COLONIAL THEOLOGY: JOHN LOCKE, JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU, CHARLES DARWIN AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE COLONIAL-CAPITALIST WORLD SYSTEM, 1500-1900

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ABSTRACT

My dissertation examines the relationship between the theological political and temporality in the constitution of the colonial-capitalist world system from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth century. World systems and postcolonial approaches to colonial expansion have often reduced questions of theology to a discursive feature of producing difference through the binary frame of self/other in order to justify a will to power, territory, and capital accumulation. My dissertation argues that the theocentric epistemic tradition of commensurability and resemblances structured by theological temporal formations have played a large role in colonial expansion, and can be better understood by applying the decolonial concept of coloniality to illustrate how theology, political economy and philosophy form plural points of enunciation for the constitution of the colonial-capitalist world system. What is distinctive about this project is that I bring together world systems theory, postcolonial theory and theological political perspectives under a decolonial approach in order to highlight the importance of epistemology in the establishment of a global hierarchical system that produces and locates Western knowledge, cosmology and spirituality over non-Western forms. This dissertation, therefore, outlines a methodological trajectory that does not instrumentalize the theological to a materialist rendition of capitalist accumulation, colonial expansion and conquest. Rather, I will seek to characterize how capital, colonialism and theology were entwined, negotiated and expressed in often contradictory ways through the writings of some key European thinkers.

By locating the work of Locke, Rousseau and Darwin within the theological matrices of coloniality, I challenge their assumed universal claims to knowledge and prescriptive truth

claims while not reducing their work to a singular structure of determination. Rather, I explore the polyvalent and historically grounded points of enunciation and tension that enabled their particular forms of thought to be made possible. By accounting for the theological and temporal inscriptions of coloniality, I seek to uncover the secular assumptions embedded in dominant accounts regarding the constitution of the human that is inscribed within the hierarchical structure of the colonial-capitalist world system, and to open up new ways in which to conceptualize decolonal forms of resistance.

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My mother Amina Kolia remains the greatest inspiration to this work, her critical brilliance in recalling a memory of Cape Town and how history is bound with the present is inscribed within this on-going project. Her critical defiance has always been an inspiration and something often misunderstood. I am truly blessed to be raised by such a brilliant woman and someone with a deep sense of compassion. She has taught me the value of trying to struggle to uphold the right principal regardless if it does not benefit me or if others do not acknowledge it. Her everyday actions, let alone the history that I have gathered from her stories, have taught me the value of small kindnesses.

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the process. Her ability to turn my contributions in class into positive critical reflections and her strong critiques of my writing are greatly appreciated. Finally, thanks to Radhika Mongia for her rigorous teaching approach and her commitment to pushing me to trace an argument with patience and care, rather than seeking to dismiss positions I felt uncomfortable with.

After feeling rather hopeless about the ability to start this project and finally complete it has resulted in mixed emotions. I feel the inability to discuss the depth of the ideas to those closest to me and feel further abstracted from some "everyday" that I am trying to explore in greater historical depth. I only hope that I this work can somehow benefit those who seek to continually uncover the histories that remain buried-alive.

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Introduction

> Alexander, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to the illustrious sovereigns, our very dear son in Christ, Ferdinand, king, and our very dear daughter in Christ, Isabella, queen of Castile, Leon, Aragon, Sicily, and Granada, health and apostolic benediction…We have indeed learned that you, who for a long time had intended to seek out and discover certain islands and mainlands remote and unknown and not hitherto discovered by others…you, with the wish to fulfill your desire, chose our beloved son, Christopher Columbus, a man assuredly worthy and of the highest recommendations and fitted for so great an undertaking, whom you furnished with ships and men equipped for like designs, not without the greatest hardships, dangers, and expenses, to make diligent quest for these remote and unknown mainlands and islands through the sea, where hitherto no one had sailed…wherein dwell very many peoples living in peace, and, as reported, going unclothed, and not eating flesh. Moreover, as your aforesaid envoys are of opinion, these very peoples living in the said islands and countries believe in one God, the Creator in heaven, and seem sufficiently disposed to embrace the Catholic faith and be trained in good morals.[1]

On May 4th, 1493 Pope Alexander VI issued the papal bull *Inter caetera*, which claimed spiritual authority and jurisdiction over the New World[2] and the souls of its inhabitants for the Catholic Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella. This bull forms a constellation of ecclesiastical communiqués concerning the New World and Portuguese and Spanish; namely, the *Tratado de Tordesilla* of 1497, and the *Requerimiento* of 1512 that claimed temporal dominion of the papacy over the New World and the souls that dwelled therein.[3] Meanwhile, Atlantic mercantile trade circuits had been forming between 1250 and 1350 that were extended by Portuguese prince Henry the Navigator (1395-1460) who, upon "discovering" unknown lands, gained endorsement by Pope

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[1] Pope Alexander VI, "Inter caetera," 1493, <http://www.nativeweb.org/pages/legal/indig-inter-caetera.html>

[2] Indeed the "New World" including the "Americas" was not "discovered", rather as Walter Mignolo suggests was an *invention* produced through colonial expansion of Western Latin Christian knowledge, cosmology and institutions. For further reading see, Walter Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*, Blackwell, 2005.

[3] Mignolo, Walter, *The Idea of Latin America*, Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005, pp. 30

Nicholas V's *Romanus Pontifex* (1455) to advance Catholicism.[4] These interrelated theological-political processes index the entanglement between faith, land possession and conversion under the yoke of colonial expansion and conquest.

What is important about the language of the *Inter caetera* is that the peoples dwelling in these hitherto unknown lands were not conceptualized as racial Others through a modernist dehumanized epistemological structure that would authorize discourses of biological evolutionary taxonomies organized by physiognomic difference. Rather, they were apprehended under a theocentric epistemological tradition that licensed a discourse of similitude and resemblance: Indigenous peoples were held to live in peace, and they were said to believe in one God that was recognizable and translatable to the medieval theocentric epistemic tradition, or what Sylvia Wynter has called *non-secular medieval Latin Christian theocentric sociogeny*.[5] Subsequent papal bulls would reiterate the same notion of human resemblance vis-à-vis the Indigenous inhabitants of the New World – Pope Paul III's 1537 bull *Sublimis Deus* observed, "the Indians are true men." Hence, a key concern of Europeans in the wake of colonial expansion was how to increase the truth of the Christian faith, save the soul of the non-Christian and bring back the deviated pagan soul into the fold of divine provenance. In this reading then, peoples of the New World were not seen as inhuman Others through a presumed self/other structure of difference, rather they were apprehended as human candidates for conversion to Catholic Christianity under an incorporative schema of theological salvation.

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[4] Ibid
[5] Wynter, Sylvia, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument," The New Centennial Review, 3(3), Fall 2003, pp. 266-7

This is not to suggest, however, that ecclesiastical injunctions prevented "true men" of the New World from being dutifully mutilated, ceremoniously immolated and triumphantly vanquished as an enslaved curiosity and labour force. Rather, the very impulse to bring wayward pagans back into the divinely circumscribed dominion of Biblical monogenesis resulted in placing New World peoples in an impossible position: salvation through conversion or death. As "human" candidates for conversion, Indigenous peoples were obliged to accept the gospel and its dissemination peacefully, or, resist, and be cast as rebellious candidates for destruction.

That Amerindians were apprehended as "human" through a theocentric lineage of similitude and resemblance offers a space to examine their largely tepid reception vis-à-vis Europe. Before 1502 over three thousand miles of South America's coastline was explored, and yet Margaret Hodgen observes that this "made relatively little impression on Europe."[6] Surprisingly, few detailed accounts of either Indigenous peoples or the natural environment were produced about the Americas. It was only over the first half of the sixteenth century that the most prominent publications concerning the New World were generated. For instance, Amerigo Vespucci – whose very name would be augmented to anoint hitherto unknown lands as "America" – penned letters that produced the first noteworthy declaration that the Americas was not an extension of Asia, Hernan Cortez's *Cartas de relacion* (1522), Peter Martyr's *De orbe Novo* (1530) was the first "history" of the New World, Francisco de Oviedo's *Historia general y natural de las*

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[6] Hodgen, Margaret, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 104-5, quoted from Seth, Vanita , *Europe's Indians: Producing Racial Difference, 1500-1900*, Durham & London: Duke University Press, pp. 37

Indias (1535) and Francisco de Vitoria's treatise *On the Indies* (1539) were all only published within a half-century following the so-called discovery of the New World.[7]

It took over fifteen years before Columbus's travelogues were translated to English, and the first *Encyclopedia* published in 1751 only devoted about a quarter of a page (about fifty lines) to the "Americas", while "Alsace" was accorded over eighteen times the space. Surprisingly then, published works concerning the New World was quite limited, while between 1480 and 1609, about four times as many works were focused upon Asia and Turkey as opposed to America. Similarly, in sixteenth century France, there were over twice as many publications devoted to Muslim practices than on Africa and America combined.[8] Indeed, these numbers suggest the intense anxiety Europe held vis-à-vis the "Islamic threat", whereas Indigenous peoples were hardly met with such vociferous preoccupation. Accordingly, Vanita Seth observes, "It is difficult to speak the language of otherness when the other is virtually absent from the discourses of the self."[9]

This is not to suggest, however, that there was no curiosity about the New World and its inhabitants, as Christopher Columbus and other adventurers returned to the Old-World with marvelous and exotic "possessions" that were paraded throughout European cities and towns. For instance, flora and fauna were on display to the European gaze, in addition to "strange" enslaved Indigenous peoples adorned with paint and bizarre forms of dress. However, Columbus's letters and other accounts had little to remark about Indigenous peoples, nor was much interest in accounting for differences in Indigenous cultures. What is important to note is that despite what would seem as an extraordinary

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[7]Seth, op. cit. 37
[8] Ibid, 38
[9] Ibid

event of the existence of a "New World", this news seems to have met with an ambivalent attitude by many people in Europe.

One could suggest that in the initial decades following the Age of Exploration that the New World was thought to be an extension of the East – it is reported Columbus died believing this. Further, it could be said that the so-called discovery of a New World represented such a massive cognitive challenge to established thought, and to a largely illiterate lay population, that time was needed to digest its magnitude. Indeed, to be considered an accomplished and erudite scholar meant knowledge of a limited set of canonical texts: Ptolemy's geography, Euclid's geometry, Aristotle's politics, ethics, logics and science, and Lombard's theology among few others.[10] What is important to note is that knowledge production vis-à-vis the Americas in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century was limited because techniques of instituting colonial rule took time to consolidate. As such, power was not configured through power-knowledge technologies associated with modern forms of governmentality via archival knowledge systems, anthropological catalogues and other forms of representational formations of power that index complex modern disciplinary forms of colonial regulation underpinned by universal global historical narratives of progress, biological evolutionary sequences, and racial schemas of difference.[11]

The central argument that I pursue in this dissertation is that in the wake of colonial expansion, European knowledge was not mediated by a singular point of enunciation via a binary of self/other in order to simply justify a will to power, territory, and capital accumulation. Rather, I seek to identify the often competing and contradictory

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[10] Ibid
[11] Ibid, 40

logics, sensibilities and reasoning for apprehending difference and authorizing colonial expansion. Using Foucault's periodization scheme, I pay particular attention to how the Renaissance (fifteenth and sixteenth century), the Classical Age (seventeenth and eighteenth century) and the Romantic (nineteenth century) epistemic traditions vis-à-vis human difference were entangled with Christian theology – specifically Western European Catholic and Protestant forms.

I seek to complicate the narrative that presumes European representations of difference were always organized by some form of opposition through a self/other binary that may have first been introduced by a Greek/barbarian[12] form, and then was simply reinscribed as Christian/pagan and then subsequently displaced by European white/non-European racial Other. Consequently, this presumed framework of self/other is presented as a stable transhistorical phenomenon that is rearticulated to accommodate various colonial "encounters" in order to justify an underlying motivation for power, territorial expropriation and resource extraction.[13]

Consequently, Western European forms of Christianity, I held, was simply a justificatory moral narrative to placate the violence of colonialism, and was deployed to resignify acts of violence such that those acts were rendered moral deviations from the

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[12] William Spanos (2000), for instance, contests the presumed Greek point of origin for an "imperial will to power", and suggests that it is a function of the Western cultural process of "remembering" its past through an imperial Roman frame. Moreover, he argues that the "Greek/barbarian" binary was ideologically produced in relation the socio-political transformations precipitated by the Peloponnesian War and other shifts in relation to the Greek city-state structure (66). Consequently, he states, "It cannot be taken, as it has been by traditional literary historians, cultural critics, and political scientists and continues to be by contemporary postcolonial critics, as a definitive representation of the collective or national attitude of the classical Greeks toward these constituencies of Others" (71). Nevertheless, I depart from Spanos's presumed self/other structure of difference in my dissertation and highlight the role of theology in mediating how European commentators represented colonial difference through forms of resemblances and commensurability. For further reading see, William V. Spanos, *In Americas Shadow: An Anatomy of Empire*, Minnesota University Press, Minneapolis, 2000

[13] Seth, op. cit., 3

otherwise ostensibly benign project of colonialism. Such a reading of European knowledge, structured by a singular teleological history – from a presumed Greek to Christian and to scientific enunciations of self/other – I now believe misses the nuances and bounded nature of conceptualizing difference. As such, I do not seek to map the content of Renaissance and Classical forms of representations of the non-Christian, non-West through a transhistorical binary of self/other. Instead, I seek to trace the historically contingent epistemological traditions and discursive processes that mediated the apprehension of human and cultural difference through commensurability, rather than the sole frame of opposition.

The transhistorical self/other structure also runs the risk of reproducing a linear Eurocentric narrative that presumes colonial expansion was underpinned by an autonomous and coherent European self-identity that was produced through unique internal characteristics. This "first in Europe, then elsewhere" teleology assumes a global diffusionist path that either subsumes, neutralises, or transforms contingent differences into vehicles for the spread of its own logic in form of derivatives.[14] This narrative misses the nuances and contradictions concerning how a European self-identity was produced through colonial expansion, rather than preceding it. Moreover, it misses the multiple negotiations and appropriations of non-European knowledges, cosmologies and spiritualities that a self/other binary cannot sustain. In contrast to this Eurocentric approach, I highlight the historically specific systems of knowledge production, methods of reasoning and practices informed by the neglected registers of resemblances and

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[14] Chakrabarty, Dipesh, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000, pp. 48

theocentric forms of incorporation that underpinned European attempts to apprehend, organize and translate difference in the wake of colonial expansion.[15]

Colonial expansion, as I refer to it, is not reducible to techniques of land theft, resource extraction, or labour exploitation; and Christian theology was not simply used as a justificatory logic for the consolidation of colonial governance. By indexing the constitutive role of epistemology, cosmology and theology that entangle with the materiality of global power structures, I will argue that Christian theology was co-produced by and entwined with colonial processes in often contradictory and contingent fashions under the mantle of incorporative redemption in order to negotiate human and cultural difference. Throughout my dissertation, therefore, I use the decolonial concept of coloniality rather than empire, colonialism and imperialism commonly deployed by postcolonial approaches.

According to Robert Young, the term "empire" historically has been used to conceptualize the administrative centre of a state bureaucracy for establishing hegemonic control of one entity over another. Historically, moreover, empire has been distinguished by two main trajectories: a) "imperialism" which can be understood as the ideological and financial structures of domination; b) "colonialism" which can be understood as a diverse set of practices for establishing settlement, or for establishing commercial power via trading companies.[16] At other moments, all three of these conceptual categories are used interchangeably as synonyms for broad range of hegemonic forms of power. Consequently, the conceptual terrain concerning "empire", "imperialism" and "colonialism" is unstable because these terms are historically bounded and contingent

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[15] Seth, op. cit. 3
[16] Young, Robert J.C., *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 16

upon different logics of control in addition to manifold experiences of domination and resistance. For instance, the concept of "empire" is sometimes used to describe a global system no longer bound territorially to a metropolitan administrative centre, but that is underpinned by the tripartite ensemble of imperialism, colonialism and capitalism. In other moments, "colonial" is used to describe a general grid of perception that is circumscribed by the ideological systems of power centred in Europe and the U.S., whereas "imperialism" sometimes is deployed to describe neo-colonialism, that is, pervasive economic forms of domination that have persisted beyond the formal independence of subjugated colonies. The main point to be made is that these key terms have been deployed in overlapping often in contradictory ways.

The limitation of this commonly accepted postcolonial conceptual schema for decolonial thinkers is that the global nature of what can be called empire, imperialism, and colonialism are often reduced to material processes concerning the juridical-political mechanisms of control vis-à-vis a conquering state power over another. Consequently, "decolonization" is often understood through the narrow parameters of national liberation, and, therefore, is dependent upon the presence of a colonial administration that has direct control over policy and economy. Instead, decolonial thinkers underscore the epistemological domains of the heterogeneous and interwoven colonial-capitalist global system of power. Hence, I use the term "coloniality", introduced by Annibal Quijano, as opposed to "colonialism", in order to emphasize the notion of a global epistemic

hierarchy that privileges Western knowledge, cosmology and spirituality above non-Western knowledge, cosmology and spirituality.[17]

Another prominent framework for investigating colonial expansion has been world systems theory; however, I suggest it has fallen short of accounting for the historically bounded character and multiple tensions regarding the production and organization of hierarchal forms of global domination. I argue that one cannot simply presume that colonialism is reducible to theories of political economy that subsume questions of theology to a secular, materialist justification for capital accumulation commonly assumed by world systems theory. While world systems analysis is attentive to political economy in the establishment of global capitalism as a world system, it has often reproduced a Eurocentric perspective that locates the origins of the so-called capitalist world system by analyzing imperial competition within Europe alone. Consequently, the primary impetus for actors and institutions for colonial expansion is explained by material interests: shorter routes to the East that inadvertently led to the so-called discovery of the New World by Spain. These processes led to territorial expropriation, resource extraction and labour exploitation for the ceaseless accumulation of capital on a global scale. From this perspective, economic relations for the extraction of surplus value led to new class structures, which are then conceptualized as the main sites of social and political relations of domination as opposed to other relations of power.[18]

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[17] Grosfogel, Ramon, "World-Systems Analysis in the Context of Transmodernity, Border Thinking, and Global Coloniality," Review (*Fernand Braudel Centre*), 29(2), 2006, pp.171, 174
[18] Ibid, 170

Without surrendering an analysis concerning the significance of global capitalism, and existence of particular class structures, how can we attend to the theological political domains that are constitutive of the world system in addition to the perspectives of subaltern knowledges and experiences? While one can subsume theology into a materialist analysis of capital, I suggest that this is important to examine how political economy, political theology and subaltern viewpoints are entangled and co-produced. This approach of co-contaminated points of power, or "plural points of enunciation" can help reorient a reductionist analysis of a "capitalist world-system" towards examining the constitution of the "colonial-capitalist world system" that views economy as *one* of the points of enunciation, rather than the sole origin.

Traditional debates regarding the conceptual location of the "theological" and "political" have been concerned with either subordinating the political to the theological, or subordinating the theological to the political, or suggesting a strict separation between the two registers. Instead, I suggest that the genealogical and structural imbrication between these two domains makes any conceptual separation unstable even when political and social theories of global capitalism, empire and colonialism do not directly invoke any explicit divine associations. I further suggest that the theological has a permanence that continued to co-constitute incipient secular forms of thought of John Locke (chapter two), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (chapter three), and Charles Darwin (chapter four) despite their claims that religious forms of political authority and knowledge may be undesirable, regressive or even impossible.[19] Hence, rather than instrumentalizing the theological to a materialist rendition of colonial expansion and

[19] De Vries, Hent and Lawrence Eugene Sullivan (eds.), *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, Fordham University Press, pp. 26

conquest, this dissertation will outline a different methodological trajectory as I endeavour to characterize how they are co-constituted and negotiated.

What is distinct about this project is that I bring together world systems theory, postcolonial and theological political perspectives under a decolonial framework in order to highlight the importance of epistemology in the establishment of a global hierarchical system that deems Western knowledge alone as being capable of achieving universality. While I draw upon each of these critical approaches, I have found they all neglect the significance of the theological in their analysis. I argue that these approaches have often presumed that theological domains have either been largely displaced or overcome by secular forms of thought and knowledge traditions. In other instances, questions of the theological are reduced to simplistic moral prescriptions that were deployed to in order justify a deeper underlying will to power and capital accumulation. Conversely, my project highlights how the largely neglected theological registers of colonial expansion, which emerged through historically contingent circuits of reasoning, mediated the production of European knowledge, practices and sensibilities. As a result, I draw attention to how the theological-political comes to bear upon the secular assumptions that animate critical historical approaches to colonial expansion, and, significantly, I offer a series of new interventions to extend the analytical parameters of decolonial theory.

From a decolonial perspective that is attentive to political theology, the *Inter caetera* was not simply a theological justification for global capital accumulation, but was a constitutive domain that entangled material interest with theological concerns for the spread of global Christianity in order to save the souls of the so-called pagan, and to defend the truth claim of Catholicism against various pagan and infidel figures. The main

point which is the original contribution of my dissertation is that I examine the epistemological structure of the colonial-capitalist world system, with particular focus upon its theological registers, and their effects upon subaltern experiences and knowledge systems.

Over the course of the Renaissance, a Christian theocentric structure of management and control was being put in place, in part, through internal competition between the Christian Atlantic nations of Europe – namely, Spain and Portugal – vis-à-vis African and Indigenous souls, land and labour.[20] Control and management here refers to the actors and institutions of the Atlantic powers that generated the rules for decision-making power over the colonial-capitalist world system that emerged following 1492. For decolonial thinkers such as Quijano, the colonial-capitalist world system was structured by a particular formation of power called the "colonial power matrix" that established control over the domains of the economy, of authority, subjectivity, knowledge, and cosmology.

According to the decolonial thinker Walter Mignolo, the historical foundations of the colonial power matrix was theological. As I will discuss further in chapter one, various papal bulls and decrees by the clergy established distinctions between the "true" Catholic Christians, Jews, Muslims, and other so-called deviant sects of Christianity. For Mignolo, while religious distinctions and conflicts have a long history, 1492 transformed the way in which human difference was conceived and organized when Catholic Spain forcibly converted, mercilessly tortured and eventually expelled Muslims and Jews from the Iberian peninsula. In Aragon and Catalonia, for instance, Muslims were removed

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[20] Mignolo, Walter, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, Duke University Press, pp. 8

under threat of death and escorted by Spanish delegates who charged them money whenever they drank from rivers or sought temporary retreat in the topiary shade.[21] Mignolo suggests that these distinctions were based upon blood purity, and, as such were racial, and that this formed the foundation for racial schemas between Spanish, African and Indigenous peoples. By the eighteenth century, he says, blood purity as a signifier for race would be transferred to the skin. Similarly, Quijano also suggests that racial configurations introduced by blood purity are the main location of difference that structures relationships within the colonial matrix of power until today.

Where I depart from these decolonial thinkers is that I argue throughout my dissertation that while Spanish notions of blood purity may in fact indicate an incipient form of modern race thinking, I do not find that modern forms of racial distinctions are a feature of Renaissance or Classical epistemology (an argument they would not necessarily contest). This position, I suggest, presumes that difference was mediated through a discourse of bio-evolutionary notions of race/racism via a self/other structure in which the body was made available as a constituted object of power. However, as I will suggest, the medieval theocentric epistemological tradition organized difference through resemblances and incorporation derived from Biblical readings of monogenesis, while the body was largely flexible and not scientifically knowable via physiognomy. As a result, I constantly reference the importance of temporality; particularly, the incorporative temporal arrangement of sacred Judeo-Christian time in order to grasp the shifting theological epistemological structure and how this impacted upon the constitution of difference.

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[21] Carr, Matthew, *Blood and Faith: The Purging of Muslim Spain 1492-1614*, London: Hurst & Company

In chapter one, I examine the fifteenth and sixteenth century, and suggest that Indigenous peoples of the New World were not represented through a modern biological frame of racial typologies. Rather, I argue that European commentators generated novel readings of Biblical origin narratives in attempts to render Indigenous people knowable and as potential candidates for salvation via conversion. However, arguments to bring the "pagan Indian" back into the fold of a divine Christian heritage simultaneously produced authorizing discourses for the spread of empire. Hence, I will seek to explain how European empire, characterized by territorial expansion and material resource expropriation, was entangled with theological discourses of salvation.

I will examine some main theological debates held by key figures of the Age of Exploration, including Francisco Di Vitoria (1483–1546), Bartolome de Las Casas (1484–1566) and Juan Gines de Sepulveda (1490–1573). I will highlight the contestations, negotiations and arguments made for the conquest of the New World and the conversion and enslavement of its Indigenous inhabitants. I will suggest that the emergence of religio-secular humanist arguments regarding the existence of different types of humans, some being inherent slaves, occurred through epistemological shifts related to temporality. Hence, I will suggest that the role of Christian theology in relation to the spread of empire does not function ideologically as a materialist alibi for acquiring or confiscating territory and resources. Instead, empire was also spread through the intense desire bring the Indigenous "pagan" back into the fold of divine concord.

In chapter two I shift focus to the seventeenth century and the liberal political theory of John Locke (1632–1704). I examine how Locke's relationship to colonial bureaucratic administrations, Protestant Christian theology, and his labour theory of

property formed plural points of enunciation for the formation of the colonial-capitalist world system. Instead of focusing my analysis around a singular materialist framework that reduces his theory of property to the level of motivation for territorial expropriation, resource extraction and resource exploitation, I suggest that his thought should be centralized around four co-dependent registers. One is the colonial travelogues concerning the New World and its inhabitants; the second, English political economic debates between mercantilism and the plantation colonial model; the third, establishing the labour theory of property ownership for authorizing a particular English ritual of land occupancy; and the fourth one being, Protestant theological arguments for producing an individuated form of self-ownership in order to establish the colonial plantation system.

In the third chapter, I examine the eighteenth century and the Enlightenment political thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778). In this regard his theory of human perfectibility so key to his notions of European decadence and civil society were generated through the coloniality of knowledge. I argue that his thought should be centralized around a constellation of four interrelated domains. His philosophy of the origins of natural man and his essential nature was co-constituted by colonial travel literature and missionary accounts that merged Christian biblical origin narratives of monogenesis and Platonic philosophy of the perfected form is one domain. Linnaean classificatory schemas regarding the location of the human in the theologically derived Great Chain of Being created the epistemic conditions for Rousseau to examine the singular nature of human in relation to other sentient beings is the second. Third, Rousseau builds upon Protestant Christian notions of the inward detached subject – in part produced through the political philosophy of John Locke – through his unique novel

form and musical productions, which further engenders processes of disenchantment and the establishment of the universal individuated self. A fourth domain concerns how he introduces temporally varied stages of the human in order to suggest that European civil society, characterized by property enclosure and contractual property relations, underpins the human potential for degeneration and perfectibility, rather than being a result of an essentialized human nature. I argue Rousseau provides a critique of modernity; however, he ends up authorizing European colonialism, and, by extension slavery via the establishment of European civil society that he initially identifies as the very location of human corruption and degeneration.

In the fourth chapter, I examine the nineteenth century and the work of Charles Darwin (1809–1882). I illustrate that Darwin's biological evolutionary theory of descent with modification by means of natural selection was not produced by a disenchanted, scientific biological notion of the human. Rather, I trace the emergence of his thought through four co-dependent domains; first, I argue that this bio-evolutionary theory was dependent upon the discursive reorganization and transformation of "religion" into a psychological category of cognitive belief through eighteenth and nineteenth century colonial historiography. Second, I examine Darwin's notebook entries from his Beagle voyage (1831–1836), and pay particular attention to how he represented contemporaneous Indigenous peoples that he encountered globally as mentally inferior primitive savages through the temporal grid of historicism. Third, I explore his distinctive gradient theory of the origin of religious cognition. I show that he restructured the progressive sequences characteristic of Victorian anthropological theories of religion within a bio-evolutionary diagram. Consequently, I illustrate that he located rudimentary

forms of religious cognition within primitive humans and non-human animals in order to create a bio-evolutionary link. That humans descended from non-human animals was an idea Darwin made primarily through appeals to religion rather than the science of physiognomy. Fourth, I argue that Darwin's anti-slavery positions were conveyed by an endorsement of the global spread of British colonial humanitarian government. Furthermore, I illustrate that Darwin's abolitionist positions were underpinned by locating non-Europeans as mentally inferior primitive savages, and that consequently the potential for human perfectibility on the part of the otherwise unchanging Indigenous subject depended upon the colonization of this figure.

Tracing the shifting epistemic traditions and structural imbrication between the theological and political in the constitution of the colonial-capitalist world system illustrates the historical and discursive contingencies surrounding the representation of human difference. By locating the work of Locke, Rousseau and Darwin within the theological matrices of coloniality, I challenge their assumed universal claims to knowledge and prescriptive truth claims whilst avoiding the reduction of their work to a singular structure of determination. My interest is in the polyvalent and historically grounded points of enunciation that enabled their particular forms of thought to be made possible.

Chapter 2

Mapping the Theological and Political Coordinates of the Age of Exploration

In this chapter I will examine the period of the Renaissance and trace some main shifts that culminated with the Spanish conquest of Al-Andalusia and the subsequent Age of Exploration during the fifteenth and sixteenth century. In particular, I will examine the global expansion of the Atlantic imperial powers that established settler colonial sovereign claim over the Americas and the Caribbean. I will situate my analysis by using the decolonial concept of coloniality in order to highlight the epistemological structure of the colonial-capitalist world system that emerged following 1492. Coloniality indexes the hidden constitutive logics of modernity and traces the interconnected domains of power that has plural points of enunciation. The power matrix affects all dimensions of social existence and establishes a global hierarchy that privileges Western knowledge, cosmology, authority, subjectivity and labour over non-Western forms.

In particular, this chapter will explore three main domains of the power matrix that emerged through the Age of Exploration. The first is a spiritual/religious hierarchy that privileged Western Latin Christian theology over non-Christian spiritualities via the globalization of the Catholic and later Protestant church; the second, an epistemic hierarchy that privileged Western forms of knowledge and cosmology over non-Western forms of knowledge and cosmology; and the third, an ontological hierarchy that privileged a Christian conception of the human over non-Western conceptions of being in

the world.[1] In doing so, I emphasize the role of the Judeo-Christian temporal formation of salvation that mediated the structures of reasoning for classifying, translating and organizing non-European forms of human difference.

For decolonial thinkers such as, Enrique Dussel, Walter Mignolo, Anibal Quijano, Ramon Grosfogel and others, race and racism are the main organizing categories that structure all of the hierarchies of the colonial-capitalist world system. As a point of departure from this approach, I do not suggest that race and racism are the main locations for establishing human difference during the Renaissance. As I will suggest, discourses of evolutionary biological race thinking emerge through various epistemological shifts – throughout, mainly, the later portion of the nineteenth century – and as such were not available during this epoch. Further, suggesting that race and racism organizes the colonial power matrix assumes that the Renaissance epistemology organized difference via the self/other binary sequenced by biological evolutionary taxonomies. Conversely, I suggest that similitude and commensurability, mediated through the familiar, characterized theocentric Renaissance epistemology.[2] While I agree that the colonial power matrix constructs Western systems of knowing and being over non-Western ones, I argue that these hierarchies of power were established by assimilating differences into forms of resemblances – New world inhabitants were apprehended as knowable through familiar theological genealogical schemas. Put differently, inhabitants of the Americas and the Caribbean were conceptualized as children of God through the familiar organizing principal of the theologically inscribed Great Chain of Being, rather than

[1] Mignolo, Walter, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, Duke University Press, pp. 18-19
[2] Seth, Vanita , *Europe's Indians: Producing Racial Difference, 1500-1900*, Durham & London: Duke University Press, pp. 4

dehumanized racial Others via biological racial taxonomies.

A key register that linked epistemology and coloniality during the Renaissance was the theo-politics of knowledge. Accordingly, the main site of difference was constituted by Christian theology upon the axis of what Sylvia Wynter names the "True Christian self" and Moors, Jews, and other infidel figures. According to Mignolo, this logic was underpinned by the category of salvation, which continues to inform the matrices of coloniality. For Mignolo and Wynter, the theocentric epistemological structure of the Renaissance was focused upon saving the soul of the human through conversion, and would culminate in attempting to save the soul of the non-Christian by bringing them back into the fold of divine provenance through establishing diverse colonial institutions and global missionary projects. [3] Moreover, for Mignolo, church authority and mercantilist trading interests converged in order to secure Atlantic colonial hegemony over the Americas. From this perspective, discourses of human salvation entangle with geopolitical and economic interests under the mantle of coloniality. While I am mostly in agreement with the assessment of plural points of power for securing Atlantic interests over the New World, I will highlight the often conflictual, negotiated and provisional nature of these co-produced relations. Competing interpretations of Christian theology vis-à-vis conceptions of human and cultural difference greatly impacted the trajectories of authorizing colonial sovereignty, the exploitation of land and labour, and practices of conversion. Hence, there was not a unified and coherent colonial script that all actors followed in order to maximize interest for Spanish or Portuguese empire, rather, coloniality represents a non-linear and shifting

[3]Mignolo, op. cit. 18-19

process of entangled points of power.

In this chapter I will explore some broad historical and epistemological shifts that produce settler colonial sovereign power over the New World. It will be split into two principal sections; first, I will undergo a genealogy of settler colonial sovereignty that is generated through shifting conceptions of temporality and its relationship to the fluctuating category of the human. I will suggest that one cannot assume that an *a priori* homogenous Christian European self-identity was simply transplanted to the Americas in the late fifteenth century and later transposed into a secular settler European sovereign claim. Instead, I will argue that the Age of Exploration generated various contestations, fissures and entanglements between Christian theology, Renaissance humanism, and political economy.[4]

Second, I will suggest that the Spanish settler colonial sovereign claim over the New World emerged *through* colonial conflict instead of preceding it with pre-established norms and/or a coherent logic of "discovery." Rather, Spanish settler colonial ownership centred around questions concerning legitimate sovereign jurisdiction and was coproduced through several entangled domains, including: (a) papal decrees that authorized spiritual dominion over the New World and the souls that lived therein; (b) international-legal jurisprudence developed by Francisco de Vitoria that reconfigured divine law by authorizing Spanish sovereignty over the New World and its inhabitants via natural law; (c) debates between Bartolome de las Casas and Juan Gines de Sepulveda concerning whether Amerindian difference accorded them sovereign status coeval with the Catholic Spanish in order to legitimately resist colonialism. Put differently, were

[4]Seth, op. cit. 36

Amerindians human enough to launch a just war against Catholic Spanish colonizers, or were they inherent slaves that could only be redeemed via death?

In the next section I will briefly outline a recent model of settler colonialism by Lorenzo Veracini who suggests settler colonial sovereign capacity was generated by processes internal to Europe and then traveled to the colonial setting in order to produce a distinct settler colonial formation. In contrast to this Eurocentric approach that I identify as the establishment of an ideal-type modular form of sovereignty that is transplanted or diffused to the colony via migration by a path-dependent mimesis, I will suggest that settler sovereign capacity is better understood through co-constitution.

Settler-Colonialism: Sovereign Modularity and Diffusion

Veracini argues that settler colonialism is a distinct form of colonialism that is both a global and transnational structure of pan-European settler colonial sovereign capacity.[5] Robert Young suggests that while colonialism and imperialism are both broadly characterized by domination of one group over another, he suggests that there is a diversity of colonial and imperial histories that are irreducible. He argues that these two categories need to be understood in their historical specificity because they represent heterogeneous processes that were often contradictory and did not follow a linear trajectory.[6]

Young suggests that historically forms of empire are not unique to modern world history; however, older forms of empire tended to focus upon expansion within a single

[5] Veracini, Lorenzo, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, pp. 2-4
[6] Young, Robert J.C., *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 15

land mass. For instance, the Roman empire, which acted as a model for many nineteenth century colonial projects, extended its influence from the centre Rome, eventually splitting into the Byzantine and Holy Roman empires under the umbrella of a single land mass. Due to technological shifts in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, new navigational potentials allowed empires to extend their population globally and maintain contact between metropole and colony. Young suggests that unlike premodern forms of empire that attempted to maintain geographical uniformity, new forms of empire no longer required geographical coherence.[7]

These broad historical and technological shifts generate conceptual distinctions between empire, imperialism, colonialism, and there is a further distinction of settler colonialism. For Young, empire developed into two main structures; first, imperialism, which is characterized as a bureaucratic system of governance produced and controlled by the centre for ideological and economic purposes. Second, a form of empire produced for colonial settlements by individuals, or commercial extractive economies in order to accumulate capital on a global scale.[8]

Veracini suggests that the conceptual category of the colony be further distinguished by two elements. First, he argues that a colony is a political entity that is controlled by an external agency, and, second, an external agency that reproduces itself in a particular location. For Veracini, the subjugation of an Indigenous population by an external agency through the migration flows and localized reproduction of settler communities constitutes a link between migration and colonialism. Nevertheless, he further suggests that one cannot conflate migration and settler colonialism because not all

[7] Ibid, 16
[8] Ibid

migrations are settler colonial migrations, and, further, not all colonialisms, as Young also suggests, are settler colonial projects.[9] As a result, Verancini suggests that there must be a conceptual distinction between the processes and structural features of settler colonialism.

Verancini states that while both migrants and settlers move across different geographical locations, settlers permanently reside in a particular site while in other colonial political domains, colonial entities such as officials, administrators, various missionaries and adventures return to the metropole.[10] He further argues that the settler colonial imperative to establish a regenerative settler community may fail or be obscured by migration flows and patterns. Consequently, immigrants are fundamentally marked by a political difference resulting in differential management strategies that produce and organize hierarchies between settlers, migrants and the subjugated Indigenous population. For Veracini, settler subjects are not simply immigrating, but rather carry a logic of conquest intimately connected to sovereign capacity. He argues settlers establish a political order through this sovereign capacity while migrants are drawn into a political order that has been pre-established. However, while migrants are often incorporated into the settler project, he argues they permanently lack sovereign entitlement. Varacini states,

> [A] very different sovereign charge is involved in their respective displacements; not only do settlers and migrants move in inherently different ways, they also move towards very different places…the political traditions *Settler Colonialism* focuses on concentrate on autonomous collectives that claim both a special sovereign charge and a regenerative capacity.[11]

For Veracini, the nexus between people, power, space and time indexes settler colonial

[9]Veracini, op. cit. 3
[10] Ibid, 6
[11] Ibid, 3

sovereign capacity. Hence, he suggests there is a preceding structure of sovereign entitlement enacted within the European metropole, both individually and collectively that is transplanted within the colony even though there may not have been a conscious psychological imperative to produce some version of a utopian political formation.[12] Rather, there is double displacement, first a displacement of loyalty between the settler community and the metropole and a second displacement of Indigenous sovereign claims. He further states,

> The dynamics of imperial and colonial expansion, a focus on the formation of national structures and on national independence (together with a scholarship identifying the transoceanic movement of people and biota that does not distinguish between settler and other types of migration), have often obscured the presence and operation of a specific pan-European understanding of a settler colonial sovereign capacity. *Settler Colonialism* addresses a scholarly gap.[13]

While it is certainly debatable whether such a scholarly gap exists within postcolonial and Indigenous studies literature, I will discuss Verancini's focus upon settler sovereign entitlement that for Veracini "migrates" from Europe. It is within this domain of a migrating sovereign entitlement that I argue cannot be sustained because it reproduces a Eurocentric historicist account of sovereignty. Although Veracini suggests that settler sovereign capacity "migrates" from Europe, he does argue settler political traditions and configurations of power divide from the host metropole thereby spawning a new settler colonial political formation. For instance, he states that settler colonialism "is not a leftover from transplanted political traditions, it is the beginning of a distinct political tradition and its sovereignty."[14] Veracini suggests that a settler colonial political entity is

[12] Ibid, 54
[13] Ibid, 2
[14] Ibid, 59

a self-constituting act established through a sovereign movement across space; however, he suggests that this travelling sovereign entitlement displaces itself within the settler space and generates an autonomous and regenerative claim that is distinguished from the metropole. He argues that sovereignty should be understood as a pluralistic category that is not necessarily associated with producing political institutions and can co-exist along with and in relation to other sovereign entities, whether colonial, imperial or postcolonial formations.[15]

Veracini suggests then, similar to Benedict Anderson's modular understanding of nationalism,[16] that sovereignty has a modular character, what Veracini names "corporate sovereign forms"[17] that travel across time and space through a modality of replication that eventually produces a unique settler colonial regenerative sovereign capacity. This settler sovereign capacity, he argues, produces a strained form of accommodation with other sovereignties – such as external metropole sovereign claims – and subsumes pre-existing polyvalent Indigenous relationships to land.

He argues that the structure of corporate settler sovereignty is located within "the settler archive of the European imagination."[18] This is the preceding discourse of settler sovereign entitlement that is modular and travels through a structure of mimesis to the colony. Upon its "arrival" to the settler space, he argues this European archive instantiates itself through a denial of its violent epistemological underpinnings and a repression of psychoanalytic traumas that constitute a crisis of legitimate belonging. I

[15] Ibid, 53-4
[16] For further reading see, Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* London: Verso, 1985
[17] Veracini, op. cit. 73
[18] Ibid, 76

will not address the discourse of settler disavowal and repression; instead, I will explore the epistemological and ontological antecedents regarding the settler archive of the European imagination that is held to be the foundation of settler sovereign capacity. For Veracini the lingering traces from European metropole sovereignty continue to impact this new settler colonial formation via the settler archive of the European imagination. However, I would like to ask, how are the matrices of the settler archive of European imagination constituted through colonialism? In other words how was European metropole sovereignty generated through the colonial "encounter" and not a precursor to it?

Tracing a Co-Produced Genealogy of the Settler Archive of the European Imagination

In this section, I will examine the production of the "settler archive of the European imagination" through two main historical moments that emerged from 1492: the fall of Muslim Spain and the "discovery" of the New World. The aim of this section is to illustrate that (a) "Europe" was not a fully coherent or unified geopolitical entity in the wake of late fifteenth century settler colonial expansion; in fact, "European identity" became further fractured and fragmented through coloniality; (b) the "settler archive" was produced through a theocentric Renaissance epistemological structure that apprehended human and cultural differences based upon commensurability and resemblances, rather than a self/other binary; (c) in contrast to Veracini then, I suggest there was no preceding "settler archive of the European imagination" that served as the conceptual location for a migrating settler colonial sovereign claim over the New World

– such an archive and settler colonial sovereignty was co-constituted through colonial processes.

Wynter provides a lucid account for some main epistemological shifts that constitute the settler archive of the European imagination. She undertakes an in-depth examination regarding the shifting ways in which representations of Indigenous difference has been constituted through a variegated process of what it means to be human. Her analysis will help to illustrate that medieval and Renaissance thought produced various competing conceptual frames for apprehending human difference, rather than a linear and coherent narrative of an assumed European self that was simply superimposed upon Indigenous and African peoples in the Age of Exploration.[19]

Within these broad historical transformations Wynter identifies at least two broad shifts in Renaissance epistemology and the conception of human ontology that I will focus upon. The first is the appearance of a Christian centered conception of theological man governed by the agency of divine providence. The second is the emergence of a hybrid religo-secular conception of the human that was fashioned through epistemological shifts throughout the Age of Exploration.

Wynter suggests that the antecedents of Renaissance humanism are located within a non-secular medieval Latin-Christian theocentric sociogeny. She states that this juncture is characterized by distinctions generated between the True Christian Self and

[19] While Wynter deploys the category of "European" I read her as indexing the contestations that generated a fraught and contingent notion of "European man" that was emerging in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, rather than being fully present before the colonial "encounter." As a result, even though Wynter relies upon the category of "Europe" I read her as not necessarily subscribing to the historicist account of a modular European sovereign claim transposed upon the colony and subsequently established through the reproduction of settler sovereign communities.

variously situated heretics, infidel enemies of Christ, and pagan idolaters.[20] For Wynter, the issue of religious difference was already canonized with studies related to the God's and religious rites of antiquity that was preserved through the different epochs, literature on Asiatic religious practices, and experiences catalogued during the crusades.[21] One may suggest that the crusades or any number of historical junctures could be a point of articulation for human difference drifting into racial logics of sub-human interpellation; however, various thinkers (Johannes Fabian, Margaret Hodgen, Bernard McGrane, Anthony Pagden, Vanita Seth, Sylvia Wynter) argue that the main categories of differentiation utilized during the medieval Christian epoch were not based upon race, but that of the non-Christian, pagan, infidel, or some version of savage existence bereft of religion altogether. Despite the constitution of difference upon the axis of Christian/infidel; heretic; pagan there was an incorporative logic based upon the category of redemption – although not free from acts of violence, the possibility for the non-Christian to enter the domain of theocentric notions of human through conversion, acts of penance and transformations in habit and sensibility was available.

Part of the reason the pagan could be located as a candidate for incorporation is due to the temporal arrangement of sacred Judeo-Christian time. As I will discuss later, the production of the savage and primitive through the denial of covealness depends upon the secularization of Judeo-Christian temporality that occurs through epistemological shifts of the Enlightenment. Consequently, a racial logic of dehumanization was not yet available because the sacred conceptual temporal structure of this period was not yet

[20] Wynter, Sylvia, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument," The New Centennial Review, 3(3), Fall 2003, pp. 266-7
[21] Ibid, 215

generalized and universalized through a historical sequential apparatus that could suppress the simultaneity of other cultures by placing them in a lesser stage of development as well as organize epidermal forms of human difference through biological evolutionary schemas.

I want to emphasize that I am not suggesting an essentialized exclusionary violence within Christian notions of salvation, Christianity, or monotheism generally. Instead, I am interested in the shifting relations of power and theological lineages of the Age of Exploration, and how particular articulations of Christian metaphysics were intensely debated and negotiated. To simply suggest that Christianity was the hand-maiden of empire and colonialism is to miss many of the negotiations and often contradictory processes that animated the Age of Exploration.

Johannas Fabian suggests that Judeo-Christian sacred time was conceived as a sequence of events that befell a chosen group in accordance with the divine provenance of one savior, i.e. God. A significant feature of this sacred linear temporal structure was a covenant in a linear telos of salvation between one group of Christian believers and God. Indeed, as Fabian suggests, even the Spanish conquistador who administered sadistic forms of violence upon the Indian attempted to incorporate him into the sacred temporal structure of divine Christian heritage:

> In the medieval paradigm, the Time of Salvation was conceived as inclusive or incorporative. The Others, pagans and infidels (rather than savages and primitives), were viewed as candidates for salvation. Even the conquista, certainly a form of spatial expansion, needed to be propped up by an ideology of conversion…the explorers were expected to round up, so to speak, the pagan world between the center of Christianity and its lost periphery in order to bring it back into the confines of the flock guarded by the Divine Sheppard.[22]

[22] Fabian, Johannes, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2002 (1983), pp. 26

Within this incorporative theocentric conception of the world, the domain of cultural difference was not translated through the discourse of racial difference. Differences in pigmentation were attributed to geographic contexts that held darker pigmentation was a result of exposure to the sun. This geographical notion of explaining cultural differences while retaining a theological discourse of monogenesis would allow the pagan and infidel a place in domain of theocentric conceptions of human. Put differently, if all of the earth's inhabitants derived from the fallen progeny of Adam, the taxonomy of cultural difference would be apprehended outside a modern biological basis of racial difference. The main axis of human difference was translated upon the basis of religion and language; this was characterized by the notion of a variegated assembly of "nations" while the term "race" was reserved for zoological descriptors of the animal world.[23]

Vanita Seth suggests that this discourse of similitude was a result of the structure of apprehending difference through genealogy, which is distinct from history. This structure of genealogy indexes the epistemological structure of similitude during the Renaissance. For Seth, these elaborate a-historical biblical taxonomies did not emerge through the developmental sequences of historical time. Rather, the enormous creative and intellectual effort to assimilate the Indian and African subject through a shared history was culled from biblical exegesis produced complex genealogical maps. Seth states, "The genealogical project of tracing indigenous American lineage back to the Old World, and thus rendering it malleable to Christian interpretations, resulted in the identification of some twenty possible nations as the ancestral forefathers of the New

[23] Hogden, Margaret, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,* University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998, pp. 214

World's inhabitants."[24] Further, I suggest that a result of the genealogical structure of similitude was the production of the aporia of colonial redemptive melancholy (discussed below). Hence, I examine how New World inhabitants could simultaneously be part of a Christian lineage, yet be so distinct in their religious and cultural practices.

This Christian genealogical conception of the world via incorporation, in part, made possible by metaphysical teleological "Time of Salvation" contrasted with earlier Greek, mainly Aristotelian, notions of conceptualizing difference based upon natural slavery. Anthony Pagden argues that Greek thought from Homer to Aristotle conceptualized the category of human as biologically unified from the same species. However, there were varying types of humans distinguishable based upon language and the ability to form political communities via the city,

> For most Greeks, and for all of their cultural beneficiaries, the ability to use language, together with the ability to form civil societies (poleis) – since these were the clearest indications of man's powers of reason – were also the things that distinguished man from other animals…if 'man' is to be taken as something more than a morphological category, the Greeks' failure to recognize the barbaroi amounted, in effect, to a denial of their humanity.[25]

For Pagden, redemption was not a feature within Greek a schema that closed off entrance into the *Οικουμένη* (ecumene) – civilized non-barbarous life.[26] As I will show, classical ideas regarding natural slavery will paradoxically creep back into the contested terrain of divine and natural law concerning the juridical status of Indigenous and African subjects.

Wynter suggests that the temporal arrangement of the dominant theological juncture of late medieval Europe, as opposed to classical notions, was produced through a

[24]Seth, op. cit. 56
[25] Pagden, Anthony, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology*, Cambridge University Press, 1987, pp. 16
[26] Ibid, 19

cosmic ontological discourse that posited the celestial domain as perfected divine transcendence. This engendered a form of cognition that placed divine metaphysical truth in the hands of the Church, while the earth was conceptualized as the post-Adamic fallen zone of sinful man who could reach salvation through various acts of penance.[27]

The dominant structuring theocentric sociogeny would authorize monogenesis as the key hermeneutical apparatus for apprehending cultural difference. Monogenesis, suggests mankind was created in a single act, and, as such, homogenous in all characteristics. On the other hand, polygenesis, a hypothesis not widely circulated as it breached orthodox Christian understandings, suggests that the human was manifest from various acts of creation at a plurality of spatio-temporal points. Hodgen suggests a third strand of "secular" inquiry that would render ethnological analyses through the frame of historico-environmentalism.[28]

Following the work of Fabian, Seth and Wynter, to suggest that there was a fully formed disenchanted "secular" gaze that apprehended cultural difference through environmentalism would perhaps be a hasty characterization. This is because the universalization and generalization of Judeo-Christian time was not yet possible. Fabian and Wynter do suggest, however, that cognitive fissures appeared in the enchanted cognitive schema due to technological changes in circumnavigation during the Renaissance. This could account for conceptualizing human difference via a hybrid sacred-profane matrix – but to suggest a total epistemological "break" from dominant sacred temporality is tenuous. In fact, Hodgen later suggests that monogenesis was

[27]Wynter, op. cit. 276
[28]Hogden, op. cit. 222

incorporated into the ideas of the most "convicted enviromentalists."[29]

Diversity within the dominant monogenetic schema was understood to come after Adam's creation and placement within the earthly realm of *fallen time* – exactly how and when heterogeneity would descend upon the homogeneous original human form would generate various theories, "All who concerned themselves intellectually with the manners and customs of mankind were in some measure defenders of the Judeo-Christian formula…it was the Bible – and in the Bible the first eleven chapters of Genesis – that held the lost key to the lost lock of the cultural riddle."[30] The advocates of monogenesis would produce novel Biblical exegesis in order resolve the issue of cultural diversity vis-à-vis the category of Adamic homogeneity.

Monogenesis was conceived through the frame of principal demographic events marking the diffusionist geographic dispersal of man. This sequential order of events would start with the creation and fall of Adam and Eve. The narrative would continue to posit that their offspring was dispersed throughout the earth, and end with their depopulation and subsequent repopulation. In order to retain the stability of original man's homogenous character, it would be proposed that three ruptures took place: "once by Cain and this posterity, again by the descendants of the sons of Noah, and once again at Babel; each episode being accompanied by periods of prolonged human migration, mingling, cultural diffusion, and degeneration."[31]

The first rupture was that as punishment for the fratricide between Cain and Abel – the offspring of Adam and Eve – God exiled Cain to the Land of Nod; thereby

[29] Ibid, 225
[30] Ibid
[31] Ibid, 228

dispersing man from the original abode of Adamic culture. Cain would become an unsanctified wanderer producing his progeny with various wives eventually becoming the ancestral villain credited with peopling the first city of tents and shepherds.[32] The second event of geographic human dispersal took place with Cain's offspring spreading evil throughout earth leading to divine instruction for Noah to construct an ark. After the monumental Flood, Noah and his wife as well as his three children and their wives were left subsequently peopling the planet with various homelands. Finally, with the dispersal of the remnants of Babel, various nations and languages were left to wither within a flux of degeneration.[33]

Hogden and Wynter suggest the lay intelligentsia were brokers of a discourse that generated their own ontology as the embodiments of enslavement to the "original sin of fallen man" that could only be ameliorated through direct mediation of the ostensible truth articulated through the Church and clergy.[34] As Hogden observes, "To encourage the mind to play wantonly with its own powers was denounced as self-indulgence; to seek learning outside the accustomed categories of medieval logic and information was to invite scandal."[35] The Renaissance, however, would place value upon the register of curiosity, observation and calculation – agonizing ethnological inquiries would emerge and flourish as the Age of Exploration opened vistas to the marvels of the New World.

As I have alluded to above, cognitive breaches would continue to occur as increased circumnavigation would place Western Christendom in further "contact" with the peoples of Africa and Americas. Indeed no Biblical precedent could account for this

[32] Ibid
[33] Ibid, 229
[34]Wynter, op. cit. 276
[35]Hogden, op. cit. 207

variety of cultural diversity; nevertheless, as mentioned, genealogical maps would attempt to make sense of such difference. Further, a well-known hierarchical ordering principal that serialized metaphysical and material existence within a conceptual schema would complement monogenesis. The neo-Platonic notion of the Great Chain of Being was used so that all creatures, from angels to mermaids, could be located within a precise order or metaphysical chain – linking and unifying all existence within divine provenance.[36]

Both medieval and Renaissance thought featured the Great Chain of Being as a theological and philosophical discourse and was disseminated through the works of Plotinus, Boethius, Mirandola, Ficino and various others.[37] Hodgen states, "The multiplicity of things, or the variegated world of nature, was held together by a golden chain, so scaled that the more remote a thing might be from its original source, the lower its grade of perfection."[38] The hierarchical Chain was a perhaps the most important discourse for apprehending human and cultural difference during this juncture – as I will show in chapter three, the Chain remains a vital conceptual tool well into the eighteenth century, and features in the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Wynter identifies the work of Italian Renaissance humanist of the fifteenth century Pico della Mirandola as a significant shift in conceptualizing the narrative of Genesis. Mirandola's treatise *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (1486) examined the origin and nature of man in relation to the divine and man's freedom to ascend and descend in the classical Platonic Chain of Being. In Wynter's reading, Mirandola reformulated the

[36] Ibid, 396
[37] Ibid
[38] Ibid, 397

normative Christian discourse concerning the fall of Adam and Eve from paradise into earth and their subsequent abasement in Original sin. On the one hand, Mirandola suggested that man originated by God's desire to create a being placed within the centre of the Platonic metaphysical Chain of Being, but, crucially, endowed with the ability to move up and down the Chain: "fall" himself to level of beasts through being enslaved to the base passions. On the other hand, man could "rise" to the highest status upon earth through cultivating the passions and using reason. Wynter states,

> The relation here is one of analogy. While reason is not a god, "it partakes of some of God's functions" in that it is intended to rule over a "lower order of reality." The fundamental separation for Pico was one between two orders of creation, with man placed by God at the midpoint between them… Placed between these two realms, man was the only creature "confined by no bounds," free to "fix limits of nature" for himself, free to be "molder and maker of himself."[39]

Hence, Mirandola is credited with placing man outside the Chain of Being through the freedom to ascend and descend by cultivating the faculties.[40]

It should be noted that Mirandola's conception of man as God's vicegerent on earth, with the mobility to move up and down the hierarchical Chain of Being has its roots in classical Islamic thought. While Mirandola may be the first western thinker to account for the freedom of man to move up and down the Chain through ordering the passions and virtue of reason, this notion was articulated over four hundred years before Mirandola by the medieval Islamic philosophy of Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn al-Ghazali. This is significant because as it indexes the hybrid nature of philosophical knowledge production, rather than a simple excising of non-western and non-Christian knowledge

[39]Wynter, op. cit. 287
[40] Truglia, Craig, "Al-Ghazali and Giovnni Pico della Mirandola on the Question of Human Freedom and the Chain of Being," Philosophy East and West 60(2), April 2010, pp. 150

systems. Further, as I will discuss below, despite Spain and Portugal producing their identities in opposition to the figure of Muslim infidel, this relation was also one of co-imbrication. For instance, Islamic scientific and navigational knowledge acquired through medieval developments in mathematics and astronomy was translated by Jewish interpreters to the Portuguese – these knowledges would enable the expansion voyages of competing empire (discussed further in chapter 2).[41]

The discursive maneuver, popularized by Mirandola, of positioning man not as a static placeholder between God and man within a degenerative logic, but rather as holding the potential to ascend towards perfectibility would indeed place a particular form of Christianity as the highest manifestation of spiritual perfection. Concomitantly, Indigenous and African peoples could be mistreated, enslaved, killed and their lands could be confiscated through the enactment of various papal bulls including the 1455 Romanus Pontifex and 1493 Inter caetera.[42] However, ontologically speaking, they were still seen as children of God despite being located in the frame of religious differentiation.

It is this juncture within the Renaissance from which the foundations of the settler sovereign claim were emerging. Further, we can examine how a dominantly transcendent ontology of the human, redeemable through acts of penance articulated by the clergy shifts, more concretely, to a hybrid sacred-profane one. Further, I will attempt to illustrate that a constitutive feature of Spanish imperial expansion was made possible, in part, by a metaphysical Christian temporal structure. As I have suggested above, it is important to

[41] Seed, Patricia, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 99
[42]Wynter, op. cit. 291-2

highlight how the theological imbricates with the political in order to provide a more robust account concerning the theological lineages of concepts of the political, authority, law, sovereignty and authorizations of violence as well as territorial expropriation.

In the next section I will illustrate the importance of the fall of Al-Andalusia in relation to the Age of Exploration. Accordingly, I highlight how human difference was conceptualized by Catholic Spain and Portugal vis-à-vis Muslims and Jews. The issue of authentic Catholic conversion would greatly impact the trajectories of Spanish empire in relation to the New World. Two main interrelated processes index the importance of the fall of Muslim Spain. In the first, Islam represented a geo-existential threat to Christianity, and, as such, intense anxiety loomed concerning inauthentic converts that were held to be lingering within Spain particularly. Attempts to globalize Christianity in the wake of colonial expansion are linked to seeking converts in order to mobilize successive crusades against Islam. In the second was a religious missionary impulse to save the soul of the pagan Amerindian held to be part of a displaced Noachian Christian lineage. These two theo-political processes entangled and would sometimes conflict with Atlantic mercantile interests for land expropriation, resource extraction, and labour exploitation.

A millennial form of religious purification can best characterize the theological political climate of Spain – particularly leading up to 1492. Long had there been attempts to secure a pure Catholic polity, and the doctrine of *limpieza de sangre* (purity of blood) emerged, which was a genealogical discourse that linked Old Christians to a pre-Islamic Visigothic and Latin heritage. Establishing blood concentration, for decolonial thinkers, relates to the emergence of race and racism as biological markers for constituting human

difference. In contrast, I would suggest that purity of blood was meant to determine one's religious lineage, as the primary mode of conceptualizing the ontological status of the human held by medieval Latin Christian sociogeny was, as Wynter reminds us, based upon the "True Christian self." Racial distinctions, in their modern form, require a secularized and progressive temporal character in order to sequence biological evolutionary taxonomies through the body within a hierarchical structure – I will come back to this point several times. The main point I wish to make here is that the epistemological tradition of this epoch did not make available modern forms of biological racial discourse. Blood was used as an index for tracing one's religious heritage via aforementioned theocentric genealogical maps.

For instance in 1391, priest Ferrran Martinez delivered a series of anti-Jewish sermons in Seville leading to the deaths and forcible conversion of thousands of Jews as well as the destruction of Jewish homes and synagogues. Further, in 1412, Catherine of Lancaster and regent of Castile and Leon ordered all Jews and Muslims to end economic and social activities with Christians and remain in specified housing quarters under threat of death or property seizure.[43] In the following decades the forced conversions of over three hundred thousand Jews (*conversos)* and an unknown number of Muslims (*moriscos*) would result in an intensification of Inquisition aimed at producing *sincere* converts under a pure Catholic community.

Other effects of the pure blood discourse included burning over two thousand *conversos* alive between 1485 and 1501. Further, on March 31, 1492 Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella signed an edict that ordered all Jews to convert to Christianity or

[43]Lowy, Chris, *A Vanished World: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Medieval Spain*, Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 39

be exiled from Spanish territory within three months and forty days. As a result, over 50,000 Jews chose to convert, while about 150,000 chose exile; moreover, in 1497 Portuguese king Manuel I provided the same edict of baptism or exile to both Jews and Muslims as a condition for marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella's daughter, Isabel.[44]
For the Muslim population of Spain before and following the fall of Granada in 1492, their conversion was the site of intense debate and effort. For instance, the archbishop of Toledo, Francisco Jimenez de Cisneros lost patience with a slower process of Christian evangelical initiatives and began to forcibly convert masses of Muslims in public squares. Cisneros professed to Pope Alexander VI that he had converted three thousand Moors in a single day and would later remark to his concerned church council in Toledo, "if the infidels couldn't be attracted to the road to salvation, they had to be dragged to it."[45] And on January 16, 1500 Cisneros proclaimed, "there is now no one in the city who is not Christian, and all the mosques are churches."[46]

Subsequently, the Muslims of Granada rebelled, in response Ferdinand joined the campaign to quell the upheaval, and in March 1500 massacred the inhabitants of entire villages. Ferdinand stated that in one massacre in Lanjeron: "the occupants were baptized before perishing"; it is reported Bartolome De Las Casas (discussed further below) likely was witness to these events and at the age of fifteen or sixteen marched with the militia from Seville to Granada to participate in the crushing the Muslim rebellion.[47]

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[44] Ibid, 45-7
[45] Ibid, 70-1
[46] Ibid, 72
[47] Clayton, Lawrence, A., *Bartolome de las Casas and the Conquest of the Americas*, Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 16

Ferdinand and Isabella continued their efforts, and on October 1501 ordered all "books of the Mahometan impiety" in Granada be seized under threat of death or the confiscation of property and subsequently destroyed in a public bonfire. Millions of Spanish Muslims would either be converted or exiled throughout the fifteenth century, Mathew Carr states,

> …the Muslim population of Iberia at the beginning of the twelfth century, including Berbers, Arabs, and indigenous converts to Islam, may have reached as high as 5.5 million. At the end of the fifteenth century, the number of Muslims in Spain was probably between 500,000 and 600,000, out of a Spanish population of roughly 7 to 8 million.[48]

Throughout the sixteenth century, the ascendency of the Ottoman empire created further anxiety and various incitements for the reestablishment of the crusades. However, this is not to posit a unified Christian monolith; the Inquisition turned its gaze upon variously perceived Christian heretical orders such as the Lutherans and some Catholic mystic orders such as the *Alumbrados*.[49] On the other hand, the perceived threat of the Muslim did also allow for the articulation of a unified Christian community: following the Turkish siege of Vienna in 1529, Martin Luther called for *Turkenkrieg* – a war upon the Turks who he regarded as the incarnation of Satan, while successive popes appealed to the Holy Roman Emperor to unite all Christianity in a Turkish crusade.[50] As I mentioned above, the eschatological coordinates of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries sought sincere converts for what many saw as an theologico-existential crisis vis-à-vis ominous infidel figures – most notably the Muslim,

> It was a period in which many Christians lived in expectation of an imminent Day of Judgment and the beginning of a new Christian millennium, or *renovation mundi*…According to the widely circulated 'letter of revelation' written in 1486 [stated]

[48]Carr, Matthew, *Blood and Faith: The Purging of Muslim Spain 1492-1614*, London: Hurst & Company, pp. 51
[49] Ibid, 87
[50] Ibid, 119

> Ferdinand himself was the Hidden One, who was destined to 'subdue all kingdoms from sea to sea, and he will destroy all the Moors of Spain'…Columbus's search for a new route to the Indies was partly intended to make possible a double-pronged assault on Islam from east to west.
> …In a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella written in 1493, Columbus promised 'that in seven years from today I can provide Your highness with five thousand mounted troops and fifty thousand foot-soldiers for the war and conquest of Jerusalem, upon which proposition this enterprise was taken.' The Catholic Monarchs clearly shared these aspirations to some extent. In 1494, bulls of crusade were circulated in Spain to generate support for a military expedition to North Africa. Three years later, Spain seized the Moroccan port of Melilla and acquired the first of its military and trading outposts in North Africa.[51]

The reason I have delved briefly into this history of blood purity, absolute fixation upon sincere conversion, and the religio-political climate of Muslim Spain, its conquest, and subsequent ascendency of the Ottoman empire is to highlight the nexus between the theological and political: the manner in which institutions were congealing through various debates, legal codes and acts of violence vis-à-vis the infidel and refractory convert.

As a result of Spain's Jewish and Muslim historical presence and widely known intensification of Inquisitorial techniques of violence, neighboring principalities viewed Spain as a citadel of recalcitrant *conversos*, *moriscos*, apostates and heretics.[52] In my reading, this illustrates that "Europe" was a highly fragmented and contingent entity without a coherent and bounded character. Rather, the aforementioned representations of difference and locations of violent subjugation caused further fissures in producing a coherent European Christian self. This runs counter to the position that a Christian European self-identity – and later a secular Western self-identity – was simply constituted

[51] Ibid, 48
[52] Ibid, 47

through the oppositional representation of the non-European Other.[53] As Seth argues, privileging a religion-based self-other binary risks assimilating variegated theological and ancient knowledges into a textual alibi for a teleological rendition of empire, imperialism, colonialism and settler colonialism.[54] In other words, presupposing a self/other binary where the self is Christian and the other is non-Christian assumes complex theological and political knowledges were structured and deployed through a predetermined grid. I would further suggest such a method not only misses the various contestations and negotiations of different epistemological and ideational locations, but also risks occluding processes of appropriation and hybridity that shaped and continue to influence the trajectories of modernity.

After the conquest of Granada, and in the wake of the expulsion and forced conversions of Jews and Muslims, it was Christopher Columbus who broached Spain as fulfilling a Christian millennial vision:

> Your Highnesses, as Catholic Christians, and princes who love and promote the holy Christian faith, and are enemies of the doctrine of Mahomet, and of all idolatry and heresy, determined to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the above-mentioned countries of India, to see the said princes, people, and territories, and to learn their disposition and the proper method of converting them to our holy faith; and furthermore directed that I should not proceed by land to the East, as is customary, but by a Westerly route, in which direction we have hitherto no certain evidence that any one has gone.[55]

Columbus' messianic discourse should be placed within an incorporative sacred temporal structure in order to understand the parameters of Spanish imperialism; indeed, Spanish empire was not simply a task of trouncing Portugal for dominance over material resource expropriation, but also of the unfolding of the Time of Salvation consecrated by divine

[53]Seth, op. cit. 21
[54] Ibid, 23
[55] Columbus, Christopher, letters, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/columbus1.asp>

authority (discussed further below). In other words I would like to gesture to the complex entanglements between particular Christian theological imputations of conversion and salvation in addition to competing imperial territorial expansion voyages, material resource expropriation and juridical registers and how they assembled, in often contradictory ways, vis-à-vis Indigenous peoples and lands of the Americas.

Subsequent to Columbus' exploits emerges a main point of tension between papal temporal and metaphysical claims of authority and the sovereign claim of Spanish empire over the New World. Pope Alexander VI's papal bull divided the Americas between the Spanish and Portugal in order to secure the spread of Christianity and to maintain a balance of power between the two Atlantic imperial states.[56] However, Ferdinand sought to secure temporal and spiritual dominance under the yoke of Spanish empire. Ferdinand created several theological and juridical bodies, or *juntas* in order to authorize the establishment of Spanish sovereign claim, beyond the Church, over the New World and its people.[57]

Theological Filiations of Spanish Settler Sovereign Power

Anthony Anghie suggests that theologian and jurist Francisco de Vitoria represents a key figure in the production of Spanish sovereign claim vis-à-vis Indigenous peoples of the Americas. For Anghie, one of the main concerns for Vitoria was not establishing order among *a priori* sovereign entities; instead, Vitoria's epistemological and juridical conundrum was one of translating cultural difference: "Who is sovereign?

[56]Wynter, op. cit. 291; Pagden, op. cit. 29
[57]Wynter, op. cit. 291-2

What are the powers of a sovereign? Are the Indians sovereign? What are the rights and duties of the Indians and the Spaniards? How are the respective rights and duties of the Spanish and the Indians to be decided?"[58] In order to address these questions, Anghie states that Vitoria explores the social and cultural registers of Indigenous life: their rituals, customs and behaviors.

For peoples of the Americas and peoples of Africa a question loomed: where does one place them in the Chain of Being? Hodgen states that there were various options for slotting in the non-European within the chain of being:

> First, the savage could be accepted as a man like other men, and inserted in the scale of being with European and other known men; second, he could be regarded as something different from and less than, European man, and be inserted in the scale in a secondary human category; or third, he could be interpreted as an animal, and given a place, perhaps the highest, among the other animals.[59]

Within the dominant theocentric frame that conceptualized human difference through Biblical monogenesis, the neo-Platonic Chain of Being necessitated apprehending Indigenous and African peoples through the category of human. While both Indigenous and African peoples may have been seen as animalistic in their cultural disposition and aesthetically reviled, or held in the liminal zone between curiosity and heretical horror, theologically speaking, they were still human. However, this conception undergoes shifts through the production of Vitoria's jurisprudence.

Anghie examines how the foundations for international law were coproduced through colonialism, rather than being fully formed in Europe and deployed to the colonies through a diffusionist historicist account. It is within this domain that I would

[58] Anghie, Anthony, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 15
[59]Hogden, op. cit. 405

like to supplement the work of Veracini, mentioned above, who espouses a form of modular European sovereignty that "migrates" to the colony in order to enact the production of a new and unique settler colonial sovereign claim. I will examine how Anghie indexes key shifts that emerged through Spanish sovereign claims over both papal and Indigenous authority, and the corollary of new representational logics concerning the ontology of both the Spanish and Indigenous peoples of the Americas.

Anghie argues that Vitoria opposed the normative juridical framework that binds human relations through divine law, and he contested, as mentioned above, the right for conquest by way of papal decree sanctioned through the spread of the Christian faith. Instead, Vitoria argues that papal authority, established through divine law, should be displaced by the power of a "secular sovereign" figure ruling on the basis of natural law. Anghie states that at this juncture of the Renaissance, Vitoria was not able to produce a coherent notion of what exactly the sovereign is: if it relates to a state like formation, or general polity with a system of laws.[60] This establishment of natural law relates to the Indigenous subject because the registers of ownership and property were deemed, according to Vitoria, to be outside the scope of divine papal authorization. In other words, for Vitoria, ecclesiastical decree cannot deny Indigenous peoples their property simply because they are unbelievers.[61]

Vitoria further truncates the normative grounds for Spanish – and by extension other European nations deriving their right to conquest by referencing the papacy – conquest by stating that temporal and spatial jurisdiction over the earth is not derived

[60]Anghie, op. cit. 25
[61] Ibid, 17-8

from religious license, nor does the pope hold dominion over unbelievers because they could not be bound to a law before being subject to it:

> Vitoria denies that the sovereign, the Emperor, could have acquired universal temporal authority through the universal spiritual authority of Christ and the Pope. He questions whether divine law could provide the basis for temporal authority, methodically denies a number of assertions of Papal authority and concludes that "The Pope is not civil or temporal lord of the whole world in the proper sense of the words 'lordship' and 'civil power.'"[62]

In Anghie's reading, this generates a problem regarding jurisdiction for Vitoria as it locates the Indigenous subjects as belonging to a different juridical order. As mentioned earlier, theologically speaking, Indigenous peoples were still considered human. Vitoria relies upon reason and installs it as a universal category to resolve the problem of differential jurisdiction.[63] Vitoria states, "the true state of the case is that they are not of unsound mind but have according to their kind, the use of reason"[64] and, hence, are bound by the doctrine of *jus gentium.*

This doctrine, which not did fall under divine law, but natural law, binds all nations and is administered by the sovereign. *Jus gentium* allows the Spanish the right to "travel" and "sojourn" in the Americas, and, as a result, Indigenous peoples cannot prevent it. Vitoria paradoxically hails forth theological legitimacy from monogenesis, suggesting in the days of Noah it would be inhuman to deny the permission of travel. This illustrates that despite Vitoria stating that legitimacy for territorial incursion by Spanish empire did not require theological license, but rather the authority of the law of

[62] Ibid, 19
[63] Ibid, 20
[64] Ibid, 20, quoted from: Vitoria, Francisco de, *Des Indies,* pp. 127

nations via universal reason, he still deploys theological monogenesis as the translatable category for a hybrid sacred-profane conception of the human.

While it would seem Indigenous peoples are able to reach perfectibility by way of the faculty of reason ordering the passions (hailing forth Mirandola and the Chain of Being), they are still culturally different to the Spanish. This presents a paradox: the Indian is both universal and particular. It would seem that for Vitoria, while reason is the central category to ascend the Chain of Being and realize a perfected self, rather than fall to the realm of beasts, it is Catholic Christianity and Spanish cultural practices that are positioned as the pinnacle form for refining reason.

Anghie suggests that Vitoria reintroduces Christian norms as originating in the universally applicable law of nations. Put differently, Vitoria's previously held decision displacing divine law with natural law, authorized by reason, repositions normative Christian categories within the universal matrix of *jus gentium*. The basis for waging war upon Indigenous peoples for resisting conversion is now achieved through hailing forth *jus gentium* authorized by the sovereign figure instead of divine authority.[65] Indeed, the theological is not evacuated, but rather rearranged within an emerging colonial apparatus that is not fully formed at this juncture of the Renaissance, but rather congealing. Indigenous peoples were then seen by Vitoria to be inherently incapable of waging a just war because only sovereign entities have this power. Consequently, Indians are intrinsically conceptualized as non-sovereign, or, in Anghie's words: "partially sovereign",

> Vitoria's insistence, in his analysis on just war, that only Christian subjectivity is recognized by the laws of war, ensures that the Indians are excluded from the realm of

[65] Ibid, 23

> sovereignty and exist only as the objects against which Christian sovereignty may exercise its power and wage war.[66]

Hence, because the Indian is represented as pagan they can be subject to a perpetual war; moreover, they are ontologically unable to fulfill the requirements to resist Spanish expansion. Anghie suggests that Vitoria represents the Indian at this juncture as "unredeemable" – the only solution to the unbeliever becomes death, Vitoria states,

> And this is especially the case against the unbeliever, from whom it is useless ever to hope for a just peace on any terms. And as the only remedy is to destroy all of them who can bear arms against us, provided they have already been in fault.[67]

This determination of the ontological status of the Indigenous subject as *naturally unredeemable* is a moment of reintroducing Aristotelian notions of natural slavery into Vitoria's theological itinerary. John Mair, Scottish theologian and thinker deployed neo-Aristotelian philosophy in order to theorize the inherent slavery of Indigenous peoples. Pagden suggests that Vitoria was influenced by Mair's thought during his time at College de Saint Jacques at Paris where Mair and his colleagues left a venerable intellectual mark by merging ancient moral philosophy with theology and jurisprudence.[68] Mair comments upon the natural condition of inherent slavery of the Indian,

> And this has now been demonstrated by experience, wherefore the first person to conquer them, justly rules over them because they are by nature slaves. As the Philosopher says in the third and fourth chapters of the first book of the *Politics,* it is clear that some men are by nature slaves, others by nature free; and in some men it is determined that there is such a thing and that they should benefit from it. And it is just that one man should be a slave and another free, and it is fitting that one man should rule and another obey, for the quality of leadership is also inherent in the natural master.[69]

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[66] Ibid, 26
[67] Ibid, 27, quoted from Vitoria 183
[68] Pagden, op. cit. 40
[69] Ibid, 38, quoted from, Mair, John, *Distinctio*

For Mair, Aristotle's *Politics* was not a commentary upon the specific conditions of fourth century Athens, but rather a universal categorization that some humans are intrinsically natural masters and others are barbarous slaves. The representation of Indigenous people through the commingling of different philosophical, juridical and theological domains by Vitoria raises a series of vital questions: if Indigenous peoples are naturally unredeemable, were they still candidates for conversion? Was the temporal structure of the Time of Salvation evacuated, or rearranged into a different temporal schema? If the Indigenous subject was simultaneously both inherently unredeemable and a suitable candidate for conversion, how was cultural and religious difference apprehended and represented? Finally, what were the implications for conceptualizing the category of the human through the entangled registers of theology and humanism in the wake of empire?

For Wynter, this juncture indexes a major shift in the incorporative schema of Latin Christian theological salvation where the human was able to access redemption through penance articulated by the religious authority of the Church. In this reading, Vitoria introduces a new hybrid religio-secular conception of the human. Anghie provides details of this shift by suggesting Vitoria's instantiation of the universal category of reason generates an ontology of the Indian that is simultaneously secular-humanist under the doctrine of *just gentium* and religious due to being a pagan. Put another way, the Indian is ontologically constituted by reason and is thus capable of using reason to reach perfectibility authorized by Catholic Christianity and Spanish cultural practices (these two domains are not mutually exclusive). However, paradoxically, Indians are pagan, thus inherently incapable of using reason to reach a theologically

sanctioned form of perfectibility in order to gain sovereign status coeval with Spanish imperial sovereign power. The category of redemption was displaced from the domain of penance primarily defined by the religious jurisdiction of the Church to new secular powers invested in the sovereign.

Anghie suggests the sovereign is a secular figure. I would suggest that while the sovereign figure authorizes its right to travel and sojourn separate from papal authority, Vitoria secures this legitimacy by referencing the metaphysical permissibility of earthly travel articulated in monogenesis. I read Anghie and Wynter together in order to suggest that the sovereign entity is a hybrid religio-secular entity and that therefore religious authority is not eliminated, but rather is displaced, rearranged and articulated to various discursive locations due to shifts in relations of power.

Ways of apprehending time also underwent displacements: what else could account for a temporal transformation in what Fabian characterizes as the Time of Salvation? Fabian suggests that it is only at a later juncture of the Enlightenment with its corollary of the decline in celestial understandings of agency, that the universal structure of history was retained while its specific divine Christian character was transformed. For instance, Fabian describes the epistemological shifts in experiences of travel within the context of secular understandings of space, agency and the origin of humankind,

> In the Christian tradition, the Savior's and the saints' passages on earth had been perceived as constituent events of a sacred history…But for the established bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century, travel was to become (at least potentially) every man's source of 'philosophical knowledge… Religious travel had been *to* the centers of religion, or *to* the souls to be saved; now, secular travel was *from* the centers of learning and power to places where man was to find nothing but himself…religious and metaphysical searches for mankind's origin and destiny were to give place to a radically immanent vision of humanity at home in the entire world and at all times.[70]

[70]Fabian, op. cit. 6-7

For Fabian, travel, as a technique of disenchanted self-realization marks the emergence of the secularization of time. I read Fabian, Anghie and Wynter together and suggest that the colonial "encounter," the emergence of a hybrid religio-secular conception of human, in addition to the emergence of the settler colonial state indexes the antecedents of Fabian's eighteenth century production of a "radically immanent version of humanity." Or, alternatively, one could suggest there is an issue of competing or conflicting periodization issues with these different thinkers.

I would suggest that the structuring temporal coordinates at this juncture of the renaissance should be still be conceptualized as the Time of Salvation with its incorporative logic, but with a rearranged schema. On the one hand, redemption of the true Christian took place upon the axis of penance defined by religious authority. The Age of Exploration, and the thought of Vitoria, indexes redemption of the hybrid sacred-secular sovereign upon the axis of reason authorized by the juridical spheres of the emerging state, yet still sanctioned by monogenesis.

On the other hand, the Indian is drawn into the rearranged incorporative temporal logic of the Time of Salvation, which means they are split between being candidates for redemption, but, in the end, are represented as inherently unredeemable. They get incorporated into a temporal logic that redeems them through destruction and as a labor force for Spanish sovereign expansion of empire. However, if this is the case, why attempt to Christianize the pagan? Why bother with the elaborate institution of Christian missionaries? As I have argued, a clear European Christian self-identity was not simply transposed onto the New World. These multifarious interests were not unified within a

single linear expansive logic; instead, the Age of Exploration produced further fragmentation of a bounded Spanish, Christian, and European character.

The Indian was put in an impossible ontological location: bound by universal reason articulated by the universally binding law of nations the Indian cannot have their property expunged by simple virtue of not being Christian; however, denying Spanish imperial incursion would violate Biblical narratives of reciprocity sanctioned by Noachian monogenesis. Simultaneously, Indians are pagan, so the use of their reason cannot lead them to sovereign status, and, thus, salvation. Rather, they are conceptualized as naturally unredeemable through the re-articulation of, ironically, "pagan" Aristotelian philosophy espoused by Mair. Wynter states,

> It is, therefore, the very humanist strategy of returning to the pagan thought of Greece and Rome for arguments to legitimate the state's rise to hegemony, outside the limits of the temporal sovereignty claimed by the papacy, that now provides a model for the invention of a by-nature difference between "natural masters" and "natural slaves," one able to replace the Christian/Enemies-of-Christ legitimating difference.[71]

As Pagden and Wynter suggest, the determination of the Indians as natural slaves in accordance with neo-Aristotelian thought coincides with the shifting production of the ontology of the human as able to reach salvation through using reason in order to adhere to the emerging juridical political space of the emerging settler colonial state.

Bartolome de las Casas, Juan Gines de Sepulveda and Natural Slavery

It is within the aforementioned shift from theocentric conceptions of the human to a hybrid sacred-profane rational one that Bartolome de las Casas and Juan Gines de

[71]Wynter, op. cit. 297

Sepulveda would hold their famous debates at Valladolid. For Wynter, despite this shift, she stresses that there was not a complete epistemological break, but rather the emerging conception of rational human contains the traces of Christian metaphysics as well as its theological "schematic structure."[72] Further, despite Sepulveda's humanist arguments he was still wedded to a millennial vision of global Christianity. Sepulveda had served under Cardinal Tomas de Vio Caytano between 1469 and 1534 as an assistant in producing the New Testament in Spanish and was a head figure in refuting the ideas of Martin Luther in the Counter-Reformation.[73] Further, Pagden suggests Sepulveda's *Democrates secundus* was a final installation of a trilogy that began in 1529 with *Ad Carolum ut bellum suscipiat in Turcas* calling for another Christian crusade against the Muslim Turk.[74]

Sepulveda's natural slavery discourse authorized by Mair's integration of Aristotelian philosophy was not simply a conception of differing degrees of reason under the rubric of the human; rather, in Wynter's reading, it indexed a shift to representations of differing degrees of the human itself.[75] However, again, it should be stressed that Indigenous peoples were not simply understood as inhuman, or as animals, or as racial Others at this juncture. For Sepulveda, the Indian was still a candidate for conversion under what I have suggested is a reordered metaphysical temporal structure of redemption; hence, the Indian was still considered human.[76]

Las Casas appealed largely to arguments of St. Thomas Aquinas – Aquinas was the one of central consultants for the Dominican order and influenced the work of

[72] Ibid, 288
[73]Clayton, op. cit. 131
[74]Pagden, op. cit. 114
[75]Wynter, op. cit. 299
[76]Seth, op. cit. 39

Vitoria, who Las Casas also referenced – who conceptualized the origins of the pagan condition through two main categories. The first category of pagans was the "invincibly ignorant," which by no fault of their own were not exposed to the truth of Christianity. For Las Casas, successful conversion of the invincibly ignorant Indian was his primary concern, and, importantly, he did not challenge neo-Aristotelian thought regarding natural slavery, but entered into the dialectic with a normative Christian theological repertoire.[77] I would suggest his famous Defense of the Indian can, in part, be understood as a further development of the noble savage tradition, which, arguably, could be sourced to Columbus' diary entries that Las Casas abstracted and studied closely. Columbus remarks,

> It has often occurred when I have send two or three of my men to any of the villages to speak with the natives, that they have come out in a disorderly troop, and have fled in such haste at the approach of our men, that the fathers forsook their children and the children of their fathers. This timidity did not arise from any loss or injury that they had received from us; for, on the contrary I gave to all I approached whatever articles I had about me, such as cloth and many other things, taking nothing of their in return: but they are naturally timid and fearful. As soon however as they see that they are safe, and have laid aside all fear, they are very simple and honest, and exceedingly liberal with all they have; none of them refusing any thing he may possess when he is asked for it, but on the contrary inviting us to ask them. They exhibit great love towards all others in preference to themselves: they also give objects of great value for trifles, and content themselves with very little or nothing in return.[78]

The naturally timid and childlike character of the Amerindian in of Columbus' representations is related to the later noble savage discourse of Michel de Montaigne and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, which juxtaposed an originary and uncorrupted "natural human" to one of modern European decadence (discussed in chapter three). In short, the sacred temporal and ontological coordinates of this juncture of the Renaissance could not

[77] Ibid, 44
[78] Columbus, *Four Voyages to the New World*, op. cit. pp. 6-7

represent the Indigenous subject as a non-coeval, pre-modern analogue to European moral and political depravity. Instead, I suggest that for Columbus and Las Casas, representing Indigenous peoples as child-like malleable candidates for Catholic conversion was generated through a larger representational matrix of this epoch: the Time of Salvation operative in relation to the image of the Muslim infidel and the recalcitrant Jew. I suggest conversion, and more precisely *sincere* conversion, represents a central conceptual location to understand Las Casas' defense of the Indian.

The crisis of authentic conversion with regards of the Jew and Muslim, as well as the urgency concerning conquering Muslim Spain were significant factors in seeking candidates for conversion in order to fulfill the widely circulated eschatological vision and millennial ambition: the apocalyptic triumph of Christendom. I am not seeking to reduce these processes to a singular origin; however, the political climate in Spain concerning a purified Catholic polity and global evangelical mission is where I locate the theological political epistemological coordinates of Las Casas and Sepulveda's famous debates.

Las Casas's defense of Indigenous peoples of the New World is often celebrated as a heroic discourse drawn from an unprejudiced universal human impulse. In my reading, however, Las Casas's putatively valiant defense for Indigenous autonomy and peace is constitutive of a Noble Savage discourse produced in opposition to the figures of *true barbarism*: Muslims and Jews that represented an existential threat to the theocentric conception of the human: the True Christian self.

There are three main points I will focus upon concerning Las Casas's defense. First, without proper theological justification the Indigenous pagan could not *a priori* fall

under the jurisdiction of the Church as this would justify Muslim rule in Spain and Ottoman ascension. Second, while the Indian is not forced to become Catholic, they are bound by universal natural law to receive the gospel and may not stop it from being spread. Third, forced conversion would produce inauthentic neophytes, the same reviled vintage of *converso* and *morisco* that infected Spain. Instead, authentic converts are required in order to fulfill a Christian eschatological narrative culminating in global Christendom. Much like Vitoria, Las Casas was concerned with legitimate jurisdiction and the translation of religious and cultural difference.

For Las Casas, if ecclesiastical authority was generated *a priori* over the New World simply because the Indian was an unbeliever, this would authorize Muslim expansion:

> [If] war against the Indians were lawful, one nation might rise up against another and one man against another man, and on the basis pretext of superior wisdom, might strive to bring the other into subjection. On this basis the Turks, and the Moors – the truly barbaric scum of the nations – with complete right in accord with the law of nature could carry on war, which, as it seems to some, is permitted to us by lawful decrees of the state. If we admit this, will not everything high and low, divine and human, be thrown into confusion?[79]

Las Casas does not rebuke the use of neo-Aristotelian philosophy for formulating the parameters of legitimate religious expression; indeed, rogues exist in the form of the Muslim infidel, who, for Las Casas, is incapable of producing legitimate jurisprudence, let alone a just war. Las Casas relies on the category of natural reason, as Aquinas did before him, suggesting that the Muslim is endowed with human quality. However, he rejects the gospel and remain abased in worldly pleasure and sin; consequently, the Muslim descends to the realm of animals. We see here the reformulated Great Chain of

[79] Las Casas, Bartolome, *In Defense of the Indians*, Northern Illinois University Press, 1992

Being articulated by Mirandola employed to plot the Muslim as human yet animalistic through the category of reason. Despite being philosophically and politically erudite, "truly barbaric" Islamic "scum" represented the genuine threat to Catholic Spain as they willfully wallow in sexual debauchery as well as other perverse carnal pleasures. Las Casas remarks,

> The Turks and Arabs are a people said to be well versed in political affairs. But how can they be honored with this reputation for uprightness when they are an effeminate and luxury-loving people, given to every sort of sexual immorality? The Turks, in particular, do not consider impure and horrible vices worthy of punishment.
> Furthermore, neither the Greeks nor the Romans nor the Turks nor the Moors should be said to be exercising justice, since neither prudence nor justice can be found in a people that does recognize Christ, as Augustine proves.
> When, therefore, those who are devoid of Christian truth have sunk into vices and crimes and have strayed from reason in many mays, no matter how well versed they may be in the skills of government, and certainly all those who do not worship Christ, either because they have not heard his words even by hearsay or because, once they have heard them, reject them, all these are true barbarians.[80]

While he does mention Greeks and Romans, Las Casas pays special attention to the Muslim, in particular the Muslim sexual travesties and moral bankruptcy he perceives. He views them as being legitimate candidates for punishment – including death. Interestingly, Las Casas deems all "true barbarians" those who do not worship Christ. However, he devotes attention towards distinguishing between the vincibly and invincibly ignorant throughout the *Defense*.

For the invincibly ignorant Indian pagan, they are all represented as *potential subjects* of Christ, but not yet voluntary and thus not subject to the authority of the Church. For Las Casas, the Church had no prior jurisdiction over the pagan even if their religious and cultural practices were reviled as demonic or misplaced imputations of divine agency. Paradoxically, however, as *potential subjects* the Indian pagan is placed

[80] Ibid, 51

under the dominion of Christian spatio-temporal divine provenance. Las Casas suggests all creatures in heaven and earth fall under dominion of Christ and he appeals to last chapter of the Gospel to authorize Christian legitimacy, "…according to Matthew: 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me,' and so all peoples of the earth are his (Christ's) subjects by the authority and power over every creature he has received, not only as God but also as man, from the Eternal Father."[81] Further Las Casas states, "…the gospel must be preached to all nations without distinction, in a brotherly and friendly manner, along with the offering the forgiveness of sins."[82] As a result, Christians have a theologically sanctioned obligation to spread the gospel globally; however, they may not forcibly convert others, he passionately states,

> For men are obliged by the natural law to do many things they cannot be forced to do against their will. We are bound by the natural law to embrace virtue and imitate the uprightness of good men. No one, however, is punished for being bad unless he is guilty of rebellion. Where the Catholic faith has been preached in a Christian manner and as it ought to be, all men are bound by the natural law to accept it, yet no one is forced to accept the faith of Christ. No one is punished because he is sunk in vice, unless he is rebellious or harms the property and persons of others. No one is forced to embrace virtue and show himself as a good man. One who receives a favor is bound by the natural law to return the favor by what we call antidotal obligation. Yet no one is forced to this, nor is he punished if he omits it.[83]

Here Las Casas bounds all Indigenous peoples to universal natural law, just as Vitoria did before him, the Indian is not forced to become Catholic, but they may not stop the Gospel from being disseminated. If they were to prevent Catholicism from being preached this would render them rebellious, and, therefore, in breach of natural law. This illustrates the entanglement between religious authority, which was punctuated by the theocentric temporality of salvation regarding the production of *potential subjects* of Christ, and

[81] Ibid, 56
[82] Ibid, 93
[83] Ibid, 46

secular authority inscribed by the political jurisdiction to rule over non-Christian lands. Consequently, Las Casas produced a hybrid religio-secular form of power by drawing from both Vitoria and Aquinas concerning the inherent right to spread Catholicism.

Aquinas's famous *Summa Theologica* produced new authoritative exegesis for the doctrine of just war. For Aquinas, if the unfaithful were to "hinder Christ's faith" it was that they be met with defensive force. Aquinas applied the notion of hindering Christ's faith through such a wide scope that through the category of *defense* Catholicism could wage a perpetual global war against the theological-ontological status of unbelief.[84] Aquinas states,

> there are some who have never received the faith, such as the heathens and the Jews; and these are by no means to be compelled to the faith, in order that they may believe, because to believe depends on the will; nevertheless they should be compelled by the faithful, if it be possible to do so, so that they do not hinder the faith, by their blasphemies, or by their evil persuasions, or even by their open persecutions. It is for this reason that Christ's faithful often wage war with unbelievers, not indeed for the purpose of forcing them to believe (for even if they were to conquer them, and take them prisoners, they should still leave them free to believe, if they will), but in order to prevent them from hindering the faith of Christ.[85]

Similarly Las Casas argues the pagan should not be forcibly brought under the yoke of Christian authority, and, like Aquinas, Las Casas does not broach reasons of unbelief as the basis for spread of Catholicism and defensive acts of violence. Rather, the very ontology of unbelief justifies the global spread of Catholicism – acts of vengeance are subsequently licensed through a defensive war against rebellion. In fact Las Casas defends Indigenous cultural and religious practices at various moments, even suggesting they are "governed by laws that at very many points surpass ours, and could have won

[84] Mastnak, Tomaz, *Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World, and Western Political Order*, University of California Press, pp. 214
[85] Ibid, 213, quoted from Aquinas, Thomas, *Summa Theologica*

the admiration of the sages of Athens"; however, they are rendered *rebellious* if they impede the Catholic faith.

This is not to simply suggest, however, that Las Casas was not interested in authentic non-violent conversions. I would suggest he certainly was concerned with acts of violent forcible conversion as theologically it was prohibited. Moreover, as I have suggested above, the use of coercion would generate inauthentic converts just as Spain's *conversos* and *moriscos*: a locus of intense anxiety in Spain. Much like Columbus, Las Casas suggests that the Indian pagan is an innocent and childlike subject,

> completely innocent, meek, harmless, temperate and quite ready and willing to receive and embrace the word of God…And so what man of sound mind will approve a war against men who are harmless, ignorant, gentle, temperate, unarmed, and destitute of every human defense?[86]

Representations of the Indigenous neophyte as harmless and ignorant noble savages did not generate a rejection of Spanish empire and the spread of Catholicism; instead, this representational matrix appealed to his mandate of generating *authentic* converts. As stated above, this placed these *potential subjects* of Christ in an impossible double location: accept the gospel peacefully, or, resist conversion and be constituted as rebellious agents preventing the Word.

This is further confirmed through his various petitions and letters in 1517, 1518, 1531 and 1543 for the introduction of "justly obtained" African slaves in the Americas to replace the dwindling Indigenous population and beleaguered Spanish settlers.[87] In these appeals, and in his famous recanting, Las Casas was more concerned that acts of violence impeded authentic conversion. For instance, Las Casas reflected upon the first chronicle

[86]Las Casas, op. cit. 26
[87]Clayton, op. cit. 139

of Gomez Eanes de Zurara's Portuguese slave expedition of 1444 upon the west coast of Africa. Zurara's accounts recorded the forced partition of toddlers from their grieving mothers and children from their parents, causing Zurara to remark with astonishing disregard: "the partition took a lot of trouble."[88] For Las Casas, Portuguese empire and slavery is not what primarily concerned him; instead he lamented about the potential for conversion. What sincerity, he queried,

> could they have for the faith, for Christian religion, so as to convert to it, those who wept as they did, who grieved, who raised their eyes, their hands to heaven, who saw themselves, against the law of nature, against all human reason, stripped of their liberty, or their wives and children, of their homeland, of their peace?"[89]

Las Casas, writing in the third person, would further state,

> This note to give license to bring black slaves to these lands was first given by the cleric Casas, not taking into account the injustice with which the Portuguese captured and enslaved them; then, having discovered this, he would not for all the world advocate this, for he held enslaving them both unjust and tyrannical; and the same goes for the Indians.[90]

For Lawrence Clayton, Las Casas's moving words are apprehended as a passionate rejection of slavery and territorial expropriation. Conversely, I would suggest that Las Casas was not diametrically opposed to enslavement, imperial territorial expansion, or various acts of violent punishment. Despite his recanting of advocating for African enslavement, he remained resolute that the proposed slaves were obtained by just title. He rejected forcible conversion and was repelled by the violent imposition of the Gospel, as this would presuppose an *a priori* jurisdiction over peoples and lands. Rather, when "the Catholic faith has been preached in a Christian manner and as it ought to be, all men are

[88] Ibid, quoted from Zurara, Gomez Eanes de
[89] Ibid, 140, quoted from Las Casas, *The Defense*
[90] Ibid, 143, quoted from Las Casas, *The Defense*

bound by the natural law to accept it."[91] Thus, he advocated Catholicism's spread through acts of non-material violence, in short, to spread the Gospel through kindness in order to produce a sincere conversion of the heart. However, one was obliged to receive the gospel and not prevent doing so, which would constitute an act of disobedience, or war requiring defensive punishment.

He also discusses the legitimacy of destroying pagan idols, and states the church has no power to do so, stating,

> Christ did not give the Church power over the pagans to annoy, persecute, afflict, and arouse them to riot and sedition, and to hatred of the Christian religion, but (only the power) of gentleness, service, kindness, and the words of the gospel to encourage them to put on the gentle yoke of Christ…punishing pagans who worship idols is not the business of the Church since it sets up an obstacle to the gospel.[92]

The central locus of concern Las Casas identifies in the above passages concerning breaches against the law of nature and human reason was preventing the potential neophyte from embracing Christ. I have attempted to locate Las Casas within the temporal structure of Salvation, with a commitment to an ontology of the human as a True Christian in relation to the theological political crisis of the spread of Islam, and obstinate *conversos* and *moriscos*. Through this reading, I would suggest that Las Casas was opposed to imperialism and slavery *only* when inhibiting the evangelical mission of producing authentic converts.

For Sepulveda, the idolatry and cannibalistic rituals of the Aztecs were not simply conceived as false, or demonic imputations of divine agency, but evidence of their inherent slave nature. Yet, paradoxically, as mentioned, he still conceptualized them as

[91] Las Casas, op. cit. 46
[92] Ibid, 72

subjects for conversion.[93] Indigenous sacred practices were apprehended as crimes against humanity as translated through universal natural law. For Sepulveda and Mair, the Indian was drawn into the universal category of natural law and then paradoxically through this inclusion is conceptualized as being an intrinsic slave due to cultural and religious difference. Hence, the Indian is not simply excluded from the logic of universal reason, but is constituted as an unredeemable barbarous slave through its very coordinates; thereby indexing the aporetic universal-particularity of Christian European culture. As I will elaborate upon below, the convergence between increased competition between the Atlantic imperial nations for dominance in trade, epistemological shifts in apprehending time, and the increased privatization of religion would lead to Sepulveda's conception of differential taxonomies of human difference to emerge as hegemonic principals.

Despite the production of entangled registers of Christian theology, ancient Greek philosophy and jurisprudence within the historical context of emerging imperial territorial expansion, Hodgen suggests there were various articulations that positioned so-called savage man as sub-human, or a superior animal type. For Hodgen, travel writing regarding marvelous creatures of the New World challenged theological notions of difference represented through the category of the human. Hodgen states,

> In the first book on America, published in English in 1511 (or even earlier in a Dutch edition), the Indians were described as "lyke bestes without any reasonableness…And they ete also on(e) a nother. The man etethe his wyf his chylderne…they hange also the bodyes or persons fleeshe in the smoke as men do with us swynes fleshe"[94]

[93]Seth, op. cit. 44
[94]Hogden, op. cit. 409, quoted from Anonymous, 1511, Antwerp (Dutch, translated into English)

In fact, as Seth argues, we can trace representations of the marvelous and fabulous that continue to "haunt" the modern itinerary of apprehending diversity. Seth states,

> the relevance of the wild man extends beyond the temporal bounds of the Classical and Medieval world and continues to haunt the imagination of the Renaissance through images of cannibalism; the ideals of the enlightenment through representations of noble savagery and…the unconscious of modern men and women (the wild man within; the wild man as pathology).[95]

For Seth, tales of monsters and wild men living on the periphery of the world widely circulated throughout voyage writings, poetry and political theories, and this has continued into the modern era.

Representations of human difference were heterodox and are not reducible to a simple logic of excluding Amerindian and African peoples from the category of the human in order to authorize imperialism. Rather the very notion of what registers were held to characterize the human was a site of uncertainty as well as intense debate and inquiry. As such, a clear and coherent self/other discourse was not deployed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries – this would presuppose that a fully formed conception of European self-identity was positioned against an equally coherent representation of the Other. One can read Wynter, Hodgen and Anghie as illustrating that to represent a homogenous fully formed European entity before the colonial "encounter" took place is false; rather, their work illustrates that the New World was a venue for examining the fragmentation and subsequent coagulation of a contingent European self-identity – this process, therefore, was not based upon a linear trajectory. Going back to my initial argument in relation to Veracini, I suggest that a modular form of corporate settler

[95] Seth, Vanita, "Difference with a Difference: Wild Men, Gods and Other Protagonists," Parallax, 9(4) pp. 77

sovereign capacity, underpinned by "the settler archive of the European imagination" did not precede the colonial conflict, but was constituted *through* it. Put differently, a structure of sovereign entitlement was not produced by processes internal to Europe which then traveled to the New World in order to produce a distinct settler colonial formation; rather, it was provisionally fashioned through contested, negotiated and historically bounded processes of coloniality.

The New World represented a site for the contestation of various co-constituted theological, juridical, philosophical and material registers – not the simple displacement of a fully formed homogenous European self-identity or sovereign form within a new geographical context. As I have suggested, similar to Seth, Christian theological interpretations conflicted with each other, for instance: Vitoria's contestation of papal authority, and the debates between Las Casas and Sepulveda using theology, jurisprudence and Greek philosophy to authorize different conceptions of Indian difference and trajectories for Spanish empire. Finally, as Seth remarks aptly, the colonial conflict with the New World did not produce a secular European self-consciousness. Instead, by tracing various displacements and rearrangements of temporality, I argue that the metaphysical matrices of competing Christian theological interpretations were reordered, not excised, occluded, or overcome.

Hogden suggests that Renaissance thinkers throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries largely circulated the notion that cultural diversity remained traceable to the posterity of Noachian dispersal. Ethnological studies seeking to explain the Noahian origins of newly "discovered" cultural, religious and aesthetic differences proliferated and ruptured the commonly accepted notion of monogenesis. For instance,

Johann Boemus, struggled to reconcile his collected works of cultural customs and manners with conventional Biblical exposition.[96]

Boemus suggested it was Ham – son of Noah – and not Cain, who breached the Adamic lineage. Ham constituted a community that deviated from the original Adamic Christian path of divinity and subsequently devolved into wickedness and a plurality of reprobate behaviors as they moved across the earth. Boemus remarks that the descendants of Ham, having journeyed upon the path of uncivil and barbarous degenerationism have "hardly any difference be discerned between them and brute beasts.'"[97] Hogden states that there are various moments in Boemus' rather orthodox Biblical annotations that illustrate a discursive drift into notions of polygenesis, that is, plural moments of human creation. In Hodgen's reading, Boemus articulates the possibility of three geographical zones of human creation: Ethiopia, Judea and China. Hodgen states,

> Manifestly, in this dual or triple implantation of the race, Boemus appears less the advocate of a theory of plural creations than the victim of that intellectual conflict which afflicts any transitional generation. Or, since during the earlier Renaissance many men could not make up their minds on this and related questions, he stands as an example of that uncertainly.[98]

This "transitional generation" speaks to the contestation and production of a hybrid sacred-profane conception of man. Wynter argues that the discursive alignment of African peoples with the descendants of Ham would rearticulate itself with a conception of the "subrational Negro."[99] This again illustrates the double location of, in this case, African peoples within the theocentric structure of monogenesis: they are devoid of reason because they are not Christian, but they remain candidates for redemption.

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[96]Hogden, op. cit. 234
[97] Ibid
[98] Ibid, 235
[99]Wynter, op. cit. 306

I would suggest that what Hodgen reads as an "intellectual conflict" (also illustrated by Anghie, Wynter and my readings regarding the conflicting productions of African and Indigenous difference) can be understood as an aporia of redemptive colonial melancholy. This melancholic discourse produces the ontology of the Indigenous and African subject as necessarily redeemable due to the dominance of Biblical narratives of monogenesis. However, they were also conceptualized as inherently unredeemable for severing their lineage from the telos of divine provenance. Put another way, the Indian and African subjects were represented as being manifest from an originary Adamic heritage, and, thereby the redemptive temporal coordinates would locate them as candidates for incorporation into the Time of Salvation. However, through motley genealogical taxonomies, they were simultaneously represented as severing their Christian filiation thereby rendering them intrinsically incapable of employing a form of reason coeval with their colonial interlopers. Consequently, Indigenous and African peoples were represented as being natural slaves indexed by their repugnant, curious and ghastly cultural and religious practices.

Therefore, I push Hodgen, Wynter and Anghie's examinations towards reflection upon the aporia of a melancholic discourse with regards to the hybrid sacred-profane ontology of the peoples of the Americas and Africa. Paradoxically they were seen as both candidates for salvation within a reordered sacred genealogical temporal structure, but also seen as inherently unredeemable due to their lineage having resulted in the severing of the covenant with a particular representation of an original and authentic Christian heritage.

Crucially, at this juncture, it was not a scientific, biological notion of race that

constituted the ontology of the peoples of the Americas as intrinsically unredeemable. This is because temporality was not yet universalized and generalized under the rubric of secular historical time in order to allow for racial taxonomies. Rather, discursively, thinkers such as Boemus drifted between theologically authorized notions of monogenesis and more unconventional notions of polygenesis – but still under the rearranged redemptive temporal schema of the Time of Salvation. This, I have suggested represents an aporia of redemptive colonial melancholy, which is commensurate with Wynter's notion of a hybrid religio-secular production of human.

It should also be mentioned that during this period there was increased proliferation of civic political discourse that conceptualized the hierarchical Chain of Being through social duty. For instance, Jean Bodin applied the Chain of Being to notions of citizenship aimed to discourage the idea that all citizens were equal.[100] Within this social feudal structure, sovereign power loomed over estates that were comprised of several enclaves and each was endowed with specific qualities of purpose. For Wynter, the ushering in of this conception of man guided by reason is a result of a syncretism between a semi-secularized Judeo-Christian discourse of human perfectibility by way of disciplining the passions – described above through Mirandola – and man as a political subject of the state. Wynter suggests that the discourse of human perfectibility/imperfectability was now conceptualized in a modern form through the category of reason.[101] These epistemological and material shifts would still be wedded to the neo-Platonic hierarchical Chain of Being, but, crucially, not yet "secularized" in a

[100]Hogden, op. cit. 400-1
[101]Wynter, op. cit. 287

modern sense through biological notions of racial differentiation, nor fully apprehended by a modern secular empty homogenous temporal structure.

This point is important to note, as Wynter is not suggesting that the theological was completely evacuated by the emergence of the conception of rational man as a political subject of the emerging state. Rather, there was a reformulation of Christian conceptions of fallen man able to seek redemption through penance, as described above, such that man was now able to seek an entangled sacred-secular redemption through cultivating reason and disciplining his irrational nature.

> This redescription had, in turn, enabled the new behavior-motivating "plan of salvation" to be secularized in the political terms of the this-worldly goals of the state. Seeing that because the "ill" or "threat" was now that of finding oneself enslaved to one's passions, to the particularistic desires of one's human nature, salvation/redemption could only be found by the subject able to subdue his private interests in order to adhere to the laws of the politically absolute state, and thereby to the "common good." This meant that the primary behavior-motivating goal, rather than that of seeking salvation in the civitas dei, was now that of adhering to the goal of the civitas saecularis.[102]

This hybrid sacred-profane form of salvation would become embodied with the political subject subordinating his interests to the common good delineated by the juridical structure of the state. In illustrating these shifts, I am not attempting to trace a coherent and intelligible colonial "script" that every entity followed under a fully formed mantle of secular European consciousness. I have sought to illustrate above that scriptural readings would shift, in part, to deal with an ever-bloating ethnological itinerary generated through the Age of Exploration. I have examined how difference was apprehended through a complex and highly contested constellation of co-constituted theological narratives of Cain and his degenerate posterity, shifting to Ham and then supplemented with neo-

[102] Ibid, 288-9

Platonic and neo-Aristotelian philosophy in order to develop juridical solutions to the increasingly expansive Spanish and Portuguese colonial state.

As a result, I suggest that the ground for the emergence of settler sovereign capacity was constituted through complex processes concerning the Judeo-Christian theological structure of the Time of Salvation in relation to the sincere conversion of the infidel Muslim and Jew, which then culminated with the Age of Exploration. Consequently, the antecedents of the "settler archive of the European imagination" cannot be presumed to have formed prior to and outside of the sacred temporality of divine redemption and displacements of religious authority to a religio-secular sovereign power. Instead, I have sought to complicate the assumed category of a European self-identity that was transplanted to the colony through a structure of mimesis in order to generate a distinct sovereign claim.

In the next chapter, I will explore the political philosophy of John Locke in order to interrogate the structure of coloniality and the colonial matrix of power. I will examine the intensification of competing imperial territorial expansion voyages and index the contested terrain between various points of enunciation of coloniality in the registers of Christian theology, mercantile economic theory, and the principal of individuated property ownership. I will seek to illustrate the contingencies, contestations and co-imbrications of differing epistemological and temporal domains that prelude the emergence of a more coherent, but very much still enchanted European consciousness in the seventeenth century.

Chapter 3

John Locke, British Empire and the De-Mediation of Extra-Human Agency

In the previous chapter I attempted to suggest that the New World Indigenous inhabitants were largely apprehended through a discourse of similitude vis-à-vis the non-Christian pagan. As such, difference was constituted through assimilation and resemblances – the pagan could become knowable through the culling the annals of sacred texts and the production of genealogical maps that traced their origin back into an Adamic heritage. Also, I attempted to suggest that one of the major conditions of possibility for apprehending difference during the Renaissance was the temporal arrangement of the Time of Salvation, which structured the world through theocentric frames.

This chapter will examine the emergence of Locke's labour theory of property as a constitutive process of coloniality. This juncture represents a key epistemological reconfiguration of the Time of Salvation towards a transitory period where we see the incipient production of the autonomous individual no longer completely immersed within a theocentric temporal structure. Liberal[1] notions of the inward looking and self-governing subject influenced by Protestant theology and the colonization of the Americas create the material and epistemic circumstances for evacuating extra-human agency from

[1] I recognize that "liberalism" is a diverse and heterogeneous historical tradition, and I am cognizant that Locke should not be assimilated into the conceptual habitat of other liberal thinkers, such as Constant, Mill, Rawls, Hobbes, and others. As Talal Asad observes, "the history of liberalism in North America is not the same as that in Europe—or, for that matter, in parts of the global South where it can be said to have a substantial purchase. Liberalism isn't located simply in classical texts, and of course it jostles with other traditions in the West." For further reading, see Asad, Talal., et al. *Is Critique Secular?: Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech,* UC Berkeley: Doreen B. Townsend Center for the Humanities, 2009

land: this marks a key moment in the constitution of the individuated subject no longer absolutely subsumed by notions of divine decree.

I will examine John Locke's theory of property as it relates to the formulation of a defense of an English style plantation system in opposition to other colonial maritime powers. Further, I will also examine how Locke, in order to authorize English colonial possession of the Americas, was also informed by the Protestant Christian notion of de-mediating extra-human agency from land. I shall situate these processes of Lockean property acquisition within the decolonial frame of the colonial power matrix.

To date, two main frames of analysis have largely circumscribed Locke's theory of property. The first is the socioeconomic frame that situates his thought as an economic justification for English empire. This frame sees Locke's theory of property as emerging from individualist property rights, capitalist accumulation and self-interest shaped by the relationship between mercantilism and incipient capitalist relations. The second major frame focuses upon Locke's moral sensibilities shaped by Protestant theology and how his articulations of property are wedded to the Christian natural law tradition. This frame emphasizes Locke's belief in natural law as a divine structure linked to the intrinsic will of God's design, God's workmanship that authorizes human equality, and the ethical commitment for the common good over the hording of individual property.[2] On the one hand, the socioeconomic frame that suggests Lock's theory of property is predicated upon individual self-interest and unrestrained acquisition of property and wealth. On the other, the theological frame emphasizes the divinely authorized natural law tradition of

[2] Ince, Onur Ulas, "Enclosing in God's Name, Accumulation for Mankind: Money, Morality, and Accumulation in John Locke's Theory of Property," *The Review of Politics* 73, 2011, pp. 29-31

bounding individual self-interest and accumulation to a moral duty of serving others and maintaining common grant.

This chapter will situate the socioeconomic and theological registers of Locke's theory of property within the colonial power matrix thereby offering an alternative to the notion that these two domains are in opposition. I will illustrate that Locke's theory of property via the plantation model was, in part, produced in opposition to the dominant mercantile economic doctrines that shaped English imperialism as well as Spanish, Dutch, French and Portuguese maritime imperialist paradigms. However, rather than reducing Locke's thought to an economic justification for the theft of resources and territory, I will highlight the constitutive role of Protestant theology in the production of his theory of property. Hence, I will not reduce the theological to a justification for a deeper underlying materialist motivation that underpinned imperialism; instead, I will argue these two registers are entangled. I will argue that Locke's theory of property is dependent upon the de-mediation of extra-human agency from land, which is an epistemological pre-condition for enabling the colonial expropriation of territory from Indigenous people.

There have been recent studies that have attempted to link Locke's relationship to English colonialism and his personal involvement with colonial institutions (Barbara Arneil, Neil Wood, Herman Lebovics, David Armitage). While these studies have indexed Locke's investments in slave trading companies and his bureaucratic role as secretary to the Council of Trade and Plantations, they have largely reduced the domain of colonialism to an economic materialist motivation for resource expropriation. Consequently, these studies have fallen short of elucidating the overlapping registers of

colonialism, political economy and theology that emerge from plural points of enunciation. This study intends to examine the epistemological underpinnings of Locke's theory of property vis-à-vis overlapping hierarchies of power in order to help shift the conceptual terrain of analysis beyond the narrow registers of a purely economic justification or a theological one. I situate Locke's theory of property within the epistemological constellation of what Peruvian scholar Anibal Quijano calls the "colonial power matrix" and what others refer to as the colonialty of power. I argue that colonality is central to understanding how Locke's theory of property is generated from the co-imbrication of materialist interests in territorial expropriation and from theologically authorized discourses of property ownership by labour via settlement, planting and harvesting.

While I have outlined the importance of attending to the coloniality of power in previous sections, my appropriation of the decolonial frame is an analytical move of shifting the geo-politics of knowledge in order to uncover and trace the registers of the theo-political and ego-political underpinnings of Locke's thought. What I mean by tracing theo- and ego politics is the contestation of Eurocentric notion of a universal and neutral epistemological frame that underscores much of Western philosophical traditions of the colonial world-system. Santiago Castro-Gomez names the Eurocentric practice of concealing the particular point of view and contextual systems of power from which knowledge is produced as the "point zero" perspective. This "point zero" standpoint, "represents itself as being without a point of view. It is this 'god-eye view' that always

hides its local and particular perspective under an abstract universalism."[3] The majority of Locke scholarship has neglected the locations from which Locke speaks thereby reproducing the "ego-politics of knowledge", that is, a non-situated "ego" that delinks ethnic/racial/gender/sexual/theological registers from Locke's epistemic positions. As result of this delinking, Locke is represented as producing his theory of property through a universalistic frame that occludes the constitutive role concerning the coloniality of power.

Various theorists such as Walter Mignolo, Ramon Grosfugal, Gloria Anzaldua and Enrique Dussel, among others, suggest that every person speaks from a particular epistemological location that is wedded to overlapping systems of power – indeed Locke is no different. Nobody can step outside of the overlapping class, gender, racial, sexual, spiritual, linguistic, geographical and temporal registers of the colonial-capitalist world system that situate one's knowledges. Dussel and others calls this situated and contextualized field of partial knowledge production the "geo-politics of knowledge", or "body-politics of knowledge." Accordingly, I am attempting to re-situate Lockean scholarship within the body-politics of knowledge that defies the ego-political pretenses that conceal the processes of coloniality that serve as Locke's environment of enunciation for his theory of property.

I emphasize that Locke's theory of property and land ownership that unfolds through English and Protestant registers was universalized through the ego-politics of the colonial power matrix. The ideal conception of human subjectivity, land, and ownership

[3] Grosfogel, Ramon, "World-Systems Analysis in the Context of Transmodernity, Border Thinking, and Global Coloniality," Review (*Fernand Braudel Centre*), 29(2), 2006, pp. 168, from Castro-Gomez, Santiago, "La Hybris del Puto Cero: Biopoliticas imperials y colonialidad del poder en la Nueva Granada (1750-1810)," unpublished manuscript. Bogota, Columbia: Instituto Pensar, Universidad Javeriana, 2003

that Locke theorized was based upon a particular standpoint (body-politics, or geo-politics of knowledge) of what Mignolo calls "the perception of Christian, White, and European males."[4] The geo- and body-politics of knowledge concerning Locke's theory of property emerge from his experiences as a white/Protestant Christian/ English/ male situated within imperial and colonial contexts. Hence, I situate Locke's thought within the unfolding of a larger world-system that initiated itself in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (explored in chapter one). This larger world-system is underpinned by overlapping heterogeneous hierarchies, or *heterarchies* that has produced a structure of control and power of knowledge, economy, subjectivity that were regulated by the Atlantic colonial powers both in in their opposition to each other and in their exploitation of labour and expropriation of territory.[5] As a result, neither a reductionist political economy frame nor a theological one can capture the multifarious social relations that produce entangled and overlapping hierarchies of power and relations of domination over Indigenous inhabitants of the Americas.

Liberal Universalism, Coloniality and Locke's Theory of Property

Liberalism, in theory, is often held as having a universal and inclusive character. One only need invoke the categories of the universal associated with human equality and freedom along with social institutions that are meant to uphold these innate individual qualities in order to index inclusive liberal values and political visions. Conversely, when liberalism is examined as a historical process and political practice, it becomes associated

[4] Mignolo, Walter, *The Idea of Latin America*, Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005, pp. 15
[5] Mignolo, Walter, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, Duke University Press, pp. 7

with the subordination and political exclusion of various groups and identifiable types based upon race, class, gender, sexuality and so on. One could suggest, for instance, that theory is often located in a zone that is free of violence and that the historical exclusionary outcomes of liberalism are the product of attempting to put theory into practice. Further, one could suggest that dubious political actors have misapplied the universal and inclusive thrust of liberal theory due to individual forms of prejudice and that liberalism can be recuperated by including those historically left out. However, various thinkers such as Uday Singh Mehta, Walter Mignolo, Vandita Seth, Sylvia Wynter, Denise De Silva, and others suggest it is through the very production of universality[6] that forms of exclusionary violence are enacted and that liberal thought in particular unfolds as a constitutive feature of coloniality.

Jennifer Pitts, for instance, suggests that the relationship between liberalism and empire is largely debated upon disagreements as to whether or not liberalism has an imperialist thrust due to the values of equality and freedom being embodied in political doctrines such as the rule of law and notions of historical progress that necessitate the production of civilizing missions. Others suggest that political doctrines such as the rule of law is evidence of the commitment of liberal thought to the anti-imperialist principals

[6] The claim to universality is not special to liberal thought as articulations for universal foundations and corollary institutions to buttress them can be traced to theology, or Afro-Asiatic thought that came to underpin Greek philosophy. Mehta suggests that while, for instance, Platonic thought grounds its universal categories in a transcendent ontology, liberal notions of universalism finds its roots in human anthropological capacities that are present in all human beings from birth – termed "philosophical anthropology." Mehta states,

> …the universal claims can be made because they derive from certain characteristics that are common to all human beings. Central among these anthropological characteristics or foundations for liberal theory are the claims that everyone is naturally free, that they are, in the relevant moral respects, equal, and finally that they are rational. One might therefore say that the starting point for the political and institutional prescriptions of liberal theory is an anthropological minimum, or an anthropological common denominator (52).

For further reading, see Singh Mehta, Uday, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press: 1999

of self-government and universal human equality; consequently, the illiberal outcomes of European colonialism are outcomes of the failure to fully implement the universal categories prized by liberal theory by way of duplicitous ideology or intention.[7]

For Pitts, the first conception holds that liberal theory is inherently contaminated with an imperial logic that cannot convincingly provide reasons why many thinkers who are said to be liberal opposed European empire at various moments. The second argument that illiberal practices of imperialism do not necessarily link to a structural and generative logic of exclusion cannot properly account for why liberal political thought has been mobilized in favor of European imperial expansion. Pitts suggests that one cannot essentialize liberalism as either ineluctably anti-imperial or imperialist, but rather one must assess the historical contexts and political pressures that led to such deep cleavages concerning one of the most looming political issues of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that is, European colonial expansion. Mehta argues similarly that an analysis is required concerning the relationship between inclusive theoretical claims made by liberal universal notions and the effect of exclusionary liberal practices via colonialism. For Mehta, the result of violence that can be attributed historically to liberal support for empire illustrates the ambivalence of universal conceptions of inclusivity.

Pitts makes it clear that she is not attempting to suggest that there is merely a gap between liberalism in its theoretical commitments and its practice, or that political pressure led to liberal thinkers abandoning their notions of universal human dignity and equality. Rather, Pitts suggests that liberalism should be understood as a *practice* – that the generative theoretical categories of liberal theory were constituted through

[7] Pitts, Jennifer, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France*, Princeton University Press, pp. 4

imperialism and colonialism. She states, "Liberal theory has been constituted by its engagement in politics, and it is an important if often overlooked historical fact that the creation and consolidation of empires was central to that process."[8] What Pitts is suggesting is that liberal theory's foundational categories of equality and freedom were not constituted in a vacuum outside political relations, and, importantly, liberal notions of universality are co-constituted through colonialism.

For Locke theorists, the issues of coloniality are most often explained by moral failure or the aforementioned limitation of putting liberal theory into practice. For instance, John Dunn states Locke's relationship to slavery and land expropriation is not a product of any deliberate moral rationalizations, but rather "moral evasion."[9] Similarly Douglas Lewis locates Locke within a narrative concerning the impossibility of bridging universal human rights with practice, and suggests that Locke "affirmed a doctrine of universal rights but failed to live up to the demands of the doctrine in the activities of his life. His passions or self-interests came between him and his duties in relation to slavery."[10] These explanations, however, require the bracketing-out the constitutive role of colonialism in the production of Locke's deployment of universality. As mentioned above, Locke's liberal theories were produced as a practice through the registers of coloniality, not as separate processes. Hence, the positions that seek to locate Locke's universal categories as separate from imperialism fail to recognize how the very production of the European universal human emerges through the colonial production of

[8] Ibid, 5
[9] John Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969, from Hinshelwood, Brad, "The Carolina Context of John Locke's Theory of Slavery," Political Theory, 41(4), 2013, pp. 563
[10] Douglas Lewis, "Locke and the Problem of Slavery," Teaching Philosophy, 26(2), September, 2003, pp. 276, from Hinshelwood, Brad, "The Carolina Context of John Locke's Theory of Slavery," Political Theory, 41(4), 2013, pp. 563

human and cultural difference. As I will discuss later, Locke's theory of labour, which presupposes the body as something owned by the universal human subject, must produce subjects that do not own their own bodies, and, therefore, are not fully self-authorizing human subjects that can appropriate the products of their labour. However, I do not wish to move too far ahead of the argument I am seeking to construct – at this point, I want to highlight that we cannot simply separate Locke's liberal universalisms from the colonial power matrix, but rather situate them as co-produced registers.

Instead of attempting to elucidate Locke's whole theory of property in relation to the state of nature in this section, I shall outline the basic structure of his theory in order to set the parameters of the argument in this chapter. Rather than focusing upon the details of his theory of property, I am most interested in revealing some dominant epistemological and ontological assumptions of coloniality for Locke during this juncture in order to better trace the colonial power matrix. I will highlight two main domains: individual property accumulation and how theological notions of God's common grant mediate it.

Locke starts his theory of property with a theological authorization that God provided the earth to all of mankind through common grant and he ties this to a particular reading of Genesis authorizing man to subdue nature. Genesis 1:28 states: "God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'" Locke states in his *Two Treatises*,

> …it is very clear, that God, as king David says…has given the earth to the children of men; given it to mankind in common…God, who hath given the world to men in common, hath also given them reason to make use of it to the best advantage of life, and convenience. The earth, and all that is therein, is given to men for the support and comfort of their being. And tho' all the fruits it naturally produces, and beasts it feeds,

> belong to mankind in common, as they are produced by the spontaneous hand of nature; and no body has originally a private dominion, exclusive of the rest mankind, in any of them, as they are thus in their natural state.[11]

Locke, therefore, suggests that the earth has been given to all mankind in common – the main task he sets out for himself is to argue "how men might come to have a property in several parts of that which God gave to mankind in common, and that without any express compact of all the commoners."[12] In other words, Locke seeks to justify private ownership of land despite the theologically authorized notion of common ownership.[13]

For Locke, one can appropriate what is held in common grant by all people through labour – this is known as the labour theory of property which warrants primitive accumulation. Locke contends that because a person owns their body, they, therefore, own the product of labour generated by the body (I shall discuss the importance of this notion of the self-owning individual later in the chapter). Consequently, a person can come to possess property from the common grant through the mixing of their labour and enclosing it through fixed boundaries; however, as a proviso, there still must ostensibly be enough property for others and it must be used and not go to spoil. As I will discuss below, this labour theory of property that is wedded to the fixed boundary/enclosure is a particular English ritual of colonial possession that was, in part, constituted in opposition to the other Atlantic colonial powers – each of whom each had differing prescriptions of colonial tenure. Locke states,

> God gave the world to *Adam*, and his heirs in succession, exclusive of all the rest of his posterity…Though the earth, and all inferior creatures, be common to all men, yet every man has a *property* in his own person: this no body has any right to but himself. The *labour* of his body, and the *work* of his hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever

[11] Macpherson, C.B. (eds.), Locke, John, *Second Treatise on Government*, Indiana: Hacket, pp. 18-19
[12] Ibid, 18
[13]Ince, Onur Ulas, op. cit. 35-38; Shrader-Frechette, "Locke and the Limits of Land Ownership," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 54(2), April 1993, pp. 202-10;

> then he removes out of the state that nature hath provided, and left in, he hath mixed his *labour* with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his *property* (emphasis original) .[14]

As Kristen Shrader-Frechette suggests, the theologically authorized starting point of common ownership of land is often missed by various thinkers (Robert Nozick, Sibyl Schwartzenbach) who argue Locke offers a labour theory of value in order to provide a general schema concerning the acquisition of private property. Others suggest Locke seeks a specific justification for unowned and uninhabited land; further, some thinkers claim that Locke's theory of property is based upon arguments of social utility, sufficiency and merit of personal labour.[15] However, it is vital to contest this Eurocentric narrative and stress that Locke was not merely outlining a process of appropriating land that was not inhabited through notions of social utility, or recompense for hard work. Rather, Locke's task is a combination of two interrelated processes to authorize colonial possession. First, it is to extinguish Indigenous conceptions and relations to land in order to authorize his theory of property; second, it is to justify the enclosure of land via private ownership despite having clearly articulated that God has provided land for all "men" in common grant.

Unlike various aforementioned commentators, who have reproduced a disembodied and decontextualized explanation for Locke's theory (the ego-politics of the coloniality of knowledge), I will shift the geo- and body-politics of Locke's theory of property. Hence, while my outline of Locke's theory of property is quite brief, I will attend to the broader task of illustrating that his theory of property, while often decoupled

[14]Locke, op. cit. 19
[15]Shrader-Frechette, op. cit. 203-6

from its particular colonial foundations, is not universal, but became universalized through the coloniality of knowledge.

Colonial and Economic Relationship to Locke's Theory of Property

Barbara Arneil's seminal work locates the contextual underpinnings of Locke's conceptions of British empire concerning the Americas within three main domains: first, the reliance upon of travel writing of the New World; second, metropole English economic political debates concerning the profitability of the plantation colonial model; third, establishing labour via cultivation as the basis for establishing natural right to land proprietorship in order to subsume natural law jurisprudence concerning prior occupancy held by Amerindians.[16] As I will illustrate below, there is also a fourth register of theology that is a significant feature of Locke's theory of embodiment and property.

Colonial Travelogues and the Americas

Linking Locke's philosophy to historical and political domains opens up investigations into some of his personal connections with various colonial institutions and the constitutive role they had in influencing his overall thought. For instance, recent scholarship has discussed his financial interest in the slave trade including monetary investments in the Royal African Company and the Company of Merchant Adventures, which was created to develop the Bahama Islands. Further he owned thousands of acres

[16] Arneil, Barbara, "Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defense of Colonialism," Journal of the History of Ideas, 55(4), October 1994, pp. 591-93

of land in the province of Carolina and was the secretary to the Lord Proprietors of Carolina from 1668-75, secretary to the Council of Trade and Plantations from 1673-76, and commissioner of the Board of Trade from 1696-1700. Locke also co-drafted with his patron Lord Ashley the Carolina Constitution, and Hermon Lebovics suggest that his contemporaries in England considered him as one of the most knowledgeable men with regards to the colonies.[17]

John Harrison and Peter Laslett have studied the books contained in Locke's personal library in order to assess the role of colonial travel literature in shaping his thought of the colonies. They published the contents of Locke's library and they listed 195 titles concerning voyages and travels, 80 devoted to geography and a voluminous 870 related to theology. Harrison and Laslett even sought to elucidate which books Locke may have read and consulted the most by examining Locke's makeshift bookmarkers constructed from old letters,

> The presence of these markers shows that the work has been read and that something in it had to be remembered. Indications such as this, and all the evidence of Locke's having actually read a volume, are commonest in his books of travel, exploration, and geography…Everyone who has had occasion to comment on Locke's books has pointed out that works of this sort were the great strength of his collection. Here we can be quite certain, even without numbers of private libraries to compare with Locke's, that the presence of 195 titles which can be called Voyages and Travel made it a very remarkable collection.[18]

The majority of the travel titles were related to voyages made by European explorers to the Americas. From these travel books, Arneil suggests, Locke derives much of his

[17] Seth, Vanita, *Europe's Indians: Producing Racial Difference, 1500-1900*, Durham & London: Duke University Press, pp. 82, from Tully, James, *An Approach to Political Philosophy: Locke in Contexts*, Cambridge University Press, 1993; Lebovis, Herman, "The Uses of America in Locke's *Second Treatise of Government*," Journal of the History of Ideas, 47, 1986

[18] Harrison, John; Laslett, Peter, *The Library of John Locke*, Oxford University Press, pp. 27

primary material for his notions of the state of nature and natural man.[19] For instance, Sir Walter Raleigh's *History of the World*, Samuel Purchas's *Pilgrims* and Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* comprised some widely circulated travelogues in seventeenth century England.[20]

The travel documents found in his library must be placed in their context of voyages sponsored for the purposes of spreading monarchal interest and Christian conversion of New World Indigenous peoples. For instance, Father Joseph d'Acosta, head of a Jesuit College who Locke quotes in his *Two Treatises*, states in his own *Natural and Moral History of the Indies:*

> The intention of this Historie *is* not onely to give knowledge of what hath passed at the Indies, but also to continue this knowledge, to the fruite we may gather by it, which is to helpe this people for their soules health, and to glorifie the Creator and Redeemer, who hath drawne them from the obscure darkenes of their infedelitie and imparted unto them the admirable light of his Gospel.[21]

As I discussed in the previous chapter, Latin Christian theocentric sociogeny conceptualized Amerindians as "human" and possible candidates for conversion, while simultaneously, candidates for destruction if they impeded the spread of the truth of the gospel. The essential point at this juncture is that the travel books found in Locke's library had a unifying discourse concerning the savage non-Christian character of the Indigenous subject that must be converted to Christianity in order to enter the domain of the theocentric conception of the human.

To take another example of a widely circulated travelogue found in Locke's library is by Captain John Smith. Smith was one of the most influential English colonists,

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[19] Arneil, Barbara, *John Locke and America: The Defense of English Colonialism*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 24
[20] Ibid, 22
[21] d'Acosta, Joseph, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies,* <http://archive.org/stream/naturalmoralhist60acosrich/naturalmoralhist60acosrich_djvu.txt>

his voyage and travel writing pertaining to the New World, particularly Jamestown Virginia, was instrumental for encouraging Englishmen to embark to the Americas. Smith states in his widely read treatise *Advertisements for the Unexperienced Planters of New England or Any Where or the Pathway to Erect a Plantation:*

> Many good religious devout men have made it a great question, as a matter in conscience, by what warrant they might goe to possesse those Countries, which none of theirs, but the poore Salvages. Which poore curiosity will answer it selfe; for God did make the world to be inhabited with mankind, and to have his name knowne to all Nations, and from generation to generation: as the people increased they dispersed themselves into such Countries as they found most convenient. And here in *Florida, Virginia, New-England,* and *Canada*, is more land than all the people in Christendome can manure, and yet more to spare than all the natives of those Countries can use and cultivate. And shall we here keepe such a coyle for land, and at such great rents, and rates, when there is so much of the world uninhabited, and as much more in other places, and as good, or rather better than any wee possesse, were it manured and used accordingly. If this be not a reason sufficient to such tender consciences; for a copper kettle and a few toyes, as beads and hatches, they will sell you a whole Countrey; and for a small matter, their houses and the ground they dwell upon; but those of the *Massachusets* have resigned theirs freely.[22]

What is significant about Smith's passage is the co-imbrication between Christian theology, land improvement and notions of possession. While Indigenous peoples are mentioned widely in this travel document as living in said areas of Florida or Canada, paradoxically, land is conceptualized as "uninhabited." What Smith focuses upon for his logic of possession is the notion of *terra nullius*, that is, the logic of "empty land" that he suggests can be "spared" due to its abundance. Moreover, he provides a mocking and chimerical logic of consent via exchange for the "tender consciences" of the "poor Salvage": a country in exchange for kettles, beads and other "toyes." Particular conceptions of cultivation can account for this paradox of present-absence – lands are held to be possessed when "cultivated" and "manured" by Christian men. He further

[22] Smith, John, *Advertisements for the Unexperienced Planters of New England or Any Where or the Pathway to Erect a Plantation*, <https://archive.org/details/advertisementsfo00smit>

authorizes the travel of colonists to the New World through theological license because God has commanded for his name to be known to all nations.

For Locke, however, it is not simply a colonial logic of abundant uncultivated land, nor a justification of property tenure through consent by way of exchange mediation in the form of beads and kettles. Rather than gaining even a rudimentary form of fraudulent consent, as Smith does above, Locke enables property to be alienated by the labour of the self-owning body (discussed below in further detail). The main point to be derived from gleaning some of the texts found in Locke's library is to emphasize that his notions of the New World and its inhabitants were primarily generated from an existing discursive tradition of travelogues constituted by a historical colonial archive of representations concerning the pagan savage.

English Political Economic Debates: Mercantilism and the Plantation Model

The second major contextual location according to Arneil concern Locke's positions on English colonization of America that emerge through economic debates during the latter half of the seventeenth century in England. These debates relate to the opposition to plantation settlements from English proprietors and politicians who held economic interest would be best served by a colonial model that could yield faster returns on investment and not drain vital resources of the empire.[23] Locke's relationship with the production of colonial policy took place when various economic pressures weakened English interest in the mid seventeenth century. For instance, Britain sought to secure

[23]Arneil, op. cit. *John Locke and America: The Defense of English Colonialism,* 17

resources in order to finance their ongoing mercantile and maritime rivalries with the Dutch, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Drawing from Mignolo and Dussel one can trace the historical antecedents of the English economic pressures vis-à-vis other mercantile rivals within a global-historical frame of analysis. For Mignolo, commercial trade circuits were emerging in the incipient mercantile economy as far back as between 1250 and 1350. However, he identifies key events that index the link between theology, imperialism and the justification for possession of space. First, as mentioned in chapter one is the *Romanus pontifex* bull of 1455; the bull *Inter caetera* of 1493; the Tratado de Tordesilla of 1497, which, by papal decree authorized "discovered" lands to be allocated to Spain and Portugal. Finally, the Spanish *Requerimiento* of 1512 was read by authorities of the Castilian crown and church to Indigenous peoples of the Americas in order to license possession.[24] According to Mignolo, "These bulls clearly linked the Christian church with mercantilism and added a new and important element: the right of Christians to 'take possession.'"[25] These proceedings, which link Atlantic commercial circuits with divine papal decree and territorial expropriation constitute the grounding for the emerging modern colonial-capitalist world system and the beginnings of competition for territorial expansion among emerging imperial powers.

Drawing on Giovanni Arrighi's examination of the rise of the capitalist world system along with Mignolo's analysis of the capitalist-colonial world system, I explore the interrelated processes of the subsequent erosion of the Spanish medieval system of rule and the simultaneous rise of dynastic states and colonial overseas territorial

[24]Mignolo, op. cit. *The Idea of Latin America,* 30
[25] Ibid

expansion. According to Arrighi, throughout the sixteenth century Spain had a relative preponderance of power over other regional states. Spain unsuccessfully attempted to hold onto the eroding medieval system of rule through the Habsburg Imperial House and the progressively unscrupulous papacy. Arrighi suggests that Spanish decline led to the emergence of "compact mini-empires" such as the French, Swedish and English dynastic states through territorialist logic of imperial expansion. He further suggests that increased economic pressures resulted from urban and peasant revolts in states such as England and France concerning the sixteenth and seventeenth century transitions from medieval systems of rule to more "modern systems."[26] He states,

> This system-wide intensification of social conflict was a direct result of the previous and contemporaneous escalation of armed conflicts among the rulers. From about 1550 to about 1640, the number of soldiers mobilized by the great powers of Europe more than doubled, while from 1530 to 1630 the cost of putting each of these soldiers in the field increased on average by a factor of 5. This escalation of protection costs led to a sharp increased in the fiscal pressure on subjects which, in turn, triggered many of the seventeenth-century revolts.[27]

Arrighi provides some crucial links concerning the relationship between shifting modes of governance, social conflict of urban and rural populations and the resulting economic pressures of emerging mini-empires to intensify surplus capital through colonial territorial expansion via mercantilism.

We can read Arrighi with Mignolo who links mercantilism and coloniality in the sixteenth century,

> …think of the massive appropriation of land by the Spanish and Portuguese, the would-be landlords of the Americas during the sixteenth century, and the same by the British, French, and Dutch in the extended Caribbean (from Salvador de Bahia in Brazil to Charleston in today's South Carolina, and including the north of Colombia and Venezuela in addition to the Caribbean islands). The appropriation of land went hand in hand with the exploitation of labor (Indians and African slaves) and the control of finance

[26] Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power and the Origins of our Times*, Verso, 2010 (1994), pp. 42
[27] Ibid, 43

> (the accumulation of capital as a consequence of the appropriation of land and the exploitation of labor). Capital concentrated in Europe, in the imperial states, and not in the colonies.[28]

Mignolo allows us to locate English economic pressures, which play a large role in shaping Locke's theory of property, from within a global perspective of coloniality. Accordingly, the mercantile rivalries between the Atlantic powers was chiefly over control of the emerging global colonial-capitalist world system rather than simply a series of internal contestations between the "mini-empires" of England, Spain, Portugal, France and Holland over hegemony in the region.

Placing Arrighi and Mignolo together illustrates that the emergence of the global colonial-capitalist world system, which was predicated upon a colonial-mercantile system of surplus capital utilization, brought the different rival states under the umbrella of imperial mercantilist principals, yet further fragmented any coherent European self-identity due to the generation of intensive inter-imperial competition. As I will discuss below, Arrighi and Mignolo's deployment of the category of "Europe" as a marker of a unified regional identity is problematic due to the intense antagonisms between the maritime powers.

Having located mercantilism within global historical processes of coloniality, let us now turn to some particulars of mercantilism itself. Mercantilism, a set of economic principles dominated the commercial structure of the various maritime powers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Mercantilism proposes the regulation of the nation's economy by a centralized state bureaucracy in order to increase its power and

[28]Mignolo, op. cit. *The Idea of Latin America,* 12

capital accumulation while weakening rival states.[29] Trade with other nations, under mercantilist economic principals, should produce a surplus of precious metals that can be used for the depository of national wealth. Also, trade with the colonies must be in total control by the metropole and be structured as a monopoly.[30]

The main vehicle privileged by mercantilist doctrines was the overseas trading company, which was used by the British, French, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese. These state owned companies that flourished in the mid seventeenth century were the principle entities that British metropolitan economic authorities felt should direct the growth of the metropole. The British trading companies were created by private brokers, but were closely affiliated to the state through joint stock capital, monopoly privileges granted through royal decree and state incorporation. This state-company relationship operated in specially selected global zones in order to make sure state power was increased through overseas trade for the direct fiscal interest of the metropole.[31]

The trading companies and the British state comprised a mutually co-dependent relationship: the companies were held to be the most lucrative financial institution while the companies relied upon the state for military and political support for the extraction of overseas wealth and to gain leverage over other maritime rivals. As Eli Heckscher and Partha Chatterjee suggest, the British overseas mercantile trading companies flourished during the seventeenth and eighteenth century through a highly regulated fiscal-military nexus. As a result, many wars occurred among maritime rivals causing further

[29] Chatterjee, Partha, *The Black Hole of Empire: History of a Global Practice of Power*, Princeton University Press, 38
[30] Ibid
[31] Ibid

differentiation between colonial powers and strain upon the financial infrastructure of England.[32]

This political economic background concerning the dominance of mercantilism and the protracted wars of competition between the British, French, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese is important for various reasons. It complicates an assumed notion of a unified and coherent European self-identity that was in binary opposition to the New World. Rather, in the seventeenth century, "Europe" was only an emerging or nascent category and the different maritime powers each attempted to differentiate themselves through mutually antagonistic relations. Agnes Heller states, "The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were characterized neither by the unification nor by the establishment of a common integration termed 'Europe.'"[33] Similarly Seth states, "Europe as a confident, self-conscious, self-defining entity is an eighteenth century phenomenon, and hence we should be wary…of presuming the presence of such a figure in the sixteenth [and seventeenth] century."[34] The highly differentiated and fragmented character of the English vis-à-vis French, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese was further exacerbated by fractures in Christendom by way of the Reformation and antipathy between Protestantism and Catholicism. Theorists such as Seth, Seed and Heller suggest, therefore, that these fragmentary historical processes index the problem of representing Europe as a monolithic category during the seventeenth century.

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[32] Ibid; from Eli, Hechscher, *Mercantilism*, Translated by Mendel Shapiro, Vol. 1, London: George Allan and Unwin, pp. 436-55

[33]Seth, op. cit. 30, quoted from Agnes, Heller, "Europe: An Epilogue?" In, Nelson, Brian; Roberts, Daniel; Veit, Walter (eds.) *The Idea of Europe: Problems of National and Transnational Identity*, New York: Berg Publishers, 1992, pp. 13

[34]Seth, op. cit. 29

Second, due to the intense rivalry between the maritime powers, the political economic climate did not allow much space for advancing arguments, such as Locke's, concerning the investment in the plantation colonial model. Arneil suggests that in the late seventeenth century it was only a minority that viewed the colonization of the Americas via a plantation system as the answer to the economic crisis facing Britain. In fact, the majority of Britain's economic elite saw the prospect of plantations as contributing the problem and widely denounced Locke's arguments. For instance, Mun wrote in his widely read *England Treasure by Forraign Trade* that support for the plantation model was a minority view, "This Position is so contrary to the common opinion, that it will require many and strong arguments to prove it before it can be accepted of the Multitude, who bitterly exclaim when they see any monies carried out of the Realm."[35] The main concern that the majority of those who opposed plantation colonialism was due to the dominance of mercantile philosophy; consequently, it was feared that the colony would become an independent entity and compete with the English. As noted above, England faced protracted wars with the other mercantile states and mercantilism's central tenant was that trade directly benefit the mother country. For example, New England was viewed as a renegade colony that was competing with British interest.[36]

Further, the ability to maintain their military advantage against the Dutch and other navel mercantile powers was hampered by the Great Plague of 1665 and the great fire of London in 1666 which decimated the British economy. As a result of these

[35]Arneil, op. cit. "Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defense of Colonialism," 593, quoted from, Mun, Thomas, *England's Treasure by Foreign Trade*, Oxford, 1994 (1664), pp. 14
[36] Veracini, Lorenzo, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, pp. 101, from Faragher, Mack John, "Americans, Mexicans, Metis," pp. 94-95

economic pressures, the Americas were conceived by the majority of those with interest in the vitality of English empire as an abyss of loss revenue and hazard. During the 1670s, therefore, the colonization of the New World via the plantation model was ridiculed by British political pundits as an unattractive solution to the imperial aspirations of the nation, and hardly a solution to immediate fiscal requirements. The plantation colonial model was held to be inefficient and draining during a juncture when trade was conceptualized as the best model for capital accumulation.[37]

However, for a small number, including Locke, the New World held promise for the expansion of the empire's sphere of influence and to increase revenue needed to quell its pecuniary problems. Locke's writing can be located along with English economic writers Thomas Mun, Sir Josiah Child, and Charles Davenant, who defended against metropole skeptics of the plantation colonial model, "Until the beginning of the eighteenth century, most of England's politicians were opposed to English settlements in America, because it was perceived to be a drain on English fortunes."[38] For Arneil, Locke used his Two Treatises to support the development of the plantation model in America deploying supporting arguments from Child and Davenant in order to launch a robust defense of English colonialism in the Americas. Colonial policy was held to have been a particularly acute concern for Locke from 1668 to 1675 where colonial records from Carolina illustrate that he endorsed most correspondences between the Lord Proprietors and the Council in Carolina. Further, specific laws, such as the Temporary Laws of 1674

[37]Arneil, op. cit. "Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defense of Colonialism," 593

[38]Arneil, op. cit. *John Locke and America: The Defense of English Colonialism,* 17

that were hand written by him, and, along with his patron Shaftesbury, he wrote the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina.[39]

With competition between the mercantile powers fierce, England lagged behind the Dutch in trade with the Americas. As a result, the House of Commons in 1667, the House of Lords in 1668, and the King in 1669 erected various committees to examine the decline in overseas trade and for possible solutions. Prominent among the figures who offered the plantation colony and settlement as the best solution to generating wealth and trouncing the Dutch and other maritime constituents were Mun, Davenant and Child.[40]

While Mun was the first to propose the plantation model as the most suitable form of overseas expansion of British empire, Child provided voluminous expositions aimed at combating the hostile majority of public opinion that detracted from the idea. Child suggested that the colony was not only economically advantages, but also provided a fertile location to deposit the underclass of England such as criminals, unemployed and morally defunct.[41] Locke echoed Child's sentiments and added a religious valance inscribed by the theological Time of Salvation to the proposition. Accordingly, Locke argued that the vast expanses of the Americas could resettle and redeem England's large poor underclass. Arneil states,

> The vacancy of America…was frequently linked to descriptions of an overflowing population in England and the desirability for people to move from the latter to the former…Filling the land thus takes on mythical proportions in line with exoduses described in the first few books of the Old Testament.[42]

[39] Arneil, op. cit. "Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defense of Colonialism," 592
[40] Ibid, 594
[41] Ibid, 598
[42] Arneil, op. cit. *John Locke and America: The Defense of English Colonialism,* 110

This sentiment that juxtaposes English social decay and a bloating underclass foregrounds Rousseau's later discourse concerning the noble savage tradition (I have stated in chapter one that this can be traced to Columbus and Las Casas). The Americas would come to be increasingly represented as a space of redemption for Europe despite paradoxically justifying their imperial incursion, in part, by way of redeeming Indigenous souls.

Child further argued that colonialism based upon agriculture was preferable over seeking to expand markets for the distribution of British manufactured goods, capital and labour intensive extractive industry, or outright conquest.[43] Child's arguments concerning the superiority of English style farming vis-à-vis Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish and French forms of colonial practice relates to what Patricia Seed names "rituals of possession." Seed provides an important symbolic dimension to the political economic matrices of coloniality and allows us to further situate the emergence of Locke's theories on property.

What becomes clear from these debates is that Locke was a key figure in shifting global political economy from mercantilism towards the plantation colonial model. Moreover, his plantation system did not follow a linear trajectory, but was being produced through contestations and negotiations concerning colonial expansion. As opposed to a Eurocentric diffusionist account, his plantation model was not fully formed within England, in isolation from colonial processes, and simply disseminated outward to the New World. In the next section I will examine the third major register identified by Arneil, that is, establishing cultivation as the basis for a settler colonial claim of land proprietorship over the Americas.

[43]Arneil, op. cit. "Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defense of Colonialism," 599

Colonial Rituals of Possession and the Enclosure of Common Land via Fixed Boundaries

Seed suggests that analyses of empire usually conceptualize the five main powers as a single monolith of "Europe" and that each of these nations shared the same imperial logic of possession over the New World. However, while the effects of death, enslavement, and expropriation carried out through acts of colonial violence can all be ascribed to the imperial logics that sustained their actions, they differed and had conflicting understandings concerning the discourses of "legitimate possession" over the New World. Seed examines the differences in colonial notions of establishing authority over the Americas through rituals, ceremonies, and symbolic systems – what we can term "rituals of possession." These rituals included lodging the cross, banners, statements or coats of arms in the newly "discovered" land; moreover, there were procession marches, speeches, map sketches and handling the soil. Each act corresponded to a symbolic process concerning attempts to establish "legitimate authority" in order to acquire land in the New World. She argues these rituals of possession emerge through common national traditions related to the shared cultural practices of everyday life; language systems that constitute social meaning; and legal codes that provide the basis to authorize colonial ownership.[44] Because each colonial power had a particular and shifting configuration of these national traditions, each colonial power articulated and substantiated the manner in which they felt possession could acquire legitimate license. Seed states,

> While all Europeans aimed to establish their right to rule the New World, their means differed substantially…What Europeans shared was a common technological and ecological platform – trans-Atlantic ships bearing crossbows, cannon, harquebuses,

[44] Seed, Patricia, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 1-3

> horses, siege warfare, and disease, but they did not share a common understanding of even the political objectives of military action.[45]

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, fierce debates and conflicts between each power centred on discursive assumptions concerning the validity of their own cultural and legal traditions that were used to authorize colonial tenure. By examining some of the differences between the English, Dutch, Spanish, French and Portuguese authorizing discourses of possession over the Americas, I intend to provide further context concerning how English arguments for colonial possession via agriculture espoused by Mun, Child, Davinant and Locke emerges as a critique of the competing maritime powers. Seed's notion of the particular systems of enacting colonial possession also adds an important dimension to Mignolo and Arrighi's work mentioned above, who sometimes collapse the specificity of colonial notions of possession by their focus upon the constitution of the emergence of larger colonial-capitalist world system.

The English rituals of possession can be gleaned from reports from Plymouth, Massachusetts and Jamestown, Virginia in the early seventeenth century.[46] For instance, William Bradford and other settler accounts from the English describe the act of gazing upon the new land and subsequently deciding where to build a dwelling. This seemingly innocuous act of building a house, fence boundary or gardens in addition to planting and harvesting crops from cleared landscapes was the means through which the English generated their "authority" to possess land in the New World. These acts of establishing political license over space through the production of houses and planting are not insignificant because it contrasts with the Spanish, French, Portuguese and Dutch

[45] Ibid, 3
[46] Ibid, 16

methods that deployed distinct symbolic acts of possession such as speeches, written pronouncements and symbolic forms of consent.

The French, for instance, engaged in an elaborate set of Catholic religious acts including the planting of the cross and a carefully choreographed procession marches while hymns were chanted. What made the French ritual of possession unique for Seed was the emphasis upon gaining some element of "permission" or "consent" from the Indigenous inhabitants.[47] In order to secure consent, the French would hold their intricate participatory ceremonies, drawing Indigenous inhabitants into the production of the religious rites in the seventeenth century from the mouth of the Amazon, Brazil, Guadeloupe, Martinique Florida, Canada, and so on.[48]

For Seed, the emphasis upon elaborate performative acts of possession that contrasted with the English rituals of building fixed dwellings and erecting boundaries by fence and garden to establish possessive authority are rooted in French understandings of the concept of the ceremony. Unlike other European languages, the French word ceremony relates directly to the notion of a complex performance of a parade or procession. Seed goes onto to link the relationship of the ceremony to French displays of power: the entrance of the King through ceremony and monarchical sanctification of the powers of ecclesiastical authorities, bureaucratic bodies and to inaugurate new masters of guilds.[49] Significant to this display of power was the new political ruler gaining tacit consent from the gestures, body language and verbal cues from the surrounding crowd. Hence, in Seed's reading, the French assumed that Indigenous consent of French

[47] Ibid, 44
[48] Ibid, 48
[49] Ibid, 53

dominion was secured through similar acts of verbal and somatic gestures of participation.[50]

The Portuguese, on the other hand, did not seek to gain "consent" of Indigenous inhabitants through participatory ritual performances as did the French or arguably the Spanish, nor did they focus upon the fixed dwelling and enclosure as did the English. Instead, as I alluded to in chapter one, the Portuguese appropriation of Arabic navigational knowledge allowed them to produce complex calculations for determining sea routes and the precise location of lands "discovered." For instance, when the Portuguese landed upon the coast of Brazil in April 1500, they did not enact any performative ritual of possession involving enclosures or Indigenous participation. Rather, a letter was penned to the King concerning newly "discovered land" while a record was taken of the height of the midday sun as well as the longitudinal and latitudinal coordinates.[51]

> The Portuguese claims, repeatedly voiced in international conflicts, that they had a right to a commercial monopoly on the seaborne trade with the new lands was an explicit claim that because of their vast expenditures on developing the science and technology of high-seas navigation, they had a just right to compensation.
> Other competing powers were unwilling to accept Portuguese claims for a monopoly on sea routes in exchange for their discovery.[52]

While the Portuguese attempted to patent their sea routes via appropriating Arab navigational technologies and knowledges, the Dutch followed closely by enacting colonial possession via sailing to a location rather than landing there.[53] Because much of Dutch capital was closely linked to the Portuguese through long established commercial business linkages, the Dutch also appropriated navigational expertise and commercial

[50] Ibid, 55; Seth, op. cit. 31
[51] Seed, op. cit. 130
[52] Ibid
[53] Ibid, 151

stratagems from the Portuguese.[54] Consequently, the Dutch rarely sailed across lands untrammeled by other maritime entities; instead, they often sailed to accessible lands largely ill defined or poorly understood by others in the seventeenth century. Following suit from the Portuguese, the Dutch overseas mercantile companies regarded trading routes and navigational circuits as proprietary due to notions of labour and capital investment evidenced by Dutch officials prohibiting the disclosure of their navigational routes.[55]

Finally, the Spanish ritual acts of possession were distinct from the English, French, Portuguese and Dutch. V.Y. Mudimbe outlines various symbolic acts including the verbal declaration of the *Requirement*, which Indigenous peoples were presented with a rendition of Castilian Catholic conceptualizations of genesis and history. The end of the recitation calls upon the Indian "'pledge allegiance to the pope and the king of Spain.'"[56] If the Natives eschewed this pledge – inevitably they did, as they did not understand the language – it was considered legal to gain colonial occupancy over the *terra nullius* lands by force if needed. In addition to the verbal declaration of the *Requirement,* the Spanish also planted crosses, as Columbus did on his third and fourth voyages, others laid stones as Balboa did in 1513 upon the Pacific Coast. Further, others proceeded to cut trees or inscribed their bark with names, and drank from local water sources.[57] Further, Seed argues that one of the main forms of physically enacting possession from the Americas for the Spanish, unlike the other maritime powers, was extractive mining operations.

[54] Ibid, 150
[55] Ibid
[56] Mudimbe, V.Y., *Idea of Africa*, Indiana University Press, 1994, pp. 35
[57] Ibid

For Seed, the English act of possession via establishing houses and boundaries is related to the geographic typology and demographic registers of the village structure of English society that is not found elsewhere in Europe. The island nation is without contiguous territory to expand and has a long tradition of the village settlement that can be documented in some instances – such as Devon and Lincolnshire – to have established habitation for over a thousand years.[58] This structure of the village system with fixed objects, that is, dwellings and demarcated boundaries established legal right to space under English law,

> [i]n addition to houses, another kind of fixed object also created similar rights of possession and ownership. By fixing a boundary, such as a hedge around fields, together with some kind of activity demonstrating use (or intent to use, i.e., clearing the land), anyone could establish a legal right to apparently unused land. As with the house, mundane activity rather than permission, ceremonies, written declarations created ownership. The ordinary object – house, fence or other boundary marker – signified ownership.[59]

The object boundary was a normative model of enclosure and ownership by English colonizers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and comprised some of the first laws passed in the colonies. For instance, the Rhode Island Quarter Court in 1639 passed legal ordinance for fences, hedges, posts or rails in addition to harvesting corn to establish legal boundary. Also, some of the first laws passed in Virginia concerned the production of fenced enclosures in the Virginia assembly in 1623 and was reiterated in the legislature in 1632, 1642 and 1646 and even included specified heights of four and a half feet. Similar legal requirements for fixed objects that established ownership was passed in the Connecticut River valley and in the Maryland colony.[60] Seed further relates the

[58]Seed, op. cit. 18
[59] Ibid, 19
[60] Seed, Patricia, *American Pentimento: The Invention of Indians and the Pursuit of Riches*, University of Minnesota Press, 2001, 21

relationship to planting and sowing crops to theological arguments generated from biblical readings – I will discuss the theological registers of Locke's thought specifically below.

There are some problems with Seed's thesis. The first is that her account of rituals of possession suffers from a Eurocentric form of diffusionism. Consequently, English acts of possession become centralized around a logic of "first in Europe and then outward", which is a variation of the linear, progressive temporality of historicism (discussed further in chapter four). Historicism positions Europe as the centre and presumes that internal events and processes that are unique to Europe – however indeterminate the boundaries are conceptualized – are disseminated throughout the world. The chronological and geographical logic of the global diffusionist paradigm locates Europe as the autonomous centre that encounters, negotiates, and neutralizes difference.[61] Moreover, Eurocentric historicism occludes the constitutive role of the diverse knowledges and cosmologies that were appropriated and absorbed into the making of the colonial-capitalist world system.[62] Seed, therefore, fails to account for the various acts of appropriation of Indigenous knowledge systems concerning relationships with land. Seed does attempt to illustrate the cross fertilization of knowledge by way of highlighting Portuguese appropriation of Arabic navigational knowledges and technologies, but

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[61] Chakrabarty, Dipesh, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000, pp. 48

[62] Enrique Dussel, "Beyond Eurocentrism: The World-System and the Limits of Modernity," in *The Cultures of Globalization*, ed. Jameson, Fredric and Miyoshi, Masao, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1998, pp. 3-5 from Cua Lim, Bliss, Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic, and Temporal Critique, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2009, pp. 84

unfortunately produces a very problematic Orientalist reading of Spanish appropriation of Islamic notions of *Jihad*.[63]

Second, Seed's account concerning the English national tradition of the village system established through the fixed boundary to establish political authority contrasts with Arneil's account of the fierce opposition towards the plantation system by the English establishment. If land ownership established through the English style village were part of the dominant cultural ethos and semiotic structure in England, it would seem unlikely that the opposition to Mun, Child, Davenant and Locke would be so pronounced. However, the two explanations can be reconciled, perhaps, by suggesting that while mercantile economic doctrine set the dominant agenda for the method of overseas capital accumulation, the fixed dwelling and boundary characterize the particular localized rituals of possession. Moreover, the particular English style of establishing authority over the New World was assumed to be superior and used by the proponents of the plantation against Spanish, French, Dutch and Portuguese discourses of possession. Let us now move back to how some of Locke's contemporaries framed these other ritual acts of colonial possession by the rival maritime mercantile powers.

Child argued that the methods of possession via trade, mining or conquest were inferior to the plantation based upon English style agricultural practices. For instance, he criticized the Dutch for their warlike posture and emphasis upon trade and the building of castles upon the coast in order to secure exclusive trading rights within the conquered space, and, further, for not making any improvements to the land by planting. Moreover,

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[63] For a discussion concerning how English rituals of possession, specifically how Locke's labour theory of property were produced through appropriating Indigenous acts of planting and enclosures see Hsueh, Vicki, "Cultivating and Challenging the Common: Lockean Property, Indigenous Traditionalisms, and the Problem of Exclusion," *Contemporary Political Theory*, 5, 2006

he lambasted the French for not making any discernable progress by planting and sowing crops, and, also he attacked the Spanish declaring, "The English…have cleared and improved fifty plantations for one, and built as many houses for one the Spaniards have built."[64]

The Spanish emphasis upon surveying large areas of land in order to establish extractive mining projects was not conceptualized as beneficial to the national interests, but rather primarily served private capital gain. Also, grazing large sections of land and grazing cattle by was discouraged because it was seen to facilitate inter-colonial trading networks within the Americas itself rather than promote trade between the metropole and the colony.[65] Child and other English merchants employed within the farming sector argued that the establishment of export structures between the Americas and England would facilitate the growth of the navel and shipping capacities and therefore create more jobs and dependency networks than other models of labour. Child states,

> The Spaniards' intense and singular industry in their mines for gold and silver ... doth cause them to neglect in great measure cultivating of the earth ... which might give employment to a greater navy, as well as sustenance to a far greater number of people by sea and land.[66]

Davenant, who argued that tilling and planting was the only form of securing legitimate title of possession, further supported Child's economic arguments for the plantation. In developing his support for the plantation model, he juxtaposed the English with the despotic Muslim Turk for establishing title through conquest rather than through "Arts of Peace", and further suggested that the search for gold undermined the vitality of the

[64]Arneil, op. cit. "Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defense of Colonialism," 599
[65] Ibid
[66] Ibid, 600, quoted from Child, Josiah, *A New Discourse on Trade*, London, 1804, pp. 184

empire.[67] Moreover, like Child, Davenant argued for the tilling and planting of land as the optimal form of labour to insure the dependency of the colony and to limit the colony from competing with England. He argued,

> Tis true, if in New England or in other Parts there, they should pretend to set up Manufactures, and to cloath, as well as feed their Neighbours, their nearness, and low Price, would give 'em such Advantages over this Nation, as might prove of pernicious Consequence; but this Fear seems very remote, because new Inhabitants, especially in a large Extent of Country, find their Accompt better, in Rearing Cattle, Tilling the Earth, clearing it of Woods, making Fences, and by erecting Necessary Buildings, than in setting up of Manufacture.[68]

We see in the later section of the passage Davenant's conceptual location with English discourses of possession, that is, the production of the fixed boundary by fences, erecting building and tilling land. Davenant articulated the distinction of English discourses of land proprietorship in opposition to other colonial modes of possession and production by way of setting up zones of manufacture that do not benefit the mother country. Similarly, Locke focused particular attention to Spanish forms of imperial expansion through a critique of conquest, railing against the disregard of human life and the failure to "improve" the land rendered *terra nullius.* Along with Child, Locke contests Dutch and Spanish forms of conquest that he suggests is based on a "strange Doctrine." In Locke's *Some Considerations* Locke states:

> There are but two ways of growing Rich, either Conquest, or Commerce…no body is vain enough to entertain a Thought of our reaping the Profits of the World with our Swords, and making the Spoil…of Vanquished Nations. Commerce therefore is the only way left to us…for this the advantages of our Situation, as well as the Industry and Inclination of our People…do Naturally fit us.[69]

Locke would also write to colonists in Carolina, "Neither doe we thinke it advantageous for our people to live by rapin and plunder which we doe not nor will not allow. Planting

[67]Arneil, op. cit. "Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defense of Colonialism," 601
[68] Ibid, 601-2
[69]Arneil, op. cit. 105, quoted from Locke, John, Some Considerations, 222-3

and Trade is both our designe and your interest and…shall lay a way open to get all the Spaniards riches."[70] As Mignolo reminds us, the condemnation for Spanish cruelty and greed articulated by the English cannot be separated from their own attempts to secure hegemony over the Atlantic, and the emerging capitalist-colonial world system. Mignolo states,

> The "Black Legend" of Spanish corruption, which the British initiated to demonize the Spanish Empire in a ploy to get a grip on the Atlantic economy during the seventeenth century, was part of a European family feud over the economic, political, and intellectual (in the general sense of accumulation and control of knowledge, including science and technology, of course) riches of the "New World." Therein originates the *imperial difference* that would become widespread in the eighteenth century and shape the conception of "Latin" America.[71]

Mignolo frames the inter-imperial rivalry as being directly constituted by the attempt to generate surplus capital from the expropriation of resources and labour from the overseas colonies. This analytical move repositions mercantilism from a narrow materialist doctrine of financial accumulation to a global project of coloniality that is also anchored by theological political registers supported by papal bulls of the fifteenth century.

Over the last several pages I have attempted to provide a detailed backdrop of the broader political and economic landscape of the seventeenth century that helps us to better contextualize Locke's theory of property within a frame of coloniality. Locke generates the right of possession via English notions of agricultural labour. As I have argued above, he develops his theory of property rooted in the plantation model in opposition to English detractors and in opposition to other colonial rituals of possession. Yet a closer reading of Locke's Two Treatises suggests that his thought cannot be so centralized around a constellation of defending the economic viability and profitability of

[70]Arneil, op. cit. *John Locke and America: The Defense of English Colonialism*, 164 quoted from Letter from Lord Ashely to William Saile, 13 May, 1671, Shaftsbury paper, PRO Bundle, 48(55), pp. 91
[71]Mignolo, op. cit. *The Idea of Latin America,* 55

the plantation colonial model. Rather, if we analyze his theory in relation to both the Indigenous inhabitants of the Americas and Locke's religious commitments to Protestant Christianity, we can see how both domains inform each other. In the next section I will move to the fourth register of Locke's thought in relation to coloniality, that is, the role of Protestant Christian theology in constituting his labour theory of property.

Locke, Protestant Theology and De-mediation of Extra-Human Agency

My argument thus far centered on the broader political context of travel writing, maritime colonial powers, mercantilism and the specific rituals of possession that helped to constitute Locke's development and defense of the plantation model. Hence, unlike the French, Dutch, Portuguese or Spanish, the English farmer is the "'industrious and rational' being that, Locke claims, God gave the world."[72] However, in the largely materialist account offered above, the theological and embodied coordinates of Locke's theory of property is largely subordinated to the economic registers of colonialty. In my reading, the limitation of focusing upon the political economic contexts of Locke's theory of property, such as the rituals of English possession via farming and the fixed enclosure, is that it does not adequately explain why Locke centralizes the body as the vital category for his labour theory of property, nor does it adequately explain the role of theology in mediating his notions of the body.

In this section, I will examine how Locke's theory of property, which emerged in relation to the generation of authorizing discourses of English colonial possession of the

[72]Locke, John, op. cit. *Second Treatise on Government*, para 34

Americas, was informed by Protestant Christian notions related to the self-owning body and de-mediation of transcendent non-human agency from land vis-à-vis Indigenous conceptions. This requires a three-fold process of inquiry into Locke's embodied theory of property. First, for Locke, the acquisition of private property is centralized around the labour theory in which property is held to be possessed through what is produced by the labour of one's body. The main ontological assumption within this formulation is that one owns one's body, which, in my reading, is related to Protestant theological notions regarding the self-governing and inward looking subject. Second, and also related to Protestant Christian reading practices, is that in order to produce a direct relationship with the divine, it is necessary to de-mediate extra-human agency from objects – such as land. For many peoples, land cannot be separated from immaterial transcendent forms of agency related to ancestors and the divine (discussed further in chapter four) – for Locke land has no agency. Land was created by God, yes, but can be alienated for private ownership by rational individuals. Third, Locke's production of the self-owing body simultaneously constructs a colonial representation that Indigenous people are incapable of corporeal self-ownership; they are not self-governing and hence not capable to use their body's labour in order to acquire land. The Amerindian is permanently wedded to the state of nature and unable to move out of the past and into the future of civil society.

The self-Owning Body and Protestant Theology

In this section I will offer an explanation of Locke's notion of the self-owning body, that is, the notion of the body as property. Accordingly, I focus upon the link between Christian Protestant theology, the increased inward focus of religious belief, and the de-mediation of extra-human agency from land, which for Locke creates the conditions for the individuated self to emerge.

How does Locke arrive at his unique conception of the self-owning body? This notion of the body as individual property has its lineage in readings of Platonic, and, later, Augustinian notions of inward reflexivity and care for the soul. Further, Locke's notions of the self-owning body relates to Descartes notions of the mind/body split.[73] As Charles Taylor reminds us, during the juncture of the seventeenth century, a notion of the self-owning body represented a significant epistemological departure from the dominant theocentric epistemological structure. As such, reason was defined through a schema of divine cosmic order, and, ontologically, the human was conceptualized as the property of God alone (discussed in chapter two). However, what we find in the work of Locke, and other theorists of the seventeenth century, is the emergence of a conception of the human that exercises instrumental forms of control over the self and the surrounding world through a discourse of partial disengagement from heavenly provenance.[74] As I discussed in chapter two, before the seventeenth century, the structure of the world was understood through divinely mediated relationships between man and society. Consequently, social hierarchies in addition to the king's power, ecclesiastical authority and the natural world reflected God's perfection and harmony. This vision of cosmic order and unity, underpinned by the temporal structure of Salvation, underwent profound shifts – Locke's

[73] Taylor, Charles, *Sources of the Self: the Making of Modern Identity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 159-62
[74] Ibid, 174

philosophy is constitutive of this shift. I shall offer a lengthy quote from Seth as she captures the magnitude of this juncture,

> What was once ascribed to God became the story of man. Possessed of little other than reason, man had to impose meaning…Intricately bound to this changing conceptual schema was the gesturing towards two future historical possibilities: the secularization of time and the reconceptualization of man as an individualized self. Precisely because the ordering of human affairs was estranged from the creation of the cosmos, the transition from chaos to meaning is a transition made possible only through the agency of men – it is a transition within secular time. Yet in this conceptual schema, man himself is transformed from the political animal of Aristotelian thought, which presupposed a natural order and meaning in the world, to the a priori individual who is predisposed by his natural reason to impose meaning and order on his world.[75]

For Seth, Locke represents a key theorist in generating epistemological shifts concerning individuation and disengagement from divine provenance. However, while Seth suggests that these shifts take place *within* secular time, it is more accurate to emphasize that the seventeenth century represents a period of transition, or border zone, towards the future possibility of the secularization of time in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (discussed further in chapter four). Hence, Locke represents a theorist who helps to produce a bridge between the theocentric schema of divine order and human centered agency – a transition that must take place within shifting and entangled registers of secular and non-secular forms of time. While elucidating the transitory temporal schema of the seventeenth century is out of the scope of this chapter, I want to emphasize that we cannot understand Locke's theory of epistemology, property and embodiment without taking into account the entangled registers of temporality, theocentric conceptions of the human and incipient secular ones.

Accordingly, Locke's notions concerning the self and embodiment were quite radical for his time. Concerning the body, he states:

[75]Seth, op. cit. 62

> Though the earth, and all inferior creatures, be common to all men, yet every man has a *property* in his own person: this no body has any right to but himself. The *labour* of his body, and the *work* of his hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature hath provided, and left in, he hath mixed his *labour* with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his *property* (emphasis original).[76]

A crucial domain of Locke's theory of property, therefore, is to be found in his notion of embodiment. In my reading, the notion of the self-as-property is derived from two related domains of his theory of epistemology and the Protestant notion of having sovereign direction over the self in matters of faith. For Locke, the notion of "no body having right but to himself" indexes a link between embodiment and Protestant Christian theological notions of powers of self-responsibility, individual consciousness, and sincerity in matters of faith.

Charles Taylor argues that Locke is an important thinker in the emergence of modern individuated subjectivity through his focus and subsequent development of inward reflexivity and disengagement – Taylor examines Locke's theory of epistemology in order to illustrate these processes. In Locke's *Essay*, he argues that our knowledge of the world is the product of syntheses of ideas we receive from sensation and reflection; however, due to our appetites, socially embedded customs and education these syntheses are generated without legitimate grounding or conscious awareness. Consequently, the ontological grounding of these syntheses appears to be solid and natural, yet, for Locke, they have not real validity. Because these conceptions are the mediums of all our thoughts, it is difficult to question them and stage a process of radical reflection concerning their foundations. Locke states that knowledge, generated by custom and reflection often "have, by prescription, such a right to be mistaken for deep learning and

[76]Locke, op. cit. 19

height of speculation, that it will not be easy to persuade either those who speak or those who hear them, that they are but the covers of ignorance, and hindrance of true knowledge."[77] For Locke, therefore, knowledge is not *a priori*, but rather is contingent upon socially produced forms of habituation and institutions such as educational and customary authority; however, through individual reflection the mind can suspend, detach, and reform them.[78]

According to Taylor, Locke proposes a process of "demolition" through a radical form of disengagement in order to remove "some of the rubbish that lies in the way to knowledge."[79] Put differently, Locke suggests that one can suspend and then disengage from invalid forms of knowledge produced through the base passions, customs, and education so that true knowledge can be achieved. The significance of Locke's theory of epistemology for Taylor is that he reifies the individual mind in a radical way for his time. Locke suggests that the mind has "a power to suspend the execution of any of its desires; and so all, one after another; is at liberty to consider the objects of them, examine then on all sides, and weigh them with other."[80] The emphasis upon the processes of suspending, reflecting and demolishing preconceived notions as well as the subsequent reassembling of our conceptions of the world upon stable and genuine foundations of knowledge establishes the primacy of self-responsibility and individuated self-consciousness. Taylor states,

> In effecting this double movement of suspension and examination, we wrest control of our thinking and outlook away from passion or custom or authority and assume responsibility for it ourselves. Locke's theory generates and also reflects an ideal of

[77]Taylor, op. cit. 163, quoted from, Locke, John, *Essay*, Epistle, 14
[78] Ibid, 171
[79] Ibid, quoted from Locke, *Essay*
[80] Ibid, 170, quoted from Locke, *Essay*, 2.21.53

> independence and self-responsibility, a notion of reason as free from established custom and locally dominant authority.[81]

For Locke authentic knowledge is generated through a process of reflective self-comprehension. His emphasis upon the role of disengaged reason and self-responsibility concerning knowledge emerges, in part, from Protestant theological arguments concerning a direct and unmediated relationship to the divine. As such, he was subject to the larger theological contestations of his time vis-à-vis perceptions of Catholic clerical authority, and their hegemonic grip over truth and knowledge. Seth states Protestant theology has a position of the "privileging of individual conscience, which imbued each Christian subject, possessed of reason, with the authority to gain access to and interpret the Word of God and his natural laws."[82] Consequently, Locke's thought is constitutive of Protestant theological notions of personal adhesion, he states, "I have not made it my business, either to quit, or follow any Authority in the ensuing Discourse: Truth has been my only aim."[83]

For this reason, Locke often stages his conception of reason in terms of the opposition between freedom and bondage. His reading of Protestant theology emphasized that one cannot submit the inner spirit to the outward dictates of men – if one does, this creates a relation of slavery and not self-authorization. He states, for instance, "faith only and inward sincerity are the things that produce acceptance with God" and "liberty of conscious is every mans natural right"[84] – in order to be truly sincere in matters of faith, therefore, one must have liberty of conscious. As we can see from the passages above, Locke's process of individual self-remaking cannot be divorced from theological

[81] Ibid, 166
[82] Seth, op. cit. 69
[83]Taylor, op. cit. 168, quoted from, Locke, *Book IV*, 1.4.23
[84] Locke, John, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, 1689

domains because it remains bound by the limits set out by God through natural law – he remains situated in the tradition of theological voluntarism aligned with the natural law tradition of Pufendorf and Grotius.[85]

Locke continues to centralize individuated self-consciousness in his use of embodied metaphors of detachment. Locke makes use of thought experiments that attempt to illustrate that individual self-awareness is separate from the body. He asks the reader to consider the idea of a prince awaking in the body of a cobbler in order to index his conception of independent self-consciousness and individuated control over the body. Taylor states, "The stance of detachment generates the picture of ourselves as pure independent self-consciousness, which underpins and justifies this stance and is the basis of the radical promise of self-control and remaking it holds out."[86] Crucially, if we trace Locke's theory of knowledge and individual remaking via detachment of self-consciousness from embodiment, we can trace Locke's conception of the body as being a type of vessel, or property of the person. In other words, the body, because it is separated from consciousness, can be conceptualized as the property of the detached self-conscious subject. Locke carries this notion of the body as property into his *Two Treatises* that I quoted earlier where he states, "every man has a *property* in his own person: this no body has any right to but himself."

Radhika Mohanram reads Locke's conception of the body as reproducing a set of binary oppositions that finds its lineage in Cartesian mind/body split. While Mohanram does not deal with the theological dimensions of Locke's thought concerning self-consciousness, she, like Taylor, suggests that Locke represents the body as a static form.

[85]Taylor, op. cit. 171
[86] Ibid, 173

For Locke, only consciousness has the ability to transmute the self and enact the process of self-reform. Accordingly, she notes how Locke represents the body through the use of atomizing characteristics: "particles of matter", "one organization of life", "an embryo."[87] These notions serve to generate a hierarchy of the mind over the body, and, as a result allows Locke to conceptualize the body as individual property, Mohanram states, "The body has no identity on its own except insofar as it is property, functioning as object to provide subject status to the individual…It is in function in the interstices of ontology and political philosophy that the body becomes property."[88]

For Mohanram, the abject "poor body" without property – and I will suggest below the Indigenous subject and other enslaved peoples – is not capable of transcending the state of nature through self-conscious transformation into a fully individuated subject. Locke produces an ideal conception of comportment that underpins the ontological grounding for the ideal subject of civil society, that is, the individuated and detached self-conscious subject. As I have attempted to argue, this maneuver of conceptualizing the body as property is not arbitrary for Locke, it is constitutive of his theories concerning knowledge and theologically informed notions of self-reform, and is central to his theory concerning the acquisition of private property.

De-Mediation of Extra-Human Agency and Indigenous Irrationality

In Locke's *Two Treatises*, he states that Indigenous peoples are "needy and wretched inhabitants" because they fail to improve the "wild woods and uncultivated

[87] Mohanram, Radhika, *Black Body: Women, Colonialism and Space*, University of Minnesota Press, 1999, pp. 31
[88] Ibid, 37

waste of America" by English methods of tillage and husbandry. The "needy and wretched" Indigenous subject is held to be irrational because they cannot undergo the aforementioned process of self-reform and achieve the status of pure independent self-consciousness. Consequently, Indigenous subjects are not self-authorizing, do not own their bodies and therefore are incapable of appropriating the product of their labour. For Locke, the inability and failure of the Indigenous subject to acquire land allows the Americas to be constituted as uncultivated, unenclosed by fence or garden, and, therefore, rendered wasteland and common – *terra nullius*. Locke states,

> …he who appropriates land to himself by his labour, does not lessen, but increase the common stock of mankind: for the provisions serving to support of human life, produced by one acre of inclosed and cultivated land, are (to speak much within compass) ten times more than those which are yielded by an acre of land of an equal richness lying waste in common. And therefore he that incloses land, and has a greater plenty of the conveniencies of life from ten acres, than he could have from an hundred left to nature, may truly be said to give ninety acres to mankind.[89]

The Americas were apprehended through Locke's ego- and theo-political representational schema as *terra nullius* until the rational, self-authorizing individual appropriates it with his labour. As result of this maneuver, the Amerindians failure to cultivate land was conceptualized by Locke as a crime against God, because, as mentioned, Genesis 1:28 was interpreted by Locke as a divine decree to subdue and cultivate land and domesticate wild beasts.[90] Locke states, "… God, by commanding to subdue, gave authority so far to appropriate: and the condition of human life, which requires labour and materials to work on, necessarily introduces private possessions."[91] He further states, "God gave the World to men in Common; but since he gave it them for their benefit,…it cannot be supposed he meant it should always remain common and uncultivated. He gave it to the use of the

[89]Locke, op. cit., *Second Treatise on Government*, 23-4
[90]Seth, op. cit. 95
[91]Locke, op. cit., *Second Treatise on Government*, 22

Industrious and Rational, (and Labour was to be his title to it;) not to the Fancy or Covetousness of the Quarrelsome and Contentious."[92] In Seth's reading, the Amerindians failure to cultivate land and leave it as waste indexed their "Quarrelsome and Contentious" nature that breached "the Common Law of Reason."[93] As I will argue below, this allows Locke to authorize unlimited English settlement of the Americas via the plantation model.

Indigenous conceptions of land become subsumed by Locke's English notions of colonial possession, which include Protestant reading practices concerning de-mediating non-human agency from the material world. For many Indigenous nations, land cannot be separated from transcendent forms of immaterial agency (discussed further in chapter four). However, due to the ego and theo-politics of knowledge, Locke locates himself atop an epistemic hierarchy that privileges Protestant English knowledge and cosmology over Amerindian knowledge and cosmologies. Accordingly, Locke completely invalidates Indigenous sacred conceptions of time and space in order to render land bereft of extra-human forms of agency. Once again we see that while he suggests God created the world for common grant, Locke nevertheless conceptualizes uncultivated land as "waste" that must be subdued, enclosed, cultivated and ultimately privately owned by rational men.

For Web Keane, "Protestant semiotic ideology" is a key site for exploring the invalidation of transcendent Indigenous life-worlds through the entangled domains of Protestant reading practices and European colonialism. In his study, Keane argues Protestant missionaries attempted to distinguish between the "true faith" of Protestantism

[92]Seth, op. cit. 96, quoted from Locke, 34.291
[93]Seth , op. cit. 96

from the "false faith" of Indigenous traditions. Protestant semiotic ideology holds that rational human beings do not conceptualize land as embodiments of the divine, but only stand in for the divine through an act of human encoding and interpretation. Practices that encode the material world with extra human agency were contested as external constraints on the individual's path to salvation. Through detaching from forms of external spiritual mediation, Protestant missionaries held that this would open up a vastly expanded vision for individual inward self-creation.[94] For various theorists such as Keane, Taylor, Talal Asad and Saba Mahmood, Protestant hermeneutics indexes a modern formation of individual agency; however, as Talal Asad suggests, this does not so much "free" the individual, but rather put in place new forms of discipline and relations of power.[95]

Understood in this light, Protestant semiotic ideology facilitated shifts in the conception of authentic spiritual life towards practices of detachment and re-signification of material mediation. While the genealogy of "Protestant semiotic ideology" can, in part, be traced to the Reformation and constitutive arguments of self-adhesion mentioned above via Taylor, we must also situate its emergence within the colonial matrix of power. For Protestant missionaries, the notion that land indexed transcendent forms of agency and as ontological extensions of the self was a false imputation of divine agency upon the material world. As missionaries understood it, to ascribe land with supernatural agency was a false and confused gesture because signs and symbols are arbitrarily encoded with sacred properties. Rather, as mentioned above, Protestant theology emphasizes a personal

[94] Keane, Web, Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter, University of California Press, 2007, pp. 54-5
[95] Asad, Talal. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam and Modernity*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003, pp. 25

and inward relationship with God that is not mediated by a clergy, rituals or other material mediations such as printed prayer texts, holy water, crosses, so on.[96] Accordingly, Indigenous cosmological practices that link land with ancestral and supernatural agency was held to be nothing more than confused and heretical forms of primitive fetishism.

In Kean's reading, Protestantism does not introduce agency, or individualism into a conceptual world that may have lacked them. Rather, he suggests that such a claim presupposes a dubious view of subaltern life-worlds before the globalization of Protestant semiotic ideology by colonialism. Further, he argues that the effects of Protestant semiotic ideology enforced through missionary activity is constitutive of multifarious historical processes – as I have argued, Locke's conceptions of detachment and theological voluntarism. Keane suggests, therefore, that Protestantism generated powerful arguments for the theological value of agency by generating "correct" imputations of transcendent agency informed by self-conscious inward belief. He argues that these processes form a moral narrative of modernity, a type of script of theological liberation and conversion to authentic forms of spiritual life for both Christian Europeans and non-Christian peoples globally.[97]

I argue that the aforementioned processes of self-adhesion and the de-mediation of extra-human agency from land converge in Locke's theory of property. The entanglement between Protestant semiotic ideology and colonialism reorients land as bereft of transcendent agency and represents it as "common" and "waste", that is, *terra nullius* so it can be cultivated and enclosed by the labour of the rational, self-owning

[96]Keane, op. cit. 87
[97]Ibid, 48-52

individual. The consequence of Locke's colonial (miss)representation of land goes beyond a mere failure to take into account "the Indian's perspective." Rather, it is the epistemic violence of invalidating Indigenous forms of worlding and self-understanding that emerge through concrete embodied practices and semiotic forms of a given community[98].

In the following passage we see that Locke deploys a universal conception of reason and industry via cultivation in order to increase life's "conveniencies", and in the process invalidates Indigenous conceptions of human-land relations,

> …several nations of the *Americans*…who are rich in land, and poor in all the comforts of life; whom nature having furnished as liberally as any other people, with the materials of plenty, i.e. a fruitful soil, apt to produce in abundance, what might serve for food, raiment, and delight; yet for *want of improving it by labour*, have not one hundredth part of the conveniencies we enjoy: and a king of a large and fruitful territory there, feeds, lodges, and is clad worse than a day-labourer in *England.*[99]

While Locke seems to leave open the possibility for Indigenous peoples to enter the domain of reason and industry by improving land via labour, I have suggested that the paradox in his thought is that the Amerindian is unable to do so. As such, the Amerindian is permanently held to inhabit the state of nature, unable to achieve pure individuated self-consciousness, and, hence, unable to remake the self into a rational individual who can accumulate private property and form a civil political community. Having subsumed Indigenous conceptions of land within English and Protestant semiotic ideology, the only possibility of human-land relations that Locke can image, due to his epistemological location within the colonial matrix of power, is subduing nature by accumulating private property and "convieniencies" via cultivation.

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[98] Ibid, 43, 146

[99] Locke, op. cit., *Second Treatise on Government*, 26

For Locke, the ability to form civil political communities by self-owning rational individuals is what allows one to leave the "past" of the state of nature and move into a new future horizon. The temporality of the state of nature is void of historical potential, because "historical possibilities are created by reason alone."[100] Locke then states history is generated by the rational self, "Person is the name for this *self*…This personality extends *itself* beyond present Existence to what is Past, only by consciousness; whereby it becomes concerned and accountable, owns and imputes to *itself* past actions."[101] Therefore, history itself is produced by civil political society inhabited by self-conscious and morally self-regulating subjects who are able to remake themselves and leave the static state of nature in the past.

In this reading, Locke's thought emerges through plural points of enunciation of coloniality, rather than any singular register. On the one hand, Locke brings together Protestant theological notions of detached self-consciousness, private property accumulation via labour, and, as a result of these processes, the formation of history producing civil political society. On the other hand, the Indigenous subject is put in an impossible position; they are represented as irrational by imputing land with false and heretical forms of supernatural agency and fetish rituals. Indigenous peoples are then held to have committed a crime against God by their inevitable failure to "subdue common wasteland", that is, land rendered *terra nullius*, and transform it into enclosed and cultivated parcels authorized by Genesis and English rituals of possession. As a result, they are permanently held to inhabit the static temporality of the state of nature.

[100]Seth, op. cit. 98
[101]Seth, op. cit. 99, quoted from Locke, *Essay*, 26.189

What emerges in Locke's thought is theological license for English planters to colonize the Americas by rendering Indigenous peoples outside the common law of reason and as "Quarrelsome and Contentious" criminal enemies that can be destroyed by a just war if they resist settlement. Locke states,

> I should have a right to destroy that which threatens me with destruction: for by the fundamental law of nature, man being to be preserved as much as possible, when all cannot be preserved, the safety of the innocent is to be preferred: and one may destroy a man who makes war upon him, or has discovered an enmity to his being, for the same reason that he may kill a wolf or lion; because such men are not under the ties of the common law of reason, have no other rule, but that of force and violence, and so may be treated as beasts of pretty, those dangerous and noxious creatures, that will be sure to destroy him whenever he falls into their power…Thus a thief, whom I cannot harm, but by appeal to the law, for having stolen all that I am worth, I may kill…[102]

By universalizing a conception of the human upon the axis of the industrious and rational individuated self, Locke enunciates his positions based upon the theo- and ego-politics of knowledge, that is, at the epistemology of the zero point that claims for itself truth and objectivity.[103] Consequently, the Amerindian is not simply excluded from Lockean conceptions of the universal individual, rather they are constitutive of it – there is no industrious and rational individual without the irrational Amerindian that is incapable of industry. In this reading, Locke's theory of epistemology, Protestant theology and economic interests for instituting a plantation model of colonialism in the Americas are not reducible to a "secular" economic justification for increasing land and labour productivity within the global circuits of capital accumulation. Rather, I argue the theological productions of the human partially unhinged from the temporality of the Judeo-Christian Time of Salvation were marshaled to organize the colonial expropriation of territory and resources from Indigenous peoples. Accordingly, Locke's attempts to

[102]Locke, op. cit., *Second Treatise on Government*, 15
[103] Mignolo, op. cit., *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, 82

classify, manage and control knowledge regarding human reason place him within the tradition of global linear thinking, which is the central logic of imperial designs for global domination.

Chapter 4

Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Enlightenment Decadence and Coloniality

In the last chapter I discussed the seventeenth century and how the philosophy of John Locke emerged through the coloniality of knowledge, that is, how Locke's relationship to colonial institutions, Protestant Christian theology, and his theory of property formed plural points of enunciation for the formation of the global colonial-capitalist world system. Rather than centralize my analysis around a monological materialist analysis that subsumed his theory of property to territorial expropriation and resource extraction, I argued that Locke's thought should be understood within a constellation of four interrelated and co-produced registers; first, colonial travel literature concerning the New World; second, English political economic debates regarding mercantilism and the plantation colonial model; third, establishing the labour theory of property ownership for legitimizing English rituals of land tenure; fourth, Protestant theological arguments for establishing an individuated form of self-ownership in order to authorize the colonial plantation model. Hence, a central aim of the last chapter was to illustrate the entangled domains of theology, political economy, and philosophy in the constitution of coloniality. This chapter seeks to continue this line of inquiry into the early Enlightenment period.

In this chapter, I will examine the Enlightenment period of the eighteenth century through the work of Jean Jacques Rousseau, and locate him within the matrices of coloniality. I shall argue that Rousseau is a key figure of the Enlightenment because he develops a unique philosophical anthropology, account of history, and philosophy

concerning the origin of man and his essential nature. Rousseau does not attempt to trace the emergence of political society within the state of nature that was imagined to be located outside of Europe, and within the wilderness of the Americas, as Locke does before him. Instead, Rousseau concerns himself with a portrait of natural man that is devoid of reason and self-conscious reflection in order to generate a conception of the origin of man that is to be found within Europe.[1]

I will locate Rousseau within two main co-produced registers that unfold within the colonial matrix of power. First, I examine his notion that human nature cannot be essentialized, but is contingent upon social and political relations. He suggests, in contrast to the dominant positions of his time, that European civilization was decadent and morally corrupt due to factors related to (a) profound social, political, economic, aesthetic and environmental shifts that transformed Europe due to proto-industrialization, which I link to shifts in global political economy, that is, the shift from Dutch to British and French market oriented economics; and (b) the introduction of what he deems to be the morally corrupting "artificial" city established by the enclosure of common-land via contractual property relations and sedentary living. In sum, Rousseau reverses the dominant assumption of the time that modernization cultivated human perfection, a view that associated this process with complex forms of reasoning and conscious moral freedom. Rather, he suggests, these processes led to human degeneration. Rousseau juxtaposes a melancholic portrait of moribund European civilization with representations of the pristine natural living conditions and uncorrupted virtues of so-called savage

[1] Seth, Vanita, *Europe's Indians: Producing Racial Difference, 1500-1900*, Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2010, pp. 101

Caribs and Hottentots living in the state of nature.[2] He relies upon existing colonial travelogues and missionary accounts to determine that savage life was a more perfected period in human history. I will illustrate that he was able to arrive at this position by relying heavily upon travelogues, structured by Platonic philosophy and Christian theology, which held that so-called savages of the Americas were derived from an originary Chrisitan-Hebrew lineage. Put differently, I will show that Rousseau's political philosophy emerges from a Christian narrative of Biblical monogenesis interwoven with Platonic philosophy concerning the deviated copy and the perfected original. Europe then, according to Rousseau, stands as a degraded copy in relation to a more authentic savage that he represents as natural to the point of being subsumed into pure corporeality.

Second, I illustrate that Rousseau relies upon Enlightenment natural history that was organized by the medieval theocentric Great Chain of Being. I show that Linnaean classificatory schemas created the epistemic conditions for Rousseau to examine the sovereign location of the human in the Chain vis-à-vis other sentient beings by focusing upon the unique capacity of human perfectibility. I illustrate these processes by turning to his distinctive literary and musical productions, which introduce a new quality of human agency that further dislodges the existing theocentric structure of divine will. Hence, I suggest that while Rousseau relies upon the metaphysical Chain, he simultaneously undermines it through his philosophical anthropology concerning the moral freedom of the detached, inward looking individual.

By excavating the historical genesis of Rousseau's political philosophy, I show that he remains indebted to an entangled colonial and Christian theological lineage, while

[2] Gordon, Jane, *Creolizing Political Theory: Reading Rousseau Through Fanon*, Fordham University Press, 2014, pp. 53

at the same time subverting it. I illustrate that while he offers a criticism of "artificial" European society, which he locates as the source of human degeneration rather than being the result of inherent human nature, he ends up authorizing European colonialism. This is because he paradoxically suggests that the very possibility of generating the conditions to fully realize human perfectibility emerges through the artificial processes of modernization. Hence, it only when savage man moves through different stages of "artifice", that is, legally sanctioned property enclosures and labour exploitation that he/she gains the capacity for perfectibility by willfully exercising agency and future oriented consciousness.

To date, two main frames of analysis have largely demarcated Rousseau's political philosophy vis-à-vis colonialism. The first is the introspective philosophical frame that largely abstracts Rousseau's thought from coloniality (Ter Ellington, John Lyons). Through this perspective Rousseau's strident critiques of European society are shown to have been produced in isolation from colonial processes. Ellington contests attributing the "noble savage" tradition to Rousseau on the basis that he does not explicitly mention the term. This frame, exemplified by Ellington, suggests that Rousseau's political philosophy was largely an introspective philosophical exercise, or "thought experiment", aimed at revealing that natural man was to be found within Rousseau himself.[3]

The second frame is a colonial one, which focuses upon how Rousseau's thought is co-produced by colonial processes. This approach explicitly contests reducing his ideas of natural man to an abstracted analogue of Rousseau's own self; instead, this perspective suggests that Rousseau relies heavily upon empirical ethnological chronicles, rather than

[3] Ter Ellington, *The Myth of the Noble Savage*, University of California Press, 2001

simply dismissing them or subsuming them into an individualized introspective exercise. Importantly, this viewpoint emphasizes that his political philosophy stands as an authorizing discourse for European colonialism (Jane Gordon, Vanita Seth, Nelson Maldonado-Torres). While the first frame is attentive to Rousseau's engagement with travel writing, it largely circumscribes Rousseau's thought as a contemplative philosophical activity. This reading, I suggest, essentially misses the second frame's emphasis upon how Rousseau develops a sophisticated political philosophy that consents to colonial expansion and furthers the noble savage tradition – despite his failure to explicitly mention the concept.

In this chapter, I offer a position that largely builds upon the second frame of analysis. While this frame provides a rich and theoretically nuanced reading of Rousseau's relationship to colonialism, it has directed little attention to the constitutive role of theology in his thought. This is rather surprising, especially considering how the theocentric epistemological tradition of his time demarcated the boundaries of knowledge concerning the noble savage tradition, natural history and colonial ethnology. My main contribution to the second frame, and existing Rousseau scholarship, is accounting for how his notions of human difference and perfectibility imbricate and rearrange elements of the metaphysical Great Chain of Being and monogenesis - registers that had already been undergoing discursive rearrangements in coloniality as I have argued in the previous chapters. As I will suggest, the epistemic conditions that allowed for Rousseau to articulate his particular notions of difference were contingent upon the particular ways in

which theology was negotiated and became entangled with Enlightenment natural history and colonial ethnology.[45]

A Brief Glimpse of Rousseau's Origin of Natural Man

Instead of attempting to outline Rousseau's whole theory of perfectibility in relation to the origins of natural man, this section will outline the basic structure of his theory regarding the noble savage and state of nature in order to provide a conceptual backdrop for the chapter. According to Rousseau, noble savages in the original state of nature are pre-social, self-sufficient and solitary; further, they are characterized as having robust physical frames, lots of leisure time and simply defined needs. They also exist without industry, fixed households, and are devoid of the capacity for language. He remarks:

> But the fact of the matter is that in that primitive state, since nobody had houses or huts or property of any kind, each one bedded down in some random spot and often for only one night. Males and females came together fortuitously as a result of change encounters, occasion, and desire, without there being any great need for words to express what they had to say to one another.[6]

As the physical environment changed and humans multiplied, their posterity formed into community units via semi-fixed dwellings and they cooperated in order to procure food and other rudimentary living requirements. For Rousseau, language initially formed

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[4] The exact specifications of the Christian tradition, namely, Protestant and Catholic (in addition to the various cleavages within them) that most influenced Rousseau is difficult to discern. It becomes more difficult considering Rousseau's own conflicted personal relationship with the Christian faith and the historical context of the time concerning tensions between the two traditions. For instance, Rousseau renounced his Reform religion and converted to Catholicism in 1728. Nevertheless, below, I focus on the profound impact that Protestant notions of the inward looking and detached individual had on Enlightenment thought and on Rousseau's political philosophy.

[5] Gordon, op. cit. 38

[6] Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *The Basic Political Writings*, Indianapolis: Hacket, 1987, pp. 48

within islands, bound by limited territory and resources. The resulting growth of complex societal arrangements – established through mutual dependence and language – produced early forms of love and elementary notions of personal possession.[7]

As a consequence of these early communal relationships, so-called savages started to conceptualize their basic relative worth in relation to others and non-human animals. In turn, this cultivated the desire of public esteem for the beautiful, the physically gifted, and talented artisans. These self-centred inclinations gave rise to other iterations of the base passions such as human avarice, vanity, and opulence.[8] Rousseau observes,

> Having previously wandered about the forests and having assumed a more fixed situation, men slowly came together and united into different bands, eventually forming in each country a particular nation…people become accustomed to consider different objects and to make comparisons…Each one began to look at the others and to want to be looked at himself, and public esteem had value. The one who sang or danced the best, the handsomest, the strongest, the most adroit or the most eloquent became the most highly regarded. And this was the first toward inequality and at the same time, toward vice.[9]

Nevertheless, empathy remained a feature of these "primitive" social arrangements and this established the "beginnings of morality" that were held to underpin human judgment. For Rousseau, this original state of nature was represented as the longest lasting and happiest epoch in human history.

> The more one reflects on it, the more one finds that this state was the least subject to upheavals and the best for man…The example of savages, who have almost always been found at this point of development, appears to confirm that the human race was made to remain there always; to confirm that this state was the time youth of the world, and that all subsequent progress has been so many steps in appearance towards the improvement of the individual, but so many steps in reality towards the decrepitude of the species.[10]

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[7]Gordon, op. cit. 45; Maldonado-Torres, Nelson, "Rousseau, Fanon on Inequality and the Human Sciences,", *Creolizing Rousseau*, 15(1), 2009, pp. 118
[8] Gordon, op. cit. 45
[9]Rousseau, op. cit. 64
[10]Maldonado-Torres, op. cit. 118, quoted from Rousseau, 65

For Rousseau then, the emergence of society did not result in the improvement of the human condition; rather, it unleashed an arsenal of intellectual and self-centred emotional capabilities such as inventiveness, recollection, active reason and dynamism.[11] Society, for Rousseau, introduced a unique valence of human freedom indexed by self-perfection vis-à-vis nature and non-human animals. Rousseau states that the rudimentary forms of human cognition and social organization held to characterize the egalitarian original state of nature withered into decrepit forms of self-preservation via property enclosure supported by slave labour. Hence, the characteristics of social development that were commonly assumed to correlate to human improvement were conceived for Rousseau as the cause of degeneration of the human into a tyrant – over nature and himself.[12]

> But as soon as one man needed the help of another, as soon as one man realized that it was useful for a single individual to have provisions for two, equality disappeared, property came into existence, labor became necessary. Vast forests were transformed into smiling fields which had to be watered with men's sweat, and in which slavery and misery were soon seen to germinate and grow with the crops.[13]

However, I will argue below, as much as Rousseau seemingly critiqued the excesses of European modernity and the principal of human enslavement, he did not extend his concerns to the reality of enslaved Native and African peoples that suffered as a result of these processes. Moreover, he paradoxically ends up endorsing the very model of society that he decries as the locus of human decadence and wickedness. I suggest this is due to Rousseau's contradictory location within the colonial matrix of power. I shall now turn my attention to the body and ego-politics of knowledge vis-à-vis the Enlightenment and Rousseau in order to unpack these complex relationships.

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[11]Gordon, op. cit. 45
[12] Ibid, 46
[13]Maldonado-Torres, op. cit. Rousseau, Fanon on Inequality, 118, quoted from Rousseau, 65

Rousseau, Enlightenment and Coloniality

In this chapter I am concerned with the political thought of the Enlightenment and treat it as a temporal category and as a set of practices generated over the eighteenth century. The Enlightenment includes a multiplicity of texts, authors, institutions, and sensibilities; hence, the Enlightenment is not a singular project, but rather represents multiple and often contradictory philosophical and political articulations. For instance, there are various Enlightenment projects, including French, Scottish, American and German variants. Further, from the multiplicity of political and philosophical thought that emerged in the long eighteenth century, there remained contrasting positions ranging from atheistic materialism, theological philosophy, romantic nationalism and enlightened materialism – each replete with different assumptions and practices.[14]

Despite the diversity of discourses generated throughout Enlightenment thought and practice I situate it within the frame of coloniality. As I have stated in earlier chapters, coloniality is a frame of analysis that examines the constitution of the modern colonial-capitalist world system that while made up of heterogeneous ways of life, knowledge, and cosmological systems is nevertheless constitutive of a historical structure of the colonial matrix of power. Following the decolonial perspective, the colonial matrix of power brings together plural points of enunciation over the control of knowledge, of jurisdiction, and authority over discourses of gender and sexuality, and over the

[14] Muthu, Sankar, *Enlightenment Against Empire*, Princeton University Press, 2003, pp. 2

classificatory schemas concerning people and regions, and over the validity of sacred systems and cosmology.[15]

A key domain of the colonial matrix of power is the coloniality of knowledge, that is, an epistemic hierarchy that privileges Western knowledge and cosmology over non-Western knowledge and cosmology. This hierarchy of knowledge has been sustained by a formation of power that has a lineage of over five hundred years. As I have argued in earlier chapters, what emerged in the late fifteenth century was not simply an economic system of capitalism underpinned by the exploitation of labour and territorial expropriation for material interests. While this is a vital domain of coloniality, the constitution of the global system was generated though the colonial matrix of power, which by the late nineteenth century engulfed the entire planet, and is the foundation of the variety of historical colonialisms that emerged thereafter.[16]

In agreement with Mignolo, I suggest that the historical antecedents for the colonial matrix of power are to be found in theology. In chapter one I argued that Christian theology provided a theological grid of intelligibility to organize difference by a structure of similitude through the temporal structure of the Time of Salvation. Through this structure differences were assimilated into redemptive genealogical maps whereby the "pagan Indian" was brought into an incorporative Christian temporal structure of salvation. Subsequently, since 1492 with the fall of Muslim Spain and the expulsion as well as forced conversion of Muslims and Jews, the theological domains of the colonial-capitalist world system has persisted and has been rearticulated; for instance, the

[15] Mignolo, Walter, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, Duke University Press, 2011, pp. xv
[16] Ibid, 2

melancholia of coloniality indexed the representation of Indigenous and African peoples as paradoxically both redeemable and destroyable.

The seventeenth and early eighteenth century marked an epoch of transition in which the conceptual schema of similitude underwent transformations to its conceptual architecture towards universality via the incipient emergence of individual autonomy partially delinked from divine provenance. Hence, this epoch marked a significant epistemological restructuring of the Time of Salvation towards the modern horizon of a universalized and generalized temporal arrangement marked by the increasing secularization of time and space. For Mignolo, theology was transformed via secular philosophy and the sciences by the Linnaean system of classificatory schemas and organizational principals.[17] While Mignolo suggests that theology was "displaced" by secular philosophy and science, I argue that Christian theology was reconfigured and rearranged throughout the Enlightenment into new configurations of knowledge and points of articulation within the colonial matrix of power.

One of the major consequences of the rise of secular and scientific rationalism was the ego-politics of knowledge, which takes a point-zero standpoint to knowledge production. In an attempt to contest the ego-politics of knowledge, decolonial thought shifts the discussion to the body-politics of knowledge, that is, the biographical locations of the agents and institutions that produced knowledge through the particular configurations and epistemic desires of mostly white, European, Christian males that were hidden and articulated in a universal language of Reason as opposed to theology. In other words, decolonial thought argues that Western epistemology generated through the frame of coloniality occludes the gendered, sexual, religious, ethnic, class and linguistic

[17] Ibid, 9

domains that underpin its universalist articulations.[18] As Maldonado-Torres observes, reflecting upon the spatial and geopolitical contexts through which knowledge is produced exposes the falsity of the neutral epistemic subject that speaks from the space-less location of the universal.[19] Conversely, failure to consider the spatial registers of Western philosophy does not simply reproduce conceptual blindness to the history of Enlightenment theory's generative categories. Rather, it reinscribes a typology of value regarding European knowledge, cosmology and spirituality over non-European forms through the coloniality of knowledge.[20]

Working within the framework of decolonial thought, I seek to situate Rousseau within the geopolitical and epistemic points of articulation with attention paid to the theological filiations of his thought. By doing so, this decouples his thought from the notion that he is beyond the body politics of knowledge, and, hence, outside the colonial matrix of power. Locating Rousseau within the larger structure of coloniality highlights the ways in which his thought was produced through a theocentric Latin Christian system of apprehending difference vis-à-vis the New World and its inhabitants. The sources he relied upon were largely generated from several interrelated locations; first, a series of widely disseminated travelogues of explorers and missionary accounts from figures such as Sir Walter Raleigh, Captain John Smith, Captain Cook, Father Joseph d'Acosta, Father Labat, Michel de Montaigne, and Baron Lahontan, among others.[21] Consequently, I argue that the intertextual citational practices concerning the New World were produced

[18] Ibid
[19] Maldonado-Torres, Nelson, "The Topology of Being and the Geopolitics of Knowledge: Modernity, Empire, Coloniality," *City*, 8(1), April 2004, pp. 29
[20] Ibid, 30
[21] Eze, Chukwudi, Emmanuel, *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader*, Wiley-Blackwell, 1997, pp. 2

through an entangled configuration from both theological and material domains. As Jane Gordon observes,

> Rousseau was himself fascinated by travel writings. He took from them profound instances of refusal; moments when narratives of the inevitable desirability of French models were clearly and publicly rejected by people who faced being or already were colonized. Still Rousseau was not able to move (at this stage) beyond critical refusal. Trapped in a singular Christianized classical teleology, the further one moved from originary moments, in this case ones that were only basically social, the further one moved toward decay.[22]

Second, Rousseau was heavily influenced by the discourse of Enlightenment natural history through figures such as Carl Linnaeus and Comte de Buffon. These thinkers produced voluminous and complex classificatory schemas for locating all creatures (from sea-mermaids to angels) within the vertical scale of the Chain of Being that reached God at its highest and most perfected point (discussed in chapter 1). Rousseau remained embedded within the taxonomies of the Chain and within the accepted eighteenth-century system of thought regarding natural history largely derived from medieval theological categories.[23]

For Rousseau, however, rather than deploying a discourse of human evolution through developmental temporal sequences, which would not emerge until the nineteenth century, he reversed the eighteenth century temporal schema of progressivism by arguing that "development" and "progress" were related to a future characterized by human decay. In doing so, he located "natural man" within a static temporality, a timeless zone of perpetual youth and happiness, in order to construct his political philosophy concerning civilizational degeneration. Rousseau located "natural man" above animals and below "full human-man" within the incorporative conceptual grid of the Chain of

[22]Gordon, op. cit. 25
[23]Seth, op. cit. 107

Being. However, during this juncture, the Chain is simultaneously undermined and rearranged by the incipient emergence of ideas concerning human centred agency that is linked to shifts in Christian theology influenced by Protestantism (discussed in chapter 2) and Rousseau's notion of the potentiality of human perfectibility.[24] As such, I examine how travel literature and Enlightenment natural history, which are both indebted to a medieval Christian theological conceptual universe (discussed in chapter one), were rearranged and reinscribed within the thought of Rousseau via notions of human perfectibility.

Political Economic Context: From Dutch to British and French Hegemony

Before tracing the philosophical and theological underpinnings of Rousseau's thought within the domains of travel literature and natural history, I want to provide a brief backdrop to the politico-economic climate of the long eighteenth century from a global perspective. My intention in this brief section is to foreground the structure of coloniality vis-à-vis global political economy. In the last section of the chapter, I will illustrate that the registers of political economy, political philosophy and theology link to Rousseau's conception of human perfectibility.

As I suggested in chapter one, European sovereign possession over the Americas was established by the notions of *terra nullius*; that is, the lands of the New World were rendered *empty* through a combination of theological license initiated by papal bulls in order to secure the spread of Christianity and ideas of *jus gentium* authorizing Spanish colonization. Further in chapter two, I illustrated how Locke was a key figure in helping

[24] Ibid, 107-110

shift European political economy and European colonial possession over the Americas via the plantation colonial model. Rousseau does not play a similar role in shaping colonial political economy as an actor within key bureaucratic posts as Locke did before him. Rather, Rousseau emerges as a philosophical and political critic embedded within major shifts of the epoch, as I will argue, he shapes the coloniality of knowledge through his criticisms and support of the colonial power matrix.

The eighteenth century marked a shift from Dutch maritime mercantile hegemony towards the dominance of market oriented economic models of coloniality by the British and French.[25] This process began in 1651, when Britain challenged the Dutch in several naval battles that resulted in British domination of Europe and the global colonial-capitalist world system.[26] As I argued in the previous chapters, European interstate competition, intensified by the so-called "discoveries" of the New World and mercantilism, produced what Giovanni Arrighi named a "vicious/virtuous cycle" of imperial expansion. For Arrighi, three interrelated processes of settler colonialism, capitalist slavery, and economic nationalism characterize the decline of the Dutch and introduce British and French colonial-capitalist dominance beginning in the seventeenth century. He states, "All three components were essential to the reorganization of world-economic space, but settler colonialism was probably the leading element in the

[25] These shifts can be best understood by Giovanni Arrighi's notion of "systemic cycles of accumulation", developed from Fernand Braudel's notion of "*longue duree*". While Arrighi's approach does not aim to focus upon co-produced, non-material domains of accumulation, such as Christian missionary activity and travel adventures – it concerns itself with the making of the "capitalist world system" – the model of "systemic cycles of accumulation" captures the broad global economic shifts that take place within the structure of coloniality. Hence, I suggest that we can include Arrighi's examination of the capitalist world system as a constitutive domain of the colonial power matrix.

[26] Buck-Morss, Susan, "Hegel and Haiti," *Critical Inquiry*, 26(4), 2000, pp. 825

combination."[27] He further argues that capitalist slavery was in part a condition and result of settler colonialism because the "industriousness" of British colonists were continually challenged by limitations of labour-power, "This chronic labour shortage enhanced the profitability of capitalist enterprises engaged in the procurement (primarily in Africa), transport and productive use (primarily in the Americas) of slave labour."[28]

Over the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the "virtuous/vicious" cycle of empire, spearheaded by the British victory of the Seven Years War (1756-63), placed Britain as the world leader of the European balance of power.[29] As Partha Chatterjee explains, while Britain (earlier understood as England) gained colonial control over extensive settlements throughout the Americas and the Caribbean for over two centuries, the terminology of the "British Empire" only entered the public lexicon during the Seven Years War when Britain gained significant overseas territories from the French.[30]

J.M Blaut argues that it is difficult to determine the exact impact of colonialism in the eighteenth century vis-à-vis the volume of production, labour forces and capital accumulation due to limitations in quantitative data.[31] However, like Arrighi, he suggests that the combination of settler colonialism and slavery underpins shifts in global political economy. And, importantly, he suggests the antecedents of this expansion are rooted in processes following 1492 (discussed in chapter one). For instance, over a fifty-year period after 1640 the West Indian plantation system expanded rapidly and over fifty thousand enslaved people were forcibly brought to Barbados alone. Moreover, over two

[27] Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power and the Origins of our Times*, Verso, 2010 (1994), pp. 50
[28] Ibid
[29] Ibid, 51
[30] Chatterjee, Partha, *The Black Hole of Empire: History of a Global Practice of Power*, Princeton University Press, 49
[31] Blaut, J.M., *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History*, Guilford Press, 1993, pp. 198

million enslaved peoples were brought to the Americas over the course of the seventeenth century.[32] Key to this expansion was the sugar plantation economy, often referred to as the "Atlantic economy." As Susan Buck-Morss explains, sugar radically altered the West Indian colonial plantations,

> Both capital and labor intensive, sugar production was protoindustrial, causing a precipitous rise in the importation of African slaves and a brutal intensification of their labour exploitation in order to meet a new and seemingly insatiable European demand for the addictive sweetness of sugar. Leading the Caribbean-wide sugar boom was the French colony of Saint-Domingue that in 1767 produced 63,000 tons of sugar. Sugar production led to a seemingly infinite demand for slaves as well, whose number in Saint-Domingue increased tenfold over the eighteenth century to over five hundred thousand human beings. Within France, more than 20 percent of the bourgeoisie was dependent upon slave-connected commercial activity.[33]

Caribbean theorists, C.L.R. James and Eric Williams are notable for suggesting that the West Indian slave-based plantation colonial model in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was vital for the rise of British and French protoindustrialization. For instance, they argue that both European imperial powers developed the most advanced system of industrial capacity through a complex network of capitalization, international business institutions, and technology in the form of milling, rum manufacture, and transportation. Moreover, the immense labour force in the sugar producing factories and fields created a complex infrastructure of indentured labourers, slaves and plantation supervisors. These processes formed astonishing profits from sugar and the slave economy itself – what Williams refers to as "the triangular trade" in his book *Capitalism and Slavery.*[34] Hence, both James and Williams suggest the slave-based plantation system provided *most* of the capital required for the genesis of the Industrial Revolution.[35]

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[32] Ibid
[33]Buck-Morss, op. cit. 827-8
[34]Blaut, op. cit. 204, from Williams, Eric, *Capitalism and Slavery*, University of North Carolina Press, 1944
[35] It is important to note that various Eurocentric Marxist theorists reject the position that the colonial slave-based plantation model underpinned protoindustrialization and the Industrial Revolution. Most

Finally, Jason Moore suggests that in order to understand the qualitative shift to protoindustrialization, and the rise of the British and French, one must take into account the coproduced registers between land and labour, production, and power.[36] He states, "any adequate explanation of this qualitative shift must recognize that there was a transition from control of land as a direct relation of surplus appropriation to control of land as a condition for rising labor productivity within commodity production."[37] Through an approach of "capitalist world-ecology", Moore provides an astonishing catalogue of the environmental impacts of imperial expansion, which he traces to the fifteenth century – from deforestation due to shipbuilding and the rise of fishing industries, for instance – in order to index the coproduced relationship between power and production in relation to the environment.[38] As I shall argue below, these massive environmental shifts would deeply impact Rousseau and many of the thinkers that influenced him. These transformations in the natural landscape played a large role in Rousseau's articulations of the perceived decadence of Europe and the degradation of the natural environment abroad. I shall quote Moore at length in order to provide a glimpse of the magnitude of some of these shifts,

> [T]he emergence of major shipbuilding centers and significant frontiers for timber and naval stores in North America during the 18th century; the relentless geographical expansion of forest product and shipbuilding frontiers were bound up, in no small measure, with the increasingly vast fleets of herring, cod, and whaling vessels that searched and devoured the North Atlantic's sources of maritime protein; the search for fish was complemented by the search for furs, which had only a modest economic weight in world accumulation, but whose steady advance (and serialized exhaustion of fur-bearing animals) across North America (Siberia too), stretching by the 18th century into

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Notably, Robert Brenner argues that unfree labour is not an essential feature to the emergence of capitalism through what Blaut refers to as a Eurocentric-diffusionist framework. For further reading refer to Blaut, *Eight Eurocentric Historians* (2000); *The Colonizers Model of the World* (1993), Guilford Press.

[36] Moore, Jason W., "The Capitalocene Part 1: On the Nature & Origins of Our Ecological Crisis," *Fernand Braudel Centre*, pp. 20

[37] Ibid

[38] Ibid, 11

> the expansive Great Lakes region, encouraged significant infrastructure of colonial power; the steady expansion of sugar demand and the exhaustion of Bahia's sugar complex by the mid-17th century favored successive sugar revolutions of the West Indies, from Barbados in the 1640s to Jamaica and St. Domingue in the 18th century, leaving a trail of African graves and denuded landscapes in its wake; human ecologies too were transformed in many ways, not least through the sharply uneven "cerealization" of peasant diets – and the "meatification" of aristocratic and bourgeois diets – within Europe after 1550; the resurgence of Mexican silver production in the 18th century and the attendant deforestation of already-thin Mexican forests; the revolution in English coal production from 1530 and, perhaps most significantly, the epoch-making "Columbian exchange," as Old World diseases, animals, and crops flowed into the New World, and New World crops, such as potatoes and maize, flowed into the Old World .[39]

This analysis of global political economy is not attentive to the constitutive registers of theology, such as the fifteenth century papal bulls that authorized the colonial ownership over the New World and the *souls* of its inhabitants. Nevertheless, we can tie together the work of Arrighi, Blaut, Buck-Morss and Moore in order to capture the magnitude of the transformations that took place throughout the long eighteenth century and its relationship to the unfolding of coloniality from the fifteenth century.

These dramatic shifts were not lost upon the Enlightenment thinkers of the time; thinkers such as Rousseau valorized indigenous peoples of the New World for their natural purity and natural landscapes in the midst of these social, political, economic and environmental transformations that were taking place. However, as Buck-Morss suggests, "the economic lifeblood of slave labor was not their concern."[40] Rousseau would passionately state in the opening lines of *On the Social Contract* (1762) that "Man is born free, and everywhere he is chains", yet he would fail to address the reality of millions of European-owned slaves despite his attacks on the institution.[41] Buck-Morss draws from Louis Sala-Molins and suggests that Rousseau often referred to travelogues concerning "Hottentots" and "Indians", but never does he address the violence of European slavery,

[39] Ibid, 17-8
[40] Buck-Morss, op. cit. 828
[41] Ibid, 830

> Rousseau referred to human beings everywhere but omitted Africans; spoke of Greenland's people transported to Denmark who die of sadness-but not of the sadness of Africans transported to the Indies that resulted in suicides, mutinies, and maroonings. He declared all men equal and saw private property as the source of inequality, but he never put two and two together to discuss French slavery for economic profit as central to arguments of both equality and property.[42]

Buck-Morss refers to Sala-Molins in order to suggest that Rousseau was both racist and revolting, and criticizes attempts to disregard such charges as anachronistic, or as relativistic readings of modern race thinking imposed on earlier epochs due to a variety of disciplinary and moral reasons. She argues Rousseau's racism is omitted from historical and philosophical accounts: "the embarrassing facts are quietly allowed to disappear."[43] While I am mostly in agreement with Buck-Morss's and Sala-Molins's excellent analyses, I would suggest that accounting for the epistemological structure of the eighteenth century (that Rousseau was embedded within), did not include the possibility for bio-evolutionary racial schemas. Rather, the main conceptual architecture for conceptualizing human difference remained a theocentric mode of similitude. This can still be understood as revolting. Attending to the epistemological structure of the long eighteenth century does not necessarily evacuate an analysis of "embarrassing facts" instead, it provides an opportunity to better trace the genesis of the colonial-capitalist world system in its complex and contradictory formation, and, vitally, allows us to better understand the traces of incorporative theology that remain a constitutive feature of the colonial power matrix – including modern race thinking.

It is from this intervention concerning the epistemological structure of the long eighteenth century that I shall now turn in order to better trace the complex assumptions that inform Rousseau's thought, in particular, his notion of human perfectibility that are

[42] Ibid, 831
[43] Ibid

key to his ideas of human difference, and his omissions concerning slavery including his contradictory endorsement of European colonialism. In the next section I will explore the tradition of travelogues that influenced Rousseau's thought, and I pay particular attention to the often-neglected domains of Christian theology and Platonic philosophy that are constitutive of the noble savage tradition.

Travel Writing, Natural Humans and Medieval Christian Theology

In previous chapters I have discussed the importance of travel writing and missionary accounts in the production of the coloniality of knowledge. From Antiquity to the Middle Ages various marvelous creatures were said to exist, such as dog-faced men with tails, Cyclopes with one-eye, and giants for instance.[44] Nevertheless, these depictions of the marvelous and fantastic gave way to a theologically authorized conceptual schema of similitude and resemblances that came to structure the logic human difference. Hence, in the centuries preceding the Enlightenment, there is a long tradition of travelogues and accounts of human difference apprehended by Biblical exegesis, and as I have suggested in previous chapters, these theological traces remain a constitutive feature of coloniality, and, as I argue here, Rousseau's thought.

In the following section I will examine some of the philosophical and moral assumptions that formed the conceptual matrix of Rousseau's conceptions of human forms of difference via the coloniality of knowledge. I shall focus upon the notion of "natural man" that underpins the noble savage discourse found in the work of Montaigne

[44]Seth, op. cit. 75

who heavily influenced the work of Rousseau – particularly his notions of human perfectibility.[45]

Centuries of travel writing and missionary accounts cannot be reduced to any singular logic or simplistic narrative of exclusion. Rather, the accounts of so-called noble savagery was heterodox, and, in fact, attempts to humanize and valorize the figure of natural man through characteristics such as intrinsic benevolence and pacifism paradoxically had the result of dehumanization. This paradoxical representation of natural man as so close to nature as to make them animalistic would feature as prominent themes in Montaigne's articulations of New World inhabitants.[46] Muthu states:

> The accounts of many of the earliest encounters between Europeans and Amerindians contain reactions toward New World peoples that implied, or more directly offered, praise for what was perceived to be their 'natural' manner of living. Idealized portrayals of Amerindians in these writings reflect the varied, and at times conflicting, fables about faraway lands and peoples across the seas that shaped the expectations of the late-fifteenth- and early-sixteenth-century explorers, missionaries, and soldiers who travelled to the Americas.[47]

Montaigne's widely read *Des Cannibales* (Of Cannibals) provided a significant source for the dissemination of a conceptual vocabulary for juxtaposing French decadence with New World purity. The resulting representation of an "artificial" French lifestyle, attributed to an increasingly corrupted set of virtues, was evinced for Montaigne by the altering of the physical environment that were held to be the result of moral corruption. Conversely, the New World and its inhabitants was cast as pristine and uncorrupted while the natural environment was valorized for its originary purity.[48]

For Montaigne, the so-called savage condition of the Indigenous subject was not due to intrinsic inferiority or what we can understand as biological racial difference by

[45]Muthu, op. cit. 12-13
[46] Ibid, 9-12
[47] Ibid, 13
[48] Ibid, 14

evolutionary temporal schemas. Rather, his savage condition was held to be a result of his natural condition, and thereby being closer to an idealized original state that has not been exposed to the debasement of the modern condition. Montaigne states that, "[t]hese nations, then, seem to me barbarous only in this sense, that they have been fashioned very little by the human mind, and are still very close to their original naturalness."[49] His inspiration for this discourse of natural barbarity can be found from Greek philosophy and various sixteenth century dispatches from expeditions and travelogues, including Amerigo Vespucci's popular *Mundus Novus*.

According to Montaigne, the natural life of Amerindians was exemplified by their lack of attachment to any extraneous physical or psychological extravagance that is held to be the result of layers of moribund culture such as art and innovation. Instead, the Amerindian is held to happily flourish as a result of living by a natural code of simplicity. Montaigne remarks:

> These nations then seem to me to be so far barbarous, as having received but very little form and fashion from art and human invention, and consequently to be not much remote from their original simplicity…no clothing, no agriculture, no metal, no use of corn or wine; the very words that signify lying, treachery, dissimulation, avarice, envy, detraction, pardon, never heard of.[50]

Montaigne maintains that the natural state of barbarous people, ostensibly lacking in what can be understood as culture, in the form of mastery over craft and ingenuity, produces an egalitarian social structure that results in high levels of moral well-being, and, as a result optimal physical health, "'tis rare to hear of a sick person, and they moreover assure me, that they never saw any of the natives, either paralytic, bleareyed, toothless, or crooked

[49] Ibid, 15, quoted from Montaigne, Michel de, *Des Cannibals*, translated by Charles Cotton, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3600/3600-h/3600-h.htm>
[50] Montaigne, op. cite. *Des Cannibals*

with age."[51] Rousseau would follow Montaigne in suggesting that physical decrepitudes found in Europe were a manifestation of the perils of the artificial human penchant for luxury, and a result of poverty underpinned by social, legal and political hierarchies.[52] Rousseau would declare that, "When one thinks about the stout constitutions of the savages, at least of those whom we have not ruined with our strong liquors; when one becomes aware of the fact that they know almost no illness but wounds and old age, one is strongly inclined to believe that someone could easily write the history of human maladies by following the history of civil societies."[53]

The conception of the New World, structured by the "original simplicity" of natural life and embodied in the authentic purity of the savage Amerindian was in part generated for Montaigne by Platonic schemas of aligning the categories of "natural" and "original" with the perfected form.[54] Conversely, the artificial creation is an imperfect analogue to the original. Montaigne observes: "All things, says Plato, – [*Laws*, 10.] – are produced either by nature, by fortune, or by art; the greatest and most beautiful by the one or the other of the former, the least and the most imperfect by the last."[55] For Montaigne, French society was the imperfect copy, while Amerindian peoples were seen to be closest to the original; moreover, he goes further to challenge the perfected representation of the Republic by lamenting that Plato never was able to observe the natural state of the New World and its inhabitants,

> I am sorry that Lycurgus and Plato had no knowledge of them; for to my apprehension, what we now see in those nations, does not only surpass all the pictures with which the poets have adorned the golden age, and all their inventions in feigning a happy state of man, but, moreover, the fancy and even the wish and desire of philosophy itself; so native

[51] Ibid
[52]Muthu, op. cit. 17
[53]Rousseau, op. cit. 42
[54]Muthu, op. cit. 17
[55]Montaigne, op. cit. *Des Cannibals*

> and so pure a simplicity, as we by experience see to be in them, could never enter into their imagination, nor could they ever believe that human society could have been maintained with so little artifice and human patchwork. I should tell Plato that it is a nation wherein there is no manner of traffic, no knowledge of letters, no science of numbers, no name of magistrate or political superiority; no use of service, riches or poverty, no contracts, no successions, no dividends, no properties, no employments… How much would he find his imaginary Republic short of his perfection?[56]

We observe in Montaigne's passionate remarks the paradox of noble savage discourse, that is, the so-called savage is represented as so uncontaminated, uncorrupted and therefore so authentically human that they are in fact dehumanized and subsumed into nature itself. Amerindians are cast as being automatons that mechanistically follow the laws of nature; as such, they are devoid of science, numbers and all forms of creative human capacity and dynamism. Additionally, they follow no political structure of a magistrate or political superior, nor do they use contract to enter into property relations and employment. The Amerindian, for Montaigne, is part of an organic natural formation that is more perfect and originary than Plato's Republic to the point that almost all traces of human faculty and reason were evacuated from them.

In a similar vein, Rousseau argues that natural savage man degenerated into an undomesticated animal due to being habituated by society's excesses,

> The horse, the cat, the bull, even the ass, are usually taller, and all of them have a more robust constitution, more vigor, more strength, and more courage in the forests than in our homes. They lose half of these advantages in becoming domesticated, it might be said that all our efforts at feeding them and treating well only end in their degeneration. It is the same for man himself.[57]

He further states, making comparisons between the orangutan, dogs and savage-man, that

> Alone, idle, and always near danger, savage man must like to sleep and be a light sleeper like animals which do little thinking and, as it were, sleep the entire time they are not thinking…the orangs that are perfected only by softness and sensuality must remain in a state of crudeness that excludes any kind of refinement in him….Such is the state of animals in general, and, according to the reports of traveller, such also is that of the

[56] Ibid
[57] Rousseau, op. cit. 43

> majority of savage peoples. Thus we should not be surprised that the Hottentots of the Cape of Good Hope can sight ships with the naked eye as far out as sea as the Dutch can with telescopes; or that the savages of America were as capable of trailing Spaniards by smell as the best dogs could have done…[58]

A significant question that arises in Montaigne's *On Cannibals* is the category of reason for New World inhabitants. As I mentioned above, those who subscribed and disseminated noble savage discourse cast Amerindian rationality as mechanistically following the prescriptions of natural law and natural base instinctual capacities of the sensual body.[59] Paradoxically, savage "natural man" was held to have the capacity for future improvement and to exercise reason through cultural agency[60] if they were brought into the fold of colonial institutions, knowledge and cosmology that was seen as "corrupting" and "artificial." Put differently, New World inhabitants were held to have reason, but it remained beholden to and operational by the dictates of natural law and the corporeal proclivities. However, for both Montaigne and Rousseau, modern forms of reason that would unleash cultural agency could only emerge through the same institutions and knowledge systems cast as the very source of worldly abasement and sin. As I will argue, this paradox is key to Rousseau's conception of natural human perfectibility, and his political philosophy.

While Muthu traces Montaigne's ethnological observations of noble savagery to the Platonic notion of imperfect forms, he fails to take into account its constitutive

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[58] Ibid, 43

[59] Muthu, op. cit. 18

[60] Muthu describes cultural agency as the Enlightenment notion that the human was characterized by cultural difference. He states Enlightenment thinkers, "believed that human beings are fundamentally cultural creatures, that is, they possess and exercise, simply by virtue of being human, a range of rational, emotive, aesthetic, and imaginative capacities that create, sustain and transform diverse practices and institutions over time" (8). As I argue in this chapter, Enlightenment conceptions of the human were circumscribed by the coloniality of knowledge. For instance, the "savage" was not accorded full human status coeval with that of European man as they were held to lack features of "cultural agency" such as reason, emotive, esthetic and imaginative capacities.

theological registers. Montaigne, a product of Renaissance theocentric conceptions of the world, saw New World human and cultural difference through the frame of redemptive similitude. Montaigne agonized over how to explain the origins of New World peoples and their cultural differences, and, as Hodgen explains, he relied upon assimilating those differences back into familiar conceptual frames in complex and often contradictory ways.

As discussed in chapter one, sixteenth century thinkers relied upon the theological notion of monogenesis and its corollary hypothesis of an original Adamic culture that had broken its divine covenant by willful acts of disobedience to God's plan. In the reading of the Adamic Fall, Renaissance thinkers held that man descended into corruption and evil, while change was largely conceived as a negative consequence of man's disobedience. The idea that original Adamic man had fallen from the grace of God and descended into evil was by supported by Biblical narratives of Noachian dispersal, the exile of Cain and the spread of his mischievous offspring throughout the world, and importantly, these Biblical notions of dispersal formed the conceptual structure to apprehend human difference across vast geographical areas.

Rousseau does not depart from this theological narrative of the Adamic fall and Noachian dispersal, even as he rebukes other philosophers such as Hobbes that ascribe avarice and caprice as characterizing the state of natural man.

> It did not even occur to most of our philosophers to doubt that the state of nature had existed, even though it is evident from reading the Holy Scriptures that the first man, having received enlightenment and precepts immediately from God, was not himself in that state; and if we give the writings of Moses the credence that every Christian owes them, we must deny that, even before the flood, men were ever in a pure state of nature, unless they had fallen back into it because of some extraordinary event: a paradox that is quiet awkward to defend and utterly impossible to prove.[61]

[61]Rousseau , op. cit. 38

Returning to Montaigne, he fused these widely held Biblical understandings of human diversity and the Adamic Fall with Platonic notions of the derivative copy of an ideal original. The resulting pessimism of French moral and cultural decay juxtaposed with Amerindian purity is a product of this theologico-Platonic historical structure of human sin, decline, resemblances and imitation. Hodgen states, "The monogenetic theory of social origins, with its melancholic philosophy of history and its rejection of the positive values of human movement, cultural contact, borrowing, or diffusion, was the conventional Renaissance answer to the problem of cultural differences."[62] This particular Renaissance Christian reading of monogenesis is central to the production of Montaigne's notion of noble savagery, and, I will suggest, is constitutive of Rousseau's philosophy of natural man that underpins his theories of human perfection and the political.

For Montaigne, human diffusion and the transmission of religious and cultural practices from peoples divided by large geographical distances and time was conceptualized as a largely negative phenomenon. However, as I have suggested, this gloomy Renaissance notion of historical decline was modified in order to explain the cultural and religious differences found in the New World. In other words, the main problem for Montaigne and other thinkers of the sixteenth century was accounting for competing religious articulations and cultural practices of pagan idolaters, heathens, and savages. The plurality of religious and sacred rites, including those of the Greeks, Romans and other civilizations of antiquity in addition to New World religions were held

[62] Hogden, Margaret, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,* University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998, pp. 269

to be derivative articulations of an originary and pure faith understood as a Hebrew-Christian synthesis.[63]

Montaigne, in his *Essayes* illustrates the Renaissance sensibility of seeing Indigenous religious practices as resembling Christian ones.

> I have often wondered to see in so vast a distance of places and times such a concurrence of so great a number of popular and wild opinions, and of savage manners and beliefs, which by no means seem to proceed from our natural meditation…they were made use of to honour and adorn their sepultures, there they were erected, and particularly that of St Andrew, to protect themselves from nocturnal visions, and to lay upon the cradles of infants against enchantments; elsewhere there was found one of wood, of very great height, which was adored for the god of rain, and this a great way in the interior; there was seen an express image of our penance priests, the use of mitres, the celibacy of priests, the art of divination by the entrails of sacrificed beasts, abstinence from all sorts of flesh and fish in their diet, the manner of priests officiating in a particular and not a vulgar language…[64]

Amerindian religious practices were seen as imitative shadows of the original Hebrew Christian faith, even their language was held to be a form of pre-Babel Hebrew in order to remain consistent with the Old Testament.[65] These ethnological statements concerning resemblances and imitation was generated from the Christian notion of monogenesis; hence, we observe in Montaigne's ideas that Indigenous sacred practices were reminders of the original Christian-Hebrew message, while Old World religions such as Islam was seen as a heretical and infidel imitation of it.[66] We see this conceptual grid clearly articulated in Montaigne's comparisons of New World sacred practices with the degenerate imitations of Old World religious forms vis-à-vis Indigenous peoples,

> The vain shadows of our religion, which are observable in some of these examples, are testimonies of its dignity and divinity. It is not only in some sort insinuated into all the infidel nations on this side of the world, by a certain imitation, but in these barbarians also, as by a common and supernatural inspiration; for we find there the belief of purgatory, but of a new form; that which we give to the fire they give to the cold, and imagine that souls are purged and punished by the rigour of an excessive coldness…

[63] Ibid, 323
[64] Montaigne, op. cit. *Des Cannibals*
[65] Hodgen op. cit. 305
[66] Ibid, 305

> there were there some people who delighted to unmuffle the ends of their instruments, and clipped off the prepuce after the Mahometan and Jewish manner.[67]

Thus, while Muthu is correct in identifying the importance of Platonic notions of the imperfect copy, Christian theology is a vital component in understanding Montaigne's noble savage discourse. We get a clearer picture of the epistemological universe of Montaigne if we examine how Platonic ideas of the corrupted form and Christian notions of similitude, imitation, and the fall of Adamic man were interwoven.

The medieval belief in decline and commensurability, therefore, were viable explanations for Renaissance thinkers who attempted to account for human difference. From peoples "discovered" in Africa to the Americas, the "savage" condition was conceptualized as a corollary of progressive decay, this theme was consistently found in the work of various prominent works, from Johann Boemus's *Omnium gentium mores* (1541), William Cunynghams's Cosmographical glasse (1559), Louis Le Roy's Thevet's Singularitez (1576), Samuel Purchas's *his Pilgrimes; or, Relations of the world and the Religions observed in all Ages* (1613), Sir Mathew Hale's *Primitive origination of mankind* (1677), and various others. In all of these works, "Differences of degree of savagery or barbarism among New World tribes were explained by the fact that migrations had occurred at successive intervals since the Flood, and hence some groups had more time in which to degenerate and forget the 'Original' from which they were derived."[68]

For Montaigne, and what we will see in Rousseau, is the idea that the process of change was conceptualized as decline, degeneration and corruption, while the so-called savage Amerindian lifestyle, language and sacred practices were valorized for being the

[67]Montaigne, op. cit. *Des Cannibals*
[68]Hodgen, op. cit. 379

most authentic expression of the deviated Hebrew-Christian heritage. However, as I have stated, paradoxically, the Amerindian was seen as such a clear example of originary natural purity that they would be represented as virtually static and incapable of innovation as well as indistinguishable from nature to the point of being dehumanized into pure corporeality – animal like beings that exercised no agency, but rather instinctually followed the laws of nature.

What is key to this discussion is that, for Rousseau, the notion of decline that is generated from the fusing of Platonism and Christian theology remains a constitutive trace of his ideas of human perfectibility and his theory of the political, despite his critiques of religious orthodoxy. In the next section I will examine key shifts from this Christian theological and Platonic historical schema of similitude, decline, and imitation and how it relates to the natural philosophy of Linnaeus and Buffon who mobilize the Chain of Being in order to account for human difference. I argue that Rousseau retains both Christian and Platonic notions of decline, corruption and imitation as well as classificatory schemas of the natural philosophers in order to articulate his ideas of noble savagery and political philosophy.

Natural Philosophy, Classification and the Chain of Being

In the above section, I outlined the connection between medieval and Renaissance Christian theology, Platonic philosophy, travel literature and the discourse of similitude in relation to the New World and its inhabitants. While there are many elements of medieval and Renaissance thought that were constitutive of eighteenth century noble

savage narratives, there are important transformations and departures that take place in the Enlightenment; namely, augmentations to the theologically inscribed Chain of Being by the natural historians.

Despite the widely held belief that there were societies of authentic "savages" dwelling in far-off locations, it is through the proliferation of the natural sciences that these "discoveries" take on particular importance in the Enlightenment.[69] Robert Wokler states, "Naturalists in the eighteenth century often contrasted the flora and fauna of the New World unfavorably with related species in the Old, and so, too, they regarded non-European men and women as generally inferior copies of an older race."[70] According to Seth, it is due to the rise of natural science that the so-called savage transforms from an exceptional figure marked by degeneration via theologically authorized notions of monogenesis into a model of universal man understood as pre-social man.[71] Put differently, the rise of natural science transforms savage man into a point of origin for all of humanity, rather than as a departure from an originary Hebrew-Christian stock.

Rousseau held deep admiration for Linnaeus and corresponded with Buffon – both of whom influenced Rousseau's conceptualization of natural man and his political philosophy. For instance, Buffon's *Natural History* is frequently cited in Rousseau's *Second Discourse*, despite Buffon's criticisms of his romanticism. As Wokler observes, Rousseau transformed "some of Buffon's arguments from the domain of natural history into that of civil history."[72]

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[69]Seth, op. cit. 104
[70] Wokler, Robert, "Perfectible Apes in Decadent Cultures: Rousseau's Anthropology Revisited," *Daedalus*, 107(3), Summer 1978, pp. 111
[71]Seth, op. cit. 104
[72] Ibid, quoted from Wolkler, "Deconstructing the Self on the Wild Side," pp. 112 in O'Hagan, Timothy (ed.), Jean-*Jacques Rousseau and the Sources of Self*, London: Avebury, 1997

The rise of natural sciences is rooted in Renaissance thought and the proliferation of ethnological taxonomies within the Chain of Being – discussed in chapter one. Hodgen states that from the middle ages and the Renaissance and into the modern period, nearly all attempts to produce a philosophy of human nature utilized the hierarchical or "architectonic" principal in the arrangement of categories and forms.[73] She suggests that Scholastic, Renaissance and Enlightenment philosophers and theologians attempted to analyze and classify forms according to three main steps; first, they searched for similarities and correspondences between groups and the totally of forms they examined. Second, they searched for principals that separated group from group and between forms. Third, they looked for a principal of unity within the diversity of groups and forms.[74] As such, the "discovery" of the African and Amerindian took on particular importance as it related to the rise of the natural sciences and the assimilation of differences into the tripartite principal of taxonomies within the hierarchical Chain.

For over four hundred years, between the thirteenth century and the seventeenth century, little was remarked concerning the prospect of a semi-animal link between man and other forms – such as animals – in the chain of being, nor was it proposed that the so-called savage represented a transitional figure between human and animal. As suggested, this would breach the Christian theocentric epistemological structure of the epoch. Indeed, many were reluctant to include the Amerindian and African into the category of the human; for instance, the Puritan mind regarded the Indigenous inhabitants of the North American colonies as satanic creatures, "Satan had possessed the Indian until he

[73]Hodgen, op. cit. 404
[74] Ibid

had become virtually a beast."[75] Sir Thomas Herbert observed the so-called Hottentots of South Africa in 1626 and noted, "their words are sounded rather like that of Apes, than Men…And comparing their imitations, speech, and visages, I doubt many of them have no better Predecessors than Monkeys"[76]

However, the implications of these ethnological observations vis-à-vis the scale of being were not investigated, that is, the so-called savage was not considered a transitional figure that could bridge the gap between animal and human, as Francis Moran states that these claims "would probably have been read as an allusion to the chain of being rather than as an indication of human descent…Instead, their claims were meant to establish the relative position of each in the chain of being."[77] Similarly, Hodgen suggests that these attitudes and assessments of human difference did not result in any radical breach of the architectonic principal, "There were no suggested amendments to the human section of the scale of being. The logical implications of these attitudes and observations with respect to the hierarchical position of the savage were not pursued."[78]

The epistemological shift with the given order took place in the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century with the works of Sir William Petty, in his essay entitled *The Scale of creatures* (1676-77), Sir William Tyson's *Orang-outang, sive homo silvestris; or, the anatomy of the pygmie* (1708), Linnaeus' *System of nature* (1735), and Buffon's thirty-six volume *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière* (1749-1788). The significance of these publications concerning natural history was the discursive

[75] Ibid, 417
[76] Ibid
[77] Seth, op. cit. 107-8, quoted from Moran, Francis III, "Between Primates and Primitives: Natural Man as the Missing Link in Rousseau's *Second Discourse*," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 54(1), January 1993, pp. 39
[78] Hodgen, op. cit. 418

rearrangement of the position of the human in the Chain. The human was no longer seen as a unique and perfected form, that is, man was no longer simply conceptualized as an indivisible whole at the center of the hierarchical chain with animals ranked below and angels positioned above. Instead, the naturalist's main task was to inquire into both biology and ethnology in order to discover the gaps or missing categories between the human and other forms – particularly the ape, which represented the closest human resemblance.

For the natural historians of the Enlightenment, namely Linnaeus and Buffon, they concerned themselves with generating social and cultural hierarchies as an extension of the biological.[79] However, we must not lose sight that the gradation of order established by the natural historians was still authorized by divine decree. According to Eze, one must emphasize that Linnaeus

> articulates an idea pervasive in the eighteenth century: that an underlying hierarchical order in nature was established by God, or providence by itself, and that it is the duty of human was to discover this order and to classify everything that exists – from human to fauna and flora…"[80]

Natural historians were not seeking an evolutionary history of human biology in the modern sense as initiated by Jean-Baptiste Lamarck and Charles Darwin. The discourse of evolutionary biology would not emerge until the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century – Rousseau's *Second Discourse* was written in 1754. In none of Rousseau's writing does he argue that the human descends from orangutans through biological evolutionary sequences. For instance, when Rousseau does remark upon the problem that so-called wild-men and Carib children had in walking upon two legs, as opposed to assuming their natural quadruped movement, he suggests this is due to neglect

[79] Ibid
[80] Eze, op. cit. 10

and lack of socialization. Rousseau does not attribute these curiosities in posture and mobility to evolutionary biological schemas.[81]

The shift towards evolutionary biology would only emerge through further transformations in the quality of time itself; namely, the shift from Judeo-Christian time towards modern, secular forms of time. Put differently, evolutionary biology is made possible by techniques of temporal distancing that subsume Judeo-Christian notions of time into a secularized developmental schema. Evolutionary schemas only emerge through the transformation of sacred time into a generalized and universalized secular structure that enables the modern production of Others that can be conceived as being in a lessor stage of historical development (discussed in chapter four). The temporal universe for Buffon and Linnaeus as well as Rousseau would not transform until much later.

The essential point to make in this discussion on temporality and the epistemological structure of Rousseau and his contemporaries in relation to cultural difference is that it took place with the divinely ordained hierarchical Chain that was structured vertically with God positioned at the apex.[82] It is important to note that Rousseau and the natural historians each played a role in the production of Enlightenment shifts towards the secularization and universalization of time, and, therefore, can be seen as forbearers of modern evolutionary developmental schemas that would later emerge.

While there should be no confusion that Rousseau articulated his notions of human difference through a discourse of biological evolutionism, I would argue he is a vital figure in the later development of it by helping to transform examinations of the

[81]Seth, op. cit. 107
[82] Ibid

human by building upon a synthesis of travel writing, colonial ethnology and natural history. In short, he augments the Chain by bringing together Renaissance and Enlightenment thought in relation to apprehending human difference. One of the main shifts we see from the work of Montaigne to the natural historians of Linnaeus and Buffon is that while the Chain of Being remained the main conceptual grid for assimilating human and cultural difference back into theologically authorized genealogical maps, the category of change was no longer exclusively conceptualized as a negative phenomenon, but as more fluid. He retained elements from Montaigne, that is, a largely Renaissance inspired pessimism for change by way of a particular reading of the Adamic Fall and Platonic philosophy, while modifying this narrative with Linnaeus and Buffon via Enlightenment natural history. This opened up the possibility for Rousseau to examine what characteristics made humans unique in relation to other animals. These shifts created the possibility for Rousseau to focus upon the issue of human perfectibility within the conceptual grid of continuity and gradation.

For the natural historians of the eighteenth century, as mentioned above, the vertical and ascending gradation of the Chain established social and cultural hierarchies vis-à-vis biology while still structured by divine provenance. For instance, Linnaeus states,

> Man, when he enters the world, in naturally led to enquire who he is; whence he comes; whither he is going; for what purpose he is created; and by whose benevolence he is preserved. He finds himself descended from the remotest creation; journeying to a life of perfection and happiness, and led by his endowments to a contemplation of the works of nature…It is therefore the business of a thinking being, to look forward to the purposes of all things; and to remember that the end of creation is, that God may be glorified in all his works.[83]

[83]Eze, op. cit. 11 from Carl Linnaeus, *The System of Nature*, 1735

While Linnaeus's *System of Nature* was intended to locate the vast amount of flora within the chain, as he was primarily a botanist, his classificatory system also attempted to catalogue every conceivable geological structure, herb, plant, quadruped, and human – in total over ten thousand organisms were categorized. For Linnaeus, cataloguing every known creature and mineral formation was meant to confirm nature's hierarchical gradation according to the immutable design of God.[84]

The decision of Linnaeus to locate man within the graduated Chain represented a significant moment in the production of ethnology, and, for later generations, indexes the antecedents of modern biological schemas of evolutionary race thinking. Linnaeus proceeded not only to locate man within his vast arrangement of forms, but also divided man into two different sub-species and further into numerous assortments. The criteria for Linnaeus included pigmentation, cultural difference, political organization and clothing. Below is a section taken from his *System of Nature*:

> **Mammalia**
> *Order I. Primates*
> *Foreteeth cutting: upper 4; parallel teats 2, pectoral*
> HOMO
> sapiens. Diurnal; varying by education and situation
> 1. Four-footed, mute, hairy. *Wild man*
> 2. Copper-coloured, choleric, erect. *American.*
>   *Hair* black, straight, thick; *nostrils* wide; *face* harsh; *beard* scanty; obstinate, content, free. *Paints* himself with fine red lines. *Regulated* by customs.
> 3. Fair, sanguine, brawny. *European*.
>   *Hair* yellow, brown, flowing; eyes blue; gentle, acute, inventive. *Covered* with close vestments. *Governed* by laws.
> 4. Sooty, melancholy, rigid. *Asiatic*
>   *Hair* black; *eyes* dark; *fevere*, haughty, covetous. *Covered* with loose garments. *Governed* by opinions.
> 5. Black, phlegmatic, relaxed. *African*
>   *Hair* black, frizzled; *skin* silky; nose flat; lips tumid; crafty, indolent, negligent. *Anoints* himself with grease. *Governed* by caprice.

[84]Hodgen, op. cit. 424

Monstrosus. Varying by climate or art
1. Small, active, timid. *Mountaineer*
2. Large, indolent. *Patagonian*
3. Less fertile. *Hottentot*
4. Beardless. *American*
5. Head conic. *Chinese*
6. Head flattened. *Canadian*[85]

For Linnaeus, *homo ferus* and *homo monstruosus* was the transitional figure between pure man and pure ape.[86] Despite the organization of the human according to varieties in what looks like a racial typology of biological evolutionism, Linnaeus remained within the tradition of medieval resemblances that utilized a discourse of progressivism and the marvellous within a hierarchical structure of the Chain.[87] In other words, the American and African were still considered God's creatures, and not as racial Others ordered by evolutionary temporal sequences.

This epistemological shift in the apprehension of human difference is important because organizing organisms through the structure of the Chain had the simultaneous effect of undermining its religious underpinnings. The effect of attempting to uncover the missing links between the human and other forms had the effect of introducing a new quality of human sovereignty, superiority and uniqueness vis-à-vis other sentient animals.[88] Importantly, the Chain was no longer conceptualized as solely reflecting divine purpose and meaning, but shifted towards issues concerning the consequences of human inspiration and inward purpose.

As I noted in chapter two, this process of increased inward reflection and the notion of the self-owning body was already being developed by figures such as John

[85]Eze, op. cit. 13-4
[86]Seth, op. cit. 108
[87]Hodgen, op. cit. 425
[88]Seth, op. cit. 108

Locke who generated his theories via the co-produced registers of Protestant Christian theology and coloniality. The forces of the Reformation, Counter-Reformation and colonialism had the effect of making religion an issue of intense inward and personal decision. Charles Taylor observes the paradox: the increased personalization and detached inward reflexivity of religious belief is connected to processes of disenchantment and the rise of the individuated self, "Disenchantment, Reform, and personal religion went together…This involved the growth and entrenchment of a new self-understanding of our social existence, one which gave an unprecedented primacy to the individual."[89] Rousseau is a key thinker in this process because he further develops this conception of the individuated self through his reliance on the entangled registers of Christian theology, travel writing, natural history and colonial ethnology.

For Rousseau and other thinkers of the early Enlightenment there was an intensive shift towards the issue of human nature as opposed to the hierarchical order. Put differently, while Rousseau was heavily influenced by the natural historian's focus upon the position of the human vis-à-vis other creatures in the Chain, Rousseau was a crucial figure in shifting the focus of inquiry towards the nature of the human being, and what qualities and characteristics distinguish the human from other beasts despite the fact he never departs from its structure. Thus, human agency begins to take a more central stage in eighteenth century, and, as I will discuss later, the so-called savage become a key site for him to engage these questions. This shift in inquiry for Rousseau is only made possible, I argue, by the transformations in conceptualization of the ontology of the human brought about by successive shifts in relation to theology and coloniality.

[89] Taylor, Charles, *A Secular Age*, Belknap Press, 2007, pp. 143-46

According to Taylor the major shift in the eighteenth century with regards to human agency was no longer what activities reflected the structure of natural hierarchy, but rather what concerned thinkers such as Rousseau were the activities and purpose of human creation.[90] Taylor:

> So in spite of the similarity of language with the ancients, we have an ethic based no longer on inherent hierarchy but rather on marked activities. Reason is still important, and those beings who possess it are still ranked higher in the chain of being…Knowing the good isn't just a matter of apprehending a hierarchical order. It requires rather that I come to know my own inclinations.[91]

The result of the shift away from the focus of plotting man in the hierarchy vis-à-vis divine provenance and towards human activity and inward inspiration opened the doors for Rousseau to question what human activities and sensibilities raised the human above all other creatures. For Rousseau, it was the human potential for perfectibility, "a faculty which with the help of circumstance progressively develops all our other faculties and which in man is inherent in the species as much as in the individual."[92]

According to Taylor, the seventeenth and eighteenth century emergence of the novel indexes the new importance accorded to inward sentiment and purpose reflected in disengaged reason: a modern form of reason indexed by individuation partially delinked from divine purpose.[93] He suggests that the novel had the effect of increasing the importance of individuated purpose in three main registers. First, it affirmed a new consciousness of ordinary life and dealt with moralistic themes of love and marriage. Second, the novel was distinguished from previous forms of literature in its emphasis upon the particular as opposed to what Taylor refers to as "ontic logos", that is,

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[90] Taylor, Charles, *Sources of the Self: the Making of Modern Identity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 279
[91] Ibid, 282
[92] Seth, op. cit. 110
[93] Taylor, op. cit. *Sources of the Self* 285

traditional archetypical themes, such as the general and universal message of divine provenance and salvation. Taylor states the novel "narrates the lives of particular people in their detail", and he further states "…what it is to exist in time is undermined by the decline of an ontic logos and by the new self-understanding as disengaged reason."[94] He observes that the quality of time shifts further towards a disenchanted "empty" and "homogenous" structure via the increase in human centered agency; however, he cautions that this is not to suggest that novel evacuated larger themes of archetypes. Rather, the form of the eighteenth century novel reflected the general archetypal myths through reliance upon the particular. For instance, deeper themes of salvation and divine concord would be expressed, but through narrations of individual characters and details of their personal lives and experiences. Third, the novel introduces a new focus upon individual sentiment through categories of love, affection, personal feelings and singular needs.

For Taylor, the eighteenth century shift in focus upon life-narration and particular experiences of the disengaged self was, in part, reflected in the modern form of the autobiography that was initiated by the novels of Rousseau; namely, his 1761 *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Heloise* (*Julie, or the new Heloise*) – the most wildly sold novel of his century.[95] Taylor states that "…the novel which helped more than any other to define and spread the new outlook there was undoubtedly Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Heloise.*"[96] In this novel Rousseau emphasizes the role of personal autonomy and voluntary ties through a particular theme of rebellion against the traditional family and its petition for ascriptive

[94] Ibid, 287-88
[95]Gordon, op. cit. 19
[96] Taylor, op. cit. *Sources of the Self* 294

authority.[97] Rousseau narrates the story of St. Preux, tutor of Julie, who rebels against the wishes of her father in order to affirm his personal devotion and the rights of love:

> How despotic soever may be the empire you assume my rights are infinitely more sacred. The chain by which we are united marks the extent of paternal domination, even in the estimation of human law, and whilst you appeal to the law of nature, you yourself are trampling upon its institutions.[98]

We see from the introduction of Rousseau's unique form of the novel the dissemination of the particular themes of individual autonomy and personal choice via inward sentiments. This affirms a major shift from earlier literature that sought to affirm the individual's place within a larger theocentric universe aimed at developing ontic logos via messages of providential order and salvation. Taylor observes the influence of Rousseau's novel,

> The impact of La nouvelle Heloise when it came out in 1761 is hard to imagine in this more jaded age. Copies were snapped up, and many of those who read it were literally overpowered with emotion. Rousseau received a flood of letters from readers who were "ravished", "in transports", in "ecstasy", moved to "delices inexprimbales" and "larmes delicieuses". Baron Thiebault came to the end of the book, …(no longer weeping, but crying out, howling like a beast"). Francois, a cornet in the vacalry, was so moved by his reading [that he said] ("I believe in the moment I would have looked upon death with pleasure").[99]

For Taylor, Rousseau's novel aroused feelings of personal sentiment and not the broader Christian theme of self-transcendence. Consequently, we observe in Rousseau the introduction of a major shift towards individuation through an inward focus upon feeling and duty to personal autonomy that defies duty to authority.

It is not only with the autobiographical and romantic novel that we can examine the shift towards human centred agency indexed by Rousseau, but also in his capacity as a composer of music, opera and theatre. I suggest his relationship to music and drama

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[97] Ibid, 290
[98] Ibid, 290 quoted from Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *Julie; ou La Nouvelle Heloise*, 3e partie, Lettre XI; New Eloise, University of Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1962, II, pp. 171-172
[99] Taylor, op. cit. *Sources of the Self* 290

also are key sites in order to explore what Taylor refers to as the transformation in self-understanding as disengaged reason. While the impact of Rousseau's musical exploits as a composer and theorist is debated, he was a celebrated figure in a diversity of artistic forms. At thirty, when Rousseau arrived in Paris, he presented his paper "Project Concernant de Nouveaux Signes pour la Music" to the Academie des Sciences in 1742. The Academie considered Rousseau's idea for a new system of musical notation unusable and underdeveloped; however, he eventually published an expanded version of it as his "Dissertation sur la music modern" in 1743.[100] Further, in 1745 he attempted to attract attention to his opera *Les Muses Galantes*, but it was not met with a favourable response and failed.[101]

Despite these challenges, Eric Taylor suggests that Rousseau continued to develop his interest in music and by the middle of the eighteenth century he garnered considerable standing as a musical writer. Denis Diderot, acting as chief editor of the *Encyclopaedia*, assigned Rousseau with its musical section – he would provide several hundred entries and also compile a two-volume *Dictionnaire de Musique.*[102] Finally, three years after his death, in 1781 over one hundred compositions of Rousseau's were compiled in a volume, *Les Consolations des Misères de ma Vie, ou Recueil d'Airs, Romances et Duos de Jean-Jacques Rousseau.*[103]

During the Bouffons' War, Rousseau produced his most famous opera: *Le Devin du Village* (*The Village Soothsayer*), which ran for over four hundred showings over a

[100] Taylor, Eric, "Rousseau's Conception of Music," Music and Letters, XXX(3), 1949, pp. 232
[101] Dyson, R.W., *Natural Law and Political Realism in the History of Political Thought, Volume II, From the Seventeenth Century to the Twenty-First Century*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., pp. 61
[102]Taylor, Eric, op. cit. 232; Green, Edward, "Reconsidering Rousseau's Le devin du village: An Opera of Surprising and Valuable Paradox," Ars Lyrica, 16, 2007, pp. 145
[103]Green, op. cit. 145

seventy-year period.[104] In Eli Friedlander's reading of the opera, Rousseau's musical work should be placed in relation to philosophical work, namely, his *Essay on the Origin of Languages*. For Friedlander, Rousseau's theory on music and language proposes that operatic voice is an embodied manifestation of deep passion and extravagant vocalization. Friedlander states, "The voice in opera emerges out of passion, as a vocal extension of passion. It is an embodied voice that does not dissociate between the representation and the body that emits it. It is, as it were, a voice that one cannot hide behind."[105] As Charles Taylor similarly argues, Rousseau concerned himself intensely with the issue of personal sentiment and passion that further disrupts and rearranges the theological themes of self-transcendence. Furthermore, Rousseau elaborated upon Locke's introduction of the self-owning body, as discussed in chapter two.

In *The Village Soothsayer*, akin to his later novel *La Nouvelle Heloise,* Rousseau narrates a tale of Colette, the village shepherdess, who lives in a state of personal turmoil because she is estranged from her lover Colin who pursues women in the city. She offers the village soothsayer (Le Devin du Village) her money in exchange for disclosing the fate of her love. The soothsayer instructs Colette to keep her money and promises to remedy the situation. When Colin arrives in the village, the soothsayer hides Colette and cautions Colin that she is considering the courting efforts from city men. As a result, Colin is overcome with jealously and pride and ensures the soothsayer that he will desist his sojourns to the city if Colette returns to him. Colette emerges from hiding and the two lovers embrace and marry. At the end of the opera, a village festival takes place with song and dance in order to celebrate the triumph of love. Importantly, Rousseau ends the

[104]Taylor, Eric, op. cit. 234
[105] Friedlander, Eli, *J.J Rousseau: An Afterlife of Words*, Harvard University, 2004, pp. 145

opera with a chorus that valorizes the virtues of the simple and pastoral life of the city and juxtaposes this with the artificial love and decadence of the city[106],

> Art in Love is favorable,
> Artless Love knows how to charm;
> In the city, we are kinder,
> In the village we know better love.
> Ah! to the ordinary
> Love knows little
> What it does, what he stands for;
> This is a child is a child. (scene V111).

The play continues, and they sing out,

> Here the simple nature
> Love follows naivety;
> In other places, the ornament
> It seeks borrowed radiance.
> Ah! For the ordinary
> Love knows little
> What it does, what he stands for;
> This is a child is a child.[107]

Three main themes are revealed in Rousseau's artistic works. First, the particular subject of individual choice and personal sentiments of love that are elevated above the Christian virtue of subordinating the personal passions to religious and familial authority. As Taylor and Seth suggest, Rousseau is a vital Enlightenment figure because he undermines the religious foundations of the Chain by shifting the inquiry from the place of the human in it towards individual choice and particular sentiment as disengaged reason. In Rousseau's *Second Discourse*, he continues to work within the theologically inscribed hierarchies; however, with the shift towards human purpose and away from a purposeful, divinely authorized cosmology, he opens the possibility to claim that the wild man, the Carib, and the Hottentot are corresponding examples of the origin of humanity.[108]

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[106] Ibid
[107] Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *The Village Soothsayer*
[108] Seth, op. cit. 109

The second theme that is reflected in Rousseau's musical productions and is a pillar of his political philosophy is the valorization of the authenticity, simplicity and purity of "natural living" vis-à-vis the European city. In the *Village Soothsayer*, the expression of personal choice and love are represented as authentic virtues that emerge in relation to the corrupted virtues that are cultivated in the artificial setting of the city. Colin is unable to nurture the authentic personal sentiment of love in the city; instead, he fosters the artificial and corrupted sensibility of infidelity. Rousseau's attempt to juxtapose the city and village is non-other than a reflection of the valorization of the purity and innocence of the natural living of the so-called savage Amerindian.

The discourse of natural authenticity reflects the influence of Montaigne and the notion that the city is an imperfect and degraded copy of the original form of the village and where authentic human virtue cannot emerge. Taylor suggests that Rousseau valorizes the ordinary life of "simple, rustic people"[109] and affirms their virtue and personal satisfaction as opposed to the decadent existence of city living. Importantly Rousseau's narrations of village life were generated through colonial ethnology influenced by the aforementioned work of Montaigne who deployed Christian theology and Platonism in order to juxtapose the purity of savage life with that of corrupt modern existence. I want to emphasize that while Rousseau undermined the theocentric structure of natural hierarchy, his narratives of cultivating personal sentiment were co-produced by Montaigne's theological and colonial travel writing. Hence, Rousseau retains traces of Christian theology and Platonism in his work.

The third theme is the paradox that is retained from Montaigne, that is, that the very artificial institutions and ways of being that are identified as unnatural and

[109] Taylor, Charles, , op. cit. *Sources of the Self*, 297

corrupting are rearticulated as necessary for human perfectibility. For instance, it is only by moving through the artificial inward feelings of jealousy and pride that Colin is able to generate the authentic love for Colette. This idea is further reflected in Rousseau's novel *Emile,* where he observes, "Much artifice is required to prevent man from becoming entirely artificial."[110] As I will discuss below, this paradoxical feature of Rousseau's political philosophy is reflected in his conception of human perfectibility that is coproduced by the tradition of travel writing and his own colonial ethnology.

Colonial Ethnology and the Natural Human

Rousseau's various novels, musical compositions and political philosophy; namely, his two *Discourses,* inscribed man with a new sense of individuation. As a result, he decoupled the human from the prescriptive license of the Chain. As I argued above, he created the conditions to interrogate man as a unique creature with the particular capacity of disengaged reason and the potential for perfectibility, thereby distinguishing man from all other sentient beings. For Rousseau, human perfectibility distinguishes man from brute. He states that,

> [T]here is another very specific quality which distinguishes [man from brute], and which will admit of no dispute. This is the faculty of self-improvement, which, by the help of circumstances, gradually develops all the rest of our faculties, and is inherent in the species as in the individual: whereas a brute is, at the end of a few months, all he will ever be during his whole life, and his species, at the end of a thousand years, exactly what it was the first year of that thousand.[111]

Rousseau conceptualizes the human with the potential of perfectibility that is contingent upon the passage of time; consequently, he introduces "temporally varied portraits of the

[110]Friedlander, op. cit. 146, quoted from *Rousseau*, *Emile*
[111]Seth, op. cit. 110, quoted from Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, 88

individual self."[112] As a result Rousseau is able to provide a series of stages in which the savage/ wild man/ ape, exist within the forests of Lithuania and jungles of Malaysia, are at a different state of nature as opposed to the noble savage that he recognizes as the Amerindian and African.

What makes Rousseau's conception of human stages different from John Locke's identification of the state of nature that moves from a savage hunter-gatherer stage to civil society characterized by the enclosure of private property and monetary exchange, or Thomas Hobbes' notion of natural egoism and war that establishes civil society by the institution of law and governance, is that Rousseau suggests that human nature is malleable over time. Put differently, he suggests that the human is both prone to decline over time and has the potential for perfectibility.[113] In Rousseau's *Discourses,* he distinguishes his political philosophy from that of Locke and Hobbes by suggesting that civil society introduces external social and political developments that lie at the heart of human degradation and perfectibility.

Still operating within a theocentric structure, or despite his concept of individuation as disengaged reason, he seeks to index the series of socially produced transformations within the human soul:

> the human soul modified in society by a thousand ever-recurring causes, by the acquisition of a mass of knowledge and errors, by mutations taking place in the constitution of the body, and by the constant impact of the passions, has changed in appearance to the point of becoming almost unrecognizable, and is no longer found.[114]

Rousseau constructs a philosophical anthropology that is contingent upon the malleability of the human vis-à-vis shifts in forms of social organization over time rather than upon

[112]Ibid, 110
[113] Ibid
[114] Maldonado-Torres, op. cit. "Rousseau, Fanon" 117, quoted from Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, 68

changes in the human condition due to "developments" in natural scientific knowledge.[115] This leads Maldonado-Torres to observe that *in principal* the so-called savage has the potential for perfectibility just as the European can degrade into a "savage" condition if they are raised and socialized within a "savage" environment.[116]

Rousseau stages his temporally contingent, malleable conception of human perfectibility by examining the origins of the human itself via colonial ethnology.[117] In his *Second Discourse*, Rousseau observes that "[a]lthough the inhabitants of Europe have the past three or four hundred years overrun the other parts of the world, and are constantly publishing new collections of travels and reports, I am convinced that the only men we know are the Europeans."[118] He argues that the only way to truly understand the self is to understand human difference, "When one proposes to study men, one has to look close by; but in order to study man one has to learn to cast one's glance afar; one has to begin by observing the differences in order to discover the properties."[119]

Despite the vast amount of travel literature available, Rousseau argues that the true significance of travelogues were circumscribed by ignorance; for instance, "Sailors, Merchants, and Soldiers" were held to be ill equipped to produce any relevant philosophical inquiries because they remained prejudiced to a narrow European perspective. Moreover, he argues that missionary accounts are "too absorbed by the sublime vocation" of Christian conversion to appreciate the intellectual relevance of their chronicles.[120] Rousseau then states that,

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[115]Ibid, 117
[116] Ibid, 123
[117] Ibid, 118
[118]Muthu, op. cit. 31, quoted from Rousseau, *Second Discourse*
[119] Ibid
[120] Muthu op. cit. 32

> What is even more cruel is that, since all the progress of the human species continually moves away from its primitive state, the more we accumulate new knowledge, the more we deprive ourselves of the means of acquiring the most important knowledge of all. Thus, in a sense, it is by dint of studying man that we have rendered ourselves incapable of knowing him.[121]

While Rousseau decries the lack of genuine knowledge acquired from the diversity of studies regarding human and cultural difference, he nevertheless appropriates and reinscribes elements of them in order to offer empirical support for his own philosophical anthropology and political writings.[122] As Muthu observes, Rousseau frequently drew from the very travel accounts that he identified as limited and distorted; further, he generated a conception of human nature that drew heavily from the noble savage tradition and natural history as I have demonstrated above.[123]

While Rousseau often contrasts "savage" and "civilized" life he introduces several stages of human organization over time. He constructs a conjectural history in which he maps the transformation of bestial seclusion to family organization and settled societies. This ushers in the decay of artistic autonomy due to the invention of metallurgy and agriculture that is responsible for the "great revolution" of property relations, and, therefore the introduction of social inequality, despotic laws and corrupt political institutions.[124] For him, the "savages of America" do not practice metallurgy and agriculture and remain in a "savage" state for this reason, while "barbarians" are those that practice either one form of metallurgy or agriculture. Passing from savage or barbarian to civilized man is the result of practicing both artistic forms. For Europeans,

[121]Rousseau, op. cit. *Second Discourse* 33
[122]Muthu, op. cit. 32
[123] Ibid, 33
[124]Maldonado-Torres, op. cit. "Rousseau, Fanon" 119; Seth, op. cit. 110

their "civilized" form of human organization is characterized by their ability to develop "iron and wheat."[125]

However, as Maldonado-Torres observes, there is more to this typology of social organization in which civilized society is ostensibly presented as the apex. Rousseau holds that these transformations are a reflection of the degradation of the human, which is established by their separation from the state of nature and pure natural faculties. In other words, the procurement of iron and wheat that is held to characterize civilization also unleashes the base passions. For Rousseau, civilization produces pejorative human qualities such as narcissism, artificial attachments and the unjust accumulation of property.[126] Hence, the incipient emergence of civil society is moulded by "incipient inequality."[127] He states,

> For their part, the wealthy had no sooner known the pleasure of domination, than before long they disdained all others, and using their old slaves to subdue new ones, they thought of nothing but the subjugation and enslavement of their neighbors, like those ravenous wolves which, on having once tasted human flesh, reject all other food and desire to devour only men.[128]

He continues, and observes that "the usurpation of the rich, the brigandage of the poor and the unbridled passions of everyone, shifting natural pity and the as yet feeble voice of justice, made men greedy, ambitious and bad."[129] As a result of these environmental, political and economic transformations, a Hobbesian state of war emerges and results in the disfigurement of the human soul: "nascent society gave way to the most horrible state of war."[130] As Seth and Maldonado-Torres suggest, what is important to note from Rousseau's conjectural history is that these external transformations in the environment,

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[125]Ibid, 119
[126] Ibid
[127]Rousseau, op. cit. *Second Discourse*, 68
[128] Ibid
[129]Maldonado-Torres, op. cit. "Rousseau, Fanon" 119, quoted from Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, 68
[130] Ibid

economics and politics are successive through the passage of time and not the result of any inherent properties of human nature; rather, these gradual social shifts transform the human as an individuated, subjective being.[131]

After Rousseau establishes the origins of inequality among men, he then examines three "revolutions" that result from it. First is the state of constant war. Rousseau suggests that the rich recognize the need for mutual agreements with the weak and poor in order to protect the latter's private property, "to protect the weak from oppression, to restrain the ambitious, and ensure for each the possession of what belongs to him."[132] Subsequently, he suggests that laws were established through submission to "one supreme power" in order to govern all people. The enactment of laws underpins society by eroding natural liberty through legitimizing usurpation as an inviolable right, "and for the benefit of a few ambitious men subjected the human race thenceforth to labor, servitude, and misery."[133]

The second "revolution" emerges through the establishment of magistrates. According to Rousseau, the institution of magistrates crumbles due to conflict, and out of this social discord "ambitious leaders" arise helping to promote social stability. However, these leaders come to conceptualize themselves as equivalent to gods and see the magistrates as possessions and fellow citizens as slaves.[134]

This leads to the third "revolution" of despotism. It is through the division between the strong and weak that a relationship of master and slave is established in society. In this state, the foundations of individualism are evacuated and people are

[131]Seth, op. cit. 111
[132]Maldonado-Torres, op. cit. "Rousseau, Fanon" 119, quoted from Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, 121
[133]Ibid, 119
[134] Ibid, 120

reduced to "nothing." However, this stage itself leads to new revolutions that "dissolve the government altogether or bring it back to legitimacy."[135] In Maldonado-Torres's reading, Rousseau ostensibly argues that the state of despotism yields itself to a new condition of equilibrium in which an originary "happy and long lasting" state of nature emerges, and human caprice and differentiation disappear from society. This, however, is not the case. For Rousseau, we cannot observe the original state of nature, but we can examine the so-called savage in order to discern how he is different than civilized man. Rousseau refers to empirical observation and the same travelogues that he locates as inadequate in order to glean the distinctions.[136] Seth suggests the three "revolutions" that have come to constitute civilized man makes it so he cannot "return to the forests with the bears."[137] For Seth and Gordon, the *Second Discourse* is a melancholic expression of the decrepitude of contemporary European society and its inhabitants. Seth states, "The knowledge of his own perfectibility ensures that he will not want to return to the forests, while conscious agency, that expression of perfectibility, offers the optimism for change, for moral renewal."[138] Therefore, Rousseau does not suggest a return to the state of nature, nor to the valorized Enlightenment notions of individualism, and even less so to a state of despotism. Rather, he seeks to establish a vision of the political that is based upon a timeless freedom and balances the requirements of individual freedom with the social compact.[139]

It is only when savage man moves through the three "revolutions" that he adapts to the changing environment and gains the capacity for perfectibility and agency. Before

[135] Ibid
[136] Ibid, 122
[137] Seth, op. cit. 111
[138] Ibid
[139] Maldonado-Torres, op. cit. "Rousseau, Fanon" 122

this, the "savage" lacks any capacity for future oriented consciousness and fully formed agency, Rousseau observes: "Such is even today, the extent of the Carib's foresight. In the morning he sells his bed of cotton and in the evening he returns in tears to buy it back, for want of having foreseen that he would need it that night."[140] Also he remarks, "they eventually die without anyone being aware that they are ceasing to exist, and almost without being aware of it themselves."[141] Drawing from thinkers such as Montaigne and empirical observation, Rousseau states that natural man is guided by instinct, and is void of the dynamic human capacity to command the power of his will. After having to adapt to the transformations in the environment and property relations, the so-called "savage" is only then endowed with complex forms of reasoning. Rousseau remarks, "the first man who, having enclosed a piece of land, thought of saying 'This is mine' and found people simple enough to believe him."[142] Thus, it is through the establishment of private property enclosures and legally sanctioned usurpation that conscious agency, human will and future oriented consciousness emerge, as Seth remarks, "Agency is the twin of bourgeois man."[143]

As man passes through the three "revolutions" he activates the capacity of human perfectibility by developing the mental and moral faculties such as reason, memory, imagination, and pride.[144] Hence, paradoxically, Rousseau ends up endorsing the very processes that produce degenerate European bourgeois culture in order for the human to realize perfectibility associated with human agency and future oriented consciousness.[145]

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[140] Ibid, 119, quoted from Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, 46
[141]Rousseau, op. cit. *Second Discourse*, 42
[142]Seth 114, op. cit. quoted from Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, 60
[143]Ibid, 114
[144]Ibid, 114, from Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, 118
[145]Ibid, 114

All in the name of political formations that are perfect, these themes are reflected in Rousseau's political philosophy in addition to his novels and musical productions. Rousseau produces an account of human organization that moves from a speechless and isolated self towards familial and social relationships that engender emotional bonds, and, with them, an egoistic surrender to the perceptions of others. Through the development of individuation as disengaged reason, man recognizes love and inward purpose while also becoming imprisoned by the base passions of envy, jealously and pride.[146] For instance, this narrative is clearly demonstrated in his opera *The Village Soothsayer*, in which his narrative of Colin and Colette reflects the malleability of the human through a narrative of their potential of perfectibility characterized by love and empathy cultivated in the pastoral village; however, their potential for deprivation is also illustrated by jealousy, pride and infidelity generated in the "civilized" yet corrupt city. However, as stated above, Rousseau then paradoxically illustrates that it is only by passing through the artificial domains of the city, which are held to be the cause of perverting their love, that they are able to fully exercise the capacity for authentic feeling and affection.

Rousseau ends up in a position that Maldonado-Torres describes as "anti-Eurocentric Eurocentrism" because Europe is the location where reason and agency have been cultivated the most, and also the location that is tied to processes of human degeneration. Consequently, "This opens the door for anyone to argue that while it might not be a good idea to colonize with the intent of civilizing the 'savage,' it is still a good idea to colonize in order to allow 'savages' to realize their humanity."[147] Maldonado-Torres further observes that Rousseau does not entertain the possibility that "savages",

[146] Ibid, 111
[147] Maldonado-Torres, op. cit. "Rousseau, Fanon" 124

who he suggests are examples of those living in an originary state of nature, live in dynamic societies with varying visions of the past, present and future.[148] In short, Rousseau fails to acknowledge the full humanity of the "savage" he examines. Maldonado-Torres remarks,

> Rousseau searches for "savage" man, but does not consider that the "savage" have turned, for the most part, into the "colonized." The "colonized provide a much better access to understanding his own self, inequality, and the European than do his hypothesized or the presumably historical savage.[149]

This leads us back to Buck-Morss and Sala-Molins who argue that Rousseau is both racist and revolting. As Maldonado-Torres suggests, Rousseau does not ever consider that the so-called "savage" have been turned into the colonized. As Buck-Morss and Sala-Molins illustrate, Rousseau was more concerned with slavery as an abstract philosophical principal, but not as a concrete practice. For instance, the French legal code, *Le Code Noir* (1684) that applied to black slaves in the colonies – and was not abolished until 1848 – codified slavery as well as branding, torture, mutilation and killing enslaved people for objecting to their enslaved status.[150] In his *Social Contract,* Rousseau remarks that "The right of slavery is null, not simply because it is illegitimate, but because it is absurd and meaningless." [151] Rather than referring to slavery as a practice legislated in *Le Code Noir,* which Rousseau was no doubt aware of, he was referring to the third "revolution" of despotism.

Rousseau passionately argued that all men were equal and conceptualized private property as a key institution of inequality; however, he never mentions French slavery as a nefarious institution of economic profit in his articulations of equality and property.

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[148] Ibid, 125
[149] Ibid
[150] Buck-Morss, op. cit. 830
[151] Ibid, quoted from Rousseau, *Social Contract* 114

Sala-Molins states, Rousseau most certainly have known "that there are boudoirs in Paris where one amuses oneself indiscriminately with a monkey and a young black boy."[152] Buck-Morss states,

> It took years of bloodshed before slavery – really – existing slavery, not merely its metaphorical analogy was abolished in the French colonies, and even then the gains were only temporary. Although the abolition of slavery was the only possible logical outcome of the idea of universal freedom, it did not come about through the revolutionary ideas or even the revolutionary actions of the French; it came about through the actions of the slaves themselves.[153]

Contrasting Buck-Morss and Sala-Molins, I suggest that Rousseau was not deploying biological evolutionary notions of race organized by physiognomic differences. I argue that there are various political and ethical implications for thinking about Rousseau's thought beyond the limited frame of racism. Besides running the risk of conceptualizing racism as an individualized form of bigoted expression, I read Rousseau's failure to mention French slavery as indexical of the contingent knowledge structures and particular historical forms of reasoning available to him. Reading modern forms of race thinking into the eighteenth century, without the attendant nineteenth century epistemological structure of bio-evolutionism and historicism, can risk the suggestion that racism is simply an intrinsic feature of human and social relations. Instead, I argue racism is not congenital to human experience, but the product of historically bounded traditions of knowledge and thought. If race is simply reduced to a synonym for any articulation of human alterity then the possibility for examining the conditions for its emergence in addition to thinking about the conditions for its de-naturalization are foreclosed. Finally, anachronistically reading race into Rousseau's thought could potentially lead us away from examining the historically grounded features and

[152]Ibid, 831, quoted from Sala-Molins, Louis, *Le Col Noir, ou le calvaiw de Cannan*, Paris, 187, pp. 248
[153] Ibid

theological inscriptions of his universal conception of the human; namely, the production of the savage figure that is denied the full capacities of human perfectibility. I am in agreement with Maldonado-Torres who suggests that Rousseau is better understood as espousing a form of anti-Eurocentric Eurocentrism – this, again, can certainly be understood as revolting.

In this chapter I examined the Enlightenment period of the long eighteenth century through the work of Jean Jacques Rousseau, and located him within the frame of coloniality. I argued that his theory of human perfectibility is essential to his political theory of the social compact and his critiques of European civil society. I suggested that his theory of human perfectibility was generated through four interrelated domains of the coloniality of knowledge. First, his philosophy concerning the origins of natural human and his essential nature was indebted to a lineage of colonial travelogues and missionary accounts that fused Christian theological notions of monogenesis and Platonism. Second, natural history classificatory schemas concerning the location of the human in the theologically inscribed Great Chain of Being created the epistemic conditions for Rousseau to examine the unique nature of human agency vis-à-vis other sentient beings. Third, Rousseau extends the Protestant Christian focus upon the inward, detached subject through his unique novel structure and musical productions; consequently, this furthers the processes of disenchantment and the constitution of the universal, individuated self. Fourth, Rousseau introduces temporally varied stages of the individual self in order to suggest that civil society, characterized by law and property relations, underpin human degeneration and perfectibility, rather than being the result of an essentialized human nature. Paradoxically, while he does provide a critique of Eurocentrism, Rousseau ends

up endorsing the very processes of human degeneration via decadent European civil society, and by extension European colonialism, which was in part structured by the institution of slavery.

Chapter 5

Charles Darwin: Bio-Evolution, Religious Cognition, and Coloniality

In the previous chapter I examined the Enlightenment period of the eighteenth century through the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. I argued that his critiques of European civil society emerged in relation to colonial representations of the so-called noble savage. I illustrated how his philosophies concerning malleable human nature and human perfectibility were generated through a theological and philosophical heritage that fused Biblical monogenesis with Platonic discourses concerning perfected forms within the classificatory structure of Enlightenment natural history. While offering an account of human degeneration brought about by "artificial" European civil society, Rousseau paradoxically suggested that human perfection was attained through the very processes and institutions he decried as "artificial." That Rousseau relied upon a Christian theological lineage of human difference via Genesis and the Chain of Being did not preclude him from further engendering notions of human centred agency and inward focused forms of individuated subjectivity via his philosophy, novels and musical productions.

In this chapter I examine the Victorian period of the nineteenth century through the work of Charles Darwin (1809-1882). More than a century after his death, the record of Darwin's life remains an emerging field study: Darwin himself produced an autobiography written privately for his family, his son Francis edited a five-volume collection of his personal letters, and the University of Cambridge has untaken the task of transcribing over 13,000 of his correspondence letters. It has been well documented that

Darwin was exposed to a variety of world views from an early age, he was the son of a doctor and grandson of the celebrated speculative evolutionist Erasmus Darwin, while his mother was the daughter of the famous industrial potter and Unitarian abolitionist Josiah Wedgwood.[1]

Darwin attended Edinburgh University for medical school, but eventually left this ambition to attend Cambridge in order to become an Anglican priest – the only university degree Darwin attained in his three years of study was in theology.[2] While at Cambridge, he became well acquainted with the professor of botany, John Stevens Henslow, and subsequently developed a stronger interest in science and the classificatory principals of natural history. It was from Henslow's advocacy that the twenty-two year Darwin was chosen to partake in a surveying voyage as a naturalist upon the HMS Beagle, which was commissioned by the British Admiralty.[3] As I will discuss in further detail, the Beagle's circumnavigation of the globe lasted five years (1831-1836), and in his autobiography, Darwin recalled that the voyage of the Beagle was the most important experience in his entire life and determined the trajectory of his career. Perhaps no other moment during his voyage had impacted him more than what he witnessed upon the shores of Tierra del Fuego, "The sight of a naked savage in his native land is an event which can never be forgotten."[4] Not to be forgotten, Darwin's encounters with naked savages would later punctuate the notion of intra-species continuity in his bio-evolutionary history.

Darwin returned from the Beagle voyage as a competent geologist and naturalist. However, what is often missed in biographical accounts is that he also came back as a

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[1] Howard, Jonathan, *Darwin: A Very Short Introduction*, London: Oxford Paperbacks, 2003, pp. 2
[2] Phipps, William E., "Darwin and Cambridge Natural Theology," *Bios* 54(4), 1983, pp. 219
[3] Howard, op. cit. 2
[4] Darwin, Charles, *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin 1809-1882,* Barlow, Nora, ed., *London and Glasgow: Collins Clear-Type Press,* 1958, pp. 80

burgeoning anthropologist as evidenced by his detailed ethnological observations of the Indigenous peoples he encountered globally. Shortly removed from the Beagle voyage, Darwin produced his entire theory of evolution in about nine hundred pages of private notes from 1837 to 1839. Darwin continued to produce written material at a prolific rate, and in 1839 he published the *Journal of Researchers* based upon his meticulous descriptions and colourful experiences upon the Beagle – this text subsequently became one of the most widely read travel accounts of the nineteenth century.[5]

This brief portrait is meant index some of the influences upon Darwin's life and scientific career that I elaborate upon further in subsequent sections. That Darwin was a wealthy Victorian European male from a celebrated family lineage highlights the geopolitical and body-political location of his thought and this serves to counter the Western philosophical myth regarding the objective, neutral and non-situated "Ego."[6] He was indeed situated within a variety of traditions, including his family's abolitionist positions, that were anchored by a monogenetic and evolutionary portrait of man, his Cambridge training in natural theology, and his encounters with Indigenous peoples circumnavigating the globe upon the Beagle. I suggest that these geo and body-political domains cannot be disassociated from his speculative evolutionism.

I organize this chapter by staging an examination of Darwin's bio-evolutionary structure of history through four co-produced registers of coloniality. First, I locate Darwin within Enlightenment epistemological transformations regarding time and space, and the emergence of colonial historiography. I suggest that the progressive chronological structure of world-history was dependent upon the anthropological

[5] Howard, op. cit. 6
[6] Grosfogel, Ramon, "World-Systems Analysis in the Context of Transmodernity, Border Thinking, and Global Coloniality," *Review* (*Fernand Braudel Centre*), 29(2), 2006, pp. 168-169

invention of the category of religion as a cognitive feature of "primitive" superstition and myth. In other words, the emergence of world-history as a modern discipline and practice emerged through the coloniality of knowledge, that is, separating empirically verifiable events from the myths of superstitious primitive cognition.

Second, I explore Darwin's notebook entries from his Beagle voyages. I situate his entries within the larger epistemological temporal structure of progressive world-history, naturalist science, and colonial travelogues related to the global expansion of British empire. Consequently, I argue that Darwin conceptualized Indigenous peoples as Europe's ancestors through a historicist frame anchored by notions of superstitious primitivism.

Third, I illustrate that the Enlightenment conception of religion as a quantifiable object of knowledge underpinned Darwin's distinctive theory concerning the origin of religious cognition. I show that he initially depended upon dominant Victorian anthropological approaches to the study of the origin of religion, but ultimately challenged them. Specifically, I illustrate that Darwin attempted to reconcile the problem of inter-species variation while maintaining the structure of intra-species continuity within a bio-evolutionary structure by appealing to religion. Put directly, the simplistic religious expressions of primitive savages were evidence, according to Darwin, that humans descended from beasts.

Fourth, I will illustrate that Darwin promoted the colonizing project of developing the mental and moral faculties of the primitive non-European by extending missionary governance through his anti-slavery humanitarianism. Put directly, the vintage of

Darwin's humanitarianism emerged through the production of colonial difference – the potential for human perfectibility depended upon the primitive subject being colonized.

As a scientist, author, correspondent and humanitarian activist, Darwin's influence across a myriad of academic and non-academic disciplines over the last century has congealed into what has been called "Darwin studies" or what others have called the "Darwin Industry."[7] Plunging into the capacious field of "Darwinism", I seek to differentiate my approach by locating his thought in relation to coloniality. Briefly, I will illustrate how this examination departs from the literary and cultural studies frame, which has examined Darwin through a diverse set of registers well beyond the scope of his scientific writings. For instance, Gillian Beer's *Darwin's Plots* (1983) and George Levine's *Darwin and the Novelists* (1988) represent influential studies that have examined the narratological implications of Darwin's bio-evolutionary theory of transmutation.[8]

Various other literary and cultural theorists (Endersby 2009; Choi 2009; Richards 2002; Johnson 2015; Desmond and Moore 2009) have examined a wide range of Victorian social and cultural influences upon Darwin's thought including gender, natural science, medicine, botany, theology, emotional and aesthetic sensibilities, and the proliferation of dynamic literary forms for instance.[9] These thinkers have offered a rich account of contextualizing Darwin's thought within the matrices of English social and cultural relations. In many cases, however, I suggest that these attempts to radically

[7] Johnson, Curtis, *Darwin's Dice: The Idea of Chance in the Thought of Charles Darwin*, London: Oxford University Press, pp. xii-xv; Levine, George, "Reflections on Darwin and Darwinizing," *Victorian Studies*, Special Issue: Darwin and the Evolution of Victorian Studies, 51(2), Winter, 2009, pp. 215
[8] Choi, Tina, Young, "Natural History's Hypothetical Moments: Narratives of Contigency in Victorian Culture," *Victorian Studies*, Special Issue: Darwin and the Evolution of Victorian Studies, 51(2), Winter, 2009, pp. 276; Smith, Jonathan, "Introduction: Darwin and the Evolution of Victorian Studies," *Victorian Studies*, Special Issue: Darwin and the Evolution of Victorian Studies, 51(2), Winter, 2009, pp. 216
[9] Smith, Jonathan, op. cit. 219

decentre Darwin's thought, and dislodge it from the narrow parameters of science, have in fact distanced him from the epistemic locations from which his thought arose – specifically, the constitutive registers of coloniality.

For instance, Levine argues that attempts to position Darwin within the genesis of capitalist, sexist, or racist ideologies fail to recognize the wider implications of his thinking because, simply, his theory of evolution was "right",

> One need not become a passionate Darwinian, of the sort I feel myself to be, to recognize Darwin's significance for our own hyperactive and confused moment. Current Darwinizing is being done in a world in which, stupefyingly, the theory of evolution by natural selection is often treated as though it were still controversial.[10]

Levine continues,

> Perhaps ironically, no humanist critics I have encountered, not even those who leave Darwin out or condemn his ideology, would express doubt about the validity of the theory of evolution by natural selection. The theory may simply be capitalism writ large; sexual selection may simply give scientific authority to sexism (it doesn't); *The Descent of Man* (1871) may embody a racist orientation (that is far too simple…) but Darwin was right about evolution, right about sexual selection, and hostile to slavery, and it makes sense to try to figure out what the implications of these facts are.[11]

Darwin, according to Levine, was simply "right" so much, in fact, that his theory of evolution should not be abridged to any one vector, be it capitalism, sexism, racism, science, or imaginative literary expression for instance. This reading, however, can have the effect of circumscribing the disquieting features of Darwin's thought into "simple" reductionisms that are held to be reactionary, anachronistic and intellectually immature expressions that fail to see grander import of his work. Levine's paternalistic treatment of those who refuse to enter the gates of Darwin studies based upon the prescriptive truth claim of evolution by natural selection, therefore, can quickly be dismissed as harbingers of, in his words, "stupefying" approaches that pervert the "facts."

[10] Levine, George, op. cit. 225
[11] Ibid, 225-226

Nevertheless, no matter how "hyperactive" and "confused" a moment Levine believes we may be living in, I do find the constitution of Darwin's theory of bio-evolution controversial precisely because of its presumed universal, neutral and objective status as "fact." The problem with Levine's universalistic presentation of evolution is that it has the effect of delinking Darwin's epistemic location in structures of power. This Eurocentric "point zero" perspective places Darwin's theory of evolution beyond the particular and local contingencies of knowledge – that Darwin could potentially be read as capitalist, sexist, or racist for instance is subsumed into the universal validity of his thought. This is not to make the banal observation that all knowledge is partial and situated, but rather to place Western philosophical and scientific knowledge production within the context of Eurocentric epistemology that has anchored the global colonial-capitalist world system for the last five hundred years. This chapter stands as an attempt to try to figure out the implications of Darwin's thought without concealing its constitutive "dark side" by celebrating its factual nature in universality through the ego-politics of knowledge.

Brief Outline of Darwin's Theory of Descent with Modification by Means of Natural Selection

In Darwin's *The Origins of Species* (1859), he outlined his systematic theory of descent by natural selection. Rather than detailing the entirety of his biological evolutionary history, I will outline its basic structure in order to provide a theoretical context to the broader aims of the chapter.

I highlight four interrelated processes that capture the main tenants of his theory of descent with variation by natural selection. First, variation: all organisms that reproduce – either sexually or asexually – will generate progeny that marginally vary. No offspring is a duplicate of their parents; they may have variations in limb size, hair length, or other slight differences in features thereby illustrating creature variation. For Darwin, he did not suggest why or how these variations took place, that is, the slight variations that occur over time are not able to be projected in by any consistent model or mechanism – they are based upon chance[12]. Darwin maintained throughout his life that the exact reasons for variations that occur through reproduction were limited by human ignorance.[13] That Darwin did not explicitly link variability to a specific mechanism, most notably environmental changes, is where he departed most from the constructivist evolutionary philosophy his grandfather Erasmus. For Erasmus, transformations in external conditions correlated to adaptive change, that is, variability was not unpredictable.[14]

Second, heritability: variations between parents and their offspring are often handed down through reproduction. Put another way, variations are often preserved throughout successive generations. For instance, creatures with longer limbs or hair will

[12] Until today, one of the main debates within Darwin literature is the category of chance mentioned in the first process of variation. While not the first to examine evolution or the role of chance in biological contexts, Darwin's introduction of the chance into nineteenth century biological theory of evolution is what largely distinguished him from other naturalists and biologists of his time. Darwin himself struggled with the category of chance and would negotiate and modify the concept throughout his writings; for instance, by the publication of the *Descent of Man* (1871) and *Expressions of Emotions* (1872), he tried to avoid the concept or vary the manner in which it was expressed. Some commentators have attempted to resolve how Darwin conceptualized the category of chance by pointing his gradual departure from Christian devotion, that is, he evacuated a theologically determined teleological structure. However, what concerns me is his firm commitment to civilizational progress. For further reading see, Johnson, Curtis, "Darwin's Dice: The Idea of Chance in the Thought of Charles Darwin," London: Oxford University Press.

[13] Johnson, op. cit. xiv

[14] Howard, op. cit. 67

likely produce offspring with similar features and these variations can become more prominent through generations.[15]

Third, competition for survival: there are more organisms produced in every species than will survive. This notion was established through the natural theology of the Anglican cleric Thomas Malthus in his *Essay on Population* (1798). Disillusioned with the Enlightenment doctrine of human perfectibility, Malthus suggested that the law of nature dictated the intrinsic struggle for survival brought upon by the universal tendency for creatures to multiply in a geometrical progression, and to deplete the resources of the environment.[16] In short, Malthus's philosophical theodicy suggested that a large portion of humankind was characterized by degeneration as a result of the imbalance between productive and reproductive capabilities.[17]

Reversing the Malthusian structure of degeneration while maintaining its quantitative analytical principals, Darwin read the sixth edition of Malthus's essay and recast the struggle for survival within a framework of human perfectibility by biological evolution.[18] For Darwin, creatures produced offspring at a faster pace than the resources available for their survival, and, as a result, only a limited number would remain alive. Herbert Spencer coined the term to illustrate this process as "survival of the fittest" and this was subsequently appropriated by Darwin after the co-discoverer of natural selection A.R. Wallace informed him the fact.[19]

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[15] Johnson, op. cit. xv
[16] Howard, op. cit. 18
[17] Harris, Marvin, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory: A history of Theories of Culture, Updated Edition*, New York, England: Altamira Press, 2001 (1968), pp. 114-115
[18] Bajema, Carl, Jay, "Charles Darwin as a Cause of Adaptive Evolution 1837-1859," *The American Biology Teacher*, 47(4), April, 1985, pp. 228
[19] Johnson, op. cit. xv

Fourth, natural selection: if the above three processes occur, as Darwin theorized, then the technique of natural selection would create the conditions for evolution to occur. Organisms that have inherited variations that could be considered advantageous are most likely to live and flourish rather than those who varied in disadvantageous ways. For instance, a creature born with longer hair in an environment that was best suited for this type of variation, such as colder conditions, would then be said to have a heritable variation of advantage thereby being "selected" by nature to survive and pass along the advantageous variant. For Darwin, why or how some creatures inherited variation, as mentioned above, was unknown and based upon chance, rather than dependent upon external conditions according to the constructivist model of Erasmus Darwin or Jean-Baptiste Lamarck. Hence, if creatures did by chance inherit advantageous variation they were more likely to be selected to survive over those who did not adequately vary.[20]

The four main postulates of Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection in the *Origins* had little to say concerning the common biological origin of humanity and relational bonds between human and non-human animals except that "light will be thrown on the origin of man and his history."[21] This subject was broached in his later work *The Descent of Man* (1871) and *Expressions of Emotions* (1872). Man, according to Darwin, was subject to heritability through marginal variations over time while his reproductive capacity largely exceeded the availability of natural resources to support his offspring; therefore, man was subject to natural selection.[22]

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[20] Ibid
[21] Darwin, Charles, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life,* (1st ed.), London: John Murray, 1859, pp. 490
[22] Howard, op. cit. 76

Physically, Darwin suggested, man shared similar features to animals, however, the main register of difference was to be found in the mental faculties. Concerning mental capacity, he suggested, "man and lower animals do not differ in kind, although immensely in degree. A difference in degree, however great, does not justify us in placing man in a different kingdom."[23] In sum, Darwin argued that a) human beings constituted a distinct monogenetic species; b) humans varied in degrees vis-à-vis mental and moral faculties, known as inter-species variation; c) humans and animals shared an evolutionary link, known as intra-species continuity. A central tension that Darwin faced when developing his theory of bio-evolution, consequently, was accounting for inter-species variation while maintaining the structure of intra-species continuity.

Man, for Darwin, was an animal species that was unique most centrally in his intellectual powers – differences in intellect, therefore, correlated to differences in human "degrees." As such, despite the notion that all humans descended from a common stock, they seemed to vary quite radically in what Darwin perceived to be their degrees in intellect. For instance, Indigenous peoples and other so-called "primitive" non-Europeans he encountered globally during his Beagle voyages ranked amongst the lowest degree of human in his estimation. Nevertheless, Darwin could not simply suggest the primitive native was a transitional species between human and beast as this would justify placing them in a "different kingdom" and confirm polygenesis.

Crucially, therefore, Darwin's notion of intra-species continuity between humans and animals was staged through the register of mental cognition. Put differently, the main category that he used to form a link between human and animals was conceived through

[23] Ibid, quoted from Darwin, Charles, *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009 (1871), pp. 186

the differences in intellectual faculties. Not departing from Enlightenment notions of progress, Darwin concerned himself with one of the central categories held to distinguish the unique intellectual and moral characteristics of European man in relation to the primitive savage – that is, *religion*. Remarkably, Darwin suggested that the rudimentary origins of religiosity were to be found in dogs as well as primitive non-European savages. Consequently, religious cognition was used as the main marker of intellectual and moral development in order to generate a bio-evolutionary history. In Darwin's *Descent of Man*, for instance, he provides portraits of animal mental and moral forms of cognition and resignifies human behavior through a series of animal analogies.[24] As I will discuss in further detail below, primitive non-Europeans were located as an intermediate stage – not in terms of a separate species, but in terms of mental and moral capacity via the category of religion – between non-human animals and civilized man.

In this landscape, Darwin is a crucial figure in the production of the coloniality of knowledge because he reorganized the dominant eighteenth century comparative classificatory schema of natural history into a bio-evolutionary schema. While natural historians and political philosophers relied upon the Chain of Being in order to compare the distinctive nature of the human in relation to non-human animals, Darwin created a bio-evolutionary structure to suggest that the human, in fact, descended from non-human animals. Put directly, Darwin helped to usher forth the reorganization and transformation of the eighteenth century comparative diagram of differences into a progressive scale of biological evolution through the category of religious cognition.[25]

[24] Ibid, 79
[25] McGrane, Bernard, *Beyond Anthropology: Society and the Other,* New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 94

In the next section I illustrate in greater detail how eighteenth and nineteenth century construction of religion, understood as an index for mental and moral progress, was constituted through shifts in epistemological registers concerning temporality, space and superstitious cognition. Specifically, I will examine the rise of historicism and the conception of progress in relation to further transformations concerning evolutionary notions of human difference. I suggest that the rise of progressive chronology, organized through world-history, helped create the epistemic conditions for Darwin to make his intervention of bio-evolutionary history supported by religious gradation.[26]

Enlightenment Transformations: From Natural History to Progressive Historicism

Attempting to locate the emergence of "progress" and secular chronological forms of world history is a formidable task that cannot possibly be captured in all its contingencies and complex transformations in one chapter – let alone a single section. Nevertheless, I feel it necessary to attempt to provide a general diagram concerning the rise of historicism and how the category of progress impacted European representational schemas of difference. I decided not to approach the rise of historicism and the rise of modern time consciousness by accounting for unique processes internal to Europe within a diffusionist historical framework via capital and the work of Moshe Postone, or E.P Thompson for instance; or solely through the generalization and universalization of Biblical chronology via Johannes Fabian for instance. Rather, I will trace the emergence

[26] This is not to suggest, however, that this progressive temporal cadence is simply the logical antecedent to evolutionary forms of time as this reproduces the teleological structure of historicism, rather I will seek to trace some of the discursive rearrangements, transformations and historical contingencies for the emergence of evolutionism in modernity.

of progressive historicism by examining the registers of coloniality through the invention of religion and myth.

By the end of the Enlightenment profound shifts occurred in temporality with the rise of Newtonian mechanics and the production of primitive tradition. These processes helped to give rise to new studies in anthropology based upon a new quality of duration and progress – both temporal registers that retain theological traces of Biblical chronology while exceeding it through its secular dissemination. Darwin inherited these Enlightenment discourses of primitive traditionalism and forms of temporality and located them within a bio-evolutionary history.

I suggest that it was through the invention of the non-European superstitious figure where progressive chronology, sequenced through the grid of world-historical taxonomies, took on its "modern" form. On the one hand, Europe would represent itself as the space of self-determining and autonomous historical agents of "progress." Its constitutive underside, on the other hand, was non-Europe. The perceived space of superstition, tradition and myth: a space inhabited by primitive subjects incapable of abstract thought and unable to become subjects of history. In order to contextualize Darwin's thought in relation to the rise of historicism, I will situate my analysis within two interrelated processes of coloniality. First, through colonial expansion and the emergence of new types of anthropological discourse, the category of "religion" was invented to index "false" psychological projections of reality via superstition and myth. Second, time was spatialized, that is, European historical subjectivity was invented through the production of the primitive condition of historical inertia.

As discussed in previous chapters, the theological Time of Salvation was inclusive because the pagan, infidel or apostate were conceived as candidates for salvation via similitude. The secularization of time, conceived as natural history, marked a qualitative shift in time during the Enlightenment – secular as opposed to sacred – and a crucial shift in temporal relations structured by the notion of progressive taxonomies. Difference was no longer marked by the theological register of non-believer, but by the evolutionary register of the primitive and savage, Fabian states: "The naturalization of Time which succeeded to that view defines temporal relations as exclusive and expansive. The pagan was always *already* marked for salvation, the savage is *not yet* ready for civilization."[27] As I will suggest, Darwin projects the primitive figure through this temporal grid; consequently they were represented as lacking the mental and moral faculties to transform social and material domains in order to become subjects of history as civilized humans.

According to Bernard McGrane one of the major shifts that occurs through the eighteenth century is the rise of new anthropological and philosophical techniques of apprehending human difference. For him, demonological anthropology, which constituted human difference through theological coordinates of the non-Christian "pagan", was reorganized into a post-demonology discourse of the non-European "primitive."[28] Europe transformed its self-understanding as moving beyond the ignorant and illusory parochialism of a theocentric epistemological universe through constructing the category of "religion" as a transparent and measurable object of knowledge. Through this very process, the primitive non-European figure would come to embody myth,

[27] Fabian, Johannes, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2002 (1983), pp. 26
[28] McGrane, op. cit. 55-56

superstition and tradition. I argue that it was through the invention of the superstitious "primitive" figure incapable of abstract thought that represents a key moment regarding the split between authentic "scientific" history and inauthentic mythological accounts of duration.

Significantly, a key process in the colonial production of human difference concerns how "Christianity" became "religion" and how "religion" became an object of study by anthropology. McGrane offers a broad account of how Europe transformed its self-understanding and circumscribed Christianity as a psychological category. Religion was transformed into mythological narratives, or, more precisely, as psychological forms of distortion, moral weakness and ignorance. It was through constructing religion as a psychological category that myopically pursues false explanations of existence that the non-European primitive subject would come to embody in its most extreme forms.[29]

Throughout the eighteenth century, the works of Bayle, Fontenelle, Newton, Hume, de Brosses, Boulanger, Dupis and de Gebelin undertook the complex process of re-conceptualizing theological metaphysics into anthropological categories, that is, as psychological projections of the human mind.[30] Similarly, Charles Taylor observes that a typological ordering of "bad religion" was produced through three main vectors: superstition, fanaticism and enthusiasm. For Taylor, the construction of "superstition" was an extension of Protestant conceptual grammars of condemning Catholicism for mediating the transcendent through its liturgical worship cycles and ritual observances

[29] Ibid
[30] Ibid, 55

(explored in Chapter two). [31] Taylor, however, does not adequately account for the production of "bad religion" through colonial historiography.

Talal Asad offers an account of the typological ordering of religion through imperialism. He argues that the production of "religion" and "nature" emerge as universal categories through European colonial expansion and their regulation of overseas colonies. He suggests that into the nineteenth century, the Enlightenment reformulated demonological categories of "idolatry" and "devil-worship" into the secular concept of "superstition." Hence, the devotional activities of savage "nature folk" became regarded as notions given the false status of truth through primitive "fetish" and "taboo."[32] For Asad, it was through Enlightenment notions of reason that superstitious fetish rituals and sensibilities became constituted as categories of false thinking, illusion and oppression. He states,

> Reason requires that false things be either proscribed and eliminated, or transcribed and re-sited as objects to be seen, heard, and touched by the properly education senses. By successfully unmasking pretended power (profaning it) universal reason displays its own status as legitimate power.[33]

According to Asad, it was Christian anxiety and doubt that drove skeptical biblical scholars towards constituting Christianity as an object to be studied as a form of cognitive belief – as stated above. As a result, secular forms of historiography emerged.

As forms of secular critique emerged, Christianity was increasingly understood as an unviable set of traditional practices out of which emerged a split between "scientific" history as the pursuit of *unknown causes* (also understood as causality, or contingency) and "imaginative" religious literature and arts. It is at this moment, according to Asad,

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[31] Taylor, Charles, *A Secular Age*, Belknap Press, 2007, pp. 239
[32] Asad, Talal. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam and Modernity*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003, pp. 35
[33] Ibid, 35-36

that the category of "myth", "sacred discourse" and "symbolism" took shape. He states convincingly, "The rereading of the scriptures through the grid of myth has not only separated the sacred from the secular, it has helped to constitute the secular as the epistemological domain in which history exists as history – as anthropology."[34] Hence, Asad illustrates that it was through reconstituting biblical exegesis into traditional mythological literature and arts, in addition to the rise of anthropological conceptual vocabularies concerning primitive fetishism and superstition, that helped give rise to a new quality of time – that is, scientific accounts of "what really happened" as opposed to the false psychological projections of superstition and myth.[35]

I suggest that the main shift witnessed vis-à-vis human difference in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from "pagan" to "primitive" takes place through the transformation of religion into a category of cognitive belief. Consequently, the anthropological invention of religion as a knowable object of study and as a mode of determining intelligence and rationality was the space through which new meaning was inscribed upon the mental faculties of peoples associated with the categories of superstition, myth, taboo and fetish rituals. In other words, it was through the construction of "religion" as a psychological form of oppressive superstition, exemplified in the non-European, that Europe's self-conception of itself as progressing further towards "Enlightenment" was produced.

These processes are exemplified in the work of Auguste Comte (1798 – 1857). He suggested that historical phases were distinguished by their particular intellectual system,

[34] Ibid, 43
[35] Ibid, 45

and, therefore, ideas represented the primary moving force of history.[36] After having considered Charles de Brosses's *De Culte des Dieux Fetiches* (1760), Comte appealed to the category of fetish to produce his theory of religious development through an evolutionary schema in his two primary works, the Cours *de Philosophie Positive* (1830-42) and the *Système de Politique Positive* (1851-54). For Comte, primitive man – such as "the humble thinkers of central Africa"[37] – venerated fetishes in the belief that they exercised immaterial transcendent agency over the material world. In a series of developmental sequences, according to Comte, fetishism transmuted into polytheistic forms of worship, most notably through the ancient Greeks, who introduced unique forms of abstraction into complex devotional cycles. These atavistic expressions of fetish ritual and polytheism were then located as the antecedents to the most complex and abstract form of religious dispensation: Christian monotheism.[38] Hence, Comte's signification of religion as an expression of intellectual development located contemporaneous primitives and bygone ancients within an evolutionary structure, to study primitive fetish was to glimpse into Europe's past.

Thinkers from the Age of reason aligned the religious rites of the ancient pagans and the fetish rituals of primitive non-European as evidence of anthropocentrism – the "primitive mind" did not distinguish between objects, supernaturalisms and themselves. Accordingly, the superstitious primitive intellectual projections of transcendent forces were held to illustrate their inability to form abstract, mechanistic conceptions of the

[36] Pickering, Mary, "Auguste Comte and the Return of Primitivism," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, 52(203), 1998, pp. 53
[37] Ibid, 58
[38] McLaughlan, Robert, *Re-imagining the 'dark Continent' in Fin de Siècle Literature,* Edinburgh University Press, pp. 44

universe.[39] European ethnological accounts concerning the inability of the "primitive" intellect to form abstract forms of thought were often staged by counting exercises. The failure to count objects past a few digits was used to prove the savages inability to transform their material surroundings through the self-conscious capacity to differentiate between subject and object.

Newtonian mechanistic notions characterized by abstract visions of reality were held to be absent from the superstitious psychology of the non-European. McGrane states the "primitive mentality is that which lacks Newtonian mechanism, which is ignorant of Newtonian mechanistic vision of the general operation of the cosmos."[40] On the one hand, the "enlightened" European subject was held to be capable of unhinging their consciousness from the provincialism of religious authority – they may observe traditional rituals as a matter of personal choice, or, equally, choose to leave them.[41] On the other hand, the primitive subject was held to be largely incapable of separating their consciousness from supernaturalisms; they were therefore unable to transform the external world and understand progress via abstract notions of reality. It is within these capabilities that the Western subject's ontological status was located; unlike the primitive, they were a self-determining individual, capable of separating tradition and myth from "reality." This was where self-conscious transcendentalism took on its modern form.

Immanuel Kant, for example, in his "Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime" considered David Hume's observations in his essay "Of National

[39] McGrane, op. cit. 75
[40] Ibid
[41] Seth, Vanita, *Europe's Indians: Producing Racial Difference, 1500-1900*, Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2010, pp. 170

Characters" regarding the inability of the African to produce any abstract scientific principles, art or other dynamic productions of manufacture. Kant suggests,

> The Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the ridiculous. Mr. Hume challenges anyone to adduce a single example where a Negro has demonstrated talents, and asserts that among the hundreds of thousands of blacks who have been transported elsewhere from their countries, although very many of them have been set free, nevertheless not a single one has ever been found who has accomplished something great in art or science or shown any other praiseworthy quality…[42]

For Kant, one of the primary reasons for this intellectual lethargy was due to their atavistic religious devotions,

> The religion of fetishes which is widespread among them is perhaps a sort of idolatry, which sinks so deeply into the ridiculous as ever seems to be possible for human nature. A bird's feather, a cow's horn, a shell, or any other common thing, as soon as it is consecrated with some words, is an object of veneration and of invocation in swearing oaths. The blacks are very vain, but in the Negro's way, and so talkative that they must be driven apart from each other by blows.[43]

Drawing upon Linnaeus's typological ordering of four national types – *Asiaticus*, *Africanus*, *Europeaus*, and *Amaricanus* – via Enlightenment natural history (discussed in chapter three), Kant located the origins of the beautiful, sublime and pure reason in Europe.[44] Shortly thereafter, Hegel would locate the geographical typology of national character types within a temporalized historical schema.

According to Prathama Banerjee, the relationship between the invention of the "primitive" and the invention of time as chronology was most clearly illustrated in the work of Hegel and his *Philosophy of History* (1837). Hegel suggested that the colonial world, encompassing, for instance, the Oriental and the savage, were held to be incapable of mechanistic, abstract conceptions of reality – they lacked self-consciousness

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[42] Kant, Immanuel, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime and Other Writings,* Frierson, Patrick; Guyer, Paul, eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011 (1764), pp. 58-59
[43] Ibid, 59
[44] Mignolo, Walter, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, Duke University Press, 2011, pp. 196

transcendentalism. For Hegel, the primitive condition was characterized by their inability to acquire the requisite self-consciousness of the historical nation.[45] In Banerjee's reading, the significance of Hegel is not only that he invented modern historical subjectivity through the production of the primitive condition, but how he reconceptualized the very essence of temporality. Hegel accomplished this by spatializing time. As Seth observes, "Hegel sought to rank particular cultures within a graduated, teleological history."[46]

Hegel suggested that "history" was the advance of the Sprit in time to the full consciousness of its very being through the realization of freedom and reason – it is at this point of realization that marks the emergence of the modern subject.[47] As Zubairu Wai argues, the Spirit emerges as the actual embodiment in cultures, peoples and nations thereby indexing those who participate as "World-historical people", that is, those who partake in the movement of history. By spatializing time, Hegel held that those in Frigid and Torrid zones were bereft of World-historical potential, whereas the temperate zones of Europe – which housed the Christian German Spirit – were the very locations of historical progress.[48] Speaking of Africa, Hegel argued the entire continent was irrelevant to the movement of history, "At this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again. For it is no historical part of the world; it has no movement or development to exhibit."[49] Further, in Hegel's *Reason in History*, the "Negro" and Africa are represented as spaces

[45] Banerjee, Prathama, *Politics of Time: 'Primitives' and History-Writing in a Colonial Society*, Oxford University Press, pp. 5
[46] Seth, op. cit. 153
[47] Ibid, 158
[48] Wai, Zubairu, *Epistemologies of African Conflicts: Violence, Evolutionism, and the War in Sierra Leone*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 24-25
[49] Ibid, 25, quoted from Hegel, G.W. F. *Philosophy of History,* Translated by J. Sibree, New York: Dover Publications, 1956, pp. 99

of energy and sensual corporeality, and represented motionless stagnation that is fixed in time.[50]

It was through the spatialization of temporality, organized through colonial cultural typologies, that Hegel was able to produce a progressive chronological history. As Reinhardt Koselleck suggests, it was through colonial expansion where comparison became organized both spatially and temporally, and, consequently, is one of the defining characteristics of the modern sensibility of history: "The geographical opening up of the globe brought to light various but coexisting cultural levels which were, through the process of synchronous comparison, then ordered diachronically. Looking from civilized Europe to a barbaric America was a glance backward."[51] As a result, for Koselleck, comparative world history emerged as the universal structure of time that locates some peoples and cultures as advanced and others as backward. He calls this type of discourse the "contemporaneity of the noncontemporaneous" [52] – the process of translating social, cultural and religious difference, into a single homogeneous progressive notion of world history. He states, "The contemporaneity of the noncontemporaneous, initially a result of overseas expansion, became a basic framework for the progressive construction of a world history increasingly unified since the eighteenth century."[53] Koselleck rightly observes that comparative world history is dependent upon the conception of comparison:

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[50] Gibson, Nigel, *Fanon: the Postcolonial Imagination*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 21, quoted from Hegel, G.W. F., *Philosophy of History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975, pp. 177

[51] Koselleck, Reinhardt, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, Translated by Keith Tribe, New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 238

[52] This type of temporal distancing is known as "allochronic" discourse. For instance, Reinhart Koselleck's "contemporaneity of the noncontemporaneous"; Johannes Fabian's "denial of coevalness"; Dipesh Chakrabarty's "anachronism", and Bliss Cua Lim's "contained recognition" are all examples of what can be called allochronic forms of time. For further reading see Lim, Bliss Cua *Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic, and Temporal Critique*, Duke University Press, 2009

[53] Ibid, 246

"the *nonsimultaneity* of diverse, but, in a chronological sense, *simultaneous histories*."[54] In other words, progressive time depends upon representing different "histories" indexed by non-European forms of religious and cultural difference as coexisting at the same chronological simultaneous present; however, some are conceptualized as nonsimultaneous, or in a lessor stage of development.

Whereas as India could be represented by Hegel to be a zone of despotic caprice, and Africa as demonic malevolence, this is not to disregard their conceptual value among historians and anthropologists in relation the constitution of historicism. Put another way, while non-Europe was held to be inconsequential to history, or as the negation of history, their relevance to historicism is that their "primitive" traditions would come to represent Europe's past that it had long surpassed.[55] As Seth states,

> Tradition ceased to be posited in opposition to history because it had gradually come to be historicized in its own right. Societies governed by tradition (primitive societies that in a later age were to be redesignated "traditional") were societies that continued to reside in a particular stage of history that non-traditional societies had once experienced but had since surpassed.[56]

The representation of the inert superstitious-primitive figure, therefore, was the very condition for the genesis of a progressive world historical schema. The colonial production of Europe's history as continually unfolding towards "enlightened" progress underpinned Darwin's thought. Specifically, this spatio-temporal arrangement provided the epistemological coordinates for Darwin's confident perception of a civilizational gap between himself and the primitive Indigenous people that he transformed into objects of knowledge for a bio-evolutionary history.

Modern civilized subjects, those freed from the parochial manacles of tradition, were

[54] Ibid, 166
[55] Seth, op. cit. 165
[56] Ibid, 169

held to transform social and material relations via abstract, Newtonian conceptions of the universe. Importantly, through the spatializaton of time assembled in relation to national types, most notably via Kant and Hegel, Europe became the location of historical agents of progress while leaving behind a stagnant past. It was within the matrices of the reordering of the theological through the production of superstition and myth that duration would help find its linear cadence along with the help of geology.

Various Enlightenment thinkers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century produced works concerned with dating the earth via geological chronology. The discipline of geology had profound effects upon the study of religion as their durational estimates far exceeded the six thousand years indexed by Biblical Genesis. Prominent studies included George Buffon's *Epochs of Nature* (1778), which dated the earth at a minimum of 75,000 years – he resisted a longer time frame due to scriptural authority. Immanuel Kant suggested the earth was part of an infinite unfolding system in which millions of centuries produced new worlds in his *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens* (1755). The most ridiculed account was from Lamarck in his *Hydrogeology* (1802), which suggested that the earth was in fact billions of years old and that humans descended from fish.[57] Despite these works, however, Biblical chronology still influenced geological history in the first years of the nineteenth century, most notably from Georges Cuvier's *Researches on Quadruped Fossil Bones* (1811) and William Buckland's *Reliquiae Diluvianae* (1823).[58]

Charles Lyell, however, proved to be most influential to Darwin. Lyell produced a widely read manuscript entitled the *Principals of Geology* (1830), which Darwin brought

[57] Harris, op. cit. 110
[58] Ibid, 111

with him on his Beagle voyages. It remains a prime example of a distinct form of travel writing aimed at recording an authentic "scientific" geological account of history through the collection of data concerning physical geography while still holding faithful to elements of theological metaphysics.[59] Significantly, the preoccupation with physical geography for scientific explanations of the world, rather than superstitious mythological ones, helped open the horizons of time beyond the limiting vectors of Biblical chronology mediated by the *events* of salvation and eschatology.

According to Koselleck, it was only when time broke with conceiving and experiencing duration as the temporalization of expectation of inevitable apocalypse that temporality was opened up to different vistas. He argues that sacred Christian time consciousness limited the scope of "human ambition and hope" while modern time consciousness, understood as a secular experience, opened society to unknown futurity.[60] Progressive and evolutionary forms of time, therefore, emerged as key vectors for shifting the experience of time from "superstitious" past expectation (what he names the "space of expectation") to future possibility ("the horizon of expectation") – this helped give time a new directional quality towards "advancement" in relation to chronology that far exceeded the Mosaic chronicle.[61] This is not to suggest, however, that progressive secular forms of evolutionary time severed with its theological filiations – rather, what I have suggested is that the secular and religious entangled into complex post-Enlightenment formations – I will continue to examine this theme throughout the following sections.

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[59] Ibid, 112
[60] Lim, Bliss Cua *Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic, and Temporal Critique*, Duke University Press, 2009, pp. 80
[61] Ibid

Judeo-Christian time, therefore, had to be reconceptualised, not only because geological time extended into the past over millions of years, well beyond Biblical accounts, but because it did not allow time to be conceptualized independent of events. Time needed to be separated from events in order for various "non-eventful" data to be recorded by scientists like Lyell and Darwin. Importantly, travel writing and scientific data collection of foreign lands was directly linked to a new interest in the non-religious explanation for the origin of humankind.[62]

Geological time, therefore, provided anthropology a temporal grammar of "pre-history" in order for new studies to emerge for accounting for the incremental, progressive advancement of the human condition from its primitive past to the future vicissitudes of civilization. It is within the emergence of new studies of anthropology constituted through the vectors of religion and colonial ethnology, underpinned by the "deep-time" of geology, which provided Darwin with the epistemological space to consider the origins of humankind through a bio-evolutionary history.[63]

I suggest that these plural points of enunciation for the emergence of Darwinian evolutionary history illustrate several crucial points. One is the emergence of the nineteenth century autonomous, rational individual – unhinged from superstition – who did not simply separate themself from religious domains, but rather was constituted through epistemological transformations in theology, that is, the invention of religion as a cognitive category of belief through the grid of myth. Another is the way Indigenous sacred belief systems and ways of being, exposed through colonial expansion, were represented as being ruled by oppressive forms of myth, superstition, taboo and fetish

[62] Fabian, op. cit. 7, 12
[63] McGrane, op. cit. 90

rituals, with Christianity being considered as a constitutive phase in the history of abstract, scientific forms of thought. Thus, the third point which is that the emergence of secular forms of progressive world-history cannot be separated from the co-produced registers of theology and coloniality.

I suggest, therefore, that the theological was not simply evacuated from Darwin's thought. Rather, as I will suggest in the next section, his concern with religion as a cognitive feature of belief marks a significant reordering and subversion of theological grammars and concepts.

Darwin and Coloniality: Global Travels, Wretched Primitives, and Religious Dogs

In this section I will examine Darwin's conceptualization of religion as central category for demonstrating an evolutionary link between human and non-human animals. For him, "primitive" forms of superstitious religion resembled those found among of non-human animals, such as dogs. Arguing against the common notion that Darwin ushered in an epistemological "break" with the theological, I argue he reorganized theological grammars through "primitive" superstition and myth. Consequently, I will show that Darwin helped to entangle progressive chronology with a bio-evolutionary history through the matrices of the theological.

While the nineteenth century is often framed as disenchanted, because of how it allows a scientific evolutionary schema to organize human difference through "secular" positivist approaches, I will build a different structure. Debates between proponents of monogenesis and polygenesis – both inflected by religious and secular concepts and citations – created the space for Darwin to suggest that humanity shared a common origin

via evolutionary history. However, an evolutionary schema alone did not allow Darwin to attend to the problem of inter-species variation and intra-species continuity. If all humans descended from a common origin, Darwin struggled to explain how the "primitive" Indigenous groups of Tierra del Fuego and other Native peoples he observed during his Beagle voyages remained so radically different from the "civilized" European like himself. In order to negotiate the tension between continuity and variation within an evolutionary account of history, Darwin deployed the category of religion, through a progressive gradient map.[64]

A central function that the category of religion played in Darwin's theory of evolution is that it illustrated the level of "civility" between humans. However, religion, expressed in its superstitious and primitive form, also demonstrated link at the level of cognition between human and non-human animals. Put directly, the primitive, characterized by their superstition and taboo is what made them different from the "civilized" European, while simultaneously, primitive superstition marked their resemblance with non-human animals. Mediated by the cognitive schema of religious gradients, Indigenous peoples and animals would come to share an intimate link in Darwin's bio-evolutionary history.

In an attempt to solve the tension between species continuity and variation within an evolutionary framework supported by a religious gradient diagram, Darwin made an important assertion. Religion, he said, was not a uniquely human characteristic assumed by natural theologians and anthropologists. Superstitious forms of religion observed among primitive Indigenous peoples indexed the cognitive resemblance between human

[64] Day, Matthew, "Godless Savages and Superstitious Dogs: Charles Darwin, Imperial Ethnography, and the Problem of Human Uniqueness," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 69(1), January 2008, pp. 50

and non-human animals. Through the categories of religion and progressive chronology, therefore, human and non-human animals shared an evolutionary link.

I shall now turn to exploring Darwin's examination of bio-evolutionism and religion through three principal sections. In the first, I will situate Darwin within the entangled registers of naturalist science, colonial travel writing and British empire via his Beagle travels. The second section examines how Darwin's conception of religious cognition departed from dominant Victorian anthropological approaches to the study of the origin of religion. In the third, I illustrate that Darwin's unique theory of religious cognition entangled with coloniality and configured into his bio-evolutionary history.

Darwin's Beagle Voyage (27 December 1831 - 2 October 1836)

Darwin spent nearly five years on his voyage upon the H.M.S. Beagle – eighteen months at sea, and three years and three months on land. His voyage has commonly been framed as a "scientific" voyage for the further examination of natural history, geology, geography and zoology. In this reading, on the one hand, Darwin is cast as an extending Alexander von Humboldt's German romantic naturalist tradition, which expressed the sublime guiding forces that provided structure and direction to the unfolding of natural processes. In this frame, romantic naturalism is held to underpin Darwin's philosophy of nature and his theory of natural selection developed after the Beagle voyages.[65] On the other hand, Darwin's Beagle years have been cast as an example of autobiographical literary metaphor for life's journey. For instance, John D. Rosenberg describes Darwin's

[65] Harley, Alexis, "This Reversed Order of Things: Re-Orientation Aboard 'HMS Beagle'," *Biography* 29(3), Summer 2006, pp. 465

Beagle years with tender sentiment as "a voyage of discovery in which the old self gives birth to the new"[66] While not discounting the constitutive role of Humboldt's German romanticism, or the extent to which his voyages can act as literary metaphor for the journey of life, these accounts remain separated from any its constitutive political, let alone, colonial processes.

The Beagle voyages reveal the complex international networks constituting European empire in the Victorian period. Commissioned by the British Admiralty, the Beagle expedition and its surveying duties aimed at increasing Britain's colonial influence in South America. Spanish colonial rule was being eroded, in large part, by the example set out by the Haitian anti-slave rebellion and the independence movements of Venezuela, New Granada, Ecuador, Argentina, Chile, and Perú for instance. As such, Britain's incursions into South America sought to consolidate colonial control over the area through export and import trade networks as opposed to the moribund slave trade that was proving economically and morally unviable (I discuss slavery in the last section). Consequently, the Beagle voyages link the industrial revolution of Britain to domestic agrarian and financial capitalism that was underpinned by coloniality – that is, territorial expropriation, resource extraction, labour exploitation, and, as I will examine in the last section: slavery. Therefore, when cast in the frame of colonial power matrix, the Beagle voyages constitute the extension of geology, zoology and ethnology to Britain's imperial aspirations in South America.[67]

The captain of the Beagle, Robert FitzRoy arose from the British imperial

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[66] Ibid, quoted from Rosenberg, John D. "Mr. Darwin collects himself." *Nineteenth-Century Lives*. Lawrence S. Lockridge, John Maynard, and Donald D. Stone Eds., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 85

[67] Hodge, M.J.S., "Capitalist Contexts for Darwinian Theory: Land, Finance, Industry and Empire," *Journal of the History of Biology*, 42(3), Fall, 2009, pp. 406

dynasty; he traced his lineage to Charles II, was the grandson of the 3rd Duke of Grafton and was the nephew of Viscount Castlereagh. A proud aristocrat, FitzRoy was a naval officer and academic pupil of British empire having served its colonial interests in South American waters since 1822.[68] Beyond his official naval duties, FitzRoy was a physiognomist and phrenologist and regarded his own "Roman-nose" – deriving from Latin aquiline, or *aquilinus,* "eagle-like" – as indexing the profundity of his soul in addition to the exceptional capacity of his brain and mental faculties.[69] Committed to Mosaic chronicle supported by philological evidence of shared language groups, FitzRoy held that "Negro blackness" was the result of Noachean dispersal, that is, the curse set on recalcitrant Cain for his wicked earthly exploits (discussed in chapter one).[70]

At the age of twenty-three, FitzRoy abducted four Indigenous Fuegians on a previous expedition – three were children, the youngest being a nine year old girl the crew named with brazen malice, "Fuegia Basket". With remarkable hubris, FitzRoy did not hesitate to express his "firm belief in the most debasing trait of their character" and regarded the captives as "specimens" capable of the most "diabolical atrocity."[71] York Minster, the oldest twenty-six year old Fuegian prisoner was, according to FitzRoy, "certainly a displeasing specimen of uncivilized human nature."[72] However, the three younger captives displayed the potential to be *civilized*, that is, he placed them with the Church Missionary Society in England where they were converted, and taught Victorian

[68] Ibid; Moore, James; Desmond, Adrian, *Darwin's Sacred Cause: Race Slavery and the Search for Human Origins*, Penguin Press, 2010, pp. 67
[69] Moore and Desmond, op. cit. 67
[70] Livingstone, David, *Adam's Ancestors: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Human Origins*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011, pp. 120
[71] FitzRoy, Robert, *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of His Majesty's Ships Adventure and Beagle. Proceedings of the Second Expedition, 1831-36, Under the Command of Captain Robert FitzRoy, R.N.,* London: Henry Colburn, 1839, pp. 3; Moore and Desmond, op. cit. 67
[72] FitzRoy, op. cit. 3

sensibilities as well as the use of cutlery, buttons, and so on.[73]

> In his *Descent of Man*, Darwin would reflect upon these moments,
> The Fuegians rank amongst the lowest barbarians; but I was continually struck with surprise how closely the three natives on board H.M.S.; Beagle, who had lived some years in England and could talk a little English, resembled us in disposition and in most of our mental faculties.[74]

One child, however, subsequently died of small pox, while the others remained captive and were eventually paraded as specimens in London at Court. FitzRoy sought to extend his colonial civilizational mission through their return to Tierra del Fuego, and brought along a twenty-two year old Anglican missionary by the name of Richard Mathews to aid in the conversion of the "horrible cannibals." Once they returned home, however, they rejected their European attire and returned to their own way of life.[75]

In this reading, the Beagle voyages are not reducible to either a) a scientific expedition for geological, zoological and ethnological observation; b) a capitalist mission for the establishment of *laissez fair* British imperialist economic principals; or c) the evangelical dissemination of Protestant forms of Christianity. Rather, the Beagle voyages form an entangled constellation of plural points of enunciation for the spread of coloniality, that is, there is the convergence of the interests of natural science to extend geological and zoological observations; for the British via the imperial Admiralty to extend colonial trade circuits; and for the London Missionary Society to steadily Christianize South America. These three co-constituted domains of coloniality can be seen functioning through the Beagle voyages.

Significantly, Darwin's representation of Indigenous Fugeians affirms the colonial structure of progressive chronological world history: civilizing the superstitious

[73] Moore and Desmond, op. cit. 67; Harley, op. cit. 468
[74] Darwin, op. cit. *The Descent of Man,* 33
[75] Moore and Desmond, op. cit. 89

primitive Fuegian, held to be a figure of Europe's past, was made possible by representing them through the colonial vectors of ethnological observation. For instance Darwin would state in the *Descent of Man*,

> The main conclusion arrived at in this work, namely that man is descended from some lowly-organised form, will, I regret to think, be highly distasteful to many persons. But there can hardly be a doubt that we are descended from barbarians. The astonishment which I felt on first seeing a party of Fuegians on a wild and broken shore will never be forgotten by me, for the reflection at once rushed into my mind—such were our ancestors.[76]

For Darwin, the Indigenous Fuegian was represented as a lower barbaric form of human organization through which European's past was assembled. Significantly, the historicist grid of progressive chronology was co-produced through the figure of the Indigenous Fuegian.

As I will illustrate below, the Beagle voyages are central to his bio-evolutionary history, as it through the representation of primitive superstition that Darwin would consider the evolutionary link between human and non-human animals. For instance, Gillian Beer states, "Darwin's encounters with Fuegians in their native place gave him a way of closing the gap between the human and other primates, a move necessary to the theories he was in the processes of reaching"[77] Darwin's approach to closing the gap between human and non-human animals would not be produced through physiognomic differences, but rather through a gradient schema of religiosity that located rudimentary forms of religious cognition in "primitive" Indigenous superstition as well as non-human animals.

[76] Darwin, op. cit. *The Descent of Man,* 39
[77] Harley, op. cit. 479, quoted from Beer, Gillian. *Open Fields: Science in Cultural Encounter*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996, pp. 67

Darwin's encounters with Indigenous peoples of Tierra del Fuego would border between discourses of the marvellous and resemblance. When one examines Darwin' diary entries, the Fuegian's are repeatedly represented as both spectacle and as troubling likeness of Europe's own bygone past. Darwin provided detailed observations of the native Fuegians in his personal travel diaries and questioned the characteristics that could provide reason to include the them in the category of the human,

> Whilst going on shore, we pulled alongside a canoe with 6 Fuegians. I never saw more miserable creatures; stunted in their growth, their hideous faces bedaubed with white paint & quite naked. – One full aged woman absolutely so, the rain & spray were dripping from her body; their red skins filthy & greasy, their hair entangled, their voices discordant, their gesticulation violent & without any dignity…viewing such men, one can hardly make oneself believe that they are fellow creatures placed in the same world.[78]

As much as Darwin found the Indigenous inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego unintelligible, however, he remained committed to a monogenetic discourse of similitude as opposed to a polygenetic one. Moreover, epistemologically, Darwin reproduced the historicist assumption that the primitive state represented the antecedent to his own present, civilized state: Indigenous Fuegians existed in the flesh, for Darwin, as part of Europe's ancestral heritage.

The Indigenous Fuegian's, therefore, were significant for Darwin because of what they signified for Europe's own self-identity. In other words, the "primitive" was an anachronism that Darwin could observe as an example of Europe's own past – a past that Europe has moved beyond into a future free from superstition, cannibalism (which Darwin never witnessed, but assumed via European travelogues) childlike simplicity, and savage appearance. In the next section I consider how Darwin created a cognitive link between human and non-human animals through a gradient diagram of religiosity.

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[78] Darwin, Charles, *Charles Darwin's Beagle Diary,* Keynes, R. D, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 222

Darwin's Theory of Religious Cognition

Natural philosophers and proponents of natural religion claimed the main characteristic that distinguished human from non-humans was the unique capacity for religious devotion. This position held that some savages lacked any expression of religious faith, while others held that the religious practices of the so-called savage could be traced to a pre-Babel Christian-Hebrew synthesis implanted into the human species through individual acts of God. For instance, in Notebook M, Darwin would state,

> … the same mistake, more apparent however to us, as does that philosopher who says the innate knowledge of creator has been implanted in us (individually or in race?) by a separate act of God, and not as necessary integrant part of his most magnificent laws of which we profane degnen in thinking not capable to produce every effect, of every kind which surrounds us. Moreover it would be difficult to prove that this innate idea of God in civilized nations has not been improved by culture who feel the most implicit faith that through the goodness of God knowledge has been communicat to us.— and that it does exist in different degrees in races.— whether in Ancient Greeks, with their mystical but sublime views, or the wretched fears & strange superstitions of an Australian savage or one of Tierra del Fuego.[79]

In this confusing passage, Darwin rejects the philosophical position that religion was implanted into individuals or the human race through separate acts of God. Darwin then affirmed the Victorian anthropological conception of religion as a psychological cognitive category that humans deployed in order to make sense of existence – that is, "every effect of every kind which surrounds us." Through the interpretive grid of progressive historicism, the ancient Greeks in addition to the contemporaneous Indigenous Fuegian and Australian were held as resembling Europe's past through the categories of myth and superstition. However, while the ancient Greeks are valorized for their sublime conceptions, the Indigenous figure was debased for their "wretched fear" and "strange superstition". The most significant part of the passage, in my reading,

[79] Darwin, Charles, "Notebook M," in Charles Darwin's Notebooks, <http://darwin-online.org.uk/EditorialIntroductions/vanWyhe_notebooks.html>

concerns how Darwin conceptualized religion as serving a psychological function for explaining causality and in locating religiosity through degrees, or gradients.

According to Matthew Day, Darwin would not merely conceptualize religion as a "switch" that could be turned on or off; instead, he envisioned a gradient map of religious cognition. For instance, Darwin wrote, "Hensleigh [Wedgwood] says the love of the deity and thought of him or eternity, only difference between the mind of man & animals," however, in Notebook C, he would state, "yet how faint in the Fuegian or Australian! *Why not gradation*" (emphasis mine).[80] Moreover, he would remark, in relation to his Beagle voyages, that gradation was a key organizing principal in order to determine difference: "Differences…between the highest men of the highest races and the lowest savages, are connected by the finest gradations."[81] Locating religion through a progressive gradient diagram, Day rightly argues, would preserve the monogenetic lineage of the human.[82]

In this way, Darwin's conception of gradients resembled a reorganized notion of Biblical Genesis and the Chain of Being, retaining their theological filiations, rather than breaking with them. According to McGrane, the Scale of Creatures was not contested by Darwin, but rather was collapsed and subsequently traced upon the Origin of Creatures. The challenge of classification became, for Darwin, the problem of particularity; he argued that classification "must be strictly genealogical in order to be natural."[83] Sylvia Wynter argues that Darwin's paradigm emerged through the deconstruction of the Chain of Being; consequently, the human was no long conceptualized through an Adamic

[80] Day, op. cit. 60, quoted from Darwin, Charles, "Notebook C," in *Charles Darwin's Notebooks*, pp. 316 (C 244)
[81] Darwin, op. cit. *The Descent of Man,* 34
[82] Day, op. cit. 60
[83] McGrane, op. cit. 83, quoted from Darwin, *Origins*, pp. 420

degenerative logic where the "Negroid" was held to have fallen to the status of the ape, but rather to have barely evolved from it.[84] Put differently, by reorganizing theological citations, Darwin subverted the structure of monogenesis and reorganised its conceptual grammar into a biological framework. In doing so, he was able to stage an examination regarding the possible cognitive links between human and non-human animals. Day states, "Darwin's solution…was to narrow the gap between humans and non-humans by locating the rudiments of religion in animal cognition."[85] By conceptualizing the origins of religion in animal cognition, Darwin could position Indigenous peoples – whether they be Feugian or Australian – as representing Europe's own past through the temporal grid of historicist progressive chronology as well as through a bio-evolutionary diagram.

One of Darwin's main contributions to the study of religion as an object of study – more specifically as a psychological category of cognitive belief through a bio-evolutionary framework – was that though he initially relied upon the dominant Victorian anthropological approaches to religion, he ultimately subverted them. Specifically, Victorian perspectives conceptualized religion as a cognitive category of belief in spirits and supernaturalisms; and they located the origins of religious cognition in primitive experience of dreams and visions. Further, they presumed lower forms of primitive superstition, fetish and taboo would develop into a monotheistic Christian form through improvements in the mental faculties – namely, reason. For Darwin, these approaches located religious cognition as a unique feature of the human intellect, and, as a result, they were unsuccessful in producing an evolutionary schema of religion that linked human and non-human mental and moral faculties.

[84] Wynter, Sylvia, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument," *The New Centennial Review*, 3(3), Fall 2003, pp. 319
[85] Day, op. cit. 59

In order to illustrate how Darwin depended upon and reconceptualized dominant Victorian approaches to the study of religion and the primitive non-European, I examine the meeting of the Ethnological Society of London that took place on April 26, 1870. Two papers were presented by phrenologist Dr. Cornelius Donovan (1820-1872), and anthropologist E.B. Tylor (1832-1917), while the meeting was chaired by Professor Thomas Huxley – a vociferous proponent of evolutionary theory also known as "Darwin's bulldog."[86]

Donovan, a fellow of the Ethnological Society, doctor of philosophy and professional phrenologist read his paper entitled "On the Brain in the Study of Ethnology". Donovan's focus was the differences between races of men and he turned to phrenology in order to explore mental capacity through the size, shape, and weight of human skulls as well as the configuration of its sutures. His methodology centred on examining the qualitative and quantitative form of the brain in order to prove the comparatively inferior state of mental and moral aptitude of the most "uncivilized races."[87] His abstract would state, "The author urged upon travellers who wished to advance ethnological science, the importance of analyzing the mental constitution of each race, and of determining the relation which it bears to that of the normal European."[88] Hence, through colonial ethnology, Donovan would advance phrenology as the main scientific tool to compare the distance between uncivilized and civilized people. In this way, the temporal coordinates of progressive chronology took shape through the mental

[86] Chidester, David, "DARWIN'S DOGS: Animals, Animism, and the Problem of Religion," *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal,* 92(1/2), Spring/Summer 2009, pp. 53
[87] Ibid, 54
[88] Donovan, Cornelius, "On the Brain in the Study of Ethnology," *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London, Volume 2,* Ethnological Society (London), 1870, pp. 369

and moral capacity of the uncivilized non-European – indexed by cranial skeletal measurement –vis-à-vis the civilized, normal European.

Not drifting away from nineteenth century focus upon the inability of the primitive subject to form Newtonian conceptions of reality, Donovan remarked upon the use of numbers as evidence for mental faculty of abstraction. He would state in his *A Handbook of Phrenology*,

> But few, if any, of the lower creatures seem to have any notion of Number, nor any Faculty of this kind. In order to count anything there must be a power of abstraction – power to withdraw the Intellect from any difference between the objects counted, and to regard them solely as units. The savage tribes are remarkable for deficiency in Number. But few of them can count beyond ten or twenty, and some have no words to express any Number beyond five.[89]

However, rather than locate the faculty of abstraction as diametrically opposed to religious metaphysics, Donovan attempted to measure the quality of religious devotion through a gradient schema. Religious adoration was, for Donovan, an innate human impulse. The capacity for religious veneration correlated to developed mental faculty, he would remark that "'Veneration' gives respect for age, for parents, and persons in authority, and for ancient institutions."[90] Religiosity, for Donovan, could be measured by the length of the head; remarkably he would claim that even long heads could be "deficient in the length at the top, leaving no room for 'Veneration' to develop fully."[91] Through phrenology and the schema of religious gradation, he would take the opportunity to suggest that Protestantism was the most developed form of religious worship. On the one hand, the "humanity" of Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon was evidenced by the particular dimensions of their skulls. On the other hand, Catholicism

[89] Donovan, Cornelius, A Handbook of Phrenology, London: Longmans, Green, Reader and Dyer, 1870, pp. 61
[90] Ibid, 40
[91] Chidester, op. cit. 54, quoted from Donovan, op. cit. *A Handbook*, pp. 93-94

was correlated to "inhumanity" evidenced by the skull of Pope Alexander VI – the capacity of religious veneration among the uncivilized primitive figure would be virtually absent for Donovan.[92]

What is important about Donovan's contribution to the anthropology of religion was not the ludicrous approach of phrenology, but how he conceptualized "religion" as a mental faculty and quantifiable category through a scientific gradient diagram. Whereas Donovan correlated the capacity for religious veneration to developed mental and moral faculties through measuring the head and form of the brain, it would be E.B. Tylor who produced a concise "scientific" definition of "religion" as well as an influential account concerning its origins.

Tylor's paper, entitled "The Philosophy of Religion among the Lower Races of Mankind" was based upon anthropological "evidence" primarily generated from travel literature, missionary accounts, colonial administrative dispatches, and his own ethnological accounts from his visit to Mexico.[93] Tylor located the category of "religion" to the domain of cognition as "animism", that is, religion was simply defined as the belief in spiritual beings. These spiritual beings, for Tylor, included belief in souls, demons, spirits, ghosts, gods and other invented superstitious categories of the human intellect.[94]

For Tylor, the study lower animism indexed by "savagery" in relation to "civilized life" formed the basis for producing a philosophy of religion. While Tylor did not generate a coherent structural sequence of "lower" animism to "higher" Christianity, Marvin Harris suggests that Tylor presumed a gradual progressive movement to Christian monotheism through the "removal of the pantheon of high gods from direct human

[92] Chidester, op. cit. 55
[93] Ibid, 54
[94] Harris, op. cit. 202

appeal."[95] Hence, Tylor did not depart from the progressive chronological schema of Eurocentric historicism; consequently, lower animist savagery was represented as the antecedent to Christian Europe – indeed it is through the cognitive domain of savage religion that progressive chronology generated its modern cadence.

Countering the claim that "savage tribes" were bereft of religion, as this would breach his notions of religious philosophy, Tylor situated animism as a psychological category found in every religious enunciation. Animism, therefore, manifests in the universal subjective experience of dreams and visions in which phantom duplicates of man remove themselves from the materiality of the physical world, including their bodies, in the form of shadows or vapor.[96] For him, the savage was characterized by their belief in the apparitional soul, or ghost-soul: "He considers that what causes death and what causes visions and dreams are one and the same…the generally received connextion of the life with the phantom in to a soul-ghost is the very key to savage psychology." (371). Appreciating Tylor's theory of animism, Darwin would remark,

> It is probable, as Mr. Tylor has clearly shewn, that dreams may have first given rise to the notion of spirits; for savages do not readily distinguish between subjective and objective impressions. When a savage dreams, the figures which appear before him are believed to have come from a distance and to stand over him; or "the soul of the dreamer goes out on its travels, and comes home with a remembrance of what it has seen."[97]

John Lubbock, a friend of Darwin, would similarly argue that the cognitive register of spirits originated as the primitive expression of dreams and visions. Unable to separate the realm of death and life, the soul of the departed that may visit upon the primitive subject in a dream or vision was regarded as living-phantom. Lubbock would remark, "When a dead father or brother appears to a man in sleep," he would continue, "he does

[95] Ibid, 202
[96] Tylor, Edward B., "The Philosophy of Religion among the Lower Races of Mankind," *The Journal of the Ethnological Society of London (1869-1870),* 2(4), 1870, pp. 371
[97] Chidester, op. cit. 62, quoted from Darwin, op. cit. *Descent*, 66

not doubt the realty of the occurrence, and hence concludes that their spirits are still alive."[98]

Significantly, for Donovan, Lubbock, Tylor and Darwin, the savage was represented as incapable of separating his subject status from objects. Consequently, primitive conceptions of the apparitional soul made them virtually incapable of abstract conceptions of the phenomenal world. Darwin would reproduce both Tylor's conception of the savages inability to form abstract conceptions of objects and Donovan's use of the Number as an index for the capacity of Newtonian mechanics,

> [I]t may be urged that, as man differs so greatly in his mental power from all other animals, there must be some error in this conclusion. No doubt the difference in this respect is enormous, even if we compare the mind of one of the lowest savages, who has no words to express any number higher than four, and who uses no abstract terms for the commonest objects or affections, with that of the most highly organised ape.[99]

The inability for the lowest savages to use abstract concepts in order to separate subject from object was issued as the causal explanation of their historical inertia. Furthermore, the state of savagery was historicized in order to index an invented past that Europe exceeded through "enlightenment" – that is, they were able to separate the "false" mythos of religious psychology and apprehend "truth" through the individuated, self-conscious transcendental mind.[100]

Darwin recommended influential Victorian anthropological studies of religion including Lubbock's notion that religion emerges from the primitive impulse of deification in *The Origins of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man*; John McLennan's conception of totenism and that primitive subjects apprehend natural causality as spiritual agencies in *The Worship of Animals and Plants*; and Herbert

[98] May, op. cit. 63, quoted from Lubbock, John, *The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man*, 1912 (1870), London: Longmans, Green, Reader and Dyer, pp. 275
[99] Darwin, op. cit. Descent, 33
[100] Seth, op. cit. 170

Spencer's proposal regarding the origin of supernatural cognition in the primitive idea of ghosts, that is, the idea that humans had both a corporeal and spiritual essence in the *Fortnightly Review*.[101] Darwin found Tylor's dream and vision theory particularly intriguing as Tylor sought to produce an evolutionary diagram that distinguished between the animistic illusions of fetish, idolatry and taboo as opposed to rational scientific principles.[102]

Tylor, however, was unable to formulate a functional-causal structure, or evolutionary system of laws. Rather he provided several examples, ranging from the native Fijian to the Greenlander, as separate developmental sequences that independently transformed through the faculty of reason.[103] Hence, Tylor, according to Darwin, failed to provide an adequate evolutionary schema because he presumed a highly sophisticated form of perceptive reason in his theory of the origin of religion in dreams and visions.

Darwin remarked that only when "the faculties of imagination, curiosity, reason, & c., had been fairly developed in man, his dreams would not have led him to believe in spirits, any more than in the case of a dog."[104] According to Darwin, therefore, there must have been "a still earlier and ruder stage"[105] that came before the ability for primitive cognition to express dreaming and visions as phantom-doubles that travel to distant lands in the form shadows or vapors; or, alternatively, as receiving visits from the living spirits of departed souls.[106] Put simply, these accounts concerning the origins of religious cognition in primitive superstition erroneously located religious cognition as unique

[101] Chidester, op. cit. 62
[102] Ibid, 57
[103] Harris, op. cit. 204
[104] May, op. cit. 63, quoted from Darwin, op. cit. Descent, pp. 66
[105] Darwin, op. cit. Descent, pp. 66
[106] Chidester, op. cit. 62

feature of the human intellect. They all failed, in other words, to adequately bridge the gap between human and non-human cognition.

Lubbock, on the other hand, did attempt to construct an evolutionary history in *The Origins of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man* (1870). Relying upon Henry Lichtenstein's prosaic travelogues from the Eastern Cape, the Xhosa were reported to have presumed that an anchor cast ashore from a shipwreck was, in fact, alive. Lubbock observed in a footnote that "Dogs appear to do the same."[107] Lubbock, therefore, partially managed to link religion to the primitive instinct to ascribe agency to inanimate objects.

Darwin's Theory of Religion within a Bio-Evolutionary History

Despite Lubbock's attempt to provide a brief link between primitive human and canine cognition in a passing footnote, Darwin systematically located the colonial link between humans and non-human animals within his bio-evolutionary framework. Specifically, he would generate a bio-evolutionary schema of religion that did not reproduce the assumption that religiosity was a unique human mental faculty. Instead of locating religion to a belief in spiritual agencies that originated in the notion of the apparitional soul via nature, dreams or visions, Darwin reconceptualized religion – as a cognitive category of belief – in "anything which manifests power or movements is thought to be endowed with some form of life."[108] Crucially, he also stated, "this belief

[107] Ibid, 59, quoted from Lubbock, op. cit. 287
[108] Darwin, op. cit. Descent, pp. 65

seems to be almost universal with the less civilized races"[109] The origin of religion, for Darwin, was specifically located in the mental faculties of imagination, wonder, and curiosity working together with a rudimentary form of reason.[110]

According to Darwin, each of these mental faculties could be found in any number of animals, and, therefore, were not unique attributes of human beings. For instance, Darwin argued that primates feel wonder, curiosity, imagination and reason in addition to other faculties such as attention and memory.[111] He also observed that retriever-dogs are capable of simple forms of reason without language.[112] Darwin even suggested that other faculties that were held to be specific to humans were more developed in animals as opposed to primitive savages. For example, he observed that birds have a more developed sense of beauty indexed by their musical rhythms; however, he argued: "Judging from the hideous ornaments and the equally hideous music admired by most savages, it might be urged that their aesthetic faculty was not so highly developed as in certain animals, for instance, in birds."[113] By conceptualizing religion as ascribing agency to anything that moves, via mental and moral faculties, Darwin helped to close the gap between human and non-human animals. In short, it allowed him to produce a biological framework of evolutionary history as opposed to mere developmental sequences of Donovan, Tylor, or Lubbock for instance.

Dogs, for Darwin, would feature as the most common non-human animal to reference as sharing religious cognitive faculties with primitive subjects. This was not because dogs were especially unique for Darwin; rather, he simply held deep affection for

[109] Ibid
[110] Ibid. 66
[111] Ibid, 48
[112] Ibid, 58
[113] Ibid, 64

his own dogs. Darwin could easily observe their behaviors as opposed to relying more heavily upon secondary observations of primates and other organisms from naturalists including Johann Rudolf Rengger, Alfred Edmund Brehm, or Sir Andrew Smith, for instance. Darwin observed that his own canine shared the superstitious primitive penchant for ascribing agency to moving objects in order to support an evolutionary link between human and non-human,

> The tendency in savages to imagine that natural objects and agencies are animated by spiritual or living essences, is perhaps illustrated by a little fact which I once noticed: my dog, a full-grown and very sensible animal, was lying on the lawn during a hot and still day; but at a little distance a slight breeze occasionally moved an open parasol, which would have been wholly disregarded by the dog, had any one stood near it. As it was, every time that the parasol slightly moved, the dog growled fiercely and barked. He must, I think, have reasoned to himself in a rapid and unconscious manner, that movement without any apparent cause indicated the presence of some strange living agent, and no stranger had a right to be on his territory.[114]

Darwin would make the link between savage humans and his beloved dog explicit in his subsequent colonial ruminations.

For Darwin, if the rudimentary cognitive faculties that attributed life to material objects were not developed by reason; this would lead to primitive forms of polytheistic anthropomorphism. He suggested that primitive forms of religious cognition naturally, yet mistakenly, assigned spirits with human passions such as the love of vengeance or elementary forms of justice, "the same affections which they themselves experienced."[115] Whereas emotions such as love, fear, gratitude, hope, dependence and submission to transcendent powers form a constellation of complex intellectual and moral faculties, Darwin argued that a variety of non-human animals express similar sensibilities. Dogs, Darwin surmised, displayed profound love for their master, which correlated to their absolute submission, fear and gratitude for instance. Dogs and monkeys also expressed

[114] Ibid, 67
[115] Ibid

unique behaviours of joy towards their master after being reunited with them – they did not display similar affection towards their own species in his estimation. The dog, Darwin considered, even looks to his master as a God.[116]

In some instances, however, Darwin suggested that non-human animals have more developed mental faculties than primitive peoples – most notably, love. Recall, for example, Darwin's contention of birds having a more developed sense of beauty in relation to the "hideous" aesthetic sensibilities of the Native Fuegian. In the case of belief, Darwin characterized the religious cognition of "savages" as more commonly associated with "bad spirits" as opposed to "good spirits."[117] Further, he expressed his agreement with Lubbock by quoting him as follows: "it is not too much to say that the horrible dread of unknown evil hangs like a thick cloud over savage life, and embitters every pleasure."[118] Consequently, for Darwin, the religious cognition of dogs and monkeys are largely characterized by their "deep love", "joy" and other "beloved" expressions of devotion, whereas the ominous spiritual agencies of primitive fetish and taboo continually results in the state of wretched misery – the Indigenous primitive subject is not only represented as largely incapable of abstract thought, but also the emotional and moral domains of pleasure, joy, and, significantly, love.

There does not seem to be a direct correlation between the category of "love" and the developed mental faculties through abstract, scientific forms of reason in Darwin's thought. Rather, I argue that Darwin associates the capacity of "love" with the moral registers of Christian monotheism, which he entangles with the power of abstract cognition via scientific objectivity. This provides us with a clue in how Darwin

[116] Ibid, 69
[117] Ibid, 67
[118] Ibid, 69

conceptualized primitive forms of polytheism through a progressive historicist frame that departed from a degenerative logic. For instance, Isaac Newton suggested that polytheism indexed the degenerative form of Biblical monotheism, while Edward Herbert of Churbury, John Toland, and Voltaire located polytheism as a corrupted expression of natural deism.[119] Darwin, on the other hand, subverted this degenerative frame and conceptualized monotheism, associated with the developed moral faculty of "love", to be correlated with progressive abstraction towards objective scientific truth. Primitive fetish rituals were characterized as "unknown evil" – including human sacrifice, witchcraft, and trials by ordeal – and were associated with simple moral faculties and poorly developed powers of reason.

While Darwin seemed to conceptualize the state of primitive superstition as an immutable psychological condition, Indigenous people were represented as candidates for intellectual and moral perfectibility, that is, the primitive state, at least in theory, was reversible. In fact, Darwin explicitly states the Native Feugian appeared to represent an "intermediate condition."[120] Hence, through the development of their simple mental and moral faculties, through reason and love, they could pass through the different degrees of religiosity: from belief in "unseen spiritual agencies, then in fetishism, polytheism, and ultimately in monotheism."[121] Here Darwin located monotheism as the form of religious cognition associated with the highly developed powers of reason. However, Darwin ventured further and urged his readers to reflect upon the oppressive taboo and fetish rituals of the savage as they provided a historicist lens through which to celebrate Europe's past that it exceeded through scientific abstraction: "it is well occasionally to

[119] McGrane, op. cit. 65
[120] Darwin, op. cit. Descent, pp. 67
[121] Ibid, 69

reflect on these superstitions, for they shew us what an infinite debt of gratitude we owe to the improvement of our reason, to science, and our accumulated knowledge."[122]

One is left ask the question: did Darwin conceptualize Protestant, Christian monotheism as the highest form of religious cognition that was compatible with disenchanted secular formations of scientific objectivity? Or, alternatively, did Darwin situate monotheistic forms of mental cognition as eventually unfolding towards abstract scientific objectivity, totally unhinged from theological metaphysics? I am not interested in situating Darwin within either a religious or secular domain, but rather am gesturing towards the entanglements between the religious and the secular. In other words, I would suggest that one cannot easily determine a clear "break" between the religious and the secular in Darwin's thought; rather, he transforms and reorganizes theological categories into secular formations making any conceptual distinction problematic.

I suggest, therefore, that Darwin linked human and non-human cognition through the reformulated theological category of religion. In this way, he did not simply excise the theological, but transformed its grammar. Specifically, through historicist world history underpinned by the contemporaneity of the non-contemporaneous, the primitive existed as a living relic of Europe's past that had been transcended through highly developed cognitive faculties. Cognition determined by degree and kind of religiosity, furthermore, was the basis for a progressive and evolutionary chronology. Consequently, the primitive was not only a figure of Europe's past, but shared various mental and moral faculties with non-human animals. Primitive superstition, projected through a gradient diagram of religiosity, was held to inhibit the human ability to form abstract conceptions of existence rooted in scientific objectivity. Rituals of primitive fetish rituals and taboos,

[122] Ibid, 68-69

and the belief in "bad spirits," were held to restrict the development of the moral and emotional faculties of love and joy rooted in Protestant Christian monotheism.

As a result of Darwin's philosophical and bio-evolutionary thought, the primitive Feugian or Australian remained potential candidates for human perfectibility – that is, they must be colonized in order to become "civilized." Darwin would in fact remark: "I have felt some difficulty in conceiving how inhabitant of Tierra del Fuego is to be converted into civilized man."[123] Darwin, in this regard, shares common colonial ground with Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Darwin attempted to link the mental faculties of humans to non-humans through a gradient map of religious belief in order to generate an evolutionary history; however, in doing so, he subsumed non-European "primitive" consciousness into the instinctual impulses of non-human animals. At times, Darwin even argued that animal cognition was more developed than the primitive subject in various domains such as beauty, pleasure and love.

Rousseau, on the other hand, emphasized the natural purity of the noble savage to the point of subsuming their consciousness into intuitive forms of corporeality. While Darwin did not share Rousseau's conviction concerning European decadence in relation to noble savagery, they both converged by conceptualizing the potential of human perfectibility through the vectors of European colonialism. While Rousseau would passionately condemn slavery as an abstract philosophical principal, Darwin was moved to activist forms of "humanitarian" abolitionism. And yet, it was through the registers of human compassion and welfare that Darwin endorsed the global encroachment of British

[123] May, op. cite. 59, quoted from Darwin, "Notebook E," in *Charles Darwin's Notebooks*, pp. 409 (E 47)

settler colonialism; it was in the name of civilization and humanity that his progressive and evolutionist notions of perfectibility were constituted.[124]

Darwin, Slavery and Humanitarianism

A common apologist response to locating Darwin in the colonial matrix of power is that he was actively involved in the anti-slavery movement in the nineteenth century. So the argument goes: how could Darwin endorse the violence of European colonialism and imperialism if he so passionately contested what is held to be the most violent institution of European empire? Surely, unlike a figure like Rousseau, who argued against slavery as a theoretical reflection upon the category of freedom, Darwin's critical praxis is held to be evidence that he cannot be associated with the butchering violence of colonialism. Contrasting this Eurocentric portrait, I argue that Darwin was not opposed to European empire, but rather actively endorsed it through humanitarian discourses of moral responsibility to institute colonial forms of governance aimed at "civilizing" – that is, to improve, protect and control the primitive non-European. My central aim, therefore, is to examine how the moral domains of benevolence and empathy intertwined with violence and cruelty through Darwin's humanitarianism.

One the most widely cited works concerning Darwin's role in the abolition of slavery is Adrian Desmond and James Moore's *Darwin's Sacred Cause: How a Hatred of Slavery Shaped Darwin's Views on Human Evolution*. In this Eurocentric piece, they state that while Darwin did not attend abolitionist rallies, or produce anti-slavery petitions like

[124] Asad, Talal, "Reflections on Violence, Law, and Humanitarianism," *Critical Inquiry* 41, Winter 2015, pp. 395

his Unitarian extended family members, he rather "subverted" slavery with the scientific evolutionary theory of common descent.[125] I will focus upon two main domains that the authors claim shaped Darwin's abolitionist humanitarianism, and, according to them, helped form his distinctive position concerning shared ancestry; first, the political climate of early nineteenth century Britain and the influence of antislavery advocates and institutions; second, Darwin's experiences of witnessing slavery during his Beagle voyages.

The larger abolitionist political climate of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century England, according to Desmond and Moore, was characterized by an eclectic network of individual and institutional actors. Moral passion, the authors suggest, motivated the humanitarians to reduce human suffering and pain through a wide range of affective registers including "compassion", "kindness", and "sympathy." Contrasting this position, I argue that these abolitionist affective domains were constitutive of humanitarian rationalities to extend the powers of settler colonial governance.[126] For instance Alan Lester and Fae Dussart argue British humanitarianism was paradoxical,

> Just at the time when elite Britons decided to abolish slavery abroad and reform governance at home; just when the first global campaign on behalf of distant and 'less fortunate' indigenous peoples was emerging; and just when colonial officials were first instructed to govern humanely, hundreds of thousands of Britons were encouraged to invade and occupy indigenous peoples' lands on an unprecedentedly extensive scale.[127]

In this reading, anti-slavery beliefs and practices were a co-constitutive feature of expanding the scope of British settler colonialism and its administrative capacity.[128] It is within this context that I locate Darwin, that is, he featured as part of a larger

[125] Moore and Desmond, op. cit. 12-13
[126] Lester, Alan, Dussart, Fae, *Colonization and the Origins of Humanitarian Governance: Protecting Aborigines Across the Nineteenth-Century British Empire*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 4
[127] Ibid, 1
[128] Ibid, 2

epistemological structure in which abolitionist humanitarianism and colonial governance entangled with a theologically inflected moral economy of compassion and protection.

In the next section I will briefly examine the genesis of the Sierra Leone Company and the humanitarian arguments of Thomas Clarkson and re-read him as a central figure in the production of colonial humanitarian governance. Clarkson's significance, according to Desmond and Moore, lies not only with his connections to Darwin's family, but in the larger abolitionist discourse of the nineteenth century that profoundly impacted Darwin. I will then situate Clarkson with other notable humanitarian abolitionists that influenced Darwin including James Cowles Prichard (1786 – 1848), and Sir William Lawrence (1783 – 1867) in order to suggest that British abolitionist humanitarianism formed part of a larger shift in British settler colonial governance.

Thomas Clarkson became one of the main spokesmen for the London Committee of the Abolition Society. Along with Darwin's grandfather Josiah Wedgwood, various funding outlets would help consolidate the Sierra Leone Company. According to Desmond and Moore, the company was established in order to place Africa above capitalist driven motives for profit and "to create a bridgehead in West Africa for liberated slaves."[129] The Sierra Leone colony, however, traces its roots to the colonial experiment conceived by Granville Sharpe (1735-1813) most notably in his *A Representation of the Injustice and Dangerous Tendency of Tolerating Slavery in England* (1769), and *A Short Sketch of Temporal Regulation* (1786).[130]

In the context of the Mansfield ruling of *Somerset v. Stewart* (1772), destitute and homeless freed slaves – known as the "Black Poor" – failed to gain employment in

[129] Moore and Desmond, op. cit. pp. 23
[130] Wai, op. cit. 71

England and could not find adequate support by the Poor Law committees.[131] With the establishment of the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor, England sought a solution to the Black Poor problem, which was held to be responsible for many of the country's social ills. Moreover, in seeking an alternative to the slave trade that was increasingly becoming an economic drain on the national economy, the Sierra Leone Company was eventually established with the help of Clarkson. The mandate of the company was to cultivate the fruits of Christian morality, industry and civilization with a commercially viable trading centre in West Africa.[132]

The colony of Sierra Leone would be a theatre for Europe's own bygone primitive past that it long surpassed through "enlightenment." For instance, Clarkson penned over two dozen works on slavery and he helped guide William Wilberforce into the fold of the abolitionist movement.[133] Clarkson's most notable work was his *Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species, Particularly the African* (1786). In it, he criticized the violence of planters for not understanding that the "savage state" of Africa resembled that of Europe's past, and, through colonial governance could "progress" according to the dictates of Enlightenment conceptions of European "civility":

> In their own country…[t]hey are mostly in a savage state. Their powers of mind are limited to few objects. Their ideas are consequently few. It appears, however, that they follow the same mode of life and exercise the same arts, as the ancestors of those very Europeans [that] are described to have done in the same uncultivated state.[134]

Clarkson continued and observed,

> when they are put in the mechanical arts, they do not discover a want of ingenuity. They attain them in as short a time as the Europeans, and arrive at a degree of excellence equal to that of their teachers…Their abilities in music are such to have been generally noticed.

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[131] Ibid
[132] Ibid, 76
[133] Livingstone, op. cit. 66
[134] Clarkson, Thomas, *Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species, Particularly the African,* 1786, London: J. Philips, pp. 168

> They play frequently upon a variety of instruments without any other assistance than their own ingenuity.[135]

These passages illustrate the multifarious Eurocentric notions of Enlightenment progress that were produced through the very figure he wished to redeem. Naturally musical, the African was cast as type of "noble savage" whose mental faculties follow the natural cadence of corporeal instinct and base passions rather than abstract, Newtonian mechanics. Clarkson maintained that slavery was economically unviable and would impede Christian conversion. He maintained, therefore, that Sierra Leone should be governed by the moral principles of benevolence and compassion in order to improve the uncultivated life of the unfortunate savage.

This brief portrait of the Sierra Leone Company can serve as an example of the larger nineteenth century humanitarian colonial approach towards abolition. As Harris rightly suggests, "in British antislavery circles, the more childlike and savage the 'inferior' races, the more they were regarded as needing the help of the civilized branches of humanity."[136] This approach, I suggest, was underpinned by the co-constitution between notions concerning Adamic unity of the human through Biblical monogenesis and Enlightenment progressivism; consequently, the African subject was held to be potentially perfectible through Christian conversion and improvement of their mental faculties via mechanical arts and industry. The nineteenth century antislavery movement, therefore, represents a flexible assemblage of individual and institutional actors including politicians, manufacturers, physicians, scientists, logisticians, educators and missionaries

[135] Ibid, 170
[136] Harris, op. cit. 97

that were mobilized through the dynamic affective registers of compassion and sympathy that intertwined with the cruelty and violence of coloniality.[137]

That Clarkson opposed the institution of slavery did not mean he was opposed to colonialism, imperialism or British empire. What Desmond and Moore fail to account for in their analysis is that the very articulation of ending the institution of slavery – for abolitionist figures such as Clarkson, and, later, Darwin – was based upon representing the primitive non-European as a figure of Europe's past, as an uncivilized savage that was incapable of mental abstraction and self-conscious transcendentalism. Rather than seeking to curtail colonial territorial expropriation and labour exploitation through plantation systems, or settler colonialism, the abolition movement extended technologies of British empire through the vehicles of humanitarian colonial governance – Sierra Leone thus stands as an example of an entire state apparatus produced through the matrices of humanitarian discourses of coloniality.

Clarkson was part of a much larger network of thinkers that opposed slavery, but endorsed British colonialism and imperialism – most notably settler colonialism characterized by resource and territorial expropriation, and labour exploitation. For instance, James Cowles Prichard's *Researches into the Physical History of Mankind* (1813), and *Natural History of Man* (1843) influenced Darwin's work.[138] Desmond and Moore suggest that Prichard was held in high regard by Darwin, and he stated: "How like my Book [*Origin of Species*] all this will be."[139] For Desmond and Moore, Prichard's

[137] Lester and Dussart, op. cit. 10
[138] Livingstone, op. cit. 118; Harris, op. cit. 94
[139] Moore and Desmond, op. cit. pp. 13 quoted from Darwin, Charles, *More Letters of Charles Darwin: A Record of His Work in a Series of Hitherto Unpublished Letters , Volume 1,* , Francis Darwin, ed. 1902, pp. 46

work would form part of the "extraordinary growth" of studies concerned with ending the violence slavery.

Prichard was born a Quaker and later would tend towards evangelicalism; he based his theory of civilizational development upon Biblical monogenesis, and sought to explain somatic differences based upon climatic factors. Committing himself to Mosaic chronicle, he sought to reconcile geological periods to Biblical *Days of Creation* in order to suggest that religion was an act of divine revelation, rather than the product of human mental cognition. Prichard argued that Adam was in fact a "Negro", or that "the primitive stock of men were Negros." [140] For Prichard, civilizational progress gradually turned man white. Similar to Darwin's notion of sexual selection in the *Descent of Man,* Prichard suggested that divine providence implanted in human nature an instinctual proclivity for beauty in the form of lighter pigmentation. As darker skinned primitive peoples developed towards civilization, their inferior mental faculties progressed towards lighter somatic types.

Paradoxically, it was through Pritchard's conceptions of non-European moral and mental inferiority that made him a notable nineteenth century critic of slavery and an advocate of human rights. Prichard believed in the common ancestry of all human beings through Biblical monogenesis. This was the very location for suggesting that through civilizational progressive sequences, the original Adamic stock of Negro humans was potentially perfectible – they could resemble their European colonizers.[141] In other words, epistemologically, his scientific notions of primitive inferiority were not moral or intellectual contradictions regarding his positions of abolitionism and human equality, but

[140] Livingstone, op. cit. 120; Harris, op. cit. 95
[141] Harris, op. cit. 95

the very condition for its articulation. As such, Prichard's "secular" scientific writings entangled with the theological registers of Biblical monogenesis – they form plural points of enunciation for the coloniality of knowledge.

Pritchard's views were not a departure from dominant nineteenth century abolitionist positions, supported by scientific evolutionary conceptions of shared ancestry, and theological imputations of moral development in relation to the inferior primitive human. Sir William Lawrence, for instance, was an eminent British anthropologist of the nineteenth century and influenced Darwin's theories of common descent. Lawrence suggested the inferior races of man were the result of Adamic degeneration. His firm belief in Christian charity towards those he held to be weak, ignorant, and naturally low members of humanity also entangled with the capitalist imperative to increase surplus value from an exploited labour force and the availability of raw materials – in short, Lawrence endorsed British colonial-capitalist global expansion.[142]

For Lawrence, the slave trade represented an anti-Christian practice because it was not based upon theological principals of kindness and indulgence; rather, Europeans, having been blessed with superior endowments in mental and moral faculties, had a theological-ethical responsibility to "extend the blessings of civilization and multiply the enjoyments of social life"[143] Like Prichard, Lawrence was a vociferous opponent of slavery and based his humanitarian evolutionary structure from the co-produced registers of Biblical monogenesis, Christian charity, and the Enlightenment progressive chronology of world-history – inferior peoples were conceived as non-contemporaneous

[142] Ibid, 97
[143] Ibid, quoted from Lawrence, Sir William, *Lectures on Physiology, Zoology and the Natural History of Man*, London: James Smith, 1823 (1819), pp. 240

figures of Europe's past. What is significant, however, is the absence of "racial" classificatory schemas, at least, in the modern biological sense.

Conceptions of skin colour, for Prichard and Lawrence, were not organized according to what can be understood to be modern notions of biological physiognomy. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the body was still considerably flexible; consequently, pigmentation and corporeal functions were associated with climatic, geographical and dietary differences. Lawrence and Pritchard joined other prominent thinkers in associating differences in the body and flesh with geographical and ecological domains. For Clarkson, climatic variations accounted for differences in skin tone. He suggested that man was originally "dark olive" in order to refute the notion that black races were natural slaves and created by separate independent acts of Divine Will.[144] Charles de Secondat Montesquieu argued that environmental differences related to physiology in addition to forms of political organization and sociality. Further, Comte de Buffon suggested with the utmost conviction that if one relocated an African to Paris and prepared French cuisine for his dietary requirements, his descendants (within a few generations) would be endowed with white skin.[145] And, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach suggested that the Negro was the result of Adamic degeneration; specifically, he suggested that dark skin was the result of bile secretions from the intense heat of the sun.[146] Consequently, unlike later physiognomic racial systems of classification, where the body was conceptualized as an inflexible and immutable object, differences in what could be considered "race" were subsumed to reflections upon mental and moral

[144] Livingstone, op. cit. 66
[145] Seth, op. cit. 207
[146] Livingstone, op. cit. 120

cognition.[147] Darwin would not transcend the contingencies concerning the malleable nature of corporeality; rather, his bio-evolutionary framework traced the inferior mental and moral characteristics of primitivism through the vectors of religious gradation.

In this section I argue that Darwin's humanitarian discourses of benevolence and empathy depended upon and found expression through the colonial interventionist grid of protection and improvement. Significantly, however, I suggest that for Darwin, the abolitionist logic of humanitarian dehumanization was not underpinned by racial physiognomic differences because this presumes that the body was available, epistemologically, for signification as an immutable and transparent object of knowledge. I suggest, therefore, that Darwin's colonial humanitarian project was underpinned by forms of dehumanization generated through the reordered conception of religion as a quantifiable index for moral and mental faculties. It would be in the post-Darwinian era that these mental and moral registers would be mapped onto the body as a stable category of classification.

Upon reading Darwin's passionate reactions against the visceral violence of enslaved peoples of African descent during his Beagle voyages, one is left to pause and consider what can seem to be a contradiction in his foul representations of Indigenous peoples of Rio de Janeiro and Tierra del Fuego. I will juxtapose these contrasting representations from a single diary entry to illustrate the complexity of his humanitarian colonial outlook. While in Rio de Janeiro on July 1832, Darwin would observe,

> The Brazilians, as far as I am able to judge, possess but a small share of those qualities which give dignity to mankind. Ignorant, cowardly, & indolent in the extreme; hospitable & good natured as long as it gives them no trouble; temperate, revengeful, but not quarrelsome; contented with themselves & their customs, they answer all remarks by asking "why cannot we do as our grandfathers before us did".— Their very appearance

[147] Seth, op. cit. 206

> bespeaks their little elevation of character.— figures short, they soon become corpulent; and their faces possessing little expression, appear sunk between the shoulders.[148]

Later in the same day and in the diary same entry, he would remark of enslaved African peoples:

> I judge of it from their numbers, from their fine athletic figures, (especially contrasted with the Brazilians) proving they are in a congenial climate, & from clearly seeing their intellects have been much underrated.— they are the efficient workmen in all the necessary trades.— If the free blacks increase in numbers (as they must) & become discontented at not being equal to white men, the epoch of the general liberation would not be far distant. I believe the slaves are happier than what they themselves expected to be or than people in England think they are.— I am afraid however there are many terrible exceptions.— The leading feature in their character appears to be wonderful spirits & cheerfulness, good nature & a "stout heart" mingled with a good deal of obstinacy.— I hope the day will come when they will assert their own rights & forget to avenge their wrongs.[149]

One the one hand, the Native Brazilians were conceptualized as almost unintelligible because their faces expressed few emotions and their bodies were associated with their inferior mental powers of cognition.

Significantly, Darwin located Indigenous people's deficiencies in moral and intellectual domains with their stubborn connection to "customs" and the practices of their ancestors. For Darwin, "custom" indexed primitive forms of religious superstition, which created a cognitive link between human and non-human animals. In this regard, Darwin linked the body with the mental faculties; crucially, however, I suggest that the mediating category for Darwin was religion. In his Beagle diaries and later publication in the *Descent of Man* and *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, Darwin did not produce an evolutionary history that linked human and non-human animals through racial physiognomic sequences. Rather, he formed relational bonds between the mental cognition of animals and non-human animals through gradient maps of religiosity –

[148] Darwin, Charles, *Charles Darwin's Beagle Diary,* Keynes, R. D, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 79
[149] Ibid, 80

ascribing spiritual agencies to objects remained the central link between primitive humans and non-human animals.

This is not to say, however, that Darwin failed to represent Indigenous and African peoples through the racial principals of physiognomy and phrenology. Clearly, in both passages, the face and body were associated with the development of the mental faculties. However, Darwin did not focus upon hierarchies of pigmentation, that is, he did not associate developed mental faculties with the lighter skin tones of the Indigenous Brazilian. Rather, he associated their "corpulent" figure, lack of facial expression and penchant for superstitious custom as an index for their ignorance, cowardliness and other intellectual and moral deficiencies. The body was not yet constituted as a stable object of power in order to produce a coherent modern discourse of race based upon physiology and epidermal forms of difference. Rather, different forms of racial signification indexed by phrenology, physiognomy, and skin tone for instance were congealing through Darwin's gradient diagram of religiosity. What were largely absent in Darwin's thought, therefore, were modern biological racial schemas for categorizing difference.

The enslaved peoples of African descent, on the other hand, were represented as largely cheerful, courageous, and he associated this with their athletic bodies. Their mental faculties, Darwin considered, were underrated and their abilities to learn trades illustrated their ability to be "civilized" despite their "obstinacy". Here Darwin took aim at one of the common anti-abolitionist assertions that claimed people of African descent were lazy and incapable of "industry."

What is also significant about the passage is that Darwin argued, remarkably, that people brutally enslaved as dehumanized units of labour were, in fact, "happier" than

they themselves expected. This sentiment is consistent in Darwin's other diary and notebook passages in that acts of physical violence were held to impede the colonial project of civilizing the primitive non-European. For Darwin, feelings of empathy towards the suffering of those he regarded to be "wretched savages" produced a complex moral geography.[150] For instance, Darwin states in his Beagle diaries:

> I was crossing a ferry with a negro, who was uncommonly stupid. In endeavouring to make him understand, I talked loud, and made signs, in doing which I passed my hand near his face. He, I suppose, thought I was in a passion, and was going to strike him; for instantly, with a frightened look and half-shut eyes, he dropped his hands. I shall never forget my feelings of surprise, disgust, and shame, at seeing a great powerful man afraid even to ward off a blow, directed, as he thought, at his face. This man had been trained to a degradation lower than the slavery of the most helpless animal.[151]

In this passage, Darwin did not associate the physical musculature of the body with the mental faculties; rather, he located his fellow traveller as intellectually and morally inferior due to the cruel training of planters. For Darwin, the nexus between Enlightenment progressivism and evolutionism constituted the human as a malleable figure, and the African subject was potentially capable of developing their mental and moral faculties – he would turn to their religious beliefs in order to affirm an evolutionary link to dogs and monkeys.

That Darwin opposed slavery on moral grounds and endorsed colonial governance on moral grounds did not make him exceptional, nor was it a case of not fully universalizing his positions against slavery due to some moral or intellectual contradiction. For Darwin, his humanitarian colonial prescription for civilizing the inferior primitive was based upon expanding European settler colonial governance.

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[150] Lester and Dussart, op. cit. 11 from, Laqueur, Thomas, "Mourning Pity and the Work of Narrative," in Wilson and Brown, eds., *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 33

[151] Darwin, Charles, *The Voyage of the Beagle*, Charles Elliot, ed., New York: P.F. Collier & Son Company, 1909, pp. 34

Darwin's first publication, penned along with FitzRoy, was entitled "A letter, containing remarks on the moral state of Tahiti, New Zealand, &c.," and it appeared in the *South African Christian Recorder* in 1836.[152]

Drawing authority from Sir James Mackintosh's *History of England*, concerning civilizing capacity of missionaries in relation to Europe's ancestors, James suggested that the Danes and Saxons were held to be "irreclaimable barbarians", but were elevated to become "among the most *industrious*, *intelligent*, *orderly*, *and humane*, of the dwellers upon earth."[153] Aligning contemporaneous Indigenous peoples with the non-contemporaneity of Europe's ancestors, Darwin and FitzRoy recalled the four abducted children of Tierra del Fuego who they described as some of the "most degraded of human beings." Darwin may have used a bio-evolutionary framework of shared human origins supported by moral arguments of compassion and benevolence in order to ground his humanitarian positions against slavery; however, he also actively endorsed the abduction of non-European children into the bondage of European, post-Enlightenment ways of being and knowing through the same humanitarian moral vectors.

Unremarkably, Darwin and FitzRoy both fabricated the details of their successful conversion,

> They were taught the simpler religious truths and duties…although with the failings inseparable from a thorough-bred savage…they they once went naked, destitute of any covering, except a small piece of seal skin, worn only upon their shoulders; that they had devoured their enemies slain in battle; or that they had smothered, and afterwards eaten, the oldest women of their own tribe, when hard pressed by hunger during a severe winter! Surely, if three years sufficed to change the natures of such cannibal wretches as Fuegians, and transform them into well behaved, civilized people, who were very much liked by their English friends, there is some cause for thinking that a savage is not

[152] FitzRoy, Robert; Darwin, Charles, "A letter, containing remarks on the moral state of Tahiti, New Zealand, &c.," *South African Christian Recorder,* 2(4), September, 1836
[153] Ibid, 221

> irreclaimable, until advanced in life; however repugnant to our ideas have been his early habits.[154]

They failed to mention, however, the utter failure of their odious civilizational experiment, that is, upon their return to Terra del Fuego, the surviving members failed to domesticate themselves to the duplicitous prescriptions of civilized life and left their abductors to return to their "early habits" – as mentioned above.

The article continued to praise the missionary efforts to civilize the "cheerful" Tahitians, and "wild cannibals" of New Zealand. Darwin and FitzRoy commend the success of the temperance movement as well as the voluntary prayers offered, Bible readings, and other acts of sincere religious veneration. The main thrust of their article, however, was a defense of the London Missionary Society's conversion project, which represented a key location within English global circuits of imperial power. These circuits of power cannot be disassociated from their material inscriptions, including the purchase of Indigenous land; population transfers; resource extraction; labour exploitation, re-education; shifts in conceptions of hygiene and health care; dietary prescriptions; transformations in architectural and aesthetic domains, and so on.

These material inscriptions, however, should also be linked to the larger shifts in the colonial-capitalist world system. It should be noted that missionary and settler interests often clashed and they represented diverse and competing claims of authority; consequently, it is incorrect to simply suggest that missionaries and settlers formed a unified colonial monolith – Darwin and FitzRoy's letter is, in part, representative of defending missionaries against the sentiments of settlers. Despite these clashes, however, the larger shift Darwin and the anti-slavery humanitarians helped produce was the

[154] Ibid, 222

expansion of humanitarian forms of governance and the vast expansion of British settler colonialism.

For James Belich, one of the major shifts colonial-capitalist world system – borrowing and modifying Kenneth Pomeranz's notion of the "Great Divergence" – was the dramatic shift in the nineteenth century British settler colonialism. For instance, he suggests that in 1790, the population of Spanish America was about fifteen million, which was over five times the size of Anglo-America. Moreover, the value of Spain's European exports far exceeded that of Britain.[155] What occurs over the nineteenth century, with the rise of humanitarian forms of British colonial governance proliferated through settler colonial expansion, and the reduction of the slave economy, is the explosive rise in the English settler population.

Over the course of the long nineteenth century[156], the size of British America went from one-fifth the size of Spanish America to around twice its size. While Britain expanded its settler empire to Australasia and South Africa (the geographical contexts for Darwin's first publication), its Anglo-speaking population bloated from about twelve million to over two-hundred million – this is not counting the roughly four-hundred million people in England's subject empire. This global expansion of British empire, underpinned by the logic of settler colonialism, overtook Russian, Indian, Chinese and Hispanic growth over the same period; thereby helping transform the character of the capitalist-colonial world system.[157]

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[155] Belich, James, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783-1939*, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 3

[156] The long nineteenth century refers to the late eighteenth to early twentieth century. In this specific instance, Belich is referring to the rough time period of 1780 to around 1920.

[157] Ibid, 4

For Belich, the "Anglo divergence" of the long nineteenth century was punctuated by three main co-constitutive processes: a) *networks* to establish systems of long-range communication, primarily through trade; b) *empire* to establish external control over subject populations, primarily through conquest; c) *settlement* to establish the reproduction of the metropole population, primarily through long-range migration. These interdependent processes, for Belich, overlapped and formed a flexible system for the Anglo divergence of the long nineteenth century. Moreover, these overlapping circuits of colonial governmentality were anchored by epistemologies of demographics, epidemiology, social hygiene, psychiatry, geology, anthropology, and theology as well as the institutions of urban planning, life insurance, mission societies, and healthcare systems for instance.[158] According to Walter Mignolo, these colonial processes constitute the antecedents to Foucault's biopolitical forms of governmentality.[159]

The reason I have briefly transgressed from Darwin's thought into the larger shifts in the colonial-capitalist world system is to index that his anti-slavery humanitarian positions helped to facilitate the Anglo divergence of the long nineteenth century. Darwin's anti-slavery humanitarianism is a prime example of how the moral registers of benevolence and sympathy entangled with the violence of expanding British coloniality through networks, empire and settlement. What I have been suggesting is the epistemological structure that underpinned the emergence of British nineteenth century humanitarian rationalities cannot be decoupled from its colonial genesis. It is not so much that Darwin failed to fully apply or universalize his conception of the human to the non-

[158] Ibid, 20
[159] Mignolo, op. cit. 14-15

European primitive as that the very condition of its enunciation was based upon the coloniality of knowledge.

In order to further examine the culmination of Darwin's humanitarianism we can examine Darwin's voluminous correspondences. For instance, Darwin reveals the manner in which he expressed the relationship of intellectual gradation amongst European and non-European peoples in relation to natural selection. Not to be mistaken for later articulations of what would be known as "social Darwinism", he does offer further insights concerning civilizational progress. For instance, speaking of the primacy of intellectual gradation as evidence for natural selection being a more reliable measure of progress than corporeal structure, he would write to Charles Lyell in 1859:

> I can see no difficulty in the most intellectual individuals of a species being continually selected; & the intellect of the new species thus improved, aided probably by effects of inherited mental exercise. I look at this process as now going on with the races of man; the less intellectual races being exterminated.[160]

Similarly, he would state in his correspondences to Charles Kingsley in 1862, "In 500 years how the Anglo-saxon race will have spread & exterminated whole nations; & in consequence how much the Human race, viewed as a unit, will have risen in rank."[161] Finally in his correspondence with William Graham, in 1881, Darwin outlines his vision of human progress through an evolutionary history of natural selection: "Looking to the world at no very distant date, what an endless number of the lower races will have been eliminated by the higher civilised races throughout the world."[162] These violent colonial predictions were not simply a feature of "early" Darwin or some

[160] Darwin, Charles, "Letter to Lyell, Charles," Letter 2503, 11 October, 1859, <http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/entry-2503>
[161] Darwin, Charles, "Letter to Kingsley, Charles," Letter 3439, 6 February, 1862 <http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/entry-3439>
[162]Darwin, Charles, "Letter to Graham, William," Letter 13230, 3 July, 1881 <http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/entry-13230>

aberration in his bio-evolutionary history of common descent. Rather, the striking consistency in each of the letters span over the course of his early publications to his latter stages of his life.

Although Darwin does candidly utilize the language of "race", I would suggest that his bio-evolutionary structure was not primarily based organized upon the axis of physiognomic biological racial schemas. The body, for Darwin, and in particular pigmentation and physiology, was not the major determinate of human difference. Rather, mental and moral cognition conceived through the vectors of religious gradation cast the superstitious primitive subject – debased in fetish rituals and taboo – as unable to transform their social, material and moral existence through abstract scientific forms of cognition, and monotheistic Protestant Christianity. In short, for Darwin, the body was not yet totally conceptualized as an immutable category appropriated for scientific forms of signification.[163]

Shifts in conceptualizing the body were certainly taking place, and can be found in Darwin's work as well as in many of his contemporaries. However, I argue that Darwin did not exceed the contingencies regarding the flexible conception of the human body. What did not appear in Darwin's thought was a process in which inferior mental and moral attributes, generated through the gradient map of religiosity, were mapped onto the body. Put differently, for Darwin, the body remained malleable; it was not conceived as a stable empirical site to inscribe the mental and moral deficiencies generated through the category of superstitious cognition.

I argue, therefore, that what would later become biological racial schemas emerged, epistemologically, through theological registers. I suggest that it was not a fully

[163] da Silva, Denise Ferreira, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, University of Minnesota Press, 2007, pp. xxvi

disenchanted secular conception of the body that made it suddenly available for scientific racial forms of signification. Rather, the secular and the religious entangled through a complex process of co-contamination in order to transform the body into an object available for inferior forms of mental and moral signification, and, crucially, in order to link human and non-human animals together through a progressive and bio-evolutionary epistemological structure. Put directly, the history of racialization cannot be decoupled from theology when one examines its historical genesis through coloniality.

This, however, is in no way at attempt to sanitize or apologize for Darwin's violent Eurocentrism, nor does the notion of historical anachronism shield Darwin from ethical judgment. Rather, I would suggest that exploring the epistemological structure of Darwin's bio-evolutionary history allows us to better understand the nature of coloniality, and, therefore, to better conceive of decolonial options beyond simply locating Darwin as yet another racist and despicably filthy colonizer.

In this chapter I argued that Darwin's theory of bio-evolution by natural selection was generated through the matrices of coloniality vis-à-vis rise of British global colonial expansion, reliance upon existing colonial travelogues and naturalistic scientific data, and his own colonial ethnology. Also, I argued that his thought did not represent an epistemological break with theological metaphysics through a presumed disenchanted structure of "secular" science, but rather he helped rearrange and transform Christian theology into mental and moral cognitive processes in order to serve as evidence for his bio-evolutionary theory.

For Darwin, the answer to the tension between variation and continuity within a bio-evolutionary framework was not to be found in physiognomic differences organized

through modern racial classifications, but in the matrices of theology. Darwin produced his own novel theory of religion that departed from dominant anthropological ones derived from vision and dream theory. The result of deploying religion as an index of mental and moral cognition allowed Darwin to create relational bonds between human and non-human animals. In short, that the origins of religious cognition could be found in non-human animals as well as primitive humans confirmed, for Darwin, an evolutionary schema. Finally, I argued that despite Darwin's anti-slavery positions, which were underpinned by the notion that man shared common origins, he endorsed the global spread of British empire. British settler colonialism, linked to the developmental discourse of civilizing the primitive savage, exploded in the wake of the anti-slavery movement helping to transform the nature of the global-capitalist world system.

Conclusion

One of the central tensions of this dissertation concerns accounting for the continuing trace of the theological and mapping its transformations and reinscriptions within the colonial matrix of power, while seeking to index epistemological ruptures and discursive breaks that ostensibly evacuate particular theological categories and constitute distinct formations of power within coloniality. Rather than simply argue on the side of historical continuities that presuppose an uncontaminated full presence of theological citations throughout historical epochs, or, conversely, argue for the displacement of theological categories by the emergence of secular forms of colonial power vis-à-vis human and cultural difference, I suggest these two domains are co-produced and entangled.

In the first chapter I illustrated how the historical period of the Renaissance apprehended unfamiliar New World human and cultural differences by a theocentric Latin Christian epistemic structure. As a result, difference was translated through a discourse of commensurability and resemblances via various papal bulls as well as Biblical readings of monogenesis that entangled with non-Christian Aristotelian philosophy concerning inherent human slave nature. Moreover, Noachian narratives regarding the right to travel and globalize Christianity were co-produced with a religio-secular sovereign claim of Spain over the New World and its inhabitants. These processes, I argued, were intensely debated and resulted in often contradictory outcomes through the co-produced registers of Christian theology and material processes of territorial expropriation, resource extraction and labour exploitation. I illustrated how, for instance, readings of Biblical monogenesis

underwent discursive rearrangements to its conceptual grammar in order to authorize colonial expansion and conquest. Hence, rather than suggest that Christian theological notions of salvation, monogenesis, or the theologically inscribed Great Chain of Being were simply expunged, or was used as ideological justification for global capitalism and Spanish sovereign power over the Americas, I suggested they were co-contaminated and negotiated in a provisional fashion.

In the second chapter, I examined how liberal notions of the universal individuated human were co-produced through coloniality, rather than generated outside of it. Locating liberalism as a practice, that is, how the foundational categories of liberal thought were fashioned through epistemological and material processes of coloniality allowed me to interrogate the ego and theo-politics of Locke's thought. His labour theory of property, in my reading, was co-produced through processes related to global capitalism, colonialism and Protestant Christian theology. Specifically, his arguments for instituting a distinct English style colonial plantation system of land tenure were interwoven with his particular reading of Genesis and Protestant theological notions concerning the disengagement of transcendent agency from land and other material figures. Resituating liberal Lockean thought as a colonial practice firmly opposes locating his "non-liberal" exclusionary arguments as moral failure, or aberrations attributable to individual prejudice. Such arguments, I argue, presumes that liberal Lockean thought can be decoupled from its very genesis, and that liberalism more broadly can redeem itself by "including" those historically left out – thereby fulfilling its own global mission liberal universality.

In the third chapter, I argued that the Rousseau's thought concerning human perfectibility was generated out of a melancholic discourse that juxtaposed representations European decadence with notions of the uncorrupted natural virtue of the so-called noble savage. I argued that Rousseau's representations of the original state of nature were generated though his textual dependence of travelogues and missionary chronicles that fashioned the noble-savage tradition through the fusion of Christian theological discourses of commensurability generated by Biblical monogenesis and Platonic notions of perfected forms. Further, Enlightenment natural historical classificatory schemas, which relied upon the medieval theological structure of the Great Chain of Being, allowed Rousseau to undermine notions of divine concord by examining the unique place of the human in the Chain through his distinctive novel and musical forms. Hence, he simultaneously relied upon a distinctive Christian lineage while simultaneously subverting it by further focusing upon human agency of the detached inward looking individuated subject.

As a result, I argued that his notions of a malleable human nature and perfectibility, which were key to his political philosophy concerning a critique of decadent European civil society, were generated in relation to colonial ethnology concerning the noble savage and state of nature. Paradoxically, however, while he offers a strong criticism of Eurocentrism, he ends up arguing that unleashing the potential of human perfectibility is contingent upon the institution of what he deems to be artificial European civil society. In short, he authorizes European colonialism so that noble savages can attain human perfection. I suggest that while his political philosophy is seemingly bereft of Christian theological citations his thought retain its traces – they are

entwined.

In the fourth chapter I examined the nineteenth century and the work of Darwin. I illustrated that Darwin's biological evolutionary theory of descent by natural selection was not produced by a disenchanted, scientific biological notion of the human. I argue that this bio-evolutionary theory was dependent upon the discursive reorganization and transformation of "religion" into a psychological category of cognitive belief through eighteenth and nineteenth century colonial historiography. I suggested that he located rudimentary forms of religious cognition within primitive humans and non-human animals in order to create a bio-evolutionary link. That humans descended from non-human animals was, for Darwin, primarily accomplished by appealing to religion rather than through secular scientific physiognomic domains. I argued that Darwin's arguments for abolishing the institution of slavery were dependent upon furthering the global project of British colonial humanitarianism. Similar to Rousseau's notion of human perfectibility, the potential for the primitive savage to reach a Eurocentric notion of perfection was dependent upon them being colonized.

I suggested that Darwin did not conceptualize the body as a stable object for scientific racial forms of signification. His cognitive bio-evolutionary religious diagram concerning inferior mental and moral faculties was not traced upon the body via an epidermalized schema. Rather, his thought reflected upon a somatic structure that was largely flexible. Secular scientific forms of racialization, therefore, did not emerge through a process of excising the religious markers of mental and moral depravity, but rather they were co-constituted. The secular and the religious intertwined in order to transform the body into a largely stable object available for inferior forms of

mental and moral signification, and, crucially, in order to link humans and animals within a bio-evolutionary history. Consequently, scientific forms of racial signification emerged through a complex process whereby theological citations were rearranged and transformed within coloniality. Put directly, the sordid history of racialization is contingent upon theology rather than its absence.

Each chapter examined the imbrication between the shifting theological, philosophical and political rationalities that authorized conceptions of human difference within the colonial-capitalist world system. I suggested that the shifting nature of temporality, specifically, the Judeo-Christian time of salvation, was a key register of Renaissance, Classical and Romantic epistemology. This shifting theocentric epistemic tradition, I argued, authorized the classification, translation and organization of the unfamiliar into a discourse of commensurability. Consequently, this reveals that a presumed self/other binary is not a transhistorical frame that can be applied to every historical moment. Further, conceiving difference through a racial self/other frame was produced through particular formations of knowledge and power not available to the historical junctures that I examined. While it is often common to attribute modern notions of race to colonial power regimes, as I illustrated through the thought of Quijano, Mignolo and Buck-Morss for instance, I argued this is an anachronism; however, revealing this anachronism did not evacuate an ethical and critical analysis regarding the coloniality of knowledge and forms of violence that it authorized. Rather, this dissertation hoped to stand as a critical interrogation of the shifting epistemic traditions that enable particular forms of thought to be made possible.

This project, therefore, is not meant to bind the theological or transcendent forms of being and knowing intrinsically with a logic of exclusionary violence that must be overcome or

exceeded within a purely immanent and secular form of critique and worlding. Put differently, I am not suggesting that it is *really* Christianity that underpinned the violence of coloniality. Rather, by tracing the theocentric grammar of rendering the unfamiliar as being commensurable in the wake of colonial expansion, I hoped to illustrate that the boundaries between the religious and the theological are not clear-cut, but rather entangled in particular formations of power at specific historical junctures.

Consequently, I examined the entangled character of the theological and the secular that emerged through distinctive constellations of power suggesting that any discrete distinction between them would only impoverish an examination of coloniality. I argued for the continuing trace of the theological in the making of modern racial schemas and the colonial-capitalist world system that continue to reconstitute themselves in the contemporary "secular" moment.

Finally, I want this dissertation to open up further examinations concerning the importance of non-secular forms of subaltern knowledge and cosmologies in the unmaking of the colonial-capitalist world system. As such, an implicit aim of this dissertation was to develop a decolonial reading practice that does not simply argue that non-secular notions of difference need to be expelled or circumscribed to the personal realm in order to be truly oppositional or decolonial. Rather, I gestured towards the hermeneutics of ethical translations regarding subaltern epistemology and ontology in the hope of offering what can be called a "solution", or, perhaps better expressed by decolonial authors an "option." That is, I want to express my dissatisfaction with literature that concludes rigorous examinations of colonialism and imperialism by suggesting "we need to imagine new possibilities." While the notion of "decolonial options" can be read as a liberal form of tolerance for difference that is displaced to a future utopian horizon, I understand the notion as an ethical practice of translation that moves

towards what decolonial scholarship has described as “multi-versality,” or “pluri-versality.” This line of inquiry seeks to move towards the existence of multiple co-existing epistemological traditions, rather than the thrust of universalism that seeks to subsume difference into itself while masking the constitutive violence of its establishment.

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