

THE HYDRA OF HOROWITZIAN HISTORY

*The Mobilization of Scholarship against Black Reparations*¹

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Abstract

Whether to provide reparations to African Americans for the atrocities of slavery and segregation is arguably the most controversial public matter concerning race in the United States today. This debate, a clash over the economics and ethics of equality, is nothing less than a struggle over the future of racial identity, race relations, and racial progress in the current post-civil rights movement era.

With the stakes for African Americans so high, and the prospects for affirmative action dim, public intellectuals have weighed in heavily on each side of the issue. Randall Robinson—author of the best-known work advocating for reparations, *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks* (2000)—and David Horowitz—the reparationist movement's most reviled nemesis and author of *Uncivil Wars: The Controversy over Reparations for Slavery* (2002)—have become the alpha and omega of almost any deliberation on Black reparations.

Not surprisingly, rancorous rhetoric has often overshadowed rigorous research on the veracity of antireparations and pr reparations claims. This essay aims to correct this problem with an extensive analysis of David Horowitz's (2002) arguments, providing a synthesis of data, concepts, theories, and methodologies from the disciplines of sociology, history, economics, and anthropology. This essay finds that Horowitz's use of academic scholarship to discredit African American reparations fails to meet the "scientific" standards he demands of his opponents.

Keywords: Reparations, Slavery, Racial Inequality, Comparative Ethnic Studies, Social Science Theory/Methodology, Historiography, Public Intellectualism

We have shown how the [social scientist] has to disregard the preconceptions which he had of facts, in order to face the facts themselves; how he has to discriminate among them according to their most objective characteristics; how, he must seek in the facts themselves the means of classifying them as normal and pathological; how, finally, he must be inspired by the same principle in the explanations he

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attempts as in the way in which he tests these explanations. For, as soon as he has the feeling that he is in the presence of things ["social facts"], he will no longer think of explaining them by utilitarian calculations or by syllogistic reasoning of any sort. He will understand too well the gap that exists between such causes and such effects.

—Émile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1938, p. 144; emphasis added)

INTRODUCTION

In 2002 David Horowitz, a former leftist radical turned archconservative, published *Uncivil Wars: The Controversy over Reparations for Slavery* as a counterattack to Randall Robinson's *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks* (2000) and to the Black reparations movement in general. *Uncivil Wars* is arguably the best-known refutation of contemporary Black reparations politics to date. It is an interdisciplinary, ideological work that marshals historical, economic, and sociological data and comparisons for the purpose of defeating the intellectual and ethical justifications of the Black redress movement.

Horowitz mobilizes scholarship like a hydra against Black reparationists. His serpentine set of assertions seeks to constrict all thought of compensation and to further envenom public opinion against proponents. Also like the myth, Horowitz's hydra has many fierce heads. Each one attacks reparationists in a different way and therefore deserves to be called by its own proper name.² This essay will grapple with seven of the most vicious:

- First Head: African Enslavement of Africans
- Second Head: Islamic Enslavement of Black Africans
- Third Head: White Abolitionism over Black Abolitionism
- Fourth Head: White Slavery
- Fifth Head: Non-Slave-Ownning Whites
- Sixth Head: Free Blacks
- Seventh Head: Black Slave Owners

The herculean task of this essay is to destroy this argumentative beast one angry head at a time, until enemies and allies alike of reparationists see Horowitz's arguments for what they truly are—monstrous distortions of academic research born of crude theories, rough methods, and malformed facts.

FIRST HEAD: AFRICAN ENSLAVEMENT OF AFRICANS

Horowitz's main assertion is that "Black Africans . . . were responsible for enslaving the ancestors of African-Americans" (Horowitz 2002, p. 12). He presents three supporting arguments for this thesis. Distilled to their essences, these arguments are: (1) "African slavery"³ was a form of involuntary servitude despite claims to the contrary; (2) "African slavery" was at least as bad as "transatlantic slavery" in its scope, motivation, and treatment of slaves; and (3) European colonial powers fought valiantly to abolish "African slavery" while African slave owners fought vigorously to maintain the institution.

As a central argument in his attack against Black reparations, Horowitz elevates African slavery to the level of a "crime against humanity" (Horowitz 2002, p. 39) that is equal to or more egregious than U.S. slavery. He must therefore prove that Africans were responsible for African slavery within their continent, and that Afri-

cans were equally responsible as Westerners for the transatlantic slave trade. The subtext of proving such is that Africans would be rendered as morally bankrupt as Westerners—even more so because they would be found to have had enslaved and sold “their own people.”⁴ The *political* implication of finding Africans equally or more responsible for African slavery would be that living Black Americans would have no ethical justification for singling out the United States to redress their claims. To do so would amount to “reverse racism.” The *legal* implication of finding Africans equally or more responsible for African slavery would be that the U.S. government would have no legitimate reason to waive its sovereign immunity protection, and thereby expose itself to liability for its part in the slave trade, when African governments of the past committed the “identical” crime against the identical people without making reparations.⁵

Horowitz’s characterization of African slavery and its demise is, for the most part, factually and conceptually incorrect. This can be proved conclusively through the use of appropriate concepts backed by relevant historical data. First, it is necessary to delimit the spatial boundaries of his comparison of African slavery and U.S. slavery. Since Horowitz wishes to focus on the Black ancestors of living African Americans, this would primarily include persons from the nations today known as Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo—in other words, West Africa.⁶ However, Horowitz draws upon examples of slavery that occurred as far away as East Africa (Horowitz 2002, p. 133). He contrasts these examples with events in the colonial United States.

Second, patterns in human bondage in West Africa *prior* to substantial European contact should be identified and evaluated. This is a necessary step since Horowitz argues that “African Slavery . . . pre-existed the Atlantic slave trade by a thousand years” (Horowitz 2002, p. 48). But note that he is making an assertion about the *continent*, which includes West Africa but goes far beyond this region. Hence, we are compelled to examine pre-European West “African slavery” *and* also the existence of slavery throughout the entire landmass to test his assertion. One must therefore go back to 500 AD, nearly one thousand years before Columbus’s 1492 landing in the Americas, to prove or disprove Horowitz’s spatial and temporal claims.

Sound conceptual tools are necessary before undertaking this journey in comparative history. Most forms of human bondage are identical according to Horowitz, and he heatedly rejects any attempt to establish a hierarchy of wrongdoing.⁷ Horowitz accuses reparatationists of “argu[ing] incoherently that African slavery was not really slavery; or, if it was slavery, it was not really bad” (Horowitz 2002, p. 132). (He continues this thesis when he refuses to make sufficient distinctions between so-called “White slavery” and Black slavery in the United States, and between Black slaveholders and White slaveholders in the same country.) But is he correct?

Joseph E. Inikori (2001), a scholar who has investigated different forms of human bondage throughout world history, provides important theoretical tools. After analyzing the literature on serfdom and slavery in Europe, Russia, and Africa, Inikori (2001) concludes that what is often called *slavery* in Africa is much more akin to *serfdom*. He came to this conclusion by first developing a clear, historically informed conceptual distinction between these different types of servitude:

The foregoing evidence on England and Russia (and generally on Europe) makes it clear that the formula employed by students of European history to distinguish serfs and other dependent social categories from slaves incorporates

unambiguous elements: First and foremost, the serfs or non-slave dependent people must possess the means of production of their own (mainly land) large enough to provide a potential income that could support a household with unproductive children and old members; second, they must have enough free time to produce for themselves in order to realize the potential income from the employment of their means of production; third, they must be allowed to retain for their own use as they please the income realized; and fourth, their residences must be physically separated from those of their lords. On the other hand, for a dependent people to be slaves, they must spend virtually their entire working day on their lords' estates—they may be allotted some plots, but both the size and the time available to work them would be so limited that they would have to be fed, clothed, and housed by their lords; and their owners must be free, under the law and by tradition, to sell them to any buyer (Inikori 2001, pp. 55–56).

Inikori next mobilizes this clarified notion of slavery in an interregional analysis of African servitude. After surveying several polities existing in West, Central, and East Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, he finds that both serfdom and slavery existed in Africa, often simultaneously. However, historical evidence conclusively demonstrates that serfdom was by far the predominant form of servitude in Africa. The reason for this is straightforward:

The phenomenon of what scholars refer to as intergenerational mobility among the slave populations in Africa—the tendency for the children of slaves to become free persons or nearly so—meant that the slave class in Africa could not reproduce itself, not only because its rate of reproduction was low . . . but largely because the children of slaves normally did not remain in slavery. They either became free or became serfs. Apart from the clove plantations of East Africa, most of what scholars have called slave plantations in Africa were, in fact, serf villages (Inikori 2001, pp. 67–68).

It is therefore debatable to say that “there were certainly more slaves in Africa in the nineteenth century than there were in the Americas at any time,” as stated by Paul Lovejoy, a scholar Horowitz cites (Paul Lovejoy cited in Inikori 2001, p. 49).⁸ But it is an interesting coincidence that Inikori makes an exception for the East African plantation system because this is exactly a case Horowitz highlights to prove that “African slavery” was “exploitative” (Horowitz 2002, p. 133). As he will do with U.S. slavery and Black slave ownership, Horowitz chooses an extreme instance to support an exaggerated claim. Therefore, Inikori's finding is not simply a political gloss coincidentally favoring reparacionists.⁹ Suspicion should fall on Horowitz (Chrisman and Allen, 2001).

The question remains whether what has been misidentified as slavery for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has also been misidentified in the thousand-year period before significant European contact with West Africa and the rest of the continent. Therefore, I extend Inikori's analysis to at least the thousand-year period before 1500 AD to further test Horowitz's claims and those of reparacionists.¹⁰

Covering the four centuries prior to 1500 AD, the twelfth century to the sixteenth century, and examining several African regions, Djibril Tamsir Niane finds that in general the continent's “kings and emperors had ‘human estates,’ that is, lands [were] worked by subjugated communities; but closer examination shows that this was a system of serfdom rather than slavery” (Niane 1984, p. 682; Adamu 1984, pp. 294–295). Numerically, “Slaves never exceeded peasants as a proportion of the

population. Free men worked the soil on their own account, but free men and tributaries both owed service to the ruler or to the local lord” (Niane 1984, p. 683). There were, of course, regional differences, but throughout the sub-Saharan region (and other regions, but to a different degree), serf labor was larger in number, productivity, and economic importance than slave labor.¹¹ Inikori’s distinction seems to hold somewhat even when extended 3500 years before 500 BC to the era of ancient Egypt, Nubia, sub-Saharan Africa,¹² and the East African Coast (Yoyotte 1981, p. 117; Hakem 1981, pp. 298–325; Sheriff 1981, pp. 551–567).

While some merchants and states engaged in slave trading to amass wealth, and were very adept in doing so, slave trading was never a dominant mode of wealth accumulation nor a means of production for the preponderance of tributary states and kinship societies in Africa prior to European control (Walker 1998, pp. 14–17). For African slavery to take on the chattel characteristics it did in the transatlantic trade, it would have required the substantial substitution of serfdom with capitalist relations—entailing, at bare minimum, private-property ownership and its attendant cultural logic of “possessive individualism.”¹³ Neither occurred greatly in Africa’s pre-European era.¹⁴

Economically speaking, after reviewing “the present state of research” (up to 1984) on events and patterns occurring within Africa or involving Africans from the twelfth century to the sixteenth century, Niane concludes that “nowhere did private ownership of property become general; the principle right of ownership belonged to the community,” and although “a certain accumulation of capital began with the merchant class . . . this did not result in a true bourgeoisie” (Niane 1984, p. 683).¹⁵

Traveling further back in time is just as revealing. Abdoulaye Bathily and Claude Meillassoux’s appraisal of intra-African trade from the seventh century to the eleventh century describes the nature of African commerce as also overwhelmingly noncapitalist:

The African economy as a whole remained a self-sufficient one within which *productivity standards followed consumption standards. Goods were traded on the basis not of their exchange value as such but of their use value.* Economic links between the various regions were based on complementarity between the goods they respectively produced; and these were more subject than now to natural conditions because of the low level of productivity (Bathily and Meillassoux, 1988, p. 749; emphasis added).

Culturally and politically speaking, possessive individualism was nowhere dominant on the continent. Prior to the Europeans, there were three ways an African could be unfortunate enough to become a slave: pawnship, court order, or capture in war. Anthropologist Eric R. Wolf describes each:

The first of these mechanisms, pawnship, was widespread. It was used to settle debts, placing a person in the possession of another in payment of a debt. . . . The second mechanism for creating potential slaves operated through the judicial process. In brief, infractions against the kinship order and the lineage structure were seen as directed not merely against living people but also against the ancestors, and hence the supernatural. . . . A third mechanism was capture in war. In effect, like the other mechanisms, this meant the victim was severed from his native lineage and deprived of supporting kin. Thus, potential slaves in general—whether pawns, criminals, or captives—were all obtained by cutting their ties from kin and transferring the victim to the owner’s kinship group (Wolf 1982, p. 207).

This emphasis on lineage connections was not limited to the *kin-oriented mode of production*,¹⁶ but this mode of production was the one most vested in these kinds of connections. Note that while enslavement could occur because of economic motives (such as debt), these motives were not the “profit motive,” a far harder, and some say impossible, imperative to satisfy.¹⁷ Moreover, those rendered slaves through these mechanisms were not simultaneously given a subhuman status (unlike U.S. slavery). As Wolf notes:

It is important to recognize that once in the possession of his owner’s lineage, a pawn or slave could become a functioning member of the domestic group, even if denied linkage with the owner’s lineage. Pawnship and slavery could thus have relatively benign consequences, without any of the attributes of chattel slavery, which became characteristic of the Western Hemisphere. Nevertheless, both pawns and slaves lacked the rights of lineage members and were thus open to manipulation by their owners (Wolf 1982, pp. 207–208).

There are also noteworthy examples of slaves secured for a *tributary mode of production* by elites, but again this activity was not usually motivated by profit, but rather was a practice designed to concentrate social labor through political might and custom.¹⁸ The significance of this clarification is not that “use value”¹⁹ slave trading was intrinsically a benign transaction. In almost all instances, a slave was a human being of sorely degraded status.²⁰

When the predominant African modes of production began to interface with European and U.S. labor demands, trade between economic systems was initially based primarily on voluntary exchanges that mutually benefited each “world’s” merchants.²¹ Some African merchants sold slaves for *exchange value*.²² As uncomfortable as this fact may be for some reparatationists, it should be acknowledged. Yet this fact should be contextualized and given proper perspective. Were African slave merchants who traded for exchange values the norm in Africa or a lucrative aberration? Was this kind of African slave trader similar to his European counterpart?

Often at the nexus between economic systems, merchants may seem mostly identical in their function. However, as Wolf (1982) cautions, while some merchants functioned as points of articulation between systems, this does not mean they embodied the predominant economic characteristics of their respective societies. Early modern merchants, for the most part, were only powerful or privileged enough to “skim” a fraction of the surpluses generated by noncapitalist modes of production, and subsequently to commodify²³ these surpluses and to reap profits.²⁴ Most could not take this wealth and turn it into *capital*²⁵ ownership of the means of production. Slave labor, the little there was in pre-European Africa, was mostly locked into other modes (Manning 1999, p. 1720). Private property on a *systemic* level was uncommon. Without widespread private property, the “profit for profit’s sake” economic logic of capitalism could not take hold or be fully taken advantage of by merchant slavers at this stage. And without this occurring, most of these African merchants could not rightly call themselves true capitalists. Wolf makes an emphatic distinction between mercantile enterprise and capitalist enterprise:

As long as wealth remains external to the process of production, merely skimming off the products of the primary producers and making profits by selling them, that wealth is *not* capital. It may be wealth obtained and engrossed by overlords or merchants, but it has not yet entered what Marx called “the really revolutionary road” of appropriating and transforming the means of production

themselves (*Cap.* III, 1967:334). Only where wealth has laid hold of the conditions of production in the ways specified can we speak of the existence or dominance of a capitalist mode. There is no such thing as mercantile or merchant capitalism, therefore. There is only mercantile wealth. Capitalism, to be capitalism, must be capitalism-in-production (Wolf 1982, p. 79).

Hence the presence of specialized “interstitial” figures such as *slave traders* does not indicate that the tributary- and kin-oriented modes of securing and allocating slave labor²⁶ in Africa were not still the dominant economic institutions for doing so. For example, the Hausa of Nigeria did “commodify” some of their slaves, but seemingly a larger portion was procured not through purchase or sale but as “tribute from neighboring countries.”²⁷ In general, there is little evidence that the minority of slaves, purchased or sold for exchange value within Africa for African usage, were forced to labor in “nontraditional” ways or generally experienced less-than-customary treatment.

Emphasizing modes of production contextualizes commercial acts and also highlights differences between nominally identical economic activities. *Slave trading*, if not slavery *per se*, has been a commercial enterprise for millennia within and between societies. However, more specific points should be raised: What was the general nature of this commerce in Africa before European encroachment? What was the commercial nature of the Atlantic slave trade? How did the articulation of Atlantic “commercial” slavery affect African “commercial” slavery?

Only theoretical precision can save reparationists at this point. What they should emphasize, in apparent contradiction to their earlier negative evaluation of *all* commercial slavery, is that the existence of a market where and when values are traded does not prove that these transactions were predicated on exchange value, *per se*. They should seek to establish, if correct, that the intra-Africa slave trade was mainly a trade of *use values* before European control transformed many, though not all, of its slave transactions to ones based on exchange value (Adamu 1984, p. 156). Only when African “pre-existing institutions were placed in the service of European mercantile expansion” did the African slave trade take on genocidal chattel form (Wolf 1982, p. 208). The domination of the kin- and tribute-oriented African slave trade by the capitalist transatlantic slave trade, a process of economic *incorporation*²⁸ into the Western world economy through military coercion²⁹ and exchange-value commerce, would eventually reduce those who were once considered lowly, but wholly human, into chattel. *Contra* Horowitz, and to the vindication of reparationists, the historical evidence supports the latter’s contention that African slavery was far less commercial (capitalist) than the transatlantic slave trade dominated by Europeans and White Americans.

SECOND HEAD: ISLAMIC ENSLAVEMENT OF BLACK AFRICANS

Horowitz’s assertion on this topic—“Arabs were responsible for enslaving the ancestors of African-Americans”—is supported by this argument:

In the period between 650 and 1600, *before* any Western involvement, somewhere between 3 million and 10 million Africans were bought by Muslim slavers for use in Saharan societies and in the trade in the Indian Ocean and Red Sea (Horowitz 2002, pp. 12, 111).

Horowitz is right when he says the enslavement of Black Africans by Arabs is usually unknown or ignored. However, he is wrong on almost every other account.

Horowitz really argues that the *Muslim* slave trade was larger than the North American slave trade by the order of approximately ten to one, at most (Horowitz 2002, p. 111). The actual number of slaves transported in this trade is closer to 6 million.³⁰ Regardless of the actual number, Horowitz is being conceptually slippery here. Leaving aside his basic error of making Arabs isomorphic with practitioners of Islam, he does not compare equivalent trades. When he argues against Islamic slavery, he includes the entire expanse of that trade (Saharan, Indian Ocean, and Red Sea trade). He then compares this trade *in toto* to only a portion of the entire transatlantic slave trade to the Americas, that is, the Atlantic slave trade to North America (more specifically, the area that would come to be known in the late eighteenth century as the United States). When compared to the estimated total number of African slaves reaching *all* American shores, Islamic continental and water trades were far less numerous than the transatlantic slave trade—only half the amount. According to a comprehensive scholarly study of the latter phenomenon, conducted by Harvard University's W. E. B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research, almost 12 million enslaved Africans were forced onto European ships heading for the Americas, while "many more Africans were captured or purchased in the interior of the continent, [and] . . . a large number died before reaching the [African] coast" (Behrendt 1999, p. 1865). This means that at least twice the number of Africans, in about one-third the time span, were enslaved in the North American trade versus the number of Africans enslaved in the Islamic trade.

In addition to the smaller total number enslaved nearly one thousand years before the transatlantic slave trade, it should be pointed out that in Islamic slavery the treatment of captive Black Africans was not as severe generally as their treatment in the Americas. Ronald Segal, a historian who has conducted comparative research on both Islamic and Atlantic slave trades, offers this balanced juxtaposition of slavery in the two different civilizations:

Christian societies were responsible for an engagement of slavery in its most hideous, dehumanizing form. Yet it was Christians who led the campaign to abolish the slave trade and then slavery itself. Islam has been, by specific spiritual precept and in common practice [that is, as a "social fact"], relatively humane in its treatment of slaves and its readiness to free them, even though *individual* Muslims have been among the most ferocious slavers in history (Segal 2001, pp. x–xi; emphasis added).³¹

Islamic slavery varied significantly depending upon the circumstances (Hill 1985, pp. 34–36). The Hausa "farm-slavery system" of the Kano Emirate, a polity that predated European control, is a good example of what "typical" Islamic slavery was like (Hill 1985, p. 35). There were similarities between Christian U.S. slavery and Islamic types of slavery. Kano slavery was geared toward household consumption of crops and the generation of surpluses (Hill 1985, p. 36). A slave was "considered chattel because he had a market value, which no one save his owner could realize by selling him" (Hill 1985, p. 37). Moreover, owners owned the offspring of their female slaves (Hill 1985, p. 38). Yet there were many important differences between the two systems. First:

A master was obliged . . . to provide his slave with a plot of land on which he could work on his own account, and to allow him one or two free days in the

week when he could work on his own farm or in some other remunerative occupation, rather than on his owner's . . . farm (Hill 1985, p. 37).

Applying Inikori's conceptual and practical distinction between slaves and serfs means that many so-called slaves under Islam actually functioned more as serfs. Second, while a slave owner had the absolute right to sell any or all of his slaves,

a slave-owner's freedom to sell any slave living *en famille* was severely limited by local public opinion, which held that children should not be separated from their parents or spouses wrenched apart, unless the owner had become impoverished or the slave were unmanageable, troublesome or criminal (Hill 1985, p. 38).

The separation of family members was far more common under U.S. slavery, even based on conservative calculations (Fogel and Engerman, 1974, pp. 44–52). Third, slaves under Islamic slavery were allowed to purchase their freedom or could have their freedom purchased for them. However, whereas Kano Emirate slave “masters were obliged to allow their slaves time off in which to accumulate sufficient funds by pursuing some remunerative occupation,” in the United States slave masters provided little to no opportunity for slaves to earn enough money to purchase their freedom (Hill 1985, p. 38). Against the Islamic example stands the practice of charging “self-ransoming” slaves twice their market value for their freedom, whereas self-manumitting slaves in the United States were usually charged their market value (Hill 1985, p. 38). However, U.S. slaveholders often attached pecuniary and humiliating requirements on to-be-freed slaves, while this was not as frequent a practice under Islamic slavery (Berlin 1998). Moreover, “A freed slave was free without qualification” under Islamic slavery since “there was, in fact, no legal status intermediate between slavery and freedom” (Hill 1985, p. 38). This was certainly not the case in U.S. slavery, as I will demonstrate later in my analysis of free Blacks.

Another major difference between the Islamic and transatlantic trades is that the former was overwhelmingly female, whereas the latter was mostly male. African women were used as concubines and domestic servants in Islamic slavery. Turning to another major Islamic slave trade destination, Southwest Asia, Ari Nave concludes:

The majority of slaves, particularly women who served as concubines, became integrated into host societies, most often under Muslim law. Male slaves were also circumcised and given Muslim names. Upon bearing a son to their owner, concubines could not be sold or given away. Furthermore, concubines were liberated upon their owner's death, and the child was considered a free individual. Many other slaves were probably manumitted after working a nine-year period, after which many pious Muslims felt that the slaves had worked sufficiently to have earned their freedom (Nave 1999, p. 1880).

By stating that Islamic slavery was less severe than U.S. slavery, I do not mean to diminish in any way the crime of sexual exploitation experienced by women or men in the Islamic system(s). But in comparison, this most despicable offense, suffered by slaves in both systems, compounds the larger list of abuses Black slaves faced in the Americas. The secret and public rape of Black women, the more familiar image of Black men noosed, hung, and castrated—there is little proof that these brands of human degradation were practiced as widely under Islamic slave systems as they were under U.S. slavery. Nor is there sufficient evidence that slaves freed under Islamic

systems subsequently faced the rampant sexual predations and overall brutality suffered by emancipated North American Blacks.

THIRD HEAD: WHITE ABOLITIONISM OVER BLACK ABOLITIONISM

Horowitz's broadest attack against Black abolitionism begins, strangely, in ancient times:

For thousands of years, until the end of the eighteenth century, slavery had been considered a normal institution of human societies. In all that time, no group had arisen to challenge its legitimacy. Of course, there were many slave revolts from the times of Moses and Spartacus, in which those who had been enslaved sought to gain their freedom. But that was not the point. The freedom they had sought was their own. They did not revolt against the institution of slavery as such.

What had happened in the English-speaking countries at the dawn of the American Republic was entirely unique. Before then, no one had thought to form a movement dedicated to the belief that the institution of slavery was itself immoral. What was important in this historical fact was that it showed that white Europeans who were the target of the reparations indictment had played a pivotal role in the emancipation from slavery (Horowitz 2002, p. 58).

Horowitz's assertion can be dismantled on the level of historical evidence and on the level of theory. Horowitz's historical knowledge is flawed. Historian Theodore L. Sylvester traces the first signs of abolitionism to two ancient sects of Jews called the Essenes and the Therapeutae (Sylvester 2000). These groups lived in first-century Palestine and Egypt, respectively. They were pacifists and abhorred slavery. The Essenes, for example, "actively worked to end slavery by purchasing slaves from their masters and setting them free" (Sylvester 2000, p. 33). Second, his minimalization of Spartacus's revolt is not justified. Spartacus did not *only* free himself and a band of seventy gladiators from their owners when they escaped their slave pens in 73 BC. In addition to freeing themselves, Spartacus's soldiers

set up base near Mount Vesuvius . . . and attacked nearby towns, freeing slaves and killing slaveowners, sometimes forcing them to fight each other to the death. . . . As word spread, the gladiator-led revolt attracted thousands of runaway slaves to the rebel camp. By the time Rome sent a small military force to Vesuvius to end the rebellion, they faced thousands of liberated and runaway slaves. The Romans were soundly defeated (Sylvester 2000, p. 54).

The activities of all these groups indicate that efforts against the institution of slavery were under way thousands of years before British or U.S. initiatives began in the late eighteenth century.

Horowitz's conceptual understanding of political movements is generally problematic; its formulation is too narrow. According to him, Black slave revolts were a legitimate form of liberation but ultimately only localized, self-serving efforts. Horowitz does not believe that these events and less dramatic forms of resistance constitute anti-institutional politics. There is no mention in his work of the evolution of a

collective antislavery consciousness or of the politics among Blacks independent of, or prior to, White abolitionism.

Robert Chrisman and Ernest Allen, Jr., take Horowitz to task for his omission of Black agency (Chrisman and Allen, 2001). Horowitz has responded to this criticism by saying:

I was defending those whites who had honorable anti-slavery sentiments and deeds to their credit against the claims of the reparations partisans. There was obviously no reason, in making such an argument, to comment on the efforts of blacks themselves (Horowitz 2002, p. 58n81).

More to the point, he argues that all examples Chrisman and Allen give of Black militancy “postdated the creation of the anti-slavery movement by Christians in 1787” (Horowitz 2002, p. 58n81). The year 1787 is important because it marks the founding of the London Abolition Committee by four White English Quaker merchants, George Harrison, Samuel Hoare, James Phillips, and Joseph Woods.³² In short, according to Horowitz, Black revolts and regular resistance do not a “revolution” make. Yet when conceptualized correctly these unpredictable activities are what some social movement theorists would describe as part of a larger “cycle of protest” (Snow and Benford, 1992) against the *institution* of slavery.

Horowitz understands political movements as efforts involving formal *resource mobilization* practiced by *social movement organizations*, to use the parlance of movement theoreticians.³³ While these efforts are undoubtedly crucial to most movements, it is incorrect to conflate them with all movement activity as Horowitz does. Doing so prevents Horowitz from accurately interpreting, for example, the attacks and “predations” by Blacks who escaped their personal bondage and formed “bands of runaways sometimes . . . so emboldened that they sent entire [White] communities into panic” (Franklin and Schweninger, 1999, pp. 86–89). Nor can he explain why slave owners in general feared the instability that rebellious slaves brought to the whole system of slavery through nearly “250 serious revolts (conspiracies and uprisings)” from early colonial times up to the Civil War (Sylvester 2000, p. 184).³⁴ Slave rebellions did indeed occur in specific places at particular times—in precise “localities.” Perhaps slavers feared no rebellion more than the one at their doorstep. However, as Sylvester notes, the political ramifications of these collective actions were felt

[throughout] the entire nation, especially in the slaveholding South. For slaveholders, the rebellions and conspiracies were reasons to fear their slaves all the more and to pass even more restrictive laws to control them. . . . As examples of the price slaves were willing to pay for freedom, the slave revolts and conspiracies inspired and helped to unify the abolitionists (Sylvester 2000, pp. 189–190).

Obviously, Horowitz’s implicit “organizational standard” for abolitionism is an inappropriate measure for “informal”³⁵ Black abolitionist activities during a time when most Blacks were enslaved or at best “quasi-free” (Berlin 1974). Securing enough freedom and resources to organize and sustain lasting organizations was very difficult during slavery. White violence and other forms of repression hampered Black abolitionist agendas. Black organizations, far more than White organizations, had to perform several social, economic, and political functions for their communities. This meant Black organizations, under racism and heavy demands, required more time to extend themselves markedly in some endeavors. Perforce, many of their

antislavery activities came to acquire a more piecemeal appearance, especially in the early days of the colonies. If White abolitionists were able to forge standing organizations before Blacks, then it would be understandable since White abolitionists were not encumbered by as severe restrictions on their personal freedom and political rights as were imposed on Blacks.³⁶ To put a fine point on it, it was far easier and less dangerous for a handful of White Quakers in England to take a strong public stand against slavery than two equally religious, abolitionist Black men, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, who did so in the United States. Yet Allen and Jones were *still* able to found their Free African Society in *the same year* as the London Abolition Committee! Beginning, most likely, as “the first black benevolent society in the United States . . . within several years members had turned their attention to anti-slavery work, including the prevention of kidnapping [free blacks into slavery]” (Wilson 1999, p. 111).

Blacks often had to adopt more covert means to undermine the institution of slavery. Some were cultural, as in the case of “slave religion” and its reinterpretation of Christian doctrine as narratives of divine deliverance from and retribution for the temporal horrors of slavery. Slave culture(s) also gave birth to folktales that condoned patience, guile, and even humor as coded counternarratives to the logic of slavery.³⁷ Their ubiquity and usage by slaves can be posited, in part, as proof of a widespread *counterconsciousness* against the slave system which, if not revolutionary, was certainly collective and critical. When they presented their case before colonial authorities, Blacks often had to condemn their enslavement through comparisons that played on the sympathy—and hypocrisy—of the White colonial public’s anger toward British tyranny.³⁸ For example, in line with this necessarily muted rhetoric, but ignored inexcusably by Horowitz, were “petitions of independence” authored by Blacks during the Revolutionary era, predating the Declaration of Independence by at least three years (Wood 2000, pp. 99–100).

Horowitz’s excuse for omitting pre-1787 Black efforts to consistently undermine slavery is unacceptable and galling in light of the vacillations and contradictions displayed by most White abolitionists and American Enlightenment figures. In the first case, history shows that Blacks sought various means to achieve their *own* freedom once the Revolutionary War began. Five thousand Blacks joined the colonial army, hoping that the ideals of the Revolution would be applied to them if the insurgents won (Littlefield 2000, p. 116). Black loyalty to the principle of freedom usually *transcended* any loyalty to colonial nationalism. Black slaves fled even “kind masters,” such as Thomas Jefferson; they sought not only to escape their particular circumstances but also to rid themselves of the logic and dictates of the “peculiar institution” (Stampp 1956). Since they were not powerful enough to destroy the institution of slavery but could damage its economic base and social stability, many Blacks took flight, with some joining the British army in the wake of Lord Dunmore’s 1775 proclamation “offering freedom to slaves . . . of rebellious [colonial] subjects . . . able to join and fight” (Littlefield 2000, p. 115). Still others fled to “parts unknown,” with “Jefferson estimat[ing] that about 25,000 Virginia slaves left their owners during the war . . . [even though] many had to endure considerable danger and hardship to do so” (Littlefield 2000, p. 117). In other words, attempts to extricate themselves from their particular conditions of enslavement constituted attacks upon the institution itself. Runaway slaves alone cost U.S. slavery a great deal in terms of lost capital, reduced production, and rising “enforcement costs” associated with the greater demand for slave patrols when this kind of “property stole itself” (Hummell 1996).³⁹ All these attempts at self-liberation occurred years before Horowitz’s start date for White abolitionism.

White U.S. Abolitionism

Horowitz asserts that “if not for the anti-slavery beliefs and military power of white Englishmen and Americans, the slave trade would not have been brought to an end” (Horowitz 2002, p. 15). Moreover, he writes, “If not for the sacrifices of white soldiers and a white American president who gave his life to sign the Emancipation Proclamation, blacks in America would still be slaves” (Horowitz 2002, p. 15). The problem with these statements is not that they are entirely incorrect but rather what they exaggerate and what they occlude. For example, one is led to believe from Horowitz’s assertions that President Lincoln was a selfless and strident opponent of slavery. This portrayal is contradicted by political scientists Haines Walton, Jr., and Robert C. Smith. According to these scholars, at the eve of the Civil War:

As the prospects of secession and civil war increased, the House and Senate appointed special committees to investigate the situation and make recommendations that might avoid war. Among the recommendations proposed by the House committee was an amendment to the Constitution that would have prohibited any amendment to the Constitution granting the Congress the power to interfere in any way with slavery in any state. . . .

This extraordinary amendment, intended to freeze slavery into the Constitution forever, was adopted on March 2, 1861, by a Congress that was overwhelmingly northern, since by that time the senators and representatives from seven southern states that had already seceded were not present. *President Lincoln took the extraordinary and completely unnecessary step of personally signing the amendment, the first and only time a president has signed a constitutional amendment* (Walton and Smith, 2000, p. 198; emphasis added).

Lincoln’s position on Blacks in the United States was highly troublesome and contradictory, not unlike the opinions and politics of more genuine White abolitionists. In *Reluctant Reformers*, sociologist Robert Allen investigates whether liberal White abolitionism was truly as antiracist as is commonly believed. His answer is resoundingly negative (Allen 1974).

Slavery had become a firm institution at least a century before the American Revolution (Handlin 1957, pp. 3–22; Jordan 1968). Early proposals to end the “peculiar institution” failed before the combined might of northern merchants and southern planters. Antislavery forces failed again at the Constitutional Convention of 1787. Northern interests argued that enslaved Africans and African Americans should not be fully counted for the purpose of apportioning representatives. Southern slaveholding interests wanted slaves to be fully counted in order to increase the region’s political clout. A bargain was struck, and it was “written into the United States Constitution . . . that each slave would be counted as 3/5 of a person” (Allen 1974, p. 12).

As the plantation economy expanded at the end of the eighteenth century so did the power of proslavery forces. Black abolitionist activities “converge[d] and unite[d] in an *organized* movement . . . [in the] 1817 conventions in Richmond, Virginia, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania” (Allen 1974, p. 13; emphasis added). Thus began the Negro Convention Movement, its genesis a response to the founding of the American Colonization Society in 1816, an association that sought to deport free Blacks. The Negro Convention Movement opposed the colonization efforts by White abolitionists. A few Whites were in line with the Black position, most notably William L. Garrison, a pacifist and former procolonialist turned staunch anticolonialist, as he

detailed in his 1832 *Thoughts on African Colonization* (cited in Allen 1974, p. 14). But it was a Black radical political philosophy—proclaimed both in David Walker's *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* ([1829] 1998), which militantly railed against slavery itself, and in Henry Highland Garnet's call for slave revolts in his 1843 *Address*—that really fired up support for abolitionism.

Black abolitionists vigorously debated the goals and strategies of the overall movement. Initially, Frederick Douglass would not back Garnet because he was a believer in Garrison's pacifist, moral-suasion approach to the slavery issue. (The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, a component of the Compromise of 1850, would cause Douglass to change his mind.) Earlier Nat Turner's Virginia revolt in 1831 had spurred militant abolitionism. Inspired by Turner, Garrison founded the New England Anti-Slavery Society in 1832, which was a forerunner of the larger, interracial American Anti-Slavery Society founded in 1833.

Horowitz ignores the radicalizing effect Black abolitionists had upon their White counterparts. In his desire to prove White abolitionists were the most organized of the entire lot, he fails to closely examine the ideological makeup of his antislavery heroes. For example, the outlook of the early phase of the White abolitionist movement was largely conciliatory, gradualist, and procolonization. This changed only after the influx of Black militants and the hardening of the slave system after 1830. Horowitz also ignores the ambiguities about race relations between Blacks and Whites that split the movement into separate sections. Whites accepted Blacks as members in their militant organizations, but some felt an interracial group would scare off potential White recruits. Some Whites patronized Blacks and thought them naturally inferior. These issues effectively stalled the movement.

White U.S. abolitionists should be known and given their due. However, the historical record plainly contradicts Horowitz's image of Black freedom as a gift given by beneficent Whites to a mostly stupefied population of enslaved and free Blacks.

British Abolitionism

Horowitz's romanticization of British abolitionism also falls before the axe of historical evidence. This is true whether we focus on Britain's relationship to the United States before and during the Civil War or if we turn our attention toward Britain's various initiatives to "liberate" Africans.

Union forces imposed a blockade on the Confederacy early in the Civil War that prevented the region from carrying on trade and commerce with the nations of Europe. However, British merchants proceeded to rake in "handsome profits [from] supplying both the Union and [the] Confederacy with arms, ammunition, and sundry military equipment" (Hummell 1996, p. 171). For the Confederacy, the British built "ironclad warships . . . equipped with seven-foot, wrought-iron, underwater rams and nine-inch rifled guns . . . sea-going fortresses [that] might have smashed through the Union blockade" (Hummell 1996, pp. 214–215). This action set off a diplomatic incident with the Union, one that forced the English to back down and to stop their supplies to the South. After the war, the *re*-United States would not let the transgression of international norms pass quietly and sought monetary damages for what was technically foreign interference in a domestic civil matter. According to Hummell, "Britain was found not to have exercised 'due diligence' and paid the United States \$15.5 million" (Hummell 1996, pp. 214–215).⁴⁰

Horowitz's position also suffers from a lack of awareness (or concern) regarding the vested interests that the colonial powers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had in perpetuating slavery in Africa (Inikori 2001, p. 67). Did European

conquerors truly wish to end slavery in Africa? Certainly there were colonial administrators and local White foes of the institution who genuinely wanted to see it end, as historians Suzanne Miers and Martin A. Klein indicate (Miers and Klein, 1999, pp. 4–5). But more common was the bureaucratic imperative to find the most efficient manner to rule. Horowitz rightly indicates that this emancipation was a gradual process (Horowitz 2002, p. 131). Some groups of African slave owners, such as the Igbo people of Nigeria (one of the slave strongholds Horowitz identifies), fought tooth and nail to maintain their human holdings (Miers and Klein, 1999, p. 5). The Gold Coast situation was similar (Miers and Klein, 1999, p. 6). Hence, colonial efforts to end slave raiding and slave trading are verifiable and commendable (Miers and Klein, 1999, p. 1). However, efforts by the same powers to keep the *institution* of slavery intact are not.

In a recent compilation of essays by several authors designed specifically to “cast more light on the flaws and hypocrisies of colonial policies as well as on the subtle infinite variations in the legacy of slavery” in Africa, Miers and Klein find the authors unanimous in their belief “of the reluctance of colonial regimes to deal with slavery” (Miers and Klein, 1999, p. 4). Their piecemeal approach was due largely to financial considerations and administrative convenience.⁴¹ What colonials did to appear beneficent also deserves scrutiny. Suffering seemingly under “the White man’s burden,” colonial administrations propagandized for full freedom. In reality, however, they chose to alter but not to eliminate African slavery. Their reasons for doing so were strategic:

As their [European] empires expanded . . . they sought an approach to slavery that would neither antagonize African elites nor draw fire from humanitarian groups at home. Under British law slavery had to be outlawed in colonies. To avoid this, as new areas were conquered, they were designated “protectorates.” In these they could use the model of abolition worked out by the British in India. Under this model slavery lost its legal status, but did not become illegal. This meant, in theory, that the colonial regime did not recognize rights over slaves in colonial courts, nor—again in theory—did it return runaways or permit slave-owners to use force to retrieve or retain their slaves. This was acceptable to many colonial policy-makers, and even to some humanitarians because they believed that slaves in Africa were in general well treated. The hope was that this model would enable the seriously oppressed to leave, but would keep most slaves in place and at work, until eventually they were replaced by a free wage labour force—the ultimate aim. This solution was cheap (Miers and Klein, 1999, p. 4).

Reparationists cannot even find full comfort in the “purer” humanitarian impulse of British abolitionists. A closer look must be taken at the motivations and goals of the men to whom Horowitz is implicitly referring when he celebrates the British abolitionist movement. Their noble motives for erasing the scourge of slavery are ultimately a fulfillment of “the White man’s burden.” Historian Jack Gratus had this to say about the handful of Quakers who founded the famous London Abolition Committee in 1787, one of the earliest organizations dedicated to the end of slavery:

The abolitionists in Britain like William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson and Thomas Buxton saw their campaign as both “positive” and “negative”; the latter policy was the destruction of the slave trade by persuading or coercing participating nations to cease the traffic. The “positive” policy can be summarized as Christianity, commerce, and colonialism. To destroy slavery once and for all,

they argued, it was essential to maintain a legitimate trade with Africa, to make the heathen blacks Christian, and to bestow on them the benefits of white Christian morality. Since the basis of their “positive” policy was a belief in the inherent superiority of white Christian civilisation, this belief became entrenched and respectable, and in a less obvious but more insidious way than outright racism became the moral and religious *raison d’être* for colonial expansion and imperial arrogance (Gratus 1973, p. 16).

Reparationists, therefore, are far more right than wrong when they direct their redress claims to Western powers (in this case colonial America and thus the United States) rather than to African polities, past or present. African slavery *on the whole* was far less expansive than the European- and U.S.-dominated slave trade and far less brutal in its treatment of slaves.

FOURTH HEAD: WHITE SLAVERY

Horowitz asserts, “There were white slaves in colonial America” (Horowitz 2002, p. 12). In raising the question “Are their descendents going to receive payments?” his pretext is explicit (Horowitz 2002, p. 12). While this may seem to be a question concerned with policy, the underlying purpose for both the assertion and the question is to undermine the moral authority of reparationists if their claims are to apply only to the Black population. By presenting the little-known practice of White slavery as an offense that is equally immoral as, if not numerically equal to, Black slavery, Horowitz hopes to prove not only that “there is no single group responsible for the crime of slavery” but also that no one racial group was its victim (Horowitz 2002, p. 12). Since Whites are not seeking restitution for this “identical” offense, Blacks should not either. Horowitz scores rhetorically because he has successfully paralleled White slavery with Black slavery in the public’s mind. To support reparations for one type of slavery logically presupposes support for the other. Conversely, if one is found to be ridiculous, so is the other, to some extent.

Conceptual clarity and appropriateness will go a long way to refute Horowitz’s assertion about the existence of “White slavery.”⁴² Is he correct? Were there White slaves in the colonial United States? In the most minuscule way, the answer is yes. According to labor historian Jacqueline Jones, there was only one category of White persons enslaved in the colonial United States: White women who gave birth to babies sired by enslaved Black men (Jones 1998, pp. 49, 53). A 1664 Virginia decree was created by colonial officials to punish White women for transgressing racial-sexual boundaries. White men, the vast majority of men fathering mulatto children during slavery, never faced such severe punishment. Yet this statute, lasting seventeen years, was “a development that made colonial officials decidedly uncomfortable,” and was rescinded in 1681 (Jones 1998, p. 49).

One cannot help but notice that in the only properly documented case of White slavery in the colonial United States, White enslavement was a horrendous *by-product* of Black slavery! These women were enslaved for no other reason than ethnocultural racism, not for economic reasons, the main reason Africans and colonial Blacks suffered slavery. Are the ancestors of this tiny, fleeting number of legally enslaved Whites the population Horowitz thinks could lay claim to reparations on the same grounds as Blacks? Perhaps, but he gives no indication of being aware of this minor historical aberration. In fact, he presents no evidence whatsoever in his book in support of his assertion on White slavery. This explosive claim, one sentence in a

147-page polemic dedicated to “the controversy over reparations for slavery,” is pure rhetoric, unsubstantiated by evidence.

But Horowitz probably does not have these unfortunate women (or their unfortunate Black mates and children) in mind when he draws his comparison. Conservative critics of slavery often point to the large number of White indentured servants working in the colonies as proof of the “multiracial” nature of slavery. It is true that most labor in the colonial era was “unfree” and subject to “hard usage.”⁴³ But does this mean that Whites of this category were slaves? To answer in the affirmative is to conflate fundamentally divergent modes of racial existence, an error untangled by concepts powered with relevant historical data.

Historian Michael L. Bush provides such concepts in an analysis of “bonded white servitude” in the Americas (Bush 2000). He identifies six types of servitude that “unfree” Whites experienced. The best known is *indentured servitude*. Under this type of bondage, many Europeans who came to the American colonies “before leaving the home country, had signed a legal document specifying the conditions and duration of service. Following their arrival and sale, a note was made to that effect on the back of the indenture” (Bush 2000, p. 57).

A second form of bondage was *servants by statute*. Under this type of bondage Whites “were simply bound by ‘custom of the country’ and the colonial laws appertaining. No legal document was signed” (Bush 2000, pp. 57–58). Both forms took root in the seventeenth century. *Redemptioning*, another form of bondage originating in the eighteenth century, was also an option for Whites. According to Bush:

After making the transatlantic passage without prior payment, [the redemptioners] eventually signed an indenture of service in the New World and submitted themselves for sale. But this only happened after a fourteen-day period of grace in which they were given the chance to redeem themselves by somehow finding the fare. Succeeding, they settled as free persons; failing, they became bonded servants (Bush 2000, p. 58).

In the above cases, Whites voluntarily agreed to become servants or to expose themselves to this liability. Bush states there were also three forms of *involuntary bondage* experienced by some Whites, including those kidnapped from Europe into U.S. servitude, convicts sent to the United States to serve their sentences, and those who broke colonial law by not paying debts or by committing “larceny, arson and forgery and then, if unable to pay the fine, [were] subjected to bonded labour” (Bush 2000, p. 58). Both exported and local convicts “were assigned for a given term to whomsoever was prepared to buy them” (Bush 2000, p. 58). In both involuntary and voluntary bondage Whites could be sold, would receive no wages for labor, and could not choose their master (Bush 2000). Some engaged in fieldwork (Bush 2000, p. 61).

There were some commonalities in the legal treatment of White servants and Black slaves (Bush 2000, p. 63). However, the overall societal treatment of White servants and Black slaves diverged far more than it dovetailed. Most “unfree” White colonials consented to their own bondage or were convicted of a crime—most often of a capital crime such as rebellion (Bush 2000, pp. 66–67). Their bondage was temporary, while Black bondage quickly became lifelong by custom⁴⁴ and by law⁴⁵ during the middle years of the seventeenth century. White bondspersons could legally own property⁴⁶ and testify and sue in court, received customary and legal protections against abuse by their masters, and could possess weapons including firearms. Blacks were generally denied these rights and privileges. While they received

no wages during their term of bondage, White servants were given several incentives for their continued “good” work (Bush 2000, p. 61).⁴⁷

Of particular relevance to the reparations debate is the fact that bonded Whites, including indentured servants, were given a “freedom due” at the end of their servitude. This due usually came in the form of a land grant of thirty to fifty acres (Bush 2000, p. 64). This due cannot be considered “reparations” for an economic wrong because it was the servant who owed money to the master, not the other way around. Nor can it be considered compensation for the “surplus value” generated above and beyond expenses that the master incurred covering the servant’s oceanic voyage or his upkeep while bonded. A servant voluntarily forfeited any right to this future wealth once he signed the contract. The glaring contrast is that while for nearly two centuries White servants were given the material wherewithal to become economically self-sufficient after seven years of voluntary service, Blacks would not even receive forty acres per family for 246 years of coerced labor. Blacks received no “freedom dues” after emancipation, much less true compensation for their unpaid “super-exploited” labor, personal “pain and suffering,” and collective cultural assault.

FIFTH HEAD: NON-SLAVE-OWNING WHITES

This brings us to the related question of whether non-slave-owning Whites benefited from Black slavery. This is a major sticking point for Horowitz, for he argues that since only 20% of southern Whites owned slaves (Horowitz 2002, p. 12), descendants of those who did not—most of the White United States—are in no way obligated to pay.

The major reparationist organizations in existence today do not direct their claims against the descendants of White slave owners or Whites in general. These reparationists usually hold the U.S. government⁴⁸ and certain private corporations accountable (Robinson and TransAfrica Forum, 2007; N’COBRA 2002). However, it should be made clear that this decision is strategic and visionary; its goal is to obtain compensation for Blacks in a way that balances this primary concern with an equally genuine concern: to improve race relations in the country (Robinson and TransAfrica Forum, 2007). It is therefore best for the United States that reparationists do not seek to recover damages from individual members of the dominant racial group.

Yet one should not infer from this decision that a valid case against non-slave-owning Whites *could not* be made. Several scholars have provided ample historical evidence of the racial benefits of slavery (and segregation) to working-class Whites.⁴⁹ These benefits were economic, cultural, and political. Surprisingly, even bonded servants benefited, as Bush reveals:

The presence of black slaves in substantial numbers not only promoted a more elevated view of white bonded servants but also lightened their burden of work. Originally, bonded servants were required to do whatever the master ordered. When this led to making artisans labour in the fields, the work must have seemed extremely arduous. However, the arrival of slaves narrowed down, and alleviated, the work expected of them. By the 1680’s the field work on the plantations of Barbados and Jamaica was confined to blacks, with the possible exception of a few white convicts. Within the next hundred years, Maryland and Virginia went the same way. In fact, the employment of bonded servants as farm laborers only endured in the regions with a low concentration of slaves, notably the American middle colonies and New England. Where slave labor was extensively used in the fields, bonded servants came to be mainly employed as skilled artisans . . .

eventually the black slaves took over the skilled positions on the plantations. . . . Displaced by slaves as skilled and unskilled laborers, white servants continue to be employed in domestic service, as labour supervisors and as plantation managers. In this way, the range of work required of them became confined to relatively light and amenable tasks (Bush 2000, pp. 63–64).

Even in the fieldwork they did share, further racial distinctions evolved. Labor tasks were bifurcated whenever practical. For example:

Hemp became known as a “nigger crop” not because poor whites eschewed all kind of agricultural labor but because growing hemp (and also breaking the tough stalks in particular) was “very dirty, and so laborious that scarcely any white man will work at it” (Jones 1998, p. 208).

The evolution of White prerogatives to secure better jobs, rights, and customary privileges of the society did not stop where the fields ended. Distinctions in this area and other areas of work became more apparent by the late eighteenth century (Jones 1998).⁵⁰ The most difficult or unpleasant tasks were reserved for Blacks.

Non-slaveholding Whites reaped benefits from Black enslavement in other ways. *Economically*, Whites, including White women, were generally given preference for better jobs or in getting hired for any job over Blacks. White women, and White men to a greater degree, were able to take this “extra racial income” home to benefit not only themselves but also their entire families.⁵¹ Economic advantages in terms of income *and* assets (recall the fifty-acre freedom dues many White ex-servants received) often translated into the possibility of purchasing slaves to augment other wealth holdings. Indeed, 135 years earlier, Virginia instituted a blatant policy of wealth transference from slaves to poor Whites.⁵² Approximately seventy years later, the same colony enticed soldiers to fight the war for U.S. Independence with the promise of receiving a “prime” slave and 300 acres of land per soldier (Takaki 1993, p. 68). It is likely to assume it was the superior class advantages White non-slave owners enjoyed that explain why by 1860 88% of all persons owning slaves in the United States were small-property owners (Rubio 2001, p. 20). The important point is that many “non-slave owners wanted to become slave owners—and supported that mentality throughout the early nation’s culture” (Jones 1998, p. 205).

Many poor Whites further benefited *psychologically* from the economic opportunities and cultural conventions that permitted even the most bedraggled, bonded “buckra” to think he was better than the “niggra” next to him in the field. Both knew the White would eventually be freed, own the sweat of his labor, and likely end up tilling his own field. All this was not for the Black slave. Knowledge of this upward class trajectory for Whites could not help but to add to the slave’s misery while making the servant’s load lighter. As Jones (1998) pointed out, the social meaning of labor, a changing phenomenon shaped by several societal forces, is not the product of individual imagination. Unlike that of a White servant, the Black slave’s dreams of freedom and farmland could only turn him every which way but loose.⁵³

Sociocultural privileges were also accorded to non-slave-owning Whites. A prime example of this is how nonpropertied Whites were given leave to lord over slaves they did not own, *as well as reign over free Blacks*. In the wake of Bacon’s Rebellion in 1676—a failed revolt of Black slaves and White indentured servants who had been denied freedom dues—colonial powers punished Whites and Blacks but Blacks worse (Takaki 1993, p. 67). Slaveless Whites were given the right to whip any Black

resisting the will of any “Christian” (Takaki 1993, p. 67). Mandatory deference to Whites from slaves and free Blacks predates the rebellion and would continue for centuries, even after emancipation.

Politically, the United States witnessed the further consolidation of White advantage for non-slaveholding, nonpropertied Whites in the early nineteenth century. The presidency of Andrew Jackson, from 1829 to 1837, politically benefited non-slave-owning working-class Whites at the expense of Blacks. Jacksonian “democracy” expanded the right to vote to include nonpropertied White men, while Blacks were disenfranchised all over the South and North, regardless of their possession of property (Rubio 2001, pp. 21–26).

Black reparationists are making a claim for compensation based on the social fact that Black slavery was a massive, long-lasting, multi-institutional, brutal, exploitative, racially specific set of practices and ideologies whose economic and cultural legacy adversely impacts Black progress today. White slavery was short-lived, minuscule, and not racially motivated. There is no way White slavery was substantial enough to impede the progress of the White people, either in the colonial era or up to the present day. White slavery did not exploit enough individual Whites to economically debilitate their overall population. White slavery did not lead to the establishment of a large White underclass during its seventeen years of “practice,” nor did it contribute to White poverty centuries later.

On the other hand, there is overwhelming evidence of how Whites benefited from the enslavement of Blacks even when they did not directly own slaves. The racial strictures of slavery augmented the economic, cultural, political, and psychological standing of most Whites to some degree, usually to a great degree.

SIXTH HEAD: FREE BLACKS

Horowitz asserts, “During the slavery era, many blacks were free men . . . yet the reparations claimants make no attempt to take this fact into account” (Horowitz 2002, p. 13). In another section, he propounds:

Hundreds of thousands of free blacks in America had citizen rights, including the right to own slaves. . . . Though free blacks could not vote in many states, some, like Frederick Douglass, were respected statesmen in their own right (Horowitz 2002, p. 81).

Horowitz makes it seem that during slavery free Blacks had nearly equal rights, treatment, and social standing as Whites. As “proof,” he points to the ownership of slaves by some free Blacks, an association thoroughly dismantled and debunked in the seventh section of this essay.

A few sharp blows destroy this particular hydra head. Theodore L. Sylvester (2000) provides some weapons. Life in the main was deplorable for free Blacks. Reminiscent of Ronald Takaki’s point above—that since 1676 (at least) Whites were free to physically punish any Blacks who they felt were “belligerent”—Sylvester states, “If found guilty of certain crimes, free blacks were subject to public whippings and the possibility of enslavement, fates that no whites were forced to endure” (Sylvester 2000, p. 157). In the matter of political rights, he adds, “In the North, only five states, four of them in New England, permitted free blacks to vote. Free blacks could not vote anywhere in the South” (Sylvester 2000, p. 157). Some free Blacks were forced to leave the states where they were emancipated, as was the case

in Virginia.⁵⁴ Most were not free to travel wherever they wished, even in the North (Sylvester 2000, p. 160). “By 1835, most free blacks in the South had lost the right of free assembly,” writes Sylvester (2000, p. 160). Economically, they were legally and violently relegated to the worst jobs, pushed out of skilled trades by White workers, and barred from labor unions. Consequently, free Blacks often suffered poverty so severe that a tiny minority even chose to *re-enslave* themselves in order to acquire the basic prerequisites of life. More generally, free Blacks were re-enslaved by kidnappers preying mainly on those living in Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania—states close to the Mason-Dixon line and possessing “a greater free black population than the rest of the country combined from 1790 to 1860” (C. Wilson 1994, pp. 10–11).

Horowitz’s rhetorical differentiation of antebellum free Blacks from enslaved Blacks is more a conceptual feat than an actual fact. One must ask, how free could any Black person have truly been when the majority of their friends, family, and *race* were enslaved in the United States before 1865?⁵⁵ Slaveholders knew that social bonds between differently positioned Blacks did not end at the outer edge of their plantations, and they used these connections to their advantage whenever they could (Berlin 1998, p. 233). The connection between free Blacks and those still enslaved was not incidental; it was sociological, economic, political, personal, and ethical, as historian James Oliver Horton elaborates in *Free People of Color: Inside the African American Community* (1993). Horowitz ignores these dimensions, preferring to focus his attention on the fractional number of free Blacks who were slaveholders,⁵⁶ as if this minute statistic was a fair indication of relationships between free Blacks and enslaved Blacks in general. Under these adverse circumstances, free Blacks were not truly free but rather were what historian Ira Berlin more aptly described as “slaves without masters” (Berlin 1974).

Besides having grounds for compensation for racial discrimination and racial terrorism, descendants of antebellum free Blacks could also demand compensation for the loss of income they incurred every time they purchased the freedom of enslaved Blacks for familial or humanitarian reasons. These expenditures were substantial and further depleted resource-bare free communities of savings and wealth.⁵⁷ Moreover, any Black slave who had to purchase his or her own freedom could also be eligible for compensation.⁵⁸

SEVENTH HEAD: BLACK SLAVE OWNERS

Horowitz makes two surprising points on Black slave ownership in the United States: (1) that Black slave owners existed at all, a fact known by few; and (2) that “there were 3,000 black slaveowners in the antebellum United States” (Horowitz 2002, p. 12). Horowitz accuses reparatationists of “reverse racism” because they “make no attempt to take this fact into account” when making their claims against Whites (Horowitz 2002, p. 13). His reason for raising these points about Black slave ownership is explicit and subtextual. His explicit reason is one of policy: “Are reparations to be paid by their descendants too?” (Horowitz 2002, p. 12). Yet it is the subtext of his argument which is most damaging. The subtext of the argument is that if Blacks had been given equal opportunity to enslave, they would have done so and would have treated slaves as deplorably as Whites. Driven by avarice equal to Whites, Blacks in similar circumstances would have enslaved their *own* people (as they allegedly did in Africa, according to Horowitz) and treated Black slaves as poorly as White masters did. The philosophical implication of this subtext is that

the pernicious parts of human nature are indeed cross-cultural, and in the context of Black enslavement, generic “greed” and “power lust” were more slavery’s root causes than was the deplorable combination of Eurocentric racism and a system of capitalist production.⁵⁹

Horowitz ignores the basic fact that neither Whites nor Blacks could have carried out widespread enslavement unless a slave *system* existed. The slave system in the United States was an interlocking and evolving set of economic, cultural, political, and legal initiatives that set the general societal conditions permitting and supporting the involuntary possession of one human being by another. Establishing a slave system in the United States meant that the ownership of slaves was no longer left entirely up to personal feelings, codes of ethics,⁶⁰ or class position, but more fundamentally, the very *possibility* of owning others and their then offspring in perpetuity was then legitimated, facilitated, and indeed coerced by societal institutions. In other words, Black slavery in the United States had become a fully crystallized *social fact* by at least the mid-1660s, not merely a result of individual lapses before the “seven deadly sins” (Handlin 1957, pp. 3–22; Jordan 1968, pp. 13–24).⁶¹

U.S. slavery, best understood as a social fact, is therefore analyzed most appropriately with sociological, economic, anthropological, political, and/or historical concepts and methods, not with psychological profiles or “character studies” in morality. In order to produce a sound social scientific study of slavery and its insignificance to the socioeconomic situation of twenty-first-century Blacks, Horowitz would have had to follow the basic methodological directives of one of sociology’s founding fathers, Émile Durkheim, at the very least. Doing so would have helped Horowitz avoid reducing society-level matters to instinctual or learned behavior, and instead would have led him to examine the “energies capable of producing [slavery]” (Durkheim 1938, p. 144), that is, the social facts surrounding slavery.⁶²

Following this Durkheimian approach, the basic question relevant for this section becomes how it was that Black slave ownership in the thousands was even possible during a time of widespread Black enslavement and anti-Black racism. Obviously, the institution of U.S. racial slavery existed as an overarching social fact that in one of its many paradoxes facilitated the existence of another much smaller, but apparently complementary, social fact: Black slave ownership.

But beyond this proper recontextualization, Horowitz would still need to communicate to readers the relative *scale* and *significance* of Black slave ownership as a social fact before making more general claims and inferences about its practice. To employ a social fact as part of a sociological explanation without clearly establishing whether the fact either occurs *frequently* enough to constitute reasonable proof of a societal pattern, or, if not frequently enough, whether it is so crucial to the operation of a societal institution (in this case, slavery) as to determine its *function*⁶³ is an unforgivable lapse in research methodology that makes accurate findings and contingent political decisions regarding reparations more difficult to achieve.

A proper sociological-historical investigation of social facts can be pursued correctly through quantitative analysis, to name only one approach.⁶⁴ It is for this reason that Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua’s critique of Horowitz’s assertion about Black slave owners is as methodologically correct as it is empirically correct. Using *statistics*, Cha-Jua first appears to strengthen Horowitz’s case. He reveals that “the 1830 census lists 3,777 Black slave owners, not 3,000 as Horowitz carelessly states” (Cha-Jua 2001). But this underestimation of 21%, so favorable to Horowitz’s argument if this difference had been included, would not help his case fundamentally, as Cha-Jua reveals:

The existence of 3,777 Black slaveholders is meaningless without knowing the total number of slaveholders. In 1850 there were 348,000 slave holding families (the Census Bureau collected data on families, not individuals). Thus, the three thousand, seven hundred and seventy-seven Black slaveholders comprised only about one percent of slaveholding families! (Cha-Jua 2001).

Yet is it fair to ask whether one can rightly infer from quantitative data the *qualitative character* of sociological relations between groups?⁶⁵ Horowitz chooses to deduce the social characteristics of Black slave ownership using statistical data and only *one* concrete case study (Koger 1985). Doing so is methodologically unsound, as Cha-Jua criticizes.⁶⁶

Horowitz interprets statistics on Black slave ownership as indicators of slaveholding for commercial purposes by Blacks. He strongly contests the claim made by two of his critics, Robert Chrisman and Ernest Allen, Jr., that Black slave ownership was humanitarian and based on the purchases of family and friends (Chrisman and Allen, 2001). He grounds his position in a statement by slavery historian Larry Koger:

The census of 1850 demonstrated that 83.1 percent of the Negro masters were mulattoes, while nearly 90 percent of their slaves were of dark skin. Where was the kinship? Since mulattoes primarily married mulattoes, the black folk owned by the light-skinned Afro-Americans were seldom kin and were overwhelmingly held as laborers. By and large, Negro slaveowners were darker copies of their white counterparts (Koger 1985, p. xiii).

A critique of Horowitz's methods and levels of social analysis should not be limited to a war of numbers.⁶⁷ Social facts, as the work of founding sociologist Max Weber exemplifies, cannot be fully understood without paying attention to patterns of *social action*, which groups manifest when forming and engaging institutional formations.⁶⁸ The scientific study of society, the standards of which Horowitz wishes to apply to the public debate over reparations, not only engenders a search for "diachronic" (historical) and "synchronic" (contemporary) social facts but is also inseparably an *interpretive* enterprise. It is this attention to the interpretation of social facts that must be applied here to Horowitz's generalizations.

Koger's findings are correct and generally supported, though one should question his logic for deciding "mulatto masters" were unrelated to Black slaves. A better way to comprehend this socioanthropological phenomenon is found in the works of historian Loren Schweninger, who combines class, ancestry, social milieu, and regional factors to explain the split between mulatto slave owners, Black slaves, and, for that matter, Blacks in general (Schweninger 1990a, 1990b).⁶⁹

Yet the real issue here is not whether Black ownership of slaves in South Carolina occurred, but rather that Horowitz *extrapolates* this pattern of unbenign slave ownership by Blacks as the general characteristic of this phenomenon *throughout* the rest of the South and the United States overall. Horowitz's claim is grounded in the peculiar case of South Carolina, which had an unusually high percentage of commercial Black owners of slaves. Koger even admits that South Carolina "may not have been the typical Southern state where free Blacks owned slaves" (Koger 1985, p. 2).

Why then does Horowitz choose an obviously exceptional circumstance of unbenign slave ownership among Blacks to back his claim? By using Koger as his only *illustrative* source to make his point about the existence of Black slave owners and

their alleged exploitation of slaves, Horowitz violates a central tenet of social scientific investigation: establishing the degree to which a finding can be said to be representative of a general pattern.⁷⁰ By explicitly presenting the South Carolina case as *indicative* of a general pattern, he has misled his readership. Without taking the time to prove his point “scientifically” (let us say, “statistically”) or beyond a reasonable common sense doubt, Horowitz’s ideal type here (and in the several “hydra head” comparisons he makes) remains a stereotype.

A proper survey of Black slaveholding in the United States, about which there is no lack of scholarship, serves as a corrective. Horowitz’s subtext of Black slave ownership for profit was not true for Louisiana, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, or New York (Sterkx 1972, pp. 236–237; Franklin 1969, pp. 159–161; Bogger 1997, p. 33; Berlin 1998, p. 323; Phillips 1997, p. 95; S. Wilson 1994, p. 75). His claim does not even hold true for the South in general (Berlin 1974, p. 273). Moreover, Black slave ownership, which in reality was rare for ethical and financial reasons, was possible only because a *racist slave system* already existed, a system designed primarily by Whites for the benefit of Whites. Since the overwhelming number of those who enslaved Blacks were White and did so for commercial reasons, while most Blacks who enslaved Blacks did so to get them away from worse situations, it is inaccurate and misleading to present Black ownership of slaves as anything but humanitarian in the main.⁷¹ Overall, Horowitz selected a nonrepresentative case to make a general point, a point designed to undermine the *moral power* of the reparations claim. Here reactionary rhetoric outraced reality.

Returning to the question of whether to provide reparations for Black slave owners, historical research would support such a claim. However, descendants of Black slave owners have not to this date pursued redress individually or in a class action suit. Like most reparatationists, most descendants of Black slave owners seeking redress would probably desire *rehabilitative reparations* for the entire Black community (Robinson and TransAfrica Forum, 2007; N’COBRA 2002).⁷² Thus, to answer Horowitz’s query, the living descendants of Black slave owners are not direct “plaintiffs,” nor would they be direct beneficiaries of reparations—although they would have good cause to make such a claim.

CONCLUSION

The Hydra of myth also had one immortal head, a head even Hercules could not destroy, only bury. And so it is with Horowitz’s historical beast. “Denial,” the aspect of thought most impervious to research and reason, can only be trapped beneath the gravitas of solid facts and figures, captured only by the standards of strong scholarship.

Contrary to Horowitz’s best arguments, this essay has proven that African and Islamic enslavement of Blacks is secondary; White abolitionism contradictory; many non-slave-owning Whites complicitous; White slavery miniscule; free Blacks, not free; and Black ownership of slaves a side issue. These positions, held by many reparatationists, may seem too cynical to their opponents, but after a careful social *scientific* examination of the historical record, an approach Horowitz (2002) demands but does not demonstrate, this essay has shown that Horowitz has not overturned the mass of Black reparatationist thought.

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NOTES

1. My eternal thanks to the late Stanford M. Lyman, chair of my doctoral committee at the Public Intellectuals Program at Florida Atlantic University. His exceptional erudition, exemplary mentorship, and enthusiastic friendship are missed by me daily. I thank fellow doctoral committee members Stephen D. Engle of the Department of History and Nannetta Durnell-Uwechue of the School of Communication and Multimedia Studies for their respective expertise and attention to disciplinary rigor in my work. I also wish to thank Phyllis Bischof, librarian of African and African American Collections at UC Berkeley, for providing me with an initial grasp of the field of comparative slavery. I thank my former wife, Cardum Sage Harmon, for her endless endurance. She taught me that “capacity equals commitment” every long day I labored on this study. Most importantly, I thank my mother, Maurelle Dottin, for beginning my lifelong love affair with “interdisciplinarity” by teaching me how to read using a set of encyclopedias.
2. Each of the following “heads” represents a distillation and synthesis of assertions and arguments Horowitz makes about a particular aspect of Black reparationism. While these arguments are often covered separately in his book, they are in fact, like the Hydra of myth, all partial expressions of a central *raison d'être*, namely, the conservative rationalization of the unequal “race as we know it” status quo. For more on the Hydra myth, see Gustav Schwab (1946, pp. 167–168).
3. I place the concept “African slavery” within quotation marks since Horowitz mobilizes this concept monolithically in juxtaposition to U.S. slavery. This tendency is not limited to his comparison of different regional forms of slavery but is also seen in his comparison of slavery’s particular hues (e.g., so-called “White slavery” versus Black slavery). In problematizing his various comparisons, I am doing more than explicitly countering his “facts” and his interpretation of those facts; I am also exposing his hidden, flawed methodology. Repeatedly throughout his book, in his attempts at “scientific” comparison, Horowitz creates bizarre versions of what founding sociologist Max Weber under duress would have called “ideal types.” Weber’s rationale for developing ideal types was reasonable and practical:

When dealing with a political or military enterprise, it is first convenient to decide how the action would have proceeded if all the circumstances and all the intentions of those involved had been known, and if the means adopted had been chosen in a fully rational purposive way, on the basis of empirical evidence which seems to us valid. . . . The constructed model of a fully rationally purposive action in such cases can be understood by the sociologist with complete certainty and total clarity which results from its rationality: as a *type* (an ‘ideal type’) it thus enables him to understand the real action, influenced as it is by all sorts of irrational facts (emotional impulses, errors), as a ‘deviation’ from what might be expected if those performing it had behaved in a fully rational way (Weber 1978, p. 9).

In and of itself, this is a time-tested way to begin comparative research. However, the formation of ideal types is only a preliminary heuristic step that should be followed up with empirical research and warranted interpretation. Certainly, as sociologists H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills pointed out, Weber believed, “Social scientists had the choice of using logically controlled and unambiguous conceptions, which are thus more removed from historical reality, or of using less precise concepts, which are more closely geared to the empirical world” (Gerth and Mills, 1946, p. 59). But they continue, “The real meat of history would usually fall in between such extreme types” (Gerth and Mills, 1946, p. 60).

Horowitz’s evidentiary procedures are so consistently anemic in this regard that he usually cannot advance beyond the first step to get a proper understanding of either the significance of historical events or the *social actions* of individuals or groups. Weber defines *social action* as “the meaning intended by the agent or agents involv[ing] a relation to *another* person’s behaviour and in which that relation determines the way in which the action proceeds” (Weber 1978, p. 7). Consequently, at their best, Horowitz’s ideal beginnings quickly become confounding stereotypes (Weber 1978, pp. 7–32; Gerth and Mills, 1946, pp. 45–74).

4. This conclusion is incorrect. According to historian Colin A. Palmer:

The vast majority of the slaves were prisoners of war. The seller and the victim usually belonged to different states and were enemies. Accordingly, Africans did not

“sell their own people,” as some historians have maintained. Such a claim ignores the culturally and politically diverse nature of the regions from which the slaves came as well as the diversity of the African continent as a whole. The overwhelming majority—perhaps eighty percent—of the victims of the human traffic were likely to be persons who had no ties to the state of their sellers, had no rights, and were vulnerable to the traditional fate of wartime prisoners—imprisonment, enslavement, or death [as was the case in Europe] (Palmer 2000, p. 14).

5. To my knowledge, no reparations are forthcoming from African nations nor have African Americans sought reparations from these nations. But an apology was issued by a former African slave-trading state, Benin (known as Dahomey during the slavery era). This is more than the United States has done (Johnson 2002).
6. See two United Nations political boundary maps relating to Africa: <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/africa.pdf> (accessed April 11, 2008) and <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/westafrica.pdf> (accessed April 11, 2008).
7. This is not hairsplitting. There are several qualitatively different major categories of “unfree” human servitude with several variations within each category (Bush 2000).
8. Horowitz does not cite this work by Lovejoy even though it would apparently bolster his claim—nor does he refer to sources written by Lovejoy that would complicate his claim. See for example, Paul E. Lovejoy (2000, pp. x, xii).
9. Horowitz makes this charge against reparationists who, as he says, “argue incoherently that African slavery was not really slavery” (Horowitz 2002, p. 132).
10. An exhaustive application of Inikori’s analysis to African servitude would require me to write another essay on this point alone. What follows instead is a continental comparison of forms based on the scholarship of leading academics contained within the eight-volume *General History of Africa* series by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
11. Niane writes:

Agriculture provided one of the principal economic bases of the kingdoms south of the Sahara; production rested on the family farm. Here and there, however, there were enslaved population groups who worked on behalf of the rulers. In black Africa there was a system of serfdom, tributes and dues being fixed by custom; in the southern Maghrib slaves and peasants worked the land for the benefit of the lords or rulers. Plantations were developed in the islands off the east coast of Africa. But nowhere throughout this period were there hordes of slaves being systematically exploited (Niane 1984, p. 680).

This point is substantiated by more focused studies (Adamu 1984, p. 296; Person 1984, pp. 301–323; Matveiev 1984, pp. 455–456; Lange 1984, p. 250; Tamrat 1984, p. 438).

12. Examining the trade relationships between different regions of the continent anywhere between 400 and 1100 BC, M. Posnansky writes:

Much more evidence of contact in pre-Islamic times comes from the rock art and archeological evidence. . . . We have to assume from the rock art that the routes across the Sahara were negotiable by horse, bullock and almost certainly by the versatile donkey. . . . *Slaves, though not very important at this period*, may have been another element in the trade; negro skeletons have come from Punic cemeteries and there were certainly Negro soldiers in the Carthaginian armies (Posnansky 1981, pp. 549–550; emphasis added).

As above, this excerpt does not give indication of treatment or the relation of the slaves to land, but provides some notice of the scale of the slave trade.

13. *Possessive individualism* is not identical to “basic” greed. Rather, as political scientist Crawford B. Macpherson writes:

The basic assumptions of possessive individualism—that man is free and human by virtue of his sole proprietorship of his own person, and that human society is essentially a series of market relations—were deeply embedded in the seventeenth-century foundations. It was the assumptions that gave the original theory its strength, for they did correspond to the reality of seventeenth-century market society (Macpherson 1962, p. 270).

What was one personal (might we say, “psychological”) ramification of these societal developments? Macpherson writes:

The individual was seen neither as a moral whole, nor as part of a larger social whole, but as an owner of himself. The relation of ownership, having become for more and more men the critically important relation determining their actual freedom and actual prospect of realizing their full potentialities, was *read back into the nature of the individuals*. The individual, it was thought, is free inasmuch as he is the proprietor of his person and capacities. *The human essence is freedom from dependence on the wills of others, and freedom is a function of possession* (Macpherson 1962, p. 3; emphasis added).

14. For an example of how the cultural standards of some kin-oriented production societies “drove” social actors to both amass wealth *and* share it, see the work of early twentieth-century anthropologists Franz Boas and his classic ethnography *The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians* ([1895] 1970) on the *potlatch*, a wealth display, circulation-destruction ceremony of the Kwakiutl Indians of the Northwest Coast of North America; and Bronislaw Malinowski and his perhaps better-known study *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) on the kula-ring gift-exchange system of the Trobriand Islanders living near eastern New Guinea. For an interesting discussion of how the Kwakiutl’s politically useful kinship economies were dangerously warped and eventually destroyed by European capitalism, see Wolf (1982, pp. 182–194).
15. This is the proper modal contextualization of the entrepreneurialism of African merchants and other businesspersons. Proper contextualization does not cast Africans as willy-nilly, “irrational” economic actors or as ones immobilized by “tradition.” Nor does it mean African merchants and states did not participate in slave trading. On the variety and vitality of African business enterprises prior to European control, see Walker (1998, pp. 1–31).
16. According to Wolf, to understand the “political economy” of a kinship mode of production, we should go beyond our usual overly sentimental conceptualization of the phenomenon:

Kinship [should] be understood as a way of committing social labor to the transformation of nature through appeals to filiation and marriage, and to consanguinity and affinity. Put simply, through kinship social labor is “locked up,” or “embedded,” in particular relations between people. This labor can be mobilized only through access to people, such access being defined symbolically. *What* is done unlocks social labor; *how* it is done involves symbolic definition of kinsmen and affines (Wolf 1982, p. 91).

17. Neo-Marxist historical sociologists Terence K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein explain the economic insatiability of capitalism, a system uniquely distinguished by a generalized profit logic:

The first and foremost sense in which the [world economy] has been capitalist (as opposed to being say redistributive or socialist) has been precisely the predominance of the law of value. The law of value prevails in a situation where there exists a “market” in which there is some price-competition between entrepreneurs who make their production decisions in their own interests (that is, in order to optimize their own accumulation of capital over some short or medium run). It follows in such a situation that each is compelled to make these decisions in terms of exchange-value instead of use-value, failing which the entrepreneur suffers acute losses and eventually goes bankrupt (Hopkins and Wallerstein, 1987, p. 765).

For a non-Marxist “culturalist” distinction between generic greed and the profit motive, see Max Weber (1958). For an overview of various interpretations of greed, ranging from a sin to a systemic imperative, see Stanford M. Lyman (1989, pp. 232–268).

18. Wolf defines *tributary mode of production* as “a mode of production in which the primary producer, whether cultivator or herdsman, is allowed access to the means of production, while tribute is exacted from him by political or military means” (Wolf 1982, pp. 79–80).
19. Duncan Foley provides a neat description of both *use value* and its related concept, *exchange value*:

Since the commodity is a product which is exchanged, it appears as the union of two different aspects: its usefulness to some agent, which is what permits the commodity to enter into exchange at all; and its power to command certain quantities of other commodities in exchange. The first aspect the classical political economists called *use value*, the second, *exchange value* (Foley 1998b, p. 561).

Based on social conditions, it appears that slavery under the tributary system, a predominantly use-value system, was generally less destructive of slaves than was slavery under the profit system, the *raison d'être* of European and U.S. capitalism.

20. For an exhaustive comparative study of the degraded status of slaves, see Orlando Patterson (1982).
21. Wolf provides this generic definition of a *merchant*:

A specialist in exchange, buying and selling goods to obtain a profit. . . . The position of merchants is . . . always defined politically as well as economically, and is always dependent on the power and interests of other social classes (Wolf 1982, pp. 84–85).

Wolf describes the explicit motivation of merchants:

To increase profits merchants strive to enlarge the sphere of exchange, drawing subsistence or prestige goods produced within the kin-ordered or tributary mode into the channels of commodity exchange, the market. This transformation of use values into commodities, goods produced for exchange, is not neutral in its consequences. It can seriously weaken tributary power if it commercializes the goods and services upon which that power rests (Wolf 1982, p. 84).

22. Ben Fine describes and defines *exchange value*:

It is clear that exchange involves a relation between producers (and non-producers). It thereby creates an equivalence between different types of labor, forming abstract labour as the substance of value. This formation of value is and is expressed as a relationship between the use values of commodities and is consequently characterized as commodity fetishism. It is taken to an extreme by the role of money in exchange which dictates that everything should have its price. Social relations between producers are, and are expressed, as material relations between things (Fine 1998, p. 182).

23. Duncan Foley provides a clear definition of *commodity*:

All human societies must produce their own material conditions of existence. The commodity is the form products take when this production is organized through exchange. In such a system products once produced are the properties of particular agents who have the power to dispose of them to other agents. Agents who own different products confront each other in a process of bargaining through which they exchange the products. In exchange a definite quantity of one product changes places with a definite quantity of another. The commodity, then, has two powers: first, it can satisfy some human want, that is, it has what Adam Smith calls use value; second, it has the power to command other commodities in exchange, a power of exchangeability that Marx calls value. Because commodities exchange with each other in definite quantitative proportions each commodity can be thought of as containing a certain amount of value. . . .

Value becomes visible as exchange value when commodities confront each other in exchange, and exchange value comes to have an existence independent of any particular commodity as money (Foley 1998a, pp. 100–101).

24. But European merchants usually had more latitude to do so than those from other regions (Wolf 1982, p. 85).
25. *Capital* is “in general . . . an asset which can generate an income stream for its owner” (Mohun 1998, p. 68). But according to the Marxist point of view:

Capital is not a thing at all, but a social relation which appears in the form of a thing. To be sure, capital is about money-making, but the assets which ‘make’ money

embody a particular relation between those who have money and those who do not, such that not only is money ‘made’, but also the private property relations which engender such a process are themselves continually reproduced (Karl Marx cited in Mohun 1998, p. 68).

26. It is important to note that slavery in and of itself is technically not a mode of production but a feature of all modes (Weeks 1998, p. 401). A slave system’s characteristics vary generally with the modes of production and cultural conditions they are embedded within.
27. Hausa slaves at this time “fulfilled various roles, being used as currency and goods, as domestic servants, soldiers and guards, and in agricultural and craft work” (Adamu 1984, p. 299).
28. *Incorporation* is defined by world systems theorists Terence K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein as the “expansion of the geographical loci included in the division of labor of the capitalist world-economy” (Hopkins and Wallerstein, 1987, p. 768). This notion needs a larger theoretical concept in order to make sense. This “bigger idea” for Hopkins and Wallerstein is the *world-economy*:

We mean by a world-economy a set of integrated production processes linked in a continuing (though evolving) social division of labor which fundamentally determine social behavior (or social action) within its arena (boundaries) over time. These boundaries themselves are variable. The forces at work (at conflict) within this social arena express themselves or give rise to various institutional expressions not only as structures of the workplace but as political and cultural “structures.” A world-economy is defined as that kind of world-system in which the political and cultural “structures” are multiple and the system-wide political and cultural structures are far less tangible and immediately constraining than more “local” ones (Hopkins and Wallerstein, 1987, p. 764).

29. For example, as anthropologists James Peoples and Garrick Bailey write:

The Portuguese became the first major traders of African slaves in the Americas. In the earliest period of the trade, slaves brought to America had already been slaves in Africa. However, the number of such people was limited, and as the demand for slaves increased the Portuguese turned to other methods—in particular, raiding—to acquire them. The expanding demand for slaves changed the relationship of the Portuguese with African societies. The kings of Kongo allowed their subjects to trade slaves to the Portuguese, but they refused to permit them to raid for additional slaves. As a result, in 1575, Portuguese mercenaries and African ‘allies’ began systematically to stage slave raids throughout much of central Africa. Finally, in 1660, the Portuguese virtually destroyed the Kongo kingdom in a short war (Peoples and Bailey, 1997, pp. 331–332).

30. “Some scholars suggest that since about 1500 C.E., approximately 4 million slaves traveled along trans-Saharan routes while another 2 million people were sold into slavery by way of the Red Sea” (Nave 1999, p. 1879).
31. Segal recognizes the role of (White) Christians in the abolition of the slave trade and slavery, though he does not complicate their motivations and politics, as I will do later in this essay.
32. For a proper social-movement analysis of British abolitionism, see Leo d’Anjou (1996).
33. According to sociologist Aldon D. Morris, *resource mobilization theory*

emphasizes the resources necessary for the initiation and development of movements. They include formal and informal *organizations*, leaders, money, people, and communication networks. . . . It is the ability of groups to organize, mobilize, and manage valuable resources that determines whether they will be able to engage in social protest (Morris 1984, p. 279; emphasis added).

Movement researcher John Lofland defines *social movement organizations* as:

Associations of people making idealistic and moralistic claims about how human personal or group life ought to be organized that, *at the time of their claims-making*, are

marginal to or excluded from mainstream society—the then dominant constructions of what is realistic, reasonable, and moral (Lofland 1996, pp. 2–3).

From Horowitz's perspective, it seems the (in)ability of African American groups to organize formally and publicly determines whether resistance to slavery by African Americans qualifies as true abolitionist activity.

34. Sylvester is precise; he does not “pad” his numbers with all acts of resistance, be they costly to the system or recuperative to slaves, such as sabotage, foot dragging, and other “weapons of the weak.” He writes, “For a slave rebellion to be included in this count, it had to involve a minimum of ten slaves, and freedom had to be their goal” (Sylvester 2000, p. 184).
35. For the best conceptualized and ethnographically supported understanding of this notion, see the originator's work: James C. Scott (1985, 1990).
36. For example, free Blacks were seen as a political threat to White slave society because they were suspected of attempting to liberate slaves individually and as groups. Black slaves and free Blacks were not allowed to vote in most instances. They were not considered citizens even though they were free, and they had tenuous political rights. Free Blacks were watched closely and were prohibited from gathering in groups or bearing arms. For more on this point, see the section of this essay dealing with so-called “Free Blacks.”
37. For an example of slave usage of the antislavery myth “High John de Conquer,” see Garth Kasimu Baker-Fletcher (1996, pp. 60–63). Paraphrasing James Scott, Robin D. G. Kelley, a historian who utilizes this concept in his examination of “informal” Black militancy, writes, “Despite appearances of consent, oppressed groups challenge those in power by constructing a ‘hidden transcript,’ a dissident political culture that manifests itself in daily conversations, folklore, jokes, songs and other cultural practices” (Kelley 1994, p. 8).
38. See, for example, Phillis Wheatley's poem “To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth,” quoted in Daniel Littlefield (2000, p. 103).
39. For in-depth coverage of this point, see Sally E. Hadden (2001). For earlier coverage of this activity, see Merton L. Dillon (1990, pp. 4–27).
40. Furthermore, in 1869 Britain blockaded the ports of China against U.S. shipping to prevent what was believed to be a revival of slavery in the South that involved the importation of Chinese workers to replace emancipated Blacks. Because Britain controlled a new source of cotton production in Egypt, it opposed a revival of cotton production in the South (Lyman 1986, pp. 240–242).
41. Miers and Klein explain:

[The authors] show how, short of European manpower and reluctant to spend more than minimal sums on their colonies, they depended largely on slave-holding elites to administer their empires. They were convinced that without slave labour, economic activity would decline dramatically and the colonies would be a drain on metropolitan taxpayers. However, to appease humanitarian groups at home, they often clothed their actions in anti-slavery rhetoric and issued pronouncements or proclaimed laws which were all too often merely cosmetic or simply unenforceable (Miers and Klein, 1999, p. 4).

42. As would historical evidence. Horowitz does not produce one piece of evidence backing this claim in *Uncivil Wars* (2002).
43. Yet hard usage was not in fact slavery. Jones writes:

When seventeenth-century English colonists described themselves or unfortunate compatriots as “slaves,” they were in fact using the term metaphorically. It is true that some white adults toiled under conditions of extreme duress or dependency. . . . Still, these workers could claim membership in a historic English community, a community that failed to protect the well-being of its members in all cases, but nonetheless a community of people bound together by certain expectations of what was due them under law and custom. After years of hard work, white ethnics and their offspring might also lay claim to “Englishness,” a status increasingly associated with a white skin and a European lineage. In contrast, persons of African descent retained their “strangeness” long after ethnic servants outgrew it (Jones 1998, p. 53).

44. The classic example of this is the John Punch case of 1640 (Takaki 1993, p. 56).
45. See Takaki's coverage of Bacon's Rebellion of 1676, which describes racial inequality in the wake of the disturbance (Takaki 1993, pp. 63–68).
46. A tiny minority of enslaved Blacks came to “own” low-value personal property and on rare exception more substantial forms of wealth with the surreptitious consent of their masters (Schweninger 1990a, pp. 29–60; Walker 1998, pp. 52–82).
47. Jones calls into question the quality and quantity of White production as compared to Black production. Masters often complained about how difficult it was to get Whites to put in a solid day's work. This should not to be taken to mean that White servants were naturally lazy, as Black slaves would later be accused of being, but rather that from the date of their first day of labor up to the end of their contracts, White servants had little reason to work at full capacity, since to do so had no bearing on the length of their servitude (Jones 1998, pp. 55–80).
48. Don E. Fehrenbacher's *The Slaveholding Republic: An Account of the U.S. Government's Relations to Slavery*, completed and edited by Ward M. McAfee, is a book that raises many difficult issues for both reparationists and antireparationists. However, the basic thesis of the book would still support reparationists' claims against the government for slavery (though I doubt this is the intention of its authors). McAfee writes:

The framers of the Constitution had not intended to make slavery a national institution supported by the Union's fundamental law. Yet, overtime, the antebellum federal government adopted the position that slavery was a national institution fully protected by the Constitution (McAfee 2001, p. ix).

49. A host of scholars have been grouped under the rubric of “White studies.” See Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (1997) for representative works by authors in this subfield. Horowitz despises this intellectual corpus and makes special mention of it in *Uncivil Wars* (2002) in several places. Yet for all his disparagement of the theories and politics of this school of thought, he does not take the time to empirically refute any of its claims. Dismissal is not the same as discrediting a perspective. For a more thorough unfriendly critique, see Robert Weissberg (2001).
50. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, black and white men might still find themselves at work together (when they dug the Potomac Canal in 1786, for example), but they were likely to be set apart from one another by their status—the white men either as hirelings or indentured servants, the black men as slaves (Jones 1998, p. 84).
51. Many will assume White males held the favored position in the labor market *vis-à-vis* Blacks in antebellum times, but far less known is that White women also enjoyed employment advantages over Blacks. For example, White women in the 1700s up until at least 1840 had become the nation's first industrial proletariat. While the reason for this was because White men preferred and reserved the better paid and more prestigious craft work for themselves, Blacks were barred, for the most part, due to racial discrimination. Paid domestic work, the traditional occupational niche of women of both races, also favored White women over Blacks (Jones 1998, p. 284). Blacks were left to do mostly menial labor outside of this growing economic sector. Moreover, White women did not face lynching or hate strikes as Black workers did (Rubio 2001, p. 21).
52. Takaki quotes the colonial statute:

“All horses, cattle, and hogs, now belonging, or that hereafter shall belong to any slave, or of any slave mark . . . shall be seized and sold by the churchwardens of the parish . . . and the profit thereof applied to the use of the poor” (cited in Takaki 1993, pp. 67–68).
53. For an urban counterpart of this eco-cultural “psychology,” see Jones (1998, pp. 248–249).
54. An 1806 Virginia law expelled free Blacks from the state. Neighboring states passed laws forbidding them permanent residence (Bogger 1997, p. 29).
55. Economic class did not inhibit this to the extent Horowitz would cynically summarize. For example, two of the most prosperous Blacks in the antebellum United States, Chicagoans John and Mary Jones, were “nationally known abolitionists” (White 1996, p. 119).
56. Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua states says only 1%, at most, of Blacks were slaveholders (Cha-Jua 2001).

57. According to Sylvester: “The price depended on the circumstances, but it was usually set at what the slave would cost on the open market” (Sylvester 2000, p. 158). Also see Ira Berlin (1998, p. 235).
58. For more on self-purchase by slaves, see Sumner Eliot Matison (1948).
59. Durkheim properly gauges the significance of “the impulses, needs, and desires of men” (in other words, the internal psychological states that often drive humans to act upon the world) *vis-à-vis* societal change (or stasis):

We do not wish to argue that the impulses, needs, and desires of men never intervene actively in social evolution. On the contrary, it is certain that they can advance or retard its development, according to the circumstances which determine social phenomena. *But even apart from the fact that they cannot, in any circumstances, make something out of nothing, their actual intervention, whatever may be its effects, can take place only be means of efficient causes. A deliberate intention can contribute, even in this limited way, to the production of new phenomena only if it has itself been newly formed or if it is itself a result of some transformation of a previous tendency* (Durkheim 1972, p. 81; emphasis added).

Horowitz repeatedly commits the error of not establishing the proper societal context for individual or collective action.

60. No doubt [ethics] is related to psychology, since moral facts have their location within the heart of the personality of the individual; but they are distinct from psychic facts, if only by their imperative character. In addition, they are related to all other social facts, but are not to be confused with them (Durkheim 1972, pp. 91–92).
61. Durkheim makes a strong connection between economics and ethics:

One cannot understand anything of the moral precepts which concern property, contract, labor, etc., if one does not know the economic causes from which they derive; and on the other hand, one would form an entirely false idea of economic development if one neglected the moral causes which play a part in it (Durkheim 1972, pp. 94–95).

For a sociotheological analysis of the “seven deadly sins,” see Lyman (1989).

62. This methodological standard also applies to the ethics of a (slave) society—its “moral facts”:

We cannot construct morality out of nothing in order to impose it subsequently upon reality; rather, we must observe reality in order to induce morality from it. We must examine it in its multiple relations with the unending number of phenomena in terms of which it is shaped, and which, in turn, it regulates. If ethics is separated from these, it seems no longer to have any basis of its own, and to float in a void . . . an abstract conception, entirely limited to a dry and empty formula (Durkheim 1972, p. 95).

63. Durkheim anticipates this question of frequency and function in the distinction of “normal” social facts from “pathological” ones—a question Horowitz mostly ignores. I quote Durkheim at length:

Since *the generality which outwardly characterizes normal phenomena* [i.e., “frequency”], once established by observation, is itself an explicable phenomenon, it demands explanation. Doubtless we can have the prior conviction that it is not without a cause, but it is better to know exactly what that cause is. The normality of the phenomenon will be less open to question if it is demonstrated that the external sign whereby it was revealed to us is *not merely apparent but grounded in the nature of things* [i.e., “function”]—if in short, we can convert this factual normality into one which exists by right. Moreover, the demonstration of this will not always consist in showing that the phenomenon is useful to the organism, although for reasons just stated this is most frequently the case. But, as previously remarked, *an arrangement may happen to be normal without serving any useful purpose, simply because it inheres in the nature of the creature* [e.g., “Black slaveholding”]. . . . The normality of a phenomenon can be explained only through it being bound up in the conditions of existence in the species under construction, either as the mechanically essential effect of these conditions *or*

as means allowing the organism to adapt to these conditions (Durkheim 1938, p. 94; emphasis added).

- I argue that in the main, Blacks owning Blacks in the United States was an effective, social-factual way to achieve practical freedom for those purchased, a paradoxical and aberrant “means . . . to adapt” within the “normal conditions” of U.S. slavery.
64. For a comprehensive historical review of the use of qualitative research methods in the study of social phenomena, see Arthur J. Vidich and Stanford M. Lyman (1994).
65. Weber would have supported my position:
- To give a correct causal interpretation of a *typical* action . . . is to show that the occurrence which is said to be typical not only seems to be adequate to some degree or other on the level of meaning but is also to some degree or other causally adequate. Without adequacy on the level of meaning, our generalizations remain mere statements of *statistical* probability, either not intelligible at all or only imperfectly intelligible (Weber 1978, p. 15).
66. Cha-Jua rightly criticizes this strategy:
- African-Americans slave owners were a statistical reality that tells us nothing about actual social relationships. Although some black slave owners held others in bondage, that is asserted rights of ownership and exploited slave labor, most did not. They were people of some means who purchased family and friends *from* bondage, but never imposed master-slave relationships (Cha-Jua 2001).
- My critique below of Horowitz’s use of the slavery monograph by historian Larry Koger below reinforces Cha-Jua’s point.
67. Statistical analysis can indicate the existence, scale, and frequency of a social phenomenon, but this method is less indicative of the daily lived “anthropological” reality, ethical principles, or political mentality of subjects, and therefore best handled with qualitative methods and research. Weber states:
- External processes of action which seem to us to be the ‘same’ or ‘similar’ may result from very different complexes of meaning, as seen by the agent or agents; and we can also ‘understand’ actions which are intended to deal with situations which seem to us to be ‘similar’, but which differ markedly from each other and may even be totally opposed to each other in meaning (Weber 1978, p. 13).
68. I am not attempting to conflate Durkheim’s theory of “social facts” with Weber’s theory of “social action,” but rather wish to emphasize their complementarity when applied to this point in my argument, because I stress not only the coercive aspect of society but also the agency of social actors—in this case, slave owners. This requires that human action not be reduced to “human behavior” or unconscious mental forces, which both Durkheim and Weber would deem to be the purview of those who study instinctual and conditioned responses to stimuli (i.e., psychologists). Rather we should keep different types of human agency and the means by which humans act upon their physical or social environments conceptually distinct. Hence, I am more comfortable thinking of the varieties of social action—traditional, affective, absolute, and “means-end”—as the kinds of individual or collective forces that sustain or effect change upon a social fact (Weber 1978, pp. 25–32).
69. The sociopolitical split between mixed-race owners, the predominant element within the total number of “Black” slaveholders, and Black slaves was real and substantial, though stating that the lack of familial relations was the reason for this is a weak explanation. Franklin and Schweninger are more nuanced on this point. It could also be argued that the biggest difference between Black slave owners and Black slaves was not slave ownership, *per se*, since this was a common freedom strategy throughout the country, but rather being a slave owned by a Black owner more likely to exploit and mistreat *him/her for commercial reasons* (Franklin and Schweninger, 1999, pp. 199–203).
70. Of course generalization is not the only *raison d’être* of social science. For example, focus group research is specifically designed to gain deeper insights into the attitudes of segments of a population *while eschewing general claims* (Morgan et al., 1998). However, Horowitz’s use of Koger’s work also violates this basic methodological tenet.

71. Durkheim warns against leveling qualitatively different but categorically similar social facts:

A [social] thing is a force which can be engendered only by another force. *In rendering an account of social facts, we seek, then, energies capable of producing them. . . . If sociological phenomena are only systems of objectivized ideas, [then all that is needed] to explain them is to rethink them in their logical order, and this explanation is in itself its own proof; at the very most, it will require confirmation by a few examples. Only methodological experiments, on the contrary, can extract from things their real secrets* (Durkheim 1938, p. 144; emphasis added).

Since Horowitz's anti-reparations ideology and rhetoric so often ignore key institutional "causes and effects" regarding different aspects of slavery, and because throughout his text he regularly reduces complex economic, political, and cultural phenomena to the enactment of individual morality, it is accurate to claim that Horowitz pursues an analytic *modus operandi* identical to the procedure Durkheim found so antithetical to sound social science.

72. For a full definition of *rehabilitative reparations*, see Darrell L. Pugh (1999).

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