

## The Emotional Foundations of Racialized Slavery

*A mother and a daughter. Their heartbeat drums in sync. She pushes in. She wants to breathe, she wants to be caressed without fear for once, she wants. The pain is unbearable. But it is less pain as long as you are here with me. There is nothing I want more than to see you, and there is nothing I want less. You are my everything, everything I long, I love, I anticipate. You are Life and fear of death. I cannot have you. She is Weeping.*

Slavery has always primarily been an emotional economic system.<sup>1</sup> The racialization of emotions in the Atlantic world is the consequence of the historical transcendence of the ancient discourse of “slavery to passions” and the medieval notion of “slavery to sin.” Fueling relativism of slavery, these principles were mostly shaped by ancient and medieval philosophical theories about the recognizable biological difference of the “naturally enslaved.” The rise of scientific racism in the eighteenth century accelerated the racialization of “emotional difference,” arguing that distinct racialized categories feel differently. The theoretical definition of Blackness in scientific racism, and thus in modern economies of racialized

<sup>1</sup> As a trigger warning for enslaved people and descendants of enslaved people, this book tells a painful history that sparks painful memories. Quoted primary sources include hateful language and might be misgendering historical figures. English translations of primary sources in other languages were all done by the author and can be found in the footnotes. This book abstains from showing racial slurs in quoted sources as a way to connote the profound indignation the author feels toward the fetishization of this hateful violence and the minimization of the history of the intersection of racial slurs and racialized violence in academia. Translations point to the racial construct targeted by the racial slur, while still abstaining from writing down the racial slur.

slavery, can be summarized in the following tension: Black bodies were thought to be emotionally impulsive and to simultaneously be deceptive about their feelings. This opportunistic ambivalence sanctions the everlasting emotional policing of Black communities. This emotional policing is inescapable and the essence of Black captivity itself, then and now.

The scholarly conversation about the history of emotions has contextualized epistemological approaches to emotional ideas. This scholarship has argued that language about emotions has been historically “poorly suited to the phenomena the terms are intended to describe”<sup>2</sup> and has theorized how discourses about emotions influence the “self-perception of the feeling subject.”<sup>3</sup> Emotional expression has been described as impacted by “cognitive reflection” and in turn influenced by historical and social transformations; “performance of affect” then lies at the intersection of individual subjectivity and societal constructs.<sup>4</sup> It has been claimed that the influence of Galenic medical theory in “Western” knowledge production solidified “the cultural and spiritual origins of the heart as a symbol of affect (and affection),” spreading a “heartfelt” language of emotions.<sup>5</sup> Researchers contend that emotional concepts, such as “nostalgia,” spark the “affective power” of “heritage”<sup>6</sup> and that the “cultural politics of emotion” propel a dichotomy between the “fear of passivity” and the “fear of emotionality.”<sup>7</sup> These politics are differentiated in distinct “emotional communities,” societal structures that dictate the “norms” of which emotions are of “value” and the “modes” of expression.<sup>8</sup>

The scholarly exchange about the history of emotions has highlighted the eighteenth century as a turning point of meaning in the Atlantic

<sup>2</sup> Jerome Kagan, *What Is Emotion? History, Measures, and Meanings* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 9.

<sup>3</sup> Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 32.

<sup>4</sup> David Lemmings & Ann Brooks, “The Emotional Turn in the Humanities and Social Sciences,” in *Emotions and Social Change: Historical and Sociological Perspectives*, edited by David Lemmings & Ann Brooks (New York: Routledge, 2014), 3.

<sup>5</sup> Fay Bound Alberti, *Matters of the Heart: History, Medicine, and Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 4.

<sup>6</sup> Alicia Marchant, “Introduction: Historicising Heritage and Emotions,” in *Historicising Heritage and Emotions: The Affective Histories of Blood Stone and Land*, edited by Alicia Marchant (New York: Routledge, 2019).

<sup>7</sup> Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 2.

<sup>8</sup> Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling: A History of Emotions, 600–1700* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 2–3.

world.<sup>9</sup> According to this scholarship, during this “Age of Sentimentality,” literature on “elocution” engendered definitions of a “well-bred” body that could balance politeness and emotional expressiveness,<sup>10</sup> while “sentimentalist fiction” intensified the commodification of emotions in economic systems, leading to the conceptualization of “goods as objects of emotional attachment.”<sup>11</sup> Scholars have affirmed that there is a correlation between the rise of “modernity” as molded by colonialism in the Atlantic world<sup>12</sup> and eighteenth-century thought about the “bodily nature of affect as an aspect of the mind/body/soul relation.”<sup>13</sup> Sentimentality represented the “literary mode of empire in the eighteenth century” by disseminating discourses about the “selective recognition of the humanity” of the colonizer versus the colonized.<sup>14</sup> White elites historically elevated their own emotions as “refined feelings” in order to “discredit the emotions of social antagonists.”<sup>15</sup> Research on the history of emotions has explored how “Europe’s refined bourgeois economy of emotion” mobilized the “export of European standards of emotion to colonial societies.”<sup>16</sup> The “emotional narratives” of imperialism validated “legitimate conquest” and racial exclusion, while discourses of “pity,” “compassion,” and “sympathy” justified “missionary intervention” in indigenous communities as a “form of atonement and redemption.”<sup>17</sup> The scholarship has pointed out that it is

<sup>9</sup> The notion of the “Atlantic world” has been primarily constructed by historiography, and this historiography has applied different methodologies to analyze imperial history, many through the gaze of the colonizer, and some through the perspective of the colonized. See A. B. Leonard & David Pretel, “Experiments in Modernity: The Making of the Atlantic World Economy,” in *The Caribbean and the Atlantic World Economy: Circuits of Trade, Money and Knowledge, 1650–1914*, edited by A. B. Leonard & David Pretel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

<sup>10</sup> Paul Goring, *The Rhetoric of Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 39–41.

<sup>11</sup> Ute Frevert, *Emotions in History: Lost and Found* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2010).

<sup>12</sup> Sibylle Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 24.

<sup>13</sup> Fay Bound Alberti, *Medicine, Emotion and Disease, 1700–1950* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), xix.

<sup>14</sup> Lynn Festa, *Sentimental Figures of Empire in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> Nicole Eustace, *Passion Is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 5.

<sup>16</sup> Ute Frevert, “Defining Emotions: Concepts and Debates over Three Centuries,” in *Emotional Lexicons: Continuity and Change in the Vocabulary of Feeling, 1700–2000*, edited by Ute Frevert et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 7.

<sup>17</sup> Jane Lydon, *Imperial Emotions: The Politics of Empathy across the British Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 2, 18.

in the nineteenth century when the history of a multiplicity of categories, such as “appetites, passions, affections, and sentiments” culminated in a “single over-arching category of emotions.”<sup>18</sup> It is also in the nineteenth century when the categorization of “civility and civilized emotions” structurally determined political participation in imperial jurisdictions.<sup>19</sup>

The historiography of emotions has been mostly focused on the “West.”<sup>20</sup> Although a scholarly debate about the intellectual history of racialized slavery as an emotional economy is nonexistent, the scholarship has examined how the intersections of ideas of race, gender, sexuality, class, age, and “disability” have historically impacted which feelings of pain are “othered, sidelined, reduced, justified, condoned, condemned and mythologized.”<sup>21</sup> It has been analyzed how, due to the overpowering historical authority of the Aristotelian theorization of the enslaved, an enslaved person is deemed a “vehicle of emotion, but not an origin or end.”<sup>22</sup> Scholars have investigated how discourses about emotions cultivated the “sectionalization” of “political allegiances” into “North and South” in the antebellum United States,<sup>23</sup> while also evaluating how, in recent history, public emotional discussion about “criminality,” “terrorism,” “welfare dependence,” and “illegal immigration” has systematically legitimized “military-carceral expansion and the retreat from social welfare goods.”<sup>24</sup> Nonetheless, the scholarly production about the history of slavery and of emotions has not yet traced the ascent of racist thought back to the emotional justifications of slavery in the ancient and medieval worlds, or explored the influence of scientific theories of racialized emotional difference in historical and contemporary racialized criminalization and exploitation.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.

<sup>19</sup> Magrit Pernau & Helge Jordheim, “Introduction,” in *Civilizing Emotions: Concepts in Nineteenth Century Asia and Europe*, edited by Ute Frevert & Thomas Dixon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 1.

<sup>20</sup> Susan J. Matt & Peter N. Stearns, “Introduction,” in *Doing Emotions History*, edited by Susan J. Matt & Peter N. Stearns (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 5.

<sup>21</sup> Rob Boddice, “Introduction: Hurt Feelings?,” in *Pain and Emotion in Modern History*, edited by Rob Boddice (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 2.

<sup>22</sup> Daniel M. Gross, *The Secret History of Emotion: From Aristotle’s Rhetoric to Modern Brain Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 36.

<sup>23</sup> Michael E. Woods, *Emotional and Sectional Conflict in the Antebellum United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 2.

<sup>24</sup> Paula Ioanade, *The Emotional Politics of Racism: How Feelings Trump Facts in an Era of Colorblindness* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), 1.

This book argues that the intellectual history of racialized slavery in the Atlantic world has always been and still is defined by the inescapability of emotional policing of racialized bodies. This structural inescapability violently distresses Black lives and propels institutional hatred toward a racialized body that simultaneously feels “too much” and “too little,” keeping the Black body at the brink of death. The ancient world relativized slavery with the notion of “slavery to passions,” while also propagating ideas about the “biological difference” of an othered “naturally enslaved” person. Ancient intellectual production advocated for the systematization of passions as the fulfillment of political justice through the absolute “emotional subjugation” of the “naturally enslaved.” The rise of Christianity led to the extension of the notion of “slavery to passions” toward the discourse of “slavery to sin,” which eventually validated religious, colonial, and corporeal conquests. These ancient and medieval emotional justifications of enslavement set the framework for the globalized racialization of the institution of slavery. Eighteenth-century scientific racism built on from this framework and was therefore mainly concerned with “emotional difference,” consecrating a racial hierarchy of feelings. Blackness was fatally marked with the synchronicity of emotional impulsivity, emotional resilience, and deceptive emotional performativity. The Black body is judged to be wholly driven by disruptive feelings, and yet deemed more calculated, simulated, imitative. Yet the Black body feels less. Yet the Black body can bear it.

The symbiotic hypersexualization, depersonalization, and suspicion of Black emotionality sustained the imperial emotional economy and systemic sexual violence of Atlantic slavery, sanctioning the institution of racialized slavery as a perpetual stage of paternalistic emotional tutelage and education. This emotional surveillance prescribed the self-containment of emotions within the Black body, which in turn resulted in the legitimization of the continuous escalation of imperial genocidal violence toward the Black “defect” of disorderly emotionality. The “order” of racial inequality guaranteed the protection of “happiness” in colonial societies via this incessant racialized emotional policing, while the resistance of the enslaved was persecuted as transgressions emerging from “passionate” bodies that had to be tamed. Even nineteenth-century White abolitionist efforts utilized emotional imagery that othered Black “feelings” and mobilized empathy toward the protection of the “innocence” of White, “loving” familial structures. In contrast, Black antislavery thought and the revolutions of the enslaved vehemently denounced the emotional detachment and morbidity of the imperial slaveholding

regimes of the Atlantic world. Throughout the “post-emancipation era,” the longings of Black communities for political citizenship and economic mobility were disregarded by structures of power as emotional weakness that went against the value of capitalistic progress and benevolent political agency. The exacerbation of the racialized carceral landscape was grounded on the institutional insistence in the failure of the Black body to diligently serve as a carceral site of suppression of unruly emotions.

During the twentieth century, the emotional policing of the racialized and the colonized fueled the persistence of racially premised enslavement, the expansion of carceral economies, and the propagation of emotional archetypes in politics, economics, health, media, and education. The enlargement of the carceral landscape mirrored the intensification of the institutional antagonism toward “Black rage” and mimicked the imperial reactions to the revolutions of the enslaved. Today, the narrative of the “abolition” of racialized slavery thrives in the preservation of a racially premised, enslaving emotional economy and in the political fascination with “White slavery,” framing the recent intellectual history of legal and media emotional responses to “human trafficking.” Today, public discourse about racism vividly visualizes the “fear” and “guilt” of White privilege instead of the actually visible structural hate toward Blackness. Today, the racialization of childhood, concretized by scientific racism, still claims “menace” in a murdered Black child and “innocence” in an “emotionally complex” White assassin. The commodification of Blackness is now even more a conduit for White emotional performativity, and the inexorability of racialized emotional criminalization is still intact and drives the capitalistic “order” of White happiness. The institutional dependence on contemporary racialized exploitation and genocidal violence is embodied in the political imagining of an emotional Other that will silently take it and will be better for it.

#### EMOTIONAL JUSTIFICATIONS OF SLAVERY IN THE ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL WORLDS

For a man who is able to belong to another person is by nature a slave (for that is why he belongs to someone else), as is a man who participates in reason only so far to realize that it exists, but not so far as to have it himself – other animals do not recognize reason, but follow their passions.

—Aristotle, *Politics*

In *Politics*, Aristotle infamously argued for the perceptible existence of the “naturally enslaved” and contended that the condition of slavery can be “advantageous” to the one subordinated to the whim of a master. The philosopher first defines enslaved people as an “animate piece of property,”<sup>25</sup> a “tool” disconnected from a soul, and then proceeds to craft an allegory about the power relations between body and soul: “it is clear that it is natural and advantageous for the body to be ruled by the soul and the emotions by the intellect (which is the part that possesses reason).”<sup>26</sup> Aristotle asserted that these power dynamics “must apply to mankind as a whole,”<sup>27</sup> generating a complex parallelism among the “differences” between man and animal, man and woman, and master and the enslaved. After having affirmed that “men” in their “natural state”<sup>28</sup> are ruled by soul/reason and not body/emotions, the prominent philosopher concludes: “Nature must therefore have intended to make the bodies of free men and of slaves different also.”<sup>29</sup> The bodies of “free men” are destined for a public life of citizenship. The bodies of the enslaved are driven by an absence of self-governance, like “animals” that indiscriminately “follow their passions.” While *Politics* ambiguously “clarifies” that the enslaved body is not at all times unequivocally identifiable in order to avoid the “illogically” of the enslavement of “rightful” citizens, Aristotle does proclaim the state of being of a “stronger,” generally recognizable, a manifest “naturally enslaved” person.

Both Aristotelian and Platonic thought nurtured a parallelism in the power relationships between reason and passions, soul and body, man and woman, father and child, master and the enslaved, King and the State. It is through these mirrored definitions of political governance that ancient Greek philosophy introduced the concept of “slavery to passions” to both relativize and legitimize the societal practice of slavery. The doctrine of “slavery to passions” normalized the institution of slavery by projecting the link between the body and the soul as a political one that should ultimately aim for the regulation of emotions, regulation that had to mimic the rule of the Father over his Home and the sovereignty of the King over the State. Thus, the principle of “slavery to passions” built an emotional economy grounded on the corporeal control of the “naturally” enslaved for being “emotionally different”

<sup>25</sup> Aristotle, “Politics,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 15.

<sup>26</sup> Aristotle, “Politics,” 16. <sup>27</sup> Aristotle, “Politics,” 16. <sup>28</sup> Aristotle, “Politics,” 16.

<sup>29</sup> Aristotle, “Politics,” 17.

and “biologically identifiable.” Both Plato and Aristotle summoned this reasoning to disseminate ideas about “quality of men” and bodies that are recognizably distinct, setting a racist precedent for future “biological” hierarchies. Throughout the Middle Ages and the European conquest and colonization of the Atlantic world, this premise of “slavery to passions” extended to the religious concept of “slavery to sin,” which in turn progressed into the conceptualization of imperial subjugation as the righteous and predestined consolidation of a global hierarchy of feelings.

SLAVERY TO PASSIONS: EMOTIONAL FOUNDATIONS OF  
SLAVERY IN THE ANCIENT GRECO-ROMAN WORLD

The connection between exploitative power and the notion of “emotional difference” can be unveiled in the initial artifacts of the history of slavery, unearthing the etymological and mechanical conceptualization of bondage. David Brion Davis contended that the institution of slavery was born in the processes and mechanisms of the domestication of animals, establishing “dehumanization” as a vital component of the enslaved experience.<sup>30</sup> Even in the earliest written sources about slavery, there are references to “emotional difference,” from “*dullu*,” the Akkadian word for “corvée” that has been translated to “misery,” to texts that disparage enslaved women as having an inclination toward laziness and “constant complaining.”<sup>31</sup> The animalization and emotional disavowal of enslaved bodies would later be exemplified in the etymology of multiple ancient terms for enslaved people, such as the Egyptian *hm* “from a word for ‘body’”<sup>32</sup> and the Greek *andrapodon*, meaning “man-footed thing,”<sup>33</sup> among the multiplicity of ancient terms<sup>34</sup> that either infantilize the enslaved person or metonymically refer to an unfeeling enslaved body. Homer’s *Odyssey* materialized a dominant literary statement on the

<sup>30</sup> David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 32.

<sup>31</sup> Daniel C. Snell, “Slavery in the Ancient Near East,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 1, edited by Keith Bradley & Paul Cartledge (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 8–12.

<sup>32</sup> Snell, “Slavery in the Ancient Near East,” 16.

<sup>33</sup> T. E. Rihll, “Classical Athens,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 1, edited by Keith Bradley & Paul Cartledge (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 51.

<sup>34</sup> See Youval Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery and the Mediterranean World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 82.

condition of slavery: “For half the virtue that the God-head gave, the God resumes when a man becomes a slave.”<sup>35</sup> Ancient rationalizations of slavery would indeed cultivate an inexorable tie between the exercise of freedom and the public display of virtuous emotions.

Various ancient Greek didactical texts represented slavery as emerging from the nature of the excluded Other, nature ambivalently marked by a predisposition toward both revenge and complacency. The well-known fables attributed to formerly enslaved Aesop show several slavery tropes and plots of animals becoming enslaved to Men. In “The Horse and the Stag,” the Horse “acquires” its servitude by asking for help from Man to exercise revenge on the Stag; instead, Man “mounts” and thus overpowers the Horse, and the Horse becomes “from that time forward the slave of Man.”<sup>36</sup> “The House-Dog and the Wolf” creates a dichotomy between the “lean, hungry Wolf” and the “plump, well-fed House-Dog.”<sup>37</sup> Similarly, the *Pseudo-Phocylides* included the aphorism “Provide your servant with the share of food that he is owed. Give a slave his rations so that he may respect you.”<sup>38</sup> The discursive distrust toward the “well-fed,” and yet potentially vengeful, enslaved person aimed to normalize the notion that the “nature” of slavery arose from the emotional, carnal, self-destructive, and animalized deviance of the enslaved, while simultaneously belittling the lived experience of slavery as a content and “plump” existence.

The ancient Greek literary canon further explored the anxiety between the human and inhuman in the conception of enslaved feelings. In “The Banqueting Sophists,” Atheneaus collected diverse slavery tropes already present in the ancient Greek literary tradition, including the imagery of substituting enslaved people with “walking” inanimate objects<sup>39</sup> and the description of enslaved people as “bringers of gifts, trembling before their lords.”<sup>40</sup> Multiple ancient Greek plays depicted “comedic” instances of physical punishment toward enslaved people.<sup>41</sup> This spectacle of the

<sup>35</sup> Homer, *Odyssey*, vol. 4 (London: Nicol and Murray, 1834), 122.

<sup>36</sup> Aesop, *Aesop's Fables*, edited by W. T. Stead (London: Review of Reviews Office, 1896), 13.

<sup>37</sup> Aesop, *Aesop's Fables*, 22.

<sup>38</sup> “Pseudo-Phocylides,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 179.

<sup>39</sup> Atheneaus, “The Banqueting Sophists,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 82.

<sup>40</sup> Atheneaus, “The Banqueting Sophists,” 76.

<sup>41</sup> Peter Hunt, “Slavery in Greek Literary Culture,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 1, edited by Keith Bradley & Paul Cartledge (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 30.

penalization of the enslaved for the enjoyment of audiences of citizens has been interpreted as a manifestation of the “consciousness of the precarious nature of freedom.”<sup>42</sup> The “comedic” portrayal of bodily punishment of the “trembling” enslaved could serve as an emotionally cathartic simulation of the potentiality of falling into slavery and thus dishonor.

The exclusionary politics of honor in ancient Greece were precisely framed with the concept of *atimia*. Within the gradations of disenfranchisement, total *atimia* represented the denial of honor, public life, and political participation.<sup>43</sup> Orlando Patterson notably contextualized the enslaved experience within the concept of “systematic dishonor,” reducing the lived enslaved condition to a fixed “social death” and sparking a scholarly debate about the subjectivities of the enslaved.<sup>44</sup> Ancient Greek morality did intertwine the notions of honor and freedom, constructing the condition of slavery as intrinsically dishonorable and granting a high value to the public spectacle of political agency and citizenship as a validation of honor. Within this public spectacle, the hubris code of conduct emphasized civic moderation toward the enslaved, as their public humiliation for the gratification of the master was deemed a moral transgression.<sup>45</sup> Execution of enslaved people by masters was also frowned upon, since it was regarded as a matter of the State.<sup>46</sup> The hubris law encompasses how honor was conceived as the public performance of freedom, morality, and citizenship: the home was a private sphere that theoretically mirrored public life and yet also operated as a space of morbidity. This duality of an emotional economy rooted in paradoxical discourses of honor is central to the connection between the lived experiences of the enslaved subject and the emotional performativity of public and private life. This duality is ever-present and is vital to the examination of the global history of enslaved subjectivities and the suffering they fervently condemned.

<sup>42</sup> Rob Tordoff, “Introduction: Slaves and Slavery in Ancient Greek Comedy,” in *Slaves and Slavery in Ancient Greek Comic Drama*, edited by Ben Akrigg & Rob Tordoff (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 47.

<sup>43</sup> Deborah Kamen, *Status in Classical Athens* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 74–78.

<sup>44</sup> Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 78.

<sup>45</sup> Demosthenes, “Against Meidias,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 166.

<sup>46</sup> Antiphon, “Death of Herodes,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 165.

In its effort to systematize the power dynamics of the household and society at large, ancient Greek philosophy engendered intricate theoretical frameworks that justified the social practice of slavery. Undeniably, the political understanding of the *oikos*, or household,<sup>47</sup> was driven by the “emotional subjugation” of enslaved people. Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* claimed that heads of households who were not governed by reason lived in a state of unfreedom.

How, said Socrates, can they have no masters, if although they wish to be happy and desire to do what would gain good things for themselves they are hindered from doing so by their rulers? And who are these, said Critobulus, who, although invisible yet rule over them? But, by Zeus, said Socrates, they are not invisible, but very plain to be seen. Even you perceive that they are very wicked, if indeed you consider laziness, weakness of mind, and carelessness to be wickedness: and there are other deceitful mistresses which pretend to be pleasures, and gambling with dice, and profitless conversations, which in process of time clearly show even to their dupes that they are sorrows concealed within an outer crust of pleasure, which gain a mastery over them and keep them from useful works.<sup>48</sup>

Michel Foucault would state that Xenophon’s work evinced that “the government of an *oikos* presuppose that one has acquired the ability to govern oneself.”<sup>49</sup> Indeed, this passage emphatically represents lack of “control” over one’s emotions as a “master” of one’s state of being. According to Xenophon, “male” heads of households naturally wish to enjoy happiness, but the inability of emotional self-containment irremediably brings “concealed sorrows.” The philosopher personifies pleasure as disguised sadness, propelling an intrinsic anxiety between the body and its passions. While those “enslaved” by their passions do not have the capacity to detect this “wickedness,” it is very “plain to see” for the discerned eye of an accomplished head of the household. The “feminine” trope of pleasures as “deceitful mistresses” seems to be premeditated, since Xenophon’s construction of marriage within the *oikos* is an allegory for a patriarchal structure of societal power. The motivation behind Xenophon’s rhetoric is to explicitly legitimize the power of the

<sup>47</sup> See Mark Golden, “Slavery and the Greek Family,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 1, edited by Keith Bradley & Paul Cartledge (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 135.

<sup>48</sup> Xenophon, *Oeconomicus, or Treatise on Household Management* (Cambridge: J. Hall & Son, 1885), 4.

<sup>49</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, vol. 2: The Use of Pleasure* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 160.

slaveholder as a source of clemency for the enslaved person inherently “ruled” by emotions.

We ought, however, Critobulus, to fight against these for our freedom, no less against those who endeavor to enslave us with arms. Nay, ere now, when enemies who are men of honour have taken any men prisoners, they have forced many of them to be better by chastening them, and have made them live more peacefully for the rest of their lives: but such mistresses as these never cease from harassing the bodies, minds, and households of men, as long as they rule over them.<sup>50</sup>

Xenophon’s thought minimizes the condition of slavery by claiming the potential for complacency in enslaved people, in turn summoning empathy toward the perpetual struggle for (self-)government that afflicts the head of the household. This rationale conceives questioning slavery as a banal undertaking, since any deviation from an existence ruled by *logos*, or knowledge, represents some degree of enslavement. With the purpose of systematizing slavery, Xenophon’s works provide a set of rules for slaveholders to follow in order to promote the “contentment” of enslaved people. An enslaved person with a “will” to be a head of a household had to be submitted to “every kind of punishment” until they could be forced to “serve properly.”<sup>51</sup> Enslaved reproduction had to be regulated by separating enslaved people by their prescribed gender in different quarters, as a way to additionally prevent revolutionary resistance.<sup>52</sup> Most importantly, master dominance had to be analogical to the domestication of animals and conceive the unfree as inhuman.

It is possible to make human beings more ready to obey you simply by explaining to them the advantages of being obedient; but with slaves, the training considered to be appropriate to wild beasts is a particularly useful way of instilling obedience. You will achieve the greatest success with them by allowing them as much food as they want. Those who are ambitious by nature will also be motivated by praise (for there are some people who are as naturally keen for praise as others are for food and drink).<sup>53</sup>

Therefore, Xenophon’s work theorizes the discipline and punishment of enslaved people as closer to the one geared to the “obedience” of “wild beasts,” which follows his principle of “forcing” the “will” of enslaved

<sup>50</sup> Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 5.

<sup>51</sup> Xenophon, “Memorabilia,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 166.

<sup>52</sup> Xenophon, “The Householder,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 171.

<sup>53</sup> Xenophon, “The Householder,” 177.

people into “obedience” through physical violence. According to the philosopher, the enslaved could also be compelled to subservience and complacency through food or the stimulation of “vanity” due to their intrinsic animalized essence. Enslaved people were then doubly dominated by their “carnal desires” without the likelihood of escaping any pleasurable “sorrows.” Xenophon’s writing hence openly endorsed the political imposition of the “passions,” the same “passions” that he alleged naturally lead to the enslaved condition, as a method to systematize slaveholding economies through violence, since discerning the “passions” was solely the domain of the “emotionally superior” slaveholder.

Just as Xenophon’s writing stressed the notion of slavery to pleasure (or concealed unhappiness), Plato would also perpetuate the metaphor of “slavery to passions,” in this case as the foundation of his envisioned political order. Plato claimed that those enslaved by “desire” and “pleasure” could not control the urge to fulfill sublime gratification. “The man who is under the sway of desire and a slave to pleasure will inevitably try to derive the greatest pleasure possible from the object of his passions.”<sup>54</sup> The Platonic definition of the soul conceptualizes its “nature” as the “ruler” of the body, which parallels the order of the Universe, separating the incorporeal from the material. “It is the soul’s nature to rule, the body’s to serve. In this the soul is more akin to the divine, the body to that which is mortal.” Even more, the philosopher uses the trope of slavery to lay a framework for measuring the “quality of men,”<sup>55</sup> since his thought defines enslaved people as having “unhealthy” souls, prone to irrational passions.<sup>56</sup> On the contrary, the soul that mirrors the divine, and can thus rule the State, is one that refrains from undue emotions.

Only the philosopher’s soul will join the gods, for only he abstains from lusts for the right purpose – not to avoid property or disgrace or illness, but to avoid the distortion of his sense of values which excessive emotions would create: for intense excitement may lead one to attribute more importance to the material objects that cause it than to that which is divine.<sup>57</sup>

Plato conceives political governance as analogical to self-governance, toward the divine and away from emotional “excess.” The Platonic understanding of enslaved people as non-political is best exemplified in

<sup>54</sup> Plato, *Phaedrus and Letters VII and VIII* (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 38.

<sup>55</sup> Plato, *Phaedo* (London: Routledge, 1955), 74.

<sup>56</sup> Plato, “Laws,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 78.

<sup>57</sup> Plato, *Phaedo*, 74.

the use of imagery of slavery in the Allegory of the Cave.<sup>58</sup> Ignorant people who have been deceived by the “shadows” are chained and in a state of continual captivity. Although many scholars contend that Platonic discourse on the “human” potential to utilize reason to achieve immortality made the rise of racial categories “antithetical,”<sup>59</sup> Platonic thought did premeditatedly spread ideas about the “quality of men,” as tied to status. “Our best men should make their match with the best women as often as possible; but with men and women of lower status, it’s the reverse. We must nurture the offspring of the first group, but not those of the second, if our flock is to be of the highest quality.”<sup>60</sup> Hence, the philosopher held that political societies should promote the reproduction of “men of the highest quality,” Men who exercise control over their emotions and consequently have intrinsic political leadership. On the contrary, according to the Allegory of the Cave, people of a “lower status” turn the “direction of the soul” away from the divine due to the “weight” of the “passions,” arguing that “this part of such a nature had been hammered at in earliest childhood and had been knocked free of attachment to becoming, lead weights, as it were, which, grafted onto it through food and like pleasures and delicacies, turn the soul’s sight downward.”<sup>61</sup> Plato’s Allegory proposes that only self-governance can lead to political order and that only “men of the highest quality” are the ones capable of stepping out of the cave of illusory “pleasures.” The chains and the darkness of the cave are the afflictions of the emotional bodies that are not “biologically” capable of “turning their soul.”

Aristotelian thought would further solidify and expand the parallelism between emotional self-control and political domination, starting at the level of rhetorical thinking. Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* claimed that persuasion could be achieved by understanding the role that emotions play in the shaping of “opinions” and “decisions.” “Men’s judgments vary with love or hatred, with joy or sorrow; insomuch that writers on rhetoric have hitherto confined the art wholly to address in moving the passions.”<sup>62</sup> This text then portrays the “judgments of men” as responsive to “agitations of the mind, and their accompanying pains or pleasures.”<sup>63</sup> While rhetorical delivery is constructed as a consciousness of the transcendence

<sup>58</sup> Plato, *Republic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 107.

<sup>59</sup> See Ivan Hannaford, *Race: The History of an Idea in the West* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 21.

<sup>60</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 487. <sup>61</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 123.

<sup>62</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric* (London: T. Cadell, 1823), 160. <sup>63</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 255.

of emotions over reason, Aristotelian thought establishes categories of emotional difference by status and by age.

*Rhetoric* asserts that youth is universally a stage of inherent vulnerability to passions, a phase which never culminates within the condition of slavery: “what still remains of the subject, it may be observed that youth is naturally obnoxious to all those passions which originate in the love of pleasure; with these it abounds, hurrying to the gratification of them through every obstacle, and too often indulging in them to the most profligate excess.”<sup>64</sup> While children are prone to “excess,” “men in the prime of life” and “in power” are capable of controlling their reactions to emotional stimuli. “The same manly temperament will prevail throughout, and regulate all the angry passions, as well as all those originating in the love of pleasure.”<sup>65</sup> By conflating age and status, Aristotle demarcates the nature of the enslaved person as innately emotional and infantile. Moreover, the philosopher distinguishes anger as a passion that is universal and particularly fleeting when stimulated by “just punishment” to an act of “misconduct”: “thus even slaves may be made to perceive the fitness of their punishment.”<sup>66</sup>

Aristotle further explored the universality of anger in *Nicomachean Ethics*, crafting a hierarchy of “incontinence.”

And hence anger may, to a certain extent, be said to obey reason, while desire cannot: and hence, to desire is the more disgraceful of the two. He, indeed, who is incontinent of anger is worsted, not by passion alone, but, to a certain extent, by reason also; whereas he who is incontinent of his desires, is worsted by simple lust alone, without any admixture of reason.<sup>67</sup>

The classification of the “incontinence of anger” as less dishonorable than the “incontinence of desires” is vital to comprehend Aristotelian thought on the “irrationality” of the “naturally enslaved.” *Nicomachean Ethics* describes enslaved people as inherently “low-minded” and “weak-souled,” even depicting flattery as emerging from the “slavish spirit.”<sup>68</sup> The thinker consistently establishes connections between the “spirit” of the “naturally enslaved” and the tendency toward “desires,” in turn animalizing enslaved people as “brute beasts.”

<sup>64</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 301.      <sup>65</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 307–310.

<sup>66</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 265.

<sup>67</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1869), 231.

<sup>68</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 120.

But, to return to the point from which we commenced our digression, the many and baser sort give by their lives a fair presumption that their conception of the chief good and of happiness is that it consists in material pleasure: for their only delight is in a life of gross enjoyment. There are, indeed, but three noteworthy modes of life, the one just mentioned, the life of the statesman, and the third, the life of the philosopher. Now the many are clearly in no way better than slaves, in that they deliberately choose the life of brute beasts.<sup>69</sup>

Therefore, Aristotle utilizes the trope of the enslaved person as an archetype for the degrading incontinence of passions for “gross enjoyment.” Furthermore, *Nicomachean Ethics* proposes that the relationship between the ruler and the ruled is “that of the craftsman to his tool, or of the soul to the body, or of the owner to the slave; for, in each of these three relations, the owner may be said to confer an absolute benefit upon his property by his use of it.”<sup>70</sup> Just as in *Politics*, Aristotle abstracts enslaved people as “tools” for the “absolute benefit” of a master and connotes an allegory about power relations in society and power dynamics between the body and the soul. *Nicomachean Ethics* also distinctively examines the “paradoxical symbiosis” between master and the enslaved, an interpretation that would insistently infiltrate intellectual and popular discourses on slavery to this day.<sup>71</sup>

But justice between master and slave, or between father and son, is not the same as is justice political, but only like unto it. One cannot wrong that which is absolutely one’s own. Now one’s property, and equally with it one’s son (as long as he is of a certain age, and so has not yet separated himself from his parents), is, as it were, an integral portion of one’s self. And, since no man can deliberately purpose to do himself an injury, it follows that for a man to commit a wrong against himself is an impossibility.<sup>72</sup>

Aristotle conceives enslaved people and the progeny of free Men not only as property of the Father/Master but also as “surrogate bodies” of the “self” of the Father/Master, theory that would be intensified in the ancient Roman world. Due to their status as “surrogate bodies,” the Master cannot hypothetically “injure” these segments of the “self.” While Aristotle, who notoriously labeled wives and offspring as “poor men’s slaves,”<sup>73</sup> isolates the potential in “male” children to acquire

<sup>69</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 7.      <sup>70</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 293.

<sup>71</sup> William Fitzgerald, *Roman Literature and Its Contexts: Slavery and the Roman Literary Imagination* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 6.

<sup>72</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 162.      <sup>73</sup> See Rihll, “Classical Athens,” 49.

selfhood, the enslaved person is designated as a perennial “portion” of the “self” of the enslaver.

Lastly, by a metaphorical or analogical use of language, we may be allowed to speak of justice as subsisting, not between a man and himself, but between the man as a whole and certain parts of his nature. But yet it will not be every kind of justice that can thus subsist, but only that justice which can subsist between master and slave, or between a father and his family; for a relation of this kind it is that exists between the rational and the irrational parts of the soul.<sup>74</sup>

Aristotelian thought, then, in instances, subdivides the soul into “rational” and “irrational” parts, still echoing the more consistent allusion to the challenging struggle of the soul to conquer bodily desires as “analogous” to governing over an enslaved person, a home, and a State. This plight is represented as an act of political and introspective justice. Thus, “political justice” is premised on the physical identification of a “surrogate body” and the fulfillment of an intrinsically “noninjurious benefit.”

Following emotionally charged Greek philosophical precedents, ancient Roman thought stressed the economic productivity and the ethical relativity of slavery through emotional differentiation. In *Agriculture*, Varro argued for the profitability of a self-sufficient household with the “purchase” of specialized enslaved people.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, Varro adapted and perpetuated the Aristotelian conception of the “naturally enslaved” person as a “tool” in his portrait of the *instrumentum vocale*.<sup>76</sup> The popular sayings of formerly enslaved Publius Syrus included “Modesty is also a kind of slavery” and “Whoever helps his country is the slave of his people,” downplaying the significance of the lived experiences of slavery.<sup>77</sup> Likewise, a recurrent metaphor of slavery in ancient Roman thought referred to “disempowered senators” in light of the ascent of emperors.<sup>78</sup> Cicero’s *Republic* preserved the discourse of “slavery to passions” as the failure for self-governance, claiming that the ideal ruler

<sup>74</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 180.

<sup>75</sup> Varro, “Agriculture,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 92.

<sup>76</sup> Sandra Joshel, “Slavery and Roman Literary Culture,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 1, edited by Keith Bradley & Paul Cartledge (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 215.

<sup>77</sup> “Publius Syrus,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 71.

<sup>78</sup> Sandra Joshel, *Slavery in the Roman World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 10.

is the one who can be master of “his” emotions and hence sovereign of all: “What more illustrious than the man, who while he governs others is himself the slave of no bad passions?”<sup>79</sup> According to Cicero, exemplary Men would demonstrate their capacity for (self-)government with “fair” comportment toward enslaved people, “the lowest kinds of people.”<sup>80</sup>

Ancient Roman law crafted exclusionary norms that would be inherited by the institutionalization of slavery in the Atlantic world and that were driven by a political agenda against societal “corruption.” Slavery fell outside the range of the *ius naturale*, but was legitimized as natural behavior in the *ius gentium*.<sup>81</sup> Yet the acquisition of the condition of slavery could not be specified in positive law, as this would place Men in power at risk of falling prey to slavery. Lex Aelia Sentia fixed limitations to the number of manumissions as a political statement that it was “very important that the people should be kept pure and uncorrupted by any taint of foreign or slave blood.”<sup>82</sup> Ancient Roman law also declared that any enslaved person with an assassinated enslaver “deserves to suffer the penalty of death, so that no other slaves may think that they should consider their own interests when their masters are in danger.”<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, “corrupting a slave” was regarded as a breach of the code of conduct, whether the citizen was “making a good slave bad, or a bad slave worse.”<sup>84</sup> Under Constantine, the boundaries of the penalization of the enslaved would be slightly demystified: while slaveholders possessed the right to punish enslaved people with “sticks, whips, and chains,” the use of “stones, lethal weapons, poison, and wild beasts” was purportedly reserved to the sovereignty of the State.<sup>85</sup> These legal norms responded to a general narrative of “*terror servilis*,” encouraging physical violence toward enslaved people and simultaneously targeting “corruption” of

<sup>79</sup> Cicero, *Republic* (New York: G. & C. Carvill, 1829), 63.

<sup>80</sup> Cicero, “On Duties,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 180.

<sup>81</sup> Marcianus, “Institutes,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 20.

<sup>82</sup> Suetonius, “Augustus,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 17.

<sup>83</sup> “The Senate Recommendations Proposed by Silanus and Claudius,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 164.

<sup>84</sup> Ulpian, “On the Edict,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 30.

<sup>85</sup> “Code of Theodosius,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 167.

the enslaved and society as a whole.<sup>86</sup> The notion of “corruption” was rooted in discourses about emotional deviance, foreignness, and bloodlines, setting precedents for Atlantic “terror” mythologies of the “corruptive” nature of the racialized/colonized and in turn the inexorability of emotional policing.

Just as the Greek *oikos*, the Roman *familia*<sup>87</sup> aimed to contain enslaved people, and the enslaved had to be emotionally regulated as if the Home mirrored the State. Now, the institution of the *paterfamilias* assumed offspring and enslaved people to be under the *patria potestas* of the Father: the *paterfamilias* had the right of life and death over his children<sup>88</sup> and “paternalistic” dominance over the enslaved.<sup>89</sup> Being accompanied by a large “entourage” of enslaved people was not only a signifier of status, but also the exemplary manifestation of the civic exercise of *potestas*.<sup>90</sup> Following the Aristotelian framework, Roman law constructed enslaved people as “surrogate bodies,” decreeing that the injuries of an enslaved person were legally a transgression against the “slaveholder’s personal dignity.”<sup>91</sup> The patriarchal dominion of the *paterfamilias* over enslaved and “infantile” bodies augmented their disposability and incited the propensity of exposure of infants, particularly those identified as “female” by the State, which in turn ignited the growth of a pedophilic sex industry.<sup>92</sup> While the enslaved were forced to be subjected to the expectations of sexual gratification of the *paterfamilias*, sexual relationships between free women and enslaved men were socially regarded as dishonorable.<sup>93</sup>

The ancient Roman code of conduct utilized discourses of emotion to authenticate the nonexistence of enslaved autonomy, setting precedents

<sup>86</sup> Keith Bradley, “Slavery in the Roman Republic,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 1, edited by Keith Bradley & Paul Cartledge (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 261.

<sup>87</sup> See Jonathan Edmondson, “Slavery and the Roman Family,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 1, edited by Keith Bradley & Paul Cartledge (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 351.

<sup>88</sup> “The Twelve Tables,” in *The Civil Law, Including the Twelve Tables: The Institutes of Gaius, the Rules of Ulpian, the Opinions of Paulus, the Enactments of Justinian, and the Constitutions of Leo*, edited by S. P. Scott (Cincinnati: Central Trust Co., 1932), 64.

<sup>89</sup> Edmondson, “Slavery and the Roman Family,” 357.

<sup>90</sup> Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 125.

<sup>91</sup> Jennifer A. Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 12.

<sup>92</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 40.

<sup>93</sup> Edmondson, “Slavery and the Roman Family,” 352.

for anti-Black enslavement. Enslaved people were essentially attributed a perilous “moral deficiency” that required regulation.<sup>94</sup> While enslaved people were considered the ultimate source of *fastidium* (annoyance), *veracundia* (social worry) was reckoned as out of the range of emotion of enslaved people, and *pudor* (shame) was associated with both slavery and “femininity.”<sup>95</sup> However, shame did not translate to the principle of protection of “sexual honor,” since the enslaved were forced to grant carnal pleasure to their enslavers.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, Roman slaveholders often denoted enslaved adults as “boys” or “girls” and in turn negated their maturity, while enslaved people could not disobey exhaustive norms of demeanor without being reprimanded, even if their enslavers insulted or taunted them.<sup>97</sup> The perpetual “infancy” of enslaved people was paradoxically grounded on their “brief childhood” or their “early” capacity to “comprehend” their “duties” as enslaved people, since Columella contended that enslaved people should preferably initiate their labor by the age of six.<sup>98</sup> Emancipation did not rid the formerly enslaved of the burden of stigma: the emancipated were subjected to harsher legal punishments, could not vote, and could not serve in the military, among other restrictions.<sup>99</sup> Table X of the Twelve Tables dictated that the “body of no dead slave shall be anointed; nor shall any drinking take place at his funeral, nor a banquet of any kind be instituted in his honor.”<sup>100</sup> No emotions could be summoned at the death of an enslaved person: to be enslaved emulated being a *homo sacer*.<sup>101</sup>

Many ancient Roman texts further diffused the conception of the enslaved person as prone to passions and weakness of character.

<sup>94</sup> Sandra Joshel & Sheila Murnaghan, *Women and Slaves in Greco-Roman Societies* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 3.

<sup>95</sup> Robert A. Kaster, *Emotion, Restraint, and Community in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 23, 47, 117.

<sup>96</sup> Matthew J. Perry, *Gender, Manumission, and the Roman Freedwoman* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 8.

<sup>97</sup> Kyle Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World AD 275–425* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 332.

<sup>98</sup> Hanne Sigismund-Nielsen, “Slave and Lower-Class Children,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*, edited by Judith Evans Grubs, Tim Parkin, & Roslynne Bell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 290.

<sup>99</sup> Tristan S. Taylor, “Legally Marginalised Group: The Empire,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Law and Society*, edited by Paul J. du Plessis, Clifford Ando, & Kaius Tuori (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 361.

<sup>100</sup> “The Twelve Tables,” 75.

<sup>101</sup> See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 54.

Horace portrayed the enslaved character as controlled by the “stomach”: “Does the man who sells his estates to comply with his stomach’s demands have nothing of the slave in him?”<sup>102</sup> Meanwhile, Philo of Alexandria abstracted the enslaved person as an emblem of emotional submissiveness.

But the slave or the metal lies subdued and unresponsive, ready to suffer all that the one who handles it is minded to do so. This state of being we should never admit into our bodies, much less into our souls, but rather that condition which is characterized by reciprocity, for mortal kind must inevitably suffer. Let us not like effeminate men, invertebrate and unstrung, succumbing before the first shot is fired, our psychic energies drained, sink in utter exhaustion. Invigorated instead by the firm tension of our minds, let us have the strength to lighten and alleviate the onset of the impending terrors.<sup>103</sup>

Philo of Alexandria constructs submissiveness as framed by “terror” and enslaved people as overpowered by suffering. In this passage, enslaved people are analogous to “effeminate men,” and the intrinsic “femininity” and “passivity” of the enslaved are regarded as detrimental to body and soul. Meanwhile, dominant “masculinity” is defined as guided by “reciprocity” and a “strong” response to fear. Philo of Alexandria further argues that the institution of slavery is not a natural phenomenon, but that this practice is brought by the irrationality and animalism of the enslaved themselves: “The servants are indeed free by nature, for no man is naturally a slave, but the irrational animals have been made ready for the need and service of men and rank as slaves.”<sup>104</sup> Seemingly incongruously, this interpreter of Jewish religious texts later appropriates the trope of slavery to claim that Men must assume their minds and bodies to be “God’s possessions”: “I am not even master of my senses, but more likely their slave, following wherever they lead, to colors, shapes, sounds, scents, flavors, and the other bodily things.”<sup>105</sup> Here, there is a symptom of the later application of the trope of slavery to designate not only the traits that are unwanted in society but also the aptitudes that are desired in religious devotion.

Seneca utilized imagery of the enslaved to articulate the moral expectancy of Stoicism, a philosophical current that would intensify the societal

<sup>102</sup> Horace, *Satires and Epistles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 59.

<sup>103</sup> Philo of Alexandria, *The Contemplative Life, The Giants, and Selections* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1981), 189.

<sup>104</sup> Philo of Alexandria, *The Contemplative Life, The Giants, and Selections*, 189.

<sup>105</sup> Philo of Alexandria, *The Contemplative Life, The Giants, and Selections*, 189.

influence of the notion of “slavery to passions.” *On Anger* categorized an “outburst of anger from a position of authority” as being “beastly, horrible and bloodthirsty, and unable to be cured except by fear of some greater power.”<sup>106</sup> Based on this principle, his denunciation of violence toward enslaved people is fixated with the character of the slaveholding aggressor, and not the worth of the enslaved person: “Why on earth are we so anxious to have them flogged immediately, to have their legs broken on the spot? We do not abandon our rights by postponing the exercise of them.”<sup>107</sup> In fact, Seneca’s conceptualization of the enslaved character is one of a precarious cradle of “greed” and “hate.”

Slaves require a clothing and food allowance; you have to look after the appetites of all those greedy creatures, you have to buy clothes, you have to keep a watch on those hands ever ready to steal things; you have to make use of the services of people who are always breaking down in tears and who hate us. How much happier is a man whose only obligation is to someone whom he can easily deny – himself! But since we don’t have that much self-reliance, we should at least reduce our inherited wealth so that we are less exposed to the damage Fortune can inflict on us.<sup>108</sup>

The Stoic philosopher designates as a happier existence not to have to be surrounded by such emotional “creatures.” Most importantly, while the representation of the enslaved person as “breaking down in tears” somewhat acknowledges the emotional impact of unfreedom, this “break-down” is transformed into hate, and these “tears” are fundamentally depicted as an annoyance for the master. Thus, Seneca’s statements about the institution of slavery concentrate on the character and the “happiness” of the slaveholder. Overall, Seneca’s thought on the master–enslaved relationship underlined that authoritative power and social order would be better sustained when higher beings treated lesser beings with “clemency,”<sup>109</sup> racist discourse that would be replicated in nineteenth-century White abolitionism.

Attitudes toward physical punishment of the enslaved in the ancient Roman world normalized the excruciating pain of enslaved people. As described by Plutarch, Cato the Elder’s norms for slaveholding granted

<sup>106</sup> Seneca, “On Anger,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 169.

<sup>107</sup> Seneca, “On Anger,” 173.

<sup>108</sup> Seneca, “The Tranquillity of the Mind,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 89.

<sup>109</sup> See Keith Bradley, *Slavery and Society at Rome* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 5.

much value to the whip as an icon of master supremacy, to violence as a tool of domination, and to slaveholding authority over the bodies of enslaved people, such as the regulation of their energy by promoting long sleep and the sexual exploitation of the enslaved,<sup>110</sup> again advocating for the institutional systemization of “passions” and sexual violence for the continuation of slavery. Meanwhile, a fiction by Apuleius pointed to the pervasiveness of brutal physical punishment toward enslaved people in ancient Roman society. “The men there were indescribable – their entire skin was coloured black and blue with the weals left by whippings, and their scarred backs were shaded rather than covered by tunics which were patched and torn.”<sup>111</sup> Even Galen commented on the penalization of the enslaved through the lens of medicine, warning that not delegating physical punishment toward enslaved people could be a source of malady for, not the enslaved themselves, but for the masters. “If a man adheres to the practice of never striking any of his slaves with his hand, he will be less likely to succumb later on, even in circumstances most likely to provoke anger.”<sup>112</sup> Corporeal violence toward the enslaved was standardized as a necessary measure to keep the emotions of enslaved people on a tight rein, and the discursive source of concern was fixated with the “emotional toll” on the slaveholders who tortured enslaved people.

Plotinus defined “virtue” as one entirely emerging from reason and detached from the passions. “So understood, virtue is a mode of Intellectual-Principle, a mode not involving any of the emotions or passions controlled by its reasonings, since such experiences, amenable to morality and discipline, touch closely – we read – on body.”<sup>113</sup> This characterization of virtue leads to a persistent use of the metaphor of “slavery to passions,” culminating with a hierarchy of virtue that in turn justifies the unequal division of “wealth and property.”

He has learned that life on earth has two distinct forms, the way of the Sage and the way of the mass, the Sage intent upon the sublimest, upon the realm above, while those of the more strictly human type fall, again, under two classes, the one reminiscent of virtue and therefore not without touch with good, the other mere

<sup>110</sup> Plutarch, “Cato the Elder,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 175.

<sup>111</sup> Apuleius, “Metamorphoses,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 170.

<sup>112</sup> Galen, “The Diseases of the Mind,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 173.

<sup>113</sup> Plotinus, *The Six Enneads* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1975), Sixth Ennead, Eighth Tractate.

populace, serving to provide necessities to the better sort. But what of murder? What of the feebleness that brings men under slavery to the passions? Is it any wonder that there should be failing and error, not in the highest, the intellectual Principle, but in Souls that are like undeveloped children?<sup>114</sup>

According to Plotinus, the souls of Men who are “enslaved” by passions are like the ones of “undeveloped children,” again tying the idea of slavery to infantilization. Moreover, this notion of souls that are lacking in “virtue” and human development is offered as justification of the economic obligation of a social class of producers, the “mere populace.” The Greco-Roman world concocted an emotional economy in which the enslaved are never allowed to be children as children or adults as adults. It is an inevitable, degraded, and permanent infancy that set the framework for the modern racialization of childhood and the uninterrupted economic exploitation of the emotional Other.

Diogenes Laërtius delivered the most categorical statement of the Stoic stance on emotional slavery: “for that freedom is a power of independent action, but slavery is a deprivation of the same. That there is besides another slavery, which consists in subjection, and a third which consists in possession and subjection.”<sup>115</sup> Stoicism denied the actuality of slavery by continually relativizing its relevance with the prevalence of “slavery to passions,” while also defining enslavement as a product of Fortune.<sup>116</sup> The early Christian Church would transform the discourse of “slavery by Fortune” into “slavery by Divine Providence” and would generate much knowledge production about the spiritual “benefits” of the enslaved condition.<sup>117</sup>

#### SLAVERY TO SIN: EMOTIONAL JUSTIFICATIONS OF SLAVERY IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

The advent of Christian thought<sup>118</sup> not only acknowledged slavery, but also applied tropes of enslavement to contextualize spiritual teachings. Both the Old and the New Testaments depict slavery as a laudable

<sup>114</sup> Plotinus, *The Six Enneads*, Second Ennead, Ninth Tractate.

<sup>115</sup> Diogenes Laërtius, *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901), 303.

<sup>116</sup> Hunt, “Slavery in Greek Literary Culture,” 45.

<sup>117</sup> Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492–1800* (London: Verso, 1998), 36.

<sup>118</sup> It is important to mention that the advent of Christian thought not only was grounded on Jewish texts but was also influenced by Egyptian, Greco-Roman, and Nubian

condition, celebrating spiritual emancipation in Exodus, commemorating the crucifixion of the enslaved as the death of Christ, and exalting the metaphor of “slavery to the Lord.”<sup>119</sup> Psalm 123 equates the adoration of God to the expected docility of an enslaved person.

To you I lift up my eyes,  
O you who are enthroned in the heavens!  
as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master,  
as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,  
so our eyes look to the LORD our God,  
until he has mercy upon us.<sup>120</sup>

The metaphor of “slavery to the Lord” is framed by the narrative of Exodus: after emancipation, God became the exclusive “master of men.”<sup>121</sup> Similarly, the Gospel of Matthew likens the preparation of the soul for the “coming of the Son of Man” to the obedience of a submissive enslaved person. The consequences of infringing the duties of a loyal enslaved person are ruthless.

Who then is the faithful and wise slave, whom his master has put in charge of his household, to give the other slaves their allowance of food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives. Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions. But if that wicked slave says to himself, “My master is delayed,” and he begins to beat his fellow slaves, and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know. He will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.<sup>122</sup>

The description of the repercussions of “disobedience” of the enslaved highlights the emotional responses to punishment, but the fault is the enslaved person’s alone. This fear-provoking passage aims to clarify the paybacks of being a “faithful and wise slave,” mindful and emotionally prepared for the new coming of Christ. While the Gospel of Matthew visualizes the “weeping” of the “wicked slave,” the Pauline Epistles, like Psalm 123, openly intertwine the ideal condition of “slavery to Christ” with religious feelings. “For you were called to freedom, brothers and

religious traditions. See Michael A. Gomez, *Reversing Sail: A History of the African Diaspora* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 16.

<sup>119</sup> Ilaria L. E. Ramelli, *Social Justice and the Legitimacy of Slavery: The Role of Philosophical Asceticism from Ancient Judaism to Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 81.

<sup>120</sup> *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), Psalm 123.

<sup>121</sup> Hezser, *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity*, 328.

<sup>122</sup> *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, Matthew 24:45.

sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become enslaved to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”<sup>123</sup> Love is deemed a feeling that binds Christians to their faith and to each other, and slavery is pictured as a desired spiritual practice of religious fraternity. Although the “docile” enslaved person is constructed as an ethical model of faith in God, Christ, and the universality of humanity, the trope of slavery simultaneously illustrates the adverse nature of being “enslaved by sin.”<sup>124</sup> “So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.”<sup>125</sup> The slavery of the “flesh” to sin and wealth, as expressed in biblical texts, is evidently rooted in the Stoic rhetoric of “slavery to passions,” and so a new paradigm prolonged the reach of the dominance of slaveholding economic regimes.

The Epistle to the Ephesians categorically normalizes slavery and dictates a distinct code of conduct for enslaved people and masters, in which the enslaved were advised to both “fearfully” and “enthusiastically” serve their enslavers.

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as you obey Christ; not only while being watched, and in order to please them, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. Render service with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not to men and women, knowing that whatever good we do, we will receive the same again from the Lord, whether we are slaves or free. And, masters, do the same to them. Stop threatening them, for you know that both of you have the same Master in heaven, and with him there is no partiality.<sup>126</sup>

Since God is regarded as the “Master” of all, biblical texts not only relativize slavery, but also commend the obedient service of the enslaved as a paradigm for religious faith and as an advantage in divine judgment and deliverance. Enslaved people must obey their enslavers as they do Christ, “doing the will of God from the heart.” The expectations over enslaved feelings are high: they must both “fear” the Master and show “enthusiasm” in their own exploitation. Not only do the scriptures encourage a parallelism between the omnipresence of master authority and the omnipresence of God, but they also summon the historical

<sup>123</sup> *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, Galatians 5:13.

<sup>124</sup> Glancy, “Slavery and the Rise of Christianity,” 460.

<sup>125</sup> *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, Romans 7:24.

<sup>126</sup> *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, Ephesians 6:5.

discourse of “trembling” enslaved bodies as experiencing a spiritual deliverance enacted by divine will. The symbiotic link between these two principles sets a precedent for the discursive legitimization of the omnipresence of racialized emotional policing in the Atlantic world.

Early Christianity strikingly granted much significance to the emotional religious experiences tied to the subservience to God: love as instructed in the commandments of the New Testament, disinterested anger toward undue actions, ritualization of guilt, and joyous liturgical tribute to Christ.<sup>127</sup> Within the celebration of religious love, love was to be felt in a sublime emotional level and to be perceived both as a grace of God and as a proof of faith.<sup>128</sup> Certainly, this tradition led to the performativity of religious experiences as beyond the emotional ordinary, the interpretation of religious conversion as a “joyous relief,” and the understanding of confession (or testimony) as a pleasurable revelation of scriptural insight.<sup>129</sup> Religious experiences were furthermore represented as carrying ecstatic out-of-worldly sensations with sensual undertones.<sup>130</sup>

Gregory of Nyssa brought an early voice of antislavery thought in *Homilies on Ecclesiastes*. His emotional rationale was grounded on the narrative of Genesis.

God said, let us make man in our own image and likeness. If he is in the likeness of God, and rules the whole earth, and has been granted authority over everything on earth from God, who is his buyer, tell me? Who is his seller? To God alone belongs this power: or rather not even to God himself. For his gracious gifts, it says, are irrevocable. God would not therefore reduce the human race to slavery, since he himself, when we had been enslaved to sin, spontaneously recalled us to freedom. But if God does not enslave what is free, who is he that sets his own power above God's?<sup>131</sup>

The bishop not only justifies his thinking with the biblical description of the divine creation, but also points to the “irrevocability” of God's gifts, since God had liberated humanity from “slavery to sin.” Furthermore, Gregory of Nyssa validates the common origin of humanity

<sup>127</sup> Hubert Knoblauch & Regine Herbrich, “Emotional Knowledge, Emotional Styles, and Religion,” in *Collective Emotions*, edited by Christian von Scheve & Mikko Salmela (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 361.

<sup>128</sup> Nancy Martin & Joseph Runzo, “Love,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, edited by John Corrigan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 313–318.

<sup>129</sup> Douglas J. Davies, *Emotion, Identity, and Religion: Hope, Reciprocity, and Otherness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 51, 216, 220.

<sup>130</sup> Angelika Malinar & Helene Basu, “Ecstasy,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, edited by John Corrigan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 246.

<sup>131</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *Homilies on Ecclesiastes* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1993), 74.

with the universality of emotions and bodily sensations. “Your origin is from the same ancestors, your life of the same kind, sufferings of soul and body prevail alike over you who own him and over the one who is subject to your ownership – pains and pleasures, merriment and distress, sorrows and delights, rages and terrors, sickness and death.”<sup>132</sup> In this instance, emotions are pictured as “sufferings” of the soul, but this passage still amalgamates passions and bodily sensations. Throughout his work, Gregory of Nyssa refers to emotions as a way to cultivate a normative code of religious devotion.

Thus those whose soul’s eyes are blinded by error in this recent age have made vanity their God. To sum up, whatever a person submits his reason to, making it slave and subject, he has in his sickness made that into a god, and he would not be in this state if he had not attached himself to evil by love.<sup>133</sup>

According to *Homilies on Ecclesiastes*, “vanity” is an emotional state that can be described as a sinful “love of oneself.” This love can in turn be defined as a disease for its emotional “attachment to evil.” Gregory of Nyssa categorizes “vanity” as an emotional sickness that “submits reason” to slavery and deviates from the adoration of the authentic God. The bishop demystifies the “proper” manner to love God in his interpretation of *Song of Songs*: the rhetorical model of Christ as a groom and the soul/Church as a bride symbolizes the necessity of the soul to transform passionate love toward the self (and its bodily urges) to a mindful “passion” of the spirit toward God.<sup>134</sup> *Homilies on Ecclesiastes* also explicitly comments on the desired control of passions by stressing the limits of freedom.

What the more devout understanding is disposed to think is this: that the good gift of God, that is, freedom of action, became a means to sin through the sinful use mankind made of it. For unfettered free will is good by nature, and nobody would reckon among good things anything which was constrained by the yoke of necessity. But that free impulse of the mind rushing unschooled towards the choice of evil became a source of distress for the soul, as it was dragged down from the sublime and honourable toward the urges of natural passions.<sup>135</sup>

Therefore, Gregory of Nyssa denounces the elimination of “spiritual” freedom by emphasizing the universality of emotions and warning against

<sup>132</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *Homilies on Ecclesiastes*, 75.

<sup>133</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *Homilies on Ecclesiastes*, 135.

<sup>134</sup> Niklaus Largier, “Medieval Mysticism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, edited by John Corrigan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 365.

<sup>135</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *Homilies on Ecclesiastes*, 50.

“freedom of action” degrading into a “means to sin” and unbridled passions. In sum, although Gregory of Nyssa condemns slavery as an “evil” institution, his rhetoric paradoxically still draws from and normalizes the relativist notion of “slavery to sin.” Likewise, during a sermon on the Epistle to the Ephesians, John Chrysostom echoed this antislavery stance grounded on the discourse of “slavery to sin,” denoting the institution of slavery as the “fruit of sin” and “result of greed, of degradation, or brutality,” while also conceptualizing enslavement as a “post-flood” institution.<sup>136</sup>

Nonetheless, prominent Christian theorists immortalized the Stoic doctrine of “slavery to passions” and extended it to the premise of “slavery to sin” in order to validate the institution of slavery in the pursuit of eternal life and to advocate for legal distinctions between masters and the enslaved, all under the veil of biblical exegesis.<sup>137</sup> Augustine became the normative voice of religious intellectual production about the institution of slavery. *The City of God* notoriously portrayed slavery as a favorable condition, an early worldly punishment for the original sin.<sup>138</sup>

And obviously it is a happier lot to be a slave to a human being than to a lust; and in fact, the most pitiless domination that devastates the hearts of men, is that exercised by this very lust for domination, to mention no others. However, in that order of peace in which men are subordinate to other men, humility is as salutary for the servants as pride is harmful to the masters. And yet by nature, in the condition in which God created man, no man is the slave either of man or sin. But it remains true that slavery as a punishment is also ordained by that law which enjoins the preservation of the order of nature, and forbids its disturbance.<sup>139</sup>

Augustine depicts slavery as a lesser detriment to happiness in comparison to “slavery to lust for domination.” While lust and pride “devastate the hearts of men,” the cleansing “humility” intrinsic to the enslaved condition generates an “order of peace.” Augustinian thought equates this “order of peace” with the “preservation of the order of nature,” justifying the unnatural enslavement of God’s creation with the motive of the law that regulates it as a social practice. *The City of God* reinforces the notion of the “order of slavery” with the paradoxical reasoning of the inherent freedom of the enslaved person. “For the evils inflicted on the

<sup>136</sup> Chris L. De Wet, *Preaching Bondage: John Chrysostom and the Discourse of Slavery in Early Christianity* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 1.

<sup>137</sup> See Glancy, “Slavery and the Rise of Christianity,” 473.

<sup>138</sup> Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, 36.

<sup>139</sup> Augustine, *The City of God* (London: Penguin, 2003), 493.

righteous by then-wicked masters are not punishments for a crime but tests of virtue. The good man, though a slave, is free; the wicked, though he reigns, is a slave, and not the slave of a single man, but – what is far worse – the slave of as many masters as he has vices.”<sup>140</sup> The earthly experience of slavery is conceptualized as a set of “tests of virtue” that have the potentiality of purifying the soul from the original sin. On the contrary, sinful slaveholders could possibly have many passions as their “masters.” Augustine contends that passions are of a demonical influence, consolidating the parallelism of “slavery to passions” and “slavery to sin.”

Thus the mind of the demons is in subjection to the passions of desire, of fear, of anger, and the rest. Then is there any part of them free and capable of wisdom, which can make them acceptable to the gods, and of service to man by offering an example of morality? How can there be, if their mind is subdued under the oppressive tyranny of vicious passions, and employs for seduction and deception all the rational power that it has by nature, with all the more eagerness as the lust for doing harm gains increasing mastery?<sup>141</sup>

The Augustinian theory of “oppressive tyranny of vicious passions” would influence the medieval understanding of the demonic and would extensively relativize and legitimize the condition of slavery. The later Franciscan movement commemorated the contemplation of imagery of the crucifixion of the enslaved as the iconography of the sacrifice of Christ, as the emotional incarnation of spiritual suffering.<sup>142</sup> In *The Governance of God*, Salvian, almost contemporaneously to Augustine, rendered enslaved people as fearful of “bad earthly masters,” in comparison to the wealthy who did not dread the divine master and were therefore more likely to satisfy their carnal desires in excessive and “uncontrolled” ways.

So why are you rich men finding fault with your slaves? You’re behaving exactly as they are, since they may well be running away from a bad master, but you from a good one. And then you accuse your slaves of uncontrolled gluttony. This sin is rarely true of a slave, because they lack the means to satisfy it – but it is frequent with you, since you have the means.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Augustine, *The City of God*, ccxii.      <sup>141</sup> Augustine, *The City of God*, cdlxv.

<sup>142</sup> Largier, “Medieval Mysticism,” 374.

<sup>143</sup> Salvian, “The Governance of God,” in *Greek and Roman Slavery*, edited by Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Routledge, 2003), 59.

While the sacred texts of the three dominant monotheistic religions do not explicitly allude to racialized categories as markers of difference,<sup>144</sup> these religious canons did trivialize slavery and propelled ideas rooted in exclusionary politics. The Islamic Sharia Law would standardize the enslavement of Dar al-Kufr, or “pagans,” by Dar al-Islam, the “faithful people of Islam.”<sup>145</sup> This code of religious morality led to Africa and Eastern Europe becoming a significant source of enslaved people during the Middle Ages, regardless of their conversion.<sup>146</sup> Not only did the enslaved condition tend to be disaffected by conversion, but the Muslim offspring of enslaved parents would usually still be regarded as unfree,<sup>147</sup> and, just as in ancient Greco-Roman sources, the political unit of the household criminalized those who lived in the sidelines.<sup>148</sup> Eventually, *abd*, the Arabic term for an enslaved person, would be strongly tied to Blackness.<sup>149</sup> Internal African slavery since the ancient world had targeted regional “outsiders,”<sup>150</sup> was premised on the unfreedom of military enemies,<sup>151</sup> and grew during medieval times to being a fundamental component of the economic systems and political alliances of States.<sup>152</sup> Meanwhile, medieval jurists throughout Europe documented ancient Roman law and its figure of *patria potestas* as the foundation of the *ius commune*. Consequently, the *ius commune* contemplated slavery as merely a severer gradation of subjugation in the context of general society in Europe,<sup>153</sup> further solidifying societal apathy toward the condition of slavery during the Middle Ages.<sup>154</sup> Within medieval

<sup>144</sup> David Brion Davis, *In the Image of God: Religion, Moral Values, and Our Heritage of Slavery* (New York: Vail-Ballou Press, 2001), 144.

<sup>145</sup> David Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 63.

<sup>146</sup> Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 16.

<sup>147</sup> Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: A Historical Inquiry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 9.

<sup>148</sup> Ehud R. Toledano, *As if Silent and Absent: Bonds of Enslavement in the Islamic Middle East* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 24–30.

<sup>149</sup> Davis, *In the Image of God*, 141.

<sup>150</sup> Patrick Manning, *The African Diaspora: A History through Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 52.

<sup>151</sup> Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, 22.

<sup>152</sup> Sean Stilwell, *Slavery and Slaving in African History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 32.

<sup>153</sup> R. H. Helmholz, “The Law of Slavery and the European *Ius Commune*,” in *The Legal Understanding of Slavery: From the Historical to the Contemporary*, edited by Jean Allain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 21.

<sup>154</sup> Alice Rio, *Slavery after Rome, 500–1100* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 216.

slaveholding networks that targeted Africans,<sup>155</sup> there are primary sources that allude to the desirability of West African enslaved women for their “lustrous Black skin.”<sup>156</sup> The enslaving “trade” networks throughout the “Old World” would only further propagate with the increasingly globalized and capitalistic demand of tropical goods.<sup>157</sup>

Medieval intellectual production of the Atlantic world continued disseminating discourses of emotional enslavement, while also providing insight into the role of slavery in engendering medieval chains of being. The fourteenth-century Ethiopian Christian epic *Kebrā Nagast* channeled religious imagery of slavery in the “Parable of the Two Slaves.”

A certain king had two slaves; one was arrogant and strong, and the other was humble and weak. And the arrogant overcame the humble one and smote him all but killed him, and robbed him, and the king upon his throne saw them. And the king descended and seized the arrogant slave, beat him and crushed him, bound him in fetters and cast him into a place of darkness. Then he raised up his humble and weak slave, embraced him and brushed away the dust from him, washed him and poured oil and wine on his wounds and set him upon his horse and brought him into his city; and he set him upon his throne and seated him on his right hand. The king is in truth Christ, the arrogant servant is Satan, and the humble servant is Adam.<sup>158</sup>

This parable based on Genesis constructs Adam as a “humble and weak slave” of Christ, while Satan represents an antithetical enslaved person due to his “arrogance.” Satan’s “arrogance” is subjected to the divine punishments of violence, captivity, and exile. Thus, *Kebrā Nagast* displays the relativism of slavery, the biblical dichotomy of the faithful-wicked enslaved, and the principle of “slavery to sin.” The passage establishes a gradation of states of slavery and depicts the “arrogance” of the enslaved as innately demonic. Following the biblical framework, the transgression of the enslaved person who steps out of the boundaries of enslaved humility is considered a religious abomination, one that strays away from the spiritual love of Christ.

<sup>155</sup> Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History*, 64. During the Middle Ages, economies of enslavement that targeted Africans expanded “Old World” networks of commercial exchange.

<sup>156</sup> Michael Gomez, *African Dominion: A New History of Empire in Early and Medieval West Africa* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 36.

<sup>157</sup> Matthew S. Hopper, *Slaves of One Master: Globalization and Slavery in Arabia in the Age of Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 15.

<sup>158</sup> Miguel F. Brooks, trans., *A Modern Translation of Kebrā Nagast (The Glory of Kings)* (Lawrenceville: Red Sea, 2002), 144.

The *Muqaddimah* by Ibn Khaldun appeared in 1377 as an early manifestation of geographical determinism, the principle that diverse climates produce differentiated populations with a distinct set of behaviors. His definition of Blackness is precisely focused on emotional impulsivity.

Heat dominates their temperament and formation. Therefore, they have in their spirits an amount of heat corresponding to that in their bodies and that of the zone in which they live. In comparison with the spirits of the inhabitants of the fourth zone, theirs are hotter and, consequently, more expanded. As a result, they are more quickly moved to joy and gladness, and they are merrier. Excitability is the direct consequence.<sup>159</sup>

According to Khaldun, the ardor of Africa's "hot zone" affects Black bodies and "spirits." Heat produces an "excitability" that is prone to "quick" bursts of "joy and gladness." This "excitability" is constructed as the "direct consequence" of an "expanded" spirit. Thus, Khaldun projects emotional impulsivity as emerging from a "spirit" that has been "expanded" by heat, foreshadowing the use of deterministic language of science to impose a racial hierarchy of emotional volatility. A fundamental pillar of geographical determinism would precisely be that heat is presumed to affect both "temperament and formation." Heat may temporarily disturb a newcomer to a hotter climate, but it is intrinsic to the "formation" of those born in hotter climates, dominating their racialized "temperament." The onerous mark of emotional "excitability" would be consequently unavoidable for Black and Brown bodies.

Medieval European literature insistently incorporated references to slavery as tropes of religious conversion and "emotive" national conquests and defeats. In *The Divine Comedy*, Dante Alighieri exclaimed: "Slave Italy! Hostel of grief!" fusing a metaphor of slavery with a figurative proclamation of national suffering.<sup>160</sup> *The Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio not only alluded to "slavery to Love" and "slavery to the Lord," but also narrated the tale of a nurse who "wept long and bitterly" on realizing she had become enslaved, until she comprehended that "tears were useless."<sup>161</sup> *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer displayed much commentary about the institution of slavery, especially in

<sup>159</sup> Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1377), 63.

<sup>160</sup> Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 88.

<sup>161</sup> Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 2004), 113.

the final tale of the book, “The Parson’s Tale.” This text about penitence includes a reference to the biblical narrative of the Curse of Ham. “And furthermore, understand well that conquerors or tyrants often make thralls of those who were born of as royal blood as those who have conquered. This word of thralldom was unknown until Noah said that his grandson Canaan should be servant to his brethren for his sin.”<sup>162</sup> Chaucer’s dissertation about conquerors and the conquered further evaluates the “order of slavery.”

But certainly, since the time of grace came, God ordained that some folk should be higher in rank and state and some folk in lower, and that each should be served according to his rank and his state. And therefore, in some countries, where they buy slaves, when they have converted them to the faith, they set their slaves free from slavery.<sup>163</sup>

“The Parson’s Tale” asserts not only that there is a God-sanctioned “order by rank and state” but that this “order” is also affected by religious conviction. Hence, Chaucer affirms that, while conversion could justify the emancipation of enslaved people, their “sinfulness” or lack of adherence to the faith vindicates their subjugation. Moreover, “The Monk’s Tale” inherits the Stoic doctrine of slavery being a product of Fortune.

Masters, therefrom a moral may you take,  
That in dominion is no certainness;  
For when Fortune will any man forsake,  
She takes his realm and all he may possess,  
And all his friends, too, both the great and less;  
For when a man has friends that Fortune gave,  
Mishap but turns them enemies, as I guess:  
This word is true for king as well as slave.<sup>164</sup>

Chaucer endorses the medieval persistence of the relativism of slavery, intellectualizing the slippery slope from the condition of the master, or “dominion,” to the status of the enslaved person as one tied to the role of Fortune in the shift from friend to foe. The Chain of Being is dreadfully variable, or so did the European elite claim. Now, this “variability” still depended on the slaveholding assessment of the religious devotion of the enslaved.

Scholasticism further diffused Aristotelian thought on slavery and augmented the tie of slavery to “femininity” and “sin.” *Summa*

<sup>162</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* (New York: Dover, 2004), 514.

<sup>163</sup> Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, 514. <sup>164</sup> Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, 211.

*theologica* by Thomas Aquinas conceived exorcisms as acts “by which man is wholly freed from the slavery of the devil.”<sup>165</sup> The Scholastic writer stated in a letter that Jewish “guilt” had resulted in their “perpetual slavery.”<sup>166</sup> Aquinas also validated the rationality behind the heredity of slavery in matrilineal lineage. “Now slavery is a condition of the body, since a slave is to the master a kind of instrument in working; wherefore children follow the mother in freedom and in bondage; whereas in matters pertaining to dignity as proceeding from a thing’s form, they follow the father, for instance in honours, franchise, inheritance, and so forth.”<sup>167</sup> This influential figure of the medieval clergy constructs slavery as a bodily status and simultaneously ties the corporeal to the figure of the Mother. On the contrary, the concepts of dignity and honor, connected to the soul, are found within the realm of the Father. This reasoning extends the reach of the ancient notion of slavery as a corporeal ailment outside the sphere of “masculine” rationality.

During the Renaissance, there was a free Black African “presence” in Europe, and ideas about “Blackness” were fluctuating.<sup>168</sup> Isabelle D’Este infamously purchased “exotic” enslaved Africans for them to “model” for her financed “works of art,” setting a pattern for the intersection of art and racialized exploitation.<sup>169</sup> In *The Oration on the Dignity of Man*, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola regarded “slavery to appetites and to senses” as obstacles to the pursuit of knowledge and as a sign of inhumanity, fostering the Renaissance’s recalling of the ancient discourse of “slavery to passions.”

If you see someone who is a slave to his belly, crawling along the ground, it is not a man you see, but a plant; if you see someone who is enslaved by his own senses, blinded by the empty hallucinations brought on by fantasy (as if by Calypso herself) and entranced by their bedeviling spells, it is a brute animal you see, not a man.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>165</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologica* (New York: Benziger, 1922), 41.

<sup>166</sup> Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, 45.

<sup>167</sup> Aquinas, *Summa theologica*, 181.

<sup>168</sup> Kate Lowe, “Introduction: The Black African Presence in Renaissance Europe,” in *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, edited by T. F. Earle & K. J. P. Lowe (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 2–11.

<sup>169</sup> David Bindman & Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *The Image of the Black in Western Art: From the “Age of Discovery” to the Age of Abolition: Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 102.

<sup>170</sup> Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 131.

It has been theorized that Michelangelo's *Nakedness of Noah* exemplifies a historical rupture in the interpretation of the Curse of Ham, with Noah shifting from a "first Christ" to a "second Adam."<sup>171</sup> Indeed, the Age of Exploration led to the opportunistic parallel reading of the Curse of Ham, the Table of Nations, and the dispersion of the Tower of Babel as divine puzzles of racial differentiation.<sup>172</sup>

#### THE EMOTIONAL RACIALIZATION OF THE GLOBALIZATION OF SLAVERY

In the thirteenth century, King Alfonso X's *Siete Partidas* responded to the resurgence of ancient Roman law in the Middle Ages and would precisely preserve this canonical influence by eventually infiltrating the colonial legislation on slavery in the Spanish colonies,<sup>173</sup> prescribing an emotional political economy in the Atlantic world. The *Siete Partidas* consolidated the notion of "slavery to passions" with the principle of "slavery to sin" through its legal conceptualization of "avarice."

A King Should Not, in His Heart, Covet Excessive Riches: And they said of it, besides, that a man who eagerly desires to collect great treasures, but not for the purpose of doing good with them, although he may have them in possession, is not their master, but their slave; since avarice prevents him from making use of them in a way which would be to his credit. A man of this kind is said to be guilty of avarice, which is regarded by God as a great and mortal sin, and a serious and evil condition in the world.<sup>174</sup>

While the title of the law is limited to the "King," the content of the law conveys the universality of "emotional slavery," as generating "a serious and evil condition in the world." The wording expresses "avarice" as the legal and spiritual transgression that represents both a passion and a sin, in turn making Man (and even a King) enslaved. Furthermore, while this regulation uses discourses of emotion to feature the condition of the King,

<sup>171</sup> Benjamin Braude, "Michelangelo and the Curse of Ham: From a Typology of Jew-Hatred to a Genealogy of Racism," in *Signs of Race: Writing Race across the Atlantic World: Medieval to Modern*, edited by Taylor Beidler (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 79.

<sup>172</sup> See Stephen R. Haynes, *Noah's Curse: The Biblical Justification of American Slavery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 6.

<sup>173</sup> William D. Phillips, Jr., *Slavery in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 21.

<sup>174</sup> Robert I. Burns, ed., *Las Siete Partidas, vol. 1: The Medieval Church: The World of Clerics and Laymen* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 281.

another law does the same to encompass the “ideal” behavior of those governed by a monarch.

How the People Should Fear the King, and What Difference There is Between Fear and Dread: For as wise men once stated, there is no distinction between him who is a prisoner in chains, and in power of his enemies, and him who is the slave of his own will, so that he is obliged something on account of which he will deserve punishment. For, undoubtedly, he who commits an offence subjects himself to the slavery of the penalty which he deserved to undergo on account to it. And with this agrees what the Apostle St. John said, namely, that whoever commits sin is its slave.<sup>175</sup>

Therefore, the *Siete Partidas* consistently fuses legal transgressions with the condition of being “enslaved by passions and sin,” which in turn facilitates an elaborate justification of the power of masters to inflict systematic bodily harm in the enslaved by “their own will.” King Alfonso el Sabio’s legal framework prohibits a master from filing complaints “against his slave” and orders the slaveholder to instead “exercise his rights over him by punishing him by reproof, or by blows, in such a way as not to kill or cripple him.”<sup>176</sup> Along the same lines, if an enslaved person caused “dishonor” on another master, the enslaver of the “dishonorable” enslaved person had to “deliver” them to the “wronged” party, so that the other master could exercise his right to “punish him with blows in such a way as not to kill or maim him.”<sup>177</sup> Following the ancient Roman legal framework, the bodily penalization of enslaved people by slaveholders was abstracted as exercising a right and ridding the State of the onus of discipline and punishment of the enslaved population. Still, the State did have the authority and capacity of torturing the enslaved to acquire information against their “masters.”<sup>178</sup>

The *Siete Partidas* also highlights the discourse of the infantilization of the enslaved person, by reiterating the vulnerability of “emotionally immature” enslaved people to being corrupted by the adult rationality of slaveholders. This legal framework forbid children from summoning their parents and, intriguingly, the same law established that emancipated persons could not legally summon “those who enfranchised them,” since formerly enslaved people were expected to “always reverence and honor”

<sup>175</sup> Burns, ed., *Las Siete Partidas*, vol. 1, 352.

<sup>176</sup> Robert I. Burns, ed., *Las Siete Partidas*, vol. 2: *Medieval Government: The World of Kings and Warriors* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 539.

<sup>177</sup> Robert I. Burns, ed., *Las Siete Partidas*, vol. 5: *Underworlds: The Dead, the Criminal, and the Marginalized* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 1358.

<sup>178</sup> Burns, ed., *Las Siete Partidas*, vol. 5, 1460.

their former enslavers.<sup>179</sup> This law thus regards the act of deliverance as a deed of paternalism and indissoluble familial ties. Furthermore, the *Siete Partidas* constructs the “corruption of a slave” as a legal transgression: “What Penalty Those Deserve Who Corrupt Slaves, Making the Good Ones Bad, and the Bad Ones Worse: And what we stated in this law and concerning those who corrupt the slaves of others applies also to those who corrupt the sons, daughters, grandsons, granddaughters, or servants of a household.”<sup>180</sup> Hence, the *Siete Partidas* depicts enslaved people as elements of a domestic sphere that could be “corrupted” by another domestic sphere, while also maintaining an enslaved person within an infantile stage of emotional development. To protect the home from “perversion” was to safeguard the economic future of the Master.

The European conquest of the Americas would be precisely endorsed by the interplay of ideas of corruption of emotions and blood. The colonies of the Americas would inherit the reverberations of the Iberian fixation on “*limpieza de sangre*,” a fusion of religious and genealogical intolerance that ostracized “*conversos*” and “*moriscos*,” and this fascination led to the “*averiguación de limpieza*,” an inquest into the “cleanliness” of blood and the verification of a pure bloodline of Christian “ancestry.”<sup>181</sup> The conquest of the “New World” was framed by symbolic acts of possession that were in turn centered on the notion of “*res nullius*,” the seizure of land that was considered common property, acts such as ritualistic invasion, cartographic renaming, and Eurocentric territorial disputes.<sup>182</sup> From there, globalized modernity would sophisticate a Eurocentric hierarchy of nations based on opportunistic projections of History, Language, and the development of States, forming a historical geography.<sup>183</sup> Even before the conquest of the Americas, the Catholic Church had legitimized slavery with discourses of the Reconquista, providing the Portuguese state with religious authorization to “trade” in African ports.<sup>184</sup> In 1455, Pope Nicholas V released the papal bull

<sup>179</sup> Burns, ed., *Las Siete Partidas*, vol. 2, 606.

<sup>180</sup> Burns, ed., *Las Siete Partidas*, vol. 5, 1392.

<sup>181</sup> Barbara Fuchs, “A Mirror across the Water: Mimetic Racism, Hybridity, and Cultural Survival,” in *Signs of Race: Writing Race across the Atlantic World: Medieval to Modern*, edited by Taylor Beidler (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 9–10.

<sup>182</sup> J. H. Elliot, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 30–34.

<sup>183</sup> Ranajit Guha, *History at the Limit of World-History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 12.

<sup>184</sup> Gwendolyn M. Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 7.

Romanus Pontifex, which authorized and justified enslavement as a method of propagation of Christianity.<sup>185</sup> In 1493, the papal bull *Inter Caetera* by Pope Alexander VI extended its sanction to the Americas, conceiving non-Catholic lands as “barbaric” and declaring the expansion of Catholic faith as the priority of conquering and colonizing missions.<sup>186</sup> Genocide and contagion were “interdependent forces”<sup>187</sup> that engendered a panorama of bloodstained conquest.<sup>188</sup> The European conquest of the Americas was marked by genocidal violence through enslavement, mass killings, and family separations, which in turn led to an exacerbation of the “susceptibility” of indigenous populations to disease.<sup>189</sup>

Bartolomé de las Casas emerged as a figure who spread “passionate” denunciations of maltreatment by Spanish conquistadores and the intrinsic “vulnerability” of the indigenous populations of the Americas, while also preliminarily propelling the idea of Africa being a source of “naturally” (and stronger) enslaved people.<sup>190</sup> In *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, the friar interweaved accounts of mass killings of indigenous people with religious imagery: “Considérese agora, por Dios, . . . qué obra ésta y si excede a toda crueldad e injusticia que pueda ser pensada; y si les cuadra bien a los tales cristianos llamarlos diablos, y si sería más encomendar los indios a los diablos del infierno que es encomendarlos a los cristianos de las Indias.”<sup>191</sup> The portrayal of Spanish colonizers as “cruel devils” is accentuated by the emotional responses to the genocidal slaughters of indigenous populations.

<sup>185</sup> Nicolaus V, “Romanus Pontifex (1455),” in *European Treaties Bearing on the History of the United States and Its Dependencies*, edited by Frances G. Davenport (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution, 1917), 16.

<sup>186</sup> Alexander VI, “*Inter Caetera* (1493),” in *European Treaties Bearing on the History of the United States and Its Dependencies*, edited by Frances G. Davenport (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution, 1917), 73.

<sup>187</sup> David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), xii.

<sup>188</sup> See Norman M. Naimark, *Genocide: A World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 35. The death toll of this genocide is estimated to have reached 70 million out of 80 million indigenous people in the continent.

<sup>189</sup> Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 100.

<sup>190</sup> See David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 15.

<sup>191</sup> Bartolomé de las Casas, *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (Barcelona: Linkgua, 2017), 76. Translation to English: “Consider now, for God, . . . what wrongdoing, and if it exceeds all cruelty and injustice that can be conceived, and if it fits well to call those Christians devils, and if it would be better to entrust the indigenous people to the devils of Hell than to entrust them to the Christians of the ‘Indies.’”

“¡Cuántas lágrimas hizo derramar, cuántos suspiros, cuántos gemidos, cuántas soledades en esta vida y de cuántos damnación eterna en la otra causó, no solo de indios, que fueron infinitos, pero de los infelices cristianos . . . en tan grandes insultos, gravísimos pecados y abominaciones tan execrables!”<sup>192</sup> De las Casas conveyed the enslaved indigenous experience in the Americas as one that was encompassed by a distressed display of emotions expressed through “tears,” “sighs,” and “moans.” These expressions were “contagious,” since, while indigenous populations were compelled to incessant “tears” in life, the Spanish colonizers would be punished to eternal grief for their “sins” and “abominations.”

The Leyes de Burgos of 1512–1513 responded to claims of maltreatment of indigenous populations by authenticating and regulating the transformation of the “amorphous *repartimiento*” into a tributary *encomienda* system in the Spanish colonies,<sup>193</sup> while also providing insight into the animalization and depersonalization of indigenous populations. This set of laws decreed that indigenous populations had to be “relocated” to the towns settled by their “*encomenderos*,” had to receive religious instruction, were “allowed” to attend their “*areytos*,” or cultural gatherings, had to be clothed and fed by the colonizers, and were not to be physically abused or called “dogs,” among other regulations that bring light to the systematic harm and animalization of indigenous populations.<sup>194</sup> The amendments of 1513 ruled that single indigenous women had to remain under the authority of their parents in order to avoid the rise of “*malas mugeres*,” coded language used in gendered discourses of inherent “female” sexual deviance.<sup>195</sup> The Leyes de Burgos were not motivated by the aim to protect the indigenous populations that were being subjected to mass killings, but instead were a legal code that elucidated the configuration (and abuse) of a racialized hypersexual Other.

<sup>192</sup> De las Casas, *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, 41. Translation to English: “How many tears were shed, how many sighs, how many moans, how many solitudes in this life, and how many eternal damnations in the other life were caused, not only for the indigenous people, which were infinite, but for the unhappy Christians . . . in such great insults, grave sins, and such execrable abominations.”

<sup>193</sup> James Lockhart & Stuart B. Schwartz, *Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 94.

<sup>194</sup> “Leyes de Burgos de 1812,” Archivo General de Indias, Patronato, Legajo 174.

<sup>195</sup> “Ordenanzas de 1513,” Archivo General de Indias, Patronato, Legajo 174. Translation to English: “bad women.”

The model of the sugar plantation based on racialized slavery in the Portuguese colonies in the Atlantic Islands would soon become the paradigm of modern globalized markets in the Atlantic world,<sup>196</sup> and historical and religious ideas about the negative value of the color black were rhetorically utilized to assert the essential “inferiority” of Africans.<sup>197</sup> Monogenism and polygenism surfaced as biblical interpretations of the origins of non-Whiteness. Polygenism argued for a multiplicity of creations; in other words, people of color either were “pre-Adamite” or belonged to a different form, outside the divine creation or outside the human species.<sup>198</sup> Many polygenists held that Blackness must have emerged from human sexual encounters with apes. Meanwhile, monogenism looked in the Book of Genesis for answers<sup>199</sup> to the puzzle of the “degeneration” of the divine (and thus “White”) creation into a multiplicity of races: the assassination of Abel by Cain, the Curse of Ham, and the survival and dispersion of “monsters” after the Flood were all named as instances of divine fury that transformed the color of the dermis of those predisposed to slavery. The theory of the “Curse of Cain” constructed Blackness as the instigation of homicidal fraternal violence, while the most influential “Curse of Ham” isolated a biblical mention of a lineage eternally punished to slavery and randomly racialized this ambiguous reference to an evil transgression.<sup>200</sup> The myth of survival after the Flood served as a rationalization of the extermination of “sinful” bodies of color. Regardless of the religious theory, the connection between race and deviance was predestined according to speculative biblical exegesis, and racialized Atlantic slavery was validated by religious interpretations that proclaimed sinfulness as the essence of Blackness, globalizing the emotional discourse of “slavery to sin.”

<sup>196</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 87.

<sup>197</sup> David M. Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 2.

<sup>198</sup> Robert Wald Sussman, *The Myth of Race: The Troubling Persistence of an Unscientific Idea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

<sup>199</sup> David N. Livingstone, *Adam's Ancestors: Race, Religion & the Politics of Human Origins* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 14.

<sup>200</sup> The “Curse of Ham” is a historical misnomer as the passage in Genesis places the curse on Ham’s son, Canaan, and all of his descendants after Ham saw Noah’s “nakedness” while the patriarch was drunk. What was the essence of Ham’s transgression in the divine gaze and why the punishment is granted to Canaan and his descendants, and not Ham, are key questions of the theological debate about Genesis. See Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham*, 141–177.

The Middle Passage was premeditated to be an agonizing experience of terror, overcrowding, dispossession, and disorientation.<sup>201</sup> While the European design of the Atlantic “trade” of enslaved people was distinguished by intended control of the State by taxation, subsidization, and monopoly contracts, the African coordination of the “trade” relied on resistance to the monopoly of one European nation and the constant variation of “prices” and currencies,<sup>202</sup> though much of the Atlantic slaveholding economy was marginal to legal transactions. The image of the “Slave Ship Broadside” has incarnated the abominable forced mobilization of millions of Africans, turning the Atlantic Ocean into a site of memory of genocide, generational trauma, and identity for the African diaspora.<sup>203</sup> This image has also been contemporarily used in public discourse and general education to emotionally depersonalize the enslaved through the fetishization of Black pain. The twentieth-century scholarly debate about the “numbers” of the Middle Passage (and the significance of statistics about enslaved mortality for historiography)<sup>204</sup> would mirror how the captains of slaveholding ships dehumanized the enslaved, depicting enslaved death by “numbers.” Captains of enslaving ships wrote in their journals entries of enslaved people “departing this life” from “disease,” hiding their negligence and murderous attacks.<sup>205</sup> The representation of enslaved mortality during the Middle Passage in slaveholding primary sources conceived an unfeeling collective unit and itemized their lifeless bodies. This painful generational memory of the detached (and therefore sinister) gaze of the White colonizer as Black people are thrown to the Atlantic Ocean was and is a key driving force of Black revolutionary movements.

Philosophical inquiries of the early modern world evidence an exacerbation of the European preoccupation with the mutability of the

<sup>201</sup> Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 35.

<sup>202</sup> Herbert S. Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 103.

<sup>203</sup> “Description of a Slave Ship,” Princeton University, Firestone Library, Rare Books and Special Collections, Oversize 2006-001BE.

<sup>204</sup> The key scholarly debate about the “numbers” of the Middle Passage was sparked by the controversial publication of *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* by Philip D. Curtin. The “census” debate in instances emphasized “empirical data,” disregarding the history of premeditated erasure, corruption, and trauma, which makes any “number” conservative and non-encompassing. See Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

<sup>205</sup> Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*, 122.

condition of slavery after the encounter with the “New World.” Thomas More’s *Utopia* cautioned about the perils of a wealth based on gold, stating that it delivered the uncertainty of class mobility and the volatility of the vulnerability to the condition of slavery.

Which if it should be taken from him by any fortune, or by some subtle wile and cautel of the law (which no less than fortune doth both raise up the low and pluck down the high), and be given to the most vile slave and abject drivel of all his household, then shortly after he shall go into the service of his servant as an augmentation or overplus beside his money.<sup>206</sup>

Meanwhile, *The Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli represented Italy as historically “enslaved” and assessed the significance of “political slavery.”

And if, as I said, it was necessary in order that the power of Moses should be displayed that the people of Israel should be slaves in Egypt, and to give scope for the greatness and courage of Cyrus that the Persians should be oppressed by the Medes, and to illustrate the pre-eminence of Theseus that the Athenians should be dispersed, so at the present time, in order that the might of an Italian genius might be recognized, it was necessary that Italy should be reduced to her present condition, and that she should be more enslaved than the Hebrews, more oppressed than the Persians, and more scattered than the Athenians; without a head, without order, beaten, despoiled, lacerated, and overrun, and that she should have suffered ruin of every kind.<sup>207</sup>

Machiavelli contends that historical slavery and “degradation” are vital for a calculated “emotive” narrative of political deliverance and the ascent of a powerful ruler. The role of slavery is symbolic, since it boosts the tale of triumph of the sovereign. The intervention of the Prince in History is the establishment of stability and social hierarchy, outlined by the art of war.<sup>208</sup> The philosopher concludes that the ideal ruler comprehends that “his” is not a “profession of goodness.”<sup>209</sup> The understanding that “grief” can materialize from the intended good justifies the framing of politics as a perpetual war. It is an eternal figurative battle of perceived emancipation and imposed inequality.

Elizabethan rhetoric merged English patriotism, Protestantism, and appropriation of metaphors of slavery by portraying the Pope as scheming for the English “to be subjects and slaves to aliens and strangers” and Catholic nations as desiring “to overthrow our most

<sup>206</sup> Thomas More, *Utopia* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1997), 84.

<sup>207</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (London: Richards, 1903), 103.

<sup>208</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 57. <sup>209</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 60.

happy estate and flourishing commonwealth, and to subject the same to the proud, servile and slavish government of foreigners and strangers.”<sup>210</sup> Contemporaneously, William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* used the trope of slavery to express the despair behind the impassioned “tears” of the titular character.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!  
Is it not monstrous that this player here,  
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,  
Could force his soul so to his own conceit  
That from her working all his visage wann’d,  
Tears in his eyes, distraction in’s aspect,  
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting  
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!<sup>211</sup>

The metaphor of “slavery to passions” was reinforced later in the play: “Give me that man that is not passion’s slave, and I will wear him in my heart’s core, ay, in my heart of heart, as I do thee.”<sup>212</sup> Similarly, in *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha*, not only did Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra explore the “paradoxical symbiosis” of Quijote and his “servant” Sancho, but tropes of slavery are recalled by “female” characters to articulate the “feminine” experience of love.<sup>213</sup> The Ethiopian hagiography *Gädlä Wälättä Petros* characterized the “just” will of God as knowing the “innermost feelings” of the saint when “supplying” a better “servant.”

Do you see the justness of God’s understanding? He chased away the young servant girl who had accompanied Walatta Petros into exile but drew close this young servant woman who had been far away, and made her stay with Walatta Petros. He truly is all-powerful. He acts as he pleases and what he decides he carries out. Nobody can argue with him. He removes what is nearby and brings close what is distant. Truly, he scrutinizes the heart and the kidneys.<sup>214</sup>

<sup>210</sup> As quoted in Michael Guasco, *Slaves and Englishmen: Human Bondage in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 21.

<sup>211</sup> William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (London: Heinemann, 1904), 60.

<sup>212</sup> Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 72.

<sup>213</sup> Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *El ingenioso don Quijote de la Mancha*, Tomo II (Barcelona: Gobchs, 1832), 13, 158.

<sup>214</sup> Gälawdewos, *The Life and Struggles of Our Mother Walatta Petros: A Seventeenth-Century African Biography of an Ethiopian Woman*, edited by Michael Kleiner & Wendy Laura Belcher (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 113. This translation defines the “heart and the kidneys” as “innermost feelings,” following a biblical metaphor in Revelation 2:23.

The tropes of emotional slavery patently reverberated throughout texts of the early modern Atlantic world. Notably, *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes defined the social contract as being bound by laws or “chains”: “But as men, for the atteyning of peace, and conservation of themselves thereby, have made an Artificiall Man, which we call a Common-wealth; so also have they made Artificiall Chains, called *Civill Lawes*.”<sup>215</sup> And the triumph of the discourse of the irremediable nature of slavery arose from the modern significance of the social contract and the taxonomical codification of laws.

From antiquity to the early modern world, the doctrines of “slavery to passions” and “slavery to sin” served as foundations for the conquest, domination, and enslavement of the “emotionally deviant.” The scholarly debate about the racialization of slavery has been primarily focused on why Black Africans became the target of Atlantic slavery and has been mostly concerned with the historical “ruptures,” mainly connected to the advent of Eurocentric Christianity, leading to the emergence of a “new” manifestation of bondage, a now racialized slavery.<sup>216</sup> What this debate has not brought to light is that the answer to this inquiry lies in the long-lived institutional conflation of “emotional difference,” identifiable “biological difference,” and predisposition to slavery. While there has been scholarship on how the modern construction of those who were Black and enslaved inherited the weight of the ancient notion of the “infantilized and animalized”<sup>217</sup> enslaved person, there has been a fundamental gap in the scholarship, a silence on the inexorability between the ancient and medieval emotional justifications of the institution of slavery and the ascent of modern racist thought. It is not that racialized Atlantic slavery represented a new manifestation of enslavement responding to ideological shifts or simply inheriting the legacies of the slaveholding practices of the ancient and medieval worlds. It is instead that the long-lived emotional

<sup>215</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan, or The Matter, Forme & Power of a Commonwealth, Ecclesiasticall and Civill* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1651), 149.

<sup>216</sup> The most cited theory in this debate is the one introduced by David Eltis in *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*. According to Eltis, the European dependence on slavery relied on the foreignness of “non-Europeans,” when “white slavery” would have been “cheaper” and “developed more quickly” in the Atlantic world, and thus the racialization of slavery was due to the religious unity of European Christians. See Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, 17, 70. Meanwhile, the theory of Winthrop Jordan linked the European preoccupation with “heathenism” to the religious connotations of the color black. See Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 7.

<sup>217</sup> See Davis, *In the Image of God*, 128.

justifications of slavery were the intentional driving force and framework of the early modern racialization of slavery and the symbiotic rise of the social (and scientific) constructs of “race.” For the imperial design, Blackness opportunistically embodied the recognizable “biological difference” of the “naturally enslaved” and incarnated the fatal mark of emotional criminality. The escalation of anti-Black slavery ultimately heightened the ancient normativity that stipulated that passions had to be systematized in order to discipline those “enslaved” by emotions.

Through parallelisms that tied the domestic and political spheres, the ancient Greek and Roman worlds conceptualized the enslaved as “surrogate bodies” that could not be injured and constructed the exercise of citizenship as a right tied to the non-foreign emotional aptitude for self-governance and the governmental paternalistic power of domination over the enslaved. These emotional justifications set the framework for both the modern racialization of childhood and the paradoxical emotional infantilization and animalization of those who were Black and enslaved. These rationalizations also shaped the political model of the institutional insistence of emotionally aligning with the master hypothetically “bothered” by the burden (and “emotional toll”) of “having to exercise” violence on the enslaved. The Christian teachings about slavery extended the relativism of “slavery to passions” to justify slavery as an institution of spiritual liberation from essentially “sinful” emotions, and the urgency of “deliverance” would soon be appropriated by political defenses of Atlantic conquest, colonization, and enslavement. Christian thought overwhelmingly endorsed the omnipresence of the emotional policing of enslaved humility and religious obedience. The enduring discourses of subservient emotional deficiency relativized slavery to conceal the institutional exclusionary convenience of equating the “emotional difference” and the “biological difference” of those “fit for slavery.” The intellectual history of the Eurocentric ancient and medieval worlds advocated for the detection of an emotional Other and for the systematization of passions to regulate the enslaved in order to configure an imperial emotional economy. And the forced globalization of the early modern world made it Law to subdue a racialized emotional Other. In the opportunistic imperial gaze, Black passions became erratic, demonic, and “feminine” in opposition to “masculine” reason, and Blackness in turn became the “biological” proof of absence of emotional self-discipline. Racialized slavery arose to keep Blackness in perpetual subjection to penalizing violence, in everlasting institutional suspicion provoked by its attributed irrational, sinful, and fundamentally emotional nature. Black communities would be

increasingly codified as racialized emotional entities that had to be regulated (and perpetually saved, yet never saved) by those “emotionally superior” and thus worthy of the joys of political citizenship and economic inclusion. The imperial economies of the Atlantic world would engender their wealth from racialized emotions that could be injured again and again.

In the eighteenth century, the premise of emotional difference would systematically acquire the deterministic language of science. This turn was also grounded on the shift from the scientific fascination with the “four humors” to the fixation with the “four temperaments.” The classical understanding of different bodies being predominantly affected by one of the four humors (yellow bile, blood, black bile, and phlegm) was spread by Galenic thought and, by the seventeenth century, led to the assertion of primacy of one of the four temperaments (choleric, sanguine, melancholic, and phlegmatic) in different peoples of distinct “nature,” a “temperament” being assumed to be an emotional “predisposition” due to the “condition of the nervous system.”<sup>218</sup> Carl Linnaeus, considered the “father of taxonomy,” delineated “variations” of *Homo sapiens* in his influential 1735 *Systema naturae* and strengthened the influence of the notion of the “four temperaments” within the rise of scientific racism.

*Homo Sapiens.* Diurnal; varying by education and situation.

*Wild Man.* Four-footed, mute, hairy.

*American.* Copper-coloured, choleric, erect. Hair black, straight, thick; nostrils wide, face harsh; beard scanty; obstinate, content free. Paints himself with fine red lines. Regulated by customs.

*European.* Fair, sanguine, brawny. Hair yellow, brown, flowing; eyes blue; gentle, acute. Inventive. Covered with close vestments. Governed by laws.

*Asiatic.* Sooty, melancholy, rigid. Hair black; eyes dark; severe, haughty, covetous. Covered with loose garments. Governed by opinions.

*African.* Black, phlegmatic, relaxed. Hair black, frizzled; skin silky; nose flat; lips tumid; crafty, indolent, negligent. Anoints himself with grease. Governed by caprice.<sup>219</sup>

<sup>218</sup> Alberti, *Matters of the Heart*, 18, 33.

<sup>219</sup> Carl Linnaeus, *A General System of Nature, through the Three Grand Kingdoms of Animals, Vegetables, and Minerals, Systematically Divided into Their Several Classes, Orders, Genera, Species, and Varieties with Their Habitations, Manners, Economy, Structure, and Peculiarities*, vol. 1 (London: Lackington, Allen, and Co., 1735), 9.

Linnaeus's taxonomy, which would serve as the framework for modern legal codification, utilized the deterministic language of science in order to validate a racist hierarchy premised on "temperamental" difference. His definitions of his continental categories include racialized generalizations about physical attributes and establish severe lines of emotional distinction. According to Linnaeus, Europeans are "sanguine" and "governed by law," indicating the highest Eurocentric principles of the eighteenth century: legal methodization and "masculine" rationality. In contrast, Asians are "melancholic" and "governed by opinions," and indigenous populations are "choleric" and "regulated by customs." Consequently, Asians are portrayed as "rigid," conceited, and greedy, and the indigenous are depicted as irritable and stubborn. Linnaeus generated a hierarchy of emotional degradation from the "inventiveness" and "gentleness" of Whiteness, and this hierarchy creates a slope of generalizations about dress, from "close vestments" to the nakedness of a "greasy" Black body. Since Africans are conceptualized as "phlegmatic," "indolent," "negligent," and "governed by caprice," Europe is propelled as a site of "gentle" law and "inventiveness" that should govern over lethargic, self-destructive, and emotionally "capricious" African bodies. Linnaeus's taxonomy is the quintessence of the globalization of a scientific (and legalist) hierarchy of racialized feelings, where capricious emotions are ruthlessly punished.

*A mother and a daughter. Drums. She is suckling. An eternal glimpse into life with you. Your smell is endless. Your warmth is undying. Because you are not him. You were never his. The corners of her mouths hint at a smile. She was never his.*