“IF THERE IS NO STRUGGLE, THERE IS NO PROGRESS”: INDUSTRIAL SLAVERY AND THE NOVEL IN THE LATE-ABOLITION AMERICAS

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ABSTRACT

No Struggle, No Progress' explores how antislavery authors refashioned the political novel to diagnose the failures of their movement and imagine previously unthinkable resolutions. As the "Age of Revolutions" appeared to pass them by, activist writers in what I term the Late-Abolition Americas – the post-1848 US, Cuba, and Brazil – were faced with an exceptional challenge: how to continue to the fight when the march of human progress, the basis of their politics and worldview, appeared not only to have stalled but drastically reversed course. Far from withering away, a highly-developed racial slavery had consolidated its grip on the Late-Abolition world. Narrative fiction emerged as a crucial space in which to cope with this collective trauma and speculate on future worlds not been foreclosed by the zombie-like persistence of slavery. Starting in the mid-1850s US, my first chapter argues that Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Dred: A Tale of the Dismal Swamp* (1856*)* exploits novelistic conventions such as character system and point of view to stage the death of older antislavery paradigms and consider the maroon commune as a potential vehicle for emancipation and Black citizenship. After the US Civil War, the Cuban independence struggle breaks out in Cuba against a Spanish empire dependent on plantation slavery. In this matrix, Francisco Calcagno's *Romualdo, One of Many* (1869) unfolds a bleak counterfactual in which the pursuit of abolition through legal channels is not simply outdated but has always been ineffectual, leaving free and enslaved Blacks no choice but marronage. At the end of the era, hopes for winning black citizenship are transmuted into a reactionary allegory in the Brazilian Joaquim Macedo's *Pai-Raiol, The Conjurer* (1869). This text diagnoses Industrial Slavery as a national cancer, but only to ultimately imagine the excision of Afro-Brazilians from the body politic. Rather than the egalitarian multiracial societies imagined by Stowe and others, the post-slavery world at the end of *No Struggle, No Progress*

predicts the anti-Black biopolitics that tragically unite post-abolition Brazil, post-colonial Cuba, and the Jim Crow South.

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INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM OF "PROGRESS" IN THE LATE-ABOLITION AMERICAS

I: Industrial Slavery

At the midway point of what scholars refer to as the Age of Revolutions, opponents of slavery in most of the world felt justifiably optimistic. Following Haitian independence (1804) and the end of the US and UK slave trades (1807-1808), a sequence of events seemed to suggest that freedom was spreading around the globe as never before: the Latin American wars of independence and consequent proscription of racialized slavery;[1] the radicalization of abolitionism in the US; British West Indian emancipation; the toppling of absolutist monarchies and upsurge of working-class movements during Europe's 1848 revolutions; and France's abolition of slavery in its colonies in the same year. There was just one problem: to use Moses Finley's famous distinction, while several "societies with slaves" persisted in the hemisphere (and throughout Africa and Asia), the three remaining American "slave societies" – US, Cuba, and Brazil – showed no signs of "catching up" to the free world.[2]

They not only persisted but flourished. As has been well-documented since the 1990s, a "Second Slavery," as world-systems theorist Dale Tomich dubbed it, arose through a bustling slave trade to the Spanish Caribbean and Brazil, the extension of slave-based production into new territories, and growing networks of planters, merchants, and economic zones across the hemisphere.[3] The abolition of the US and UK slave trade did not immediately slow down the

[1] This overstates the case slightly, as pockets of African and Indigenous enslavement persisted in delimited enclaves and on small scales within Andean countries, the Yucatán peninsula, and Rio Plata basin as late as the 1850's.
[2] Cited in Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*, 6. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as Drescher.
[3] This term originates in the work of Dale Tomich. See Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery,* 61-69.

expansion of ruinous, labor-intensive monoculture plantations that provided racial slavery's material base.[4] Instead, two divergent solutions emerged to fill the void: due to its unique demography, the southern United States (and, to a lesser extent, the Brazilian northeast) developed its internal slave trade to supply the massive demand for enslaved labor in the Cotton Kingdom states that had been recently expropriated from indigenous nations.[5] Meanwhile, the demand for enslaved labor in the non-Anglo Caribbean and South America was sustained through a two-pronged circum-Caribbean and South Atlantic slave trade that blatantly flouted international law and British effort to suppress the trade. The South Atlantic trade flourished through raiding villages in more recently colonized regions of southwestern and eastern Africa, whereas the circum-Caribbean traffic largely consisted of smuggling and importing enslaved from the US.[6] The collapse of British and especially French colonial slavery actually allowed these slave societies to increase their market shares, means of production, and "human capital." Slave agronomy was given a new lease on life in, as evidenced by the explosion of coffee production in Cuba and later on a massive scale in southeastern Brazil.[7] These final developments of the Second Slavery bolstered areas of the US economy (e.g., industries like ship-building, finance and insurance, foodstuffs exports) and statecraft (e.g., the Monroe Doctrine, balance of payments, Western expansion) paved the way for postbellum imperialism,[8]

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[4] David Eltis. *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, 38-56.
[5] An explosion of work in this field worked against the previous scholarly consensus that US institutional support for small-land holders, the lack of new territory, and the inexorable expansion of commerce was responsible for leading to the decline of US slavery. Building on similar scholarship of the slave trade and Caribbean slavery, insights from this "History of Capitalism" school informs my analysis, in addition to recent contributions to the Second Slavery. See Sven Beckert. *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*, 83-135; Laird Bergad, *The Comparative Histories of Slavery in the US, Cuba, and Brazil*, 10-1; Daina Ramey Berry. *The Price for Their Pound of Flesh*, 58-90; Walter Johnson. *River of Dark Dreams*, 46-96; and Calvin, Schermerhorn. *The Business of Slavery*, 14-32.
[6] David Eltis and David Richardson. *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*; Gerald Horne, *The Deepest South: The United States, Brazil, and the African Slave Trade*, 53-64; and Rafael Marquese et al, *Slavery and Politics: Brazil and Cuba*, *1790-1850*, 76-157.
[7] Ada Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror*, 3-17; Tomich, Chapter 1.
[8] Stephen Chambers, *No God but Gain: The Untold Story of Cuban Slavery, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Making of the United States*, 104-125; Matthew Guterl, *The American Mediterranean*, 12-46; and Johnson Op. Cit.

enabled an explosion of profits that stabilized a Spanish empire reeling from the wars of Independence,[9] and provided an economic jolt in Brazil that allowed for modernization efforts, a military buildup, and (until the Paraguayan War, 1864-1870) political stability for the newly-independent nation[10].

Equally essential are the connections that begin to solidify among these three states in the 1810s, the era in which the US, Cuba, and Brazil became an increasingly linked geo-political region through a nexus of investment, technology, information, people, and capital flows.[11] Steam power and other hallmarks of modern industrial technology first developed in Europe and produced in the US were exported south via engineering teams, technical manuals, and fixed capital, which helped to transform the production of sugar in Cuba as well as its domestic and international circulation (e.g., rail lines, canals, and steam ships).[12] Despite formal bans on the slave trade by Spain (1820), Brazil (1830), and Portugal (1836), the US smuggled untold thousands of enslaved people into Cuba and Brazil. Far from a one-way traffic and despite antebellum tariffs, the US would be the premier market for Cuban sugar and more than half of Brazil's world-leading coffee exports.[13] A transnational matrix of capitalists sent investment, commodities, land deeds, and often planters themselves between hubs in New York, Richmond, New Orleans, Havana, Matanzas, Pernambuco, and Rio de Janeiro. And of course, the "imperial fantasies" of planters and their political representatives imagined a transnational slaveholding

[9] Christopher Schmidt-Nowara. *Empire and Antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1833-1874*, 14-18 and Josep M. Fradera, "Moments in a Postponed Abolition," 256-290.
[10] João José Reis, "Slavery in Nineteenth-Century Brazil," 129- 138 and Marquese et al, Op. Cit.
[11] Although the US, Cuba, and Brazil are often analyzed together in excellent macro-histories such as Blackburn's *The American Crucible* and Seymour Drescher, *Abolition*, the three are only just starting to be compared as part of a single geo-political economic entity. Especially useful are Bergard, *The Comparative Histories* and Rood, Daniel Rood, *The Reinvention of Atlantic Slavery: Technology, Labor, Race, And Capitalism in The Greater Caribbean*.
[12] Rood, *Reinvention*, 14-41. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as Rood.
[13] Begard, 160; Gerald Horne, 13.
"The Proslavery Compacts established in the second half of the 1830s led to an effective association between capital and politics in the Brazilian and Spanish Empires" (Marques et al., 12)

imperium, based in the US but traversing Cuba, Brazil, and territories in Central America.[14] Despite internal tensions (i.e., the US North or liberal Spanish officials) and external challenges (especially from England), the "century of Progress" produced a geo-political economy[15] grounded in a modern form of racial slavery that thrived not only through vestigial circuits of "merchant capital" but also as a result of decidedly modern forms production, circulation, and financing. Therefore, it is no coincidence that they were the last in the New World to abolish slavery (the US in 1865; Cuba in 1886; Brazil in 1888).

Observers at the time realized the transnational scope and industrial qualities of the post-1848 Second Slavery across the hemisphere. An 1859 report from the US consulate in the state of Bahia, Brazil summarized economic enterprises such as US investment in sugar plantations and exporting ships in glowing terms. Despite persistent "scarcity of labor" [of enslaved workers]:

> The capital of our citizens [is] employed in this province [and] wholly invested in commercial pursuits, almost without exception in the prosecution of direct trade with the United States, the exports of produce exceeding the value of our imports of merchandise, by nearly one-hundred per centum.[17]

Advancements in technology and productivity increased profits in high-value commodities, especially (if not exclusively) in cotton, coffee, sugar, and the myriad commodities and infrastructure bound up in their production and circulation. Another illustration of this nexus is the figure of Richard Sears McCulloh, the Southern civil engineer considered the father of

[14] While fringe actors such as the "filibusters" William Walker and Narciso López made disastrous attempts to realize such fantasies, they would be ironically inverted after thousands of Confederates and fellow travelers were self-exiled in Cuba and Brazil. Guterl, 54-71; Horne, 185-210; and Johnson, 176-208.
[15] Radhika Desai specifies the main contribution of this framework as its prioritization of the "materiality of nations. It sees the capitalist world order and its historical evolution as the product of the interaction – conflicting, competing or cooperative – of multiple states" (*Geopolitical Economy*, 2).
[17] Cited in Horne, 106.

modern sugar distillation and milling methods who consulted for Cuban scientists in 1847 and was awestruck by the R&D capabilities of the western Cuban sugar plantations he visited:

> I could obtain the cane juice perfectly fresh, and at all stages of the process of manufacture, as well as the canes themselves, and every other interesting product … I found myself in the possession of every facility, and of a laboratory as well furnished and convenient for analytical research as any chemist could desire.[18]

Nor were such insights confined to planters and proslavery figures. In his *Blake; or the Huts of America* (1859-1861), African American intellectual and activist Martin Delany captures this transnational convergence in the opening pages of his novel. Set in 1850s Baltimore – a mecca of the post-1808 slave trade as well as the related industries of ship-building, rail transit, and wheat exports – a group of Anglo-American and Cuban businessmen meet to discuss "an adventure of self-interest," which turns out to be retrofitting a sailing vessel for a transatlantic slaving enterprise in Africa.[19] In illustrating this afterlife of the slave trade, *Blake* introduces us to Colonel Franks, an avatar of the new Cotton Kingdom who lives in Natchez, Mississippi and has extended family connections in the western Cuban sugar elite (Delany 6-11). Delany was keenly aware of the hemispheric cartographies of the Second Slavery that evolved from dense economic connections and ruling-class affinities.[20]

In recent years, as our picture of this latter period of the Second Slavery has coalesced, several frameworks have attempted to capture the shape, scale, and historical evolution of the slave regimes that developed in the US, Cuba, and Brazil. Building on previous work focused in transnational US historiography, Matthew Guterl's concept of the "American Mediterranean"

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[18] Cited in Rood, *Reinvention*, 47.
[19] Martin R. Delany, *Blake or the Huts of America*, 5. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as Delany.
[20] See Robert Levine, *Martin Delany, Frederick Douglass and the Politics of Representative Identity,* 190-195.

usefully explores the shifting hemispheric imaginary of US planters, pro-slavery ideologues, and ex-confederates in the southern US and abroad.[21] But his concept is somewhat loose and analogical, emphasizing US figures' fantasies of empire to the exclusion of Latin American fellow travelers. Similarly, Sven Beckert's extremely useful Atlanticist "Empire of Cotton" is too geographically capacious for my purposes here and over-emphasizes the role of a single (if extremely important) commodity.[22] My analysis is more indebted to two alternative periodizing terms. First, Daniel Rood's notion of the "Greater Caribbean," which he defines as "a geographic label" specific to the 1830s-1850s that "describe[s] the dense circuits of interaction among the Upper South, Cuba, and Brazil" (Rood, *Reinvention*, 6). Insofar as my archive privileges the Cotton Kingdom as a metonym for the Second Slavery in the US, I combine Rood's emphasis on material, epistemological, and political "interactions" and flows with insights from Beckert and other work of the US "History of Capitalism" school. But the term I use as a shorthand for the historically specific geo-political economy under discussion is Robin Blackburn's notion (adapted from Richard Starobin[23]) of the epoch of "Industrial Slavery," which he asserts began in the immediate aftermath of the Saint-Domingue uprisings (circa 1800) and ended with Brazilian abolition in 1888.[24]

There are two related reasons behind opting for "Industrial Slavery" over the Greater Caribbean as a guiding term for this archive. First, it emphasizes the temporal aspect more than Rood's purely spatial term, insofar as a main task of Rood's indispensable book is not to provide a synthetic account of the history of slavery in these three countries but to chart the multi-scalar networks of scientific knowledge, investment, and "industrial experiments" linked to modern

[21] Guterl, 12.
[22] Beckert, Chapter 5.
[23] Robert Starobin, *Industrial Slavery in the Old South*, New York 1970.
[24] Blackburn, 10.

plantation production.[25] My adaptation of this concept follows Second Slavery scholarship that problematizes the long-standing conceptions of the relations between capitalism and slavery, in which the latter signifies as pre-capitalist social relations that are inevitably destroyed by bourgeois revolution that installs liberal or industrial capitalism.[26] Although I am indebted to such scholarship as well as to debates about how to define capitalism, these are not central concerns for my argument. Integrating aspects of the aforementioned frameworks for the Second Slavery in post-1848 US, Cuba, and Brazil, in this dissertation Industrial Slavery signals a tighter chronology than Blackburn and a narrower problem than that of Rood, Beckert, Guterl, or Tomich. As a periodizing term, it not only has the advantage of expressing the material and commercial advancements of slavery but also their inverted, oxymoronic form of appearance as understood by liberal and radical antislavery thinkers: how could "industry" – the expression of Western art and science that emblematizes the highest "stages of civilization" – exist in such violent proximity to an archaic residue of pre-modern tyranny already abolished in the rest of the "civilized world"? Thus, Industrial Slavery encodes an essential tension of writers and activists I

[25] This aspect is discussed in depth in Rood, "Plantation Laboratories: Industrial Experiments in the Cuban Sugar Mill, 1830–1860." This argument builds on the foundational insights into sugar mill technology, transit systems, and investments in Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *El Ingenio*, Chapters 4, 5 and 8.
My adaptation of Blackburn's concept departs from his conception of it as a "transitional" mode of production. While he concedes that slave-based US industries *were* increasingly productive and capital-intensive (alongside profits related to slave trading and financing), he ultimately describes the Industrial Slavery as precapitalist obstacle that was cleared away through bourgeois revolutions in the US. Cuba, and Brazil (Blackburn, 312-313; 315).

[26] While I depart from Liberal, Marxist, and other rigidly stadialist narratives of capitalist development, my approach is informed by Walter Johnson's pragmatic rather than programmatic response to "mode of production narratives" and rejection of economic ideal types in *River of Dark Dreams*:

> A materialist and historical analysis—a focus on what happened, rather than on how what happened was different from what should have happened if Mississippi had, in fact, been a bit more like Manchester—begins from the premise that in actual historical fact there was no nineteenth-century capitalism without slavery. However else industrial capitalism might have developed in the absence of slave-produced cotton and Southern capital markets, it did not develop that way. (254)

For theoretical developments, see Radhika Desai's polemic against "pure capitalism" in "The Absent Geopolitics of Pure Capitalism," 464; Jairus Banaji's de-centering of wage-labor in Marxian critiques of capitalism in *Theory as History*, 145; and John Clegg's Brennerian critique in "Capitalism and Slavery," 281-282.

analyze:[27] squaring their political discourse and tactics, inherited from a prior era of the global abolition movement, with a form of slavery that not only was more powerful but which also had developed characteristics commonly associated with historical progress.

II: The Late-Abolition Americas

But rather than adding to the booming scholarship on the Second Slavery and its ruling-class agents, *No Struggle, No Progress* contributes to the ongoing recovery of abolitionist culture and ideas that emerged in opposition to this extremely advanced form of racial slavery in the American hemisphere. My primary concern is to chart the extent to which Industrial Slavery in the US, Cuba, and Brazil precipitated what I call a Late-Abolition discourse within which writers and activists experienced the profound disorientation occasioned by their loss of the epistemological framework and phenomenological landscape they inherited from the preceding abolitionist tradition. The concept of a Late-Abolition Americas involves confronting how changing political and economic circumstance made abolitionism itself obsolete. At the start of what Manisha Sinha terms, the "Second Wave" of abolition (roughly the 1830s), the Atlantic world seemed to be poised for decades of sustained social progress.[28] The most crucial touchpoints, mentioned earlier, were the First Wave of Abolition, which consisted primarily of events in Britain and the US North: in the 1770s, a massive social movement centered in England eventually pushed Parliament to outlaw slavery on British soil and (more importantly)

[27] This is not at all to imply that Industrial planters were homogenously of the same "advanced" technological level; for those that were, many were not always conscious of their modernity. For example, on the one hand, Francisco Arango y Parreño's *Discurso sobre la Abricultura en la Habana y Medios de Fomentarla* (1792) clearly aligns industrial advances in slave-based agriculture with historical progress (Fradera Op. Cit.); On the other, an opponent of gradual abolition in Minas Gerais aligns Brazilian slavery with a rhetoric of the pre-modern pastoral: "Our national law, the Portuguese as well as the Brazilian, always honored the Roman principle *partus sequitur ventrem,* and it was constantly and uniformly respected by our courts. Therefore, the fruit of the slave belongs to the owner of the womb as the offspring of any animal in his possession" (Barros Cobra, "Slave Property," 443; reproduced in *Children of God's Fire*, ed. Robert Conrad).

[28] Manisha Sinha, *The Slave's Cause*, 195-196.

ended the UK slave trade – a major victory considering that Liverpool and other key ports were the most lucrative hubs of the Atlantic traffic at the turn of the century;[29] across the Atlantic, similar sentiment and arguments spread throughout New England and the Mid-Atlantic regions as the new republic's constitutional deliberations led to the abolition of the US slave trade in 1807, at which point most northern states had already outlawed slavery.[30] During a lull in Anglo-American abolitionist mobilization in the early nineteenth century, the Latin American wars of independence not only inspired political reformers elsewhere but often directly or indirectly encouraged the decline of slavery. A renewed UK abolitionist movement in the 1820s ultimately led to the largest victory of all: the gradualist Slavery Abolition Act in 1833 and (after years of agitation), the end of slavery and the "apprenticeship" system in 1838.[31] The revolutionary windfall of 1848 frightened the rulers of monarchies and industrializing democracies alike, leading France to abolish slavery in its colonies. The Age of Revolutions seemed to liquidate oppressive institutions and social relations[32] in every corner of the globe – surely slavery was not poised to survive.

In the same period there were also smaller signs of optimism that historical Progress would see the decline of slavery in the US, Cuba, and Brazil, the region and period I designate the Late-Abolition Americas for more than merely chronological reasons that I will elaborate in this section. In the United States, a renewed and radicalized abolitionist movement was becoming a prominent fixture of the public sphere despite the smaller scale, at least compared to

[29] For data on the English slave trade, see Eltis and Richards Op. Cit. and Seymour Drescher, *Econocide*, 28.
[30] Manisha Sinha, *The Slave's Cause*, 65-96; Drescher, *Abolition*, 124-144.
[31] On apprenticeship as a continuation of slavery by another name, see Diana Paton, "Introduction," xii-xiii Drescher, *Abolition*, 251-259.
[32] Bracketing the coercive aspects of liberal capitalism, various systems of "indentured" labor, kidnapping, and covert slavery emerged after (and often during) slavery. Among the most prominent, so-called "coolie" labor (the importation of proletarians Asia, usually China or India) was implemented throughout the Caribbean and the western US in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This will be touched on in Chapters 2 and 3.

the earlier English movement to abolish the slave trade; there was the publication of slave narratives and Black newspapers, as well as the blossoming of African American institutions, lecture circuits, and what is today called the Underground Railroad; and numerous uprisings among free and enslaved Blacks in the South (most notably the 1822 Denmark Vesey Conspiracy in Charleston and the 1831 Nat Turner revolt in Virginia).[33] In the Spanish metropole and colonies, prominent Cuban intellectuals such as Francisco de Arrango y Perriño, Cuba's leading political economist, and José Antonio Saco made public turns against slavery, and were later joined by antislavery Liberals in Puerto Rico and Spain; around this time began the salons, networks, and publications surrounding the patrician reformer, Domingo del Monte, who facilitated the production and publication of poems by prominent free and enslaved Black poets; and the Cuban-born Gertrudis Goméz de Avellaneda's seminal antislavery novel, *Sab,* was published in Spain in 1841.[34] There were even antislavery glimmers in Brazil, the latest of the Late-Abolition countries: in 1823, the first Prime Minister of independent Brazil, José Bonifacio de Andrada e Silva made a famous public plea against slavery along classic British lines and drew up a proposal for gradual abolition (for which he was brusquely removed from office); in practice, local clerics and officials often spoke out against slavery, both before and after England succeed in forcing Brazil to cease its slave trade in 1850; the lack of a mass abolitionist movement in Brazil was at least partially compensated for by its large and vibrant free Black community (as was the case in Cuba as well).[35]

[33] See David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Emancipation*, 193-215 and 226-231; Manisha Sinha, 195-294.
[34] On Arrango y Perriño and Saco, see Nowara Schmidt, *Empire and Antislavery*, 18-22 and Marquese et al, 150-153; on del Monte, see Gerard Aching*, Freedom from Liberation*, 45-52; on *Sab*, Sara Rosell, *La novela antiesclavista en Cuba y Brasil*, 73-75.
[35] Boris Fausto and Sergio Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, 77-78 and Drescher, *Abolition*, 348-349.

My intentionally triumphalist framing of this period seeks to encapsulate the philosophy of history grounding the political world-making of antislavery writers entering the 1850s. As David Brion Davis explains, out of the experience of 1770-1838, abolitionists developed a meta-history[36] (or historical Ur-narrative) premised on the unity of "morality, self-interest, and human progress," of enlightened moral sentiment, liberal capitalism, and the insuperable spread of modernity.[37] Making slavery into a social "problem" rather than a timeless fact of nature for most Europeans and many Americans was an immense achievement that resignified slavery as regressive, rather than part of a progressive Euro-Christian civilizing mission.[38] On the one hand, the abolition of the British slave trade was viewed with an attitude of "kairos," or a quasi-apocalyptic "victory" that enacted a historical paradigm shift; on the other hand, "the British antislavery triumphs…were also assimilated to faith in continuous and universal progress, a progress conforming to social and economic laws."[39]

To understand this meta-history as foundational to a political world requires engaging with the implications of the abolitionist "trinity" of Progress in good faith and not as mere symptoms of bourgeois ideology, national chauvinism, or political arrogance. Although I am indebted to literary and historiographic scholarship that privileges ideology critique premised on the materialist terms outlined in the previous section, I often implement comparatively "in-the-

[36] This term is not so much a theoretical innovation as a shorthand for the classic abolitionist philosophy of history (and trinity of Progress defined below) and the political world it subtends. However, there is an elective affinity between this shorthand and what Hayden White famous book. In particular, the "*plot structure* or underlying myth" what he dubs Romantic "organicist" philosophy

> [This plot structure allows] Herder to bind together the themes and motifs of his story into a comprehensible story of a particular sort was that which has its archetype in Comedy, the Myth of Providence, which permitted Herder to assert that, when properly understood, all the evidence of disjunctions and conflict displayed in the historical record adds up to a drama of divine, human, and natural reconciliation of the sort figured in the drama of redemption in the Bible (*Metahistory*79)

[37] David Brion Davis, "Slavery and Progress," 353.
[38] Christopher Brown, *Moral Capital*, 33-47; Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress*, 129-153; and Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution,* 39-83.
[39] Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress,* 128.

grain" or immanent interpretive procedures premised on attention to the rhetorical, experiential, and imaginative complexities of Late-Abolition writers. Following Christopher Taylor (from whom I also adapt the language of political worlding and unworlding), critics must remain attentive to the "fundamental discontinuity between scholarly and historical subjects' modes of world mapping," which requires combining robust historiographic and empirical endeavors with careful critical attunement to the "phenomenological, affective, and political orientations through which subjects locate their worlds."[40] Attempting to analyze my archive in this holistic, immanent manner not only permits fresh engagement with relevant problems in slavery and abolition, but also opens up possible affinities and conversations between texts with incoherent takeaways or overdetermined agendas. Being able to, for example, highlight the specific moods, rhetoric, and prognostications that emerge in immediate abolitionists 1850s US North and 1870s Brazilian *nordeste* as responses to comparable (not equivalent) political challenges opens richer pathways for analyzing hemispheric radicalism than simply reducing them to earlier and later moments of a bourgeois revolution.[41]

Returning to classic abolitionism, the movement's optimistic faith in the aforementioned "trinity" and antislavery meta-history help constitute its political world. Progress becomes a universal, Providential social evolution that inexorably raises humanity from lower to higher orders of civilization, from the irrational, feudal plantations to a virtuous capitalism premised on free labor and legal equality. For activists who dedicated their lives to the cause of ending slavery, attachment to key categories such as Natural Law or Christian ethics oriented political

[40] Chris Taylor, *The Empire of Neglect*, 22. In lieu of a methodological inventory, my approach in *No Struggle, No Progress* is influenced by three scholarly currents: the speculative recovery efforts of historicist critics in Black studies and American studies (e.g., Saidiya Hartman's *Lose Your Mother* and David Kazanjian's *The Brink of Freedom*); comparatist and Marxist developments in formalist criticism (e.g., Neil Larsen's *Determinations* and Lloyd Pratt, *The Archives of American Time*); and theoretical innovations in literary history (e.g., Robert Levine's *The Lives of Frederick Douglass*, Chris Nealon, *The Matter of Capital*, Ivy Wilson's *Specters of Democracy*).
[41] See Notes 25 and 26 above.

purposes and strategies in the narrow sense while also serving as nothing less than the pillars of their world. Antislavery ideas and strategies were more than hobbies or expressions of civic engagement; they reaffirmed a specific sense of one's place in a coherent Providential scheme, clarified the direction of history, and emplotted the individual as a constitutive agent in the process of social change. Linking together the antislavery subjects in the public (e.g., at church, work, or civic organizations) and private sphere (reading print, tending to the domestic economy, or dinner table discussions), abolitionist political worlds have mutually-reinforcing epistemological and phenomenological dimensions.

To flesh these contentions out and set up their contrast with the Late-Abolition world, I will turn to an extremely influential text from a key writer and political agent in the movement to abolish the UK slave trade: Thomas Clarkson's 1808 treatise, *The History of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade*. Concluding his account of the social movement that resulted in the formal abolition of the Anglo-American slave trade, he writes: "Thus ended one of the most glorious contests, after a continuance for twenty years, of any ever carried on in any age or country. A contest, not of brutal violence, but of reason."[42] Looking back with satisfaction, he argues that the movement against the slave trade proves that natural right, moral steadfastness, and true Christianity inevitably prevail over the "barbarism" and "avarice" that led to the human traffic. At this stage of abolition, thinkers like Clarkson were optimistic these early victories would naturally extend to abolishing the traffic in the four major continents of the Atlantic nexus and, in time, slavery altogether. Since "England and America, the mother and the child" both agreed to abolish the trade, he forecasts with the colonies in mind: "Who knows but that emancipation, like a beautiful plant, may, in its due season, rise out of the ashes of the abolition of the Slave-

[42] Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade*, 580. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as Clarkson. My argument here is indebted to Brown's analysis of Clarkson in *Moral Capital*, pp 4-9.

trade, and that, when its own intrinsic value shall be known, the seed of it may be planted in other lands?" (Clarkson, 586). The inevitability of abolition and the subsequent "emancipation" of the enslaved are figured through the conceit of organic growth in a process that, he assures us, Providence will tend to and ripen in due time; if impersonal forces (seasons) are moving history forward, the association of "emancipation" with phoenix-like rebirth implied that the African will be resurrected and "redeemed" spiritually.[43] As addressed earlier, the *event* of abolition (in this case, of the slave trade) both expresses and catalyzes the engine of Progress as it enacts the global drama of Christian salvation, moral rebirth, liberty, and economic advancement.

However, between 1840 and 1860, abolitionists and fellow travelers in the US, Cuba, and Brazil suffered a series of political defeats as the threat of Industrial Slavery loomed ever larger. They were increasingly forced to contend with the fact that the battle to end slavery would not go according to the script of the classic abolitionist meta-history. By mid-century, abolition in the US faced unprecedented political, legal, and economic obstacles that were matched in intensity by Cuba and Brazil, which had doggedly resisted British-led international effort to curb the slave trade. Publishers of antislavery periodicals were beaten and killed, a British-style petition drive in the South failed spectacularly, and activists faced myriad defeats in ecclesiastical organizations and local and state legislatures.[44] By the mid-1840s and into the 1850s, a slew of political, legal, and military events made it clear that the US government had no intention of curbing the power and interests of Industrial Slavery. Famously, the imperialist Mexican-American War annexed new territory that added to sectional disputes leading to the disastrous

[43] The form and content of this African rebirth are conspicuously unspecified here, as is the timing of emancipation, but its seasonal temporality can be read in line with Clarkson's endorsement of colonization – which will "redeem" Africa from its spiritual-material squalor just as emancipation will surely redeem commodified Black people. On this connection see Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress,* 116-120.
[44] Davis, *Emancipation*, 244-256; 277-290; Stanley Harrold, *Border War*, 138-158; and Sinha, 228-265.

Compromise of 1850, which opened up vast swaths of land for colonization by planters and led to the armed skirmishes dubbed "Bleeding Kansas." As activists were persecuted, the US courts enacted national strictures to enforce fugitive slave laws that further shrunk the narrow ambit of free Black citizenship. As a result, the US abolitionist movement sundered into camps that were only further subdivided up to the Civil War (New and Old Garrisonians, Political abolitionists, emigrationist Black abolitionists, Free Soil and Liberty Parties) in the face of Industrial Slavery's growing political power and economic advances.

Indeed, the 1840s and 1850s represented a bleakly *regressive* period in which abolition appeared largely be losing rather than gaining ground throughout the Late-Abolition world. Although the 1842 Reglamento de Esclavos codified basic protections for free and enslaved Afro-Cubans, the next two years saw the indiscriminate persecution and surveillance of free Blacks and Whites with antislavery affinities as a result of the slave uprisings and failed conspiracies grouped together as "La Escalera."[45] In the resulting dragnet of censorship and violence, prominent free Blacks such as the poets Plácido and Juan Francisco Manzano and vocal White reformers (including del Monte) were jailed, exiled, and/or executed. Whereas Cuba boasted one of the largest free Black communities, this population declined in real terms after La Escalera.[46] Against this repressive backdrop, more than 160,000 enslaved Africans landed in Cuba from US ships alone until the trade was abolished in 1867.[47] Indeed, these were the two most closely connected hubs of the Late-Abolition world and in the early 1850s the lobbying efforts for Cuba to be annexed to the US reached a fever pitch; pro-slavery planters in Cuba and

[45] "The series of slaves revolts in 1843 and the Escalera Conspiracy were the culmination of tension generated by the political-legal order that emerged from the constitutional experience of Cádiz (and had been proposed by Francisco de Arango y Parreño already in the 1790s). This arrangement created extremely unfavorable conditions for free people of color in Cuba" (Marques et al., 217)
[46] Bergard, 113.
[47] Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History*, 201.

in the North America (including the President and Vice-President), seriously considered seizing it under the Monroe Doctrine, while "filibusters" such as the Cuban-born Nárciso Lopez launched multiple failed invasions from New Orleans. Although these efforts failed, contemporaneous observers feared that such a union would presumably "augment indefinitely the political power of slavery."[48]

While the Brazilian case is more complex, it entailed similar retrenchments of slavery. As the British occupation of the ports became increasingly aggressive in the 1840s, their efforts to halt the trade were undermined by the state and merchants; famously, even when illegally trafficked slaves were remanded to Brazilian authorities [*emancipados*], rather than being freed as per Brazilian law, they were almost always resold into slavery.[49] However, in an unexpected reversal, the dual impact of an 1848 slave conspiracy and diplomatic indications that the UK Parliament was considering a military solution to ending Brazil's trade forced King Dom Pedro II to abolish the trade in 1850. Ironically, the threat of US annexation, among other factors, sheltered the Cuban trade despite Britain's keen desire to end it as well.[50] However, the Brazilian abolition of the slave trade coincided with drastically reduced tariffs on Brazilian coffee in the US and UK, which further incentivized the prodigious rise of the coffee complex in the southeastern areas such as Vassouras, Valença, and the Paraíba Valley (Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo).[51] On a comparable if smaller scale to the US, rising demand and prices saw a major export of enslaved Brazilians from the declining sugar plantations in the previous economic

[48] Cited in Sinha 497. For more on US and Cuban responses to the prospect of Cuban annexation, see Anna Brickhouse, *Transamerican Literary Relations and the Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere,* 139-179 and Marques et al., Chapter 4

[49] Leslie Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade,* 180-181; Robert Conrad, "Neither Slave nor Free: The *Emancipados* of Brazil, 1818-1868," 50-53.

[50] Marques et al., 246

[51]Robert Slenes, "The Brazilian Internal Slave Trade, 1850–1888: Regional Economies, Slave Experience, and the Politics of a Peculiar Market."

bastion in the northeast region. As the end of the trade further inflated prices for enslaved Africans, the precedents for free Black and *pardo* [mixed-race] citizenship were often flagrantly violated through denial of legally-binding manumissions and even large-scale kidnapping of free people into slavery elsewhere to supply the coffee plantations.[52] As in Cuba, previous customs and laws often dissolved when and wherever slave-dealers and planters had the opportunity. While it's difficult to estimate the precise numbers of those enslaved by kidnapping of free people, semi-legal perpetuation of bondage, or continued imports from the US, the explosion of output and profits suggest that the "labor problem" did not sink productivity.

To be clear, the Late-Abolition destruction of antecedent antislavery dissent and reform practices (even modest ones) was not a synchronic event occurring throughout the three countries at the same time or in the same way. In truth, the Cuban and Brazilian analogues that most approximate the US crisis of the 1850s both occur *after* the conclusion of the Civil War in 1865. Despite their close chronological proximity and shared language for the formal enactment of gradual abolition (1870 in Cuba and 1871 in Brazil), the Cuban antislavery movement explodes into protracted armed conflict by 1868, whereas Brazil's immediatist moment occurs in the mid-1870s but never with the degree of political violence of the US or Cuban counterpoints. One of the concerns of *No Struggle, Nor Progress* will be to track the diachronic patterns of the Late-Abolition predicament after the precedent set by the US Civil War.

Proceeding across the Late-Abolition Americas, Industrial Slavery and the political crises it precipitated led to far-reaching changes in the ideas, affects, and imaginaries of the political subjects who sought to abolish slavery and incorporate people of African descent into egalitarian future polities. Against the world-creating power of the classic meta-history, Industrial Slavery

[52] Sydney Chalhoub, "The Precariousness of Freedom in a Slave Society," 406.

caused a "political unworlding" for abolitionists, the loss of the ideologies and intellectual frameworks, as well as deeper phenomenological and affective bearings. In the face of slavery's zombie-like persistence and alarming modernity, the members of the movement were forced to revise the categories and attachments grounding their political identities and strategies and, by extension, their faith in Providence and the nature of historical change. The dissonant temporal rhetoric embedded in the term Late-Abolition is intentional: the "late" connotes the chronological posteriority, but also a sense of belatedness and even being "out of time," raising the question of "what is to be done?" alongside "why has it not been done?"

And yet, the creative re-commitment of abolitionists in the face of the crisis provoked by Industrial Slavery remains an underappreciated historical fact. As explanatory theories and categories broke down, antislavery radicals remained nonetheless dedicated to making slavery pre-history precisely at the height of its modernity, insisting on its social backwardness while reckoning with its zombie-like persistence and growth. Historical self-consciousness did not, in general, lead only to disenchantment or disillusion but catalyzed new ways of denouncing slavery's paradoxical modernity. The historical conditions and political antagonisms specific to Late-Abolition societies forced abolitionists to revise the abolitionist meta-history and its corpus of tropes, concepts, and rhetoric in complex ways.[54] The breakdown of "progress" and triumphalism resulted in numerous responses and affects, many of them bleak and uncertain: doubtful, despairing, apocalyptic urgency, feeling "out of time" or stuck. Generally, the revision of prior certainties in light of Industrial Slavery tended to shift theory and praxis away from faith in Progress (and its moral, economic, and historical unity) into a more contingent, struggle-

[54] These are helpfully itemized in Brycchan Carey, *From Peace to Freedom: Quaker Rhetoric and the Birth of American Antislavery, 1657-1761*. Numerous later permutations, critiques, and revisions, are explored in each of my three body chapters.

oriented philosophy of history.[55] Increasingly, the institutional and ideological implacability of slavery was denounced in terms that recognized the technological, financial, and logistical modernity of the plantation and slave-based industries, rather than the traditional declamations against "avarice," personal corruption, and tyranny tied to the meta-history's critique of moral, spiritual, and democratic backwardness.

To illustrate the unworlding and the discursive shift suggested here, I'll start by juxtaposing two well-known texts from Frederick Douglass written before and after the Late-Abolition period, each of which orients itself via the British antislavery movement. Delivered on the tenth anniversary of West Indian Emancipation (an annual holiday for African Americans and US abolitionists) and during the struggles of 1848, Douglass begins by lauding the "The day, the deed, the event" and extolling the virtues of a movement that was "marked by no deeds of violence, associated with no scenes of slaughter, and excites no malignant feelings."[56] At the intersection of kairos and chronos, the events of 1838 and 1848 are two tributaries within the forward-moving river of Progressive history. The trinity of the abolitionist meta-history – Natural Law, capitalist development, and enlightened Christianity – push slave societies toward an egalitarian modernity:

> The grand conflict of the angel Liberty with the monster Slavery, has at last come. The globe shakes with the contest…Steam, skill, and lightning, have brought the ends of the earth together. Old prejudices are vanishing. The magic power of human sympathy is rapidly healing national divisions, and bringing mankind into the harmonious bonds of a common brotherhood (Douglass, "1848," 323).

[55] Lewis Perry, *Radical Abolition: Anarchy and the Government of God in Antislavery Thought*, 231-269; Sinha, 421-460, and Taylor, 6-8.
[56] Frederick Douglass, "The Revolution of 1848, Speech At West India Emancipation Celebration, Rochester, New York, August 1, 1848," 322. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as Douglass, "1848."

Although Douglass is far from a naïve idealist, the example of 1838 interpenetrates the democratic rumblings of 1848. Conflict and political violence are displaced into the lofty allegory of "Liberty" weaving "common brotherhood" from the strands of steam power, sympathy, and the Biblical injunction that men are "of one blood" (ibid).[57] These three elements coordinate and accelerate each other, resulting in an eschatological proclamation of abolition as a peaceful end of history: "We realize the sublime declaration of the Prophet of Patmos…The oceans that divided us, have become bridges to connect us…The morning star of freedom is seen from every quarter of the globe" (Douglass, "1848," 326).

Exactly nine years later in 1857, Douglass asserts a distinction between technological and economic progress, on one hand, and the attainment of universal Liberty on the other. With a comparably jaded tone, he writes that "We have heard and read much about the achievements of this nineteenth century," as "the world has literally shot forward with the speed of steam and lightning. It has probably made more progress during the last fifty years than in any five hundred years."[58] The fifty years in question refers foremost to the end of the slave trade; after this watershed, comes the epoch of science and technology, the emblems of rapid "progress" teasing the transcendence of nature by human genius ("Time to the traveler has been annihilated") (Douglass, "West Indian" 191). But this maximal triumphalism that conflates technological and economic development with West Indian emancipation is undermined, as the "true significance" of the date in question is a "mighty, moral, and spiritual triumph… a product of the soul, not the body" (196). Cunningly, Douglass reroutes the techno-determinist conception of progress into an avatar of US slave-holding modernity. Unlike the British example, Anglo-Americans approach

[57] For the codification of this Biblical citation into an antislavery argument, see Brycchan Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 54-46

[58] Frederick Douglass, **"**West Indian Emancipation, speech delivered at Canandaigua, New York, August 3, 1857," 191. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as Douglass, "West Indian."

emancipation in "scientific" and economic terms that mask the barbarism of the slave system: as if freedom were a "railroad, a canal, a steamship…and out of the fullness of our dollar-loving hearts, we have asked with owl-like wisdom, WILL IT PAY? Will it increase the growth of sugar? […] Will it enrich or ruin the planters?" (197). Throughout this passage, Douglass has a clearer sense than most that "moral and spiritual" progress actually conflicts with "economic progress" and rationality – worse yet, the great achievements of the Industrial Revolution are connected with the profit motive that sustains slavery. Douglass seems aware that, as Walter Johnson and Sven Beckert have shown, steam travel and canals were advancements that facilitated the extension of large-scale cotton plantation along the Mississippi River and throughout the southwest states and territories.

Speaking in a more hopeless mode, the Black intellectual James McCune Smith looked back on the defeats of the Immediatist movement in dejection in 1858: "A quarter of a century ago, when the Anti-Slavery Society re-awakened under the strong utterances of Garrison, no part of the people was so electrified, so excited, so hopeful as we…that same craving now crushed, withered and disappointed, sinks down in hopeless apathy."[59] A few years earlier, the aforementioned Garrison bemoaned that the future appeared more amenable to an empire of slavery than universal emancipation: "the future seems to unfold a vast slave empire united with Brazil, and darkening the whole west."[60] Political unworlding for these writers leads to disillusionment and an uncanny feeling of national anachronism. But in radicals like Douglass, we see more than the mourning of Clarkson's organicism or his own earlier idealistic embrace of the British example. Later in the 1857 text, he resgnifies Progress as an effect rather than a cause, a product of the oppressed agitating and intervening and intervention in the here-and-now:

[59] James McCune Smith, "Reforms Are Mere Acts of Intellection," 172.
[60] Cited in Horne, 9.

"Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, want rain without thunder and lightning" (Douglass, "West Indian," 207). But taking this militant demetaphorization of Progress further, he rewrites the West Indian example in rebellious terms more adequate to the present; after highlighting the example of enslaved rebels like Joseph Cinque, he concludes that abolition actually "followed close on the heels of insurrection in the West Indies and Virginia than when General [Nat] Turner kindled the fires of insurrection in Southampton" (207-208). Rejecting the premises of the older abolition, Douglass adds the missing dimensions of urgency, Black agency, and the assumption that freedom is the result of antagonistic social struggle. To paraphrase Delany, often an ideological opponent of Douglass, Providence must be woken up.[62] If McCune Smith and Garrison reflect the unworlding power of slavery, Douglass seeks to develop new strategies in real time to supplant the obsolescence of the earlier political world.

As examples from Cuba illustrate, political violence, immediate abolition, and inclusive models of Black citizenship were forced onto the agenda to a previously unthinkable degree for White and Black thinkers. Often, these changes terrified White elites and governors, who in turn developed a political world grounded in liberal economic discourse and schemes to replace the African menace, especially after the various uprisings that followed in the wake of the Haitian revolution. In the Spanish empire, figures such as Arrango y Perreño and Saco adapt these challenges with anti-Black paranoia and advocating for "whitening" schemes.[63] A perfect inverse to Douglass is this passage from the Captain General of Puerto Rico, Juan Prim y Prats: "At

[62] As *Blake*'s protagonist, Henry, explains to his comrades on the cotton plantation in Natchez:
"You must make your religion subserve your interests, as your oppressors do theirs! […] They use the Scriptures to make you submit, by preaching to you the texts of `obedience to your masters' and `standing still to see the salvation,' and we must now begin to understand the Bible so as to make it of interest to us" (Delany, *Blake,* 43)
[63] This will be discussed in depth in the final section of Chapter 3.

present, one may consider [Puerto Rico] blockaded by the African race...Puerto Rico should be considered in a permanent state of war, the same as Ceta, Melilla, or any other town on the frontier with barbarians."[64] In the middle of the spectrum we find a frightened ambivalence at the extent to which war is necessary to reactivate progress. Francisco Frías y Jacott, a Cuban-born White liberal better known as El Conde de Pozos Dulces, wrote in the Spanish periodical *El Siglo* in 1864 that "We regret that the necessities of war [in the US] had to precipitate a catastrophe that we believe must be everywhere a work of time and economic and social progress."[65] To his dismay, war in the Spanish colony of Cuba would likewise be necessary to force even gradual abolition into law.

A counterpart to Douglass's world can be found in Antonio Zambrana's under-appreciated 1875 novel, *El Negro Francisco*, which stridently rejects gradualist measures and links Black freedom with the independence fight. This passage contains a letter from the protagonist, Carlos Orellana, to his skeptical interlocutor (named delMonte):

> No se ocupen tanto de combatir la dominación española, de obtener esta o aquella forma de gobierno, esta o aquella libertad, esta o aquella garantía. Que se ocupen sobre todo de los negros. No de no ser explotados, que se preocupen de no explotar. Uds. Dicen, ah si los Cubanos no fueran esclavos! – ah, si no los tuvieran!... con [General Ulysses] Grant estoy seguro de triunfo. Triunfante o derrotado, !o como gozo en padecer i en arriesgar mi vida por la emancipación de los negros![66]
>
> [Don't be overly focused on resisting Spanish tyranny, obtaining this or that form of government, this or that Liberty, this or that guarantee. Focus above all on the Blacks.

[64] Cited in Nowara-Schmidt, *Empire and Antislavery,* 41.
[65] Cited in Arthur Corwin, *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817–1886*, 141.
[66] Antonio Zambrana, *El Negro Francisco*, 181.

> Not on not being exploited but on not exploiting (others). You all say 'Oh, if the Cubans were not slaves (i.e. tyrannized by Spain)! – Oh, if you all did no *own* slaves! Like [General Ulysses] Grant, I am sure of a triumph. Triumphant or defeated, I wish to suffer and risk my life for the emancipation of the slaves.]

While there is much to say about this remarkable passage, note how the novel White protagonist frames oppression, the terms of the refusal, and the antislavery future – his unflinching declaration of racial solidarity overwriting the self-serving liberal creole agenda (driven home by the fact that he's writing to a character named delMonte). Whereas Prim y Prats, El Conde, Domingo del Monte, and José Antonio Saco all argue that slavery primarily harms Whites, this passage centers on the super-exploitation of the enslaved and rejects the half-measures through which the Spanish government would perpetuate their regime. Finally, Zambrana iterates a new abolitionist history grounded in the wars against Industrial Slavery in the US South and in western Cuba while refusing to posit a neat resolution despite his sincere belief that triumph is possible. Pragmatic yet innovative, militant yet concrete, this represents an upper limit of the Late-Abolition imagination. If previous antislavery thinkers drew from Enlightenment precepts and Natural Law discourse to assert an abstract human equality (especially, as Christopher Brown notes[67], when the humans in question were in colonies in a different continent), Late-Abolition discourse evinces some of the most concrete refutations of anti-Black sentiment (though not always, as we see in Chapter 3).

The palpable loss of the present world and its future are forcefully expressed by moderate Brazilian liberal Silva Netto, when in1868 he wrote that "The life we have passed was without great worry; the present is easy; the future I do not know!" Elsewhere in the same treatise, his

[67] Brown, Chapter 4.

worries lead him to stridently question some of his most basic historical categories: "The age! It is now more than 1,867 years since the era of Christ and slavery still exists. The age!"[68] Writing closer to the end of Brazilian slavery in 1883, Joaquim Nabuco's diagnosis exhibits an even heightened sense historical self-consciousness, immediatist urgency, and national shame:

> It is this very same institution, burdened with all of History's sins, now eliminated from Asia and Europe, stamped out in North America, banned by human conscience and about to be looked upon as piracy, which now seeks in Brazil a haven and implores us to permit it to die a natural death, that is, by nourishing itself on the last 1.5 million victims still remaining in the world.[69]

While Netto comes to grips with the devastating implications of Industrial Slavery's persistence amid wartime conditions and international pressure, Nabuco is able to find redemptive value in the Brazilian movement (*contra* Garrison) to destroy slavery's last remaining haven. The abolitionist poet Castro Alves figures an apocalyptic end of slavery through masculine, Byronic lines that seek to incite struggles in the present:

> É tempo agora pra quem sonha a glória
> E a luta... e a luta, essa fatal fornalha,
> Onde referve o bronze das estátuas,
> Que a mão dos séculos no futuro talha ...
>
> Parte, pois, solta livre aos quatro ventos
> A alma cheia das crenças do poeta!...
> Ergue-te ó luz! — estrela para o povo,
> Para os tiranos — lúgubre cometa.
>
> [Now's the time for those who dream of
> glory and struggle… and the struggle, that fatal forge
> where bronze statues are forged anew,
> chiseled by the hand of future centuries

[68] Both passages are from his 1868 treatise, *Estudos sobre a Emancipação dos Escravos no Brasil*, cited in Robert Brent Toplin, *The Abolition of Slavery in Brazil*, 42-43.
[69] Joaquim Nabuco, *Abolitionism*, 166.

Depart, release to the four winds
The soul nourished by the poet's beliefs!
Step into the light! – stars for the people
For the tyrants – a deadly comet][70]

While "fatal forge" (the same word for furnace) bespeaks the sense of danger and stakes, the image (like the poem itself) is also a speculative monument to freedoms of the future.

Hopefully these examples suffice to illustrate the range of affects, attachments, and imagination of Late-Abolition writers as they grapple in real time with the limits of the meta-history, arguments, and tactics they inherited from preceding antislavery movements. The historical framework I summarize here contributes to the ongoing scholarly reconsiderations of radical political movements in the hemisphere and the abolition in particular. Starting with Eric Williams *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944), important works have subjected the triumphalist meta-narrative inaugurated by British abolitionists such as Clarkson to much-needed scrutiny. Even as early as Hannah More's iconic poem, "The Slave Trade" (1788), Britons (later followed by Euro-Americans across the Atlantic) reified their protracted, contingent successes into a teleology of Progress that conflated the "trinity" of economy, morality, and Liberty with British national virtue. Abolishing the trade and later slavery, they suggest, aligns with the most basic part of Englishness (and later, French-ness, Spanish-ness, and so on).[71] Revising this ideology through a Marxist framework was an immensely valuable contribution; *contra* the nationalist mythography of Clarkson, opposing slavery was now a disguise for free trade liberalism and an expression of "liberal hegemony," while the advent of abolition represents a New-World bourgeois revolution that lifts the hemisphere into capitalism. Of course, at a basic level this

[70] Antônio Castro Alves, "Adeus, Meu Canto," in *Os Escravos*, 174
My reading of the poem is indebted to Jared Hickman's interpretation of Castro Alves' radical inversions of anti-Black tropes and anti-African Christian redemption narratives. *Black Prometheus,* 379-380.
[71] On this dynamic, see Brown, Op. Cit.; Brycchan Carey, *British Abolition and the Rhetoric of Sensibility*, Chapter 5; and Marcus Wood, "Introduction" to *The Poetry of Slavery: An Anglo-American Anthology*.

temporal transcoding (slavery as feudalism or pre-history; free labor as capitalism or modernity) actually restates the basic stadial premise of the abolitionist meta-history while simply revising the tone (rather than the substance) of abolitionists' historical agency. Besides the deluge of empirical information about the Second Slavery that arguably deconstructs the opposition of capitalism and slavery, at least in the "reinvented Atlantic world" (Rood, 6) expressed by Industrial slavery. With that in mind, I'll turn to my own method and archive.

III: The Late-Abolition Novel

Without recapitulating the basic history of print culture, it's well-established that the production and circulation of texts provided the material basis for antislavery ideas, as well as abolitionist political networks and organizing efforts.[73] As Manisha Sinha explains, the British antislavery movement developed into an "unprecedented" political force that "took the form of a broad-based social movement that cut across class lines and used the public sphere and democratic modes of communication to influence policy" and win new converts to the cause.[74] However, this public sphere was already transatlantic starting with the dense correspondence networks between the US writer Anthony Benezet and Clarkson and William Wilberforce in England, as well as the reception across the Americas of key French works by Denis Diderot, Victor Hugo, and Abbé Gregoire.[75] Earlier revolutions in print technology and circulation infrastructure linked up antislavery writers from across the Atlantic world, disseminating perspectives and information about slavery and resistance even into repressive Late-Abolition regimes. Before the codification and enforcement of copyright laws, exact reprints of English

[73] The foundational work in this is of course, Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, but see also: Meredith McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting*; Robert Fanuzzi, *The Abolitionist Public Sphere,* 85-130; Anna Brickhouse, *Transamerican,* 173-179.
[74] *The Slave's Cause*, 101. All direct quotations cited in text parenthetically hereafter as Sinha.
[75] Namely, the famous antislavery passages of Diderot's *Encyclopedia*, Hugo's *Bug-Jaral*, and Gregoire's various essays and correspondence. For a discussion, see Carey, *Peace*, 177-219 and Sinha, 55-56.

and French articles wound up on broadsheets in New York and Rio, while a heavy traffic of ad hoc translations funneled huge volumes of information about or adjacent to slavery (such as natural history) into English, Portuguese, and Spanish.[76] Although press freedom was largely curtailed in Cuba, Brazil,[77] and the US South, abolitionist newspapers and treatises printed in North America and Europe invariably made their way to the Late-Abolition world via contraband or through vernacular channels (such as sailors passing through ports). Of course, direct communication networks among writers from these countries was rare for cultural, logistical, and censorship reasons. Nonetheless, the advent of a transnational antislavery public sphere, alongside the material and political affinities, subtends my claim for a coherent (though not homogenous) Late-Abolition discursive response to Industrial Slavery.[79]

By the nineteenth century, the novel had become well-established as the print genre *par excellence* for devising foundational myths and identities of postcolonial nations but also (and more crucially in this context) an important medium through which social reforms were advocated and negotiated. The most influential antislavery iteration of the reform novel was *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), whose plot and narrative discourse respond to intense debates around the time of its publication, most famously the Fugitive Slave Law component of the Compromise of 1850 and the knotty question of African American colonization. Controversial among many Black intellectuals (though exalted by Douglass), Stowe's debut novel remains one of the best-selling works of all time.[80] Beyond elevating its author into an international abolitionist hero (as I explore in Chapter 1), it also became a touchpoint across the Late-Abolition world. In his study

[76] McGill, Chapter 3.; Hendrik Kraay et al, "The Largest Circulation in South America" 14-18.
[77] "Over the course of Pedro II's reign the press remained at the whim of political disputes but it gradually professionalized and modernized and gained greater strength" (Marcello Basile, The "Print Arena," 51).
[79] I follow Anna Brickhouse's important insight regarding "the extent to which the transamerican and multilingual literary practices of these American arenas allow us to reinvasion the nineteenth-century public sphere itself as a plurality of competing and often mutually antagonistic public spheres" (*Transamerican Literary Relations* 27-28).
[80] Levine, Op. Cit.

of the Brazilian Nísia Floresta's Stowe-inspired *oeuvre*, Thomas Celso Castilho contends that "these two processes—print culture and slavery—shaped each other and that the former should not just be seen as a source for the latter."[81] The reform novel emerged as an important medium for the Abolitionist International by mid-century, owing to other landmark antislavery novels by Gertrudis Goméz de Avellaneda and William Wells Brown. Although a relatively elite cultural form in Cuba and Brazil, with lower rates of literacy, fewer printing presses, and tighter censorship, novels often found their way into vernacular popular culture through direct and indirect means (especially local forms of theatre).[82] Despite – or because of – the smaller size of the audience able to print, write, and purchase printed works, Doris Sommer has shown the high percentage of powerful Latin American *letrados* who literally legislated the world: "perhaps the most stunning connection is the fact that authors of romances were also among the fathers of their countries, preparing national projects through prose fiction, and implementing foundational fictions through legislative military camp."[83] Thus, the antislavery novel contributes to a nineteenth century "counter-culture of modernity" that challenged the entwined hemispheric projects of white supremacy and racial capitalism.[84]

In the Late-Abolition world, the novel emerges as a crucial space for two related projects: registering and coping with the violent unworlding precipitated by Industrial Slavery and speculating on future worlds not foreclosed by the zombie-like persistence of slavery. *No Struggle, No Progress* tells a new story about how antislavery novelists in the US, Cuba, and Brazil turned away from the false certitudes and first principles of the classic abolitionist meta-

[81] "The Press and Brazilian Narratives," 78.
[82] Roberto Schwarz. *Misplaced Ideas*, 19-30.
[83] Doris Sommer, "Foundational Fictions: When History Was Romance in Latin America," 112.
For the concept of *letrado, see* Angel Rama, *The Lettered City,* 18-21; this is further developed in Julio Ramos's essential *Divergent Modernity*.
[84] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 36-37.

history and embraced the search for hitherto unconsidered and counterfactual resolutions to the political crises of Industrial Slavery that preceded slavery's "official" end in 1888: Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Dred*, *A Tale of the Dismal Swamp* (1856); Francisco Calcagno's *Romualdo, Uno de Tantos* (1869), and Joaquim Manuel de Macedo's *Pai-Raio, o Feitiçero* (1869).

In these texts, the political worlding and unworlding occur through the novel's capacity for sustaining and modifying what Eric Hayot terms "literary worlds."[85] For Hayot, the "totality" or "unity" of such worlds "emerges from the interior representational content of the work and . . . thus belongs as a formal concept most properly to the arrangement of the work's content, of which it is the formal expression" (Hayot 137). Although this insight may not be earth-shattering, the language of world-creation and attendant technical vocabulary clarify the deceptively complex Late-Abolition literary worlds I explore. In particular, the following variables – "meta-diegetic structure," "completeness," and Alex Woloch's concept of "character system"[86] – ground the following chapters, each of which takes up a Late-Abolition novel (Hayot, 141-158). In brief, the novel use particular configurations of narrative discourse, character-systems, setting, and plot in order to stage both the unworlding effects of Industrial Slavery and the Black-led counter-worlds that could supplant it. Also helpful in this context is Fredric Jameson's observation that "realism" and comprehensiveness work on a spectrum rather than a Lubbockian ideal type.[87] Far from being "good" realists, the political and rhetorical intentions of the authors I examine are extremely connected to their "formal expression" – such that all three of the novels that orient my body chapters have at one time or another been considered treatises rather than "proper novels": they aim at intervening in contingent political

[85] Eric Hayot, "On Literary Worlds." Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as Hayot.
[86] Hayot, Alex Woloch, *The One and the Many*, 12-14. This will be explored in more detail in Chapter 1.
[87] Frederic Jameson, *The Antinomies of* Realism, 8-14. While I am informed by Jameson's method and analysis, my project generally departs from his stadial understanding of genre and its relation to discrete modes of production.

conjunctures rather than the illusion of empirical and social immersion associated with realist and naturalist traditions. But this relative de-emphasizing of the mimetic aspect can be better understood as intrinsically connected to the literary practices of world-building and world destruction and this brings me to the speculative.

My consideration of these Late-Abolition novels in relation to the rubric of speculative fiction may seem surprising. Conventional accounts of speculative fiction center usually upon popular genres such as fantasy or science fiction, or other artforms that engage with them (such as Afrofuturist painting). But despite their contemporary settings and copious references to the relations, institutions, and textures of empirical reality, each novel starts by formalizing the political and existential devastation of Industrial Slavery before turning to previously invisible subjects and the worlds they strive to create: fugitives or enslaved rebels existing at the margins of the industrial-capitalist plantation and the slave-trade nexus. Whereas other critics, for example, read the fugitive commune from Stowe's *Dred* as a plot device intended to spur legislative action or an act of ideological containment,[88] I believe it is more accurate (i.e., in keeping with the totality of the literary worlds) to view Dred and the Engedi commune as counter-worlds speculatively posited by the novel as means of either supplanting or escaping the otherwise hegemonic world of Industrial Slavery. Far from "utopian" impositions (in the pejorative sense), the novels figure these Black worlds as emerging from a dialectical relation to the Industrial plantation at a time when the possibility for White-led reform from within has collapsed through the destruction of White reformist character systems and their worlds.

[88] I refer here to three studies that I otherwise have gleaned much from: Gregory Pierrot, *The Black Avenger in Atlantic Culture,* 19-51; Martha Schoolman, *Abolitionist Geographies*, 164-174; and Eric Sundquist, *To Wake the Nations,* 77-81.

The literary praxis of these authors aligns with the insight of indigenous scholar and activist Daniel Heath Justice on the urgency of "transformative modes" of representation in the face of a realism that reifies or magnifies the oppressive conditions of the world: "When 'realistic' fiction demands consistency with corrosive lies and half-truths, imagining otherwise is more than an act of useful resistance—it's a moral imperative."[89] Moreover, literary speculation as practiced in these texts is not limited to correcting to harmful representations of political (non)agency. As Mark Rifkin notes in his analysis of futurisms, the speculative denaturalizes the frames that orient our worlds through fully-realized forms of knowledge and experience:

> The speculative opens a conceptual and narrative gap that allows framings to come into view as such, as forms of orientation, and doing so dislodges them from the epistemological and phenomenological tendency to normalize their perspective as simply expressive of the singular facticity of the real.[90]

But even if we acknowledge the value of elaborating such culturally and politically significant counter-worlds amid moments of far-reaching political disorientation, what to make of the fact that in each case these worlds *fail*? Does that not reveal the "true" negative attitude towards Black agency and the attainment of post-slavery freedom? Of course, it is undeniable that the none of the White antislavery writers at the heart of each chapter approaches the abolitionist militancy of Douglass, Zambrana, or Castro Alves, even when accounting for the ruptural significance of Late-Abolition representations of fugitive worlds and Black self-organization in narrative fiction written for general circulation. Neatly collating Harriet Beecher Stowe and Denmark Vesey would be equally absurd and pointless. Recent criticism has turned increasingly toward both expanding and revising the corpus of Black life during and after

[89] Daniel Heath Justice, *Why Indigenous Literature Matters*, 142.
[90] Mark Rifkin, *Fictions of Land and Flesh Blackness, Indigeneity, Speculation*, 62.

slavery, with immensely exciting results.[91] But there are several important implications for my relatively modest recovery and reinterpretation of comparatively mainstream White abolitionists. The first point, reiterated several times already, is that the Late-Abolition framework highlights the ways that political discourse expresses disruptive circumstances *and* experiments with new tactics, strategies, and frames of reference. Following the essential reexaminations by David Brion Davis and Manisha Sinha, the example of abolitionist radicalization and plasticity deserves more concerted attention beyond the Anglosphere. My examination of the Late-Abolition Americas makes a contribution to this effort by reinserting activists from across the cartography of Industrial Slavery into a coherent material and discursive context, while attending to cultural singularities and the diachronic axis that reshapes local interventions (especially in the Cuban and Brazilian examples, which are situated more than a decade later).[92]

In broader terms, Late-Abolition literature offers a unique window into questions regarding how we understand historical change, transformative praxis, and the forces that cause shifts and swerves within our deeply-held political worlds. In large part, this is because abolitionists are uniquely self-conscious and freighted historical subjects, given toward seeking Providential hints and typological clues in most events, and addicted to publishing, anthologizing, and memorializing themselves. Although the body chapters examine writers (two of whom were professionals at a time when such a vocation was rare), their literary worlds force the reader into uncomfortable and often indeterminate questions regarding the *how* of historical progress, as well as the *when*. Following the insights of Justice and Rifkin, tracking the cohesion and

[91] Beside those already mentioned, for Cuba: Aching, *Freedom from Liberation*; for Brazil: Raquel Kennon, *Afrodiasporic Forms; and* for the Anglo-Atlantic world: Stefan Wheelock, *Barbaric Culture and Black Critique*.
[92] The trend toward homogenization is an inherent risk for hemispheric comparatist work, as well as abolitionist historiography that is largely centered in the Anglophone world (this would be my only criticism of Manisha Sinha's essential notion of the Abolition International).

implosion of worlds also expands our perception of the possible and renders transparent the usually-occluded bases for distinguishing real from "otherwise worlds."[93] At least for the writers of my archive, such questions were not mere aesthetic or intellectual curiosities but desperate attempts to act amid obfuscated perceptions of the present and grapple with whatever tactic might render Industrial Slavery pre-history. Thinking in their epistemological and phenomenological grain restores their potential for generating a range of (often uneven) imaginative affordances.

This returns us to the question posed earlier regarding the value of imaginative and historical failure. Unable to see a future beyond the crisis-time of the present, these writers create worlds that often fail, both in the texts themselves and in their often-sketchy prognostications. Like other scholars working in this vein, I see value in attending to what Holly Jackson calls "radical failures" in the sense of a utopian metalepsis: "a history of radical thought must be a history of a certain kind of failure… summon a variety of potential Americas that have not come to be. At least not fully. At least not yet."[94] But more concretely, the potential America these texts seek to "summon" involves abolishing slavery immediately and in the broadest sense: the range of racialized institutions, relations, and discourses that constitute Black unfreedom as the condition of possibility for Industrial Slavery and its afterlives. From this angle, every word cited in this Introduction recapitulates the same failure. David Kazanjian's insights about finding glimpses of "improvised" freedom through the archives of oppressed subjects within the ongoing failures of racial capitalism offer some much-needed intellectual bracing: "Present conflict thus

[93] Tiffany Lethabo King et al, *Otherwise Worlds*: *Against Settler Colonialism and Anti-Blackness*. The counter-worlds in these novels share the concerns of exploring oppositional forms of "Black Sociality" and "Black Kinship" discussed by the King et al ("Introduction," 17-22).
[94] Holly Jackson*, American Radicals*, 329.

echoes with the past's failure to realize freedom as a stable national polity."[95] Among the many lessons from the Late-Abolition archive: with persistence and imagination, these muted, residual tones of freedom can be amplified into a *musica universalis*[96] capable of orienting political beings in an otherwise hostile cosmos.

IV: Chapter Summaries

The story of the Late-Abolition Americas opens amid the political crises and social movements of the mid-1850s US. My first chapter, "Apocalypse Now-ish: From Antislavery to Autocritique in *Dred*," analyzes how Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1856 novel uses the affordances of narrative fiction to interrogate its political conjuncture, antislavery discourse, and speculate on resolutions to an ongoing crisis. The novel elaborates three successive literary worlds as a means of analyzing and testing a spectrum of political worlds. These are grounded in a specific permutation of character system, point of view, and setting, each of which represents a different mode of critically reckoning with Industrial Slavery. The first such world centers on the relations between two White plantation owners: in this "conversion narrative," Nina Gordon emerges as both a protagonist and a gradual abolitionist owing to the intimate tutelage of Edward Gordon, who implements an apprenticeship system on his plantation and seeks to reform North Carolina slave law lines along the lines of Wilberforce or Granville Sharp. The reform-minded Nina seeks to protect her enslaved half-brother, Harry Gordon, from her malicious White sibling, Tom Gordon, an avatar for Industrial Slave interests. Just as Nina comes to see slavery through the lens of the classic metahistory, her character abruptly dies, giving way to a new character system

[95] David Kazanjian, *The Brink of Freedom: Improvising Life In The Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World*, 10
[96] At the risk of obtuseness, I see clear affinity between the Late-Abolition response to slavery and Anthony Grafton's account of how Johannes Kepler in works such as *Mysterium cosmographicum* forged innovative developments in cosmology, not through a "paradigm shift," by translating the present through some of the most arcane intellectual idioms available to him. Anthony Grafton, "Kepler as Reader," 562-566.

oriented around two proxy fathers (Edward and Tom) seeking to control the enslaved proxy son (Nina's brother, Harry). In this crucible, Edward's political world is tested in across the arenas of state and civil society but (just like the antislavery precedents they refer to) he experiences a string of escalating defeats. With Tom Gordon poised to assume legal ownership of Harry and his wife, Lisette, the proxy-son decides to rebel, striking down Tom and abandoning Edward Clayton. The final literary world, from Harry's point of view, explores a fugitive slave commune called Engedi and its powerful leader, Dred, in order to evaluate the prospects for a Black uprising against the waxing power of Industrial Slavery. Although *Dred* ultimately dispenses with this literary world as well, I argue that the novel's non-resolutions illustrate a Late-Abolitionist experimental ethos that avoids committing to a single strategy with political violence already looming large.

Moving to the other side of the US Civil War and the commencement of Cuba's first anticolonial war, my second chapter, "Tropical Untruth: Abandonment and Grand Marronage" explores Cuban Industrial Slavery via Francisco Calcagno's neglected 1869 novel, *Romualdo, Uno De Tantos*. This text dispenses with the family melodrama frame and tribute to classic abolition, instead fixating on the mystery of the mixed-race Romualdo's past and present status. As such, it begins fully immersed in an equally tense yet very different character triangle. The first White proxy-father is an anonymous priest, El Cura, whose efforts to protect Romualdo reveal his political world, which consists of misplaced faith in the colony's legal protections for Black subjects, the del Monte-esque approach to reform, and the workings of Providence. However, this world is quickly destroyed by the revelation that the proxy-father aligned with Industrial Slavery, the slave trader Jacobo, illegally kidnapped Romualdo as a child and sold him into slavery on a sugar plantation. El Cura's political world is demolished in the manner of

Edward Clayton, this time by the lure of sugar profits and the crisis of slave demography resulting from the US Civil War and 1867 end of the Cuban slave trade. While El Cura is disillusioned, Romualdo is forced to flee the plantation with his daughter, Blasa, to the only safe haven available to him: a palenque (fugitive slave community) in the nearby mountains. Through the frames of petit and grand marronage, I analyze how Calcagno's novel develops a more robust and empirically rich character system that ultimately supplants Romualdo as protagonist and subject. Ultimately, the "mini-Guinea" is dispersed or killed during a climactic battle with a gang of armed slave-hunters. Like *Dred*, we are not left with a successful war of liberation. And yet, the novel's speculative vision of fugitive slave self-organization and political violence lead to both an ambivalent reflection on the 10 Years War and *sui generis* glimpses of Black freedom.

The chronological and thematic end of the Late-Abolition story centers on Brazil in my final chapter, "The War at the End of the War: Emancipating Anti-Blackness." Considered a minor novel by the major Brazilian author Joaquim Macedo, it stretches the Late-Abolition paradigm nearly to its breaking point in presenting an entirely different set of political worlds. Unlike the previous works, *Pai-Raiol* dispenses altogether with a White reformer. Instead, events unfold on the sugar plantation of Paulo Borges, an ambitious planter who remains committed to increasing his holdings in enslaved persons of African descent – specifically an enslaved African named Pai-Raiol and an enslaved creole woman Esméria. The literary and political worlds here emerge from Esméria's relation to three competing proxy fathers. I dub the first world the "expropriation plot," in which Pai-Raiol hatches a plan to usurp Paulo Borges as the owner of the plantation. In this triangle, Pai-Raiol forces the beautiful creole woman (via hypnotic powers) to seduce Paulo Borges and subsequently kill his wife, Teresa, and then three Borges children/heirs. The novel frames this process through the anthropological conceit of the African fetish that

serves to anachronize slavery's "primitive" qualities, viz. the corrosive effects on the White family and (after Paulo Borges is rendered subservient to Esméria) capitalist agriculture. Esméria's pregnancy (intended to produce the new Borges heir), the novel intensifies the demographic crisis of *Romualdo*, while reframing the problem of social reproduction through a racist idiom of degeneration and replacement. *Pai-Raiol*'s second character system involves a "good" enslaved creole, tío Alberto, who kills the African conjurer, saves Paulo Borges' life, and "rescues" Esméria from the deadly plot. Nominally restoring order on the plantation, this pseudo-resolution performs the rhetorical task of advocating for gradual abolition by recuperating "good" creole Blacks from "dangerous" African-born Blacks at the diegetic level. But the force of previous events illustrates Esméria's culpability and internalized resentment, leading me to argue that the ultimate political world of the novel is both antislavery and anti-Black. The end of the Late-Abolition world aligns with the bio-political policies that Latin American countries like Brazil helped pioneer as it largely side-stepped any responsibility for integrating Blacks into the new nation. As such, the novel forecasts the failure (if not outright refusal) of the post-slavery New World to bring about full political and economic citizenship for Afro-Americans.

Finally, a few technical notes. When the Spanish or Portuguese words appear in the body of the text, all translations are mine. Occasionally, I'll use untranslated terms if they more succinctly and clearly convey the meaning (such as *crioula* instead of American-born woman of "full" African descent or *palenque* instead of Cuban maroon settlement). In line with other scholars working on slavery, I try to avoid reifying enslavement or its association with people of African descent, except when such work-arounds hamper basic clarity. I likewise capitalize racial categories to emphasize their constructedness. Given the comparative and multi-lingual

scope of this project, I've made a few terminological choices to avoid further confusion. At times, I use context-specific racial categories used by historical actors of the period (*mulato, parda,* mestizo, creole, etc.). I occasionally use the antiquated but useful term Afro-American to refer to people of African descent in the New World more broadly and African American for North American people of African descent. America, América, or the Americas refers likewise to the hemisphere, not to the United States. Lastly, the Late-Abolition world/Americas only refers to the US, Cuba, and Brazil from 1850-1888.

CHAPTER ONE

APOCALYPSE NOW-ISH: FROM ANTISLAVERY TO AUTOCRITIQUE

This life may be truly called a haunted house, built as it is on the very confines of the land of darkness and the shadow of death. A thousand living fibres connect us with the unknown and unseen state; and the strongest hearts, which never stand still for any mortal terror, have sometimes hushed their very beating at a breath of a whisper from within the veil. Perhaps the most resolute unbeliever in spiritual things has hours of which he would be ashamed to tell, when he, too, yields to the powers of those awful affinities which bind us to that unknown realm.[97]

I: Introduction and Context of *Dred*

With the recent wave of American Studies and literary scholarship returning to nineteenth century radical political movements and discourse – and the abolition movement in particular – Harriet Beecher Stowe has undergone a much-needed scholarly reconsideration. In particular, her second novel, *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp* (1856), has garnered increased scholarly attention for its complex treatment of enslaved radicals and radicalized political discourse compared to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852).[98] The novel follows the relationship of a North Carolina plantation heiress (Nina Gordon) as she is brought into the antislavery cause by a progressive planter-reformer, Edward Clayton; but the plot spins into a complex matrix of characters and power struggles once her malicious brother, Tom Gordon, enters the scene. Ultimately, this leads to a series of conflicts that catalyzes the insurrectionary designs of a fugitive slave prophet named Dred, who organizes a conspiracy only to equivocate at the last moment. After Dred rescues Edward Clayton from a Tom Gordon-led lynch mob, Dred is killed and the rest of main black and white characters relocate to the north and Canada. Hopefully, this brief plot summary illustrates the one point on which Stowe's proponents and detractors remain

[97] Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Dred A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp*, 374. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as *Dred*.
[98] Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as *Cabin*. Recent reevaluations of *Dred* start with Robert Levine, *Representative Identity* and Gail Smith, "Hermeneutics and the Politics of Difference in Stowe's Dred."

united: the novel's fundamental formal and ideological incongruity.[99] Formally, this is evident in its sprawling yet chaotic compositional logic, glaringly incomplete plot architecture, and capricious and uneven characterizations; on the content side, critics highlight *Dred*'s ambivalence on crucial themes (such as the use of political violence), its admixture of progressive and stereotyped black characters, and its failure to offer the counterfactual story of a slave revolt teased by its titular character. Simply put: the novel's ultimately overdetermined formal and political outcomes have frustrated readers and critics ever since its publication.

But in taking stock of *Dred*'s Late-Abolition politics of time, my argument will show how the aforementioned incongruities and their resultant reading experience perform important rhetorical work. In the context of US Industrial Slavery, its unevenness and formal volatility becomes a performative aspect of the text, intimately connected to its historical specificity. At the broadest level, this chapter explores *Dred*'s ingenuity in elaborating and imploding different anachronizations of slavery, articulated through discrete constellations of character networks, narrative discourse, setting, and point of view. These allow the text to polemicize against the slave system from several vantage points, while exploring other reasons for its unthinkable survival: the zombie-like power of the slave trade, the obsolescence of older antislavery tactics, and the potential for a Black-led revolution from below. Before laying out my interpretative framework and argument, I will specify the historical conjuncture that produces my object of analysis and some key methodological assumptions.

Under the strain of the reconsolidated political, economic, and social power of what Robin Blackburn terms the era of Industrial Slavery, antislavery thinkers in what I term the

[99] For instance, Walter Benn Michaels, *The Gold Standard and the Logic of Naturalism,* 104-111 and Sundquist, 77-8. *Dred* is even dealt with in a dismissive and perfunctory fashion in Joan Hedrick's canonical biography, *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Life*, 258-262.

"Late-Abolition Americas" (the U.S., Cuba, and Brazil) experience a profound discursive and affective disorientation similar to what Christopher Taylor refers to as processes of political unworlding, as opposed to world-making. In the Anglo-American context, by the 1850s the discourse and frameworks inherited from both British abolition and the interracial Immediatist era (or Second Wave) of Transatlantic abolition seemed to be dissolving before activists' eyes. Specifically, what I term the traditional antislavery meta-history begins to breakdown amidst the continued expansion of the slave system economically, spatially, geo-politically, and temporally. Inaugurated by early antislavery scions like Anthony Benezet and Thomas Clarkson, this meta-history posited slavery as an obsolete problem destined to be imminently superseded by the engine of modern progress, whose constituent factors include the moral awakening of public conscience, the spread of enlightened Christianity, and economic incentives that favor free labor, and non-agrarian industry over plantation slavery. As I lay out more extensively in my Introduction, the US crisis of the 1850s includes battles over territorial extension, debates over Cuban annexation, and intense struggles in the North against the enforcement of slave law. This conjuncture forced US abolitionists to reevaluate the key categories and attachments that grounded their political purposes, strategy, and even the pillars of their worldview (the moral nature of humanity and the universe, the direction of history or the lack thereof). This unworlding redounded upon most corners of the diverse coalition of US antislavery: white Evangelical moderates such as Stowe convert to a maximalist version of Immediatism; the stubborn pacifist adherents of Garrisonian nonresistance like Henry Wright Clark begin to publicly concede the need for slave insurrection;[100] the famous philanthropist and politician Gerrit Smith helps fund and coordinate John Brown's activities during the Border Wars and

[100] Henry C. Wright, "Resistance to Tyrants, Obedience to God," 218-219. See also Perry, 234-238.

before Harper's Ferry;[101] Black activists like William Wells Brown and Martin Delany contemplate the futility of seeking civil rights in the US and contemplate Black colonization abroad;[102] other Black intellectuals such as Douglass and James McCune Smith oscillate between despair and the need for new and more radical tactics. The actual events that unfolded far outran the discursive sphere, as witnessed in the consistent revolts against slave law, slave trading, Western expansion, and solidarity efforts for enslaved and fugitive Blacks.[103]

With the meta-historical crisis of antislavery discourse and Industrial Slavery in view, this chapter considers *Dred* as a literary exemplar of what I term "Polemical Anachronism." The discursive abolition of slavery was predicated upon anachronizing slavery – not only for ideological reasons (i.e. Christian morality repugnance or natural rights discourse), but also owing to the grossly "pre-modern" and "obsolete" status that political actors attributed to the peculiar institution. However, as my Introduction contends, the abolitionist rhetoric of temporality was transformed by historical circumstances: the intractable power of Industrial Slavery in the Late-Abolition Americas. Industrial Slavery expressed itself not only in the expressly economic aspects, such as the well-documented explosion of the domestic slave trade, financial activity and instruments related to slave-trading, developments in plantation agriculture and exports, and so on. The power of the "Second Slavery" also manifests in the events that forced American abolitionists to reevaluate their prospects and tactics, through laws that accommodated slave-holding, the civil war around territorial expansion, fantasies of slavery's imperial expansion, and the surging battles against enforcing the Fugitive Slave law. While abolitionists clung to inherited rhetoric and categories for apprehending and denouncing racial

[101] John Stauffer, *Black Hearts of Men*, 182-186 and 236-245.
[102] Martin Delany, Political Destiny of the Colored Race on the American Continent, 245-280 and Sinha, 330-338.
[103] Davis, *Age of Emancipation*, 127-143 and John L. Brooke. *There Is a North,* 202-229

slavery, the terminal crisis of slavery that truly begins in the mid-1850s forced many antislavery thinkers into grasping towards new methods of critique and representation.

Narrative fiction, a key vehicle for the antislavery campaign waged in the public sphere, offers an important vantage point into the rhetorical and artistic creativity of activist intellectuals amidst moments of world-historical crisis and uncertainty. In the US context, Harriet Beecher Stowe's second novel, *Dred,* exemplifies the power of Polemical Anachronism to take these often-contradictory imperatives and use narrative form as a vehicle for multi-faceted reflections on the historicity of slavery and antislavery. On the one hand, Polemical Anachronism launches an activist critique of an object on the basis of its temporal obsolescence, in line with the abolitionist tradition; on the other hand, the "polemical" aspect implies a reflexivity of this procedure, an awareness of the *limits* of this mode of critique. This second aspect illustrates the novel's shrewd engagement with political rhetoric and its historical conjuncture, the combination of which have overlooked by the existing scholarship. Polemical Anachronism does not naively repeat received discourse, but deploys it towards new strategical ends, adapting the inherited rhetoric to the epistemological and strategic short comings of the US anti-slavery movement. In other words, this form of literary critique not only anachronizes slavery, but also the shortcomings of abolitionist tactics, its misapprehension of slavery's decline, and effacement of the prospects of a "revolution from below"[104] and the possibility of Black self-government.

[104] This was the operative distinction in the period, for White and Black abolitionists. For example, in Emerson's celebrated "Address on the *Anniversary* of Emancipation in the British *West Indies"* (1844), he distinguishes "moral revolution" imposed from above by benevolent lawmakers and the specter of bloody insurrection (Haiti and US revolts from the 1820's, like Nat Turner, Vesey, and Gabriel Prosser). His faith in the power of "sentiment" and moral progress signals the "classical antislavery meta-history":

> "This event was a moral revolution. The history of it is before you. Here was no prodigy, no fabulous hero, no Trojan horse, no bloody war, but all was achieved by plain means of plain men, working not under a leader, but under a sentiment. Other revolutions have been the insurrection of the oppressed; this was the repentance of the tyrant. It was the masters revolting from their mastery. The slaveholder said, I will not hold slaves. The end was noble and the means were pure. Hence the elevation and pathos of this chapter of history" (*Collected Works* 164).

To anachronize slavery in 1855-56 was necessarily a different procedure than doing so in 1807, 1833, and even 1852 (the year of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*). Faith in the classical abolitionist meta-history seemed borne out by the US-British abolition of the slave trade (1807), the "Age of Revolutions" that abolished slavery in most of South America, the abolition of British and French colonial slavery (1804; 1834; 1848), and the global political struggles of 1848. Yet, as detailed above, by the mid-1850s it became progressively clear that US slavery was, at the very least, a "living anachronism" – and patently expanding in scope and power. If history itself appeared to deconstruct the binary between pre-modern slavery and fully-modern capitalist societies (or at least the certitude of the former's decline), anachronizing slavery remained an important rhetorical tool for abolitionists; but the changed epistemological, political, and material situation forces this rhetoric of history into a more performative and strategic posture. Providence and progress are still operative terms, necessary bases for historical subjects criticizing slavery. However, as Delany makes clear in *Blake*, the barbarous autarky of the intra-American slave trade is immanent to the modernity of US society, while the agent of progress must also be immanentized: Providence must be activated or woken up. Thus, in a moment when all signs point toward slavery's revitalization, slavery must be *rendered* pre-history in two mutually presupposing senses: turning it into a thing of the past requires the paradoxical task of registering it's actually-existing (and increasing) power while performatively staging its obsolescence in ways that necessarily draw on the inherited abolitionist corpus. As stated in Stowe's Preface to the US edition, slavery still poses "the great crisis of humanity [that] must now be answered" by the coming political events.(*Dred*, 3)[105] If her intervention hinges on the

See also my discussion of Douglass's "1848" speech in my Introduction,

[105] Much scholarship dubiously oversimplifies the scale of this crisis and subsequently *Dred*'s political scope to local events such as the Presidential election of 1856, movements to amend state law, and Western expansion. David Grant, "Stowe's Dred and the Narrative Logic of Slavery's Extension"; Jeannine Marie Delombard, "Representing

power of literary imagination to contribute to activist self-clarification and polemicize against slavery— her intention is to expose the "true character" of the "system of slavery" (4) – how does *Dred* imagine "reactivating" Providence and relegating Industrial Slavery to pre-history?

My interpretation will show how Stowe's novel deploys multiple iterations of Polemical Anachronism, spanning three modes of abolitionist polemic that offer different answers to this vital question of this conjuncture: the first represents traditional anachronizing of slavery, the second an activist auto-critique, and a radical (and ultimately over-determined) speculative poetics. I do not locate this rhetorical complexity exclusively or even primarily in terms of content, but largely within the novel's notoriously unwieldy formal structure. Each iteration or moment of Polemical Anachronism corresponds to a constellation of character system and narrative discourse that predominates at different, roughly chronological sections of the novel, with the successive mode emerging from the limits of the previous one until it breaks down. Nina's **conversion narrative** (roughly, Volume I of the novel) highlights the world-making possibilities of the traditional abolitionist meta-history; her abrupt death that briefly places Edward Clayton at the center throws the novel into the **antislavery crucible** (the first half of Vol. II), a series of crises that reveal the degree to which the tactics and ideas of the White reformers have become dangerously out of date. In form and tone, I read this unworlding in light of the historical conjuncture laid out above. Within the resulting negative space of despair and irony, a speculative mode that I term **fugitive primitivism** culminates in a radically different vision for making slavery pre-history (the second half of Vol II); it posits a literary world

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the Slave: White Advocacy and Black Testimony in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Dred*"; Korobkin, Laura H. "Appropriating Law in Harriet Beecher Stowe's Dred."

While these issues are undoubtedly crucial components of the stage in which *Dred* intervenes, I endeavor to show how the Stowe's text has much greater political, moral, and intellectual ambitions.

wherein the enslaved short-circuit racist discourse and emerge as agents of a revolution from below.

At first glance, the temporal politics of *Dred* are so omnipresent that readers have scarcely bothered to notice them. The most basic level of what I call Polemical Anachronism — the rhetorical denunciation of slavery on the basis of its objective, historical obsolescence and atavistic social effects — occurs on every conceivable diegetic level. On the very first page, the author justifies writing a second novel about the "scenes and incidents from the slave-holding states" by the aesthetic opportunities that spring from the antagonism between modern and pre-modern social worlds: "In the near vicinity of modern civilization of the most matter-of-fact kind exist institutions which carry us back to the twilight of the feudal ages, with all their exciting possibilities of incident" (3). On numerous occasions, the narrative discourse makes even more emphatic declamations about "Southern backwardness" when setting up characters and situations:

> Slave labor, of all others the most worthless and profitless, had exhausted the first vigor of the soil, and the proprietors gradually degenerated from those habits of energy which were called forth by the necessities of the first settlers (37)

Similar sentiments are echoed in the dialogue of the broad spectrum of characters, free and enslaved, pro-slavery and anti-slavery. For example, Edward Clayton observes that "the kind of society which is built up [on the basis of slave labor] constantly tends to run back towards barbarism" (152), while the buffoonish planter "Uncle John" Gordon draws on Southern ideologies about the ravages of capitalism: "Just compare the free working classes with our slaves! Dear me! the blindness of people in this world!" (219). In other moments, the autarky-inducing effects of slavery are discussed by a black plantation manager and a creole planter.

While the rhetoric of anachronism is not the only weapon in Stowe's literary arsenal, the novel has such temporal language ready to hand and consistently invokes it in an effort to literally make slavery into pre-history.

It will become clear how *Dred* takes this foundational form of Polemical Anachronism as its point of departure in order to unfold other forms of Polemical Anachronism that challenge and complexify the classical rhetorical move of casting slavery as pre-modern and immoral. This will be illustrated by other layers of the novel that formalize different interventions, for example, Clayton's model of abolitionism as becomes obsolete, while "primitivism" becomes a potential site for the activation of historical progress. The "polemical" aspect of Polemical Anachronism, however, suggests that the temporal engagements of the novel are more sophisticated than the moral and social teleology that underpins the traditional abolitionist meta-history. Each form of Polemical Anachronism (PA I, PA II, PA III) corresponds to a setting and character configuration that is roughly in line with chronology of *Dred*. Despite some overlap in personae and problems, each iteration reflects markedly different senses of the historical present and its actualities/potentialities – the upper and lower limits of political subjects and the object of their critique. The progression I set out should be read less as a teleological progression, from naïve to demystified ideology, and more as a textual performance of the agility and ingenuity of radical intellectuals grappling with the onrush of critical historical events amidst the struggle against Industrial Slavery. What I call PA I is not discarded, so much as interrogated and supplemented by other literary-rhetorical models.

My analysis begins with the novel's only successful conversion to abolition (the ironic "Marriage Plot" that binds Nina to Edward) in order to assay the contours and upper limits of the foundational mode of abolitionist Polemical Anachronism (abbreviated as PA I). I show how the

character system and point of view in Nina's trajectory dramatize a politics of time that pertains not only to political and economic ideology; it also constitutes an act of world (re)making, an ascension to a "modernity" that implies spiritual, moral, and metaphysical precepts (what Clayton refers to as "the highest ideas of good," 261). PA I centers on Nina's relation to Edward and the initial setting of the plantation context, which begins as a satirical Southern marriage tale and swerves into her "conversion" to abolitionism. No longer a satirical archetype, Nina becomes the maximal heroine of the sentimental reform novel: Christian poet of the ordinary, pedagogue to her "lowly" slaves, a "new mother" to her plantation dependents martyred by cruel circumstances. I read this development from a flat archetype into a "round" protagonist and political subject as a tribute to the possibilities of the classical abolitionist meta-history that (as the subsequent Polemical Anachronism suggest) is no longer available to antislavery radicals: beyond reformist politics, her "rebirth" suggests how classical abolitionism coincides with a specific moral, spiritual, and metaphysical remaking of US plantation society.

PA II develops through Edward's failures to attain reform on any scale after Nina's death, underscoring the dangers of stubbornly letting political worlds expire or lapse amidst historical change. Through events of the plot and an increasingly ironic point of view, the narrative inverts the previous move toward rounding and sincerity; eventually, the narrative discourse uses Edward's own ironized thoughts and actions to mark his abolitionist way of seeing as outdated and racially exclusive. This process begins early in Volume II, after Edward is drawn into the "antislavery crucible" after attempting to mediate between the fraternal master-slave strife of the Gordon brothers, both of whom expose the inadequacy of Edward's tactics and theory. As this antagonism precipitates new challenges and roiling hostility to his plans, the narrative point of view gradually detaches from Edward: as his previous successes are undone by

the plot, his rhetoric and decisions increasingly register as mechanistic, outdated, and impotent. The agents of this are the fugitive slave Harry Gordon becomes a new political subject and his gothic double, Tom Gordon, who emerges as an avatar for the zombie-like tenacity of Industrial Slavery (most notably through his role in the thriving and sophisticated domestic slave trade and the hyper-exploitation of plantation workers in the cotton empire). In short, his defeat at the hands of the slavocracy plays out the dangers in misreading the modernity of slavery, while his subordination to Harry suggest the abolition must be a "revolution from below." The character system aligns with the crisis of White abolition circa 1856. If the main rhetorical and strategic arsenal of classical abolition become anachronized (e.g., the power of moral persuasion, immediatist invective, and plans to take over the legal arena in the slaveholding states) this critique (PA II) fails to provide any explicit or implicit positive supplement. The political subject and world anachronized by Volume II does not have an obvious successor: who, the novel asks, given the social panorama of the mid-1850s US, can ignite the social revolution needed to relegate Industrial Slavery to the dustbin of history? However, the tail end of Edward's trajectory points to another realm of literary critique in the ascension of Harry as a political subject after he escapes to the Great Swamp to join Dred. This relay between protagonists and setting – out of the plantation and into the swamps – leads to another constellation of time and rhetoric that provides a final, speculative, revision of the traditiona; antislavery world.

The final form of Polemical Anachronism, which I term Fugitive Primitivism, short-circuits the initial process by exploring the emergence of a *Black subject* to challenge the abolitionist's object, the atavistic power of Industrial Slavery. In form and content, the chapters detailing Dred and his fugitive character system suggest that atavistic modernity of Industrial Slavery (which has colonized the realm of law, civil society, and trade) unwittingly produces a

collective subject, a commune of radical black dissidents. As violence and chaos escalates in the wake Nina's death and Clayton's defeat, the narrative moves into the ambiguous world of the black conspirators in the Dismal Swamp. Following Ben Etherington's reconstruction of "literary primitivism,"[106] I read the Preface's distinction between two racialized "styles of existence" and slavery's connection "Romance" to account for how "primitivism" is resignified; the paradoxical modernity of slavery produces maroon insurgents, agents of progress characterized by apparent economic, anthropological, and theological archaisms. Fugitive Primitivism emerges once Dred's character solidifies and his commune blossoms into a new type of character system, distinct from the "zero-sum" logic of the rest of the novel. In the narrative discourse, a primitive idiom serves to construct the Swamp (and Dred) as a site of mysterious vitality, with his commune becoming both a primitive church-polity that resolves the antinomies of the plantation sphere (moral, democratic, spiritual, and economic) and a cell for revolutionary activity. The primitivism attributed to the social structure of black peasant self-government negates the "apprenticeship plantation" advocated by gradual abolitionists like Clayton. The prominent black male agents of the commune (Harry, Tiff, Dred, and others) evince a cooperative, non-capitalist form of social reproduction and their commune includes key female characters and plantation hands who do not speak elsewhere in the novel.

While Fugitive Primitivism speculates on another resolution to the crisis of the 1850s, the plot and narrative structure also suggest why *Dred* famously stops short of offering a full counterfactual story of slave insurrection. The rescue of Clayton from Tom Gordon suggests that one function of Engedi is to culminate the critique of white abolitionist indifference to black agency. As Martha Schoolman and others have argued, the eponymous character undoubtedly

[106] Ben Etherington, *Literary Primitivism*, 9-10.

functions in part as a "black avenger" figure, with the specter of black violence invoked rhetorically as a plea for the "repentance of the tyrant" (in Emerson's phrase).[107] However, the unique character structure of the Engedi chapters suggest that the novel is at the very least *ambivalent* about the prospects, if not the immanence, of marronage and rebellion to furnish a political subject capable of challenging the plantation sphere in a way Edward and Nina cannot. As Edward and his fellow-traveler Father Dickson falter, a collective subject emerges from the narrator's primitivizing discourse, the character economy, and the dialectic of primitivized subject and object (plantation and commune). Despite the hesitation about the tactical and moral prospects of a "frontal assault" on the slavocracy, Fugitive Primitivism and its strategic constellation of race and anti-capitalist politics represent one way that Industrial Slavery can be challenged by a collective black subject that is already beginning to lead and govern itself. Even though Dred's insurrection falters at the level of plot, *Dred* strategically uses primitivism to underscore the fact that radically egalitarian forms of black self-government are an engine and ultimate horizon for the antislavery movement – a vanguard of the Abolitionist International.[108] While Engedi clearly functions as a cautionary tale to white elites, it is also a utopian gesture mobilizes the "primitive" to imagine how the self-emancipation of the enslaved can produce a world outside of racial capitalism.

As stated earlier, the ultimate formal and political outcomes of *Dred*'s overdetermined, late-abolitionist politics of time are indeterminate. Its often-challenging reading experience thus performs important rhetorical work. The constant shifts in the formal architecture that elaborate the three iterations of PA – character systems, points of view, plot trajectory, and narrative discourse – culminate in a paradox: the activist aspirations of the novel that most directly seek to

[107] See Notes 87 and 103.
[108] Sinha, 339; Maria Karafilias, "Spaces of Democracy in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Dred*," 24.

intervene against slavery (most directly in PA I) are thoroughly complicated and overdetermined by the other self-critical and speculative modes of anachronism (PA II and PA III). The reader follows the careful implosion of a range of white reformist tactics and rhetoric, followed by an infinite deferral of the maroon insurrection, leading to an unsatisfying *deus ex machina* in which narrative resolution is mediated by the Underground Railroad. The jarring shifts in the formal paradigms of narration, character, genre, and setting produce a notoriously uneven texture and unsatisfying diegetic outcomes that frustrate readerly expectations about novelistic form and political messaging. My Conclusion will interpret this diegetic closure and formal coherence as performing the activist-intellectual labor of trying to respond in real-time to political crises of the moment. Experiment is balanced by strategy; older forms of literary critique coexist alongside the new as the novel narrate the necessity of slavery's abolition amidst the actuality of its continuity. In the first instance, then, the increasing prominence of *Dred* in recent decades must be accounted for by its commitment to balancing impossible radical agendas: anachronzing slavery while registering its modernity, positing a necessary black collective subject while leaving open the potential for reform. But more ambitiously, the novel also explores the process of political creativity that generates new solutions when faced with the impossibility of their realization. Attention to the temporal engagements of the text reveal how the meta-historical crisis of US slavery both challenged and radicalized antislavery thinkers – the *ne plus ultra* being the series of climaxes and unsatisfactory resolutions to *Dred*, which formally restage the process of activists grasping towards new polemical weapons in the face of overwhelming and indeterminate circumstances. The progression of Polemical Anachronisms modeled in different sections of *Dred* is a testament to the dynamism and creativity of activist intellectuals, even when they are unable to settle on a specific, coherent strategy.

II: The Conversion Saga

At the outset of *Dred*, the reader is introduced to Nina Gordon as a flat archetype, the careless Plantation Belle of a plantation novel. Stowe's choice to begin an antislavery novel with an indulgent replaying of Southern popular melodrama has perplexed critics: the opening twelve chapters are largely ignored or read as aberrational instances of the "real" substance of *Dred.*[109] But careful attention to narratological and diegetic function of the "marriage plot" reveal that it is an important instance of polemical anachronism: Nina initially functions as the *object* of the critique of the temporal backwardness of antebellum Southern elite culture.[110] The opening chapter introduces the reader to Nina's naivety and materialism, her aristocratic distaste for work, and her subsequent blindness to important truths about slavery's moral and economic consequences. In an emblematic tableau, her enslaved plantation-manager (and half-brother) Harry tries pull Nina away from the mirror and into the dire ledgers of her plantation:

> "Bills, Harry? —Yes.—Dear me, where are they?—There!—No. Here? —Oh, look!—What do you think of this scarf? Isn't it lovely?"
>
> "Yes, Miss Nina, beautiful—but—"
>
> Oh, those bills!—Yes—well, here goes—here—perhaps in this box. No—that's my opera-hat…." (*Dred,* 5)

This passage literalizes the trope of the materialistic and child-like Southern mistress to an almost absurd degree, substituting the bills necessary to calculate Canema's ledger for objects of conspicuous consumption (imported fabrics and ostentatious hats). This episode encodes an

[109] Levine, "Introduction to *Dred,*" xviii-xix, Schoolman Op. Cit., and Sundquist.; and all explain this as either aberration or proof of Stowe's reactionary politics.

[110] Hence, the satirical intonations of the title of the first chapter, "The Mistress of Canema." The associations of slaveholding in and "pre-modern" social relations (whether aristocratic, feudal, Roman, or some combination thereof) was a staple of classical abolitionist discourse that migrated into early historiography on slavery. For example, Eugene Genovese, *Roll Jordan Roll*, 3-7 and 113-123.

anachronizing critique of the "pre-modern" work ethic and economic backwardness of the Southern Elite: "And what's the use?" she complains to Harry, "When money's spent, it's spent; and keeping accounts ever so strict won't get it back" (13). Her would-be suitor Clayton makes the same point in his opening dialogue with the cynical pragmatist Frank Russel, specifying her crass materialism, lack of cultivation, and status as "flirt and coquette" (20). Initially satirized in this way, Nina's flatness mediates the novel's instance of Polemical Anachronism (PA I).

But this shallow character status[111] is challenged as the Marriage Plot swerves into a proto-feminist apprenticeship in anti-slavery amelioration. Even as these early chapters shore up the reader's picture of Nina as an object of antislavery critique, they also imply that her status might change. Her juggling of three suitors suggests an inchoate shrewdness and desire for autonomy, while Clayton has become infatuated with transforming Nina's "wholly unawakened nature." In contrast to Nina's own marriage plot, Edward has designs to draw out the "freshness and truth" latent in her, to apprentice her just as his plantation endeavors to "rais[e] [enslaved] men and women" (24). However, I will argue that the marriage plot and Nina's engagement to Edward shift into another story that will predominate the first half of *Dred*: an account of a precocious woman's conversion to the feminist-adjacent movement of the Antebellum era, abolition. Nina's relation to Edward functions as an instance of mimetic desire:[112] Edward

[111] My deployment of Forster's flat/round distinction is routed through Alex Woloch's refinement of the terms as expressions of the character system of a narrative text in *The One and the Many* (2004). Throughout, when I invoke developments in characterization and character-systems, I lean on Woloch's zero-sum conception of "character-space (that particular and charged encounter between an individual human personality and a determined space and position within the narrative as a whole)" and the "character-system (the arrangement of multiple and differentiated character-spaces—differentiated configurations and manipulations of the human figure—into a unified narrative structure)" (14). In Nina's case, her character-space will extend over the course of the novel as she moves from being defined by a pre-determined, narrow set of *characteristics* into a dynamic and complex protagonist. Departing from Woloch, I insist that part of *Dred*'s originality and formal incongruity is its proliferation of multiple character-systems, rather than a unitary character-logic that subsumes the text as a whole. This may be one reason, among other, for the often-frustrating reading experience discussed above.

[112] The term comes from Rene Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, 2. My contention can be countered in passages that suggest a "long-game" conquest: "He knew perfectly that his best chance, with a nature so restless as Nina's, was to keep up a sense of perfect freedom in all their intercourse" (286). But since Nina becomes a near-double to

mediates her ascension to an autonomous political subject, a process that coincides with the remaking of her world by the antislavery cause.

Two important turning points in the plot mark Nina's steps out of the realm of the flat coquette and the anachronized plantation sphere. The first stages a psychological transformation of her orientation towards the plantation and her future status therein. In "the Preparation" chapter, Nina encounters Old Tiff, the Tom-ish loyal slave of Sue Cripps, a just-deceased Virginia heiress whose marriage to a poor white huckster led to a tragic descent into squalor and abjection. Hearing the details of her death and Tiff's plea for material aid, Nina identifies with the image of the abject and dishonored young woman; as she explains her choice to help the Cripps family, Nina describes Sue as a "beautiful" figure, "just another wild girl as I am, and thought as little about bad times, as I do" (104). Next to the solidarity with the rebellious dead mother resides a more materialist epiphany: that the increasingly unprofitable Canema (revealed in the opening dialogue) may well lead to her own descent into landless pauperdom. Economic insolvency characterizes the plantations connected with the Gordons (Canema, Uncle John's Farm, Magnolia Grove, Belleville) and thus appears to Nina as a literal "road to serfdom" — which in part accounts for her horror when faced with Aunt Nesbitt's contempt toward "white trash" like the Cripps family.[113] Thus, the dangers of losing personal autonomy via marriage are conjoined to the volatile, socially retardant temporality of the plantation sphere for the first time. At this point in Nina's development she still leans on her trusted men to explain the significance:

Anne Clayton and a sentimental "mother" to her dependents, the marriage plot should more accurately be read as a Shlovskyian device, whose telos is her rebirth as an abolitionist subject in her own right.

[113] The novel follows antislavery discourse of the time in emphasizing poor Whites as degraded to the level of virtual slaves by, on the one hand, the ruinous economic consequences of Southern political economy for poor Whites (land monopoly and lack of social resources like schools); and on the other, the compensatory "wages of whiteness" that compensate actual immiseration with immaterial/legal status, fantasies of social mobility/slave acquisition, and participation in surveillance institutions (slave patrols, etc.). See W.E.B. Dubois, *Black Reconstruction*, 17-31.

in this case, Harry makes the link between gendered oppression and the volatility endemic to economic autarky:

> I shouldn't wonder if an uneducated girl, who had never been off a plantation, might have liked [the Tom Cripps]; he was fully equal, I dare say, to her brothers. You see, Miss Nina, when *money* goes, in this part of the country, everything goes with it; and when a family is not rich enough to have everything in itself, it goes down very soon (108)

In this exchange, Aunt Nesbitt swaps places with Nina to become a grotesque putrification of the Southern belle archetype. The concluding scene of Edward showing up unannounced to deliver the funeral rites similarly substitutes the Marriage Plot for a Conversion narrative: no longer a flat, tawdry caricature, the body of Sue Cripps serves as a vanishing mediator as Nina becomes a round and self-aware subject.

The pressure of the plot soon escalates, forcing Nina to act in the name of ameliorating the violence of slavery – a deepening of her point of view as a character that coincides with taking the vows of antislavery politics. Right after the marriage quadrangle implodes Nina's brother Tom (the main diegetic engine of *Dred*) returns to reassert his power in the wake of his humiliating disinheritance (caused by his own "degeneration" into voracious greed, alcohol and other vices). Upon arrival, he tries to claim an incestuous mastery over his sister by, "catching her round the waist, and drawing her to his knee" (136). The stakes of this displacement of ruinous husband into a ruinous brother are sharply raised when Tom Gordon makes clear his other intention: to extend the dishonor to his enslaved half-brother, Harry, who was favored by their common father and is solely responsible for keeping the plantation out of insolvency.[114]

[114] Early on, Harry confesses to his wife Lisette that the deceased Colonel Gordon wrote a manumission provision into his will, but that Harry has remained in slavery out of filial love in order to see that Canema doesn't go bankrupt. Once Nina marries a man who can assume these duties, Harry intends to sue for emancipation. As we see, these plans go terribly wrong very quickly, starting with his half-brother's abrupt introduction (52-60).

Unable to purchase Harry, Tom Gordon seizes on the idea of buying Lisette, Harry's "beautiful quadroon wife" his own sadistic purposes — a threat of loss and emasculation that leaves Harry apoplectic (144-145). Faced with this naked display of the barbaric potential of slavery and slave-dealing, Nina makes a promise to Harry that marks the final inversion of her initial status: with Lisette's life and Harry's honor on the line, Nina pleas: "Trust to *me*. I'm not so much of a child as I have seemed to be! You'll find I can act for myself, and you too!" (145-146). This gesture is literally and symbolically performative: the speech act declares her commitment to an antislavery action, her first step as a political subject (manumitting Lisette preemptively); more concretely, it summons another mediating character who has the money and legal expertise to realize the promise: "Mr. Clayton" returns unannounced through the shrubbery (ibid). This speech act and catalyzing wish-fulfillment set off a process of narratological and political transformation that extends her initial, filial promise to all enslaved people – eventually allowing Nina to kick away the ladder of her paternalistic suitor-mediator.

This process of conversion from political object into subject, flat into round character, culminates in Nina anachronizing and negating the plantation society that reared her. The conclusion of the manumission episode highlights how coming-to-abolition marks an instance radical world(re)making. Edward and Nina rush off to the Belville plantation to preemptively purchase Lisette from her owner, Madame Le Clere, a "New Orleans creole" planter who was a friend of Nina's father. Focalized through Nina's point of view, she nostalgically recalls Belville as the residence of an "ancient rich family," a "perfect paradise — full of the most agreeable people" (149; 150). Her encounter with the plantation's state of decay generates a rich poetics of anachronized space, as rich childhood memories are punctured by the squalor and stagnation of the landscape: the first sight of the "dilapidated gateway, the crushed and broken shrubbery, the

gaps in the fine avenue [of trees]" leave Nina "uncomfortably struck with the air of poverty, waste, and decay, everywhere conspicuous through the grounds" (149). The use of free-indirect discourse adds a sense of phenomenological immediacy to the staged disillusionment of Nina's memories of Southern grandeur and stability.[115] Nina's interiority has swollen and subordinated other characters (Edward, Harry, Lisette, Le Clere) and even the landscape to her conversion narrative. This culminates a radical redistribution of "character space" that began with the opening marriage plot.[116]

After they purchase Lisette from the destitute Madame Le Clere, Nina articulates her sympathetic criticism of fellow female planter in terms of Polemical Anachronism, conflating economic waste with a failure of white moral apprenticeship:

> "everything [at Belville] is left in the second future tense; and the darkeys, I imagine, have a general glorification in the chaos. She is one of the indulgent sort, and I suspect she'll be eaten up by them like the locusts" (151).

While far from radical in racial ideology and "protestant work ethic," Nina's confrontation with what she takes to be an actually-existing social anachronism – literalized in her observation about the social grammar of the squalid manor – implies two crucial developments. First, in *Dred* the rich and deep interiority characteristic of round characters is contingent upon professed antislavery sympathies. After the plunge into Nina's memory and present-time consciousness

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[115] As Michael McKeon notes, for theorists of the novel free indirect discourse represents "arguably the most important technical innovation" of the novel from the eighteenth century on, insofar as this technique allows narrative works to delve into new psychological and epistemological questions (e.g., the projection of a character's interiority, personality, or perspective). "Introduction" to *Theory of the Novel*: *A Historical Approach* (xvi). However, my usage here is more informed by Woloch and Hayot's social formalism.
Genette Gerard provides a helpful definition of the technique: "in free indirect speech, the narrator takes on the speech of the character, or, if one prefers, character speaks through the voice of the narrator, and the two instances are then merged; in immediate speech, the narrator is obliterated and the character substitutes for him" (*Narrative Discourse*, 174)

[116] Alex Woloch, *The One and the Many,* 51 and 97-103.

occasioned by the “desolate” Belville manor, the young heiress confesses “I don't believe in slavery!" (152). Second, Nina’s ascension to a rounded protagonist expresses her adoption of a temporally-coded, modern form of consciousness. For example, the abstract space of slave states acquires the same phenomenological retrogressiveness as Belville:

> I noticed it all the way down through Virginia. It seems as if everything had stopped growing, and was going backwards…. [by contrast] these Yankees turn everything to account. If a man's field is covered with rock, he'll find some way to sell it, and make money out of it... (151-152).

More than simply rebelling against or protecting specific enslaved characters, Nina’s relation to the plantation society that reared her has radically changed. This dynamic continues throughout the course of the novel. For instance, in a much later group debate scene, her Uncle John (a caricature of the lazy, incompetent Southern planter that Nina once embodied) questions the role of young ladies in political debates about reform or amelioration. Nina caustically responds that her vocation consists in “enlightening dull, sleepy old gentlemen, who never travelled out of the state they were born in, and don't know what can be done. I come as a missionary to them…” (219-220). Nina’s conversion to abolition not only remakes her character status and beliefs, but also reorients our hero’s relation to her own time-space. She emerges as a political agent and theorist evangelizing the abolitionist cause with a view to pulling the South into modernity.

Abolitionism implies much more than the adoption of a better ideology or “good politics.” In fact, it presupposes an entire remaking of the world – spiritually, morally, practically, and even metaphysically. The distinction is important, as it implies that whatever her local ideological shortcomings may be Nina’s journey in Volume I of *Dred* illustrates a maximalist abolitionism, the potential for a reconstructed and egalitarian sphere of modernity or

progress within a realm of autarky and barbarism.[117] Unsurprisingly for Stowe, Nina's maximalism is articulated through the metaphorical displacement of motherhood-wifedom into a series of sentimental roles: Christian poet of the ordinary, pedagogue to the "lowly" slaves, and "new mother" to her plantation dependents. The final mediating agent and characterological bridge is Edward's unmarried sister Anne, co-partner in the Magnolia Grove apprenticeship plantation and an exemplar of quasi-maternal values such as selfless devotion to others. During their first meeting, Anne formulates Polemical Anachronism as a mysterious principle of Southern being: "it's really a mystery to me what a constant *downward tendency* there is to everything—how everything is *gravitating back*, as you may say, into disorder" (320; emphasis added). This observation elevates Nina's intuition about regional temporality to the level of metaphysics, actualizing the abolitionist meta-history as a kind of cosmographical axiom. With her "views somewhat chastened and modified by her acquaintance with Anne," Nina begins teaching Old Tiff (who has taken residence near Canema) how to read using the King James Bible (331). By allowing Tiff to "receive this fresh revelation," Nina herself enters into a "great transition" centered on a rebirth in the face of "this beautiful and spotless image of God, revealed in man" (344). As Gail Smith notes, Nina's increasing literacy and intellectual autonomy marks an intervention in Antebellum debates over women's literacy and (more importantly) the perils of teaching slaves how to read and implies Nina's admission into a "interpretive community" (antislavery reformers, in this case).[118] This "worlding process" is redoubled by the power of reading Scripture, in particular, to reorient her sense of moral behavior, the cosmic implications

[117] One implication of this reading is that it allows us to at least temporarily bracket an ideology-critical reading of *Dred*. Rather than focus on the "bourgeois" subjectivity of its author (e.g. the free labor discourse), it attunes us to the potentiality latent in this instance of Polemical Anachronism. For readings of bourgeois ideology *Dred*, see Rachel N. Klein, "Harriet Beecher Stowe and the Domestication of Free Labor Ideology" and Michaels Op Cit.
[118] "Reading with the Other," 292.

of slavery/freedom, and the direction if historical time itself. Her experience of taking her "missionary" work out of the parlors and into the slave cabins results in a spiritual awakening, abolition providing the key to living a truly Christian life. Nina's trajectory thus crystallizes the famous ecclesiastical and theological arguments of the text: teaching a slave to read the Bible opens up an encounter with the higher law gospel that refutes pro-slavery theological and ecclesiastical hypocrisies.[119] The spirit of reformism invalidates even the most expert pro-slavery manipulators of the letter of Scripture.

Having remade the world in an abolitionist image, Nina's martyrdom fittingly caps off the conversion narrative. If free indirect discourse (in the Belville episode) registers an important the moment in Nina's ascending character-status, the epistolary mode deployed in "The Morning Star" chapter charts the depths of this new world just as it registers the extent to which her character has engulfed much of the narrative text. In her lengthy, effusive letter to Clayton, Nina articulates the worlding effect of her conversion:

> Everything is changed; and it is the beauty of Christ that has changed it. You know I always loved beauty above all things, in music, in nature, and in flowers; but it seems to me that I see something now in Jesus more beautiful than all. It seems as if all these had been shadows of beauty, but *he* is the substance. It is strange, but I have a sense of him, his living and presence, that sometimes almost overpowers me (346).

The divine substance in question is both the result and new ground of the abolitionist as maternal pedagogue, advocate, and visionary. As the exemplary convert to abolition, Nina's remade

[119] Kevin Pelletier, *Apocalyptic Sentimentalism*, 132-144; Hickman, 373-376.
Mark Noll has demonstrated the extent to which even Evangelical abolitionists eventually conceded to the opposition regarding the pro-slavery arguments of the Bible by the 1850s, by which time radicals such as Garrisonians had rejected the theological and ecclesiastic struggle of Anglo-American Christianity. Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*, 386-401 and Perry, Op. Cit.

character represents a *tribute* to the possibilities to how this temporalized (modern) form of consciousness leads to redrawn material, spiritual, and philosophical axes of the world. Having risen from caricature to quasi-saint, this trajectory culminates in an appropriate martyrdom. As the cholera pandemic threatens Canema and surrounding plantations, Nina refuses to flee and extends the promise of protection to everyone on the plantation; as she explains to a surprised Clayton, "Don't you know that I'm mistress of the fortress here—commander-in-chief and head-physician?" (376). This gesture leads to that infamous trope of antebellum popular fiction, the sentimental death-bed scene: "I think I'm called!" she said. "Oh, I'm so sorry for you all! Don't grieve so; my Father loves me so well, —he cannot spare me any longer. He wants me to come to him. That's all—don't grieve so. It's *home* I'm going to—*home*!" (380). Fittingly, the woman Harry refers to as his "angel" receives the saintly sendoff reserved for special characters. Nina's conversion and eventual martyrdom delimit the maximal, upper-limits of classical abolition: anachronizing the Old-World hold-over of slavery becomes the precondition for making a new world with new foundations "where all are equal" on Earth as well as Heaven (368).

The resonance of this climax with the famous death of Little Eva in Stowe' previous novel raises the inevitable important question: do scenes such as this one in *Dred* simply replay *Uncle Tom's Cabin*? The outward resemblances are surely remarkable: like the "missionary" in *Dred*, the Le Clare child is dubbed "little Evangelist" — doubly prophetic insofar as her famous death not only "converts" the Le Clares but arguably thousands of sympathetic readers with a famous injunction: "I want you to remember that there is a beautiful world, where Jesus is. I am going there, and you can go there... But, if you want to go there, you must not live idle, careless, thoughtless lives. You must be Christians" (*Cabin,* 104). Eva's death serves as a beacon of the Christian spirit that converts her slave-owning father and inspires Tom and others to keep their

submissive faith long after her death. But Nina was herself the convert and her premature death only emboldens the conflicts that will lead to the victory of the slaving class, with the return and re-enfranchisement of Tom Gordon. If anything, Sue Cripps earlier deathbed scene more closely tracks Eva's, as it inspires the Tom-ish Old Tiff to remain in the service of the family after her death, whereas Nina's death breaks the last tie holding Harry to the plantation. What's more, the death comes as a surprising reversal, immediately following her the apex of her protagonist powers —unlike the subordinate and symbolic roles of Sue Cripps and Eva in the two novels' character economies.

Both the recapitulation of the trope and their marked differences suggest a more complex process of retrospection and critical revision at work in *Dred*. One meta-literary figure for this process are the "Harriets" and "Harrys" in each novel: in *Cabin*, Harriet is what fugitive Eliza dubs her cross-dress disguised son Harry to aid their journey north, a tongue-in-cheek nod to the author herself. The slippage between female author and resistant slave the now-recognized strategy of female leadership in social movements like abolition functioning in part as a proxy for proto-feminist emancipation[120] (recall the substitution of marriage plot for conversion narrative). However, in *Dred*, this meta-literary tribute and the political gesture implied are drastically revised. The second "Harry" remains in border-state bondage and eventually fights back; Nina's beloved and deceased *Aunt Harriet* is eventually revealed to have systematically sold off all of her "Aunt" Milly's children in an episode that viscerally dramatizes the unthinkable sexual-filial trauma the domestic trade exacts upon enslaved women. Why would Stowe reverse this dyad, lending her name to a white slave owner who terrorizes such a sympathetic figure as Milly? It is as if the author's former sense of insurgent confidence has

[120] Gillian Brown. *Domestic Individualism*, Chapter 1 and Sinha, 277-288.

given way to an acknowledgement of complicity in present-day systems of violence. Insofar as this revelation helps Nina revise her own sense of the plantation as such and her specific role as a planter, it also suggests the complex revisions of Stowe's political and artistic self-conception in the wake of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*[121]

A more precise account of these revisions would account for how the novel registers the historical discrepancies, the extent to which 1856 is not 1850 (the year Cabin was started in response to the Missouri Compromise) or 1852 (the year it was published). This is where the becomes an important sentimental death trope barometer. To the extent that Nina represents a *tribute* to the upper limit possibilities of the conversion to abolition *qua* spatiotemporal world-remaking, her sudden death retroactively marks a diegetic and political boundary of sorts. With the rise of Tom Gordon and Harry Gordon's refusal to recognize his brother as master, the potentiality of older abolitionist world craft now carries a sense of distance and nostalgia. The powerful sentimental iconology of little Eva has been resignifed into a eulogy for an abolitionist world-craft that is no longer available amidst the financial power linked to the slave trade and its legal apparatus. This first death marks a hopeful omen of the *future* for the antislavery movement, a shibboleth of faith in the twin engines of the power of sensibility to move hearts and the power of reform (legal and extra-legal) to move slaves out of bondage and to reinscribe the letter of the law in accordance with its spirit. Its redoubling in Nina's signals a newfound sense of belatedness to this approach to abolition, relocating it in a recent but inaccessible *past*. This redoubling and its diegetic prematurity deflate the trope in order to mark the end of an era: the politics of sensibility and faith in the spatiotemporal cosmos of the antislavery movement has

[121] Levine, *Representative Identity*, 200.

died a quiet death, unable to keep up with the changing shape of slave-power and the exigencies of a new situation.

Read this way, Nina's premature death signals the limits of and obsolescence of this elite-led mode of abolition by the mid-1850s. The fact that it was predicted – if not effected – by the fugitive slave Dred suggests that one fissure comes from below. But more important to the plot will be the fissures in this model of abolition that come laterally, from other white elites: case in point, Nina's final injunction to Edward – "Edward, take care of my poor people. Tell Tom to be kind to them" – is met with immediate failure several pages later, when Tom Gordon's lawyer refuses to recognize the manumission provision for Harry in Colonel Gordon's will (381; 385). This dual-front assault against the Nina-Edward model of abolition becomes a critical concern of Volume II of *Dred*. As such, the second trajectory and character system I examine will constitute an anachronizing auto-critique of antislavery theory and tactics. Edward becomes the test subject in the diegetic crucible, which works by inverting the conversion narrative to ironize and flatten out the white abolitionist who refuses to adapt theory or practice in the midst of a new balance of literary and political powers.

III: Edward's Deflation Crisis

The second instance of Polemical Anachronism emerges fully in Volume II, staging the breakdown and obsolescence of classical abolitionist world-building. Negative and critical rather than affirmative, these sections of the novel generate a new character system which will push the classical abolitionist world and strategy to its limits in the face of a combination of material, institutional, and political forces (Industrial Slavery). In contrast to the previous instance of steadily expanding anachronization and world-building, the antislavery crucible section dissolves and neutralizes classical abolitionist theory and practice. I argue that this section of the novel

(roughly the middle of Volume II) performs the unmaking of Nina's abolitionist world via the twin engines of Industrial Slavery and black struggles from below, which dissolve Edward's character status and anachronize the political model he represents. While Tom Gordon, outmaneuvers Clayton laterally, Harry joins an insurgent movement that escapes Edward's control to challenge slavery from below. The process reveals how Edward misapprehends the modernity and power of Industrial slavery, mistaking the Upper South's descent into slave-trading as a sign of the weakness of the slave system; conversely, his approach to the antislavery cause represents a pastiche of outdated strategies that founder on their exclusion of the black masses from the political process. While Tom Gordon ends up as the hegemon on the Carolina plantation sphere, Harry Gordon emerges as a political subject removed from reformist pleas for patience and replacing Edward as a protagonist. This process sets the stage for another vision of abolitionist world-making from below, which will be explored in the final Section.

My formulation of the antislavery crucible, the arena that tests and ultimately thwarts Edward at multiple levels, is informed by recent historiography on antebellum capitalism and revisionist histories of American social movements. As my Introduction lays out, Industrial Slavery is a periodizing term drawn from Robin Blackburn's *The American Crucible* (my use of the "crucible" image is also equally indebted to this work). But its substance is more informed by recent "History of Capitalism" scholarship, which has shifted narratives about nineteenth century US political economy and geopolitics away from mode of production and ideology-or-resistance paradigms, and into the complex coalescence of capitalism and slavery in different contexts and social levels. The US, like other corners of the Late-Abolition world, witnessed a renaissance of slave-trading and slave-industries.[122] Following its consolidation into a postcolonial republic,

[122] Helpfully summarizing the landmark works by historians Sven Beckert, Walter Johnson, and Edward Baptist, sociologist John Clegg highlights the four main components of the new emerging picture of Atlantic Capitalist

genocidal expropriations of indigenous lands, and the financial shakeup of 1837, the new territories (especially the Mississippi Valley) explode into large-scale, technically sophisticated plantations producing slave-based export commodities to fuel capitalist industry in the North and in Europe. Concurrently, Old South cities like Richmond and Charleston become linked into a manufacture and investment within the Greater Caribbean region.[123] This thriving, dynamic constellation of capitalist slavery intensifies and expands until the intra-national battles (in congress and on the ground) that provoke the Secession Crisis and Civil War.[124] My use of Industrial Slavery in the US context indexes this complex set of institutions, events, and social dynamics that constituted new and daunting challenges for abolition. In *Dred* (and arguably in the 1850s writ large), it forms a pillar of the "crucible" that tests and ultimately defeats the Edward-Nina model of abolitionist world-craft.

To establish how IS appears in the novel and its effects in the antislavery crucible, I turn to the other Gordon sister and sororicide that pushes events past the point of no return: the saga of the manumitted slave Cora Gordon (Harry's sister), who is executed for killing her two children while incarcerated in order to avoid re-enslavement by her half-brother Tom Gordon (438). At first glance, the episode appears rhetorical in substance and plot-motivated in

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Slavery (which themselves build on the pioneering work by Eric Williams, DuBois' *Black Reconstruction*, and Marx's scattered commentaries on New World Slavery): first among them is the centrality of the profit motive, regardless of the slavers' technical rationality or irrational brutality; second, that plantations (especially cotton growers) witnessed "rapid and continuous productivity growth—a unique characteristic of capitalist societies"; third, that "the commodification and collateralization of the slaves themselves" speaks to the important penetration of the world credit market into the Cotton Belt; and lastly, that trade relations consolidated the nineteenth-century world into a "world-system" a la Wallerstein (Clegg 282-283; Baptist 316-317 and Johnson 46, 245). All the above authors stress the importance of viewing the intimate unity among the British industrial colossus, the commercial and financial instruments of the world market, and the systematic exploitation of and financial speculation on increasingly productive slave labor.

[123] Rood, *Reinvention*, 121-147.

[124] It should be clear that despite their materialist approaches, this literature opens up a non-teleological view on the Civil War by insisting on the integral relation between advanced capitalism and slavery in this period. For examples of orthodox Marxist historiography: Charles Post, *The American Road to Capitalism* and John Ashworth, *Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics in the Antebellum Republic*.

consequences. After all, Cora Gordon's "confession" to the court is freighted with standard fare of antislavery sensibility dating back to eighteenth century poems and dialogues:[125] "[I]f any of you mothers, in my place, wouldn't have done the same, you either don't know what slavery is, or you don't love your children as I have loved mine" (440). Plot-wise (as I discuss below), this tragedy caps Harry's final break with Clayton's political control and conversion to another model of abolition. But the episode raises other questions. To start, it is yet another revision of *Cabin*: unlike Eliza and her son, Cora and her children are remanded in Cincinnati; lacking the supernatural abilities to leap across the Ohio River, we discover that Cora's powers are foremost economic. Early in the text, we learn Cora has pulled herself up to the status of a successful planter and, after marrying her former master, will inherit the lucrative plantation in Mississippi that she managed while enslaved (62-63). Cora's letter to Harry refers to her friendship with other Mississippi planters[126] of color in Natchez who aid her in flight (339-340). Her situation teases a correction to Harry's unjust plight vis-à-vis his younger white brother and a parallel Eliza's self-emancipation. Can it be the plantation agriculture offers a testing ground where a talented, mixed-race elite will demonstrate what Edward calls the "capacities of a race"? The plot swiftly closes off this possibility: even before Nina's death, Tom Gordon had prized Cora and her holdings as property of the white Gordon heirs. As Mr. Jekyl lays out from the outset:

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[125] Cf. Day and Bicknell's "The Dying Negro: A Poetical Epistle" and Hannah More's "The Black Slave Trade: A Poem" in Marcus Wood, *The Poetry of Slavery: An Anglo-Atlantic Anthology*,
At the empirical level, Cora's example may correspond to a variety of historical examples of slave mothers whose flights for freedom and pre-emptive filicide led to solidarity from abolitionists of all persuasions. Some months before *Dred* was published, Margaret Johnson's failure to cross the "Fugitive Slaves bridge" (the Ohio River) emblematized in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* led her to kill her two children rather than face a future of continued sexual abuse and hyper-exploitation in Missouri (Sinha, 529).

[126] That the successful Western plantations are displaced from the diegetic scope of the novel constitutes one formal problem I will explain. But the remarkable decision to cast all *successful* planters as persons "of color" (mixed race men and women) is more difficult to make sense of. Given the limited textual data, Stowe's choice can only be chalked up to an anachronizing gesture against the plantation system, that inverts advancement based on merit (as we saw in the Harry and Tom dyad). Tinges of the "romantic racialism" cannot be denied: Harry's talents in part result from the "Scottish" and "cavalier" paternal genius combined with the big-hearted "African" sensibility represented by Milly, Tiff, and Uncle Tom.

> … we looked over the emancipation laws together, and we found out that, as the law stood, the deed of emancipation was no more than so much waste paper. And so, you see, she and her children are just as much slaves as any on her plantation; and the whole property, which is worth a hundred thousand dollars, belongs to your family. I rode out with him, and looked over the place, and got introduced to her and her children, and looked them over. Considered as property, I should call them a valuable lot (166).

The episode drives home how the racialized oppression intrinsic to slave-derived property law renders all such advancements into a "house…built upon air" (60).

But thematic meaning aside, these glances toward vibrant plantations elsewhere are striking. Indeed, they constitute a quiet revelation, as the first indication of a profitable plantation *anywhere* in the US South. Tom Gordon's thirst for personal revenge and human chattel to pay off his mounting debts are supplemented (not overshadowed) by the Southwestern holdings he stands to gain from expropriating his sister, Cora. His initial power-plays take the form of purchasing key enslaved characters or expropriating them through inheritance provisions and legal machinations. Cora Gordon's saga reveals that Western expansion is not the lifeline of an imploding, pre-capitalist slavery, but a fundamental feature of how Industrial Slavery has reconfigured Southern political economy and the integral role of property law in this form of racial capitalism.[127] Mississippi agriculture subtly refutes the metaphysical "downward tendency" that characterize the appearance and ledgers of every plantation depicted in *Dred*, suggesting an outside to the limiting structures of narrative point of view and textual ideology. This is to say that profitable and expanding slavery is not wholly erased from the text (so as to spuriously anachronize it), but regionally and narratologically displaced out of Upper South

[127] This is the point obscured by otherwise brilliant materialist arguments by Klein, 137 and Grant, 159-161.

farms. Before examining this displacement – the extent to Industrial Slavery is cordoned off from PA I – I need to examine its most common manifestation in *Dred*: the domestic slave trade that surges in the wake of the ban on the international traffic.[128]

Like Martin Delany's *Blake: The Huts of America*, Stowe's *Dred* foregrounds the key role played by the "domestic slave" trade in all realms of white civil society. Of course, this topic is not new: family separation, the brutal effects of upon marriage, and so on, were mainstay examples of the moral and Christian critiques of slavery, decried even by many pro-slavery ideologues. But the saturation of slave-dealing in everyday Southern life is uniquely foregrounded in *Dred*. The clearest example of this is Stowe's brilliant indictment of theological and ecclesiastical complicity. However, we can take this a step further: the slave trade and its regional geo-politics become limiting factor to efforts to ground antislavery efforts in any status quo institution of white civil society. This is detailed in the iconic "Camp Meeting" chapter. Dred's jeremiad expresses the classical criticism of church complicity in maintaining slavery "…what iniquities you are countenancing? Now, here, right next to our camp, a slave-coffle encamped!" But the critique of Christian acquiescence to slavery is capped by the episode between the unnamed "Georgia trader" and the lone antislavery evangelist Father Dickson, underscoring historically-specific importance of the slave trade. After ministering to a dying woman in the slave coffle, Dickson poses the emblematic Pauline-antislavery question to the guilt-ridden trader: "what shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" However, the soul-driver's position is clear: "'Why, bless your soul, sir, this yer lot's worth ten thousand dollars!' said the trader, who was not prepared for so close a practical

[128] As I reviewed in my Introduction, the waning of the African slave trade created not only a huge domestic demand for human chattel, but also increased the connection between slave-markets national and international finance and insurance to underwrite the increasingly expensive transactions.

application" (264). While the benediction is free, the stock of black souls has its own Pauline justification (the "render-unto-Caesar" outlook of Father Bonnie) and will fetch inflated prices in the fertile Western territories. In this parable, the slogan of being "sold down to Georgia" has been literalized into a naïve avatar, who answers Dickson's higher law challenge with economic rationality. Whereas classical US abolition polemicized against dehumanizing greed, the Georgia trader bespeaks a more advanced phase of slavery, balancing the cost of his soul with a specific estimate about chattelized black life ($10,000). The ends of legal reformism and pacifist martyrology amidst Industrial Slavery produce tragic emblems in Cora and Father Dickson.

These subtle transformations in the regional division of labor (slave-exploiting and slave-exporting) and the ubiquitous internal trade signal the limits of the abolitionist worldview and strategy, further demolishing Edward's now-obsolete political worlds. The specter of Mississippi cotton and the renaissance in human trafficking suggest that Edward and Nina have misread the temporal-material condition of the plantation sphere, mistaking developments in the Upper South for slavery *tout court*. Recognizing the presence Industrial Slavery in the text opens up a re-reading of the Belleville episode so crucial to Nina's *bildung*. A figure like Madame Le Clere becomes more than an emblem of the ruinous nature of slave-based industry, her farm morphing into a common (if disreputable) enterprise of the Old South, exporting "surplus" enslaved workers to thriving plantations in the Southwest. Clayton observes that, like Virginia, North Carolina is moving towards ruin from the standpoint of agricultural output, and he is correct in part. The exhaustion of the soil and advancing competition from other regions and countries led to a decline in Old South exports of tobacco, rice, indigo, and other key crops.[129] If Belleville's

[129] On the decline of Carolina plantations in the period. Wilma Dunaway, *The First American Frontier Transition to Capitalism in Southern Appalachia, 1700-1860,* Chapter 10. However, Rood shows how Old South cities and ports like Richmond and Baltimore used enslaved labor to accumulate capital via trade and investment circuits connected

wretched façade masks a standing reserve of commodified human value that will be realized elsewhere, other Upper South regional signs in Dred (Virginia, the Carolinas, and Baltimore) become vital hubs of Western slave exports[130] (recall the Natchez farms that provide temporary refuge for Cora or the Missouri territories where Milly's children are sold). The ascension of Tom Gordon, the positive half of the antislavery crucible, reveals the extent to which classical Polemical Anachronism becomes at best a partial truth; capitalist modernity is not slavery's historical negation, but its paradoxical and horrific present tense. One of Edward's initial pronouncement now rings with horrific irony: "The raising of cotton is to be the least of the thing. I regard my plantation as a sphere for raising *men and women*" (24; emphasis mine).

With Industrial Slavery standing beyond the white reformers' grasp, the "antislavery crucible" leads to the opposite dynamic of the conversion narrative: Clayton's character status, point of view, and ideology are narratively "effaced" and ironized until he is discredited and marginalized.[131] Established in the opening quixotic dialogue with Frank Russel, Edward's "idealism" corresponds to his program for a transition out of a slave-based society, grounded in an apprenticeship-plantation ("I'm going to educate and fit them for freedom") and strategic legal reforms that extend rights and protections to slaves: Magnolia Grove as a "factory" manufacturing free and "civilized" black workers, state law as the protective membrane to check planter greed and barbarism (23; 307). This vision for the transition is expressly modeled on the

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with thriving sugar and tobacco plantations in Cuba and Brazil (*Reinvention*, Chapter 5). The latter cannot be discussed with reference to *Dred*, for reasons already stated.

[130] This insight enables another way of reading Stowe's decision to cast herself as Nina's beloved "Aunt Harriet" who sells off Milly's children, as a kind of allegorical confession about the shortcomings of the whiggish optimism in *Cabin*. Milly reveals the political economic barriers to such optimism in recalling how Harriet Gordon was persuaded to sell off her children:

"While your children are small,' he says, 'you can live small, and keep things close, and raise enough on the place for ye all; and den you can be making the most of your property. Niggers is rising in de market. Since Missouri came in, they's worth double…so you can just sell de increase of 'em for a good sum" (175)

[131] Effacement is Woloch's term for the "minoring" of a character's subjectivity over the course of the plot (85).

British model of gradual abolition grounded in "apprenticeship" systems and compensation for slave-owners. Such an elite-led "revolution from above" excludes "violent" lower classes (slaves) from the process in order to ensure existing property relations:

> If you want insurrection, the only way is to shut down the escape-valve; for, will ye nill ye, the steam must rise. You see, in this day, minds *will grow*. They *are* growing. There's no help for it, and there's no force like the force of growth…Look at all the aristocracies of Europe…only one has stood—that of England. And how came that to stand? Because it knew when to *yield* (469-470)

In tandem with the "downward tendency" attributed to Southern social life, historical progress requires tactical flexibility and far-sightedness from the ruling elite "modernize" by adopting the practices of formal equality and free labor.[132] The key bulwark against these plans is of course Tom Gordon, newly wealthy, relatively popular among planters, and able to control the landless whites his an almost mesmeric charisma and natural cunning:

> He determined to rule them all, and he did. All that uncertain, uninstructed, vagrant population, which abound in slave states, were at his nod and beck. They were his tools …. Tom was a determined slave-holder. He had ability enough to see the whole bearings of that subject, from the beginning to the end; and he was determined that…the first stone should never be pulled from the edifice in his state (472-473)

The emphasis on Gordon's pragmatism and his expanded social vision ("enough to see the whole bearings") form a clear contrast with the idealistic and relatively-narrow minded protagonist.

[132] Taylor, drawing on Eric Williams, succinctly glosses the latent social violence and surprising consequences of this British-Liberal model of gradual, compensated abolition as a project "imperial neglect" (50. For a historical account of how apprenticeship system perpetuated racial slavery, see *A Narrative of Events, since the First of August, 1834, by James Williams, an Apprenticed Labourer in Jamaica*.

The antislavery crucible begins with the twin reversals of his two signature victories — the civil suit ensuring basic rights for enslaved people (and thus their "legal personhood") and his conversion of Nina to abolition. The terms of his legal defeat could not be starker: Edward's supreme court judge father proclaims that, unlike parental or apprentice relations, "With slavery…[t]he end is the profit of the master, his security, and the public safety…THE POWER OF THE MASTER MUST BE ABSOLUTE, TO RENDER THE SUBMISSION OF THE SLAVE PERFECT" (353). Drawn from an actual court decision,[133] the imperious declaratives and performative typography leave no doubt about the inextricability between property relations and jurisprudence. Initially, Edward appears to wave the white flag: "[my] illusion is destroyed. I see but too clearly now the purpose and object of the law. I cannot, therefore, as a Christian man, remain in the practice of law in a slave state" (355). The destruction of "illusion" is, of course, the shibboleth for twentieth century theories of the novel. Readers are thus invited to interpret Clayton's diagnosis of the role of "law in a slave state" as a performative utterance along the lines of Nina's radical promise to "protect" her enslaved dependents; tempted, perhaps, to read the rejection of the North Carolina bar as a rejection of his elite-centered political strategy. But this does not come to pass. Edward's obstinacy through successive failures place him away from the *bildungsroman* and closer to what Lukacs refers to the "abstract idealist" protagonist. For Lukacs, "the complete absence of an inner problematic" leads the abstract idealist hero into false conflation of the world with *a priori* beliefs, resulting in an inversion: "a maximum of inwardly attained meaning becomes a maximum of senselessness and the sublime turns to madness, to monomania."[134] Adapting this insight into the formal and ideological framework of this chapter,

[133] Korobkin, 387

[134] Georg Lukács, *Theory of the Novel*, 97-100. Here is where I part ways with Woloch, who reads parody/irony largely as expressions of the capitalist division of labor. Lukács concept, though relatively in line with the tradition

we can see Clayton "monomaniacal" clinging to his model of abolition amidst all outward signs of its inadequacy leads to an ironizing and subtly satirical narrative of his flattening as a character and the invalidation.

The trajectory of his character arc amid the antislavery crucible attests to process of ironization and flattening, as the reader becomes "disillusioned" rather than Edward. Volume II presents an almost unbroken sequence of efforts to win legal reform through non-courtroom contexts: immediately after Nina's death, he attempts to legislate the manumission of Harry, which fails owing to the fact that slaves cannot be the witness to last wills and testament. As such, it replays his failure to protect Milly in the courtroom. "The law," Tom Gordon's lawyer explains, "which is based on the old Roman code, holds him, *pro nullis, pro mortuis*; which means, Harry, that he's held as nothing—as dead, inert substance" (385). Next, we find Edward adopting immediatist rhetoric and seeking to convert Carolina clergy to his legal reformism. Quoting the letter of slave law, he seeks to awaken the Christian spirit and conscience of the religious oligarchy that preside over civil society: [Slavery] consists in making a man a dead, inert substance in the hands of another, holding men *pro nullis, pro mortuis*…[I]seek its abolition, and I desire the aid of the church and ministry in doing it (430). To the surprise of no one, Clayton and his sole ally, Father Dickson, are stonewalled by the ministers, their response likened to "stationary ships" anchored amid a swelling tide. Finally, the reader finds him stealing from the 1840's abolitionist playbook with a campaign "to petition the legislature to grant to the slave *the right of seeking legal redress in cases of injury*" through his old friend and new state legislator, Frank Russel (463; emphasis added). Ending with the same dialogical exchange that introduced Clayton, we find him in pursuit of the political object that has preoccupied him since

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of central European novel theory, better captures the characterological dynamic and the significance of Edward's transformation.

the second chapter, despite the obvious signs that the present situation has refuted this strategy. Russel's brutal response drives home the fact that Edward's attempts to convince Southern planters to follow the British model is no longer possible:

> But you won't make *our* aristocracy believe it. They have mounted the lightning, and they are going to ride it whip and spur. They are going to annex Cuba and the Sandwich Islands, and the Lord knows what, and have a great and splendid slave-holding empire! (ibid)

Far from only needed a gradual, large-scale nudge to bring about a transition to capitalist modernity, Industrial Slavery seems to be taking over the machinery of the state and appears poised to consolidate its power and grow. Despite the fact that the "splendid slave-holding empire" was ultimately thwarted by antislavery struggle, Russel expresses a potential future that feared by abolitionists and heralded by pro-slavery zealots. While Russel has the last word, Clayton tries to hold strong in the belief that, at the very least, God is on his side. However, the question of how to *activate* Providence remains unresolved. What does become certain is that the law is not an autonomous realm of political power to be taken over via rhetoric or critique; rather, property law and legal machinery underwrites the enterprise of Industrial Slavery.

The flattening effects of the antislavery crucible pertain not only to the diegesis and content but gradually take over the narrative structure as well. The opening lines of the petition episode register this dynamic, situated as it is amidst Tom Gordon's reign of terror that leave Clayton's friends and property ruined and the slaves on Canema reeling. As old Tiff and the Cripps family are fleeing for their lives and a fugitive slave is brutally murdered by patrol dogs, the narrative voice laconically notifies us that "Clayton was still pursuing the object which he had undertaken" before plunging *en medias res* into his pitch about the "only safe way for

gradual emancipation" (463). The temporal adverb suggests a sense of exhaustion with Clayton's intractability, while the abstract and clunky reminder of his "object" hardly suggest any urgency or prospects for success. This sense of distance expresses a dynamic that occurs at the start of the crucible: the disembedding[135] of point of view from Clayton's subjectivity and his subsequent ironization. This dynamic is evident in "The Purpose" chapter that details Edward's recommitment to his own first principles in the wake of the twin defeats analyzed above:

> And there arose within him that sense of power which sometimes seems to come over man like an inspiration, and leads him to say, "*This* shall *not* be, and *this* shall be;" as if he possessed the ability to control the crooked course of human events… He thought all that was necessary was the enlightening of the public mind, the direction of general attention to the subject (392).

This passage is crucial, insofar Edward's consciousness becomes an object in itself, rather than a focalizing subjectivity. The promethean "sense of his power" is roundly deflated by the "as if"[136] that pulls the lofty diction into a satirical mode. The hollow tone of the god-like speech acts ("*This* shall *not be")* that ring through his consciousness are mocked, deflating the world-making powers explored in Nina's conversion. Spuriously assuming the role of correcting the course of history, Clayton ironically nominates himself to answer the call in Stowe's Preface to the novel: If ever a nation was raised up by Divine Providence, and led forth upon a conspicuous stage, as if for the express purpose of solving a great moral problem in the sight of all mankind, it is this

[135] This term is my own, though indebted to other critics of the politics of literary perspective, especially Roberto Schwarz, *Master on the Periphery of Capitalism*, 40-56 and Hickman, 343-351.

[136] Genette points out that "modalizing locutions" usually correspond to a specific kind of narratological "distancing." On the one hand, as markers of free indirect discourse, they pull the reader into the interiority of a character, compelling us to "interpret as indices of focalization those openings onto the psychology of characters other than the hero" (202). On the other, they simultaneously undermine the credibility and perspective of the focalizer; this distancing can even undermine the narrator in extreme cases: "The multiplicity of contradictory hypotheses suggests much more the insolubility off the problem, and at the very least the incapacity of the narrator to resolve it" (204). These issues of narrative incapacity and overdetermination will be taken up in the last Section.

nation (3). As the passage continues, it expands the scope of critique from his hubris to his strategy of enlightening "the public" and strategically targeting "leading minds":

> In his way homeward he revolved in his mind immediate measures of action. This evil should no longer be tampered with…. He would take counsel of leading minds. He would give his time to journeyings through the state; he would deliver addresses, write in the newspapers, and do what otherwise lies in the power of a free man who wishes to reach an utterly unjust law (392).

The irony is searing: Clayton has been converted to a kind of immediatism, as reflected in his internal rhetoric ("this evil should no longer be tampered with") and his fantasies about the power of print-culture, lyceum halls, and manumission drives to achieve his goal about recognizing the legal personhood of the slave — the first step in his plan to help the slave-holding class see the autarky and barbarism that stem from an "utterly unjust law."

I venture that this incoherent conflation of Clayton's legalistic gradualism and Garrisonian immediatism is far from accidental. In ironizing his character in this way — transforming him from a "master" to an ideological automaton with an inflated sense of his powers —the narrative discourse performs a strategic and historicizing gesture.[137] As we have seen from his meeting with the clergy and the aborted petition effort, Clayton now stands as an avatar for the obsolescence of *all* pre-1850s tenets of abolitionist strategy: Wilberforcean legal advocacy and Woolmanite manumission drives, but also the Immediatist principles of moral

[137]Frank Russel makes the historicist argument explicit to Clayton, not only highlighting his fatal stubbornness but also the materialist fact that cotton production will trump his appeals in the North and South:

> "The fact is, you are checkmated. Your plans for gradual emancipation, or reform, or anything tending in that direction, are utterly hopeless; and, if you want to pursue them with your own people, you must either send them to Liberia, or to the Northern States. There was a time, fifty years ago, when such things were contemplated with some degree of sincerity by all the leading minds at the south. *That time is over…The mouth of the north is stuffed with cotton, and will be kept full as long as it suits us.* Good, easy gentlemen, they are so satisfied with their pillows, and other accommodations inside of the car, that they don't trouble themselves to reflect that we are the engineers, nor to ask where we are going" (464; emphasis mine)

suasion and symbolic intervention.[138] This brutal reductionism implies that antislavery itself needs to be made pre-history, insofar as Industrial Slavery and mounting political defeats suggest that previous strategies are not up to the task of abolishing US slavery. Edward's effacement into an automaton-like figure still driven to the antislavery cause but stuck with his pastiche of outdated rhetoric has formal and social bearings. His defeats and single-mindedness express a more incoherent form of minorness than Nina's archetypical status, which Woloch glosses as "the explosion of the suffocated interior being into an unrepresentable, fragmentary, symptomatic form."[139] Edward's failures in the narrative world, the text suggests, extend to the failure of the antislavery movement in *Dred*'s own conjuncture. Like the characters in and around Canema, the 1850s movement needed a Liberator; instead, they got Edward Clayton. The repetition-compulsion evinced by Clayton's character plays out the danger of remaining trapped to the same object as conditions around him have become incredibly dire and violent, including the murder of Dickson, the destruction of Magnolia Grove, and his own lynching. The narrative discourse intercedes again with to mark Edward's very belated "skepticism" just before his near murder. Equally sympathetic and ironizing, the reader is apprised about the "disenchanting powers" that have displaced his previous, god-like "sense of power" and which "give to the soul an earnestness and a power of discrimination which no illusion can withstand. They teach us what we need, what we must have to rest upon" (*Dred,* 490). But this capacity to discern illusion, this new foundation "to rest upon" comes too late. Rather than grounding a new model of

[138] A catalogue of how Clayton ultimately condenses Quaker rhetoric of Christian charity, British legalism, Political Abolition, and Garrisonianism is not necessary for my argument; the point is that his internal monologue (and the patina of irony the narrative discourse imparts to it) articulates an incoherent pastiche of the main currents of pre-1850 abolition. Besides his professed subscription to *The Liberator*, echoes of nonresistance and the power of "free discussion" to change Southern hearts and minds (two tenets of 1840's Garrison-allied abolition) permeate his discussions with the Clergy and Frank Russel (e.g. 469 and passim). For the Quaker background, see Davis, *Age of Revolutions*, Chapter 5.
[139] *The One and the Many*, 14.

abolition, this scene culminates the unworlding effects that entirely flatten out a political subject unable to adapt to changing, intensify circumstances of the 1850s.

The antislavery crucible ends with one final reversal amidst the catastrophic success of Tom Gordon in the plantation sphere: Harry not only rebukes "master" Edward but annexes his character status. Arising concurrently with the ascent of Tom Gordon, this reversal constitutes the most emphatic anachronization of gradualist and elitist abolition. In a scene redolent with gothic hues and imagery, Harry counters Tom Gordon's legal appropriation of his body and soul with a curse: "There will come a day …when all this shall be visited upon you! The measure you have filled to us shall be filled to you *double*—mark my words!" — before landing a haymaker on his younger brother and escaping with Lisette to the maroon colony in the swamp (388). Unwilling to tolerate the violence and humiliation of enslavement, Harry's speech act not only announces his non-enslavability but immediately enacts it — correcting Edward's impotent declarations and unkept promises. As I explained, part of Edward's motivation in realizing his legal reform is to check Harry's rebellion from below; such a success might ensure Harry's manumission, deliver him from the "Black Conspirators," and even permit him to prosper as his sister Cora Gordon once did. But the opposite happens.

Once again, the epistolary form signals the dilation of an insurgent protagonist within *Dred*'s character system. In this case, Harry's letter to Edward in the celebrated "The Slave's Argument" chapter not only gives the reader access to his fears and desires (which the narrative discourse rarely fails to relay) but takes this much further by laying out the tenets of his argument for slave rebellion.[140] Inquiring about the status of his enslaved sister, Harry makes his

[140] Thus, whereas Dred's dialogue is modeled directly on *The Confession of Nat Turner*, Harry's treatise reads much closer to Henry Highland Garnet's 1843 "An Address to the Slaves of the United States," 403-412 and to Douglass's essays and orations such as the 1857 address analyzed in my Introduction.

case for the right to "fight and shed blood" against oppression, citing philosophical, national-historical, and religious principles in support for his argument. The "Slave's Argument" directly attacks Clayton's by-now hollow syllogisms, relativizing his model of abolition and targeting its racial and class elitism ("understand that when I say *you*, along here, I do not mean you personally, but the generality of the community of which you are one"). While this argument is composed of recycled and clichéd antislavery arguments, their insertion into an actual declaration of war give them a renewed vitality that multiplies after tragic confession of Cora Gordon. We are thus primed to hear the banality and dissonance of Edward's last attempt to assert control:

> Harry, I freely admit that you live in a state of society which exercises a great injustice…. I admit the right of an oppressed people to change their form of government, *if they can*… I know it seems a very unfeeling thing for a man who is at ease to tell one, who is oppressed and suffering, to be patient; and yet I must even say it (442).

This stale piece jurisprudence is not dignified with a response. Rather it leads to Harry's final conversion to Dred's conspiracy. The climax of the plantation sphere dramatizes the reversal of political subject and polemical object: just as Tom Gordon and capture Clayton, the conspirators beat the white riot and nearly kill Tom Gordon. However, their primary motivation is not to save the heroic white reformer, Edward Clayton. This episode, which Schoolman[141] reads as a "rescue" of Edward Clayton by the fugitives is in fact an accidental encounter (502); moreover, Harry's near-assassination of Tom, we soon learn, was largely motivated by the murder of Hark, a fellow fugitive conspirator from Canema (493). Black solidarity and fugitive agency have supplanted Edward's milk toast reform campaign. Harry's ascension to political subject and

[141] "…Dred has beaten Tom Gordon on Edward's behalf, thereby matching the enraged violence of the slave with the enraged violence of the master, over the body of the nonviolent abolitionist citizen" (Schoolman, 174).

Edward's demotion to a flat character – if not a caricature of reformist zeal, along the lines that Nina began the novel — is complete. As the negative force of the antislavery crucible renders abolition itself prehistory (in the sense described above), this mode of PA does not posit an alternative to the sundered world of Nina and Edward. But in displacing character status and political agency out of the plantation and into the Dismal Swamp, it clears the way for the novel's final, speculative redeployment of the rhetoric of temporality — a process I refer to as Fugitive Primitivism.

IV: Time, Marronage, and Utopia Disavowed

Up to now, my analysis of the shifting rhetoric of temporality has considered how predominantly white character systems and points of view serve to anachronize the "true character" of the slave system as well as the antislavery movement in the wake of Industrial Slavery. But as the arc of Harry's character reveals, the political vacuum following the collapse of classical antislavery will be filled by a fugitive slave conspiracy set in the "Great Dismal Swamp" that gives the novel its subtitle. What I call the "maroon commune" is centered around Dred and emerges from his singular character trajectory. Like Nina (and in contrast to Edward), Dred starts as a flat character (a trope and rhetorical device) and gradually complexifies into the anchor figure of a new character economy. However, this new economy takes the shape of a distributed network, rather than a zero-sum competition to flatten/anachronize one character over another; its antislavery rhetoric of temporality relies on a resignification of social archaisms, rather than their targeted denunciation. Through Dred's solidification and then expansion into a character system, the novel leads to a new configuration of Polemical Anachronism. Introduced as an eruption of "black rage" and condensation of white paranoia about black rebellion, he

initially functions as an adjunct to the Conversion Narrative and the Antislavery Triangle. But as Tom Gordon propels the plantation sphere into a state of civil war, Dred begins to acquire a characterological solidity both in the narrative discourse and the plot. As Harry and fellow fugitives join Dred's commune and begin to plan an uprising later in Volume II, the novel pivots to consider how Industrial Slavery produces a spontaneous challenge in the form of a black fugitive character system. Grounded in the archaisms of millenarian Christianity, communitarian social reproduction, and small-scale democracy, the maroon commune coalesces into a true challenge to Industrial Slavery — a literary dynamic I term Fugitive Primitivism.

Emerging in response to Industrial Slavery's empirical effects and momentum — the super-exploitation of enslaved Black workers on the new plantations, the increased legal power to punish fugitives and protect slave-owners, and the civil wars over the extension of slavery — Fugitive Primitivism is not a programmatic statement about the inevitability or even the desirability of slave insurrection. Rather, it speaks to how abolitionists adapted their political imagination during the pressure of the crisis of the 1850s, countenancing new tactics and the prospect (if not the necessity) of a revolution from below to destabilize the slave system. The emergence of the fugitive commune as an oppositional literary world registers the felt necessity of centering black agents in their freedom struggle and of countenancing extra-legal and non-nonresistant tactics. However, the ultimate failure of the insurrection to get off the ground raises important questions about *Dred* that continue to vex readers. My argument highlights how the novel's series of anti-climaxes register both a hesitancy toward positing a new teleological meta-history and the abolitionist experimentalism that responding to real-time events and changes with the same drive to make slavery into "pre-history." By setting its readers up for a resolution and revolution that fails to launch multiple times over, *Dred* provides a window into the intellectual

and affective conditions of the 1850s — and also to the abolitionist will-to-experiment even amid a dire and uncertain political present.

IV. Dred and Racial Primitivism in PA I

Initially an interruptive presence who externalizes "black rage,"[142] Dred starts out as an appendix to the novel's other character systems. Diegetically, these fleeting appearances in Volume 1 add fuel to the urgency Nina's conversion and Edward's tactics, raising their stakes by conjuring up a chaotic revolution from below that might escape the containment of white elites and their institutional prerogatives. As such, Dred initially serves as a *means* of classical Polemical Anachronism (PA I). In particular, he functions as a mouthpiece for white antislavery discourse and a specter of the dangers of primal black rage in the absence of an "escape-valve." This doubly-subordinate character status is evident in Dred's belated introduction in Chapter 18. Here, Harry's surging anger and "bitter cursing" at Tom Gordon's repeated threats appear to call Dred into being: he "erupts" into the forest[143] disembodied, as a mysterious voice from a bush who mocks Harry's helplessness: "Aha! aha! it has come nigh *thee*, has it? It toucheth *thee*, and thou faintest!" (*Dred,* 198). Conflating the "voice of consciousness" with the burning bush trope, the revelation of Dred serves, as Robert Levine notes, as a "point of rupture" that forces the reader into the alien realm of black subjectivity and feeling: in this case, Harry's fury at his half-

[142] Robert Levine, "Introduction" xx. Retroactively, the reader discovers that Dred's presence was lurking throughout the previous 180 pages.

[143] While critical attention has understandable focused almost exclusively on the Dismal Swamp, the semiotics of the pine forests are also worthy of attention. They form a special "boundary" between the plantation sphere and Dismal Swamp, the zone of fugitivity. Once the reader discovers the existence of Dred, almost all previous and subsequent references to the forest and the sight and sounds of the pine trees become imbued with Dred's character; the "clearing" conjures an image laden with theological and philosophical meanings, which are noted by Mieke Bal "a special role is played by the boundary between two opposed locations. Just as in Christian mythology purgatory mediates the opposition between heaven and hell, so the front door may connote a crucial barrier for one intending to penetrate certain circles. Bal, *Narratology: An Introduction to the Theory of Narrative,* 184

brother for jeopardizing his family's safety and guilt for remaining loyal to his White sister.[144] But as a displacement of the slave's affect, Dred translates Harry's desires into the language of abolitionist critique for narrowly instrumental purposes. The questions with which he answers Harry are simultaneously posed to complicit (mainly white) northern readers using two classic pillars of Christian antislavery rhetoric,[145] slavery as a system of man-stealing that sows immorality by violating the marriage compact among slaves: "Hast thou not eaten the fat and drunk the sweet with the oppressor, and hid thine eyes from the oppression of thy people? Have not *our* wives been for a prey, and thou hast not regarded?" (199).

The apotheosis of Dred as ventriloquist for antislavery critique occurs in the Camp-Meeting scene, the climax to Volume I, a chapter predominantly concerned with staging the full range of ecclesiastical and congregational hypocrisies regarding slavery.[146] The spectacle of false worship is punctuated by Dred's famous screed that White worshippers, which draws liberally from antislavery sermons in the American jeremiad tradition.[147] Apprising them of their self-satisfaction, greed, and social hypocrisy, Dred calls on to "Hear, oh ye rebellious people! The Lord is against this nation!" in order to awaken "public minds" from apathy, just as Clayton endeavored in his meeting with the Carolina clergy. Ratcheting up Edward's intellectual and moral appeals, Dred promises that Providence will destroy United States for failing to observe natural rights and the Higher Christian Laws. The tactic works momentarily, before it becomes

[144] Levine Op. Cite, 22.
[145] For a typology of these tropes as developed first by Anglophone Quakers and then later Evangelical thinkers (like Granville Sharpe and Samuel Hopkins), see Carey, *From Peace to Freedom, 143-176*. For antislavery and ventriloquism, see Carey, *British Abolition and the Rhetoric of Sensibility, 73-106* and Marcus Wood: *Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography*, 23-57.
[146] Caleb Smith, *The Curse and The Oracle: A Poetics of Justice from the American Revolution to the Civil War*
[147] The clearest precedent seems to be the influential Connecticut theologian Samuel Hopkins, in documents such as *A Dialogue Concerning the Enslavement of Africans* (1776). Hopkins served as a character model for Stowe's next and last antislavery novel, *The Minister's Wooing* (1859).

clear that even the fear divine wrath has become banalized, reduced to a cathartic ritual in churches that have accommodated slavery. The white worshippers return home unscathed and unchanged. Far from embodying the subjectivity of enslaved characters (let alone a mind of his own), Dred's speech represents another "American jeremiad"[148] — a ritualized spectacle of dissent that diffuses and deflects energy toward challenging a system of domination. The "fierce, wailing earnestness in the sound of [Dred's] dreadful words" underscore his reduction to a disembodied "voice of conscience" designed to anachronize slavery and its institutional buttresses. As the play on words suggest, the meaning of Dred's prophetic bombast is to evoke the 'dread" of his white auditors and Stowe's white readers.

By shrinking antagonistic enslaved agency into vehicles to support a moderate, white-led antislavery movement, Dred's early appearances render black agency itself into an *object* of Polemical Anachronism, a product of the degrading and dangerous effects of slavery upon an already primitive "African Mind." Dred's spectral presence, archaic prophetic millenarianism, and over-identification with the power of the Dismal Swamp render him into a very specific kind of antislavery trope:[149] what Grégory Pierrot helpfully terms the "black avenger." A strategy of ideological containment inaugurated by Aphra Behn's *Oroonooko*; *The Royal Slave*, the black avenger centers around an "extraordinary man of African descent taken into slavery who decides

[148] See Sacvan Bercovitch, *Ideology and Classic American Literature,* 418-447 on the domesticating and banalizing effects of the Jeremiad and other forms of "dissensus" in US political culture.

[149] Dred's prophecies clearly place him with an earlier and "outmoded" stage of Judeo-Christian civilization, since for Evangelical Christians of the epoch access direct, prophetic revelations were seen as exclusive to a historically antecedent "age of the Prophets." See Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible*, 162.
His proximity to an abstract notion of "nature" and its primordial power posits a clear link between Dred and racist discourse regarding African (non)civilization. Numerous episodes in the plantation sphere attest to the fear of "uncultivated" and unsupervised blackness: for example, Nina's horror upon arriving at the Belville plantation to find a score of derelict, sambo-like enslaved children, which causes Nina to worry for her fellow plantation heiress, "the darkeys, I imagine, have a general glorification in the chaos. [Madame Le Clerc] is one of the indulgent sort, and I suspect she'll be eaten up by them like the locusts" (151).

to take personal revenge against the institution, generally by leading a mass movement that is inevitably defeated."[150] Revising genealogies of Afro-Atlantic freedom narratives, he highlights the sleight of hand by which exceptional, noble avenger figures displace and "silence" actually existing Black mass movements –- allowing white audiences to entertain a version of Black agency that is threatening yet always-already thwarted.[151] By contrast, in *Dred*, such African nobility is also routed through a genealogical connection to US slave revolts from an earlier era. The narrator explains that Dred is the (fictional) son of Denmark Vesey and an African mother, while his millenarian speeches are overtly indebted to Nat Turner (*The Confessions* is reproduced in Appendix I). Placed in this pantheon of exceptional warrior-prophets, the account of Dred's early formation bends away from character density and towards an allegory for the dangerous potential of Black revolt. The text suggests that this propensity is double anachronistic: not only expressing primitive "African faculties" but invoking a moment of US slave uprising ended after the 1820s.[152]

With his Oroonooko-esque appearance ("muscles of a gladiator" and "intensely Black skin"), Dred's identity is dissolved into the "Great Dismal Swamp" and the realm of fugitive freedom that space represents in the novel (207).[153] The solitude and prodigious powers of the swamp distort Dred's reading of the bible (his sole "companion") with a sense of primitive,

[150] Pierrot, "Writing over Haiti: Black Avengers in Martin Delany's *Blake,*"180.
[151] I disagree with Pierrot's contention that texts like *Dred* and especially Martin Delany's *Blake* simply reconfigure the avenger trope into a collective scale in order to "silence" actually-existing black governments like Haiti.
[152] As my epigraph suggests, the exact dating of the novel is made equivocal by Stowe's conscious "anachronisms" in reusing older primary materials and references alongside very-contemporary allusions (famously, to Charles Sumner's beating and Bleeding Kansas). But enough concrete references cohere to date the text in the 1850's (the discussion of *The Liberator,* Cuban annexation, the 1848 revolutions, among many others). Stowe and Sectional violence are discussed in Levine, "Introduction" and Grant, Op. Cit.
[153] "From the restlessness of his nature, he had not confined himself to any particular region, but had traversed the whole swampy belt of both the Carolinas, as well as that of Southern Virginia; residing a few months in one place, and a few months in another" (222)

"Hebraistic coloring" and "enthusiasm." As Clayton does later, the narrator is repelled and fascinated by Dred's single-minded millenarianism: "Cut off from all human companionship, often going weeks without seeing a human face, there was no recurrence of every-day and prosaic ideas to check the current of the enthusiasm thus kindled" (*Dred,* 221).This Black avenger status reduces Dred to another means to the same end: an exceptional, ephemeral emblem of the dangerous power of primitive and "uncultivated" Black agency — designed to invoke "dread" in white readers from yet a different angle. The fight for an elite-led revolution from above plays out directly in Edward's battle to save Harry from capitulating to the irrational and rebellious "voice in the wilderness." But as Edward's literary world (character system and point of view) starts to founder, Dred wrestles free from his largely rhetorical and subordinate role in Volume II. His newfound solidity as a character and connections to other enslaved characters force the text to revalue fugitivity and the primitive.

IVb: Character Solidity and Poetics of Opposition

With the un-worlding effects of the Antislavery Crucible and Industrial Slavery shoring up property law and lynch law, the stage is cleared for a new character system to posit a challenge to the paradoxical modernity of the plantation sphere. With Nina's decline and Edward's failures in Volume II, the character of Dred becomes the nucleus of a Black character system that transcends his doubly subordinate role in the service of classical Polemical Anachronism. Toward the end of the novel, the titular figure becomes invested with newfound a characterological solidity, as his prophecies actualize in the diegetic world and extend his power of action beyond the shadowy sphere of the Swamp.

The germ of this shift is evident in moments of the narrative discourse that concede an illegible duality at the heart of Dred's subjectivity. After probing the issue of a racial origin of

Dred's prophetic visions and mesmeric powers[154] (whether the primitive "soul" has access to future events or if this is merely animal impulse), the narrator decides upon narrative ignorance: "What this faculty may be, we shall not pretend to say" (274). While not a strong rebuttal to the racial primitivism inherent to the discourse of mesmerism, the gesture concedes a degree of autonomy and even illegibility with respect to Dred. Moving further away from the flat avenger trope, the narrator notes an aspect of Dred's personality that, ironically, gets labeled "singular and grotesque":

> It was a remarkable fact…that the mysterious exaltation of mind in this individual seemed to run parallel with the current of shrewd, practical sense; and, like a man who converses alternately in two languages, he would speak now the language of exaltation, and now that of common life, interchangeably (274)

The cohabitation of prophecy and practical genius perplex and disturb the narrator ("grotesque" of course connoting the "unnatural" grafting of two unlike features or appendages together). My subsequent Chapters will illustrate how other Late-Abolition Black protagonists also evince uncanny, supernatural traits. But one the narrator of *Dred* seems genuinely puzzled by how a roving millenarian "enthusiast" with an "uncultivated" and distorted mind can comfortably toggle into an intellectual mode of "shrewd" pragmatism.

Édouard Glissant famously called for a "poetics of opacity" capable of granting autonomy and recognition, rather than skepticism and repudiation, to subaltern cultures: "The opaque is not the obscure, though it is possible for it to be so and be accepted as such. It is that

[154] The supposed affinity of African blood and mesmeric power was a staple of discourses surrounding somnambulism and mesmerism. For a genealogy of this issues, see Emily Ogden, "Mesmerizing laborers in the Americas, 818-819*"*. The narrative insistence about the overdetermined nature of such "powers" in Dred — to say nothing of their purported racial origins — is notable and contrasts with the text on Afro-Brazilian sorcery and "fetishism" that will comprise my third chapter.

which cannot be reduced, which is the most perennial guarantee of participation and confluence"; further specifying the texture of the problem, he calls for "the right to opacity that is not enclosure within an impenetrable autarchy but subsistence within an irreducible singularity. Opacities can coexist and converge, weaving fabrics…"[155] I would argue that the narrative gesture of undecidability in the face of Dred's inscrutable duality suggests that the terms of his status are changing. Dred's psyche and character status are symptoms of a "impenetrable autarky," a primitive vestige out of the reach of modern white readers. Rather, the text acknowledges his concrete abilities and actions ("participation and confluence") within a narrative world sundered on racial lines, a point I will develop later. For now, it is enough to underscore how this complexity helps solidify the character of Dred into an autonomous actor in the diegetic world, whose words and deeds have self-sufficiency and impact. The modalities of his "faculties" and talents in persuading and organizing slave rebellion undermine the racial primitivism that flattens and instrumentalizes his character, even if the details are opaque to the narrator. By the time we get to the above-quoted passage, the reader realizes that this has been an undercurrent to Dred's character the whole time. In his opening dialogue with Harry, Dred "drop[s] the high tone" of the prophetic mode and switches to a "bitter irony" designed to shock Harry out of his complacency: "did your master strike you? It's sweet to kiss the rod, isn't it? Bend your neck and ask to be struck again!—won't you? Be meek and lowly! that's the religion for you! You are a *slave*, and you wear broadcloth, and sleep soft…. But as for me,. *I* am a free man! Free by this," holding out his rifle (*Dred,* 199). If Nina's ascension to the ineffable heights

[155] *Poetics of Relation* (Minnesota, 1990) 190-191. While we need not subscribe to Glissant's programmatic statements against totality and ideas of the universal, within the rhetorical and ideological economy of *Dred* I read this aspect of narrative discourse as a rejection of (or at least suspension of) the European philosophies of racial and cultural evolution that characterize other aspects of the novel. In my view, the gesture is less a prefiguration of recent postcolonial recuperations of alterity and "The Other" and more an instance of the productive political and speculative realms *Dred* enters into amid the pressure of Industrial Slavery.

of "true" Christianity marks the culmination of her character, the fugitive slave's opacity suggests a will-to-freedom that refuses to be subordinated to the supremacy of property law and anti-Black control. As Harry slides into fugitivity, Dred's character qualities are eventually translated into action.

This process of solidification happens gradually, through series of plot escalations during the Antislavery Crucible. Each instance serves to cement his own character status and power of action within the diegetic world,[156] effecting the direction of the main events of the novel and pulling other characters into sphere of existence. The first chapter of Volume II ("Life in the Swamps") reverses a tragic defeat from Volume I and sets the tone for this dynamic. Dred's earlier intervention at the Camp-Meeting was motivated by the murder of a fugitive slave comrade by a slave patrol (240); "Life in the Swamps" opens with his rescue of an unnamed slave from the Georgia Trader's coffle, who survives and joins Dred's conspiracy. This signals the reorientation of Dred's prophetic powers into the immanent realm of the diegetic world; further, it revises the reader's previous experience of Dred: while his Jeremiad failed to convince the white apostates, it did create a diversion that allowed an enslaved man to join the sphere of fugitivity.[157] Dred's emergence as a coherent character depends on immanentizing his eschatological visions and expanding rhetoric with concrete action.

This comes to a dramatic head when Harry returns to the site of his initial encounter with Dred, furious at the prospect of his sister Cora's re-enslavement by his white half-brother, Tom Gordon. A turning point for Harry's arc, this moment is equally decisive for Dred. Assuming a

[156] The term "power of action" comes from Northrop Frye's *The Anatomy of Criticism*, 33 and 188. In this framework, the "hero" stands in one of four archetypical relations to the implied reader and to other characters/human beings.

[157] The sparse descriptive economy and unnamed fugitive slave counterpart give each episode the feeling of an abstract parable. To anticipate my argument, following the Antislavery Crucible, Harry's point of view endows Dred's world with a rich, vibrancy that totally contrasts with these early episodes.

"cataleptic state," he informs Harry that, at last, "there's a seal been loosed" — the revelation presents Dred with images of a coming plague and Nina's corpse. When Harry returns to Canema, he is disturbed to hear the news of a cholera outbreak (341-342). This apocalyptic turning point catalyzes Edward's effacement and Tom and Harry's battle over Harry's bodily sovereignty (which increases their character-space). But it also marks a threshold in Dred's development from a cipher for "black rage," a mouthpiece and trope of antislavery rhetoric. The "Voice in the Wilderness" chapter culminates this process. *En route* to attend to the cholera-stricken Nina, Clayton encounters Dred in a clearing near Canema; the fugitive's prophecy disturbs Clayton to his core: **"**'I know whom you seek,' he said; 'but it shall not be given you; for the star, which is called wormwood, hath fallen, and the time of the dead is come, that they shall be judged!'" (373). This is the first time that Dred appears to a white character or in close proximity to a plantation. Asserting his actuality and power, this an instance of enslaved resistance to white authority, literally and narratologically. Announcing Nina's death in this way,[158] Dred prophesies the eclipse of Clayton's mastery. His increased share of the character-space can be seen in the lengthy sermons and prophecies that account for more and more paragraphs, as Dred's chapter-length intrusions disrupt the narrative hegemony of the white character systems. Interspersed between the apex and subsequent fall of Nina, these Dred-centered chapters expand in length and diegetic relevance in proportion to Tom Gordon's (and Industrial Slavery's) total colonization of North Carolina's state and civil society. This syncopated but continuous growth suggests that, right under the noses of a "master" class, another world has begun blossoming out of control.

[158] The narrative discourse and/or implied author lend further credibility to Dred's prophecies by drawing the chapters the bookend Nina's apex and martyrdom from his pronouncements: the "fallen star" he announces to Clayton is echoed in the "Morning Star" and "Evening Star" chapters, which I analyzed in Section II.

As Dred complexifies into a full-fledged challenge from below, his setting (the Dismal Swamp) becomes resignified as cartographic and symbolic antipode to the plantation sphere. Famously figured as a zone of fugitivity, the Swamp does not merely conjure the specter of Black insurrection as a containment strategy, as detailed above. Description and diction tell another story. As noted in my analysis of PA II, the Southern legal enshrines the sovereignty of property and a new geo-politics of slavery, expressed as a poetics of decay that subsumes the settings of Volume I. Contrast this with the narrator's famous introduction of the Dismal Swamp:

> The reader who consults the map will discover that the whole eastern shore of the southern states, with slight interruptions, is belted by an immense chain of swamps, regions of hopeless disorder, where the abundant growth and vegetation of nature, sucking up its forces from the humid soil, seems to rejoice in a savage exuberance, and bid defiance to all human efforts either to penetrate or subdue (209).[159]

Like the Swamp it describes, this passage comes as an abrupt "interruption" to Dred's insurrectionary genealogy, which I discussed in relation to the Black Avenger trope. Interpellating the reader, the narrator halts the momentum to orient our attention toward a new setting that has been ignored by the novel up till now. The strange admixture of geography and exalted diction mark the Swamp as both topography and topos, a site that exists literally on the maps and discursively through the accumulated myths about fugitive slaves. Historian Sylvian Diouf notes how the accreted connotations that stuck to the Swamp:

[159] In passing, I note that the "hopeless disorder" loses its force in context, as the narrator uses the term "hopeless" several times to describe Vesey's conspiracy that failed initially but lives on through Dred. Indeed, the rhetoric of hopelessness occurs often, describing the narrative discourse or Edward's opinion towards slave conspiracies. Rather than viewing this as a dismissal of fugitive slave agency, I contend it should be read as a symptom of the conditions of possibility for the "Maroon Moment" (Schoolman 162-164); that is, the meta-historical crisis of slavery outlined in my Introductory section. At worst, it self-consciously confesses the "unthinkability" that White characters attribute to slave revolt and black self-government (Trouillot, Op. Cit.).

> Mysterious, wild, savage, primitive, dreary, gloomy, dismal, oppressive: negative terminology almost always followed any mention of the people and the place, a 2,000 square mile area — until the early nineteenth century — that stretched from southern Virginia to northeast North Carolina.[160]

In the first instance, its immediately clear how this lexicon and imagery contrast with the decay and backwards tendency of Belville or Canema after Nina's death.

As Dred's world becomes more central to the plot, the "savage exuberance" and impenetrable power of Swamp's landscape and ecology translate its primitivism into a self-conscious and strategic purpose. Instead of being merely a "negative" place or heterotopia,[161] a spectral but non-existent threat to white civil society, the Swamp becomes an externalization of fugitive agency. Edward's "unworlding" and effacement clear the space for Dred and his setting to emerge as a *positive alternative.* Mieke Bal notes that "spatial oppositions" are crucial infrastructure that orient and give meaning to narrative events: "When several places, ordered in groups, can be related to psychological, ideological, and moral oppositions, location may function as an important principle of structure".[162] In this case, the dichotomy between the poetics of decay noted in Volume I and the Swamp's poetics of dangerous vitality, its baseline principle being organic and ungovernable growth. As M. Allewaert's lucidly explains, in the antebellum period the aesthetics of the "savage exuberance" used to describe unsettled spaces

[160] In *Slavery's Exiles: The Story of American Maroons,* Diouf notes the paradigm and how the Dismal Swamp's reputation lasted well after the Civil War: "For the longest time, the swamp and its elusive inhabitants loomed large in the popular imagination" (209).
[161] Cf. Karafilis, "Spaces of Democracy."
[162] *Bal* 183. In passing, I must note that narratological and formalist accounts of "setting" and "scenery" are paltry compared to the voluminous scholarship on plot, point of view, narrative discourse, and character. This contrasts with the abundance of anthropological and phenomenological accounts of "place" (such as Gaston Bachelard, *Poetics of Space*), which are often insightful and engaging but less directly applicable for formal analysis.

like the Great Dismal Swamp (which they term "the Swamp Sublime) encode a constellation of political, economic, and ecological ideologies and fantasies for elite white subjects:

> The entanglements that proliferated in the plantation zone disabled taxonomies distinguishing the human from the animal from the vegetable from the atmospheric, revealing an assemblage of interpenetrating forces that I call an ecology. This ecological orientation departs from an eighteenth century political and aesthetic tradition distinguishing persons—in particular, white colonial subjects—from the objects and terrains they surveyed.[163]

Heavily associated with marronage,[164] the "ecological disorientation" stems from the Swamp's emergence as oppositional setting, a semiotics of landscape that evinces an insurgent discourse and further immanentizes Dred's prophetic and political powers. This revaluation of the Dismal Swamp coincides with revaluing the status of the primitive.

IVc: Fugitive Primitivism

With the collapse of the Antislavery Crucible and Edward's elite-led reform campaign, Dred's fugitive conspiracy develops into a complex character system with a unique form of Polemical Anachronism from below that I term Fugitive Primitivism. Anchored in a communalistic character system centered around Dred and an oppositional "style of existence," Fugitive Primitivism departs from the PA I by rerouting discourses about Black culture and conspiracy to posit an emergent form of self-government opposed to (and in part produced by) Industrial Slavery. Unlike the previous character systems of PA I and PA III, social anachronism is not denounced but provides the foundation for speculating on how the fugitive commune

[163] M. Allewaert, "The Swamp Sublime: Ecologies of Resistance in the American Plantation Zone," 359.
[164] Ibid, 346. See also Schoolman Op. Cit., though her interpretation of marronage in *Dred* and its ending contrast with my argument.

becomes a vehicle for historical and political progress. The Swamp poetics and Dred's immanentized prophetic powers suggest a new conception of "primitivism" (or what Hal Foster called "counterprimitivism") that encodes an "aesthetics of immediacy" as a critical response to capitalist subsumption.[165] I adopt this term from Ben Etherington's notion of "Emphatic Primitivism," which articulates a self-conscious literary and intellectual response by Black and White radicals to the perceived apotheosis of capitalist imperialism in the early twentieth century. Writers such as Lawrence and Claude McKay fashion texts that embody the perceived "remnants" of pre-modern societies to posit a desire for post-capitalist forms of life and "an exit from the capitalist world system" (Etherington, 33). Unlike modernist archive of Emphatic Primitivism, Fugitive Primitivism emerges as a literary strategy amidst the anxieties and despair wrought by Industrial Slavery. Whereas the oppositional immediacy of Emphatic Primitivism works by transposing a post-capitalist future into vanishing "remnants" of the past, in *Dred* the colonization of local and national culture and politics by slave-trading and slave-holding invests the real and imagined creole cultures of fugitive slaves with an anachronistic vitality capable of confronting the paradoxical modernity of Industrial Slavery.

[165] The concept of "subsumption" as coined by Marx is a technical term to describe two logically-distinct forms of the capitalist subordination of the production process: formal subsumption centralizes a non-capitalist labor process, separates workers from the means of production, and subordinates them to market imperatives (wages, rate of exploitation, etc); and real subsumption, which refers to a more radical transformation of the labor process (rationalization/taylorization, technical changes, expanded division of labor, etc.) that tends to increase alienation and further diminish class power. scale. For an overview, Karl Marx, *Capital Volume 1,*469-481; Harvey Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly* Capital, 86-106; and Endnotes, "The History of Subsumption." My literary application is informed by Etherington, 43. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as *Etherington*.
In my application, Fugitive Primitivism emerges as a historically-specific response to the *perceived* apogee of chattelization of enslaved people of African descent. That antislavery radicals feel this way is not incidental, but stems from the enormous power of slave law (including Fugitive transport provisions), political-financial changes in the slave trade, violent revolutions in slave-based production, and fugitive resistance. For this reason, I insist upon the dialectical, mutually presupposing relation of Industrial Slavery and Fugitive Primitivism (as opposed to racialist discourses the predate this phenomenon). Besides the political theory of Roberts and Klaussen that I turn to below, this notion is in critical dialogue with Pierrot's "black avenger" and Schoolman's "maroon moment."

My adaptation of the term expresses through the temporal paradox that opens *Dred*: Stowe's Preface marvels at the coexistence of "modern civilization of the most matter-of-fact kind" and "institutions which carry us back to the twilight of the feudal ages. with all their exciting possibilities of incident" (*Dred*, 3). As I have tried to show, this temporal juxtaposition does not fall neatly in a North/South division; the North has been corrupted by the economic and ideological power of the slaveocracy, while the paradox of "Industrial Slavery" dominates the 1850s South. Stowe links the task of her novel - to reveal the "system of slavery" (4) to the antagonism between warring racialized "styles of existence," whose conflicts produce "every possible combination of romance" (3). My conception of Fugitive Primitivism emerges in part from serious consideration of the idea of "styles of existence" and the novel's literalization of these "styles" racially, formally, and temporally within the two antagonist literary worlds, the plantation zone and the zone of fugitivity, the Swamp. This diremption within the narrative structure of *Dred*, I contend, emerges out of the crisis brought into view through the antislavery crucible. But it also comprises an act of literary and political speculation about a resolution to a crisis that exceeds the boundaries of abolitionist cognitive maps. Fugitive Primitivism corresponds to the character system, setting, narrative discourse, and point of view of a radical "style of existence," an expression of the potential and horizon for fugitive slave insurrection as a serious strategic consideration during "The Maroon Moment."[166]

In considering Dred and marronage as an act of literary speculation, rather than a symptom of white paranoia or ideological containment, I read the later Dred chapters as acts of imaginative "world-building" and literary-political experiments.[167] Implicit in the just-cited

[166] Subsequent chapters will illustrate how this preoccupation with maroon agency and extra-legal resolutions to antislavery crises also fascinate the abolitionist imaginary in Cuba and, to a lesser extent, Brazil.
[167] Here my analysis departs from Karafilis' reading of the swamp as heterotopia ("Spaces," 26).

excerpts from the Preface is the period distinction between the novelistic and romance, facticity and mimesis versus "fancy" and expanded poetic license. By emphasizing the "vivid lights, gloomy shadows, and grotesque groupings" of her novel, Stowe is doing more than just advertising the exciting events and images her readers can expect. She announces that critically representing Industrial Slavery and its downfall *requires* the expanded narrative and poetic license (as noted above, the "gloomy" and "grotesque" are key words for the zone of fugitivity). As Robert Levine notes, *Dred* "tries out a number of ways of addressing the problem of slavery" including "shifts between romance and realism as if she were struggling to find the proper novelistic form that could tell the story both of the slave plantation mistress, Nina Gordon, and the Black revolutionary, Dred".[168] Fugitive Primitivism bends the mimetic spectrum away from the comparative "realism" of the plantation chapters and toward romance — especially in the depictions of the non-plantation social spaces and the maroon commune of Engedi. In its self-conscious turn to archaic, primitive cultural and social forms, Fugitive Primitivism does not hinge on romantic racialism discourses, but uses aesthetic means and political discourse to imagine a form of life outside of the chattel slavery form of racial capitalism.[169]

Fugitive Primitivism becomes available to the novel once other Black characters join Dred's conspiracy, coinciding with the disembedding of Clayton's privileged point of view. After Harry rejects Clayton's white paternalism and gradualist politics, he assimilates to what I term Dred's "maroon commune" and Harry's point of view eventually focalizes much (but not all) of the contours of the commune. Expanding the scope of Black political intervention, the

[168] Levine, "Introduction," x.
[169] Besides Etherington, my elaboration of the maroon commune and Fugitive Primitivism has also affinities Jimmy Casas Klasuen's return to Rousseau's "counterprimitivism": "Using marooning chattel slaves in the Americas and those Hebrew maroons of Exodus as touchstones, I speculate on Rousseau's references to physical flight—exit within state spaces rather than…in stateless spaces— and to cultural flight—formations of mobile or diasporic community through techniques of cultural distancing. These are practices that win political freedom and some measure of collective autonomy against the background of domination and heteronomy" *Fugitive Rousseau, 23*

maroon camp that Dred terms Engedi names a character system that is unique in its lack of a zero-sum dynamic. As the antislavery crucible cements the victory of Industrial Slavery in North Carolina, a fugitive slave character system in the Swamp emerges as a radical opposition to Tom Gordon's seizure of power in the plantation sphere, which enshrines the power of Industrial Slavery. In these chapters from the latter half of Volume II, Dred's camp becomes fleshed out into a full-blown commune, filled with fugitives fleeing the increased violence and the auction block. After Dred rescues the unnamed fugitive, his encampment includes the widow of the slain fugitive, Harry, Lisette, Tiff, Fanny and Teddy Cripps, the Canema laborer Hark, and then a half-dozen fugitives who arrive for a conference to deliberate upon the prospects of insurrection. Dred's lushly described island encampment is finally named in the chapter recounting the assault on Tom and Edward's rescue, as Engedi. As the Old-Testament connotations suggested by its name, Engedi is figured as both early church and commune.

As we saw above, Nina's "rounding" requires her to effectively flatten and anachronize the plantation world, while the engulfment of Edward by characters associated with Industrial Slavery and slave rebellion reduces him to a caricature of the obsolete abolitionist. In these later chapters (XVII-XIX), while Dred and his prophetic abilities mark the center of gravity for the insurrection being planned, power and perspective are distributed in Engedi to a greater extent than anywhere else in the novel. It is not coincidental that the same chapter that introduces the reader to fugitive commune opens with its famous narratorial declaration about the limits of white point of view:

> We have been accustomed, even those of us who feel most, to look on the arguments for and against the system of slavery with the eyes of those who are at ease. We do not even know how fair is freedom, for we were always free. We shall never have all the materials

> for absolute truth on this subject, till we take into account, with our own views and reasonings, the views and reasonings of those who have bowed down to the yoke, and felt the iron enter into their souls.... We have seen how the masters feel and reason; how good men feel and reason, whose public opinion and Christian fellowship support the master, and give him confidence in his position. We must add, also, to our estimate, the feelings and reasonings of the slave; and, therefore, the reader must follow us again to the fastness in the Dismal Swamp (445)

While the two white character systems articulate the pro- and anti-slavery feelings and arguments of "masters" and "good men," the closing gesture suggests that transcending these racially exclusive (and thus partial) "views and reasonings" *requires* the reader to "follow us again" into Dred's world. Gail Smith points out how this passage punctures white aspirations to a hegemonic interpretation of Scripture and political strategy, teased in the plantation zone by scenes of "cross-reading" and cross-racial/gender dialogism, emblematized by Nina teaching the Bible to Tiff.[170] Taking this further, it is not coincidental that first substantive chapter set in the maroon commune opens with remarks about how notions of the slave system, antislavery, and freedom are conditioned by a subject's lived experiences and channeled into competing perspectives.[171] As I see it, Stowe's text attempts to articulate an insurgent politics grounded in what Neil Roberts the "phenomenology of lived experience" of enslavement and fugitivity.[172] By necessity, this requires experiments in narrative structure and literary representation that depart

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[170] Smith, 301.

[171] My interpretation accounts for a possibility otherwise foreclosed in Woloch's foundational arguments about the European realist novel. When discussing *Les Employés*, a Balzac novel that also lacks a strong protagonist, Woloch explains that character multiplicity registers a deeper social process immanent to capitalism: "not simply the quantitative accumulation of many human beings, but rather the fracturing of many individuals into competitive interests that are in constant struggle with each other" (*The One and the Many*, 314). In addition to the content of Engedi (*qou* counterfactual social formation), the process of its emergence represents a possibility Woloch doesn't account for; namely, the possibility for competing character systems (or worlds) within a single novel.

[172] Neil Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage*, 44. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as *Roberts*.

from homogenizing or domesticating the perspectives of rebellious slaves. The meta-historical crisis has nullified aspirations to find a vantage point onto an "absolute truth" on the abolition of slavery (as we've seen, this was not a problem for Stowe in 1850). And yet, Dred and his world provide glimpses of a "style of existence" already in formation that may unlock the struggle for universal human emancipation — not just the end of chattel slavery, but as we will see a social alternative to racial capitalist social relations. This means not simply positing monolithic Black life-world but elaborating a rich literary-political world that expresses a multi-faceted challenge to the classical white abolitionist world and to the barbaric progress of Industrial Slavery. Fugitive Primitivism aspires to such a counter-world, whose literary infrastructure includes an oppositional setting, a democratized character economy, and the various insurgent qualities of the maroon commune, Engedi.

In form and content, Dred cedes and shares his status with other fugitives. Narratologically, this is clear in the oscillations of point of view: "The Flight into Egypt" details an escape into the Swamp from Tiff's point of view ("Tiff's prayer had at least this recommendation, that he felt perfectly sure that something was to come of it. Had he not told the Lord all about it? Certainly he had…") and later from Dred's perspective when he finds the group asleep and seeking help; "The Desert" turns Dred into the object of fascination for the narrator and then the delighted Cripps children, before detailing the "gloomy fervor" and "overpowering mesmeric force" of Dred from Harry's point of view (450); "Jegar Sahadutha" begins with minor characters give lengthy monologues about the barbarity of slave law, alongside Dred and Harry; "Engedi" begins (like "Flight") with Harry and Dred viewing Edward's unconscious and convalescent body, while the bulk of the chapter details Edward's perspective on Dred in the wake of his own final defeat and near-lynching; "All Over" continues

to be focalized through Clayton, who has "radicalized" to an extent and details his plans to free Tom Gordon's slaves through the Underground Railroad; and "The Burial" aspires to capture the experience of "despair" experienced by "the hearts of multitudes in the surrounding plantations, who had regarded him as a prophet and a deliverer. He in whom they trusted was dead!" (514). My claim about the communalistic character system can be gleaned from this progression from the Black avenger trope, to a solidified agent in the literary world, to the nucleus of an insurgent character system that seeks to overturn the racial capitalist structures of the plantation sphere.

Turning back to the setting, I note two overlapping patterns of narrative discourse encode a political ecology of the zone of fugitivity. The first is the aforementioned poetics of vitality – the charged diction, "gloomy" and "savage" imagery, and the awestruck tone of the narrator – emerges in the descriptions of the swamp. The narrator specifies the Swamp's "principle of growth" as its source of literary, political, and ecological power:

> It is a mysterious and dread condition of existence…The wild, dreary belt of swamp-land which girds in those states scathed by the fires of despotism is an apt emblem, in its rampant and we might say delirious exuberance of vegetation, of that darkly struggling, wildly vegetating swamp of human souls, cut off, like it, from the usages and improvements of cultivated life (496)

Unlike the impotent and cathartic "dread" evoked by the Camp-Meeting, the description of the Swamp's atmosphere and would-be ontology evinces a spontaneous power and vitality in response to the "despotism" of slavery and the lack of "civilizing" cultivation. Slavery catalyzes the full strength of human resistance in whatever form is available: in this case, Dred's world of prophecy and supernatural faculties (mesmerism, physical strength, and so on) emerges from the "uncultivated" and therefore primitive vitality of "nature" (defined as the realm of ecology

outside of capitalist social relations in their plantation guise). Contrasting with the decrepit landscape of the plantation sphere's, Dred's world and its principle of growth project a realm of activity that — like fugitives in flight — cannot be subordinated to the plantation, quantified and animalized into chattel.[173]

As M. Allewaert notes, African and Afro-American maroons were associated with an "ecological" orientation to the world that was both devalued and feared owing to its uncultivated primitivity — in contrast to Enlightenment ideology and aesthetics that render "nature" into a reified object sundered from the human.[174] Ironically, this ecology and the political potential corresponding to maroon intimacy with the ecosystem (such as guerilla tactics, poisoning, etc.) is not inherently African but a *result* of the cultural-economic assemblage of the plantation zone: "If American plantations evinced a mode of being in which bodies were fragmented and human consciousness was enmeshed with plants, histories, economies, and mythologies, it was diasporic Africans who were associated with this mode."[175] In this way, an inchoate social ecology emerges through the rhetoric and tone associated with Dred's "style of existence." It most dramatically impinges upon the narration in the form of the Humboldtian catalogue ;[176] in other words, an overloaded train of poetically rich natural description that chaotically spans across a variety of discursive and epistemological levels. A classic example occurs when the reader is first introduced to Dred's hidden encampment:

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[173] For accounts of slavery's attempts and failures at human commodification, see Berry; Chapter 3; Davis, *Age of Emancipation*, Chapter 1; and Orland Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, Chapters 2 and 5.
[174] Monique Allewaert, "Swamp Sublime: Ecologies of Resistance in the American Plantation Zone," 340-341.
[175] Allewaert, 353. Swamp Sublime also provides productive friction with two helpful theoretical insights into the spatiality of Industrial Slavery from Walter Johnson: the "steamboat sublime" (the relation between steam technology, slavery, and territorial growth) and the "carceral landscape" (the innovations made to the Mississippi Valley's built environment to curtail marronage). Johnson, 74-75 and 218-219.
[176] In Laura Dassow's helpful gloss, Humboldt's natural-philosophical style "leaps across scale levels from a bee on the hand to a view of the world, across continents and oceans and centuries. Instead of a view from nowhere, his gymnastic prose offers a view from everywhere" ("The Birth of the Two Cultures." 256). As such, it aspires to emplace local elements of the natural world into a picture of the cosmic or the Absolute.

> The reader must follow us far beyond the abodes of man, into the recesses of that wild desolation known as the "Dismal Swamp." We pass over vast tracts where the forest seems growing out of the water. Cypress, red cedar, sweet gum, tulip, poplar, beech, and holly, form a goodly fellowship, waving their rustling boughs above. The trees shoot up in vast columns, fifty, seventy-five, and a hundred feet in height; and below are clusters of evergreen gall-bushes, with their thick and glossy foliage, mingled in with swamp honeysuckles, grape-vines, twining brier, and laurels, and other shrubs, forming an impenetrable thicket….It would seem impossible that human feet could penetrate the wild, impervious jungle; but we must take our readers through it, to a cleared spot, where trunks of fallen trees, long decayed, have formed an island of vegetable mould, which the art of some human hand has extended and improved (238-239).

At the risk of falling into a Humboldtian vortex, note the unwieldy discursive combinations of travel-memoir and poetic fancy ("follow us far beyond the abodes of man"), the over-abundant and exuberant catalogues of exotic flora and fauna ("Cypress, red ceder, sweet gum, tulip…"), and scientific factoids about the Swamp and human settlement. The viscosity of this 600-word paragraph — its discursive eclecticism, divinized nature, and effusiveness — hijacks the narrative momentum, which to this point had been devoted to providing a Southern social panorama of the diverse groups united to attend the Camp-Meeting. Such disruptions tend to happen when the narrator invokes Dred or the Swamp. The Humboldtian sweep of these passages collate the poetics of vitality with the prophetic disposition of Dred's "Mosaic" approach to the Bible and his mesmeric charisma. In doing so, the text literalizes Stowe's notion of a radical Black "style of existence" antagonistic to the plantation sphere; the zone of fugitivity cannot be contained by the narrative discourse that so convincingly narrates the events of Nina's

conversion and the antislavery crucible. In its excess and gravity, the primitivity of the Swamp does not invalidate fugitive agency but posits the ecological grounds of a literary world hostile to Industrial Slavery. Far from a containment strategy, the Dismal Swamp swells into an environment of untapped revolutionary potential.[177]

The maroon commune resolves the political, moral, and theological antinomies of the plantation sphere in large part through the reanimation of the "primitive" (historically antecedent) social forms, such as the church-polity and cultivation for consumption. As if to plant the seed for the contrast with the plantation, the narrator references the political economy of the commune early in the text:

> … the quantity of pine and other resinous trees that grow there impart a balsamic property to the water, and impregnate the air with a healthy resinous fragrance, which causes it to be an exception to the usual rule of the unhealthiness of swampy land. The soil [of the Swamp], when drained sufficiently for purposes of culture, is profusely fertile. Two small cabins stood around the border of the clearing, but the centre was occupied with patches of corn and sweet potatoes, planted there to secure as much as possible the advantage of sun and air (239-240)

In an important contrast with the plantation sphere, Dred's commune enjoys a prosperous and bountiful soil that the fugitives till for life-sustaining crops – not luxury monoculture, raw material, or foodstuffs for exchange. The "savage exuberance" of the Swamp has not been

[177] There is one important qualification in order. Stowe's invocation of the "Swamp Sublime" is not naïve or romantic in aligning this oppositional "style of existence" with a transformed conception of nature. In many important areas, the text is notably self-conscious of rhetorical motivations for collating the spontaneous reactions against the slavery and its imputed "*emblem*," the "delirious exuberance" of the Dismal Swamp's flora and fauna. As with Dred's prophetic-practical dualism, the novel hastens to mention on multiple occasions that the Dismal Swamp is not a heterotopia removed from US capitalism but is in fact unevenly integrated within this social system. Thus, the occasional (but crucial) mentions of the infrastructure projects that are "opening up" the Swamp to the plantation sphere: the eventual escape North is aided by enslaved and free black canal workers who help procure a boat for the fugitives (520-521).

thoroughly dominated and cleared for large-scale agriculture, nor do the fugitives revert to some idealized hunter-gather state of nature.[178] Rather, the maroon commune has developed a form of social reproduction that emerges out of its ecological enmeshment in nature and contrasts with capitalist social relations such as a coercive division of labor and domination of exchange value. This comes into full view when the narration returns to the commune after the fellow fugitives have joined. Following the poetics of vitality, the scene is set during a "a calm, still, Indian-summer afternoon. The whole air is flooded with a golden haze," that reveals the "little settlement": Tiff hoes the sweet potatoes and tends to the corn patch, the community helps Harry and Lisette build their cabin, meals are prepared and enjoyed in common (just as foodstuffs are), Dred hunts game in the woods to trade for manufactured items, such as guns for self-defense (445-447). The social archaism of the marrons resembles a return to small-scale commune that allows for labor in common, production for immediate use, and limited reliance on commerce with more "advanced" economies. Far from a mere curiosity, the narrative discourse suggests the ethical-political salience of this arrangement. Besides the effusive tone, this can be gleaned its attitude toward the porous division of labor at Engedi. Tiff, a skilled gardener chooses "hoeing in the sweet potato patch" as the vocation most suited to him (410); while Dred's useful labor takes the form of studying the bible and catching game and Harry organizes the revolution. While meal

[178] This picture of what I term the reproduction of the maroon commune is clearly informed by the longstanding history of antislavery accounts of "pure" African tribal societies that precede the violence of the slave trade, especially Anthony Benezet's *Some Historical Account of Guinea* (1767) and Equiano's *The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano* (1789). While the Romantic/Rousseavian episteme that informs this view has been rightfully critiqued, theorists Neil Roberts and Jimmy Casas Klausen have recently stressed how this strategic primitivism was taken up and "creolized" by theorists of freedom across the Black Atlantic. For example, Roberts asserts that Douglass draws on this lineage to articulate a more powerful "critique of the prevailing Lockean conception of individual property and the Lockean proviso that assumes an individual has entitlement to acquire property and maximize the resources of a habitable land as long as the agent does not disadvantage, harm, or prevent another agent from doing the same" (*Freedom as Marronage*, 57). For genealogies of this mode of antislavery primitivism, see Davis, *Problem of Antislavery*, Chapter 4 and Wood, "Introduction."

preparation seems to be gendered (the women are constantly near the fire), the community participates in caring for the Cripps children — even Dred (to the astonishment of Tiff).

If the economic oppression of the plantation is opposed by this oppositional space, the political and theological contradictions of the white plantation sphere are also challenged. The spiritual leader of Engedi, Dred is not the theocratic tyrant we might expect. Rather, the collective *belief* in his prophetic powers and the need for emancipation endow the commune with an ethos of liberation theology. And yet, the content of this ethos is contested: Lisette, for instance, clearly dissents from Dred's radical millenarianism, advising Harry to maintain his autonomy from the "gloomy" preacher (452). Nonetheless, this application of the Bible, while contested within the slave community as it is by Edward in white civil society, illustrates the extent to which Engedi transcends the "corrupted" and "hypocritical" Christianity of the pro-slavery and anti-antislavery Evangelical churches and their congregations. An economically self-sufficient synod — an overt reference to the "primitive" or "early" Christian Church — is an avatar of Fugitive Primitivism. Edward unintentionally endorses Engedi's "liberation theocracy" in defending his belief that ecclesiastical leaders must join his reform campaign: "did not the church, in the primitive ages, stand against the whole world in arms? If religion be anything, must it not take the lead of society, and be its sovereign and teacher, and not its slave?"(396). This tongue-in-cheek observation can be pushed beyond a critique of religious hypocrisy to suggest that, once the church becomes "enslaved" by social tyranny, then a church of slaves may be required to return Christianity to its more radical, "primitive" origins. Considered as synod, the character system that coalesces around Dred in the Dismal Swamp embodies an abolitionist Protestant *Re*-reformation led by fugitive slaves and their "Hebraistic" approach to Scripture.

Ultimately, Fugitive Primitivism projects an affirmative, if not perfectly coherent, vision of Black self-organization and self-government as the prime mover in the coming battles for abolition. As Maria Karafilis argues in her excellent essay, what I call the fugitive commune represents a "space of democracy," opposed to the cotton plantation and Edward's apprentice-system plantation.[179] Engedi poses a democratic rupture with the plantation zone's corrupt institutions and civil society. This is most evident in the chapter "Jegar Sahadutha," a chapter that sets up an apocalyptic climax by giving its space over to the fugitive radicals and council of leaders who are deliberating on the prospects of a slave insurrection. The chapter provides an important speculation on a fugitive slave-derived form of self-government. As with commune's social reproduction, the fugitives model form of direct democracy seizes on an archaic remnant (in this case, a tribal system of elders) that contrasts with the pro-slavery inertia of the US legal institutions. After a subversive collective reading of the Declaration of Independence, each member of the group shares a story centering on traumatic, violent experiences of slavery and the laws that sanction them (*Dred,* 454-458). This leads to Dred's dramatic call for a covenant amongst the fugitives, "Jegar Sahadutha! The God of their fathers judge between us! If they had a right to rise up for their oppressions, shall they condemn us" (458).

Fugitive Primitivism thus names a collective force that emerges in response to what IS is unleashing new barbarism and force upon the Upper South, produced by but orthogonal to the plantation sphere. This character system would be better identified with the name, Engedi, than with the person of Dred, insofar as perspective and power are distributed to a diversity of

[179] "The swamp itself is a literal and figurative "no man's land." Figured as unfit for human habitation, a "desert space," it goes unclaimed as private property and paradoxically offers the men and women settling it a nurturing space of freedom. The shape-shifting, uncontainable, unknowable, and virtually uncultivable space defies private ownership and challenges the traditional conception of the nation with borders to be established and enforced" (Karafilis 38).

fugitives rather than congealed in one character. Following Neil Roberts' distinction, part of the radicalism of Engedi is its combination of what he terms "sovereign" and "sociogenic" forms of marronage (both of which are elaborated with primary recourse to the Haitian Revolution). The former pertains to the dimensions of the commune oriented towards emancipation and the replacement of the plantation zone with a new polity, lead and legislated by leaders such as Dred and Harry (Roberts, 103).[180] But the more radical (and for that reason, more ephemeral) concept of sociogenesis provides insights into Engedi's radicalism:

> …the idea that lived experiences fashion our social world and structure our civil and political orders. it is the notion that humans bring the state of society into being through objective and subjective measures. Human procedures and appraisals occur in a world embedded in language, its meaning, and resistance to inertia. sociogenesis is, in short, the prism that captures the process of flight from the zone of nonbeing (Roberts, 119)

The naming of Engedi, like the naming of Haiti, approximates an act of sociogenesis, emerging from of Afro-millenarian realm of experience that Stowe endeavors to represent; the importance of its name is underscored by the fact that the reader does not learn its name until page 494 — the moment when the fugitives battle with Tom Gordon and rescue Edward. This diegetic anachronism, in my view, emphasizes the solidity and coherence of the maroon commune, and the extent to which Black self-organization remains "unthinkable" even to white progressives. But the Engedi scenes represent more concrete instances of sociogenesis: they are the only chapters in the novel that name and represent enslaved characters beyond the cast of privileged domestic servants and managers — a textual performance of their "flight from the zone of

[180] The parallels between Dred and Toussaint are not negligible, as both seem devoted to "Abolitionism, hybrid constitutionalism, and militarized agriculture [as] the fulcrums of sovereign flight" (Roberts, 106). Obviously, Dred's "hybrid" governance would be more theocratically-inflected than Toussaint's "black republic," which would necessarily alter its "sovereignty."

nonbeing" that coincides with their erasure from the plantation chapters. The comparatively subaltern fieldworkers and manual laborers who were excluded *de facto* from the manor parlors and courtroom are named as agents in the fight against their oppression. This begins with Hark, Harry's friend who serves as a go-between for Canema and the conspiracy before he is tortured to death. But this radical dynamic of the democratizing character economy expands further after Hark disappearance. During the ritualized pledge of loyalty to the insurrectionary covenant begins with new fugitive characters, Hannibal and Monday, sharing stories of brutal abuses by their enslavers (*Dred* 455). And this continues even after Dred's death, as the escape plan centers the story of Hannibal (a William Wells Brown-esque ferry operator) and Jim, a heretofore unnamed personal valet to Tom Gordon — both of whom cunningly outmaneuver their masters to their flight to freedom (521-526). Despite the implosion of the conspiracy, the character system at least gestures towards the process whereby the enslaved masses (named or anonymous) are already participating the processes "of fashioning "social worlds" and "political orders."

This oppositional setting, character system, and "counterprimitivist" social form that constitutes Fugitive Primitivism is not static; it emerges in a dynamic relation to the hegemonic social relations of the plantation zone, which take the form of the slave trade (as I have already detailed) and to the brutal exploitation of slave labor power. It is not coincidental that Hark – a character who actually produces the crops that sustain plantation slavery[181] – finds himself at the

[181] While I do not wish to appear as "productivist" in assigning priority to the subaltern field slaves, their relative invisibility in an antislavery text is somewhat surprising (although the same can be said of *Cabin*). It remains a paradox that a novel that (in instances of PAI) is so concerned with the decline and abjection of the plantation contains so few representations of the miseries of plantation labor, surveillance, and punishment. However, it is equally true that the black characters in *Dred*, as I have illustrated, are more complex than the "flat" and abject victims so common to abolitionist texts (especially by White authors). This exclusiveness is certainly one of the limitations of *Dred*'s political imaginary, although I have noted how Fugitive Primitivism addresses this to an extent. Ironically, Delany's more radical *Blake* evinces a similar elitism in its speculations about the forms of revolutionary leadership that emerge to challenge Industrial Slavery.

center of a conflict that will escalate the fight against Tom Gordon. Harry lays out why the new political economy of the plantation finds him justifiably worried for Hark's life:

> They have always been held under a very mild rule, and every one knows that a plantation so managed is not so immediately profitable as it can be made for a short time by forcing everything up to the highest notch. He has got a man there for overseer—Old Hokum…famous for his hardness and meanness; and he has delivered the people, unreservedly, into his hands. He drinks, and frolics, and has his oyster-suppers, and swears he'll shoot any one that brings him a complaint. Hokum is to pay him so much yearly, and have to himself all that he makes over (451)

The empowerment of a new overseer (ironically dubbed Hokum) tasked with wringing immediate, short-term profits by exacting more brutal oversights and violence toward the bodies of enslaved laborers — this is how recent historians of capitalism describe the on the ground experience of Industrial Slavery. For historian Edward Baptist, the expansion of soil science and the "rationalization" of cotton production was built on the immiseration, punishment, and early mortality of slaves: "[this] system that extracted more work by using oppressively direct supervision combined with torture ratcheted up to far higher levels than he had experienced before. Between 1790 and 1860, these crucial innovations made possible a vast increase in the amount of cotton grown in the United States."[182] The brutality Tom Gordon inflicts on Hokum is fleshed out through their treatment of individual characters: Hark is tortured to death and even Milly decides to flee amid the "dreadful demoralization of character" wrought by the new regime (521). The paradoxical correlation between for "progress" in crop yields and progressively brutal exploitation of Black life form one key aspect of the dialectic between plantation and maroon

[182] Baptist 185; see also Johnson 245.

commune. Engedi emerges and grows in response to this ratcheting up of the technical and disciplinary rates of exploitation on the cotton plantations in the novel. This is another central way that marronage and conspiracy emerge as intrinsic responses to the machinations of Industrial Slavery.

IV: Endings and Transitions

The radical speculation of *Dred*'s Fugitive Primitivism, of course, does not end with a counterfactual history of a successful insurrection. While most critics have agreed (and usually complained) that Dred stops short of unleashing the "final seal" of insurrection, no one has convincingly interpreted the novel's cascade of anti-climaxes. The first and most enigmatic sign of these, I believe, occurs before the fugitive council: entering into a prophetic trance right after the news of Hark's brutal death, Dred seems to "symbolize to human eye the energy of that avenging justice which all nature shudderingly declares" (458). But the narrator's own dread is premature. After a long tirade drawn from the Prophetic Books, Dred attempts to direct and localize divine wrath by invoking the modern Israelites, "The burden of the beasts of the South! The land of trouble and anguish." He feels sure of the "triumphant reality" of his designs when he encounters a figure from the biblical town of "Edom" who seems to refute Dred's hope that "the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come!" For the only time in the text, Dred seems to be acting as a *medium* or oracle, who is finally able to make his case to some divine interlocutor – only to apparently be rebuffed. But it's impossible to surmise more, since the action does not unfold from Dred's but from the council members. The reader can only see his elation turn to disappointment, prophetic vengeance to theodicy as his "dialogue" ending with the timeless question: "How long, O Lord, how long? Awake! Why sleepest thou, O Lord?" This inscrutable bathos comes before Milly's famous pacifist hymn and eschatological patience,

which leads many critics to complain that Milly's less-radical, Tom-ish political theology wins the day.[183] Vexed and frustrated, the next day the communards hear Tom Gordon and gun shots, leading to Edward's rescue; divine license is with-held long enough for Dred to attempt one last rescue from Tom Gordon's slave-hunting posse — leading to Dred's martyrdom.

Ultimately, the roiling conflicts the novel sets up — first with the collapse of the Antislavery Crucible and then with the abrupt implosion of Fugitive Primitivism as an alternative with Dred death — are left unresolved. With Tom Gordon's "lynch law" and war against fugitive slaves, two short chapters detail the transport of the remaining main characters to the North and their relocation to a Canadian town of family-farms owned by Clayton or to other Northern safe-havens. Ex-slaves Hannibal and Harry Gordon enjoy thriving farms in Ontario Canada; Milly reunites with an estranged child and opens an orphanage in NYC; the Cripps children marry and ascend to middle-class lives, supported by Old Tiff; and Edward and his sister retire to an estate in Boston. Much of the scholarship highlights this final sequence as an unsatisfactory *deus ex machina*, an extended wish-fulfillment that leaves important conflicts unresolved and renders the "message" of the text extremely ambiguous.[184] But if we accept my contention that the novel elaborates a Fugitive Primitivism as an "organic" response to the waxing power and immiseration caused by Industrial Slavery, how to start make sense of the sudden collapse of this character system?

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[183] As Levine and others have shown, Milly's politics are much more radical than they outwardly appear. Her recounting of the episode in which Nina's Aunt Harriet sells off seven of her children ends with a subtle inversion of power when Milly curses her enslaver that (for her) comes to fruition with the dramatic death of Harriet's son. Milly's repentance is less than convincing. Levine, "Introduction," xxiv and Hickman, 367-368.

[184] Karafilis makes the most emphatic case: "This tension or disjunction between narrative and resolution is an effect of the power of ideologically-determined narrative structures that work to shore up corresponding social structures. Although closing with the Canadian settlement may suggest an anxiety on Stowe's part over the politics of the swamp and the threat it posed to traditional social order, the novel's final images do not neutralize them radical impulses and alternative models of sociopolitical organization Stowe previously has depicted. Even Stowe herself cannot completely contain the radical ideas she already released," 34. For a critique of this reading, Schoolman 169.

That Stowe's novel veers away from positing a history a slave insurrection in the end, may actually speak to her commitment amid the meta-historical crisis facing abolitionists, and perhaps a tacit refusal of new teleological solutions. In my reading, *Dred* is not meant to elaborate a coherent program or a newer, more radical meta-history to replace the old one; the dialectic of Industrial Slavery and the maroon commune need not require a "dialectical resolution" (in the sense of a facile "synthesis"). For this reason, I have insisted that PA I is never fully discarded as a rhetorical strategy, even if the theory and practice that perfected it (elitist gradualism) has failed. What is more important is the novel's experimental disposition that emerges amidst the actuality of civil war. In the decade before Harper's Ferry – the period of Bleeding Kansas, the apparent extension of slave power geographically and in congress, and the many physical and legal battles over fugitive extradition – Black and white abolitionists increasingly adopted a "by any means necessary" attitude toward abolition (a position that certain Black radicals had adopted much earlier). By 1856, even pacifists like Henry Clarke Wright and perhaps Garrison began interpreting the patriotic motto "Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God" as a justification for slaves to follow their own version of "non-resistance" — even if it meant the use of force. Gerrit Smith, James McCune Smith, Douglass, and other "political abolitionists" openly countenanced (and in some cases privately supported) slaves striking "the first blow" against the oppressors.[185]

As a presentist and interventionist novel, Stowe intends to expose the "slave system" and assay solutions to slavery as "a great moral problem in the sight of all mankind" (4; 3). In line with her radical contemporaries, *Dred* endeavors to show that civil war has already been unleashed: for this reason, the Tom Gordon's imposed "lynch law" and his slave hunters are

[185] Douglass popularized this paraphrase of Byron in radical abolitionist circles. For an account of the trope, see Hickman, 361-362.

"Border Ruffians" ("half drunken, profane, obscene as the harpies which descended on the feast of Æneas").[186] Likewise, the narrator compares Harry's descent into quasi-nihilistic militancy after Hark's murder to the feelings of the interracial group of antislavery radicals that emerges around John Brown – an experience that seems to be spreading to non-slaves across "our nation":

> How stinging is it at such a moment to view the whole respectability of civilized society upholding and glorifying the murderer [Tom Gordon] …Some in our own nation have had bitter occasion to know this, for we have begun to drink the cup of trembling which for so many ages has been drank alone by the slave. Let the associates of Brown ask themselves if they cannot understand the midnight anguish of Harry (525)

Slavery and anti-slave organizations (led by enslaved action) reveal that a civil war is not only inevitable; like the readers introduction to Dred, we are late to the fact that it's already here. This helps explain why even Clayton does not consider the Underground Railroad a solution to the crisis, but a literal and figurative "escape-valve" that allows the plot to end even as its story and core problems continue unresolved (519). The other two times the phrase "escape-valve" appears are with respect to Edward Clayton's reform measures that will hold off revolt and perhaps assist a revolution from above (the Magnolia Grove Project and Clayton's legal reform). As the white reformer has it, "If you want insurrection, the only way is to shut down the escape-valve; for, will ye nill ye, the steam must rise." This is not to discredit the Underground Railroad, which played an immense role in breaking the laws of human property and fueling the antislavery imaginary.

[186] Harrold, 159-182 and Sinha, 544-552.

Given the imaginative and narrative economy of the novel, I read aforementioned jump-cut out of the Carolina crucible and into a series of crudely depicted "resolutions" as performative and rhetorical, rather than as simply ideological containment strategy. In the first instance, the narrative gesture of contriving a resolution is the strongest form of irresolution. As I intimated earlier, like the often clumsy and unexpected shifts between character systems (Nina's abrupt death being the most resounding), this pseudo-closure expresses the structure of political feeling in Late-Abolition US: a defiant blend of disoriented persistence amidst a bleak, overdetermined conjuncture. Ironically, there is a degree of overlap between the century of hostile and dismissive criticism of *Dred*'s formal incongruity (in contrast with the ambivalent, but always-prominent place of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) and the generation of more charitable readings that lament Stowe's manifestly incoherent ideological investments. At the risk of glibness, grasping the novel's rhetorics of temporality leads me to view Stowe's tendency to establish and dash readerly expectations of novelistic form and content in a different light. Rather than imparting a clear program or doubling-down on a new abolitionist world, *Dred* is carefully constructed to drag the reader into the over-active, conflicted political imaginary of a social movement that has unwittingly just entered a phase of civil war.

Moreover, these self-deconstructing endings make it clear that Industrial Slavery's steam power is too powerful for Edward's escape-valves. I would propose another "ending" of the novel be countenanced, besides the death of Dred and the infamous flight to Canada. At the end of Appendix Three — one of the final pages in nearly every printed edition of Dred – Stowe steps back from her strident critique of ecclesiastical support for slavery, and offers a more global picture of the *conjuncture* in which her novel intervenes more in line with the Preface:

> In 1856 we are sorry to say that we can report no improvement in the action of the great ecclesiastical bodies on the subject of slavery, but rather deterioration. Notwithstanding all the aggressions of slavery, and notwithstanding the constant developments of its horrible influence in corrupting and degrading the character of the nation, as seen in the mean, vulgar, assassin-like outrages in our national Congress, and the brutal, bloodthirsty, fiend-like proceedings in Kansas, connived at and protected, if not directly sanctioned and in part instigated, by our national government;—notwithstanding all this, the great ecclesiastical organizations seem less disposed than ever before to take any efficient action on the subject (593).

Rather than ending with a chapter called "Clear Shining After the Rain," this conclusion offers a bleak prognosis of the present, characterized by "deterioration" rather than improvement, corruption and degradation rather than progress, bloodthirst and assassinations rather than hopeful rays of moral advancement. The scholarly consensus on *Dred* holds that Black rebellion and self-government is either "unthinkable" or undesirable for Stowe. But perhaps the series of anti-climaxes points toward the fallacy behind Dred's obsession with receiving a "sign" from God à la Nat Turner — and by extension the reader, for seeking confirmation of the capacity for rebellion and self-organization from the plot. By deploying social archaisms to posit a Black subject organizing to combat Industrial Slavery, Fugitive Primitivism speculates that the historical force of slavery's negation and obsolescence may already be immanent to the system. Rather than offering a new meta-history -– one grounded either in naïve optimism of perfect resolution or the eventual divine omen that will start the rebellion from below — the revelation and downfall of Dred's character contains a prognosis equal parts fatalistic and hopeful: the apocalypse is *right now*, stop waiting. This self-reflexive stance is tempered by an earnest blank

space about what exactly is to be done. The spontaneous emergence of Black self-organization, of a new narratological and diegetic paradigm amid the collapse of the white reformism, attests to the fact that Black agency and slave revolt has become a key factor in the abolitionist movement. I now turn to a different national context within the Late-Abolition world and consider how Francisco Calcagno's novel *Romualdo: One of Many* (Cuba, 1869) is likewise attuned to the problems of narrating the constellation of Industrial Slavery, marronage, and civil war – but in the context with a tenuous abolition movement and waxing anti-colonial struggles.

CHAPTER TWO

TROPICAL UNTRUTH: ABANDONMENT AND GRAND MARRONAGE

… otros y otros horribles casos que aparecerán el día que alguno tenga la audacia de escribir una. obra titulada *Los Misterios de Cuba*. Será mejor que nunca se escribe.[187]
[…more and more other horrific examples [of shocking violence toward slaves] will come to light the day someone has the courage to write a work entitled *The Mysteries of Cuba*. It will be better if it is never written.]

Inside, the cave was like a house. A little darker, naturally. Oh, and dung, yes, the smell of bat dung. I walked on it because it was as soft as a mattress. The bats led a life of freedom in the caves. They were and are the masters of them.[188]

I: Cuba's Age of Counterrevolution

At the dawn of the Late-Abolition moment, *Dred*'s inflated apocalypticism holds out the hope for optimism for the future even as abolition finds itself dangerously out of date. By contrast, the text I will discuss in this (and the subsequent) chapter takes up concerns specific to the 1860s moment in which a new paradox emerged: the death of US slavery delivered a major blow to Industrial Slavery, yet the institution remained powerful at decade's end. The end of the US Civil War worked synergistically with Cuban and Spanish challenges to Industrial Slavery: the end of the trade in 1867, the rise of the liberal Spanish court, and the militant growth of abolition in central and eastern Cuba. These developments culminated in an intense and protracted independence war against the Spanish Empire and those aligned with them (especially western sugar planters). However, it will become clear that this state of affairs did not simplify the political situation on the ground. Industrial Slavery did not politely decline but attempted to reassert its grip on Cuba and Brazil even as its long-term prospects were suddenly bleaker than ever. But whereas Brazil was more successful at deferrals and political subterfuge, Cuba's volatile political situation coalesced into an armed antislavery movement by 1868 that would reverberate far beyond the Spanish Caribbean.

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[187] Francisco Calcagno, *Romualdo, Uno de Tantos*, 8. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as *Romualdo*.
[188] Miguel Barnet, *Biography of a Runaway Slave*, 46.

To understand the belatedness and eventual militancy of Cuban abolition, I need to briefly review the island's complex social history. By the turn of the century, the Spanish colony of Cuba not only ran against the trend of liberal revolutions and formal abolition, but stood as the vanguard of Industrial Slavery in the sugar planting world. Famously termed the "ever faithful" island due to its continued loyalty to an otherwise reeling Spanish crown, Cuba's planters and Spanish officials warded off any serious threat to slavery as Independence movements abounded and West Indian Emancipation loomed, soon followed by the French colonies. As laid out in my Introduction, the Second Slavery revitalized the slave trade and elevated Spanish Caribbean plantations to unprecedented heights. The most immediate reason for this was the Haitian Revolution and Spain's ability to preserve a transatlantic slave trade that would soon be stymied everywhere else save Brazil. As Ada Ferrer and others have shown, Black revolution in the most technologically advanced slave society drastically reshuffled the geo-political economy of New World slavery, with Cuba emerging as the immediate beneficiary:

> [L]iberation in Saint-Domingue helped entrench its denial in Cuba. As slavery and colonialism collapsed in the French colony, the Spanish island underwent transformations that were almost the mirror image of Haiti's…Two decades after Haitian independence, Cuba had emerged as the world's largest producer of sugar and one of the greatest consumers of enslaved Africans in the nineteenth century world.[189]

The concomitant flows of capital, planters, technology, skilled engineers, and enslaved workers into Cuba in particular gave an invaluable jump-start to an island that had been a glorified naval base for the much of its previous 300 years of colonial settlement.[190]

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[189] *Freedom's Mirror*, 10.
[190] Drescher, *Abolition* 183-185; Marquese et al., Chapter 3.

Along with the hubs of US Industrial Slavery of the Cotton Kingdom and the coffee complex of Brazil's Paraiba Valley, Cuba's sugar provinces boasted some of the most profitable, productive, and technologically sophisticated enterprises of the hemisphere. Even independent of the events in Saint-Domingue, influential peninsular and creole capitalists such as Francisco Arrango y Parreño had long lobbied for the infusion of modern technology and science to bring "the bases of the development of sugar production and manufacturing in line with the new times and with *progress*."[191] Indeed, aside from concerns over social control and racial composition, proslavery ideologues had little issue developing philosophies of history in which racial bondage would remain tied to sophisticated markers of modern industry. Scholars have shown that innovations such as the application of steam power to cane drying and the development of rail and steamship travel turned sugar mills into innovative R&D hubs of the Caribbean.[192] In Cuba, Industrial Slavery fostered "experimenters [who] aimed to accumulate capital through the accumulation of knowledge to maximize efficient production of a good destined for the world market."[193] Rebecca Scott notes that by the onset of the War and initial publication of *Romualdo* in 1868 "Cuba produced 720,250 metric tons of sugar, more than the cane sugar reaching the world."[194] This productivity corresponds to an explosion both of stolen Africans transplanted into Cuba and the enormous overall slave demographics. Even despite the notoriously high mortality rates on the sugar plantation, Cuba's enslaved population by 1862 was 248,000 or roughly 29% of the population. While significantly lower than sugar colonies of the previous era, the relative population is nonetheless staggering; it was equal to the US South circa 1860, which

[191] José Antonio Piqueras, "The Discovery of Progress in Cuba," 51.
[192] Moreno Fraginals, 98-142; Rood, "Plantation Laboratories", 157-158.
[193] Rood, "Plantation Laboratories," 159.
[194] Scott, "Explaining Abolition," 83.

tended to have higher life expectancies, and 20% higher than Brazil circa 1872.[195] The formally illegal Cuban slave trade continued to thrive covertly, facilitated by US ships and merchants sustained the voracious appetite for murderous bondage that formed the obverse side to the technologically sophisticated Industrial Slavery on the island.

One key distinguishing area of Spanish colonial slavery was the set of customs and bureaucratic protections regarding the treatment and status of free and enslaved Black subjects. Like other Spanish colonies, Cuba inherited a byzantine bureaucracy with strictures and norms regulating every aspect of life for the whole spectrum of its racialized caste system.[196] Well-known distinctions between Spanish and creole whites, between free-born and freed Black Cubans, conditioned everything from professional opportunities to what fabrics could be worn. But in stark contrast to the Anglophone and even French colonial regimes, Cuba had a robust system that afforded some degree of rights [*derechos*] for enslaved people of African descent. Derived from an admixture of Roman law, Colonial reforms, and local customs, this system had two key mechanisms whereby "entrepreneurial slaves" could utilize the Spanish bureaucracy for their own ends.[197] In the more populous west, the free Black population accounted for an astounding 25% of the total in 1792 (though this plummeted to 11% in the 1860s for reasons that will be explored soon)[198]. Enslaved men and women could (and often did) lodge complaints with the *sínidico* (local council) to force a sale away from an abusive master [*pedir papel*: request a deed of sale] or to fix a price for their own self-purchase [coartación: ex-slaves who freed themselves this way were known as coartados] (103). Aline Helg surmises that "between 75 and

[195] Bergard, 117-129.
[196] Verena Martinez-Alier, *Marriage, Class, and Colour in Nineteenth-Century Cuba,* 2-8.
[197] Alejandro de la Fuente, "Slave Law and Claims-Making in Cuba," 106; Gloria García, "In Search of their Rights," 52-64; Helg, 66-67 and 240-241
[198] Bergard, 126.

80 percent of slaves who obtained manumission in Iberian [note: Spanish and Portuguese/Brazilian] America purchased it themselves or received it thanks to payment by a relative."[199] While such measures were by no means the norm, they speak to a legacy of customs and official practices that were foundational to Cuba even after the rise of Industrial Slavery.[200] Their stability can be illustrated by the fact that these two customs were codified into law only in 1842 with the Reglamento de Los Esclavos; even amid the zenith of the "age of the barracoons," such practices remained common even before legal precedent was established. Another distinguishing aspect is the toleration of palenques (fugitive slave settlements), comparable in scale and frequency only to Brazil and geographically similar regions in Jamaica.[201] The question of Black *derechos* and the palenques will prove important to explaining how Calcagno's novel uses Cuba's past to make sense of the later crisis period.

Despite its legal architecture and free Black communities, the socio-political climate was hostile to any criticism of slavery, and Blacks of every status where often regarded with close scrutiny by Whites and state officials. The specter of Haiti (witnessed first-hand by many on the island) and the collapse of the greater Spanish empire to independence incentivized the colonial regime to integrate *criollo* merchants and planters into the power structure, which provided mutual stability for planters and the crown. Even without the legal protections on speech and assembly, a small but vocal antislavery movement developed in the first half of the century within Spain, Puerto Rico, and even in Cuba.[202] On the ever-faithful colony, one current of

[199] Helg, 215
[200] The pre-Escalera halcyon days of free Black culture and community in Havana are eulogized in Cirilo Villaverde's classic 1882 novel, *Cecilia Valdez*.
[201] Gabino La Rosa Corzo, *Runaway Slave Settlements in Cuba*, 38-42 and 120-121.
[202] By the 1840s, slavery in Puerto Rico continued to collapse for a variety of factors and a vocal group began advocating for the wholesale cease of the African trade and an immediate transition to free labor (Schmidt-Nowara 37-45). In Spain, apart from vanguards such as José Blanco White, even the most dedicated Liberal advisees to the Bourbon crown couldn't resist the profits from the Cuban colony. See Fradera, 270-276.

dissent was the influential *letrado* José Antonio Saco, who by the 1830s publicly opposed slavery on the grounds of Liberal economic theory and fears of "losing" its European complexion through demographic "degeneration" or through a second Haiti.[203] A second, relatively radical current coalesced around the critic, publisher, and author Domingo del Monte. A wealthy liberal based in the western provinces, del Monte edited and distributed influential newspapers and literary works that stressed the cultural specificity of *Cubanidad* vis-à-vis the Spanish empire. These conversations about nationalism and political reform led to a critique of slavery as an imperial imposition that created an undesirable racial caste system.[204] Gerard Aching helpfully labels this milieu as "reformist," contrasting its emphasis on "denouncing slavery for the ways it undermined the moral and political development of Cuba's Creole bourgeoisie" with the abolitionist emphasis on "sentiment and philanthropy in order to promote the emancipation of slaves."[205] While this may overstate the case somewhat, representations of slavery and the rhetorical strategies of the del Monte school fail depict free or Enslaved subjects with even the limited complexity and agency we've seen in Stowe, Zambrana, Castro Alves, and Calcagno. Instead, the poems, novels, and articles that emerge from the del Monte *tertulias* [salons] largely fall into traditional antislavery tropes that originate in the British movement and its dogged insistence on moral sentiment: abstractly idealized, passive enslaved victims serve a variety of functions – from scopophilia sadism to accumulating moral capital – primarily for the White producers and consumers rather the antislavery cause.[206] In the Cuban context, besides the

[203] Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire,* 17-36; Marques, et al., 151-153.
[204] Schmidt-Nowara, Op. Cit.
[205] Aching, 25.
[206] Besides Christopher Brown, Op. Cit., Davis, *Age of Revolution*, Op. Cit. Wood, *Slavery, Empathy* Op. Cit., scopophilia comes from Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, Chapter 1.

moral salvation of the White creoles, scholars have suggested that the antislavery movement was a rhetorical device to further Cuban material interests and autonomy from the crown.[208]

Nonetheless, del Monte circle provided a forum for antislavery debate and Black testimony that remained significant. These events brought together influential Cuban reformist writers such as Anselmo Suárez y Romero, Cirilo Villaverde, and the enslaved Juan Francisco Manzano to discuss pressing cultural and political ideas. The group advocated a moderate, gradualist antislavery agenda and patronized free and enslaved Black poets – famously publishing and helping fund the manumission of Manzano.[209] Although not a direct participant, Francisco Calcagno was close to Suárez y Romero and others, and Manzano's poetry and autobiography remained a key intertext for Calcagno's novels. And yet, the influential and non-radical del Monte circle did not survive the waves of repression the colonial authorities unleashed on Afro-Cubans and political subversives in the wake of enslaved uprisings and several free Black and *mulato* conspiracies that came to light between 1843 and 1844.[210] What is undeniable is that *La Escalera* had an even more dramatic effect on Cuban civil society than Turner and Vesey did in the United States. White antislavery advocates were silenced and exiled, while prominent Black figures (including many with no documented political profile) were persecuted and jailed. Along with the reminder of earlier events such as the Aponte conspiracy, the specter of enslaved Afro-Cubans loomed large in colonial Cuban politics and was a major reason why Whites and many free Blacks rejected independence in favor of imperial loyalty.[211] This is to say that, if everyday resistance continued on at various scales, the scope of the antislavery public sphere on the island never recovered; all significant Cuban novels about

[208] Aching, 48-52; Sybille Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed*, 112-114.
[209] Aching, 30-31 and 51-52.
[210] Marques et al., 213-217.
[211] David Sartorius, *Ever-Faithful*, 94-123 and Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 37-41.

slavery after this point were either suppressed entirely or published abroad, usually in Spain and North America.

Nevertheless, with the US Civil War and the impending end of the slave trade in view, a new wave of antislavery ferment had begun in those regions in which planter power and imperial control were especially weak and free Black community especially strong. Antislavery dissent was largely concentrated in regions where dependence on slave labor declined due to soil conditions, rising slave costs, poor transit, and the general concentration and centralization of capital in the western provinces.[212] As with the apprenticeship system in the British West Indies and later in Brazil, in the wake of the US Civil War Cuban planters and Spanish merchants and financiers desperately sought to avoid the "cuestión social" and any "drastic changes in the labor system"; increasingly, the chosen strategy was loose commitment to "gradual abolition" that was "seen not as an alternative to the indefinite preservation of the by now beleaguered institution, but rather as a means of avoiding immediate emancipation"[213] as long as possible. As we will see, in *Romualdo* this spurious gradualism becomes effectively conflated with the previous era of ineffectual reformism by the outbreak of the 10 Years' War. Eastern and central regions such as Oriente and Puerto Príncipe (today Camaguey, where Francisco Calcagno was born and lived) became hotbeds of the increasingly radical movement that sought to implement abolition as part of an independence movement.[214] As Ada Ferrer narrates, "by 1868…the world was a different place….That the war of 1868 began with a slaveholder renouncing his human property and inviting them to join the cause of independence revealed how much had changed. It also portended that the very foundations of Cuban society were about to be shaken to the core."[215] As

[212] Bergard, 144-147.
[213] Scott, *Slave Emancipation,* 40.
[214] Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* 34 and Scott, *Slave Emancipation*, 45-62.
[215] Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History,* 287.

Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and others prepared for an independence war, drafting new constitutions while emancipating the enslaved or recruiting those still in bondage, the events of 1868 "initiated a period of unrest and uncertainty that tested the strong commitment to colonial slavery" in metropole and colony alike.[216] In the first two years of the conflict, the scrappy rebel forces and their inchoate nationalism made surprising inroads as the future of both slavery and colonial rule hung in the balance.

Such was the immediate backdrop when lawyer and abolitionist Francisco Calcagno began publishing Romualdo, *Uno de Tantos* [One of Many] in 1869.[217] In it, we find a Late-Abolition novel that shares many of *Dred*'s rhetorical concerns, literary features, and political speculations. Although he never achieved del Monte's success as a publisher or Anselmo y Suarez's fame as a novelist, Calcagno was loosely connected to this circle since the 1850s. He was also a patron and editor who helped bring free and enslaved Afro-Cubans into the public sphere in works like his *Poetas de Color* (1878). In his lifetime, he was most famous for his panoramic *Diccionario Biografico Cubano* (also 1878), a landmark of Cuban literary nationalism that remains a canonical source of empirical information and sentiment for scholars working on this period. Unlike Stowe and Macedo, his three novels – besides *Romualdo* (1869; 1881), *Los Crímines de Concha* [Concha's Crimes] (1863; 1887) and *Aponte* (1885; 1901) – were neither widely read, nor were they accorded any critical importance, past or present. However, *Romualdo* furnishes an important example of how antislavery authors leverage the world-building aspects of narrative fiction to interrogate their political conjuncture and grapple with potential solutions and visions of a post-emancipation future.[218] Despite the fact that the novel is

[216] Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition* 147.
[217] William Luis, *Literary Bondage: Slavery in Cuban Narrative*, 121-122
[218] In this, my argument in this chapter pushes back against William Luis' essential treatment of Calcagno as a post-abolition writer (*Literary Bondage*, 122). This work is invaluable (and still one of the few thorough engagements

set in 1836 and makes no direct reference to the war that had just erupted, the colonial authorities swiftly suppressed its publication well before the final chapter appeared. The text was only published in a single volume in 1881 by a Havana publishing house, eleven years after the passage of the Moret Law (1870) and the official onset of gradual abolition in 1875[219] – and even then, it was censored. Divorced from its original context, the novel's appearance at this later date is likely connected to the deluge of nationalist writing on the 10 Years' War period that sought to conflate slavery with the Spanish empire in order to make a case for Independence and mobilize Afro-Cuban participation in the cause.[220] Calcagno's status as a progressive *letrado* led to the publication and republication of his major works after abolition. However, he has been largely forgotten amid the deluge of radical nationalism and socialist thought that Cuba has produced since the US annexation; the 1891 edition of *Romualdo* is the most recent edition to this day.[221]

Despite the complexity of the plot and Calcagno's free-wheeling historical allusions, the novel centers on the status (in legal, moral, and diegetic terms) of its titular character, the wrongfully enslaved, *mulato,* Romualdo (also known as Toribio). The novel opens with a description of the slave-dealer Jacobo, or "Jacobito Vendialma" [Little Jacob, Soul-Seller], who

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with Calcagno in any language) and the emphasis on reception and reader response methodology lead Luis to consider Calcagno's censored *ouvre* as part of the post-Ten Years' War context. On this point, I follow Claudette Williams' in returning it to its time of composition. *The Devil in the Details*, Chapter 4.

[219] The 1881 edition included a dedication to Rafael María de Labra of the *Sociedad Abolicionista Española*, which was instrument in moving the imperial climate toward a Liberal antislavery direction. Besides the slightly different title, this is the only significant alteration to the text. However, the novel has not been republished in a scholarly edition, which has led to slipperiness regarding the exact publication date in the scant Calcagno scholarship. I use the dates provided by Luis, *Literary Bondage* and reiterated in Victor Goldgel-Carballo, "Plagio y Anacronism Deliberado en la Novela Aniesclavista Cubana." All parenthetical citations refer to the 1891 republication: Francisco Calcagno, *Romualdo, Uno De Tantos.* (Havana, Cuba: Biblioteca Selecta Habanera).

[220] See Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, Chapter 5 and Scott, *Slave Emancipation* 45-51. For a revisionist account that slightly complicates Ferrer's argument regarding Afro-Cuban rebellion, see Sartorius, Op. Cit.

[221] When Calcagno's novels are referenced in prominent studies, they often mischaracterize his work through a failure to account for context, as arguably is the case when Matt Childs cites *Aponte* as an epigraph to his otherwise indispensable *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle Against Atlantic Slavery*, 10. I follow William Luis's broader insight that when accounting for Calcagno's rhetorical context, the critical antislavery positions can be accurately evaluated (124).

sold Romualdo from Havana to La Esperanza plantation in Magarabomba, Puerto Príncipe. We are then introduced to Romualdo proleptically as a fugitive, before moving backward in time to the controversy surrounding his childhood and the exceptional abuse he experiences on *La Esperanza* sugar plantation. When El Cura, the priest who serves as Romualdo's confidante and protector, travels to Havana to seek out Romualdo's unknown biological father in the hopes of securing his manumission, a fire in the cane field breaks out. Knowing he will be blamed and killed by the barbaric overseer, Don Robustiano, Romualdo and his daughter, Felicia, flee the plantation in search of a fugitive settlement in the Cubita mountains, but she tragically dies on the way. El Cura conducts a series of interviews: first, with Jacobito, who denies knowing anything and writes a worried letter to the owner of La Esperanza, Señor Castaneiro; and next, with a white Haitian merchant falsely suspected of fathering Romualdo. Finally, El Cura meets the *mulata* Clemencia (Jacobito's naïve mistress and Romualdo's cousin) who helps him solve the mystery: Romualdo was a free-born *mulato* who has been wrongfully enslaved as a child (a phenomenon known as *plagio*). El Cura confirms this in a meeting with Romualdo's disconsolate mother, Má Felicia and uncovers another coincidence: Señor Castaneiro is Romualdo's biological father. Meanwhile, the despondent fugitive encounters the p*alenque* and is welcomed in by its leader, Juan Bemba. In Shakespearean disguise, Jacobito locates and infiltrates the group, seeking to eliminate Romualdo by leading them into the clutches of the *rancheadores* [slave-hunters]. Ignorant of these events, El Cura nonetheless receives a legal writ proclaiming Romualdo's freedom and then tracks down Señor Castaneiro, who repents his reliance on slavery and vows to make Romualdo his heir. They rush to find him before the *rancheadores* arrive, but fail. In the ensuing battle on Cubita mountain, all the major characters are slain along with both the fugitives and the hunters.

Propelled by the twin engines of Industrial Slavery and an increasingly militant and diverse antislavery movement, *Romualdo* takes up polemical and speculative tasks and shares some obvious features with novels like *Dred* and *Blake*. As critics have noted, Calcagno's text stands virtually alone in its literary depiction of marronage and some degree of fugitive resistance as inherent to the slave system.[222] However, perceived shortcomings of literary quality and ideology led to the text's marginalization; to a more radical degree than Stowe, Calcagno is remembered largely as an insufficiently radical liberal and a minor editor who was inept at the craft of fiction. However, *Romualdo* reveals a unique vision of Late-Abolition grounded in Cuba's own cultural and political situation. In terms of its literary and political worlding, the text sheds crucial light on how abolitionists experienced the crisis of Cuban slaveholding and how they increasingly began to reappraise the role of Black subjects as agents of change. In addition, its under-appreciated formal ingenuity also represents an advance that aligns with, rather than undermines, the direction of Cuban antislavery discourse circa 1868.

If Stowe looked forward to a prospective civil war within the US based on Bleeding Kansas and related conflicts, Calcagno's novel is forced to intervene indirectly, due to conditions of severe censorship following the rebellions of the 1840s. To do so, *Romualdo* is a historical novel that returns to a *desencuentro con la modernidad*, a "missed encounter with modernity,"[223] in which we see Industrial Slavery effectively overwhelm the power of Cuban law and customs that had served to provide some degree of protection for Afro-Cuban imperial subjects. Drawing this crisis into sharp relief and using it to comment upon the outbreak of armed revolt, we see specific innovations to the Late-Abolition literary paradigm centered around competing character

[222] Luis, *Literary Bondage*, 128; Claudette Williams, *The Devil in the Details*, 109.
[223] While Ramos' essential argument regarding the breakdown of the letrado and the radical autonomy of political vanguardists does not apply to this context, its prehistory (and title) are relevant to the experience of antislavery writers like Calcagno.

systems, crises of paternal legitimacy, and the threat of Afro-American insurgent counter-worlds. The political watershed is dramatized through a character triangle in which a slave-trading avatar for Industrial Slavery and a protective parish priest vie for control of the titular character, an illegally-enslaved mixed-race man. But the plot and character system anachronize both the mode of antislavery gradualism of the 1830s and the hegemony of Industrial Slavery. Consequently, the Delmonte-esque model of paternalistic amelioration implodes just as the plot reveals the crisis in slave demography that leads the slave system into extra-legal social practices that inscribe even free Blacks and *mulatos* into reserves of labor power on the plantation. The illegal enslavement of free Blacks (*plagio*) illustrates the extent to which Afro-Cubans of every status have been "abandoned" amid industrial slavery.

One thesis of the novel seems to be that the intensification of the problem of industrial slavery in Cuba occurs alongside the attenuation any political subjects (pro- or anti-slavery) capable of mitigating the crisis. When the priest succeeds in legally freeing Romualdo, locating his white biological father, and proving blame on Jacobito (the IS proxy), this help arrives too late. The crisis soon devolves into a conflict between the palenque and the *rancheadores*[224] that, for denizens of Cuba, clearly resonates with the real and imagined anti-colonial war then breaking out. With proslavery and antislavery forces laid low, the plot appears to caution us that direct resistance on the part of the enslaved is tantamount to a mutual destruction pact: the self-defensive rebellion of the Palenque is perfectly canceled out by the oppressive slave-hunters. On first glance, then, the novel can be read as a lament at the effects Industrial Slavery wrought

[224] "In 1796, Spanish authorities published a new law regarding the capture of runaways. Groups of rancheadores or professional slave hunters and their terrifying dogs would henceforth conduct monthly patrols in regions suspected of harboring palenques and maroon bands" (Helg, 226).

upon Cuban society and a call for the elite to reconsider its stubborn commitment to slavery, if not a cautionary tale against an independence struggle.

And yet, the pessimism of the plot and narrative discourse suggest that such an interpretation is a naïve extension of El Cura's misplaced faith in Providence over the actual situation: as the narrator reiterates time and again, the epistemology of the enslaving class (Christian Providence, metaphysical thinking, economistic science) fails to account for Black experience or Black salvation. While abandonment does not in itself lead to radical political subjectivation, *Romualdo* subtly revises the most famous exemplar of abandonment in Cuban antislavery culture (Juan Francisco Manzano) to suggest how the pressure of external events lead even apparently submissive subjects to radical transformations. Though the novel often depicts the desperation of Blacks inscribed into slavery, pushed to the margins and barely holding on, a closer examination shows that Romualdo's marronage and arrival at a fugitive world in a neighboring region has clear parallels to the Harry Gordon saga. Highlighting the undercurrent of slave agency that emerges after Romualdo's marronage and ascension to the palenque of the Cubita mountains, the novel's *sui generis* account of slave rebellion reflects the wartime conditions of its moment of composition. While acknowledging the actuality of armed conflict around slavery, its ambivalence toward radical Black subjectivity leads to an ultimately overdetermined political world in which the future remains bleakly indecipherable. I nonetheless contend that its treatment of Black responses against slavery represents counterfactual glimpses of a freedom-to-come, even in the absence of a clear agent of historical Progress.

II: Deflation, Plagiarism, and Abandonment

One key premise of *Romualdo* is the recession of the white biological family as an essential mediating context – a context that provides the foundation for *Dred* and (in a different

way) *Pai-Raiol*. As we will see in my final section, the white biological father does play a role at the end of the story. But it's accurate to say the *Romualdo, Uno de Tantos* dispenses with the mediation of family melodrama in favor of a more direct character triangle orbiting around the mystery of Romualdo's past. On one side is the parish priest, El Cura *de aldea*, who seeks to investigate the truth in order to secure Romualdo's freedom papers; on the other is the slave-dealer, Jacobo, who sold Romualdo away wishes to hide the original sin of the novel (contained on a bill of sale in his office) that proves the illegal childhood kidnapping of Romualdo and his subsequent sale to a sugar plantation. As before, the struggle between two white proxy fathers to determine the freedom of a mixed-race proxy son ultimately works to anachronize the White reformist world of El Cura. But the revelation of *plagio* and the subsequent failures that follow in short order also spell ruin for the white proxy aligned with Industrial Slavery. Unlike *Dred*, the relative vulnerability of Industrial Slavery, specifically due to the crisis of slave demography, leads Jacobo to seek out desperate measures to remedy the situation. For his part, Romualdo quickly finds himself abandoned or in flight away from White proxies. Ultimately, the novel iterates the Edward-Tom-Harry character system in increasingly dire and mutually destructive terms. The wreckage of this character system leads the novel to assay the prospects of resistance from below via Romualdo's marronage and the palenque, covered in the subsequent section.

In many ways, Romualdo begins the story as the maximal proxy son archetype, insofar as his character expresses maximal physical, psychological, and moral vulnerability. Unlike formally comparable protagonists such as Sab or Harry Gordon, Romualdo is seemingly devoid of any rebellious intentions. Rejected by slaves for not being African-born (*bozal*) and identifying with white Cubans, the brutal plantation the administrator [*mayoral*], Don Robustiano mercilessly singles out Romualdo for marrying the woman they both lusted after (the

now-dead Dorotea). At thirty years old he looks twice his age, with a body worn down by grueling labor and excessive punishment: "…desde entonces el carácter del mulato Romualdo se hizo más melancólico é intractable…sabía por dolorosa experiencia que no se necesita el elemento del odio para beber hiel en un ingenio…se resignaba y callaba" (*Romualdo,* 23) [since then the character of the *mulato* become melancholic and intractable…he knew from painful experience that one did not to have a hateful attitude to be beaten into coughing up bile in the sugar mill…he resigned himself and shut up]. One major reason for Romualdo's suffering is what El Cura calls his "dignidad humillada," the modest dignity of his comportment as well as his sensitivity, intelligence, and piety. At the onset of the novel, Romualdo is single-trait character, comparable in complexity to an eighteenth-century William Cowper poem.

El Cura's perspective mediates much of our early picture of Romualdo: "The Father" considers this behavior to be "exceptional" from an enslaved plantation laborer and accordingly tries to protect and mentor Romualdo. His physical degradation and spiritual resilience in turn forces him into more intimate relation with his proxy-father. The cleric desires to purchase and free Romualdo but doesn't have enough money to do so, which will become an important precondition for the plot. This dependency on and fealty to El Cura leads Romualdo to "stand still" and bear his exceptional charge while raising his daughter, Blasa (also called Felicia), as he enjoins in a Pauline sermon, "Oh siervos, obedeced á vuestros amos!" (36) [Oh servants, obey your Masters!]. By contrast, Harry Gordon begins *Dred* as the talented manager of Canema, apart from the violence of cotton production and corporeal discipline. Unlike the plantations in *Dred*, the ironically-named La Esperanza is a thriving site of sugar production and the overseer's exceptionally high yields – 2,000 barrels per annum – gives Don Robustiano carte blanche from the libertine and absentee owner, Señor Castaneiro.

As the plot unfolds, the reader gradually sees that there are additional texts buried beneath Romualdo's character and identity. Within the diegesis, two clues will initially stand out to El Cura. First, "de chico había dado en la manía de decir que era habanero y que se llamaba Toribio" (20) [from childhood he was given to inexplicably saying he was from Havana and named Toribio]. This insistence on Havana birth and a different name are beaten out of him until he accepts his "true" name and the account of his birth at La Esperanza, alongside his resigned Christian mien. A metropolitan birth would not only raise his status as a slave, but also increase the likelihood of him finding a pathway to freedom through a free relative in the city. Second, Romualdo mysteriously has memorized a specially commissioned baptismal poem (*décima*) that the enslaved seldom have means or the opportunity of hearing: "Aquellos versos que sabía el mulato, y que llamaba décimas, ciertas palabras ó frases de juegos infantiles no aprendidas en la finca…" (37) [Those verses that the mulato knew, called décimas, certain words or phrases from the rites of infants that aren't taught on the plantation…]. These and other "voces y frases de rezos que no enseña á negros esclavos" [voices and bits of prayers that aren't taught to Black slaves] represent uncanny fragment from another life apart from the plantation, "aquel imperfecto rezo, aquel residuo, aquella reminiscencia de otra edad…" (20; 37) [that imperfect prayer, that residue, that reminiscence of another age]. For the readers at the time, these clues and their elegiac tone surely called to mind the specific historical persona of Juan Francisco Manzano that emerged from his published poems (including a décima[225]) and his privately-circulated *Autobiography of a Slave* [*Autobiografia de un Esclavo*] (translated and published in

[225] The pervasive association of baptism and emancipation obtain in all epochs of slavery. Many *bozales* believed that formal baptism would force their enslavers to release them. In practice, baptisms were among the most common events at which children of African or creole slave and/or White patents "were emancipated at baptism thanks to payments equivalent to their value made by their parents or godparents" (Helg, 66).

the UK in 1840). Compare the depictions of Romualdo to Manzano's account of his life once he is sold off to the abusive and codependent Marchioness:

> …todo se trocó en cierta melancolía que se me hizo con el tiempo característica; la música me embelesaba; sin saber por qué lloraba y gustaba de ese consuelo…siempre buscaba la soledad para dar rienda suelta á mis pesares, adquiriendo mi corazón cierto estado de abatimiento incurable hasta el día.[226]
>
> […everything turned into a peculiar melancholy that eventually became a lasting feature; music would send me into a trance; without knowing why I cried and enjoyed this consolation…I always sought out solitude to give free reign to my regrets, as my heart developed a certain emptiness incurable to this day.]

Although Calcagno's own conception of Manzano was more complex than summarized here (a point that will become significant in the next section) this abject victimhood serves as the starting point for the development of Romualdo and the world of the novel.

The white proxy father who works to procure the legal protection of his proxy son is not a lawyer but an unnamed parish priest, simply referred to throughout the novel as El Cura. In Spanish American colonies, catholic clerics enjoyed powers beyond civil society, often arbitrating legal disputes and even advocating for local reforms.[227] While the father proxy in *Dred* seeks to protect a legal "son" figure by formally extending legal personhood to all slaves, El Cura's mission to save Romualdo hinges on the moral and legal status quo that largely

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[226] This passage was cited in the chapter on Manzano in Calcagno, *Poetas de Color*, 68. However, this excerpt omits a sentence from the complete manuscript edited by Ivan A. Schulman. See Juan Francisco Manzano, *The Autobiography of a Slave: A Bilingual Edition*, 58-60.

[227] Unlike other countries in which priests played important social and political roles (notably, in favor of independence), the clergy in Cuba was notoriously conservative and aligned with the Spanish crown. See Drescher, *Abolition,* 338. The novel alludes to this when introducing El Cura; despite being a Spanish *peninsular* thrown into the clergy owing to primogeniture rather than a deeper calling, he nonetheless takes his mission seriously and finds that his sympathies do not lie with the plantocracy.

obtained in Cuba until the rise of Industrial Slavery, under which there was recourse to ameliorate the harsh treatment of slaves and protect the rights of free persons of color. More than this, he condenses both the paternalist ethos underpinning Cuban law and the "reformist" and charity-oriented position of the del Monte School – a pastiche of anachronized political discourse comparable to Edward Clayton after his effacement. As a religious leader, El Cura appeals to the laws of nature and the Bible to improve how slaves are treated on the sugar plantations of Magarabomba, in central Cuba. His sermons fault Noah for forgetting the Golden Rule when cursing Ham and scandalously argue that slaves have the right to name their children; steadfastly moral, he refuses to change parish records or to take a mistress; worst of all, he ministers to the enslaved and occasionally mediates conflicts with white superiors (34-37). As with Clayton, these reform doctrines retain the mantra of demanding obedience to earthly masters and are aimed at the moral and spiritual "improvement" of slaves, in preparation for eventual freedom — in heaven if not on Earth. Nonetheless, this puts him in conflict with planters, who hope to remove him from the parish. We learn he puts this ethos into practice by serving as a patron for exceptional slaves like Romualdo, which the novel establishes through his gifts with poetry and his devout religious faith. As a result, El Cura decides to investigate rumors that Romualdo was born in Havana rather than on the plantation, with the hopes of finding his biological father and "converting" him and hopefully manumitting Romualdo as a result. This very modest applied gradualism parallels the paternalism of del Monte's circle in their dealings with enslaved men like Manzano.

More than a set of "dead letters," Cuban customs and laws constitute the initial antislavery world of the novel. For El Cura, these practices and moral imperatives are imbued with the power of divine law, which he believes will inevitably rectify any discrepancy in

Romualdo's treatment. Unable to substantively change the sugar plantation, El Cura perceives his *mission* as rectifying exceptionally bad abuses. The political world predicated on Cuba's endogenous system of amelioration and a quasi-gradualism grounded in paternal largesse become most clear in El Cura's arrival in Havana, the metropolis associated with prosperity and the colonial bureaucracy. Upon arrival in the center of Cuban commerce and politics, the Priest is confident we will "cumplir la promesa que no era Sagrada sino para consigo mismo; pues creía firmemente que la Providencia, al colocarlo en el camino de un misterio, confiaba en su buena fé y su diligencia para que aclarara el asunto y patentizara la verdad" (55) [fulfill his promise, firmly believing that Providence, by setting him on this mysterious journey, had enlisted his strong faith and diligence to clarify (Romualdo's situation) and bring the truth to light]. Note, in particular, the emphasis on his faith in Providence to manifest in the local institutions to protect exceptional and "deserving" slaves such as Romualdo. In short order, this faith will be subjected to the destructive crucible of Industrial Slavery.

Like Clayton, then, El Cura's character somewhat incoherently condenses an assemblage of older antislavery discourses into a single, recognizably antecedent antislavery world. However, Calcagno's handling of his obsolescent white paternalist underlines the peculiar time sensitivity of the Late-Abolition habitus: with every year that slavery persisted, with every abolition that happened somewhere else (i.e., in Stowe's US in 1865), the stakes and anxiety level heightened. By contrast to Stowe, Calcagno conspicuously shrinks the scope of his white-reformer proxy father's political activity: whereas Clayton at least aims for systemic change or recognition of slave agency, El Cura, for all the moral outrage and political disapproval he evinces, merely hopes to either improve Romualdo's lot in the manner of Manzano or to help the tragic mulatto sacrifice himself nobly. Clayton aims at protecting Harry by publicly crusading for

far-reaching civil rights; El Cura merely aims at improving Romualdo's situation in the most local ways. Initially, this means advocating for him and later by attempting to facilitate his manumission. Even before the backlash of *La Escalera*, the arena for reform is markedly narrow.

Standing opposed to the investigations of the parish priest is the antagonist who asserts the proxy paternity of the legally-sanctioned "owner." While other figures represent local aspects of Cuban Industrial slavery,[228] the novel's central antagonist is the slave dealer [*corredor de esclavos*], Jacobito Vendialma [little Jacob soul-seller]. The subject of the very first chapter, the narrator quickly establishes the centrality of the slave dealer to Cuban social reality and to Calcagno's own antislavery rhetoric:

> Bien sabe el lector que el corredor do negros es … (pronto felizmente podremos decir *era*) uno de los seres mas dignos de supresión de la familia cubana: si mi lector es corredor de esclavos, negará tal vez lo que afirmamos; pero lo creerá in pecto. (6; elipsis in original)
>
> [The reader knows well that the slave-dealer is… (happily we will soon be able to say *was*) one of the beings most deserving of being suppressed from the Cuban family: if my reader is a slave-dealer, you will perhaps deny what we assert; but in your heart you know it to be true.]

Speaking to his Cuban audience, the narrator uses verb tenses to anachronize the archetype in ways that converge and diverge with *Dred*. The latter polemically anachronizes slavery through a rhetoric of non-modernity, which abounds elsewhere in *Romualdo*; for example, planters and traders are likened to feudal Europe and Czarist barons (7), while the weak figure of El Cura is disparagingly contrasted with modern European literary counterparts in novels by Goldsmith,

[228] The most significant of these, the *mayoral* [overseer] Don Robustiano, will be discussed in the final section.

Balzac, and Manzoni (31). But more important here is how and why Calcagno uses verb tenses to performatively the obsolescence lamentable national type (member of the Cuban family). The confidence underpinning the shift from present to imperfect tense surely refers to the immediate political conjuncture in which the African trade and the defeat of the Confederacy create a crisis for Industrial Slavery in (among other areas) the demography of the enslaved. This is one important reason why Jacobito serves as the evil proxy in the novel. But how does this dynamic work?

If *Dred* figures the law as an extension of the extra-legal terror of Industrial Slavery and *Pai-Raiol* will figure enslavement as a sophisticated practice of fetishism, Jacobito's relation to Romualdo dramatizes the power of *inscription* to spuriously rewrite bodies and the social fabric. Calcagno intensifies the problem of reproducing the system of Industrial Slavery significantly by founding the protagonist's genesis in his literal Bill of Sale. While both Harry and Romualdo partially draw on the "tragic mulatto" trope, Harry enjoys a pyrrhic shred of paternal guardianship from Colonel Gordon and later Nina and Edward Clayton. In Calcagno's Late-Abolition world, the slave is simply "one of many," as the first chapter introduces the character by performatively selecting his name from a "random" Bill of Sale belonging to Jacobito. Considering the problem of "aquellos infelices que, contra su voluntud y deseo, eran enviados al campo" [those unhappy beings who, against their will and desire, were dispatched to the countryside], the narrator "le invitaremos á seguir a uno de ellos… en el siguiente lote, vendido para el ingenio La Esperanza" (9) [invites you to follow one of them…in the following lot sold to the sugar plantation, La Esperanza]. The text then reproduces a document for the reader with the heading: "LISTA de los esclavos vendidos al Excmo. Sr. D. Juan. N. Castaneiro para su ingenio 'La Esperanza.' / En La Habana, Noviembre 4 de 1806" (9-10) [LIST of slaves sold to

the esteemed Don Juan N. Castaneiro for his plantation. /In Havana, November 4th, 1806]. The only non-*bozal* listed, Romualdo was sold at six years old for 136 pesos.

Hidden from Romualdo and El Cura, Jacobo the slave trader begins with the hidden text that suggests the unspeakable violence of revising Romualdo's life through revising this document. The power of inscription to convert a free man into a ledger item is further driven home by the fact that there is a "*Nota sobre Romualdo*" [Note on Romualdo] conspicuously crossed out "pero lo demás esta borrado con raya de tinta" (10) [but the note itself was struck through with lines of ink] From the outset, then, the inscriptive power of the slave trade emerges as a central problem, which becomes more complex as the story progresses. Calcagno opens not with a description of Romualdo's biography, but with the bill of sale that brought him from Havana to the plantation in Puerto Príncipe. Whereas Colonel Gordon was a strong, if virtual, presence for Harry Gordon, our point departure here is the literally written characters and their economic equivalent, with a slave trader serving as his legal "guardian." The arbitrariness and fungibility of inscription are enhanced by the oblique manner at which the reader arrives at this information. After musing on the evils of slave-trading and the unimaginable horror of certain-death on a sugar plantation, the narrator wryly comforts the reader before "choosing" the slave that will anchor the narrative. Among other things, self-consciousness regarding the constructedness of slavery does not undermine it but perversely increases its amorphous power. In this first chapter, the text shows us how the venerable protections accorded to Afro-Cubans could be struck through with streaks of ink.

Piercing this textual veil to uncover Romualdo's true father in lieu of these false, legal masters animates the first half of the novel. Reducing literary character to the written characters comprising this notarized commercial tender also ups the ante just as the "dead letters"

comprising Harry Gordon's invalidated freedom papers intensified the situation in *Dred*. This opening scene also reverses the trajectory: Harry is reinscribed into slavery through the "bad lawyer" Dr. Jekyll's use of the law; Romualdo, while he later has something akin to "his day in court," begins as "dead" and illegible letters – economic value and struck-through words – only reanimated by narrative fiat. Romualdo's body and biography become palimpsestic layers that father-ciphers attempt to uncover or obscure.

The contested proxy paternity subtending the character system quickly breaks down, starting with the scene in which El Cura and Jacobo share the stage. This represents the first sign of the protracted implosion of world grounded in Cuban traditions and his moderate, reformist ethos. The power of Industrial Slavery and social inscription burst to the surface when the priest confronts the former owner about Romualdo's birth:

> Nada, padre, vendemos como compramos *alma en boca u huesos en costal*, sin derecho á redhibición, sin responder á tachas…No lo necesitamos [saber el origen de la prenda que se vende]: la ley pide pocos requisitos para no entorpecer la producción. (57)
>
> [(I remember) nothing, Father, we sell them as we buy them *as is*, without warranty, without considering branding marks… We don't need [to know the origin of the merchandise], the law doesn't require any of this so that as not to disrupt the production process.]

In form and content, this admission reverses the premises of the Priest's political world. Natural and divine right cannot contend with the "invisible hand" seeking to stock the sugar plantations with enslaved people of African descent. If God endows human beings with a soul, the slave trade reduces such endowments to mere capacities of breath and labor – "soul in mouth and bones in the sack," the literal translation for the terms of Romualdo's purchase. This

reinscription has major implications for human law, voiding traditional norms regulating the slave trade, such as "slave warranties," accurate baptismal records, and branding marks. In this new era of Cuban slavery, all laws and customs are on the table to be reinscribed to meet the needs of the planters. The Priests' failed appeal to let slaves name their children is redoubled here. As the avatar of Industrial Slavery, Jacobito leans into the full ontological force of dehumanizing slaves: "…things will go a lot better for your Holiness if you he ceases investigating the origins of this stupid mulatto who *probably never even had a father*" (58, emphasis added). As if following Marx's or Orlando Patterson,[229] to make a slave into a true commodity requires erasing all traces of its social origins. Amid the post-1790s surge in the sugar complex that was nearing its heights in the 1836 time of the story, Jacobo attempts to rhetorically preempt El Cura's intervention. The demands of production and the ever-increasing value of enslaved people, he implies, blot out the issue of genealogy or biography just as the "Note" on Romualdo was struck through on the Bill of Sale. To a similar, if slightly lesser, degree as *Dred*, the legal and extra-legal power of slavery-as-inscription serves to destroy the political world of the white reformist and proxy father.

In *Romualdo*, this unworlding occurs due to the economic imperatives that have hollowed out Cuba's comparatively robust legal resources for Afro-Cubans of every status and revealed the poverty of individualizing reform initiatives. The major genealogical epiphany does not concern Romualdo's father at all, but the status of the mother – which has major implications for Afro-Cuban freedom as such. Interviewing a white refugee from the Haitian revolution leads El Cura to Romualdo's birth mother, who turns out to be a *free* woman of color called Má Felicia. The possibility that long-standing traditions protecting Afro-Cuban citizenship have been

[229] Marx, 149-150 and Patterson, 7.

callously set aside in Romualdo's case is initially too much for El Cura to bear. Abuses on the plantation are an unfortunate fact of life – even with Cuban traditions, El Cura seems to accept, but such an abuse concerns the first principle of New World Slavery: the free womb tradition whereby children of African descent inherit their mother's legal status. To convince the Priest about the dilution of protections for free people of color, Boulard tells a story of how Jacobito pretends to help a local slave, Juan Congo, purchase his freedom by safeguarding his coartación — only in order to steal Juan's money, purchase Juan, and then sell him off to a sugar plantation before he can make a formal complaint (reclamación). Hardly able to believe it, this is confirmed when El Cura finds the disconsolate Ma Felicia, who recites the unique baptismal poem that should have kept her child safe.

Arriving at the hidden text of Toribio and the legal inscription that translated his biography and personhood of Romualdo, is the horrible epiphany that gradually flattens El Cura and his world. As defined by the narrator with typical acerbity, *plagio*[230] is that "delito que consiste en el robo de un esclavo á quien se vender por propio, ó de una persona de color á quien se vende como escravo" (83) [crime consisting of robbing either another's slave (to sell yourself) or robbing a free person of color and selling them as a slave]. Upon uncovering the truth, El Cura is filled with "anguish" and disbelief:

> ¡Ya no le podía quedar duda alguna! ¡El desgraciado Romualdo había sido plagiado! Aquel infeliz que había pasado una vida tan miserable y penosa, había nacido libre y más que libre poseedor de los bienes que ahora debía heredar Lutgard. (79)

[230] Conscious of the friction between plagiarism and *plagio,* the narrator notes that "…in Spain, where there are no slaves, they *steal* verses, a literary crime that is excusable, if rarely forgotten: in Cuba, they *steal* slaves, an inexcusable legal crime……which is almost always overlooked!" (82).

> [There was now no doubt! The wretched Romualdo was a *plagiado*! How miserable it was that he was born free and, more that, in line to inherit property…]

But the perhaps the real horror Calcagno makes El Cura and the reader see is that Romualdo, as the novel's subtitle suggests, is but "one of many": the *plagio* of Romualdo is not an exceptional case but a new rule enforced by Industrial Slavery. A few recent instances of *plagio* are even cited by the narrator, including (most proximate to the plot) three brothers robbed by a famous bandit in 1834, a free adult *mulato* kidnapped in 1863, with "el ultimo caso de que sabemos ha tenido lugar en enero del presente año 1869" (84-85) [the last case that we know of took place in January of this year, 1869]. By the letter of the law, Industrial Slavery was enslaving citizens with rights and cultural belonging, not imported Africans who were increasingly hard to come by as the Spanish and Brazilian slave trade ground to a halt. This inscription (or plagiarism in the familiar sense) is horrifically figured in through a description of how *plagiados* are branded with a letter (D or Z) on their body, an act that at least outwardly rewrites them as unfree. Expecting to find a common trope of white paternal guilt, El Cura instead uncovers a hidden plot of false enslavement that, in his eyes, threatens to upend the order of things and arrest even the movement of national time and Providence itself.[231]

This comes to a head in the final chapters of the novel, in which the Priest's success at restoring paternal authority proves too little and too late. While critics read El Cura as a protagonist of the novel as well as its moral center, careful consideration of the character system (and the tensions of Late-Abolition writing) reveals that this figure and his political world are ruthlessly effaced and ironized as the plot goes forward. Restricting myself to but a few salient

[231] Martin Rodrigo y Alharilla claims that between 1856 and 1864 profits from illegal slave trade reached a significant spike — and they flowed largely into the coffers of Catalonian slave trading firms and banks ("Spanish sailors and the illegal slave trade to Cuba, 1845-1867," 178)

examples that are drawn into relief through comparison to *Dred*, consider first El Cura's "legal victory" in court. One of the most important scenes in *Dred* occurs in the courtroom, a battlefield for legal protections and reform, while *Romualdo* dispenses with even such a pyrrhic legal victory for El Cura. Although he receives the legal writ freeing Romualdo, El Cura is denied the opportunity to make a legal case before the Captain General that would have surely served as an indictment of *plagio* and a defense of his reformist political world. Instead, the narration marginalizes the event by merely reporting its occurrence as an aside from Ma Felicia's point of view: "no encontró en aquel dia al Cura, porque éste habia ido á verse con el General" (91) [she didn't see El Cura the next day, because he had gone to meet with the General].

An even sharper instance of dramatic and tonal irony occurs when El Cura finally solves the mystery of Romualdo's White father, who happens to be Señor Castaneiro, the owner of La Esperanza. The proxy father furnishes the legal document attesting to Romualdo's true mother; Castaneiro, an aged childless widower eager to find an heir, repents his sins and resolves to help liberate Romualdo and make him his heir. In what would be the emotional and political climax of a different antislavery novel, El Cura then shares his interpretation with his new convert:

> Hemos querido ser Excelentísimos señores antes que ser Señores excelentes; hemos vendido la vida moral por la vida material…hemos sido sordos á la gran lección que nos dá la historia de Haití, y agloméranos ciegamente seres de una especie que tiene derecho de odiarnos, preparando así un volcán para nuestros sucesores y esperando impasibles la estima con que nos ha de marcar la historia. (134)
>
> [We have striven to be men of excellence instead of excellent men; we have sold the moral life for the material life…we have been blind to the great historical lesson of Haiti

and unthinkingly gather up beings who have a right to hate us, thus creating a volcano for our children and await in apathy the stigma that History will mark us with.]

Grandiloquent in tone and diction, this speech act attempts to performatively correct the course of history by waking elites up to their role as agents of historical progress. Avoiding both the imminent volcano of rebellion and the future stains of history requires the planter class to implement Emerson's famous celebration of West Indian emancipation as revolution born from "repentance of the tyrant" rather than "the insurrection of the oppressed." But such a worldview is violently anachronized one chapter later by plot and protagonist. Both White fathers, biological and proxy, arrive too late. Romualdo has been mortally wounded in a civil war scene I will examine in depth at the end of this chapter. Besides the fathers' literal failure, the proxy son likewise annihilates El Cura's spurious faith in reform and Providential unfolding. On arrival, El Cura runs to Romualdo's side and "queriendo lanzar al herido una medicina que como chispa eléctrica le reanimára" [seeking to salve the wound with a kind of medicine that would spark him into reanimation,] tells him "Romualdo, tú eres Toribio; Toribio, tú eres libre" (146) [Romualdo you are Toribio, you are free]. However, these magic words neither reanimate nor inspire the formally free character. Seemingly aware of the vanity of white intercession or proxy-dom, his last words are: "Sí, sí, lo sé…ya estoy libre…de los blancos" (147) [Yes, yes, I know… I am already free… free from the Whites]. Specifying how Romualdo resignifies freedom apart from White paternalism and reformists is the question I now turn to.

However, this revelation of Romauldo's *plagio* likewise upends the pro-slavery proxy, Jacobo, who is forced into hiding and seeking Romualdo's death in order to cover his tracks. While the plot passes negative judgement on the impotence of El Cura's political methods, the legal writ he obtains on Romualdo nonetheless spells disaster for Jacobo's economic and legal

prospects. We get a glimpse of this in the panicked letter he sends to Señor Castaneiro upon his visit with El Cura, in which he warns him against the "radical" and troublemaking (i.e. antislavery) ways of the priest (43). Immediately afterwards, he goes into hiding in order to persuade a roving group of bandits (who supply him with fungible Afro-Cuban *plagios*) to come to his aid and is bluntly refused. Finally, while disguised to prevent his arrest, Jacobito tracks down the palenque and feigns drowning in order to be saved and gain access to the group. Ironically, Romualdo is the only maroon willing to rescue the disgraced plagiarist. I will consider Jacobo's fate in more detail below but this plot development does more than just illustrate how whites depend on Black labor; in bringing Jacobo's murder intentions into the diegesis, the novel demystifies the coercive violence and social relations behind even basic economic transactions.

Section III: Revolution at Minor and Major Scales

But perhaps most significant aspect of the collapsing character triangle is Romualdo's belated emergence as a political subject through his fugitivity and entry into a palenque in the mountains. On the one hand, he is figured as a flat, emasculated and pathetic stock type so common to antislavery discourse. On the other hand, as I will show, through key actions and a few significant aspects of his representation Romualdo can also be considered a rebel and conspirator somewhere at the intersection of Manzano and Esteban Montejo.[232] In doing so, I push back against the main scholarly treatments of *Romualdo, Uno de Tantos* that tend to read the character of Romualdo as an assemblage of recycled tropes of enslaved victimhood, which gets negatively contrasted with the novel's more celebrated depiction of the palenque. Claudette Williams's excellent analysis, for example, contrasts the racist stereotyping of Calcagno's Black

[232] The famous ex-slave narrator and protagonist of Miguel Barnett's classic of *testimonio* writing: *Biografía de un Cimarrón [*Biography of a Runaway Slave].

characters (including Romualdo's insufficient rebelliousness) with the novel's more overt praise for the fugitive settlement and its characters.[233] William Luis, similarly privileges collective over individual action in asserting that "blacks will always be the instruments of whites and can only be helped by other blacks."[234] Before turning to the novel's celebrated recognition of Black autonomy and self-organization, I must first turn to Romualdo's uneasy journey that brings him to palenque of Cubita. Whether or not Calcagno "voices… white creole interest" vis-à-vis gradual abolition,[235] in Romualdo's characterization and actions the mask of Manzano slips to reveal a rebellious subject and rounded character.

Romualdo swiftly arrives at where the plot of *Dred*'s first Volume ends: the enslaved protagonist, already lacking a biological protector, loses the proxy father who affords him minimal protection and is forced to act. Just as Harry Gordon sought to protect himself and his wife from certain torture, rape, and death at the hands of "bad father" and avatar for Industrial Slavery, Romualdo likewise finds himself in a hopeless position in a richly suggestive yet underdiscussed scene. One week after El Cura departs for Havana, a blaze [bagacera] breaks out that "…devora, vuela y aniquila en minutos lo que se labra en semanas" (Romualdo, 44) [devours, explodes, and destroys in minutes the product of weeks of labor]. With the cane fields erupted in fire Romualdo realizes Don Robustiano, the plantation-side face of Industrial Slavery, will seek to exact his revenge for losing out on Dorotea and for all the times he was forced to show Romualdo some degree of mercy. The overseer throws Romualdo "una mirada sárcastica y fulminante" [a sarcastic and mortal/sudden look], a terrible reality sinks in for the resigned, melancholic slave:

[233] Williams, 110; 118.
[234] Luis, 139.
[235] Williams, 101. See also Aching, Chapter 1.

> De aquí que siempre se atribuyera el siniestro á efecto del rayo que cayó inmediato, ó al cigarro que arrojó fulano, ó á la perversa y vengativa intención de algun esclavo… La presencia del buen Cura en lo que había contenido la venganza [de Robustiano] y que se trataba de aprovechar su ausencia: era preciso huir ..... (45)
>
> [This, as always, would be to attribute the catastrophe to a sudden crash of lightening, or to someone tossing a lit cigar, or to the perverse and vengeful conniving of some slave…The presence of the good Priest had mitigated the vengeance [of Robustiano] and he would take advantage of [El Cura's] absence: it was necessary to flee.]

The rhetoric of vengeance and the emphasis on "sinister" hidden intentions run both ways in the plantation, conditioning the subjectivity of the enslaved and the figures charged with increasing sugar yields at all costs. The narrator, of course, seeks to downplay the *bagacera* in this passage and goes on to discuss how meteorological ignorance of planters and overseers lead to a paranoid tendency to view plantation fire as the "perverse and vengeful" act of a slave (43; 46). And yet, for all the reasons Calcagno could have chosen for Romualdo to flee the wrath of the overseer – indeed, hardly any pretext at all would have been necessary on a sugar plantation – the massive destruction of sugar cane is inarguably significant.

As we will also see in *Pai-Raiol, o Feitiçero*, the plantation fire expresses at least some degree of subversive inclination of the enslaved in the semiotics of the Late-Abolition novel. At the most basic level, it forces Romualdo to flee the plantation, as we see in the above passage. Realizing that his daughter, Blasa will likely be tortured and killed if left on La Esperanza, Romualdo "[a]rrebató a hija en sus brazos, y frenético, desesperado, sin saber lo que hacía, se perdió con ella en el cañaveral más próximo. Antes diez minutos estaba fuera de la finca" (46) [snatched his daughter in his arms and, frenetic, desperate, without know what he was doing,

disappeared with her into the nearest cane field. Before ten minutes he was beyond the field]. In its destruction, the sugar cane field becomes a portal to the world beyond the plantation for Romualdo and his progeny. On a non-diegetic level, this moment becomes extremely important for Romualdo's character, as suggested by the description of his disorder and instinctive acts of self-defense. The desperation induced by the will to survive leads to a change in Romualdo that at least partially fractures the saturnine "beautiful soul" we were introduced to earlier. When his most intimate enslaved confidant on La Esperanza, the enslaved domestic named Ma Concha, attempts to intercede and stop Romualdo from leaving, something truly shocking takes place: "En el frenesí de la desesperación, se convertía en tigre vengativo: pasaba su Rubicón. Un fuerte puñetazo, arrojó al suelo á Concha sin sentido" (ibid) [In the frenzy of desperation, he became a vengeful tiger: he crossed his Rubicon. A strong punch sent Concha unconscious to the floor]. Choosing a chance at life over resignation to total death constitutes a watershed event for Romualdo; *he* becomes the avenging figure and strikes down the voice commanding him to "stand still and see salvation." In addition, this is the first moment in which his character breaks out of the idealized victim trope and into more nuanced territory. Accordingly, this exciting sequence is one of the first examples when we see from Romualdo's perspective, rather than that of the intrusive narrator. In giving Robustiano the pretext to organize a party of slave-hunter [*rancheadores*] it also sets into motion an eventual confrontation that will pit the extra-legal wing of Industrial Slavery against the extra-legal maroon community.

While the conflation of machista violence and political rebellion deserves critical scrutiny that I cannot provide here,[236] two things become immediately clear in Romualdo's flight to the

[236] Such misogynism is a fixture of political violence throughout the Americas. In Cuba, it becomes crucial to nationalist works after the 10 Years War, crystallized in Barnet and Montejo's *Biography of a Runaway Slave*. However, this macho view of political subjectivity in an anti-slavery context stretches well back to the black avenger trope, perhaps all the way to Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* (Pierrot, 378).

Cubita mountains. First, striking down a proxy mother corresponds to a strike against the "good" proxy father, El Cura. This "mother" of the plantation-owner's *oikos* provides the same advice that the anonymous "father" (in both senses) presumably would have offered: wait until a benevolent White intermediary can help you; don't act on your own. Thus, in this episode we find a key example of Calcagno's emphasis on rejecting White mediation. Second, a Rubicon is crossed within Romualdo as well as in the plot. We can see this not only in the rebellious adjectives I've already noted but also in the non-conscious and instinctual nature of Romualdo's choices that are described as necessary (era preciso) or as occurring spontaneously (sin saber and sin sentir). This lexicon of spontaneity begs the question about the origins of the fire that precipitates these character changes, which the narrator describes as a "spontaneous combustion… of inflammable gases" (43). But whether or not Romualdo actually set the fire or not is ultimately beside the point. Regardless, the destruction of La Esperanza's capital sets the titular character into rebellion for the presumably the first time in his life. Fugitivity, literally and figuratively, becomes the dangerous liquidation of capital that threatens the basic unit of Industrial Slavery in Cuba.

Whether the fire was "spontaneous" in either sense, we can see how the plot delegitimizes the efforts of the proxy father to work within the system to manumit or otherwise emancipate Romualdo. Despite the original illegality of his inscription into plantation slavery, Romualdo and his daughter will die enslaved but for his decision to flee the plantation. Thus, in deed rather than in conscious will or overt speech acts, the mixed-race protagonist refuses White intercession and frees himself. Among other things, the breakdown of the character triangle over the course of the plot parallels *Dred*. But whereas the mixed-race enslaved proxy son Harry Gordon articulately voices his rejection of slavery more or less on its own terms, Romualdo

contests inscription in the spontaneous and practical terms characteristic of what Esteban Deive explains as "petit marronage": "a social phenomenon, petit marronage doubtless constituted an outward manifestation of the contradictions within the slave mode of production but it did not signify any consciousness capable of offering enslaved persons the possibility of liberating themselves as a social class."[237] Although I dispute the assertion that individuals cannot express social contradictions, this working definition aptly describes the dynamic I now turn to (grand marronage and the question of more densely collective political worlds will be explored later below).

Even before Romualdo reaches the *palenque*, the novel enacts a distinct iteration of Fugitive Primitivism centering on the radical subjectivation that induces slaves to rebel. When we first encounter Romualdo in the novel's second chapter wandering through the forests of the "inaccessible Cubita mountain" range, he appears as a character divided within himself: "Su mirada es melancólica y un tanto ferina…parece respirar odio" [His gaze was melancholic and also savage…he seemed to breathe hate] while "sus fuerzas son atléticas, aunque…se nota el abatimiento causado por el hambre y las privaciones…" (17) [his movements were athletic although… there was a pronounced abatement caused by hunger and deprivation]. As noted, critics tend to over-focus on the weaker aspects of Romualdo's character that align with antislavery discourse and historical examples such as Manzano. Following William Luis, if we concede that Calcagno makes concession for pragmatic and rhetorical purposes (i.e. to skirt censorship and persuade his White audience), we can say that the rebellious affects and actions are just as important as submissive symptoms – if not more important. Romualdo's above-cited

[237] Cited in Alvin O. Thompson, *Flight to Freedom*, 56. While group flight (grand marronage) is here asserted as the truly "political" form of action, Thompson notes that petit marronage was a "constant thorn in the side" of planters in the Caribbean plantation colonies.

transformation suggests one way in which the novel illustrates a subtle form of enslaved agency. The bestial imagery that starts with his conversion into a "vengeful tiger" (46) becomes an important barometer of Black political subjectivity going forward in the novel. Even when Romualdo is victimized rather than attacking, his point of view becomes pivotal for the form and content of the text. For example, when Blasa dies on their flight from slave-hunters before Romualdo can procure water, the reader experiences the unworlding effects of her tragic death:

> ¡El mulato se puso á gritar! ¡socorro! ¡Socorro! Pero solo el eco de la sierra repitió con sarcasmo sus palabras, como si la Naturaleza no las aceptara y se las devolviera
>
> …Entonces comenzó á llorar conociendo toda su impotencia y desamparo. Un instante se le ocurrió una idea horrible: creyó que la Providencia también le abandonaba porque no era blanco. (52)
>
> [The *mulato* began shrieking 'Help! Help!' but he was only answered by the sarcastic eco of his own words through the mountain side, as if Nature itself did not accept them and sent them back to him…Then he began to cry as he grasped the extent of his impotence and abandonment. Suddenly a horrific idea overtook him: he knew that Providence had also abandoned him because he was not white.]

In addition to the formal pattern I noted, I cite this passage at length to illustrate how even in total devastation Romualdo's character is no longer flatly melancholic. Rather, his loss constitutes a critical rejection of El Cura's naïve Euro-Christianity and slave-holding metaphysics. These pages come directly before the chapter opening (cited above) in which El Cura arrives in Havana, buoyed by his faith in Providence and the moral order of the universe. For the enslaved, Calcagno argues, Industrial Slavery represents more than a violent and oppressive institution; rather, Natural History and Providence itself appear to be constitutive

elements of an anti-Black cosmos. At the character level, Romualdo's conversion has positive and negative valences as the novel explores his abandonment.

Although Romualdo's anger and vengeful nature becomes dormant for much of the novel after the tragic death of his daughter, it animates later examples of rebellious Black affects. In a clear parallel to Romualdo's conversion, when El Cura informs Romualdo's heretofore depressed mother that his son lives in slavery in Puerto Príncipe, she comes alive: "Con los ojos que parecían querer saltar de sus órbitas… y los brazos extendidos, como si buscara algunas víctimas, era la imagen de la desesperación, era la tigre hambrienta, era…… era una madre á quien han quitado su hijo" (81) [With eyes that seemed poised to leap from their sockets… and outstretched arms that seemed to be reaching for victims, she was the image of desperation, a starving tiger, she was…a mother who had her son stolen from her]. In this rich passage, Má Felicia's response to the theft of her son intensifies the ambivalent ferocity Romualdo feels in striking down Má Concha, who seeks to smother his budding rebellion. As before, the emphasis on "desperation" invokes a helpless pathos designed to invoke pity, but which in short order is superseded by the striking image of a "hungry tiger" and barely repressed threat of arms in search of a victim to attack.[238] The implication is that regardless of status, the arbitrary and cruel destruction of basic kinship ties by the slave system turns harmless servants into primordial, enraged killers. Especially in these passages, however, the narration views such subjects with a degree of empathy that would suggest that rebellion is perhaps a natural outcome of the increasingly voracious demand for Black bodies to feed the plantations. Fugitive Primitivism

[238] As an aside to this discussion of Má Felicia's righteous anger is the fact that Romualdo's daughter goes by both Blasa and Felicia. Besides the biting irony, the decision to name his daughter thus proves to be a vestigial linkage to his lost past and freedom; in so doing, the doubling and analeptic displacement of Felicia through time represents one of Calcagno's best formal illustrations of *plagio* at the level of character. The juxtaposition of free Má Felicia and enslaved granddaughter Felicia reveals how Industrial Slavery seeks to neutralize even the most venerable convention of New World slavery – that of the free womb. This will be explored more directly in Chapter 3.

thereby extends some solidarity even toward the character who turns out to be the most maligned Afro-Cuban figure of the novel, Miguel Carabali. Outwardly a perfect contrast with Romualdo, tall, strapping [*fornido*], and African-born [*bozal*], Carabali possesses a "coldly ferocious" soul befitting of the "executor of justice" in the *palenque* (99-100). And yet, his "odious nickname of Tiger-Black" clues us in to the fact that there will be more to the character than a titillating White fantasy. Arguably, Tiger-Black goes on to provide an important supplement to Romualdo who helps solidify William Luis' important contention that the novel advocates Black autonomy.[239] This can be seen in the two primary acts of violence the *bozal* commits against the novel's primary and secondary avatars of Industrial Slavery. In the first instance, Tiger-Black nearly slays the disguised Jacobo Vendialma with a hatchet, but is prevented from doing so by Romualdo (115). This misplaced act of mercy ultimately leads to the deadly final confrontation with the slave-hunters. While I discuss this later in depth, for now I note that the latter event contains the second contribution of Tiger-Black to the cause of Black autonomy: only he is capable of dragging Don Robustiano to their mutual death.

Turning now to the *palenque*, we find that it intensifies the Fugitive Primitivist character system found in *Dred* while retaining the ambivalence I noted in the depiction of Romualdo's flight. With as many as ninety inhabitants, the palenque is not only much larger than Engedi but also brings together a maroon *bozales* who, in keeping with the South Atlantic slave trade, constitute a panorama of African nations. Its geography that repels settlement and sugar plantations place it in a "harmony" with its rebellious inhabitants in an empirically grounded relation (compared to the Romanticized world of Engedi). Unlike their US counterparts, fugitive settlements in the Caribbean and South America were often much larger and more venerable,

[239] Luis, 139.

typically situated in easy to defend geographies in the eastern province away from the center of political and economic power.[240] In Cuba and Jamaica, some maroon communities even ratified peace treaties with the colonial powers and assisted in certain slave-hunting missions in exchange for peace.[241] The solidity of these communal expressions of "passive resistance"[242] was a result of numerous cultural, colonial, economic, and ecological factors.[243]

While it steeply declined by the 1860s, in the 1836 time of narration the palenque overlaps with the Fugitive Primitivism of Engedi in several key ways. In both cases, the point of view begins with the narrative discourse and shifts into Romualdo's. However, far more than with Harry Gordon, the criollo's liminal perspective, due to his creole status and free birth, separates him from the other *apelancados*: "Y alli también está Romualdo, acaso el unico criollo del palenque, recibido con frialdad por su color, luego aceptado con benevolencia por sus desgracias" (102) [and there was Romualdo, perhaps the only creole in the palenque, received coldly due to color but later accepted with benevolence because of his sorrows]. The horrific ordeal of losing his daughter the day before arriving facilitates his acceptance and we encounter the settlement the day of her funeral. The community likewise emerges in dialectical relation to the growth of nearby sugar plantations like La Esperanza and the narration employs gothic hues to stylize the power of the fugitives. When introducing the palenque, the narrator departs from its

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[240] Corzo, 8-20; José Luciano Franco, *Los Palenques De Los Negros Cimarrones*, 78.
Ada Ferrer notes that the influx of coffee planters to Cuba from post-revolution Haiti transformed much of the eastern provinces as the century wore on. As French coffee planters "began clearing roads, putting more and more land under cultivation, hiring overseers to discipline slaves," the region became gradually less conducive to palenques (*Freedom's* Mirror, 224). As noted previously, this a similar and larger-scale dynamic to what canal construction did to the Great Dismal Swamp.
[241] Thompson, 20.
[242] Corzo, 9.
[243] But as Alvin Thompson and others suggest, the "prototype" for the maroon settlement was furnished by enslaved Indians and subsequently sustained by *bozal*, or African-born slaves, from the Sixteenth Century onward (*Flight,* 96). Unfortunately, although symbolic acts of solidarity between Afro-Caribbean and Caribbean indigenous tribes would make a generative contrast to Engedi/*Dred*, I cannot follow it here. For related insights into the Haitian example, see Geggus, "On the Naming of Haiti" and Roberts, Chapter 4.

generally critical or mimetic movements into a mode similar to what we saw above in Romualdo's transformation: "Diría que la Naturaleza, al hace esas alturas accesibles solo para ellos, quiso prepararles algún punto donde pudieran formar su pequeña Guinea improvisada e independiente" (97) [It could be said that Nature, in making these peaks accessible only to them, wished to prepare them a distant point to establish their improvised and independent mini-Guinea]. At first glance, this would seem to imply that the *cimarrones* live in accordance with Nature in a primitive harmony that translates Africa into the New World.

However, we can trace the distance between the context and geography of *Dred* and *Romualdo* by considering how the latter estranges this Romantic evocation of marronage. In describing life in this "informe barracón" (informal barracoon, or large slave quarters), we see the indulgence and ironic estrangement of fugitive mythologies in a single sentence:

> Casi todos sin más traje que un raído taparrabos, con hercúleos músculos y feroces rostros, presentaban un aspecto infernal: creeíase que la Naturaleza, amante de la armonía, había creado tales monstruos para tales montañas. (99)
>
> [The clothing of almost everyone was threadbare, with herculean muscles and ferocious faces, all of which gave off demonic appearance: many believe that Nature, lover of harmony, created these monsters suited for these mountains.]

Before the colon, the narrator offers a neutral descriptive of tattered clothing before leaping into the features (supernatural strength and ferocious expressions) that distinguish the "demonic" fugitives from the melancholic, feeble description of Romualdo at the start of the novel. Yet, after the colon we find the true object of narrative critique to be White fantasies that, like El Cura's naivety and Jacobo's inhuman cynicism, turn Afro-Cuban oppression and slavery into metaphysical facts (in this case, expressions of Nature's ontological harmony). This critical edge

is reiterated throughout the narrative discourse, which cautions its readers against the ideologies that reify racialized status: "Son hombres que se ocultan de otros hombres; negros que huyen de blancos; más aún: son seres que llamamos salvajes sustrayéndose á las pesquisas de seres que se titulan civilizados" (98) [They are men who hide from other men; Blacks fleeing Whites; moreover: those beings we call savages seeking to hide from the investigations of the beings we call civilized]. This critical attitude toward categories such as savage and civilized are undoubtedly the product the antislavery movement's effort to expand the parameters of Enlightenment humanism established by figures like Diderot. But this does not go far enough. Especially when contrasted with the ethnological and racist pseudo-science favored by antislavery writers like Joaquim Macedo (the subject of the next chapter), Calcagno seems to express the democratic antislavery discourse that contemporary historians link to emergence of revolutionary Cuban nationalism.[244]

The palenque radically extends the Black fugitive character system of the mountain dwelling "mini-Guinea." Larger and more empirically grounded than Engedi, the palenque also includes significantly more Black characters that are not only names but speak and act within the narrative world. Coming after the failures of El Cura, the narrative syntax appears to redeem Romualdo's tragic loss in the blossoming African world that supplants the plantation. Indeed, the chapter that introduces this world is the among the longest and most empirically rich of the entire novel. To illustrate the density of this, here is a list of *bozal* character who speak at least once in this and subsequent chapters: the aforementioned Tigre-Negro; Josefa Lucumí, a woman whose surname links her to Santeria; Bambauck of the Mandinka nation; the famously rebellious

[244] Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* and Aisha Finch, "Slave Resistance and Political Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century Cuba."

Jacinto, from Senegambia; Isodoro Arará, from Libya and a veteran of the Aponte uprising;[245] and the Congolese chief, Juan Bemba, also from Africa (many minor characters are also named). Almost all of these characters worked in the fields and sugar mills [*ingenio*], with Tiger-Black having suffered under the lash of Robustiano and Juan Bemba sold off by Jacobo. In line with the largest and most complex palenques, this settlement is a literal pan-African formation and the closest example of a collective Black subject:[246]

> Son casi todos de *nación*, esto es, de África, y aunque procedentes de distintas tribus, quizá enemigas en su tierra, aquí viven en paz y harmonía; que fue siempre primer efecto de opresión, unir entre sí á los oprimidos. (105)
>
> [They are almost from a unified *nation*, namely, from Africa, and although descendants of distinct tribes that may have been enemies on their native soil, here live in peace and harmony; uniting the oppressed was always the foremost result of oppression.]

While there isn't space to illustrate every example, this African nation within a (proto)nation likewise attests to the ways in which they "Africanizan, por decirlo así, todos los elementos cubanos que llegan á su alcance" (103) [Africanize, to say it in this way, every Cuban element that they come in contact with], including food, music, religion, and monarchial government. This new world and its character system overwhelm the space of the novel, supplanting the *plagio* plot that grounds the first two thirds of the text with interesting implications for a potential Black future beyond the plantation.

As with Edward Clayton's flattening and Harry Gordon's integration into a new character system, the palenque has important narratological effects on the character distribution of the

[245] For an account of this, see Childs, 120-154.
[246] While there was is no possible empirical linkage, this character system bears a striking resemblance to the "African council" in Martin Delany's *Blake* – though of course lacking the African Christian characters and the African American (US) presence provided by Blake and his wife.

novel. Accordingly, this claim is not affected by the fact that Romualdo feels alienated within the palenque due to his creole status or that this is the setting for a melodramatic reversal of his amnesia that suddenly allows him to recalls his illegal inscription into slavery. On the last point, the belatedness of this epiphany makes it more an ironic twist of the knife than a moment of *anagnorisis* befitting a Greek tragedy. If perhaps to a lesser degree than *Dred*, the mixed-race proxy son ultimately becomes a vanishing mediator, the relay point between the collapse of white intermediaries and a Black character network that the White authors seem scarcely able to control.[247] This formal development and the authorial haplessness are encapsulated by a later episode which finds the rest of the palenque passionately debating self-defense strategies:

> En cuánto á Romualdo, este es nuestro protagonista, este es nuestro héroe; pero, con dolor lo decimos, Romualdo ya no servía para héroe, todo le era indiferente: era una máquina que reducía su acción á seguir el movimiento iniciado por otros. (141)
>
> [Regarding Romualdo, he is our protagonist, our hero; but, it pains us to say, Romualdo at this point was no longer a hero, everything to him seemed completely meaningless: he was a machine, his actions reduced to following the initiatives of others.]

In this idiosyncratic and self-deprecatory meta-fictional gesture – a rare flourish that approximates the proto-modernism of Machado de Assis or Horacio Quiroga– the author abruptly remembers that the titular "hero" has been lost within the mushrooming character system that now contains him. Ironically, while slavery was often said to reduce humans to machines, the narrative machinery has flattened the hero into an inert literary mechanism, a residue of protagonicity that serves to link disparate worlds rather than act within them.

[247] This last point is indebted to Williams,113-115.

But despite its scale and narratological prominence, the palenque never emerges as fully-realized counterfactual or a counterhegemonic world. From several angles, the palenque is revealed to be vulnerable and itself an obsolete vestige. C*ontra* the narrator, the ecology and political geography of central Cuba meant that the historical Puerto Príncipe had far fewer palenques than the comparatively isolated and underdeveloped eastern provinces.[248] But more importantly, a fugitive community unable to cultivate its own food supply usually lead to smaller, transitive clusters or to banditry.[249] Dred and his comrades on Engedi enjoy a flourishing "primitive communism" grounded in cultivation for subsistence, production for use, and the lack of institutional mediation in spiritual and practical affairs. Despite their tribal and cultural cohesion, the *apalencados* lack this material basis. Most immediately, their isolated settlement makes cultivation impossible: "situado en la mas elevada y áspera de las montañas, en una meseta ó planicie de corta extensión, que parece un descanso de la Naturaleza, cansada de producir despeñaderos y precipicios" (99) [situated in the highest and most barren of mountains on a plateau of a jagged promontory, which looked like Nature had given up partway through, weary of creating cliffs and precipices]. If Nature "grew weary" of making Cubita extend higher, it also furnishes the Mini-Guinea with untillable land, "escasez de agua" [shortage of water] and "Carencia casi absoluta de árboles frutales" [near total lack of fruit-bearing trees]; the "scanty reserves" they enjoy are roots such as yuca, rainwater, coconuts, and whatever livestock they can

[248] Corzo, 12.

[249] Banditry and its repression by council generals becomes an important subplot in the novel that is beyond the scope of my argument for several reasons. It seems to be more a *costumbrista* curiosity, or an example of "local color," than integral to the antislavery plot. It is however loosely connected insofar as the infamous bandit, Juan Rivero, helps supply Jacobo the *corredor* with *plagiados*. For my purposes here, this does little more than reinforce the theme of extra-legal violence and the cannibalizing effects of slavery on the body politic. For another reading that views banditry and governance as key concerns, see William Luis*, Literary Bondage*, 125-127.
While Spanish officials claimed that the rebel armies were primarily "reduced to blacks and Chinese accustomed to banditry" and "no longer obeyed any orders other than those that led to theft for individual benefit," (Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* 48), the key bandit gangs in *Romualdo* appear to be White (or at least white-led).

pillage from adjacent small farms (104). Relatedly, Dred's supernatural hunting prowess allows him to furnish his comrades with implements for subsistence and self-defense. Once again, the comparatively realistic and deflated the palenque lacks firearms or any other implements beyond machetes. In keeping with the empirical goals of marron settlements, Calcagno's marronage is not a training ground for resistance, but a group of oppressed fugitives seeking to survive outside the White legal apparatus and brutal plantation labor. The major obstacle to this basic goal comes from a social, rather than ecological or financial, enemy: the caste of property-less Whites who work as slave bounty hunters, or *rancheadores*. Along with overseers and slave-traders, this social type is the most stridently vilified by the narrative discourse. The narrator clarifies early on the paradox of the mutually-constitutive relationship between a legal non-personhood and its dehumanizing-yet-legal enforcer:

> De un lado, pues, tenemos un ser abatido por la sinrazón, abandonado por todas las leyes, bajo el peso de todas las preocupaciones, viendo contra sí á toda la raza blanca, y sin que uno solo de la negra, se atreva á ampararlo; del otro una partida de hombres armados, protegidos por la ley, aunque no por la razón. (47)
>
> [On one side we have a being beaten down by injustice, abandoned by every law, beneath the weight of every imaginable threat seeing the entire white race against it and without a member of the black race daring to help him; on the other side a gang of armed men, protected by the law but not by reason.]

The avatar of plantation brutality, of injustice and irrationality, Don Robustiano rounds up a posse of *rancheadores* the minute Romualdo leaves, with the armed lynch mob finally tracking down the palenque in the novel's final pages. The legal threat of White persecution emerges as the main threat to the African settlement in the Cubita mountains.

In the final showdown between these two social forces, the novel resolves the ambivalence afforded to the palenque in a tragedy of mutual destruction. Jacobo is the midwife of these events, insofar as he infiltrates the palenque, gets them to sign off on a political manifesto designed to terrify the whites, and subsequently brings it to the provincial governor. Horrified at the prospect of a new Haiti, Don Robustiano's *rancheadores* are fortified and apprised of the location by Jacobo. The palenque splinters as a result, with the more militant figures seeking to stay together while the majority "prefirieron permanecer en las sierras expuestos á morir de hambre" (142) [preferred staying in the hills at the risk of starvation]. The mob ambushes the remaining group seeking to "rodeados de armas de fuego y de blancos amenazadores que parecían haber brotado de la tierra" (145) [surrounded by firearms and menacing Whites who seemed to have sprouted out of the ground]. Phenomenologically evoking what Walter Johnson terms the "carceral landscape" for those escaping slavery, it is the White enforcers of the law who appear as metamorphosing demons in diction whose cosmic stakes are on par with Cotton Mather's account of the colonization of Massachusetts. Most of the *cimarrones* are massacred in a scene of gore fusing "lo grotesco junta á lo trágico" (ibid), but a small group "se distingue por su animosidad" [notably incensed] resists to execution in a fight to the death. Most notably, Tiger-Black's tragic heroism is rendered in vividly picturesque imagery:

> Hermoso, horriblemente hermoso estaba en aquel instante el indomable africano: junto al torrente, con un pie sobre el borde del profundo abismo…en la diestra su terrible hacha, parecía lanzar un reto de muerte á toda la raza blanca. Un poeta lo hubiera tornado por genio de la barbarie desafiando á la civilización. (145)
>
> [Beautiful, horrifically beautiful was the indominable African in that moment: near the cataract with one foot above the deep abyss… his terrible hatchet in hand, he seemed to

throw down the gauntlet of death before the entire white race. A poet would have rendered it as the genius of barbarism in defiance of civilization.]

As in Walter Scott's historical novels, Fenimore Cooper's epics of settler war or Euclides da Cunha's *Os Sertoes*, the passage indulges the fairly conventional literary desire to celebrate while vanquishing the primitive subject. Poet and reader alike can revel in the beauty and horrific Romance of a nation wiped away by the inexorable force of historical progress, a feeling condensed in the sublime emblem of Tiger-Black wielding hatchet while straddling the abyss. And yet, as noted above, Calcagno's novel at least partially ironizes the terms of racialized civilizationalist discourse. In addition to the pathos of the defeated barbarian, the battle of Cubita extends this defeat to the white avatars of Industrial Slavery. Just after the above-cited passage, Tiger-Black locates and attacks his former torturer, the "superhuman" Don Robustiano, and succeeds in dragging both to their deaths. "El Mayoral se quebrantó contra una peña saliente… el Tigre rodó al fondo abismo" [Robustiano the Administrator crashed against a protruding rock [while] the Tiger spun down to the bottom of the abyss] (146-147). Rather than denouncing the "primitive" rebels and inciting white paranoia, these civil war scenes enact a performative negation of the negation in which the crimes of Industrial Slavery are swept away by the dangerous Black subjects who necessarily resist this system.

Though tragic, racialized civil war against slavery becomes imminent, and immanent to this political world, abandoned by prospects for structural reform. When Romualdo is mortally wounded without a struggle, the novel invents a double (or second proxy) who avenges the crime of *plagio*: when Juan Bemba spots Jacobito, he reveals to the slave trader that he is true name is Juan Congo – a slave Jacobito cheated out of his manumission savings and sold to a brutal sugar plantation. Before Juan Congo slays the soul-seller and is executed by gunfire, the narrator

intrudes to translate his final words for the reader: "'soy Juan Congo el Cazabero', es decir, soy él que tú robaste y vendiste infamante; soy quien no te puede perdonar, soy el instrumento con que a Providencia vá á poner fin á tus maldades" (148) ["'I am Juan Congo the Cazabero' which is to say I am the one you robbed and infamously sold; I, who never could forgive you, I am the instrument with which Providence will rectify your evil deeds]. In its righteous sincerity and strident declaratives, this extra-diegetic supplement revises the earlier misapplications of divine intercession (as we saw in Romualdo's metaphysical abandonment) and boldly posits the *cimarron* leader as a vehicle for Providence – which in the previous chapter we discussed as the reactivation of Progress.

However, this is not to say that *Romualdo* merely extends the comparatively limited political imagination of *Dred*. Exalting Juan Congo as a "radicalized Dred," is just as inaccurate as calling Calcagno an advocate for any kind of race war and my argument accounts for several formal and contextual difference. One main distinction to add at this point is that if Stowe countenances slave rebellion due to an exhaustion of all available methods, Calcagno's novel gradually comes to terms with the actuality (and potential outcomes) of civil conflict in its journey from the character triangle to the embattled palenque. At this point, we can step back and consider the substance of the novel's intervention. Despite its 1836 setting and *costumbrista* emphasis on national texture and type, the core themes identified here – the crisis of slave demography, collective Black rebellion, and emergent war over slavery – are undeniably connected to the novel's moment of composition: the already-noted subtitle (One of Many), theme of *plagio*, and polysemy of El Cura; the Jacob/Esau trope; and (most relevant to the present discussion) the fact that the final battle between marrons and slave-hunters occurs on Cubita mountain (literally, small Cuba).

As a Late-Abolition novel, *Romualdo* repels facile allegories while remaining indissolubly joined with the 10 Years' War context. The story largely occurs in Puerto Príncipe (today, Camagüey), Calcagno's home and a proving ground for the mobilizations. Bordering the eastern provinces where the first rebels emancipated slaves, raised armies, and drafted independence documents, the town had been a vital commercial and military hub in the earlier colonial period. Between the outbreak of war in October 1868 through 1870, the antislavery and pro-independence rebels, explains Ada Ferrer, had "the material and moral advantage" in the conflict but "the support of urban and rural residents of the province, as well as the financial and material backing of a powerful exile network."[250] However, the contradictions of this first independence coalition quickly became unmanageable: landowning Whites, who favored gradual abolition and viewed themselves the unassailable leaders of the movement, were terrified by the specter of excessive racial upheaval whether real or imagined (fears of miscegenation, "moral decay" of ex-slaves, the descent into a new Haitian Revolution). For their part, free and enslaved Afro-Cubans often made a range of justifiable demands, from symbolic (dispensing with degrading social titles) to material (advancement in the militias and economic concessions); in practice, many Blacks chose loyalty to Spain due to better concessions from the crown, skepticism about the aims of the movement, and a variety of other reasons.[251] By 1872, a most of the insurgent White landowners had publicly surrendered and the majority of rebel troops either surrendered or deserted – a decisive shift that would occur until the 1878 peace agreement. This historical trajectory seems instructive: if Calcagno did not (unlike many Whites) view "Cuban" and "Black" as mutually exclusive, the novel's ultimate political vision is nonetheless overdetermined.

[250] *Insurgent Cuba*, 45.
[251] Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 47-52; Sartorius, 96-106, and Scott, *Slave Emancipation*, 51-56.

In recognizing that an army of fugitives and slaves could emerge as Providential vehicle for abolition, the emphasis on mutual annihilation is hardly an endorsement. More a reflection of its embattled context than a prescription, specifying the palenque's political implications for the problem of Black freedom is not a simple task. Despite its racist descriptions of the *bozal* inhabitants,[252] Claudette Williams argues that the novel ultimately celebrates a "maroon spirt" that is "defiant, freedom-loving, self-reliant, and preferring death over a life in bondage."[253] Accordingly, she cites the ultimatum that the palenque makes to the rancheadores as an instance of their radical subjectivation that transcends authorial intention:

> Que no querían más funche, ni más mayoral, ni más cuero, ni más esclavitud: que querían morir antes que volver al ingenio; que los dejaran quietos en las sierras; y que se les diera la erial llanura inmediata, donde vivirían sembrando viandas y sin meterse con nadie. (130)
>
> [They demanded no more bare subsistence meals, no more overseer, no more lashes, no more slavery: they would die before returning to the sugar mills; they demanded to be left alone in the hills and that they be given uncultivated plain land immediately, where they would live planting vegetable gardens without bothering anyone.]

But this declaration of abolitionist intent is compromised by the fact these political demands are incited by Jacobito after he infiltrates the palenque and poses as a sympathetic White ally. Ultimately, the ultimatum does little more than push the Afro-Cuban rebels into mutually exterminating war. Its depiction is also redolent with the White political paternalism that

[252] The most obvious example is the name Juan Bemba, derived from Bembón, an Iberian slur for African "rubbery lips" (Williams Op. Cit.). At least in this case, Calcagno complicates his own racism by literalizing the violence of racism in a horrific White speech act, viz the moment when a Jacobito says to the *rancheadores*, "Por mi parte, no me conform miéntras no le corte las bembas a Juan Bemba" (131) [From where I stand, I won't be satisfied until I cut off Juan Bemba's bembas].
[253] Williams, 112-113.

Calcagno elsewhere critiques vigorously, viz. the trope of abolitionists putting "dangerous ideas" into the childlike minds of Africans. The palenque simply doesn't seem to offer any straightforward *political* clues as to what should be done or what should come next.

Thus, if the novel reckons with the consequences of Industrial Slavery and tarries with the palenque as an oppositional force, like *Dred* before it, it sidesteps the racial question lurking within *Cubanidad* and what *post*-abolition citizenship should look like. I would argue that, beside the ideological and discursive limits of White liberals *en extremis*, the wartime context seems foreclose the future in favor of a history of the present. As such, it may be accurate to read this elusion less as racist foreclosure and more as evidence for a different kind of political worlding specific to its moment. If the palenque is less an organ of revolutionary consciousness or a proto-nation, *pace* Williams and Miguel Barnet, it may be more akin to "traces" of freedom that David Kazanjian identifies in the archive of mid- nineteenth century oppressed peoples of the Atlantic world. Drawing from Fred Moten, he glosses these traces as the "improvised operations" of oppressed subjects that "typically cease after undoing efforts to fix freedom, offering potent ellipses rather than anything approaching an alternative or counterhegemonic plan, pulling back rather than advancing to seize the state."[254] Some of the key adjectives used to describe the Mini-Guinea – improvised and informal, as well as Romualdo's spontaneity – likewise suggest a nimbler, transitive, and marginal politics than *Dred*, *Blake* or *Autobiography of a Runaway Slave*. Perhaps demanding Calcagno's fugitives to self-organize a replacement polity is not only "unthinkable" (in Trouillot's sense)[255] but beside the point. If Stowe's apocalyptic immediatism presages a war to come and begins to build out a Black counter-world,

[254] Kazanjian, *The Brink of Freedom*, 20.
[255] "When reality does not coincide with deeply held beliefs, human beings tend to phrase interpretations that force reality within the scope of these beliefs. They devise formulas to repress the unthinkable and to bring it back within the realm of accepted discourse" (Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 71).

the actuality of warfare for Calcagno affords us little more than momentary glimpses "speculative encounters with freedom's ongoing, equivocal improvisation" "across apparently opposed and discontinuous idioms of freedom";[256] the spontaneous coalescence of African nations under the weight of oppression, examples of cultural and spiritual resilience that sustain them despite near-starvation, their acceptance of a creole outsider out of solidarity, and even the efforts at self-defense that ultimately fail under the pressure of Industrial Slavery. If the reality of apocalypse here is not conducive to utopian speculations, Calcagno's political imagination tears down the vestiges of an obsolete antislavery world; although in refusing to fully replace it, reluctant notes of improvised Black freedom hold out hope for a transformation that has yet to fully arrive. My next and final chapter explores the prehistory of the ongoing tragedy of slavery's intransigent American afterlives.

[256] Kazanjian, 105, 32.

CHAPTER THREE

THE WAR AT THE END OF THE WAR: EMANCIPATING ANTI-BLACKNESS

"This contradiction not only demonstrates the Romantic mixing of past and present, legend and reality, but also the contradiction of the arriviste, who climbs by virtue of his capacity to adapt to the new world and nevertheless preserves all the backwardness of his origins."[257]

"O negro d'África africanizou quanto pôde e quanto era possível todas as colônias e todos os países, onde força o arrastou condenado aos horrores da escravidão."[258]
[The African-born black Africanizes every land and every country to the fullest extent possible, wherever he is forced, dragged, or condemned to the horrors of slavery]

I: Slavery in the Brazil's Imperial Period (1822-1889)

At the onset of Anglo-American Reconstruction and Cuba's 10 Years War, Brazil was emerging as a *sui generis* South American power with a comparatively strong export economy and military. The period covered in this chapter, the late 1860's to 1870, represents a turning point in the formation of its state, political economy, and geo-political standing. Four decades after declaring independence from Portugal, it was the both only monarchy in the hemisphere and considered a bastion of political stability. Unlike its postcolonial neighbors, most separatist movements had been swiftly defeated as Brazil established itself as the biggest coffee producer in the world, in addition to its substantial sugar and cotton operations.[259] Especially during the reign of Dom Pedro II from 1841 onwards, the largest South American country had built up state institutions (e.g., basic education, a limited congress, and the military) and realigned its capital around the Paraiba Valley coffee region in the southeast: Brazilian output accounted for 61% of global exports by 1881 (up more than 40% from the start of the century).[260] However, the

[257] Antônio Candido, *Literature and Society*, 17.
[258] Joaquim Macedo, *As Vítimas-Algozes, Quadros de Escravidão,* 74. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as Macedo.
[259] Boris Fausto and Sergio Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, 102-105 and Beckert, 169-170.
[260] Thomas Skidmore, *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, 83; Bergard, 161.

outward social cohesion and economic modernization masked a complex web of social and political antagonisms thrust into the surface after the King sought to assert the new nation's military prowess during War of the Triple Alliance (or Paraguayan War) – nominally successful, but ultimately a debacle for Brazil and its two allies who razed neighboring Paraguay from 1864-1870.[261] The resulting high casualties and economic crisis caused by exploding foreign (primarily UK) debt undermined the legitimacy of the monarch in liberal, conservative, and military circles. As the century progressed, the sovereign became increasingly unpopular with elite powerbrokers who had been the crown's benefactors: landowners, the church, political parties, as well as non-elite social movements. As his health waned, his declining legitimacy culminated in a military-backed coup d'état that abolished slavery in 1888 and ushered a republic government in 1889.

But equally if not more important to this conjuncture was the shifting parameters of the role of slavery. As in the US South and Cuba, slavery was a social relation ubiquitous to cities, skilled labor markets, small farms, in travel/navigation, and even to the royal court itself (in addition to rural farms and plantations). But unlike other societies save perhaps colonial Saint-Domingue, Brazilian slaveholding traversed social class and racial distinctions, which arguably helps account for the solidity of the institution until the 1860s.[262] As Seymour Drescher writes, "Brazil entered the third quarter of the nineteenth century with a dynamic and thriving slave system… heavily dependent upon slave labor into the 1880s, particularly in the coffee sector."[263] Strikingly, even the sudden end of the African slave trade in 1850 under the naval

[261] The precise effects and later consequences of the War remain controversial among historians. See Vitor Izechsohn, "Freeing Slaves to Fight Against Paraguay: Brazilian Freedmen in the War of the Triple Alliance, 1864–1870" and Thomas Skidmore, *Brazil: 500 Years of History,* 58-64.
[262] João José Reis, "Slavery in Nineteenth Century Brazil," 136.
[263] Drescher, *Abolition*, 348.

occupation by England, Brazil's major creditor, "seemed to place the institution of slavery itself under no immediate economic or political threat" at midcentury[264]. By contrast, Cuban sugar plantations were reeling after the Spanish slave traffic ended in the 1860s. The effects of the booming coffee complex reordered the cartography of domestic slavery and revitalized planters in the southeast region, though not to the extent of the Cotton Kingdom in the US.[265] While the ratio of enslaved to total population shrank drastically from 32.8% in 1819 to 10.2% in 1872,[266] close to 80% of those who remained bonded "toiled in the southeastern coffee plantations" in three major provinces (Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, São Paulo) that accounted for between 107,000 and 192,000 of the estimated enslaved half-million.[267] The growth of market shares abroad – especially in its Late-Abolition accomplices – facilitated drastic improvements to Brazil's caffeine-centric iteration of Industrial Slavery.[268] While the king expressed antislavery opinions at times – famously before congress in 1867 – and was considered a "modernizer," his regime depended on support from the powerful planter class. Although the latter has not homogenous, its interests were effectively consolidated under Pedro II's reign and were seldom challenged in parliament until the 1870s.[269]

Equally important to the story is Brazil's free Black population, the largest in the Americas at an estimated 2,684,126 million in 1872 and a staggering 54.0% percent of the country. Save Caribbean islands formerly dominated by plantations such as Jamaica or

[264] Drescher, ibid.
[265] its plantation model required coerced labor whereas a considerable volume of coffee farms used free laborers and/or tenant farmers. Also, the "natural reproduction" of the enslaved was much lower than in the US, in large part due to the nature of the plantation labor, higher rates of manumission, and the planter's dependence on a more robust South Atlantic trade that lead to exceptional mortality rates (the US trade was largely phased out in 1807). See Begard, 136 and Marquese et al., 152.
[266] Begard, 120.
[267] Castilho, *Slave Emancipation* 13; Fausto and Fausto, 114.
[268] Rood, *Reinvention*, 125; Marquese et al., *Slavery and Politics*, Chapter 3.
[269] Fausto and Fausto, 124-136; Skidmore, *Five Centuries,* 65-72

Martinique, this dwarfs the Afro-American demographics in the rest of the hemisphere. Among the many reasons for this, Brazilian colonial and then imperial law (like the Spanish colonies) had venerable mechanisms for pursuing freedom (e.g. *manumissão* and *coartação*), in addition to vernacular customs for freeing specific enslaved people (e.g. purchase by parents or godparents, servants after the enslaver's death and children fathered with an enslaved woman).[271] Unlike the US, there were numerous examples of free Black and mixed-race [*pardo*] participation in state and civil society, including in congress, religious orders, fine arts, and even in slave-based agriculture. As Aline Helg and others have pointed out, such precedents may have provided an important safety valve for displacing dissent.[272] This state of affairs furnished real and imagined examples of social mobility – such as the legend of Chica da Silva – that would later come to define the "racial democracy" discourse in the Republican period, which would be occasionally at times be abused by politicians and scholars to argue against the existence of anti-Black racism in Brazil.[273] Conversely, antislavery advocates elsewhere in the Atlantic would turn to Brazil as an exemplar of racial coexistence to argue that abolition would not lead to catastrophic race war or another Haiti. These arguments were rhetorical and almost exclusively informed by travelogues rather than empirical experience, such as when Irish-American journalist James

[271] Drescher, *Abolition,* 354-355*;* Aline Helg, *78-79 and 93-94.*
[272] Helg, *Slave No More* 66.
[273] Gilberto Freyre was a major purveyor of this in Brazilian scholarship, in works such as his landmark *A Casa Grande e A Senzala* (1933). In the US, for a major turning point in the literature criticizing this early theory of a "post-racial" Brazilian culture, see Thomas Skidmore, *Black into White.*
As Neil Larsen writes in his tour-de-force reading of Gilberto Freyre's *magnum opus,* this period of Brazilian culture was the beginning of the intellectual movement that sought to seize on the tenets of positivist science and ethnology to rethink the national consequences of "mestizaje" and hybridity. As Larsen writes "… it is to *modernize* the racial but *naturalizing* myth of the nation, to free it of the excessively narrow and pessimistic, quasi-Spenglerian shadow cast, in the case of Brazil, by the still looming literary promontory of Da Cunha's *Os Sertões* that *Casa-grande* takes upon itself as its primary ideological mission" ("Race, Periphery, Reification: Speculations on "Hybridity" in Light of Gilberto Freyre's *Casa-Grande and Senzala*," 25).
My reading of *Pai-Raiol, o Feitiçero* seeks to illustrate another, less coherent path taken besides the national pessimism of Da Cunha and Freyre's crypto-racist triumphalism: the attempt to both suppress and manage the "black question," through the whitening schemes the Brazilian state would soon adopt.

Redpath argued that "slavery in Brazil is a milder type of bondage than the system which existed in our Southern States."[274]

However, the ideologies of "milder bondage" and "racial democracy" concealed a system of slavery that not only continued to oppress even free Brazilians but that was undergoing a revitalization that was a comparable, if smaller, scale to Cuban Sugar and US Cotton. Sydney Chaloub, in particular, has shown in exacting detail the experience of Afro-Brazilian subjects until the abolition was formalized, from arbitrary punishment and humiliations, to large-scale illegal enslavements.[275] In addition, the structural grey areas in manumission practices that enslavers could exploit to short-circuit the social mobility of the enslaved as well as the surging demand from the coffee *fazendas* meant that "kidnapping and sale of free and freed black and *pardo* [i.e. mixed-race] children to slave dealers had become commonplace; sometimes guardians of children of color sold them to slavery."[277] The context for these practices has been brought into further relief by recent scholarship on the renaissance of slavery in the southeast region with the mid-century rise of the coffee complex. Despite the desire of Dom João II to "modernize" Brazil and promote industries connected to free labor, the assets of Brazil's ruling class were primarily fixed in the human capital required by Industrial Slavery. With the effective end of the Transatlantic trade in the 1850 effected by the British navy,[278] the economic value of chattelized human life was higher than ever and the demands of increasing coffee exports

[274] Cited in Skidmore II, 158.
[275] Sydney Chalhoub, "The Precariousness of Freedom in a Slave Society" and Robert Conrad, "Neither Slave nor Free: The *Emancipados* of Brazil, 1818-1868," 52-58.
[277] Chalhoub, 43.
[278] In practice, slave-traders and planter would resort to any means of accumulating more valuable human chattel. When the British would commandeer ships of illegally trafficked Africans (or trafficked US-born slaves, etc.), they would be remanded to the state for an apprenticeship period before being "prepared" for freedom after a fixed term. In practice, "Liberated Africans" were often simply resold. Conrad, Op. Cit.; Castilho, *Slave Emancipation*, 29. As in the West Indies and Cuba, "apprenticeship" was a means of perpetuating slavery – although it was practiced as such with the most success in imperial Brazil.

trumped the shame and reproaches made by a minority of Liberal antislavery *letrados* such as the Liberal party leader José Tomas Nabuco and the head of the Cabinet, Zacharias de Góes Vasconcellos (though the latter was forced into a *volte face* by the King and the legislators serving planter interests).

This goes some way toward explaining the last essential context for *As Vítimas-Algozes*: namely, Brazil's belated domestic abolition movement. A recent wave of scholarship has changed the older Anglophone scholarly consensus that Brazil lacked *any* notable abolition movement apart from outliers such as José Bonifacio, a handful of Liberal delegates, and the later figures like Castro Alves, as well as the view that abolition was imposed solely from above by British pressure.[279] This established view stressed how the leading Brazilian voices privileged "emancipationist" or gradualist models beneficial to the planter class rather than the radical immediatism spread through a vocal minority in the Anglophone and (much later) the Spanish colonial worlds.[280] These accounts tend to trace a neat teleology from the 1850 abolition of the trade through the Paraguayan War to the 1871 Rio Branco Law (or free womb law) and subsequent legislation that paved the way for the 1888 proclamation (Castilho, 9). More recently, scholars have illustrated how this erases important thinkers, ideas, and movements that attempted to either abolish slavery immediately or force the state to implement gradualist measures that were usually deferred for years in practice. Perhaps more important for this dissertation, Celso Castilho and other have recovered the crucial, forgotten political cultures of the 1870s that approximate the discourse and tactics of the immediate abolition movement. Specifically, the explosion of the antislavery public sphere in northeastern states like Pernambuco and Bahia, the

[279] See Leslie Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade, 327-363*.
[280] This distinction is important. The term abolition was considered incendiary and beyond the pale until the 1870s. See Flora Süssekind, "Introdução," vi.

epicenter of the declining sugar plantations, where free and enslaved Blacks took up the antislavery cause, thereby ensuring the enforcement of antislavery measures and the development of new ones.[281] As argued throughout this project, antislavery politics in the Late-Abolition period run through Afro-Americans, who not only helped fuel the nascent domestic movement but also forced the nation to rethink the parameters of race and citizenship.

But it would be incorrect to conflate the Brazilian movement with its US or Cuban counterparts. As such, this chapter tells different story that emphasizes the specific factors at play in the last country to abolish American slavery. Reductive as the traditional narrative of Brazilian abolition is, it cannot be denied that radical abolition's late onset and regionalist scale bespeaks a movement that stands apart from its Late-Abolition counterparts. Among other key facets, the immediate abolition movement only begins *after* the implementation of gradual abolition in 1871, reminiscent of the British immediatist movement to end the West Indian apprentice (or neo-slavery) system. On the regionalist point, places where slavery had either disappeared or was in steep decline usually became hubs for antislavery agitation even beyond the Late-Abolition era, but in Brazil they were especially region-bound; antislavery movements in the US were not confined to New England any more than Cuban movements were to Puerto Príncipe. This belated and comparatively conservative antislavery coalition was noted by contemporaries within and beyond Brazil. Just five years before abolition, Joaquim Nabuco declaimed in tones comparable to US immediatists of the 1850s: "Does not this same underdevelopment of the instinct of [national] self-preservation and this absence of the energy which survival demands

[281] Castilho, *Slave Transformations*, Chapter 3.
Among the other important historical factors that I cannot gloss here include the short-lived cotton bubble that began during the US Civil War and further weakened the sugar plantations, and the apocalyptic drought in the *nordeste* region that began in 1877. The latter precipitated a surging regional slave trade that moved thousands of chattelized humans to the southeastern coffee plantations, a horrific spectacle that further encouraged mobilizations against slavery. As Mike Davis points out, the state most affected by the drought, Ceará, was the first to abolish slavery (*Late Victorian Holocausts*, 81-90; see also Graham, Op. Cit.).

demonstrate the compelling need to abolish slavery without the loss of another second?"[282] For Black abolitionists in the US, by contrast, Brazil represented the last major bastion of slavery, an emblem that the institution was still alive and could be reborn at any moment.[283] My argument in this chapter will turn to a text from this period that sheds light on this apparent conundrum which ultimately, I argue, proved to be predictive of the direction of Black (non)freedom in the post-slavery Americas.

As Vítimas-Algozes; Quadros de Escravidão [*The Victim-Executioners: Notebooks on Slavery*] was published as a single volume in 1869, toward the of the Paraguay War and just one year before the passage of the Spanish Moret Law that would later be emulated by Brazil. The collection contains three novels presented as descriptive accounts (thus, "notebooks"), each of which centers on a titular non-white character and specific plots that polemically explore Brazilian slavery from several angles: the first novel, *Simeão, o Crioulo,* is a "tragic mulatto" story centering on the injustices endured by an enslaved *pardo.* The third novel, *Lucinda, a Mucama,* is a similar tale of an enslaved domestic's complex relation with her mistress. The second, *Pai-Raiol, o Fetiçeiro,* on which this chapter will center, focuses on an enslaved African rebel seeking to take over the plantation. Unlike Macedo's earlier literary works, *As Vítimas-Algozes* did not sell well and was only republished once along with the rest of his writings in 1896. Despite drawing from trendy European genres and techniques favored by the Francophile Brazilian ruling class (such as the *feuilleton*), its seemingly incoherent political agenda and generic slipperiness likely contributed to poor sales and its subsequent exclusion from many Brazilian literary histories.[284] As with the other primary texts in this project and adjacent works

[282] Joaquim Nabuco, Abolitionism, 147.
[283] See Skidmore II, Op. Cit. and Horne, Chapter 6.
[284] See David Brookshaw, *Race and Color in Brazilian Literature.* By contrast, Rachel Texeira Valença's definitive edition (1989) very clearly categorizes the work as a collection of novels.

like Martin Delany's *Blake* and Antonio Zambrana's *El Negro Francisco*, its liminal generic identity and complex rhetorical tasks helped condemn *As Vítimas-Algozes* to obscurity. This mixed reception belies the fact that such texts explore the Late-Abolition political imagination, fantasies, and structure of feelings in a formally and thematically significant way.

To an even greater extent than Calcagno, Joaquim Macedo was an archetypical *letrado* and prolific influential author. A White man from a non-elite background, he trained as a medical doctor before writing the extremely popular 1844 sentimental novel, *A Moreninha* [The Dark-Haired Woman] that established him an important Brazilian writer at a time when readers still favored European imports.[285] While best known for this early work, Macedo became a professor of the Brazilian *Academia das Letrâs*, an accomplished playwright, an active member within Brazil's limited congressional body and co-founded a leading Liberal newspaper (*A Reforma)* the same year that *As Vítimas-Algozes* was published.[286] By his death in 1881, he had become one of the most influential writers and political players in congress and the royal court. His efforts to legislate the nascent republic of letters in Rio de Janeiro, the epicenter of Brazilian print culture,[287] were indissolubly linked to his mission of bringing "enlightened modernity" to the fledgling nation. This required tactfully challenging the stranglehold that Industrial Slavery had on Brazil's economy and political system as civil and imperial war gripped the Late-Abolition world in the 1860s. As we will see, the novel seeks to thread the needle of admonishing slave-owning planters for failing to embrace gradual abolition while speculating on the consequences of this failure and the place of enslaved agency in the process.

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[285] By 1920, the adult population (15+) was 70% illiterate. *A Moreninha* remains a staple of Brazilian secondary education and college entrance exams (*o vestibular*) to this day and has spawned several popular *telenovelas* throughout Latin America. Kraay et al, Op. Cit.
[286] Débora El-Jaick Andrade, "Liberalism e paternalismo no romance *As Vítimas-Algozes* de Joaquim Manuel de Macedo," 29.
[287] On this history, see Marcello Basile, "The 'Print Arena': Press, Politics, and the Public Sphere, 1822-1840."

To address these questions, I will focus on one novel from the Macedo's 1869 collection: *Pai-Raiol, o Fetiçeiro*[289] [Daddy-Raiol, The Conjurer] - that makes innovative use of the Late-Abolition paradigm of competing character systems, crises of paternal legitimacy, and the threat of Afro-American insurgency. More so than the other two novels in the collection, the text expresses the urgency to break the political inertia regarding slavery while evaluating the potential place for Africans and Afro-Brazilians in a post-slavery world. While *Dred* and *Romualdo* also use the novel form to analyze the prospects of black citizenship (and survival) in the wake of the power of Industrial Slavery, *Pai-Raiol* sees its obsolescence as undeniable and imminent in a way that is inconceivable to the two previous texts. As noted above, the prospects for gradual "emancipationist" strategies and Free Womb legislation in the Brazilian court were slowly moving into the sphere of debate after the end of the slave trade, a disastrous war, and an international climate less hospitable than ever to the perpetuation of slavery. In the first instance, the novel's combination of character, plot, and world-building makes a recognizable case for antislavery and illustrates the exigency of actions to emancipate enslaved people of African descent. But if Silva Netto lamented that "[about] the future I do not know," Macedo's novel departs from the previous in hazarding future-oriented political desires.[290] In large part, the chronological and affective distance from the post-1848 conjuncture and the delayed onset of mass antislavery sentiment permits the author to engage in more concrete reflections about the political world to come. In other words, the text focuses less on a pending apocalypse and civil war – which seem completely off the table – and more on the concrete demands and strategies

[289] It is difficult to come up with an adequate English language equivalent. The literal translation might be something along the lines of "Daddy-Raoil, the Fetishist or the Conjurer. But "Pai" is slippery, while "fetiçeiro" has pejorative connotations toward African religions and the concept of the fetish that are lost by the literal translation or domesticating it using the Anglo-American category of Conjure. Thus, I will refer to the work in the original Portuguese and will leave the eponymous character's name as Pai-Raiol.
[290] See the discussion in Section II of my Introduction.

that will soon confront a post-emancipation Brazil. The main problem to be solved is no longer the enigma of Industrial Slavery but how to speed along its death and deal the critical problem of newly free Black citizens: namely, mitigating what was termed *o perigro negro* [the black danger], which refers not only to slave revolts but the social problems associated with a non-White citizenry.[291] This revised form of Late-Abolition speculation requires several modifications to the formal paradigm. In its efforts to forecast gradual, compensated emancipation, the novel utilizes competing *Black* political worlds to both denounce slavery and consider emancipation through the prerogative of *de-Africanizing* Brazil.

The perceived world-historical stakes of this tenuous balancing act are expressed in Macedo's Preface to the first edition. In a sense, his framing of the novel combines aspects of Stowe's Preface, which attempts to intervene in a pending apocalypse, with Calcagno's prefatory remarks denouncing Cuba's shameful historical belatedness. But far from rendering abolition as chiliastic crusade or the only resolution to national infamy, Macedo gently seeks to apprise his audience calls of the impended need for "the *emancipation* of the slaves." He carefully avoids the word polarizing term "abolition" favored by later radical antislavery writers in Brazil's northeastern states (Macedo, 3). The inevitability of emancipation represents an "imminent crisis" and "social revolution" forced upon Brazil by external events and more powerful states. In particular, the defeat of the Confederacy in the US Civil war represents a watershed for slave societies throughout the hemisphere: emanating from the "bloody rivers of the Potomac," an inexorable "black cloud has come from the North" to enforce this revolution (2). Deftly aligning himself with the position of the helpless planter weathering the vicissitudes of global events, the

[291] Débora El-Jaick Andrade, "Liberalism e paternalismo no romance *As Vítimas-Algozes* de Joaquim Manuel de Macedo," 15.

arrival of Progress no longer demands political reactivation nor national expiation. The *ancien régime* has simply, and regrettably, run out of time.

Ramping up the pressure of progress, Macedo identifies rational signs of this historical necessity within the Liberal revolution in Spain (which facilitated free womb laws in Cuba and Puerto Rico) and the quasi-occupying force of the English navy, which had threatened war in order to end Brazil's slave trade a decade prior.[292] Geo-politically isolated and cut off from its insatiable thirst for human chattel, Industrial Slavery is not only crumbling; its very existence threatens Brazil's precarious sovereignty. Might not the "bloody rivers" of the Potomac tinge the Amazon if England choses to invade/annex Brazil, as was occurring throughout Asia and Africa (4)? The defeat of the Confederacy left the empire without a formidable geo-political ally. Slavery is also denounced using traditional rhetorical tropes: "The voice of God, the secular cry of liberty, world opinion, the proclamation of governments, of spirit and matter" (2-3). But this has much less force, its paratactical phrasing almost reads like an aside. More emphasis is placed on the key political demand that comes later: "gradual emancipation starting with free womb policies" and supplemented by "indirect measures" on the part of the planters to free their slaves in exchange for financial indemnification. [294] This is the only "prudent advice" and "provident recourse" for the *senhores* who comprise his audience (3-4).

Tonally, these geo-political and moral claims rework the fatalism of Calcagno and later Brazilian intellectuals such as Silvio Romero and Euclides Da Cunha into smug proclamations about the end of Industrial Slavery. This is evident in the Preface's main refrain, repeated after

[292] See Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and Antislavery*, 139-153.
[294] As the Rio Branco legislation was being debated in 1871, politicians represented the planter's interest had recourse to strikingly similar rhetorical tactics that I discussed in passing last chapter. "Indirect measures" in this context (and in contrast to Macedo's argument) were juxtaposed to free womb legislation as a slower and less disruptive way of achieving abolition via incentives for manumitting individual slaves and ad hoc public relief efforts for the emancipated. See Barros Cobra, "Slave Property is as Sacred as Any Other" (1871), in *Children of God's Fire*, Ed. Robert Conrad.

each new example of slavery's obsolescence: "It is written" [Está escrito]. But far from Stowe's Providential crisis, this citation of scripture (e.g. the Pharaoh's proclamation in Exodus: "so let it be written; so let it be done") is performative rather than portentous. This motto writes Brazil into the "century of Progress," even if belatedly. A central task of this literary text is to provoke Macedo's audience to read the historical text. Using these speech acts and arguments to project a post-slavery world, *letrados* like Macedo himself and the inchoate Brazilian state must persuade the class of landed property owners that this harsh medicine is in their best interest. Despite how things appear to you, he implores, Industrial Slavery harms the nation and is only kept alive by the inertia of our customs and ignorance. Slavery here is not a historical phase that will later be superseded by the power of historical progress, as the traditional antislavery argument goes; instead, it forms the once necessary but no-longer-tenable basis of Brazilian society, the replacement of which has become the historical mission for its ruling class.[295]

Another key element of distinguishing, late-nineteenth century framing is the "scientific" lexicon that borrows terms and metaphors from fields like meteorology, epidemiology, and ethnology. The "black cloud" of emancipation precipitated the "turbulent/stormy events" of the present moments, which represent an essential opportunity for social, cultural, and racial *ordem e progreso*. But the fusion of science and sociology are clearest in the central conceit of the Preface. African slavery has become a "cancer" upon Brazil's body politic, an infection of the that requires immediate redress even though the "cancer cannot be exterminated without some pain" (3). To be clear, slavery is the cancer rather than Africans and/or Afro-Brazilians, and removing the social tumor demands dispassionate surgical precision on the part of the state, the press, and the *senhores*. The literary world of the novel will illustrate this etiology and reinforce

[295] And they, of course, fought tirelessly to prevent their emancipation of their valuable investments. See Toplin, Chapter 3 and Castilho, *Slave Emancipation*, Chapter 2.

the urgency with which the Brazilian bourgeoisie must implement gradual emancipation. However, this begs a question that belies Macedo's confident positivism: are Africans not necessarily (even if involuntarily) part of the cancerous mass to be excised? With colonization schemes off the table, what exactly does it mean to remove slavery from Brazil?

The slipperiness of this conceit – simultaneously sympathetic to Afro-Brazilians while linking them to the deadly disease – animates the structure of *Pai-Raiol*. As we will see, the novel pivots between mimesis and allegoresis, between a gentle antislavery iteration of the national myths and efforts to expose pseudo-scientific facts that emancipation alone will not redress. This much is signaled by the title of the collection, *The Victim-Executioners: Notebooks on Slavery*, which condenses a central thesis. On the one hand, it encapsulates the boilerplate conservative antislavery truism with respect to the masers: slavery enslaves you, the masters, insofar as you become morally, spiritually, and sexually debased.[296] On the other, it turns the objective "victims" into the executioners who will inevitably threaten propertied elites. I will return to how Macedo updates this old antislavery argument in my conclusion. Lurking behind the veil of the colon is a subtitle which signals a generic aspiration: not to be a fictitious page-turner – *um romance* [Portuguese for novel] like *A Moreninha* – but a factual document of Brazilian slavery as it really is, as a notebook (*quadro*) of slavery.[297] However, despite the insistence on its "non-literary" quality by critics, *Pai-Raiol, o Feitiçero must* be read precisely as a romance*,* and not only due to its self-consciously fictional nature.[298] More importantly, the novel leverages the infrastructure and aesthetic license of narrative fiction to elaborate a political

[296] This line of reasoning goes all the way back to Seventieth Century arguments by the Quaker George Fox and others. See Brycchan Carey, *Antislavery Discourse*, Chapter 1.
[297] Celso Thomas Castilho, "The Press and Brazilian Narratives of Uncle Tom's Cabin".
[298] For example, its source materials are local legends rather the historical record, as evident in the convention of providing an ellipse instead of the precise location of the action.

world designed to shock his propertied audience out of complacency and into adopting emancipationist politics that the state was unwilling to impose. In so doing, it iterates on the Late-Abolition paradigm in unique way that harkens back to the racist antislavery politics of the eighteenth century and forward to a model of abolition centered around the racial bio-politics of free Afro-Brazilian subjects.

While Stowe and Calcagno seek to innovate new means to bring about the *end* of a revitalized slave system, Macedo's novel reorients its character system and setting toward an immanent and imminent social problem: if human progress and modernity imply a European complexion, what is to be done in a young nation with a soon to be free Afro-American population (by far the hemisphere's largest)? More than any other text discussed in this project, *Pai-Raiol, o Feitiçero* explores this question through a narrative structure I term an "expropriation plot," in which the titular enslaved African seeks to dispossess a Brazilian plantation owner through an elaborate seduction scheme involving an attractive and ambitious enslaved creole woman, Esméria. Ultimately, her actions and relationship with three successive proxy father characters leads to a civil war within the plantation, the momentary establishment of a non-emancipatory Black world (which I term the "anti-Quilombo"), and finally the uneasy reestablishment of social order. The novel uses racialized anthropological conceit of the fetish to tell a story about Industrial Slavery's effects on social reproduction and non-white demography, in addition to commodity production. This becomes central to the novel's political vision, as Esméria's character and fate dramatize the need to constrain (rather than promote) Black citizenship. In other words, the text uses the speculative capacity of narrative fiction to imagine the methods and policies whereby the Brazilian state can mitigate the various traits (ethnological, cultural, economic, and even metaphysical) that make Afro-Brazilians foreign agents within the

body politic. I argue that exploring Brazilian antislavery cultural works from before the 1870s neo-immediatist period through authors like Macedo affords an invaluable set of insights into the political fantasies and desires that will come to predominate an anti-Black post-slavery world, of which the novel proved more tragically prescient for Brazil and the rest of the hemisphere.

II: The Absentee Landlords

Pai-Raiol, o Feitiçero is a Late-Abolition novel that builds on the constellation of character system, plot, and (to a lesser extent in this case) point of view to narrate the present and future of Brazilian Industrial Slavery. The plot revolves around a plantation in southeastern Brazil owned by Paulo Borges, a bourgeois *homo economicus* so blinded by short-term profits that he ignores the risk and purchases an infamous conjurer, the enslaved African-born (*boçal*)[299] man known as Pai-Raiol. Behind his apparent subservience, Pai-Raiol hatches a plot to expropriate – and supplant – Paulo Borges as the owner/proprietor. The vehicle for this is the beautiful enslaved *crioula* Esméria, who is tasked, via apparently supernatural powers of control, with seducing and ultimately murdering Paulo Borges. The expropriation plot unleashes a campaign of chaotic terror and murder on the plantation, destroying much of it and leading to the deaths of Pai-Raiol's wife and three children. Once Esméria is pregnant with the last-standing Borges heir, she takes steps to kill Paulo and consummate Pai Raiol's plan. However, one enslaved servant loyal to Paulo and another wanting to protect Esméria, Lourença and tío Alberto respectively, intercede at the last minute – rescuing the White planter and slaying Pai-Raiol. Order is finally restored as Esméria is thrown into prison and tío Alberto is promised his freedom papers.

[299] B*oçal* refers to an enslaved person born in Africa. *Crioulo* or creole, by contrast, is a more polysemous term that literally connotes birth in the American hemisphere regardless of race. In the context of slave societies, it often refers to enslaved peoples of "native" as opposed to African birth. Throughout this chapter, I follow the novel in only using *boçal/crioulo* distinctions in this narrower sense.

Macedo redeploys the narrative infrastructure explained by this dissertation in a carefully modified way to perform historically and culturally specific rhetorical tasks. One major shift in the Late-Abolition morphology concerns the shape and complexion of the main character system. As in *Dred*, the story begins with exposition of the white plantation owner, Paulo Borges. However, *Pai-Raiol* departs from the previous novels in a central way: Borges is not a gradualist reformer positioned to crash into the negative force of Industrial slavery; far from it, Paulo is a landed capitalist who continues to use slave labor, despite the liberal economic and moral arguments against it. In fact, the novel does not include *any* emblems of moderate white reform. All such sentiments come from narrative intrusions and even these must be qualified. Eschewing a paternalistic white reformer, the text is not concerned with ironizing an obsolete antislavery vision and strategy. Rather, the lack of a white antislavery world is strategic, as well as immanent to the political conditions of the 1860s Paraiba Valley. In the first instance, this omission facilitates a key object-lesson of the novel; namely, that slavery is not only objectively outmoded, but opens the door for the contaminating effects of Africa. Paulo Borges starts and finishes as an avatar of continued ruling class largesse that avoids historical necessity. In narrative terms, this shifts the terrain of struggle away from the limits of White political worlds and into the volatile struggle being waged between Black political worlds.

Understanding how and why Macedo evacuates White gradualism from the diegetic world requires analyzing the unique white *pater familias* that he presents to the reader. The White patriarchs of the previous chapters (Colonel Gordon and Señor Castaneiro) and their reform-minded proxies (Edward Clayton and El Cura) were endowed with character depth and agency that distinguished them from the "evil" proxies (Tom Gordon and Jacobito Vendialma), whose characterization renders them flat avatars of Industrial Slavery, aside from Tom Gordon's

occasional gothic titillations. Ultimately, the latter do not anchor their character systems and functionally serve as the narrative engine for levelling gradualist antislavery worlds and empowering Black proxy-sons to rebel. *Pai-Raiol* does not reverse this dynamic so much as redistribute the characterological centers of gravity for its distinct own rhetorical purposes. To see how, I'll begin by positing that Macedo's literary world finds White characters (Paulo Borges and his family) reduced to objects rather than subjects, emblems instead of agents. But emblems of what?

Late-Abolition novels typically depart from moderate white antislavery worlds, which become anachronized by Fugitive Black proxy-sons through resisting Industrial Slavery in a process that elevates the latter to protagonist status. Macedo inverts this dynamic. Instead, Paulo Borges emerges as an archetype of the Brazilian elite whose inert character provides the grounds not only for the plot but of the rhetorical task of anachronizing the Brazil's apolitical present and demonstrating the need for a home-grown reform movement. To drive home this identification, the surname Borges explicitly invites identification from the propertied reader as members of the Brazilian branch of the bourgeois class, "the subject of history" for Enlightenment and orthodox Marxist philosophies.[300] As the narrator introduces him in Chapter IV, the figure of Paulo Borges welds Christian and Lockean ideals into a specific national ideal type. Starting with Borges' more universal aspects:

> …a simplicidade e quase pobreza do seu trajar … seus modos rudes, sua atividade constante… mostravam nesse homem o tipo do lavrador honrado, mas sempre ambicioso de duplicar, de centuplicar seus capitais (79)

[300] See Eric Hobsbawm, "Marx and History." For its application of this to Brazilian, see Florestan Fernandes, *revolução burguesa no Brasil: Ensaio de Interpretação Sociológica*.

> […the simplicity and quasi-poverty of his clothing…his lewd habits, his ceaseless activity… illustrated that this man was akin to an honest worker, yet he was always seeking to increase his capital by twofold, by a hundredfold]

In his single-minded preference simple dress and manners over the latest fashions and fine fabric, in his ceaseless activity and excessive diligence in his work, Paulo Borges combines the best aspects of the "noble worker" with those of the good capitalist bent on expanding his capital as much as possible. Supplemented by a commitment to his "homely" yet piously maternal wife Teresa (and her large dowry), his two children, and basic Christian precepts, Borges seems to graft the classical protestant work ethic onto the "tropical" realm of a sugar plantation in the state of Rio De Janeiro.[301] In the first instance, this generous characterization represents an appeal to Macedo's target audience, a celebration of the *burgesia*, as it bristles against the antislavery trope of the aristocratic and opulent planter. Perhaps more importantly, Macedo sidesteps the discourse of baroque backwardness so often applied Latin American elite – indeed even by members of this elite. Instead, Paulo Borges approximates the Enlightened subject of capitalist modernity.

These commendable aspects of our national archetype draw into relief the contours and consequences of his fatal flaw: despite clear virtues that bring him into proximity with the agent of social progress, Paulo Borges remains devoted to slavery and slave-acquisition in theory and practice. When I later discuss Esméria and the expropriation plot, the concrete implications for, e.g., his morality and spiritual salvation, will be explored. While the occasionally narrator indulges in conventional antislavery topics and tropes, Borges' *hamartia* is not greed, ambition,

[301] In contrast to the geographic precision central to the diegetic worlds of *Dred* and *Romualdo*, Macedo's choices here appear largely rhetorical and ad hoc. The main locus of sugar production resided in Brazil's Northeastern states, even though the capitol of the kingdom had an enormous quantity enslaved Afro-Brazilians (who were largely employed in other monocultures, trades, and skilled occupations). Additionally, the actual business of the Borges plantation is not clearly explained, until the sugar cane fire in Chapter 8 forces the narrator to do so. Thus, the this anatopism focuses on moving the most ruinous form of enslavement to the region where some of the more politically connected leaders were likely to live (Rio).

or flouting the Golden Rule. It's his inability or unwillingness to recognize social necessity and, ironically in light of the previous citation, stubbornly clinging to the tyranny of slavery as "o costume [que] continua a ser lei" [that custom which persists as a would-be law]:

> [Ele] tinha essa espécie de preocupação que é um mau cálculo infelizmente muito comum entre os nossos fazendeiros e lavradores, empenho sempre ativo de comprar terras para estender as que já possui às vezes demais, e de multiplicar também a escravatura, esquecendo os meios de suprir muitos braços, poupando o capital… (80)
>
> [He was possessed by the particular obsession - a flawed calculus sadly common among our farmers and workers - of actively trying to purchase new land to extend their holdings sometimes to excess, to multiply their slave holdings, [but] lacking sufficient capital they fail to consider other labor-saving methods]

Despite his commitment to "improving" the land and extending capitalist agriculture, the Brazilian planting class's obstinate attachment to slavery will prove disastrous. Paulo Borges' conflation of economic growth and wealth with additions of land and slaves at the expense of technological (labor saving) advances is not only bad business - it becomes the original sin vis-à-vis material and social progress as framed by the narrator, which demoralizes enslaver and enslaved alike:

> …jamais se ocupara de tomar informações sobre a moralidade, ou antes sobre os graus de desmoralização da gente que introduzia na sua fazenda, nem lhe importava a celebridade ruim de um ou outro escravo: *não comprava homens, comprava máquinas* (emphasis added; ibid).

> […he was never concerned with mortality rates, or the steady moral decay of those slaves he brought to his plantation, nor did the ubiquitous ruin of this or that slave matter to him; *he didn't buy human beings, he bought machines*]

Even after the end of the circum-Caribbean and south Atlantic slave trade turned the "labor problem" on the plantations into a critical issue, reducing humans to machines represents more than an increase in sugar yields: it spells the moral, physical, and emotional "ruin" of the slave, which redounds back on the planters insofar as they now violate the demands of natural law, Christian morality, etc. On first glance, then, we have an apparent restatement of the "trinity" of progress and the abolitionist meta-history

Yet, beyond merely reiterating older antislavery discourses, these passages illustrate a distinct method of anachronization in *Pai-Raiol, o Feitiçero*. Instead of showing the obsolescence of antislavery theory and practice through a carefully plotted destruction of extant white reformism, Macedo reveals its tragic consequences through dramatic irony focused on its flattened white character. Paulo Borges is not simply "dominated by this weakness within his nature" – this weakness *is* his nature. As a result, he knows not what he does, which the narrator hammers home time and again. This has major consequences for the character system and plot, both of which develop out from this premise. The effacement of our would-be White hero evacuates *any* prospect for a new, White-led political world within the novel. Industrial Slavery in Brazil, as defined by myself in my Introduction, rather than Macedo's conflation of capitalism with labor-saving devices, remains uncontested. But this is not the whole story.

Flattening out Paulo Borges in this way effectively turns his character and every extension of it (his family, his land, his capital) into the stage upon which the real story will play out. Narratologically, then, Paulo Borges occupies a comparable position to Colonel Gordon and

especially to Señor Castaneiro – two characters with virtually no power of action once the plot begins and ends. Yet to a greater extent than these patriarchs, Paulo Borges lives on throughout the plot as the passive medium for events and other characters' deeds. This explains the odd and haphazard manner with which the story plot begins, mid-chapter and *en medias res*: "Cinco anos depois do seu casamento, Paulo Borges deixou de ir à roça uma manhã… tomou o chapéu para sair" (80) [Five years since his wedding day, Paulo Borges was heading off to the fields one morning…grabbing his hat he went out]. Less ironic than emblematic, the story opens his fifth anniversary as Paulo rushes from his estate to retrieve his lot of enslaved people, "vinte e acostumados já à lavorada cana e ao serviço do engenho... "(81) [twenty people already used to cutting cane and working in the sugar mills]. When his wife questions the need for more enslaved people since they already own "more than 100," Paulo Borges points to their new-born son and conflates this domestic growth (that is to say, their three children) with the necessity of increasing their human capital by a third, to prepare a "future for our children…" Not simply a "weak nature," as the narrator pointed out, but a mechanistic and flat one as well.

III: Expropriation Against Praxis

Substituting White biological and proxy fathers for a monolithic national type leads the novel to diagnose the negative effects of the "cancer" of slavery through a very different character system. Quite the contrary, as the *pater familias* is reduced to helpless avatar of imperiled White authority vis-à-vis enslaved Africans and Afro-Brazilians. Slavery at *Canema* and *La Esperanza* was initially balanced and contested by ruling class reformers. Macedo's unnamed sugar plantation has no such figure due to a key presupposition hinted at in the Preface: unlike Edward Clayton and El Cura, the world of *Pai-Raoil* is no longer wholly conditioned by Industrial Slavery. Accordingly, Macedo builds his world in the image of a weakened yet still-

deadly institution. Given the white planter's passive role, where *is* the center of the novel's character system? Macedo effectively combines the Late-Abolition topos of the politically-obsolete plantation in crisis with the traditional antislavery cultural trope of the malicious Black Avenger. But he does so with an important difference that will be significant for the novel's ultimate political world.

The figure that seizes paternal authority from Paulo Borges is the enslaved African, Pai-Raiol. The novel establishes this relay in the same chapter that introduces Paulo and his family. Despite her reservations, Teresa catches up to her husband in the field to view out their new lot of "miserable living machines bearing expressions of stupid indifference or imbecility" (80). Wedged between these wretched animate machines is a curious figure of Pai-Raiol, "um negro feio e já desfigurado por moléstia ou por castigos" (ibid) [an ugly Black already disfigured by disease or by punishment]. More than mere ugliness, Teresa is "overcome by a wave of revulsion" on seeing Pai-Raiol's visage and instinctively blurts to Paulo Borges "Que má cara tem este negro!" [what a bad/evil face this Black has!] – a response that the disfigured yet perceptive *boçal* calmly notes. Two key points are established immediately by this encounter. Pai-Raiol's mutilated, revolting face should clue the reader that, beyond the conventions of physiognomy, this grotesque enslaved character is both malevolent and capable of resisting slavery via some form of supernatural ability. The grotesque is used in the premodern sense of fusing together seemingly opposed aesthetic forces to invoke a shock in the reader analogous to what Teresa expresses here.[302] The power suggested is similar to Dred's sublime terror and clarion charisma, Juan Bemba's "ugly" features, as well as supernatural strength in *Blake* and

[302] Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and His World*. See my discussion of Dred's contradictory dual nature in Chapter 1.

Sab. In context, this deeper power is advertised by how Teresa first refers to Pai-Raiol's ugly face: "má cara" also signifies a bad/evil aspect, person, or appearance.

But this preview of the horror to come illustrates another important contrast with the character systems of the previous novels, which included clear antislavery dyads (specifically Edward and Nina, El Cura and Má Felicia). An analogous though less total flattening occurs with the white proxy mother, Teresa. As the opening episode reveals, she evinces only a weak disapproval of slavery by meekly dissenting to Paulo Borges' thoughtless expansion of his human holdings. This advertises her main structural role: dramatizing the extent to which Industrial Slavery overpowers the filial, moral, and religious guardrails that had previously held its older, purportedly less violent form in check. As we will see, this process intensifies the political dynamics on display in *Romualdo* whereby the force of resistance is paradoxically weaker even as the power of slavery has waned. Her effacement in the system aside, Teresa nonetheless serves as the White point of view for much of the novel, the longsuffering witness to Paulo Borges as he falls deeper into the plot against him. Censoring Paulo's experience of the seduction that follows represents a clever rhetorical tactic that, among other things, will sanitize the question of what is to be done by underplaying his feeling, intentions, etc. This helps the novel thread the needle of writing an emphatic cautionary tale that hedges the culpability of fallible planters like Paulo Borges.

To map out the novel's unique iteration of enslaved rebellion, I need to discuss how it revises its character system to fill the void at the center of its political world. In other words, how to construct an antislavery world in the Late-Abolition period without an immanent white reform discourse and movement to interrogate and build upon? In *Pai-Raiol, o Feitiçero*, the power to anachronize slavery shifts to the enslaved rebels, Pai-Raiol and Esméria, who taken together

form the political nucleus and key agents of the text. But this requires two additional tweaks to the paradigm. First, the African-born Pai-Raiol assumes position of a "bad" proxy father seeking to expropriate the plantation from an exceptionally flawed white proxy father. The decision to conflate Industrial Slavery with the Black proxy father will be immensely important for where the novel ends up. The second essential aspects political world concerns the mediating third term, the enslaved character of mixed status whose actions determine its future. In this case, the *crioula* Esméria emerges as this key figure who carries out the expropriation plot.

Unlike the inert Paulo Borges and the vacuous figure of Teresa, the titular character is replete with significance for the plot and the tense political world constructed over the original sin of ruling class obstinacy to slavery's obsolescence. Pai-Raiol encapsulates the Late-Abolition imperative of denouncing the dangers specific to Industrial Slavery while insisting on its imminent demise. However, it does so with a new emphasis resulting from Brazil's belated abolition movement and Macedo's rhetorical eccentricities. This is made evident in Pai-Raiol's most important quality: his ethno-cultural identity, which is not Brazilian-born (*crioulo*) but African-born (*boçal*). Not just "more African" than other enslaved Blacks, Pai-Raiol represents a living link between Brazil and the African continent insofar as he is "um dos últimos importados da África pelo tráfico nefando" (82) [one of the last slaves imported from Africa through that evil traffic]. In fact, this crucial aspect will ultimately prove essential for the novel's argument against slavery as well as the complex issues race, racism, and the new nation. If Paulo Borges connects us to the landed bourgeoisie, Pai-Raiol enters the scene as a living metonymy for the persistent consequences of that "evil traffic."

Pai-Raoil's arrival represents the apogee of the stubborn commitment to Brazil's outmoded political economy. The story begins to fill this in first through reported accounts of

Pai-Raiol's notorious reputation among planters: well-known by white enslavers for his rebellious behavior, at 36 years old Pai-Raiol had already been resold three times for insubordination and his fourth owner died under mysterious circumstances, while his age is be suspiciously old for a sugar plantation slave (the average life expectancy was 27). The decision to make Pai-Raiol a *boçal* links the diegetic present of the Late-Abolition world to the heights of Brazilian Industrial Slavery. To an even greater extent than the coffee complex, the sugar regime required an enormous, stable influx of enslaved Africans to sustain a murderous labor regime that, in the literary world, seems to be running on fumes. As a result, the narrator explains that the "vile practices" Pai-Raiol will commit are endemic to the "southeastern interior of Brazil… wherever slavery abounds it sets traps" (17) [onde mais abunda a escravatura, mais espalhada]. In spite of the shakiness the narrator imputes to Brazilian slavery, Pai-Raiol and his uniquely African aspect set him on a course to expropriate Paulo Borges' human and non-human property. That Black rebellion is preemptive and not reactive, as in *Romualdo*, is evident in Pai-Raiol's plan to take over the Borges farm: control Esméria through fear of Afro-Brazilian conjure; place Esméria into the Borges household until she can seduce Paulo Borges; kill off Teresa Borges, his wife, and his three children; once Esméria is pregnant with Paulo Borges' new heir, legally wed and then kill the helpless *burguês*; and finally, use Esméria to manumit and wed him in order to close the circuit become the new *pater familias*.

Like the other proxy child characters, Esméria also serves as a middling character in Georg Lukács' sense of providing a stable point of view capable of toggling between the opposing forces in a world-historical conflict.[303] But there is also a critical difference that

[303] Georg Lukacs, *The Historical Novel*, 42.
But unlike Calcagno and Stowe, Macedo is less indebted to the Waverly tor to Balzac than he is to the popular French *feullitons* circulating through Latin America (Zola also is a reference point).

distinguishes Esméria from Harry Gordon and Romualdo; unlike them, she is a neither mixed-race or male, nor does she have a legitimate case for her freedom within the existing legal statutes. Esméria initially enters the scene as Pai-Raiol's beautiful lover, who Paulo Borges credits with keeping the wily rebel on a straight and narrow path. The gender question will be explored in depth below. For now, her creole status puts her in a uniquely ambivalent position. In perfect contrast to Pai-Raiol, she is introduced to the reader via Teresa Borges, who notes that she has a "*lovely face"* (*boa cara*). Imbued with Lamarckian ethnology, Teresa marvels at how "as rudes feições da sua raça abrandadas pela influência da nova geração em mais suave clima" (84) [the primitive features of her race were softened by her birth in a fairer climate]– such that there was even "uma certa expressão de inteligência e de humildade que agradou à senhora" (ibid) [a certain expression of intelligence and humility that endeared her to her Mistress]. Being born in the Americas rather than Africa goes some way to raising Esméria's status – though not (in the racist science of the epoch) as much as the "civilizing" agent of European blood. This status allows her to leverage her position to seduce Teresa as well as Paulo. But unlike the carnal seduction of the patriarch, Esméria exploits maternal tendencies of Teresa, which predispose her to view the crioula as part of the "family": "Teresa abria seu coração de mãe ao reconhecimento suavíssimo daqueles carinhos da crioula. A escrava pouco e pouco ia por sua vez cativando a senhora" (84) [Teresa opened her motherly heart to the gentle awareness of the creole's affections. Little by little, the slave was capturing the Mistress]. As suggested above, Teresa is a minimal Nina Gordon, who seeks to balance the harsh realities of plantation slavery with an ingenuous and maternal attitude inside the *casa grande*. Her largesse eventually leads to Esméria becoming the main domestic slave and governess, caring for the three Borges children while Pai-

Raiol devotes himself to hard agricultural labor, eschews the local *candomblé,*[304] and works his way up to overseer at the sugar plantation. We soon learn that Pai-Raiol and Esméria are not actually seeing each other consensually, but that the African has the creole ensnared in a dangerous plot.

To a greater extent than even Harry Gordon and El Cura, it is through Esméria's point of view, rather than the narrative discourse, that the reader encounters the dangerous Black rebel's powers and threat to the white status quo. Whereas the previous proxy children begin closer to a White proxy father, Esméria's *a priori* distance from the White world allows her to mediate the story at formal and diegetic levels from early on. A crucial example at the formal level is how her point of view serves as the medium for translating the words and thoughts of the African conjurer. There is no direct or reported speech from Pai-Raiol about the expropriation plot until he reveals it in dialogue with Esméria during a clandestine meeting that terrifies her into submission. This mediation is incorporated into the most basic property of Pai-Raiol's character, his language and voice. As we learn in this scene, the conjurer does not speak Portuguese but a patois of various African and Euro-colonial languages:

> Por negação, incapacidade ou enfim por amor de sua língua ou dialeto selvagem, mas pátrio, o rancoroso escravo apesar de trazido ao Brasil há cerca de vinte anos, exprimia-se mal e deformemente em português, introduzindo muitas vezes na sua agreste conversação juras e frases africanas. O leitor deve ser poupado à interpretação dessa algaravia bárbara (81).
>
> [Through repudiation, incapacity or perhaps a love of his language or dialect that was savage yet native to him, the rancorous slave expressed himself in a poor and mutilated

[304] See J. Lorand Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion: Tradition, Transnationalism, And Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé*.

Portuguese despite being brought to Brazil 20 years prior. He would often import African curses and phrases into his untamed speech. The reader ought to be spared from having to interpret this barbaric gibberish]

Initially distinguishing Pai-Raiol from Esméria, who unlike the African *can* speak Portuguese, this final sentence from this narrator binds them together in a crucial manner, by linking the emergence of Esméria's point of view with mediating the "barbaric gibberish" of Pai-Raiol. Whereas Teresa can only translate her revulsion with Pai-Raiol (and later Paulo), Esméria translates the African's words and intentions into crude but legible Portuguese for the reader just as she works to translate his expropriation plot into reality through her cunning seduction and reproductive capacities.

Pai-Raiol holds the creole woman hostage through putatively African powers and rituals implied by his title. Focalized through Esméria, these horrific episodes allow the reader to experience the titillating danger of African magic even as the narrator disavows its reality. An early climax of this dynamic that immerses the reader in Esméria's terror occurs with a later, unexpected nocturnal appearance of Pai-Raiol in the Borges estate: "inundada por [os] raios [da lua] mostrou-se a figura sestra do africano aos olhos da crioula que aliás nunca o repugnara, mas que principalmente o temia" (95) [flooded with moonlight the sinister figure of the African revealed itself to the eyes of the crioula who, although repelled by it, mainly was terrified by it]. Luminous and satanic, the conjurer seizes on the creole woman's primitive fears and misconceptions to effectively control her throughout the novel. This is driven home by the implicit contrast with Teresa, who was filled with revulsion rather than transfixed with fear. The narrator explains Esméria's susceptibility in an earlier chapter:

> No Brasil a gente livre mais rude nega…a mão e o tratamento fraternal ao escravo; mas adotou e conserva as fantasias pavorosas, as superstições dos míseros africanos, entre os quais avulta por mais perigosa e nociva a crença do feitiço (74).
>
> [In Brazil, even the most primitive free/freed Blacks deny… a hand and fraternal treatment to the slave; but they adopt and conserve the terrifying fantasies, the superstitions of miserable Africans; among them, the dangerous and harmful belief in fetishism is increased]

Despite the legal and de facto differences within the larger Afro-Brazilian population (for example, between free and enslaved), taken together this population is more vulnerable to the African "superstitions" decried by the narrator,

Every major escalation of the expropriation plot – from Esméria's initial seduction of Paulo and eventual victory over Teresa to the four murders she will later commit – occurs after a surprise, clandestine visit from the conjurer. Esméria's perspective allows the reader to experience the "fetishistic" rituals and spells that bind the two characters together. These tend to revolve around totem animals such as the serpent and related rituals which, despite having some basis in Afro-American syncretic religions, had devolved into pejorative clichés in the discourse on rebellious slave cultures. However, focalizing the trope through Esméria brings it to life and reveals the power of exploiting "primitive" impulses decried by the narrator. In a dramatic episode, Pai-Raiol conducts her through a forest and to a dense entanglement of vines [*o cipoal*, which also means a "conundrum] wherein he:

> …assobiou por vezes, imitando os silvos das serpentes; em breve acudiram uma depois de outra três cobras ameaçadoras; o negro fixou os olhos sobre elas, segurou junto da

cabeça em uma que se enrolou em seu braço…guardou-a no seio e por fim soltou-a no chão (88).

[…whistled a few times, imitating snake hisses; suddenly, there arose three menacing cobras; the Black man fixed his gaze upon them, fixing them together at their heads and twisting them onto his arm…pulled them to his chest before it finally fell to the floor]

This ritual leads Esméria to continually refer to Pai-Raiol as "o rei do serpiente" and we see the trauma reverberate as she proceeds to carry out the plot against the Borges family. As Gorgio Marotti notes, Pai-Raiol is even referred to as *zumbi* or "black ghost", derived from a Yoruban warrior deity as well as the fabled leader of the massive Palmares *quilombo.*[305] However, he misses an essential detail that illustrates the double movement of the "fetish" in the expropriation plot: the one who calls Pai-Raiol this is not Paulo or Esméria, but the young child Luis Borges. Placing this fabled "black and imaginary monster" in the mouth of a child indulges White paranoia while ironizing it with racist condescension (92). In terms of the character system, at least to start, we can say that it resembles an equilateral triangle, with Pai-Raiol at its apex. The institution of slavery, animated by the African Pai-Raiol, locks "weak" white planters into a prison-house of adultery with equally unwilling creole women.[306]

While critics have correctly diagnosed the paranoia and racial prejudice within Pai-Raiol's characterization, the narrative discourse disavows "primitive" African culture through the "scientific" discourse that circles back to the Preface. Along with his grotesque features, the narrator's emphasis on Pai-Raiol's eyes in the above passages tips us off; as he affirms to Esméria in his crude third-person declaratives: "Pai-Raiol pode muito, e sabe matar com os

[305] Marotti, *Black Characters in the Brazilian Novel*, 17.
[306] The erasure of White male sexual violence, while unsurprising in this racist and misogynist discursive context, is amplified by the outright rape on the part of Pai-Raiol. For a critique of these conventions, Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, Chapter 3.

olhos" (80) [Pai-Raiol knows much, and he knows how to kill with his eyes]. The power of eyes likely clued contemporaneous readers to the "true" source of the African's "repugnant" yet charismatic control: namely, the theory of animal magnetism.[307] Ironically, mesmerism originated as a "scientific" distillation of *vodou* developed by a white planter from the French Caribbean and exporting to the US and Europe in the 1830's. As Emily Ogden glosses it, mesmerists "performed a series of choreographed gestures called magnetic passes" such as the look and noises Pai-Raiol makes in the woods "that communicated an invisible (but natural) fluid into subjects' bodies. In this way they induced a state called somnambulism, in which subjects developed clairvoyant powers and entered into thrall to their mesmerists."[308] In line with its colonial origins, people of African descent and other "primitive peoples" were especially prone to both practicing and falling under the spell of somnambulism. Thus, the narrator explains that Pai-Raiol:

> …não tinha ideia alguma do magnetismo; mas extraordinariamente dotado de força magnética que só empregava para fazer mal, sabia que lhe era fácil servir-se do olhado, adjetivo que exprime uma realidade que, por inexplicável à ignorância, põe em tributo de quiméricos temores a imaginação dos supersticiosos (100-101)
>
> […knew nothing about the theory of magnetism; but he had an exceptionally strong magnetic force used for evil and did so easily through a mere look, which expressed a force that he, in his ignorance, used only to stoke chimeric fears in the imagination of the superstitious]

The discourse of animal magnetism allows for the skeptical, racist reader to feel the danger posed by those who wield African and Afro-American religious practices while degrading them.

[307] For an interpretation of mesmerism in this period see McGarry, *Ghosts of Futures Past*.
[308] Emily Ogden, "Beyond Radical Enchantment: Mesmerizing Laborers in the Americas," 818; McGarry, 12.

This similar attitude is applied to other aspects of "fugitive science" that Pai-Raiol will use to spuriously "enchant" Esméria and carry out his plot; among the practices typically associated with African rebels in the paranoid White imagination was as the cultivation of deadly herbs, the ability to concoct untraceable poisons, and expert skills in committing arson.[309]

IV: Season of the Fetish

If Stowe and Calcagno create inheritance plots that hinge on the freedom/agency of a mixed-race heir, Macedo creates an expropriation plot that approximates a thresher for every sacred tenet of the propertied white family. This starts with the *crioula* usurping Paulo Borges' devoted white Christian wife. As her anagrammatic name suggests, Esméria becomes an extension of the conjurer's mesmeric powers in carrying out the plan to seduce Paulo Borges and usurp the white *senhora* permanently. Esméria effectively brings the power of Pai-Raiol's "satanic eyes" out of the *senzala* and into the heart of the *casa grande*, the interstitial domestic sphere in which the most privilege slaves cohabitate with the white planters. Pai-Raiol's plot of reversing these spheres, seizing the plantation manor and sending whites into the barracoons, is literalized in the initial seduction, which also dramatizes the mesmeric power of the eyes and body. After carefully inveigling herself as the primary care-giver for all three of the Borges children, at the first absence of Teresa Esméria brings the newborn Luis into the sugar mill in search of Paulo Borges. Under the "pretext of cheering up the baby," "Esméria dava aos olhos fogo, aos jeitos e aos meneios do corpo como que descuidada desenvoltura de movimentos" [Esméria put fire in her eyes, in the manner and jiggles that erupted from the movement of her body] (102). One of the few glimpses we get from Paulo Borges' point of view, the ardent excess of Esméria's body seems to put the white planter in the same somnambulant state she

[309] Daniel Graden, *Disease, Resistance, and Lies: The Demise of the Transatlantic Slave Trade to Brazil and Cuba*. 62-80.

experienced in the forest and elsewhere. But whereas the eyes of the *feitiçero* are activated through ritual, the *crioula*'s maternal labor and erupting curves suffice to entrance the helpless white planter.

This is the first step in usurping rather than serving the plantation mistress and the first prong of Pai-Raiol's plan. In contrast to the seduction scene, when dealing with Teresa she hides her true intentions behind "os olhos com aparências de respeito profundo" [eyes that appeared profoundly respectful] – as if to imply that faithful obedience from enslaved domestics is inherently an act of mesmeric deception, a careful ploy loaded with dangerous consequences. In the novel this pays off in short order, as Esméria jumps from domestic servant to a second wife-mother – to the complete dismay of Teresa Borges. When Teresa tries to put a stop to the affair, Pai-Raiol codifies the situation in his command to Esméria: after Esméria complains that "[a] senhora (Teresa) se opõe" [the mistress opposes it], Pai-Raiol replies "[a] senhora é Esméria" (113) [Esméria is the mistress]. Labelled an unrepentant adulterer by the narrator, Paulo Borges' efforts at self-control are dashed whenever Esméria "dando ao corpo meneios indecentes, e pondo o vestido em desordem grosseiramente libidinosa" (65) [jiggles her body obscenely thereby putting her dress in grossly libidinal chaos]. Teresa Borges's "maternal heroism" and "homely" face, are no match for the fetishized magnetic power of the Black female body. Just before her death from a "pernicious fever" – we later find out she was poisoned by Esméria and Pai-Raiol – Teresa has a vision in which Esméria's "black hands" lacing her food with poison (121). By using the sugar mill as the point of departure for Esméria's mesmeric seduction and usurpation of the "legitimate" *senhora*, the novel figures the relations of productions as coextensive with relations of social reproduction.

At this point, the importance of the novel's subtitle can be properly explained. Pai-Raiol could presumably be tagged as a rebel, a demon, a murderer, or any number of denigrations typically applied by white elites to leaders of slave conspiracies. But the choice of *feiriçero* or conjurer proves essential for understanding the expropriation plot and the political world it creates. The novel's three prefatory chapters before the story actually beings help flesh out the paradox of Pai-Raiol's power: in the age of scientific rationality, how can a repulsive *boçal* control events in an apparently supernatural way? We find out that in América as in Europe, "O homem deixa-se facilmente enlevar pelo encanto do maravilhoso" [man easily falls under the spell of marvelous enchantment]; this "segredo da fraqueza humana" [secret human weakness] represents a vestigial holdover from an earlier, primitive epoch that allows predatory "charlatans" to prey upon "as inocentes vítimas que loucamente espontâneas se precipitam nesse perigoso desvio da razão" [the innocent victims that wildly and spontaneously bring into being this dangers flight from reason] (71). But even this seemingly universal quandary is *a priori* racialized. Note, for instance, the resonance of this "fraqueza" with the "natureza fraca" [weak nature] of Paulo Borges, as well as the rhetoric of victimhood that points us back to the novel's main title. New World slavery displaces an especially potent form of enchantment that Macedo labels refers to as "the fetish" (feitiço). Not coincidentally, Portuguese slave traders were among the first to apply the term to those special "objects they thought Africans treated as magical."[310] An enlightened *letrado*, Macedo likely borrows from Auguste Comte *Cours de Philosophie Positive* to conceptualize an ideal of African fetishism oriented around the "psychological displacement," from human and natural forces onto objects and rituals, the latter corresponding to the "ages" of man who have not ascended to scientific self-consciousness.[311]

[310] Peter Melville Logan, *Victorian Fetishism*, 18.
[311] Logan, 19 and 21-33.

In a cunning maneuver, the narrator recodes slavery from being the *container* of the fetish to the *vehicle* for its germination and spread. From the very first institutional codification of the Atlantic slave trade through Papal Bulls, correspondence, and travel writing, slavery was conceived as a civilizing process that would "redeem" pagan African. Consequently, a major ideological justification for continuing New World slavery – and among the first targeted by the antislavery discourse that blossomed in the eighteenth century – was how enslaved labor and its associated disciplinary regimes were necessary to (among other things) instill Euro-Christian virtue and protect Whites from the Africans unmoored from bondage. In partially inverting this tenet, the discourse of the fetish allows our Late-Abolition narrator to denounce the practice and effects of slavery while demonizing Africans as the catalyst of such effects. This ambivalence conditions almost every statement from the narrative discourse: "assim o negro d'África, reduzido à ignomínia da escravidão malfez logo e naturalmente a sociedade opressora" (73-74) [thus the African-born Black, reduced by slavery to ignominy, eventually will harm the society who oppresses him]. In this state of affairs, the enslaved population represents a dangerous repository that "fundou e propagou a alucinação do feitiço com todas as suas conseqüencias muitas vezes desastrosas" (73) [founded and propagated the deceptions of the fetish and it's much more disastrous consequences]. Especially in regions in which slavery has predominated – like the novel's setting of Rio de Janeiro – free Afro-Brazilians and whites are at risk for contamination insofar as they "adotou e conserva as fantasias pavorosas, as superstições dos míseros africanos…" (ibid) [adopt and conserve the most terrifying of these terrifying fantasies, the superstitions of wretched Africans]. Ethnological and racial degeneration are thereby translated along what we would now call a "cultural" basis.[312]

[312] See Larsen, Op. Cit.

In sum, at the intersection for race and culture the fetish condenses elite anxieties surrounding obstacles to the postcolonial civilizing mission in the New World. If the Preface represents slavery a cancer to be removed, *Pai-Raiol* furnishes the reader with another medical conceit for the social degeneration caused by slavery: "O feitiço, como a sífilis, veio d'África. Ainda nisto o escravo africano, sem o pensar, vinga-se da violência tremenda da escravidão" (72) [The fetish, like syphilis, came from Africa. Through this, the African slave unconsciously avenges the tremendous violence of slavery]. Such myths of contagion were common racist myths that served to deflect blame of (in this case) venereal diseases away from European colonizers and onto the oppressed.[313] However, as Dale Graden notes, in the nineteenth century the antislavery arguments would turn this argument around, using the "scientific facts" of African contagion and the disease-inducing Middle Passage to argue against slavery on public health grounds.[314] Macedo's fetish builds on this precedent, extending the pseudo-scientific paranoia into a cultural and quasi-metaphysical realm.[315] Beyond deadly sexually transmitted dieseases, the African's corrosive influence is also in "Africanizing" any land he or she steps foot on: "O negro d'África africanizou quanto pôde e quanto era possível todas as colônias e todos os países, onde força o arrastou condenado aos horrores da escravidão" (74) [The African-born Black africanizes every land and every country to the fullest extent possible, wherever he is forced, dragged, or condemned to the horrors of slavery]. Representing this degenerative force as a venereal disease and amorphous threat puts the two senses of "fetish" – anthropological and sexual – into a dangerous proximity, which the novel expresses through the Pai-Raiol's attempt

[313] The spurious African association with syphilis was one of the first, dating back to fifteenth century. Flora Süsskind, "Introduction," viii.
[314] Dale Graden, Chapter 4.
[315] In addition to Victor Hugo's Bug-Jaral, this specific dimension is clearly indebted to Eugène Sue massively popular 1845 novel, *The Wandering Jew*, whose title character spreads his corrosive influence throughout Europe like a storm system.

to use social reproduction to become the last-standing father on the Borges plantation. Paulo Borges' moral and libidinal "weakness" in the face of a viral fetishism transmitted by Afro-Brazilian bodies symptomatizes the ambivalent antislavery vision of this world.

As was the case with Cora Gordon in *Dred* and Má Felicia in *Romualdo*, the fetish draws into relief the Late-Abolition crisis of enslaved demography amid a resilient Industrial Slave system. In this case, Esméria's cunning displacement of Teresa culminates the fetish's unchecked infection of the material and even metaphysical aspects of the white Brazilian *oikos* and *economia*. With its racist caricature of the Black female body, Esméria's dangerous (and contagious) flesh effectively turns the white planter into a prisoner: "Estulta e torpemente preso à devassa crioula, o aviltado e infeliz fazendeiro passara a ver na mulher um embaraço ao desenfreamento de sua paixão ignóbil…" (107) [A stupid and greedy prisoner to the debauched creole, the disgraced and unhappy planter came to see in her the full embrace of the chaos of ignoble passion]. As the moralizing diction suggests, the reader sees much of Esméria and Paulo's "debauchery" indirectly, through Teresa's slow experience conjugal dissolution, punctuated with glimpses into Pai-Raiol pushing Esméria to accelerate the plan.

Indeed, we even have a female Christian martyrdom superficially comparable to Nina Gordon's death in *Dred*. After Paulo begins openly visiting Esméria's *senzala* and disappears for an eight-day tryst, Teresa finally "temperou-se a alma da pobre vítima para viver vida de martírio…" (108) [adjusted her soul to that of a wretched victim in order to live life as a martyr). This paradoxical living death is framed as the only recourse of a Christian wife "dishonored" by being replaced. However, the final Rubicon is not Teresa's actual death, but Paulo's decision to move Esméria into the sacred domestic space of the *casa grande*. "Só a heroicidade maternal, que excede a todas as heroicidades podia explicar a paciência, a constância e a força angelica"

[only maternal heroism, which exceeds all others, could explain the patience, tirelessness, and angelic force] suffices to explain Teresa's resilience in continuing to care for her children amid Esméria's corruption of the White family. Even Teresa's literal murder (she listlessly acknowledges that "I am dying" from Esméria's poison) seems preferable to the "martyrdom" of having the nuclear unit dissolved by two Black interlopers. In *Dred*, Nina Gordon's noble martyrdom in the service of her enslaved "family" ruptures the political world. Teresa's plight leads to a formally similar antislavery conclusion that leaves the reader with a comparatively resigned and pessimistic conclusion: even the family, that venerable pillar of White morality and Christian virtue, is no match for the contagious force of the African fetish.

Following Pai-Raiol's plan, the subordination of the economic to the erotic comes to a head when the political economy of the plantation is thrown into total turbulence. The conditions for this are set with two preparatory actions by the conjurer, both of which are tropes of slave rebellion: in the first instance, a mysterious "incêndio … devorava o imenso canavial, animadora esperança de pingue produto do trabalho do último ano… dois terços do canavial ficaram carbonizados" (94) [blaze devoured the immense cane field and with it the remaining hope for the product of the previous year's labor; two-thirds of the field was raised to ashes]. Some months after the immolation of the year's harvest, the means of production likewise dwindle "as ervas [venéficas] tinham de novo sem dúvida rebentado da terra, e outra vez as bestas, os bois, os carneiros morreram às dezenas (ibid) [poisonous weeds once again burst throughout his land, in short order killing off donkeys, oxen, and sheep by the dozen]. Short-circuiting the order of capitalist values defined by Albert O. Hirschman, the immolation of his commodities and capital further drives Paulo Borges away from his "interests" and into his "passions".[316] However, Paulo

[316] Albert O. Hirschman, *The Interests and the Passions*, especially 70-81.

Borges only betrays his interests and "nature" (i.e. his commitment to industry and expansion) after his encounter with Esméria in the *ingenho*. At the apex of his alienation from Teresa, Paulo Borges "abandonava freqüentemente a direção do trabalho de suas roças que notavelmente se amesquinharam: debalde contratou ele um feitor, cujos olhos e interesse não eram os do fazendeiro" (115) [frequently abandoned directing the labor in his fields which had notably slackened: in vain, he hired an overseer whose eyes and interests did not align with Paulo's]. This disruption is reflected back into the domestic economy after Teresa is put on her deathbed; once Esméria "assumiu efetivamente a direção e o governo da casa que pouco e pouco se foi desordenando" (119) [assumed effective control over the house it gradually fell into disarray]. As we will see below in discussing Pai-Raiol's Black counter-world, the fetish does not ultimately supplant economic interest, but rather the White hegemony of this interest. Esméria and Pai-Raiol effectively disrupt the present and future continuity of the white bourgeois family unit, a process that ultimately hollows out the Brazilian bourgeois from within.

The dissolving power of the fetish gradually leads to the effacement of the *oikos* in both the diegesis and in the character system. After Teresa's death, Paulo's infant heir, Luis, refuses to be delivered to his substitute Black mother, even calling Esméria a "demon" (116). In the ensuing conversation with Paulo, she shrewdly convinces her *senhor* that this rejection will be nothing compared to the antipathy she will experience from slaves in the *senzala*, jealous of her newfound status (116). This is one of the last bits of dialogue we hear from the child before his death, as Esméria immediately moves into the Big House. The gothic horror of Pai-Raiol's face and mesmerism are transferred to Esméria's demonic seduction and greed. Ironically, this state of affairs literalizes Frank Wilderson's conflation of political and libidinal economy when it comes to racialization in slave societies. But Macedo leverages the *crioula*'s threat to the

bourgeois family to build a literary world that fully plays out the dangers that slavery poses social order of his propertied, slave-owning readers. While the novel relishes in moralistic denunciations of Paulo Borges' weakness and Pai-Raiol's guile, Esméria's body and specifically her pregnancy with Paulo Borges' new heir becomes the fulcrum for the plot.

V: Producing Replacement

Thus, the most far-reaching danger of the fetish (and by extension the African-ness) is not desire, the body, or sexuality itself*,* but rather the matrix of race, paternity, and property referred to as social reproduction. As Marxist feminists have shown, amid its evolution and geographical variation capitalist exploitation relies upon the codified practices and structures of "non-economic" domestic sphere wherein feminized workers reproduce labor power day-to-day and generation-to-generation.[317] To paraphrase Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology*, "natural" phenomena such a child-bearing and child-rearing express *social relations*, which in this case presuppose and perpetuate androcentric authority over feminized classes (women, children, "sexual deviants," etc.).[318] However, as Angela Davis notes, New World slavery is constitutionally opposed to the illusory "separate spheres" model of exploitation characteristic of the bourgeois (and later the working-class) family: "[e]xcepting the woman's role as caretaker of the household, male supremacist structures could not become deeply embedded in the internal workings of the slave system... The black woman was therefore wholly integrated into the productive force."[319] As my interpretation of the internal slave trade in *Dred* or *plagio* in

[317] For a political genealogy, see Silvia Federici, "Social reproduction theory: History, issues and present challenges" (Radical Philosophy) and for a rigorous reconstruction of the theory see Maya Gonzalez and Jeanne Neton, "The Logic of Gender."

[318] As Marx and Engels note in *The German Ideology,* '[t]he production of life, both of one's own in labour and of fresh life in procreation, now appears as a twofold relation: on the one hand as a natural, on the other as a social relation – social in the sense that it denotes the cooperation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions, in what manner and to what end' (cited in Paul Cammack, "Marx on Social Reproduction," 79).

[319] Cited in ME O'Brien, "To Abolish the Family: Thee Working-Class Family and Gender Liberation in Capitalist Development," 368. O'Brien's account of the enslaved family builds on Orlando Patterson's concept of "natal

Romualdo reveal, slavery renders maternity and reproduction into crucial sources of capital and the family into fungible assets. While it was a polemical antislavery touchstone since the seventeenth century,[320] the Late-Abolition period pressurizes the problem of social reproduction due to the uneven collapse of the Transatlantic slave trade and disruptive political pressures from international and domestic abolition movements. Thus, the enslaved Black female body and its reproductive capacities become a site of unexpected convergence between the white planter and the African rebel, both of whom seek to exploit it and harness its capacity to reproduce; differences arise largely in the content of the reproduction (which father will the child align with?) rather than its form.

The crisis of white social reproduction reaches its crescendo with a literal plan for racial "replacement" that will upend the order of things. After the completion of the substitution, Pai-Raiol informs the pregnant Esméria of the final steps of the plan: on the third night of the new moon, she will poison all the three Borges children using venomous roots prepared by Pai-Raiol; afterwards, she will use a specific dosage of the roots to induce a trance in Paulo Borges and force him to revise his will grant freedom papers and his entire estate to Esméria; after finishing off Borges by "cozinha três raízes no café", she will free and marry Pai-Raiol, completing the circuit of racialized paternal usurpation (Macedo, 110). Faced with the "terror" caused by Pai-Raiol and the "savage love" he feels toward Esméria in her newly "elevated station," the *crioula* only offers impotent resistance before giving into the plan. While its allegorical implications are clear enough, the lexical and semiotic terms drastically raise the stakes of this plan. Note the choice to label Pai-Raiol's poison for the children and Paulo Borges a "root" [*raiz*] rather than

alienation" to usefully develop a comparative framework with proletarian families amid the Industrial Revolutions in Europe and the US North. Despite the pitfalls of this quasi-metaphysical concept and its incongruity with *Pai-Raiol*, O'Brien's persuasive and spirited argument informs this analysis.

[320] Carey*, From Peach to Freedom*, Op. Cit.

veneno, the term Macedo favors for this aspect of fugitive science. But when introducing the *feitiçero,* his "applied botany" is highlighted as a source of his power: knowledge of the terrible "properties and actions of roots, leaves, and fruits that debilitate, kill, and cause madness" (40). When considered alongside the near-homophone *raça* (race), death-by-root extends the racial substitution to a broad scale: the enslaved African, his fetish, his woman is capable "supplanting" the Brazilian ruling class regardless of their intentions. Building on Esméria's initial seduction in the sugar mill, Pai-Raiol's plot links this racial usurpation to another key product of Industrial Slavery. As the main cash crop of southern Brazil, coffee becomes both the vehicle for delivering the deadly root to Paulo Borges and a dangerous germ that imperils whiteness as such.

The shocking decision to depict the strategic murder of three White children counterintuitively undermines Black political agency by translating political violence into a localized plot for usurpation rather than liberation. To illustrate this, let us move from one medium for poison (coffee) to another (milk) that is used to kill the Borges children. Although terrified and under the mesmeric power of her evil proxy father, Esméria herself cannot help but view the children as competition that Pai-Raiol will have to deal with: "Com efeito, metade da fortuna de Paulo Borges pertencia já aos três filhos e herdeiros de Teresa; e da outra metade que poderia caber ao filho de Esméria?" (128) [In effect, half the fortune of Paulo Borges already belonged to the three children and heirs of Teresa; wouldn't the other half be imparted to Esméria's child (with Paulo)?]. Insofar as reproduction intertwines with figurative and literal elimination, she will not have to worry about this choice. The night before she poisons the Borges children, Esméria notes their displeasure at being separated from their biological mother and wet-nursed by the creole usurper: "os míseros órfãos passara amamentar-se aos peitos de uma escrava…bebendo as sobras no leite impuro o veneno da sífilis" (132) [the miserable

orphans had taken to suckling the breasts of the slave… drinking the remains of syphilitic poison in the impure milk" Indeed, syphilitic contagion soon becomes de-metaphorized when the reader learns that the newborn baby, this "poor little angel of the cradle, in fact died from syphilis contracted from his Black wet nurse (152). In the political world of the novel, the poisoned coffee spells the present-day failure of industrial slavery while the syphilitic milk casts the insurgent form of social reproduction into the future. Indeed, this tableau teases a new racial order on the plantation that comes to fruition once the three white Borges children are murdered through Pai-Raiol's poisonous roots and Esméria's child is brought into the world. Slavery, as it were, condemns white elites to produce and consume products poisoned by African and Afro-Brazilian bodies resulting in a hereditary disease (miscegenation) that threatens the ethnic stock of the country.

If the central tension of the novel is how, by way of the fetish, Industrial Slavery fuels a crisis of white social reproduction, what exactly will take its place? And what are the political implications of Macedo's literary speculation as compared to Stowe and Calcagno? On this first point, Pai-Raiol's rebellious world-building is distinguished by its monistic or immanent quality and its emphasis on process over a coherent counter-world. Unlike Engedi or the "Mini-Guinea" *palenque*, this unfolds solely through an internal conspiracy on the plantation, with no external threat from fugitive communities or even established Afro-Brazilian institutions with a presence on the plantation, such as *candomblé*. This disavowal of Brazilian *quilombos* and the Afro-diasporic cultural practices that sustains them represents a massive omission insofar as Brazil boasted the largest and most infamous fugitive settlements were in Brazil: from the maroon metropolis of Palmares, to the nineteenth century *quilombos* and *mocambos* active in the state of

Rio de Janeiro, such as Iguaçu and Vassouras.[321] In fact, this elision becomes logical when we keep in mind the key premise that slavery sustains rather than constrains the African fetish. The *boçal* Pai-Raiol is the mastermind and prime mover of the expropriation plot, while the *crioula* Esméria is often presented as an unwilling prisoner. Developing the *quilombo* into a coherent political world (another Engedi or the Cubita palenque) would risk undermining the attempt to cordon off the fetish from Brazil's creole population; the mixture of racial castes and statuses and the expansions of the character system would dilute Pai-Raiol's authority and inflated character status. This interesting sleight of hand substitutes the empirical fact of vibrant fugitive worlds for an individualized Black agency whose political aspirations mirror the oppressive White world – a creative iteration of what Michel-Rolph Trouillot terms "formula of erasure" that perpetuate racial subjugation at the narrative level.[322] Accordingly, when Macedo remarks on the *quilombo* elsewhere, he considers such settlements outside the legal and cultural influence of the white-led state to be criminal enterprises: "às horas mortas da noite vêm os quilombolas escravos fugidos e acoitados nas florestas, trazer o tributo de suas depredações nas roças vizinhas" (*Simeão, O Crioulo*, 1) [at the dead hours of the night the fugitive slaves came out from the *quilombos* and, sheltered by the forest, slaked the their plundering thirst in neighboring fields]. Far from the fugitive primitivism of *Dred* or the base criminality imputed to actual fugitive settlements, this expropriation is intentionally represented to mirror the world it will replace. Just as there is not white reformer upon which to build a new antislavery politics, the novel refuses to imagine a space of Black autonomy outside the plantation.

However, the glimpses we do get of Pai-Raiol's ultimate goal approximate a kind *anti-quilombo*. Counterintuitive as it is, the novel suggests that the tyranny of the African fetish

[321] Flavio Dos Santos Gomez, *Freedom by a Thread: The History of Quilombos in Brazil*.
[322] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 96-97.

ultimately serves to prop up Industrial Slavery. Pai-Raiol's rebellious character, African speech, and primitive powers reinforce clearly contrast with the creole rebels of the previous two novels, Dred and Juan Bemba, whose efforts to resist the machine-like barbarism of Industrial Slavery emerge as at least partially sympathetic and commendable. As noted previously, despite Pai-Raiol's past affiliation with *candomblé*, on the Borges plantation he stridently isolates himself from the practitioners of this syncretic (and much-feared) Afro-Brazilian religion. Moreover, he establishes himself as the most violent and feared overseer (*feitor*) on the plantation:

> …seu desempenho dessa tarefa requintara de severidade, e os pobres escravos viram-se de contínuo excitados ao trabalho a golpes de açoite manejado por mão também de escravo. Pai-Raiol os flagelara por sistema; o açoite é que as mais das vezes provoca o desespero e a fúria da escravidão (92).
>
> [his performance in this role was very severe, and the helpless slaves found themselves continually impelled to work through lashes from a fellow slave. Pai-Raiol beat them systematically: the whip is what most often provokes fury and despair among slaves]

Note the emphasis on the "systematic" approach to his harsh corporal punishment, which echoes the standardized brutality that Edward Baptist and others link to capitalist slavery.[323] We find echoes of this in domestic sphere echoes once Esméria once she becomes the plantation mistress:

> A crioula… impor submissão respeitosa e aniquilar as liberdades e confianças da antiga convivência…ordenou castigos justos e injustos, e com as próprias mãos e descarregou por vezes o açoite sobre as costas de suas companheiras…(144)
>
> [The creole imposed total submission and did away with the small freedoms and confidences of the previous mistress… she ordered punishments justly and unjustly, and

[323] Baptist, Op. Cit.

with these same hands unleased the whip numerous times upon the backs of her [former] colleagues]

Thus, it should come as no surprise that his usurpation of Paulo Borges will not lead to emancipation of his comrades (much less a revolution), but a continuation of the old regime under Pai-Raiol's command. There is no outside. But the decision to underscore Pai-Raiol's African powers and tyrannical fantasies while erasing creole institutions and solidarities results in an uneasy separation of Africa from Afro-America. The brutal anti-*quilombo* he seeks to build is poised to perpetuate rather than abolish or even ameliorate Industrial Slavery. All that remains is killing off Paulo Borges, gaining legal freedom from Esméria, and wedding the new *senhora*.

As with the other texts, Macedo brings us right to the brink of a civil war and the final defeat of the White proxy father. However, before this can be realized a second civil conflict breaks out – this time within the *enslaved* population on the Borges plantation. After Esméria has just learned what will happen to the Borges children, we are introduced to the enslaved creole representing the opposite of the *fetiçeiro*: tío Alberto. With his European name and less threatening title (uncle rather than father), tío Alberto enters the scene as Esméria's third and final proxy father the end of the novel: "O tio Alberto representava o contraste mais completo do Pai-Raiol: era um escravo africano de trinta anos de idade, e de alta estatura…era bonito para a sua raça, um Hércules negro em suma" (128) [Uncle Alberto represented a complete contrast to Pai-Raiol: he was an Black slave [note: not *boçal*] 30 years old and tall stature… he was handsome for his race, overall a black Hercules]. Esméria momentarily wavers and seeks consolation in the "herculean" creole, who was her primary suitor on the previous plantation. Devastated to hear what has become of her, the mention of the despised overseer Pai-Raiol drives the "good" creole proxy into a rage, vowing "hei de perseguir Pai-Raiol até que ele venha

tirar bulha comigo" (129) ["I will pursue Pai-Raiol until we finally trade blows"]. This comes to a head just after Paulo Borges, having granted emancipation to Esméria and their unborn child, uncovers the expropriation plot (not due to his own wiles but because Esméria has gone too far in her abuse of an enslaved domestic servant). With the conspiracy out in the open and the threat that Pai-Raiol will dispose of the remaining characters, tío Alberto confronts the conjurer in a fight to the death.[324]

With strikingly similarity to the previous novels, the multi-layered civil war is clumsily resolved in short order. As in *Dred*, a Black limb explodes into the scene to bash the evil proxy father and rescue the proxy child. Esméria has just voiced her reluctance to finish the expropriation plan by killing Paulo Borges (who is clandestinely listening off-stage) and when Pai-Raiol senses the influence of the creole proxy father, the conjurer says "I will have to destroy tío Alberto" (Macedo, 138). Having been performatively summoned, Pai-Raiol is met with "Um golpe violento dado por potente ombro fez em pedaços a porta da senzala, e Alberto que se mostrou ao clarão da lua, bradou com raiva: Cão danado! A hora chegou…" (150) [A violent blow from a powerful shoulder shattered the door of the slave quarters, and Alberto emerged in the moonlight angrily howling: "Cursed Dog! Your time has come…]. The two engage in hand-to-hand combat, with Alberto narrowly besting the African in large part because he refuses to fear *o feitiço*. When Alberto emerges victoriously drenched in his rival's blood, Esméria had already taken flight. In the epilogue, we discover that order has been nominally restored: the pregnant Esméria is imprisoned, Alberto is given freedom papers, and Paulo Borges lives a life

[324] However, he is not quite a submissive Uncle Tom clone. The narrator makes a point of using his "good natured" creole to illustrate how slavery drives antagonisms between enslaver and enslaved; as a "homem condenado às misérias e aos vícios inerentes à baixa condição imposta," [man condemned to the miseries and vices inherent to life imposed under slaver], his hatred of his condition makes him initially reluctant to rescue Paulo Borges (Macedo, 115).

of abject shame for enabling it all. The narrator smugly reasserts his antislavery thesis that "Pai-Raiol e Esméria, algozes pela escravidão, esses dois escravos assasinos não podem mais assassinar..." (152) [Pai-Raiol and Esméria, executioners as a result of slavery, these two slave assassins can no longer kill]. However, this conclusion feels far from satisfactory in either thematic, plot, or even rhetorical terms. After a reign of terror that includes the poisoning of three enslaved servants, two children, a pregnant woman, as well as the destruction of machines, livestock, and crops, the brief but dramatic fight scene rings hollow. That the victorious character is only introduced in Chapter 21 of 27 intensifies the creakiness of this *deus ex machina*.

And perhaps most importantly the neat resolution side-steps a major question that my analysis has so far kept in the background: does the narrator's sincere "emancipationist" antislavery stance survive the challenge posed by its own construction of the contagious, syphilitic African fetish? As I have shown, this is the central conceit animating the plot, characterization, and political world. The novel tries to resolve this by continuously highlighting the gap between *boçal* and creole, African and Afro-American, evident in diverging physiognomies and powers of action (i.e. Esméria's mesmerism by Pai-Raiol). As Flora Süsskind argues, creoles like Esméria and tío Alberto are described as being "favorably modified by the climate and natural influence of their new country" which implies that they are suited to be "better integrated into the world of the masters." But here and in other novels this apparent proximity to white elites only "serves to better mask their disloyalty."[325] This paranoia stems from anxieties around a resurgence of slave rebellions and their destabilizing potential effects, which further speaks to the texts contradictory impulse to depict a very specific kind of African resistance and threat.

[325] Süsskind, "*As Vítimas-Algozes* e o Imaginário do Medo," xxxii.

Taking this further, I believe that the *crioulo*/*boçal* dichotomy established and then deconstructed by the plot has larger implications for question of *post*-emancipation worlds so essential to Late-Abolition texts. As noted, a key tenet of the narrative discourse revolves around how the system of slavery *produces* these antagonisms between the races, between capital and labor, between Europe and Africa. I've commented how the pseudo-scientific conceits applied to slavery – cancer and syphilis – imply that this darker part of the body politic may be beyond saving. The diegetic journey of the fetish, similarly, works to at least in part to transcode racial anxieties into the realm of culture and habitus, while also preserving the fears of "racial replacement" and miscegenation. But perhaps the most damning evidence of the pessimism viz. the future Afro-Brazilian citizens can be gleaned from how the novel handles the proxy-child, Esméria. In light of the Late-Abolition emphasis on contested proxy paternity, the fate of its central creole figure becomes all the more essential. In terms of the plot, her imprisonment not only cuts against Macedo's emancipationist stance, but it also corrects the racial contamination that would presumably result from her unborn child.

The novel occasionally implies that these social antagonisms may in fact be more severe than reified effects that can be corrected through a transition to universal legal equality and free labor. Early in the text, when we see Esméria climbing the ranks in Teresa Borges' household, the narrator makes an interesting comment on the unreliability of enslaved servants:

> …criara com o fingimento mais friamente calculado uma segunda natureza para o seu viver na escravidão; sua humildade nunca se desmentia, sua disposição alegre no trabalho a tornara estimada da senhora (85).

> [there grew within her, hidden beneath the most coldly calculated pretense, a second nature for her life in slavery; her apparent humility was never undermined, her happy disposition in her work esteemed her in the eyes of the mistress]

Labelling Esméria's racial antipathy as a "second nature" returns us the origins of the word "fetish" and begs a reexamination of the "weak nature" of Paulo Borges. Following theorists such as Lukács, Adorno and Weber, the idea of a second nature implies the dissolution of physical and metaphysical "laws of nature" into a socially-determined "world of convention" produced by and for human beings.[326] While the implications of this expanded fetish are legion, I must limit my analysis to two key claims. In the first instance, Paulo Borges' original sin can now be transcoded as the extension of fetish into commodity fetish: among other dangers, slavery enables the "temptation" to make the European more "primitive" than the African (at this, Macedo would shudder). However, this insight is hardly unique to Macedo. Circling back to the passage (and numerous later descriptions Esméria's cruelty), the more important point concerns the soon-to-be ex-slaves of the Americas: does not the second nature caused (at least most recently) by Industrial Slavery also distort the subjectivity of creoles, who even when free or freed continue to exist in a society conditioned by the effects of systematic white supremacist coercion? At the minimum, it is clear that the felt historical proximity to a post-slavery world leads Macedo into the furthest-reaching – and ultimately most reactionary – assay into the present and future configurations of race and nation.

To start to answer such questions, I'll turn to a canonical framework for theorizing how (what we now call) social reproduction and the nation-state and consider how the (very) Late-Abolition conjuncture of *Pai-Raiol* forcibly modifies it. In dramatizing the perversion of the

[326] Lukacs, *Theory of the Novel* and Theodor Adorno, "The Idea of Natural History".

relations of reproduction that sustain the genetic and economic inheritance of the white ruling class, the novel likewise deforms the quintessential literary paradigm that Doris Sommer terms Foundational Fictions. As she explains, novels emerged as a technology to impose forms of citizenship and subjecthood that liberal elites demanded of these new multi-racial and multi-cultural Latin American polities:

> …after the creation of the new nations, the domestic romance is an exhortation to be fruitful and multiply…many of these romances strive toward socially convenient marriages and that, despite their variety, the ideal states they project are patriarchal or hierarchical.[327]

Such emblems of national identity as *María* and *Amalia* idealize and allegorize state formation via complex plots resulting in heterosexual matrimony between opposing intra-national factions (e.g., a white farmer and an indigenous woman). As result, their "rhetoric of productive eroticism provides a model for apparently non-violent national consolidation during periods of internecine conflict" (Sommer 112-113). Although Brazil had already achieved independence and asserted its regional power in a continental war, the weakness of executive powers of the new state, the persistence of "archaic" social forms such as slavery, and the inordinate power of the rural rentiers caused anxiety from Liberal and conservative *letrados* alike. Following Sommers' framework, the "black cloud" of Emancipation stemming from the US Civil War and the chaos of the War of the Triple Alliance are key contradictions that are phantasmatically resolved in an iconic nationalist novel such as José de Alencar's *Iraçema* (1865). Nearly a perfect contrast with *Pai-Raiol*, the earlier novel is poetic and mythic rather than journalistic and presentist; its historical setting wholly side-steps the issue of slavery and Afro-Brazilian presence in favor of origin story of the "mestiço" nation told through the Romantic saga of a Portuguese explorer

[327] Sommer, "Foundational Fictions: When History was Romance," 112

who falls for a Tupí princess aligned with a rival Euro-colonial power. The sacrifice of Iraçema (and, metonymically, the indigenous nations of Brazil) is the tragic price for her lover, child, and the Euro-colonial future of América.

If *Sab* or *Iraçema* enacts the symbolic resolution of structural antagonisms via "erotic productivism", *Pai-Raiol, o Feitiçero* violently reworks this concept through the expropriation plot.[328] As I've shown throughout this chapter, the novel almost obsessively links Esméria's sexuality to property and economic production, whether in linking seduction to sugar mills or to acts of reproductive labor. The narrator would likely frame such acts in terms of Liberal, free-labor arguments around why the system of slavery is solely responsible for inducing laborers to rebel and conspire – acts the narrator considers unthinkable for free workers of any race.[329] But they also express the two-sided issue of social reproduction that becomes central to the Late-Abolition context. An unstated, horrific premise of Paulo Borges' infatuation is that, after the end of the slave trade and amid surging prices, his "weakness" when faced with the mesmeric African fetish coincides with his hunger to acquire more enslaved workers.[330] Every Late-Abolition country (even the US with its booming domestic slave trade) unsuccessfully sought ways to solve "human capital" shortages as commodity prices and profits continued to surge, leading to the horrific practice of "productive eroticism" (to invert Sommers' term), the phenomenon explored in depth in my previous two chapters. Brazil developed a regional slave trade that outwardly resembled the US case, with regional a breakdown of slave-exporting (the

[328] In fact, this argument could be extended to all three novels I analyze in the dissertation. But Macedo's comparatively exalted political power within the Imperial court and his engagement with the implications of the breakdown of Industrial Slavery make this the appropriate place to discuss the Foundation framework.
[329] These arguments do not bear repeating here. See my Introduction and Sections II and III of Chapter 1 for a review of them.
[330] While Paulo does of course free Esméria and her unborn child, the significance of this gesture is deflated by how late it occurs in the diegesis: indeed, in the very chapter in which Paulo uncovers the expropriation plot. If the restoration of order can be read as a deus ex machina, perhaps the same can be said of the restoration of Paulo Borges' capacity for love and human connection.

northeast) between Industrial plantation (the southeast): "After 1850, slaves were bought and sold internally…. With the rise in slaves' prices owing to the end of slave importation, even traditionally productive areas such as Bahia and Pernambuco exported large quantities of slaves."[331]

However, the Brazilian ruling class was beginning to accept the unviable long-term prospects of continuing the slave trade, due to a complex combination of political pressure, internal challenges, and demographic forecasts.[332] It became clear that an internal market would not even be able to furnish the labor needed for the coffee plantations, which were less ruinous and thus created less turnover than the sugar complex; moreover, attempting to do so would not be politically sustainable either. Unlike texts such as *Dred*, *Blake*, *Romualdo*, and *El Negro Francisco*, the form and content of *Pai-Raiol* suggest another aspect of social reproduction that may overdetermine the (still important) demographic concern. After all, the novel is not a romantic tragedy centering on the Paulo-Esméria dyad, but revolves around three proxy fathers vying for control of the *crioula* protagonist. Furthermore, I have also illustrated how the text shifts character space from Pai-Raiol to Esméria, from the "last imported African slave" to an American-born domestic – insofar as the latter becomes translator and thus the vehicle for the fetish and the expropriation plot. Instead of imagining how to perpetuate slavery through African

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[331] Fausto and Fausto, 114. However, Richard Graham points out that sugar plantations were not the primary source of this internal trade until after 1877:

> On the whole, the slaves shipped south from the Northeast did not come from sugar plantations. Because sugar exports from the Northeast were no longer expanding, there is a misconception that it was the sugar planters who sold their workers southward, but that was not usually the case…the late 1870s a terrible drought seared the interior of some northeastern provinces, producing both a flood of free migrants to the coastal sugar zones in search of employment and a fire sale of slaves from the dryer regions ("Another Middle Passage?" 297-298).

[332] Assigning explanatory value to these (and other) key factors that lead to the Free Womb Law – considered the Rubicon that catalyzed the eventual abolition of slavery– is a notoriously difficult problem. For the purposes of my argument, doing so is not essential. Broadly speaking, the Brazilian situation represents a clear contrast with the Immediatist moment and civil war conditions of the US, as well as the crisis of both the institution and Spanish imperialism in 1860s Cuba. See Toplin, 145-176*;* Fausto and Fausto, 124-126.

or domestic commerce, the key preoccupation becomes managing the bodies, agency, and sexuality of the free population, and the novel moves beyond simply creating a new foundational myth or bolstering capital accumulation.

Understanding what else is at stake for a Brazilian novel circa 1869 requires returning to the conflation of *crioulo* and *boçal* that is licensed by the expropriation plot, the anti-*quilombo*, and Esméria's "second nature," in the dual sense illustrated above. Unlike *Dred* or *Romualdo*, the antislavery world of the novel centers upon a very specific repudiation of both its key proxy fathers, Paulo Borges and Pai-Raiol, insofar as they seek perpetuate slavery in Brazil. The fatal flaw of Paulo Borges is his tragic inability to anachronize "o lei de costume," a fetishism of slavery as essential rather than second nature that sets him up to be defeated by Pai-Raiol's original/African fetishism. This inability of Paulo Borges, and by extension the inability of the Brazilian planters keeping slavery alive, sow the seeds for their own execution by failing to come to terms with the slow decline of slavery in the wake of the closed slave trade, the US Civil War, and the Liberal reforms of the Spanish empire. Though he survives in the story, failing to read the signs of history spells the potential end of the father and his replacement by creole and mixed-race usurpers. In short, we can say that the political world of the novel is both antislavery and anti-Black, which aligns it with the post-Emancipation bio-political policies that Latin American countries like Brazil helped pioneer.[333]

These essentially update an older, reactionary antislavery discourse popularized by colonial and postcolonial elites. The political world and its questions about Brazil's future reach into an older antislavery discourse anchored by Thomas Jefferson's extremely influential

[333] Immigration schemes were not unique to Brazil, but were prevalent throughout the hemisphere, especially in countries with very high indigenous and Afro-American populations. However, Brazil emerged as a vanguard of these policies due to the large populations of these "undesirable" groups and the high volume of land made available to entice immigrants (in notoriously deceptive ways).

remarks in *Notes on the State of Virginia*. In the latter, he famously asked "Why not retain and incorporate the blacks into the state, and thus save the expence of supplying, by importation of white settlers, the vacancies they will leave?"[334] Besides economic benefits, natural law precepts demonstrate the moral and political consequences of slavery. Allowing "one half of the citizens... to trample on the rights of the other" corrupts both parts of the nation, turning enslavers into "despots" and "destroy[ing their] morals" and the enslaved into political "enemies" because slavery eliminates any sense of "amor patria" (Jefferson 162-163). But this ostensible sympathy for the enslaved actually provides the basis for rejection the large-scale "incorporation" of Blacks into the body politic. Fearing the emancipation of inevitable "enemies" leads to Jefferson's infamous prediction of a possible race war: "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just…that considering numbers, nature and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events…" (163). To avoid "revolution" and even divine retribution, Jefferson favored "coloniz[ing] [Blacks] to such place as the circumstances of the time should render most proper," which eventually would be the African continent itself.[335] For Stowe, the millenarian event of abolition itself will result in the desired incorporation of Black citizens (supplemented with schools and apprenticeships to aid the transition). For Calcagno, correctly applied Cuban laws and norms represents a gradual antislavery agenda in itself, at least when uninterrupted by Industrial Slavery. Jefferson, by contrast, arrives at his theoretical antislavery views by refuting the premise for these comparatively radical positions.

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[334] Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 79. Cited in text parenthetically hereafter as Jefferson.
[335] Cited in 510 of William Cohen, "Thomas Jefferson and the Problem of Slavery." In this important revisionist accounts of apologetic histories of Jefferson, Cohen persuasively argues that even despite antislavery works such as the original draft of the US Declaration of Independence that: "The entire body of Jefferson's writings shows that he never seriously considered the possibility of any form of racial coexistence on the basis of equality and that, from at least 1778 until his death, he saw colonization as the only alternative to slavery".

Pai-Raiol, o Feitiçero likewise laments the effects of slavery on both masters and slaves and calls for a far-reaching solution to address *o perigro negro* as in large part a demographic problem. In practice, what Brazil enacted can be considered a revised Jeffersonian project in which the effects of gradual emancipation will be demographically offset, though not by colonization schemes like Liberia or Sierra Leone. Colonizationist antislavery had no legitimate basis outside the Anglophone world for a variety of reasons; postcolonial nations like for Brazil had neither territory, nor infrastructure or political initiative to pull them off. And as critics like Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison noted at the time, colonization experiments in practice served as a safety valve for slavery by siphoning away a key enemy of pro-slavery forces: free Black Americans.[336] Of course, the Afro-Brazilian citizens that, for many, pose to the nascent nation could not be simply shipped off, even in theory. Instead, the official and de facto policy combined the "neglect" (or abjection) discussed by Chris Taylor with a newfound emphasis on importing free labor from European countries.[337] As Thomas Skidmore notes, "few of [White abolitionists] thought through the probable social consequences of abolition" and tended to focus solely on the "large, illiterate, unskilled mass represented by the slaves"[338]. With ambitious designs for economic development and a more skilled labor market, there was little to no consideration of Reconstruction-style policies to prepare free and soon-to-be-ex-slaves to play a key part in this. Instead "liberal abolitionists" such as Macedo "preferred to think about European immigrants as a solution to the post-abolitionist labor problem" (ibid).[339] Thus, "from

[336] See also David Kazanjian, *The Colonization Trap*.
[337] Much later and with great reluctance, select Asian countries such as Japan became a new source of foreign labor.
[338] Thomas Skidmore, "Racial Ideas and Social Policy in Brazil: 1870-1940," 9.
[339] Sales Augusto dos Santos, "The Roots of the 'Whitening' of Brazil."
This was not the first attempt to "modernize" (and whiten) the labor population via emigration schemes. There was a concerted effort to induce central European laborers to work as coffee sharecroppers in the southeast. This floundered for the same reasons that would also hamper later efforts (European states banning recruitment, colonists fleeing due to intolerable work conditions, etc.). This served to reinforce "the conservative planters' view that there was no alternative to slave labor. The opposite conclusion—that the labor shortage could no longer be met by slaves

1867 on that the Brazilian government began to invest more markedly in its chosen immigration policy," which was formalized at a convention of influential southeastern planters in 1878 (dos Santos, 63). It was hoped that these "whitening" policies would enhance the ethnological/biological, cultural, and economic stock of a Brazilian nation that would declare itself a republic in 1889, just one year after 1888. A full analysis of this complex process and discourse is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Nonetheless, this brief excursus illustrates the how the anti-Black antislavery arguments of *Pai-Raiol* look forward to the various subsequent policies and practices that served to exclude Afro-Brazilians from substantive freedom and citizenship. To be sure, this chapter does not speak to the various ways in which, among other things, enslaved and free Afro-Brazilians organized, protested, and lobbied for abolition from the 1870s onward. A larger and more comprehensive account of the Late-Abolition Americas must contend with the mass social movements and proliferation of texts that constitute Brazil's neo-immediatist moment that stretches into the late 1880s, as those explored in works like Joaquim Nabuco's *O Abolicionismo,* published in 1883. Furthermore, it would seek to explore this incendiary moment of Brazilian political worlding while placing it alongside the world-historical attempt to rewrite the terms of democracy and racial egalitarianism US Reconstruction undertook, and its disastrous implosion in the mid-1870s. as well as the devastating end of Cuba's 10 Years War and unstable peace that follows until abolition is formally declared in 1886. Recovering the patterns of the political imagination from the latter half of the Late-Abolition epoch would undoubtedly enrich the picture presented here. Although it is not within the scope of this dissertation to do so, the

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and that abolition might be an indispensable prerequisite—took longer to sink in" (Skidmore, *Brazil: Five Centuries*, 48).

references I have made to other Late-Abolition novels (Delany's Blake and Zambrana's *El Negro Francisco*, in particular) suggest some starting points for future projects in this line.

However, apart from the dearth of narrative fiction from the 1870s neo-immediatist moment, there is another reason why Macedo's novel is an appropriate end point for this dissertation: it seems to presage the often-regressive political worlds that emerge after the protracted death of Industrial Slavery. The Reconstruction-era US South and Cuban independence struggles are replete with examples of Afro-Americans gaining hard-wrought civil and economic rights (sometimes even before abolition in the Cuban example). At least at the state level, Brazil's non-efforts to reimagine racial citizenship speak to the social priorities of these New World regimes after 1889. If the story in *No Struggle, No Progress* opens with an apocalyptic Immediatism that tore down an old-world political imaginary and sought a radical alternative for Black citizenship, it ends with policies of marginalization and replacement enacted to excise the African "cancer" from the new nation. The defeats of the Late-Abolition cultural and discursive period might be said to constitute the final nail in the coffin for the Age of Revolutions. The post-abolition racial order of the Americas famously resembled an "afterlife" of slavery, conditioned by the laws, customs, and ideologies designed to marginalize, criminalize, and hyper-exploit people of African descent.[340]

Across the US, Cuba, and Brazil, various de facto, institutional and ideological practices were developed to ensure that most people of African descent continue to be hyper-exploited or marginalized (depending on the caprice of capital accumulation) and ultimately unable to enjoy the full protections and benefits of political citizenship. Speaking of this conjuncture at the end

[340] Patterson, 15 and Berry, 194-212.

of *Black Reconstruction,* W.E.B. Dubois broaches the "splendid failure" of the attempt to "make black men American citizens" from the problem of historical memory:

> "The unending tragedy of Reconstruction is the utter inability of the American mind to grasp its real significance, its national and worldwide implications… involv[ing] the very foundations of American democracy, both political and economic. We are still too blind and infatuated to conceive of the emancipation of the laboring class in half the nation as a revolution.[341]

Similarly, the abolition movement in Cuba and Brazil likewise failed to help bring about an end to slavery that would revolutionize the terms of Black citizenship and freedom. Moreover, the Late-Abolition writers I analyze fail to even coherently *imagine* political worlds in which the latter could flourish. To briefly return to Kazanjian and Holly Jackson's points regarding radical failure, the defeats of the Late-Abolition Americas furnish us with another cogent "body of literature that critically reflects upon the very meaning of freedom" (Kazanjian, 11). We can only hope that recovering discursive and cultural fragments of worlds not lived might contribute to imagining an América emancipated from the manifold forms of social oppression necessary for reproducing racial capitalism.

[341] W.E.B. Dubois, *Black Reconstruction in America 1860-1880*, 708

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