Notes on Passage (The New International of Sovereign Feelings)

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reflections on theory

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Refugees are the keenest dialecticians. They are refugees as a result of changes and their sole object of study is change.[1]

—Bertolt Brecht

Refugees study change not only because they've been put through changes but also because changes are what they want and what they play and what they are. Refugees study a mode of study—the contrapuntal intersection of a set of interstitial fields, dislocation in a hole or a hold or a whole or a crawlspace. Such study is inhabitation that *moves*: by way of—but also in apposition to—injury, which is irreducible in the refugee though she is irreducible to it. There is, in turn, passage in acknowledging the theoretical practice of the one who emerges as if from nowhere, rooted in having been routed, digging, tilling, working, sounding, the memorial future of a grave, undercommon cell. She is the commodity, the impossible domestic, the interdicted/contradictive mother. Dangerously embedded in the home from which she is excluded, she is more and less than one. The question of where and when she enters—where entrance is reduced to some necessarily tepid mixture of naturalization and coronation, which is an already failed solution that is ever more emphatically diluted in its abstract and infinite replication—is always shaded by the option to refuse what has been refused, by the preferential option not for a place but rather for radical displacement, not for the same but for its change. Blackness is given in the refusal_2 of the refugee.

Cosmopolitanism has more often than not been thought to be an overview of the underground to which blackness is supposed to have been relegated. Overseeing and overlooking are crucial elements of this particular interplay of blindness and insight. The necessary detachment that links and animates these elements becomes even more important as the various officially sanctioned modes of Euro-American cosmopolitanisms, and their Afro-diasporic critical variants, emerge. Perhaps detachment within that diverse set of cosmopoli- tanist theories is necessary to the illumination of the federated universality of a cosmopolitan drive. Detachment helps to enact a kind of meta-cosmopolitanism to the extent that it redoubles a certain constitution of cosmopolitanism as the "womb in which all original predispositions of the human species will be developed," a tendency whose subjunctivity persists as we await "the achieve- ment of a civil society universally administering right," whose own precondition is "a lawful external relation between states."[2] Immanuel Kant tries to tell us why we have to wait for what he calls cosmopolitanism, noting that the safety and sanctity of this womb and its generative capacity is always threatened with deferral *by* states; and Gilles Deleuze, reading himself into and out of Kant's conceptual framework, cautions us against state thought such as the paradoxically static and statist conceptions of cosmopolitanism that turn out to ground and sanction those antagonistic external relations that Kant posits both as a natural order and as that which nature drives peoples to transcend. Are lawful external relations between states just as dangerous to the universal administration of right as their unlawful counterparts? What if cosmopoli- tanism, which is, of necessity, national is, precisely because of this necessity, its own most absolute and eternal deferral? What if cosmopolitanism is not just national, but also racial, as well. Consider that both lawful and unlawful rela- tions between states operate, as it were, in the medium of statelessness—which is also to say upon stateless flesh or, both more generally and more precisely, earthly materiality that is posited as unembodied and figured as unanimated. Racialized and sexualized, but also given in the general distinction between man and dominion, statelessness is interdicted *mater*iality. This is to say that statelessness ought not in any case be seen simply as the field marked out by the difference between the citizen and the noncitizen. On the one hand, statelessness is the field of their convergence and coalescence and its modern determination and adjudication (even and especially as what can rightly and all but generally be called the *lived statelessness of the citizen*) is enacted in and by ascriptions and impositions of state-sanctioned or naturalized difference; on the other hand, and in the first place, statelessness is the mobilization of a difference that cosmopolitanism (as national, racial, sexual, and

military humanism) is meant to regulate in the name and in the service of the state and of the very idea of possessive and individual interest that the state is meant to protect and to project.[3]

The kind of meta-cosmopolitan overview that proliferates in the various shades of official intellectual discourse does not simply exemplify this condi- tion; rather, it might be said both to define and refine it precisely along an obscured but strangely faithful Kantian line. Such discourse usually briefly attends to the shadowed reemergence of this line, which seems inescapable in part because to step along it is to step into a kind of morass that is defined by the return of a couple of intractable, intersecting problems—the conflict between the empirical and the normative (or, you could say the constitutive and the regulative) and the conflict between the particular and the universal. But this line only seems inescapable—not because these conflicts are not real but rather because the set of terms that is marked and structured by them is neither limited to nor enclosed by the Kantian imagination whose freedom polices itself at the intersection of race, sex, and teleology. The racial/sexual mark in Kant, which regulates and is constitutive of cosmopolitan constitu- tion and regulation, has been passed on down the Kantian line and does its business in the divergent formulations that comprise the discursive field where philosophy and policy converge. The persistence of that mark (as the enclosure of the common ground of cosmopolitan thinking), its ineluctable place at the foundation of contemporary thought and society in the world that has often been called both first and free, and above all the simultaneously destructive and reconstructive force to which the philosophical concept of race, in its irreduc- ible sexualization, responds, requiring that we access and mobilize it now under the name of a radical and universal differentiation, renders moralistic calls for a kind of voluntary and self-corrective de-racialization and asexualization of culture seem downright silly and, for that matter, immoral.[4] At stake, here, is the necessary distinction between the delusional system, at once narcotic and regulatory, of possessive individual and national development, figured in what Ernst Kantorowicz calls "the king's two bodies," and the improvisational mechanics, at the convergence of fantasy and flight, of fugitive ensemble's dispossessed and dispossessive flesh.

Against the backdrop of the massive, and still massively discounted, history of (European) man's racial violence, which is part and parcel of the narcotic delusion sovereignty constructs for, as, and in itself, the burden of "voluntary" de-racialization is generally placed on the backs of those whose access to the fantasy of man's full embodiment—the full, free, self-determining occupation of his position—is always refused and often refused2. This strictly racialized responsibility for de-racialization, an externality imposed upon those who desire, as well as those who disavow, the sovereign's impossibility, now often passes as a critique of blackness leveled from a vast range of colonial outposts that have been and remain man's staging area and theater of operations. Moreover, an expanding set of contemporary social theorists, who seem to believe in the achievement of this or that country, the discovery of the world, and the possibility of the new

political dispositions these dreams imply, also seem to understand that these dreams require the repression of a range of assertive and insurgent social forms and performances that emerge, *in part,* from the experience and transgenera- tional transmission of transgenerational racial injury. Constantly inducing pain in the interest of feeling none, the sovereign junkie is always high on his own supply and always in withdrawal, which takes the violently antisocial form of the expansion of his territory. He says he does this in order to protect his geopolitical corners. He says he needs his corners in order to protect an idea. This idea, the sovereign's dream of his own unnatural highness, can't protect itself. This dream is maintained, in lieu of its fulfillment, as submission to the logistics and logic of racial capitalism and its ends. It's persistence-in-deferral is the very matter of neoliberal, neo-imperial policy.

Against the grain of (the) man's brutal self-projections, which often result in the addictive tendency of his others to settle for the settler's delusional sovereignty, blackness still has the fugal, fugitive, radically imaginative

sociopoetic work of refusal2 to do. This work takes form in passage, as ill logics and logisticalities of sharing, as a general indebtedness that requires and allows a general corporate liquidation performed by means of what Édouard Glissant calls "consent not to be a single being."[5] Such work is inseparable from the hope for an undercosmopolitanism that might abolish the Kantian line and its recursions to and recrudescences of exclusionary state and national determina- tions—its conflicted, melancholic, imperial and postimperial patriotisms—even as it materializes antinational ways of being together from the exhaust(ion) of internationalism. To speak of that hope is to sift and rub, delve and caress, in the interest of flight. One day, perhaps Walter Rodney will have called such common intellectuality undergroundings with his brothers and sisters; one day, perhaps Kamau Brathwaite will have called the striated unity of such thinking sub-marine.[6] This other ana- or extra- or subcosmopolitanism, which will not have been *from* but rather will have *remained* below, is proper—in its radical impropriety and expropriative inappropriability—only to the dispossessed and to the trace of the dispossessed, a category whose membership is open, where dispossession is understood within the context of its historical racialization and engendering and ungendering and the ongoing challenge that resistance in and before these processes offers to possessive subjectivity. Thinking the undercosmopolitan requires being circulated. You have to be moved, in having declared that you shall not be, in this other place for *theoria,* impatiently racing for another vision in and of your patient habitation, the underground overview, the buried *übersicht,* of resurrected angels singing beneath and invisibly sensing, practicing, worrying, breaking the cosmopolitan line. Signs of the universality of this new condition for theory are ubiquitous and, in Nathaniel Mackey's words, both pre-mature and post-expectant.[7] You have to give something up in desperate anticipation of the total loss at which we'll never arrive (those of

us, I mean, whose imaginations resist being policed by and in the refusal to pay noninstrumental attention to the thinking of the instrument). There's still something (t)here—the commodity's general theory of elsewhere. It comes from nothing, from nowhere, which is the real presence of our displacement, which is everywhere, in everything. You have to seek it in places that some might think unlikely and beware, in yourself, the effects of the kind of thinking that produces certain traditional ideas of unlikeliness.

At that point, as a function of its movement, you might begin to ask: Is consciousness, of necessity, national? Is necessarily national consciousness a state phenomenon? Can you be a person, can you have a story, can you have rights, can you do right, without a state? These questions, instantiating a kind of relay between G. W. F. Hegel's *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* and Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* approach a cluster of implications that are all bound up not only with the internal dynamics of the experience of consciousness but also with the modes of social organization within which what are understood to be those internal dynamics take form.[8] These questions are not meant to sanction the easy conflation of state and nation, even though they assume the intensity of their relation; rather, they are meant to allow their more rigorous separation. Maybe they mark the spot where the nation-in-dispersion renders the state inoperable. Certainly they occasion another question: What forms do the nation-in-dispersion, the family-in-dispersion, the facticity of natality *as* alienation, take? This ques- tion, instantiating a kind of relay between Arendt's *The Human Condition* and Orlando Patterson's *Slavery and Social Death* is, in turn, all bound up with the question concerning how enslavement delineates—in its attempt to regulate—an already given dispersion.[9] What if slavery is not the systematic relegation to natal alienation in/as/and dispersion but is, rather, the response to, and the attempt to regulate, them? What must be asserted here, with the greatest possible emphasis, is that the problem of the state emerges as a set of questions of travel that are, immediately, questions of study, as well, where we contemplate, while performing, the relation between dispersion and descent, descent and declivity, declivity and experiment, experiment and escape. It is not an accident that for the last two centuries all of the questions I have here been trying to approach have found their most fundamental articulation in and as the animated interval simultaneously linking and dividing pan-Africanism and black nationalism.[10]

Let's say that our study of and in displacement, in and through this interval, occurs in some region we are making and unmaking, the region of our making and unmaking, called the Atlantic World. The charting of this region under that name, in the name of some specific terms of order that naming instantiates, might be said to have begun with or in yet another relay, this one between *Slavery and Social Death* and Bernard Bailyn's *Voyagers to the*

West.[11] Though the movement between tragedy and triumph these texts enact is constantly broken—emphatically, and in anticipation, by Peter Linebaugh, when he resounds the anoriginal forces that made all the Atlantic mountains shake; or by Ronald. A. T. Judy when he shows how Euro-anthropological regulation (the failed protection of transcendental subjectivity's self-regard given in the racial projection of human life's self-dispossessive immanence) is solicited by a heterographic Afro-Arabic invitation to dance its way out of its constrictions—a paradigmatically exclusionary bipolarity to which Atlantic Studies is susceptible and which Patterson and Bailyn jointly embody remains online.[12] The multiplicity of forces, voices, in the hold of the ship, which is a language lab, which fact does not lessen but rather intensifies the ship's and the shippers' brutality, precisely in its fantastic confirmation of it, is where tran- scendence and immanence move in constantly corrosive orbit of one another. There are those who act as if the only way to speak or fathom or measure the unspeakable, unfathomable, immeasurable venality of the slavers is by way of the absolute degradation of the enslaved. But such calculation is faulty from the start insofar as we are irreducible to what is done to us, that we were and remain present at our own making, even in the hold of the ship, and that this making, that presence, this presence in that void, this fugitive avoidance in and of and out of nothing, nowhere, everything, everywhere, is inseparable from fantasy.

The geography of the old-new world continues as an extension of one pole, one stanchion: over the last two decades Paul Gilroy—moving only slightly less depressively than Patterson but in mutual echo of a certain expansion of Arendt, a certain reduction of Frantz Fanon, and the epiphenomenology of spirit that's laid down in their combination—misapprehends the void, the act of avoidance, as absence.[13] Cosmopolitanism is understood, in this annex to Arendt that is never quite errant enough, as having its origin and end in the claim of the citizen, the democratized sovereign, in such a way as to confirm the already given requirement that the relation of blackness to the nation- state be understood as analogous to that between a stubborn monolith and a finally irresistible solvent.[14] This problematic of mixture—of hybridity, if you will—is not at all to be reduced to a matter of miscegenation. What's at stake, rather, is how living outside or against the nation-state, when such an entity is understood to be the ground of a theory and practice of cosmopolitanism that simultaneously protects and undermines its sovereignty, is understood as the very form of deadly life. This is to say that insofar as such life, in its supposed fatality, is either posited, in being immeasurable and incalculable, as absence or slated for dissolution in being incorporated by the nation-state, it persists and subsists in a relation for and through which it can only signify nothing, sound and fury notwithstanding. Moreover, blackness, which is the name that has been assigned this *relative* nothingness, is often said now to

have been given most fully, as it were, in the African American example, which is manifest in and as this simultaneously melancholic and celebratory tendency to remain in the hold, as Frank B. Wilderson III has said, in echo of Mackey's song.[15] The interplay of study and enactment, contemplation and performance, which is given in that tendency, that displacement, with(in) which we are preoccupied, continues to elude us even in our inhabitation of it. For those who wish to leave this constancy of leaving without origin—the ones who keep looking for a home or a national or even international identity—the African American example is often understood to be both hegemonic and degraded. Perhaps this is because it is a certain distillate of this example—and it is Nahum

Chandler, in the inaugural attention that he pays to W. E. B. Du Bois, who makes it possible to think this exemplarity—that seems most emphatically to bear, with something that seems never quite close enough to embarrassment, the trace of the commodity and the weight of refusal, even when that trace disrupts commodification's valuative power, even when what is refused is what has been refused.[16] As Lindon Barrett brilliantly and rigorously shows, the critique of value and the refusal of national identity are desired even if the means and (musical) materiality by which they are achieved and refined are disavowed.[17] Certain blacks embody, somehow more than anyone, being on, which is to say subjection to, the market, which is given always in its contrapuntal relation to that braided, frayed refusal of what Bryan Wagner calls "being a party to exchange," within the context of an analysis that calls upon us precisely to consider how that refusal troubles the entire complex of subjection in the market that constitutes existence either in or out of exchange, either before or after "emancipation."[18] "Certain blacks [underneath the market] dig they freedom," tunneling through it in order to traffic in vindication and insurrection as if free movement were obligatory, as if exclusion were more desirable than power.[19] This is what Patterson figures as tragic, what Gilroy figures as moribund. Their investigation of the hold is always also a rejection of such sojourn, structured neither by fantasy nor flight but rather by some- thing situated at the nexus of value and fact, phenomenology and positivism, personhood and the state. Gilroy advances what looks and sounds like the immigrant's embrace of citizenship, bringing the Bailyn pole online at its re-initialization in and as Black Atlantic Studies. Recently, Kamari Maxine Clarke, in dialogue with a group of important contemporary scholars, including Michelle M. Wright, who move in "new directions for thinking diaspora," and in the service of a sharper analysis of the ways "diasporic humanitari- anism" (in its genetic relation to military humanism, national humanism, and national cosmopolitanism) is mobilized in the service of the ongoing "plunder of Africa," extends Gilroy's unfortunate romance with the nation-state precisely by refusing altogether—or, at least, altogether more quickly—the hold that Gilroy has never quite been able either to relinquish or escape.[20]

In "New Spheres of Transnational Formations: Mobilizations of Humanitarian Diasporas," Clarke works "to advance a reframing of black diasporic formations that rethinks the relationship between diasporas centered on contemporary postcolonial African states and other conceptions of African diasporic linkage whose boundaries exceed and often precede, the nation-state system itself."[21] In so doing, Clarke attends to postcolonial Afro-diasporic modes of being, thereby highlighting what Wright, in a response to and extension of Clarke entitled "Black in Time: Exploring New Ontologies, New Dimensions, New Epistemologies of the African Diaspora," calls "key differences between different Black communities." Those differences are obscured, Wright claims, when scholars apply one "closed," narrowly conceived and constrained epistemology "time and time again" to the richly differenti- ated field of global black social life. Wright is, therefore, encouraged by what she sees as Clarke's "move to decouple...a 'Middle Passage Epistemology,' which...is the dominant formation imagining, justifying and celebrating what has been termed the 'African' diaspora in the 20th century."[22] The verb *decouple* is crucial in Wright's formation. On the one hand, it appears to amplify Clarke's commitment to detaching "a new ontology of sub-Saharan Africa in crisis [from] African America"; on the other hand, what remains unclear in her interpretation and application of Clarke's work is not only what it is that "Middle Passage Epistemology" must be decoupled from but also how the reattachment of "sub-Saharan Africa in crisis to African America," which Clarke also seeks, is to be accomplished. There is something interesting and obscure about that which implies or evokes a decoupling whose partial object seems to instantiate its generality. It is as if that which must be decoupled from nothing in particular must, in fact, be decoupled from everything; or, deeper still, it is as if this particular call for the decoupling of "Middle Passage Epistemology" from, well, nothing, turns out to announce what it had meant to evoke. What work will this general decoupling have accomplished? And in whose service will such work have been done? Perhaps these questions concerning the general and already given decoupling that, according to Wright, corresponds to "Middle Passage Epistemology" can be addressed by returning to the precision of Clarke's

investment in detachment and reattachment. Given in full, Clarke's desire is

> to reevaluate the centrality of both trans-Atlantic slavery and race as the single most important problem of the West in the 20th century, in order to detach and reattach a new ontology of sub-Saharan Africa in crisis to African America. In the twenty-first century, it is not the color line that summons our urgent attention, but the crisis of death and global complicity to live and let die. The dilemma of various weakened African state polities whose significant economic and political decisions are brokered outside of the

> country with international donors and institutions, must be seen alongside diasporic survivors of slavery in the Americas whose ontological formation emerged from a pre-Westphalian order.[23]

The crux of a problematic convergence occurs here, first, in Clarke's misprision of Du Bois's conception of the color line, which he understood to be a global problematic within which the general relay between life and death was framed and adjudicated, and second, in the refusal to attend to the massive theoretical energy that Du Bois poured into both the idea and the materiality of African American exemplarity within that global problematic. Fortunately, Chandler offers a painstakingly brilliant reading of Du Bois's engagement with and embodiment of the anhegemonic exemplar whose historical specificities distill "the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea."[24] What Chandler shows, by way of the example of Du Bois's deployment of African American exemplarity, is precisely what Clarke's phrasing obscures: that African American reference to "our 'Africa' as the Africa of African American heritage without thinking about the 'Africa' of contemporary economic strife is part of the dialectic of things African" but not all of what African Americans contribute to that dialectic.[25] There is an open vision that is already given in Du Bois as antinational vantage. What is seen from and as this (dis)location lies beyond the paradoxes of national cosmopolitanism whose devolutionary update, diasporic humani- tarianism, Clarke seeks to criticize, rightly, but from within the constraints of the very Westphalian order that the idea of national cosmopolitanism helps to found and seeks to regulate. This other beholding, given in what is beheld, implies an anarchic, anarchronic, earthly apposition that, among other things, exposes the fact that the analytic capacities that produce and accompany the simple distinction between pre-Westphalian and Westphalian orders are insuf- ficient for the kind of analytic attention that Clarke and Wright desire.[26]

At stake is precisely what it is that the thought of middle passage, that remaining in the supposedly viewless confines of the hold, makes it possible to imagine and improvise. It's not just that there are flights of fantasy in the ship's hold but also that such fantasy calls into more refined and brutal existence every regulatory structure through which we identify the modernity of the world. The problem has to do, in the end, with the exhaustive deprivations—in their relation to the revolutionary forces—that mark the lived experience of stateless- ness, which is, before its exclusionary imposition, a general and inalienable sociopoetic insurgency. In other words, the operative distinction is neither between the postcolonial state and diaspora nor the (neo-)imperial state and diaspora; the problem is the relationship between the state, however it is conceived and instantiated, and statelessness. How do we inhabit and move in statelessness? How is statelessness not only an object but also a place of

study? The address of this question requires brushing up against a problematic implication. That implication is *not* that African American Studies bears the special responsibility of bracketing its own local concerns in the interest of a systemic analysis of the postcolonial state, an imperative that is underwritten by the assumption that certain kinds of attention paid to certain local conditions of black American social life not only imply but also enforce

fixed notions of blackness that exclude some who would seek to claim blackness as (inter) national identity. Rather, the implication is that African American Studies must ever more fully repress its own comportments toward the interplay of anticoloniality and statelessness in the interest of analytic devotion to the post- colonial (African) state. When questioning the value or necessity of attention to certain local conditions of and within the striated generativity of black social life in the United States (where the pitfalls of the consciousness of passage seem to have their greatest intensity) is given as a kind of methodological imperative for those in the advanced guard of professional Afro-diasporic intellectual life; when we are constrained to wonder how the most enduring modes and experience of statelessness, lived and enacted by those who are said now to have a pre-Westphalian ontology and epistemology, have come to signify not only the most powerful manifestation of the Westphalian state but, more generally, something that seems to show up for Clarke and Wright as a kind of willed, self-imposed, exclusionary form of identitarian stasis; perhaps it is because a choice has already been made, at the most general level, for political order over social insurgency.

The straight, deictically determined linearity implied by the distinction between pre-Westphalian and Westphalian delivers the brutal kick of a Hegelian historiographic and geographic cocktail, one designed to produce maximal effect by way of minimal flavor. This time, in the light of the state, which is manifest as deadly shade, Africa is a zone of relative advance. But what theoretical force is held in the ongoing generation of what is called the "pre-Westphalian"? What work does that force allow? Where did it come from? Is this a problematic of dialogue, as J. Lorand Matory, or retention, as Melville J. Herskovitz, would have it?[27] Or is the real issue the preservation of "the ontological totality" that Cedric Robinson indexes to black radicalism, which is given in general as the enactment of the refusal of the state and which is, as Laura Harris argues, to be found in every instance of "the aesthetic sociality of blackness," in every exorbitant local inhabitance of the motley crew that is instantiated by those whom Michel Foucault might also have called "prisoners of the passage."[28] Outside the history of sovereignty, self-determination, and their violent dispersion—that general and genocidal imposition of severalty, of the primacy and privacy of "home," that Theodore Roosevelt prescribed for the indigenous people of North America as if it held the pestilential increase of a Matherian blanket—blackness keeps moving in its Müntzerian way.

It does so in honor of the ways that the Peasant's War continues to disrupt the Peace of Westphalia, which it anticipates, whose brutalities it brings online in the way that insurgency always brings regulation online. Such combina- tions of precedence and fracture—in addition to the simple fact that the slave trade continued two centuries after the series of treaties signed in 1648 that initialized the Westphalian system—call severely into question any historical calculus that places the middle passage and its modes of study (as opposed to its epistemology) under the rubric of the "pre-Westphalian." However, under a Hegelian influence whose strenuous critique she elsewhere studies and extends as a mode of becoming (black), statelessness and nonarrival are objects of correction for Wright even as Clarke implies that adherence to the Peace of Westphalia, which is imagined to be applicable to Africa, whose pillage it foretells and propels, might guarantee the sovereignty of the postcolonial African state.[29]

Clarke calls for "a recognition of an ontology that is an extension of the modernity of state formation and the hierarchization of racial difference but that also represents a new node of shift in the formation of contemporary capi- talism."[30] That new node has to do with the fact that "the reality on the ground is that a significant component of governance issues in Africa are integrally tied to the international community" and that, moreover, these ties or linkages are both cutting against the grain and more deeply entrenching the old slave routes and their brutally modernizing impacts.[31] And, just as in the time of the slave trade, black migrants, in complex disruption of voluntarity and its opposite (along with sailors and traders of every stripe in markets both real and virtual, in ensembles of social relations and configurations of production that bend the bodies/corporations they justify and

trouble the states they instantiate), operationalize and administer the accumulations and dispersions of capital, labor, and resources that their flesh instantiates. This is an old new thing and the question is not only how to recognize but also how to overturn it. If a powerful and anticipatory countermovement emerges in/as passage, precisely as a theoretical practice of overturning, while "new regimes of supranational governance...cross-cut [and mirror] those of the earlier trans-Atlantic routes," then why would the proper response be further to displace that already given insurgency-in-displacement, particularly when it bears such rich resources for dealing with and in the dialectic of statelessness?[32] Perhaps the commitment to sovereignty, either as a bulwark against imperialism or as the basic form that diasporic identities take up, requires such displacement, which begins by positing the centrality of a range of anoriginal eccentricities. It is in this regard that it becomes possible and necessary to ask again how it is that within the Afro-diasporic frame blacks in the United States have come to stand in both for putatively pre-Westphalian statelessness and for the specifically and paradigmatically post-Westphalian potency of a particular state?

In order to address this question one must first acknowledge that in the case of the United States, in what many like to call the "post–civil rights era," not every black person bodies forth this seemingly impossible ante- state statism.[33] The ones who signify a statelessness that is infused with the American exception are the objects of a disavowal that is tellingly figured as expansion. In the interest of being "bigger than that," as filmmaker Thomas Allen Harris was once heard to put it, the black American intellectual field, by way of its own professional restraint, must singularly disregard itself and its own comportments and go on tour.[34] This process is predicated upon a model of the African diaspora that excludes and demonizes a certain figure of the African American whose precarity and supposedly pre-intellectual insistence upon a supposedly pre-intellectual and anticosmopolitan "authenticity" elicits various combinations of pity and disgust that are packaged in the language of policy and correction. When certain black American particularities are serially enjoined to turn from themselves, questions concerning the implications of such a turn for the articulation and enactment of the theory and practice of stateless social life must be raised. There is, moreover, a corollary set of inquiries that is just as urgent given that the diasporic turn can so easily bear that alignment of identitarian expansion, imperial acquisition, and humanitarian intervention upon which Clarke rightly trains her analytic attention. In this alignment, disavowal, concern, and censure are projected upon a certain figure of the African, as well, which requires us to consider how it is that those who live in and under the administrative force of the state as an idea and an ideal in Africa come to symbolize the precarity of African states within the international order. How does attention paid to failures of governance in African states, figured in turn as products of a supposedly failed international order, both structure and limit the attention that is paid to the theoretical practice of resis- tance to governance within and underneath those states? Is there another model of diasporic studies that might move through these constraints, limitations and modes of disregard in order to illuminate Pan-African insurgency and, more generally, blackness as an international antinational force?

Statelessness, precisely in its relation to the para-ontological arrangements of populations, is uncontained by the distinction between pre-Westphalian and Westphalian. Moreover, no appeal to physics in the interest of establishing the hierarchized co-presence of (the "ontologies" and "epistemologies" that attend) these orders is sufficient to the disorder to which they respond. At stake is not only a conception of ontology whose vagueness complements its narrowness and whose application to the general field of the colonized and the shipped seems untroubled by the attention Fanon paid to a lived experience that "prohibits any ontological explanation," but also an appeal to a notion of epistemology that valorizes measurement over measure and political possibility over social poesis.[35] This is to say, more precisely, that the narrowing of identitarian

possibility within an already given political and cultural framework might not be as great a concern as the ongoing

project of forming modes of general social organization that are compatible with what black folks already know and make. It still appears to be necessary, even within the field of black studies, to say that what those who remain in the hold know and make is not as simple as some would have us believe.

Once the problematic of statelessness comes into relief it quickly becomes necessary at least to consider that compensation for the deprivations that are visited upon the stateless are given in its maintenance and not in its eradication. Such consideration is the motive force of educational theorist Annette Henry's work, to whose supposedly primitive physics and sociality Wright condescends insofar as that work can be said to represent, at the level of its objects and its methods, the tendency of "many of the books of the Black Studies/African Diaspora canon...to serve the...function of offering Africans and peoples of African descent an enabling rather than disabling interpellation, interestingly enough, using the Middle Passage and slavery as our interpellative events."[36] In fact, Henry, who Wright acknowledges is the first to coin the term *middle passage epistemology,* offers an analytic that is insistently attuned to the problem- atic of the double—of the both/and—against the backdrop of which Wright's opposition of temporalities, as if the universe weren't complex enough to afford both classical and quantum mechanics each their own (un)folding, seems, at the very least, an unfortunate imprecision. Wright deploys this opposition in order to explain how it is that Henry's work is emblematic of a pervasive occlu- sion of "many other Black, diasporic identities" by those who are insufficiently advanced to relinquish middle passage epistemologies. Henry both studies and exemplifies this insufficiency, which I prefer to think of as something on the order of a superabundant exhaustion of normative conceptions of cultural and political identity. With the help of science journalist Dan Falk, Wright attempts to understand Henry's exhaustiveness by comparing it with Clarke's work. I quote her at some length.

> While Henry uses what physicists have called "A series time," "simply the everyday notion of time in terms of past, present and future," Clarke uses what they refer to as "B series time...[which] refers to fixed labels that we attach to specific moments in time...this is sometimes called the 'tenseless' view of time. The difference is loaded: contemporary theoretical physicists such as Lee Smolin, Lisa Randall, but also those over a century back, such as John McTaggart view "A series time" as at least deeply problematic...and at the most illusory, a trick of the mind because experiments in particle physics seem to indicate that time does not flow and, therefore, tenses of time exist only in the linguistic and psychological register, not the physical world....Simply put this is because "A series time" requires a fixed point of reference that allows

> one to then speak of the past, present and future, whereas "B series time" provides "exact coordinates," so to speak, which do not require a universal fixed point of reference.
>
> I raise this distinction to link Henry's definition of the "Middle Passage Epistemology"—a counter epistemology to allow a less harmful interpella- tion of African American female subjecthood (or "consciousness," as Henry terms it)—to my own definition, in which I also question the MPE's fixity in "A series" time. Henry uses terms such as "African American," "rites of passage," "hybridized practices" that assume fixed meanings accorded by the MPE. A Somali-American for example, is quite literally an African American but has trouble being interpellated by the MPE even in Henry's brief quote above—she is not determined by the Middle Passage, and may understand herself and be understood by her community as a woman at the age of 13, but it is unlikely Henry means "girls" must be 12 and under, and "rites of passage" in the Chicago African American community Henry studies will likely be different from those in the Somali community. Yet the reliance on "A series time" implicitly locates this hypothetical Somali-American wholly outside Henry's discourse, regardless as to whether Henry seeks this exclusion. In Clarke's article, by contrast, the invocation of "pre-Westphalian" and other "B series time" markers, quickly and clearly invokes all black communities because there are several points of entry rather than the fixed timeline of the Middle Passage Epistemology in which past, present and future can only be accessed by those willing and able to interpellate themselves through this epistemology.

"The "brief quote above" to which Wright refers is a passage from an essay Henry wrote in which she analyzes the "'Middle Passage' epistemology" mobi- lized by two black mothers in what she and they call the "spiritual education of their daughters."[37]

> The narrative of Mavis and Samaya evoked tensions produced at the intersections of living in American society as Black mothers and practitio- ners seeking a home pedagogy that resonated with their African-American heritage and traditions. As educators and as former students in American educational institutions, they mistrusted the mainstream system for its poor record of producing competent Black citizens. Thus, they sought alternatives. Their hybridized practices carried the hope of developing their daughters academically, emotionally and spiritually. Their insistence on the church and rites-of-passage programs for girls rested on their desire for a larger set of formative experiences in their daughters' lives than the curricular and philo- sophical orientation espoused either in public schools or at Malcolm X School. And, as mothers of pre-teen girls, they expressed, in veiled tones, a hope that

> these practices would protect their daughters against violent or regrettable situations specific to girls.[38]

For Wright, this kind of spiritual education exemplifies a mode of essentialist black study in the United States in which ideas of authenticity are mobilized in the service of "enabling rather than disabling interpellation."[39] The service it does explains, if not justifies, its simplicity, the purported fixity of its point of view. However, even in light of its invocation of "competent citizenship" as a goal, what is most striking, for me, is the alternative social cosmology that Henry illuminates (and Wright passes over in silence). The pedagogy Henry describes is one not only in which another world is prepared but also in which the already existing world is radically re-described. Henry suggests, by way of the intellectual work of the women she studies, that the universe is "ambidextrous epistemological terrain" and, in fact, the maternal "progressive pedagogy" to which she attends acknowledges "reality as 'non-unitary," thereby practicing "a 'double agenda,' negotiating among societal contradictions."[40]

One such contradiction centers on the problematic of interpellation, which, "interestingly enough," in the classic form within which Louis Althusser elaborates it, concerns the ways that state apparatuses produce, insofar as they position, subjects.[41] Wright's diction implies a level of voluntarity within the interpellative scene that Althusser wouldn't recognize. In Wright's formula- tions, people "interpellate themselves" or have "trouble being interpellated" by "epistemologies" that remain unanalyzed as ideological state apparatuses or, for that matter, by way of any alternative analytic. One is forced to consider that Wright's understanding of becoming a subject/citizen is that it is a process of elective naturalization that can be defined along the lines of Bailyn's trium- phalist narrative of the "voyagers to the West," thereby going against the grain of Clarke's attempts to deconstruct the opposition of imposition and voluntarity. Consider, however, against the grain of both Clarke and Wright, that middle passage is far more accurately understood, as Du Bois knew and aggressively and ceaselessly maintained, as the interpellative event of modernity in general. Implicit in this is that interpellation is troubling; that it is to be put in profound, existential trouble. Moreover, the anarchic epistemology of passage is the history of a general troubling, a general multiplication, of the voice, as Kamau Brathwaite asserts and affirms.[42] The cryptanalytic state voice is worried in the direction of the unheard while the cryptographic voice of the stateless is synthesized into the open secret that is Henry's object and method of study. The deictic force of the state's interpellative call, which is supposed to let you know not only who but also where you are, is issued forth in and from the voice of the fixed coordinate. The sound of the teacher who functions as what Augusto Boal calls "the cop in the head," or the cop who functions as what Boal (or Paolo Freire) might have called the teacher/banker in the head, is

precisely what black mothers like Mavis and Samaya—whose work in the field of black studies Henry approaches by way of a celebratory analytic and whose supposedly unsophisticated sense of time Wright critically laments—are not trying to hear.[43] They resonate with and in that anoriginary trouble that calls interpellative trouble into its own troubled being (where being is understood as the regulation of living). They are concerned with what other sounds and soundings are available to those who remain in passage, in the ship's hold, in the hole, in the brokered, broken, breaking whole. Wright's critique and Clarke's intervention, "interestingly enough," seem to be structured by the desire for another interpellative event; the one that remains readily available is precisely that which Althusser describes. We are left, again, to consider that the "the crisis of death and global complicity to live and let die" is an effect of citizenship and not its absence or even its incompetence.[44]

With regard to both the pre-Westphalian and the Westphalian orders, it behooves us to contemplate the notion that the regulation of statelessness is the (primary and proper) function of states; that it is the interpellative work of state apparatuses, precisely in calling the citizen/subject into being, to regulate statelessness. The thought of the color line remains a potent instrument for thinking both the interplay and the divergence of statelessness and citizenship. The prophetic aspiration of "middle passage epistemology" is serially given in the radical contretemps of its (dis)articulations of stateless flesh and the bones of the citizen as they crack and crumble in the parched atmosphere of sovereignty's violent democratization. It's not enough to "insure that 'Africa' is more than a symbolic holding place for African American identities"; what's at stake is how the general interdiction of Afro-diasporic identity makes possible a social irruption through the fateful, fatal coupling of politics and identity that constitutes modernity, of which the middle passage is both the beginning and the end.[45] People might have trouble accepting their interpellation by the middle passage and its attendant modes of insurgent thought but the interpella- tion goes on apace and in general, whether one is Somali American or Swedish American or some combination of the two. Moreover, throughout Henry's long intellectual engagement with the teachers and students of the Malcolm X school in Chicago, and in her other work, which focuses on African American, African Canadian, and Caribbean immigrant teachers and students, whose interpellation by the epistemology of passage includes their own sojourns north into the United States and Canada, she makes it impossible for a careful reader not to consider that the simple distinction Wright makes between the African American community and the Somali community—directly after asserting that a Somali American is "quite literally an African American"—is another highly motivated imprecision. The time of the middle passage is not fixed; it is the brutal *ekstasis* of a global condition, as Henry and Dionne Brand, Gayl Jones and Julie Dash, M. Jacqui Alexander and Grace Nichols, M. NourbeSe

Philip and Lorna Goodison, among a host of others both in and out of the hemispheric configuration of the African American, constantly assert. The middle passage is and opens onto an alternative warp, enacting its own singular rupture of the space-time continuum, of a transcendental aesthetic that lays down the terms and conditions of possibility for the modern subject of knowl- edge and power. Having been abandoned to ceaseless passage the prisoner, the refugee, the black student is enjoined to enjoy that abandon wherein stateless- ness is imagined and enacted as a kind of aninterpellative shift where what it is to have been hailed is also always what it is to frustrate calculation in defiance of the state as ontological, epistemological, and political condition.

This experimental invagination, this slit or envelope in space-time, is given not so much as multiple points of entry but rather as the division and collec- tion of entry as such so that Anna Julia Cooper's resonant phrase "where and when I enter" is properly understood as a black feminist announcement and enunciation of quantum reality at both the cosmological and the subatomic levels, where and when both where and when are beside themselves, as intrications of compulsive, propulsive, percussive, percaressive, anarecursive, anaprogressive clearing; as no room, no place, amenity's absence, it's out of phase, nonstandard noncontemporaneity, "where" and "when" the laws of (meta)physics break down in hapticality's terrible, beautiful intensities. This syncopic feint and faked book, this

unbooked, annotated, immanent praes- thesis, does not impose the implication that physics is wrong to be concerned with the theory of everything; it's just that we must also be concerned with the theory of nothing. The interplay of physics and blackness is precisely at this intersection—this mutual sexual cut—of the theory of nothing and the theory of everything. And who are the theorists of everything and nothing, everywhere and nowhere? Refugees, flightlings, black things, whose dissident passage through understanding is often taken for a kind of lawless freedom.

It is precisely in the interest of such theory that one looks forward with great anticipation to Wright's address of this problematic in her work on the physics of blackness even as one considers that what's really at stake, here, is the blackness of physics. Black enlightenment, the dark *mater*iality of another way of thinking the universe, is how I understand this echoic anepistemology of passage, this "pedagogy of crossing" to which Clarke, at least, still manages to gesture.[46] It is the thought that emerges from the experience of time itself having been put in motion. As Wright knows, it is one of the very theoretical physicists she cites in her response to Clarke, Lee Smolin, whose account of quantum physics allows and asks us to consider that the cessation of historical movement to which Hegel consigns Africa is, in fact, nothing other than a belated and compensatory projection of the geometric and geographic seizure to which Descartes consigned not only European thought but Europe itself. Smolin appears, in my understanding, to

resist that spatialization of time. He seeks to "*unfreeze time*—to represent time without turning it into space," a transformation the fixed coordinates of the graph imposed upon the straight-ahead discontinuity of the timeline, whose minimalist suggestion of motion's arrowed, uncontained endlessness can at least be said to have figured an escape from the graph's exacting incarceration of curvature.[47] But this is not about preferring the latter to the former. Wright challenges what Heidegger calls the vulgar concept of time, and seemingly as a matter of course it is a certain figure of the African American, in the fallen, ordinary sociality of a quite popular configuration of her within some newly arisen subdivisions of "public" intellectual life, who constitutes the bad example; but what Smolin is trying to cut is what he calls "background dependent theories," such as the one that Kant, by way of Newton, codifies under the rubric of the transcendental aesthetic.[48] Einstein's general theory disrupts that background, disrupts its sanctioning of a highly restrictive mode of representation, precisely in the experience/performance of dynamic, interactive fields which I will call, by way of Darby English but against his grain, "black representational space," a field whose intricacies and intima- cies even quantum mechanics has yet to approach.[49] Black representational space is the hold of the ship. Black representational space is a language lab. Strong and weak interaction not just in constraint but in exhaustion, where the submerged (if not subatomic) and the cosmological converge. That space is nowhere or is, at least not there but elsewhere, accessible through flight and/or fantasy but not calculation. Not there is where we remain, in motion. An exact coordinate is, it seems to me, what Wright desires, a home in which (pre-)Westphalian has some universal meaning, defining our differential commonness by way of that putatively straight Euro-spatialization of time and Euro-temporalization of space that used to be known as imperialism. But "where we were wasn't there. The world was ever after elsewhere, no way where we were was there."[50] What if space-time, the transcendental aesthetic, and the coherence/sovereignty it affords/imposes, is an effect rather than a condition of experience? This is the question that the submerged connector or conductor, that the interplay between nothing and everything, nowhere and everywhere, never and always, coalescence and differentiation, allows us to ask. B-series? B Sirius. Actually enter into the tortuous, torturous chamber of horrors and wonders that constitute serial form, the seriality of our forma- tion, the brutally beautiful medley of carceral intrication, this patterning of holds and of what is held in the holds' phonic vicinity (as disappearance in/ and expanse, hole, whole, blackness). So that a certain circling or spiraling Mackey speaks of suffers brokenness and crumpling, the imposition of irra- tional, terribly rationalized angles, compartments bearing nothing but breath and battery in hunted, haunted, ungendered intimacy. Is there a kind of propulsion, through compulsion, that ruptures both recursion and advance?

What is the sound of this patterning? What does such apposition look like? What remains of eccentricity after the relay between loss and restoration has its say or song?

The atrocities of national cosmopolitanism, of Afro-diasporic military humanism, are terrible and to be feared and fought, as Clarke asserts, but neither by way of a disavowal, or even a redoubled displacement, of the middle passage and its already marginal modes of thought, nor by way of an embrace of the very Westphalian claims of and upon sovereignty that justify the ongoing exercise of neo-imperial power. Nonstate thought is more crucial than ever and the question is this: Where is it held, most securely, in the open, in trust, as an undercommon resource? If the middle passage is a condition of its transport that is not just one among others, then it is the ongoing exercise of certain modes of statelessness that are its reservoir. What if what remains of value in Afro-American thought and life is the example of life in statelessness and not at all some supposedly triumphant emergence into citizenship? Exemplarity, here, does not bespeak exclusiveness. What emerges as decisive is an accident of history—the "unlikely" convergence of deprivation and privilege—that requires us to ask how we can think the centrality of a radical and irreducible eccentricity in and of black studies. Just as Clarke sometimes seems to repress the way that the color line organizes the sovereign operations that structured the violent "peace" of Westphalia and the viciousness of its current biopolitical permutations, so does Wright sometimes seem to join most of the modern world in forgetting that the middle passage is its condition of possibility. Moreover, the color line marks the immeasurable contours and incalculable duration of a global thing, a world event, which disrupts whatever dream of sovereignty emerges in the opposition of, and in opposition to, things and events. Along and in constant transgression of that line, blackness places a kind of pressure on identity that identity cannot withstand. Passage, itself, moves through the narrow straits of epistemology and ontology. Epistemology and ontology are, at the same time, in a complex ensemble of times, in a radical dislocation of time, lost in passage. Out of joint, where the joint is jumpin', refugees study the sacred profanities and eloquent vulgarities of passage in order to articulate the earth at the end of the world.[51]

In Clarke's critique of the structures of inclusion and imposition that mark the spread of the Westphalian system to Africa, she attempts to detach sovereignty from what appears to be the inconsistency of its founding paradigm. But what if the problem is not the Westphalian betrayal or curtailment of the sovereignty it instantiates and is supposed to defend? What if the problem is sovereignty as such? What if the problematic she investigates is best understood, along lines that Denise Ferreira da Silva brilliantly and rigorously explores, as the violent cunning, the brutal ruse, of self-determination?[52] What if, in turn, as she suggests, blackness, which is to say black study, is an ongoing and inaugural

violence to or indetermination of self? What if what's at stake, finally, for Clarke is a way to think, in the necessity of thinking, the relation between what she calls the pre-Westphalian and what she appears to want but does not explicitly name the post-Westphalian? Then, the validity of Clarke's work will have been mani- fest most clearly in the demand to imagine with the utmost precision, within an absolute necessity of misunderstanding, the nature of this extra-Westphalian, paraontological, anaepistemological insovereignty in its movement in and as radical disarticulation, or even general decoupling, if Wright's grammar is correct in its implications. Clarke appears to believe that the current dimensions of black suffering in Africa preclude any attendance upon certain spooky actions at a distance that occur within the sub-Westphalian social field. But perhaps the imperative isn't to pay attention to blacks in Africa from their or its own standpoint rather than that of the self-absorbed and all-absorbing, insular but enveloping, blacks of the (non-)African diaspora, particularly as they are mani- fest in the prison of anarchic versioning that is called the United States, where diaspora is enacted and repressed with equal extremity. Perhaps the imperative is, rather, to pay attention to blackness in and by way of the displacement that it embraces and defies. I would agree, I hope, with Wright and Clarke, on the necessity of our centrifugitive task, which is to

look for it everywhere.[53]

Notes

1. "*Die schärfsten Dialektiker sind die Flüchtlinge. Sie sind Flüchtlinge infolge von Veränderungen und sie studieren nicht als Veränderungen.*" Bertolt Brecht, "*Dänemark oder Der Humor über Die Hegelische Dialektik,*" in *Flüchtlingsgespräche* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1961), 112. Translation quoted in Martin Jay, *Permanent Exiles: Essays on the Intellectual Migration from Germany to America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 28. 2. Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim," trans. Allan W. Wood, in *Anthropology, History, and Education (The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant),* ed. Günter Zöller and Robert B. Louden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 118, 112, 114. 3. See Jacques Derrida, "Onto-theology of National Humanism (Prolegomena to a Hypothesis)," *Oxford Literary Review* 14 (1992): 3–23; and Noam Chomsky, *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 2002). 4. Asexualization often denotes sterilization and I mean to evoke that sense here since what's at stake is not only a regulation of sexual difference but also standard- ized control over social and sexual reproduction. 5. "Aboard the *Queen Mary II*: Édouard Glissant in Conversation with Manthia Diawara," trans. Christopher Winks, *Journal of Contemporary African Art* 28 (Spring 2011): 5.

6. See Walter Rodney, *The Groundings with My Brothers* (London: Bogle-L'Ouverture, 1975); and Kamau Brathwaite, *Contradictory Omens: Cultural Diversity and Integration* (Mona, Jamaica: Savacou, 1974), 64. 7. See Nathaniel Mackey, *Atet A.D.,* (San Francisco: City Lights, 2001), 118–19. 8. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 275–380; and Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1951, 1973), 267–302. 9. See Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958, 1998); and Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985). 10. Space and time do not permit me to approach even a gesture toward the implications that emerge from reading certain passages of Arendt's that indicate some commerce between "the fact of natality, in which the faculty of action is ontologically rooted," the unobservable insurgency of *animal laborans,* and "the disappearance of the sensually given world, the transcendent world... and with it the possibility of transcending the material world in concept and thought." Unobservable things, in their fugitive uprising, their runaway digging, have been found to perform such vanishing in the age of quantum mechanics; on the other hand, "serious slave rebellions" are, for Arendt, striking in their absence in ancient and modern times, because when it comes to the social life of the enslaved, how they felt and feel (about) each other, if Patterson is to be believed, there is no data though even if there were it would have no purchase in the "realm of human affairs." Moreover, the ones described as alienated from their natality, when Patterson is read in light of Arendt's influence, are not only detached from heritage and patrimony but also from that capacity "for distinction and hence for action and speech" that "can bestow upon human affairs faith and hope." What remains to be seen and heard, in what is supposed to be the absence of rebellion, is the material that eludes man, that escapes (in) the experiment, remaining, as the incalculable, immeasurable miracle that ends, in order to begin, the world. It is the slave revolt, in all seriousness, that puts this interval in play. See Arendt, *The Human Condition,* 215, 247, 285–89; and Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death,* 11. 11. See Bernard Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the*

Eve of the Revolution (New York: Knopf, 1986). 12. See Peter Linebaugh, "All the Atlantic Mountains Shook," *Labour/La Travail* 10 (1982): 87–121; and Ronald A. T. Judy, *(Dis)Forming the American Canon: African-Arabic Slaver Narratives and the Vernacular* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993). 13. See Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993) and *Darker than Blue: On the Moral Economies of Black Atlantic Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

14. See Melinda Cooper and Angela Mitropoulos, "In Praise of Usura," *Mute*, May 27,

2009, October 6, 2009. http://www.metamute.org/content/in_praise_of_usura. 15. See Frank B. Wilderson III, *Red, White, &*

Black: Cinema and the Structure of U. S. Antagonisms (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), xi; and Nathaniel Mackey, "On Antiphon Island," in *Splay Anthem* (New York: New Directions, 2006), 64–65. 16. See Nahum Dimitri Chandler, "The Figure of the X: An Elaboration of the Du Boisian Autobiographical Example," in *Displacement, Diaspora, and Geographies of Identity*, ed. Smadar Lavie and Ted Sweedenburg (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 235–72, and "The Figure of W. E. B. Du Bois as a Problem for Thought," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 6, no. 3 (2006): 29–55. 17. Lindon Barrett, *Blackness and Value: Seeing Double* (Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press, 1998). 18. Bryan Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace: Black Culture and the Police Power After Slavery*

(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 1. 19. Art Ensemble of Chicago, *Certain Blacks,* 1970, 2005, Verve B00008S7JX.

Compact disc. 20. See *Transforming Anthropology* 18, no. 1 (2010): 48–79. The forum also includes

responses to Clarke written by Jean Muteba Rahier and Paul Tiyambe Zeleza. 21. Kamari Maxine Clarke, "New Spheres of Transnational Formations: Mobilizations

of Humanitarian Diasporas," *Transforming Anthropology* 18, no. 1 (2010): 51. 22. Michelle M. Wright, "Black in Time: Exploring New Ontologies, New Dimensions, New Epistemologies of the African Diaspora," *Transforming Anthropology* 18, no. 1 (2010): 70. 23. Clarke, "New Spheres," 49. 24. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: The Modern Library, 2003), 15. 25. Kamari Clarke, "Response by Author," *Transforming Anthropology* 18, no. 1

(2010): 79. 26. For more on the concept of anarchrony see Tom Sheehan, "Anarchy and Anarchrony: Spatio-Temporality and Framing in Joyce, Proust, and Rhys," unpublished ms. 27. See Melville J. Herskovitz, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (New York: Harper, 1941); and J. Lorand Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion: Tradition, Transnationalism, and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005). 28. See Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 171; Laura Harris, "What Happened to the Motley Crew: C. L. R. James, Hélio Oiticica, and the Aesthetic Sociality of Blackness," *Social Text* 112 (2012): 49–75; and Michel Foucault, *History of Madness*, trans. Jonathan Murphy and Jean Khalfa (London: Routledge, 2006), 11. 29. See Michelle M. Wright, *Becoming Black: Creating Identity in the African Diaspora*

(Durham: Duke University Press, 2004). 30. Clarke, "Response," 79.

31. Ibid. 32. Clarke, "New Spheres," 58. 33. Here, I borrow and abuse a phrase of Ruth Wilson Gilmore's. See her *Golden Gulag: Prison, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 245. Gilmore brilliantly analyzes how California is an innovator in the process by which the state is made to grow precisely by way of the promise of its eventual shrinkage and how the prison is the exemplary theater wherein this paradox is played out, with blacks forced to populate the stage, as the living enfleshment of the very state that incarcerates them and which is enlarged as a result of their confinement. This same black flesh, and this is no accident, is made to stand in for a similarly tangled ensemble of anti-state statist desires precisely insofar as it is understood to exist, as it were, in a condition that is before the state. 34. *É Minha Cara*/*That's My Face,* DVD, directed by Thomas Allen Harris (2001);

New York: Fox Lorber Home Video, 2004. 35. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks,* trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove,

2008), 90. 36. Wright, "Black in Time," 72. 37. Annette Henry, "'There's salt-water in our blood': the 'Middle Passage' Epistemology of Two Black Mothers Regarding the Spiritual Education of their Daughters," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 19, no. 3 (2006): 340. See also, among Henry's prolific scholarly/creative writing, "Growing Up Black, Female and Working Class: A Teacher's Narrative," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (1995): 279–305; "African Canadian Women Teachers' Activism: Recreating Communities of Caring and Resistance," *The Journal of Negro Education* 61, no. 3 (1992): 392–404; and "A wha' dem a go on wid? (Student Resistance in a Doctoral Seminar on Black Feminist Thought," *Frontiers* 16, no. 1 (1996): 27. 38. Henry, "Salt-water," 340. Quoted in Wright, "Black in Time," 72. 39. Wright, "Black in Time," 72. 40. Henry, "Salt-water," 334, 332. 41. Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays,* trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127–86. 42. See Kamau Brathwaite, *Roots* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993). 43.

See Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed*, trans. Charles A. McBride (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1993); and Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 1970). 44. Clarke, "New Spheres," 49. 45. Clarke, "Response," 79. 46. See M. Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual*

Politics, Memory, and the Sacred (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). 47. Lee Smolin, *The Trouble with Physics: The Rise of String Theory, The Fall of a Science,*

and What Comes Next (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006), 257.

48. For his formulation of "*[d]as vulgäre Zeitverständnis*" see Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit,* Sechzehnte Auflage (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1986), 426; and Smolin, *The Trouble with Physics*, 38–53. 49. Darby English, *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness* (Cambridge: MIT Press,

2007), 27–70. 50. Mackey, "On Antiphon Island," 64. 51. See Ed Roberson, *To See the Earth Before the End of the World* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2010). Having done so, ask if the earth can survive the world. 52. See Denise Ferreira da Silva, "No-Bodies: Law, Raciality, and Violence," *Griffith*

law Review 18 (2009): 212–36. 53. See Elizabeth Alexander, "Today's News," *The Venus Hottentot* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1990), 51. Having done so, ask if blackness is (a) color? Having done so, ask if black(ness) is (another) country.