

THE TOURING MACHINE (FLESH THOUGHT INSIDE OUT)

In his review of evolutionary psychologist Robert Kurzban's book, *Why Everyone (Else) is a Hypocrite: Evolution and the Modular Mind*, philosopher and linguist Jerry Fodor takes sharp exception to Kurzban's assertion that our brains, insofar as they are nothing more than a bundle of heuristics capable of performing discrete sets of computational operations, neither imply nor require the organizing principle/principal that we ordinarily call a self. Since Kurzban "says repeatedly that he knows of no reason why the science of psychology should acknowledge...selves," Fodor is happy to provide one: "...selves are the agents of inference and of behavior; you need executives to account for the rationality of our inferences; you need the rationality of our inferences to account for the coherence of our behavior; and you need the coherence of our behavior to explain the successes of our actions."¹ When Fodor asserts the necessity of the executive a relation between the knowledge and the care of the self is implied, though what Michel Foucault claims to be the priority of care to knowledge is inverted. In the intensity of his normative philosophical self-regard, Fodor's executive is proximate to what Foucault, in a brief reading of Seneca's *De Ira*, calls the administrator. For Foucault, the administrative knowledge that Fodor sees as necessary prepares the way for renunciation, which, in the end, cannot abide with care. But insofar as Fodor's critique of Kurzban seems to leave renunciation by the wayside, to consider the representative generality that emerges when Fodor's self, which seeks to "explain the success of [his] actions," and Foucault's self, which prepares "for a certain complete achievement of life," are posed together seems

nothing less than an imperative.² At stake in such a pose, in the assumption of the possibility of position, is not only how, but also that, one looks at oneself; how and that one gives, in Judith Butler's words, "an account of oneself" in the end, as an end, in a discourse of ends above means. In the mean time, in a temporality of means that might not even be discernible as a moment's absence, the relay between abjuration and esteem that derives from philosophical self-absorption is endlessly refused in an ongoing flash of exhaustion and consent. "Our flesh of flames" burns bright in its submergence.³ It's (neo-) plastic flash still folds beneath the water. *I want to study the poetic registration of this immeasurable apposition to the world.*

In sketching an outline of the "technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality," Foucault presumes a clear difference between them and those "technologies of production, which permit us to produce, transform or manipulate things." This is to say that while these technologies "hardly ever function separately," they do operate against the backdrop of a sharp distinction between things and selves, which move within two different technological hemispheres—the technological manipulation of things and signs, which "are used in the study of science and linguistics" and the "technologies of domination and the self" that Foucault concerned himself with in the development of his "history of the organization of knowledge," his historiography of the present.⁴

Black Studies, which does or should consider what Nahum Chandler calls “the problem of the negro as a problem for thought” within and by way of imperatives that are beyond category, is constrained to investigate the integration of these hemispheres and is particularly responsible for forging an understanding regarding the relationship between (the manipulation of) things and (the care of) selves.⁵ This is to say that insofar as the ungovernability of things and signs within and outside or underneath the field that is delineated and enclosed by the manipulative efforts of selves caught up in the exertions of governmentality is, or should be, our constant study, we must be comported in and toward the juncture of technological breakthrough and technological breakdown. Black study moves at the horizon of an event where certain instruments, insofar as they can no longer either calculate or be calculated, are bent towards the incalculable. That juncture, that event, doesn’t just imply and assume and consider movement; it is, itself, on the move, as a kind of fugitive coalescence of and against more than agential force, more than agential voluntariness; as a kind of choir, a kind of *commercium*, whose general refrain—like a buzz or hum underneath self-concern’s melodic line—is that it’s not your thing, you can’t just do what you want to do. Such clamor might best be understood, in its constant improvisational assault on the understanding that was sent to regulate it, as anti-administrative, ante-executive action.

Fodor believes that evolutionary psychologists like Kurzban have taken the notion of the modularity of mind—an idea derived in part from the Chomskyan idea of innate and specific mental device, which states that such a device is evolutionarily developed to have a specific function—too far. Though Fodor is a major contributor to that notion, he

believes that too much liberty is taken with and derived from cognitive impenetrability, the condition in which mental mechanisms are understood not only to be distinct but also independent, “encapsulated from beliefs and from one another.”⁶ And so he takes Kurzban severely to task for attempting to show that such encapsulation predicts the absence of the executive. For Kurzban, the fact that we can believe two contradictory beliefs is explained by the fact that the brain contains distinct, discrete modules—bundles of software, as it were—that are devoted to separate operations. It’s not the mind or the self that believes contradictory things; it’s just two different packages within the brain that do. Contradictory views correspond to different functions, different uses to which the brain is put that correspond, in turn, to different packages of mental processes. “An important consequence of this view,” Kurzban adds, “is that it makes us think about the ‘self’ in a way that is very different from how people usually understand it. In particular, it makes the very notion of a ‘self’ something of a problem, and perhaps quite a bit less useful than one might think.”⁷ Fodor’s concern and his critique are derived from his sense that Kurzban’s psychological Darwinism—“the theory that...the traits that constitute our ‘psychological phenotype’ are adaptations to problems posed by the environments in which the mind evolved”—can explain negation (the relation or co-presence of P and not-P) but not addition (the relation of P and Q).⁸ He argues that Kurzban can explain how there can be impenetrability, but not how there can be interpenetrability, without an executive.

What I’ve been wondering, though—by way of the specificity of Fodor’s critique of Kurzban but against the grain of what Fodor understands to constitute the ground of that

critique; from the perspective of someone who is also interested in certain operations that have been done on bodies and souls, as well as on *Body and Soul*; in the light and sound, therefore, of a mode of social aesthesis whose predicate is that impenetrability and interpenetrability are one another's animation—is whether the self is better understood as something akin to what David Kazanjian calls a “flashpoint” marking a socially generated rebellion against the executive that is manifest in the form of the soloist who can now be thought as sociality's non-full, non-simple, anarchic, anarchaic avatar?⁹ The executive function is an exclusionary, hierarchical function that governs the space and adjudicates the relation between what negates and what carries and is derived from P. In this regard, Fodor writes that “it is not an accident that the belief P is a constituent of the belief P&Q; and it is not an accident that the sentence “John prefers coffee” is a constituent of the sentence “John prefers coffee in the morning”. If you have an executive, you can (maybe) make sense of all that. If not, then—so far as anyone knows—you can't. Intellectualism suggests the possibility of a unified treatment of logic, language and thought.”¹⁰ I want to suggest that it is something other than anti-intellectualism to think that what the executive excludes is a vast range of extra-rational relations for which we cannot, strictly speaking, account; relations, which is to say things, that cannot be accounted for because they cut and augment inference; things like whatever occurs when believing P and believing Q is more or less and/or more and less than P and Q. All the things we are are more and less than selves. In general, the general is more and less, given in new sentences that some might see as unworthy constituents for which we cannot

account, but which others might see more clearly as instantiations of the incalculable.

Worked minds work wonders with 6.2 words, making do with less and more.¹¹

Before a submarine poetics of plain, sous l'eau danse l'avenir dans le pre. We're something like, but both a little bit and a whole lot less and more than, the machine Alan Turing imagined and described: an infinite memory capacity, with an infinite amount of time, whose computational force allows us to chart the limits of what can be computed. This other thing—a something's else or extra—goes over the edge of that limit. It is as if it has been thrown over the side of the vessel, the state-sanctioned ship or self that navigates that limit. The self's or the subject's transcendence has usually been associated with what it is to stand on the edge of the abyss to which it is and has been committed. Transcendence matters to the one who stands there only if it is given in her immanence, her thingliness, her fallenness, her homelessness, her sounding, her submarine movement, her endless tour. Study of the socio-aesthetic substance of black insurgency is inseparable from attending to the history of the interplay of calculation and displacement. This conjuncture manifests itself in frenzied, troubled, muffled speech over the edge of whatever is supposed to divide sacrament from profanation. Foucault, by way of Philo of Alexandria, recalls "an austere community, devoted to reading, to healing meditation, to individual and collective prayer and to meeting for a spiritual banquet (*agape*, 'feast')." These common practices, he argues, "stemmed from concern for oneself." Foucault then shows how the movement from self-care to self-knowledge is finally and fully instantiated in techniques of verbalization that are first deployed in the service of ascetic self-renunciation and then, with the advent of the human sciences, are given over

to a mode of self-representation that is the necessary accompaniment to what Angela Mitropoulos calls “the proliferation and democratization of sovereignty.”¹² The undercommon articulation I want to study, the symposium I want to join, marks the violent festivity of the knowledge and care of flesh—in *the flesh and not in sovereignty’s divided body*—arrayed against the terror and privation that attend the long career of self-concern’s attempt to regulate that for which it cannot account, either through renunciation or assertion. When drowned speech becomes fire music, embalming burned flesh with a runaway sermon’s fragrant sound, an alternative is announced.

By way of the din of generative multiplicity, which sounds like an itinerant quartet’s rhizomatic excess of itself, or like what kids’ anarchic sounding does to speech, or like the evolutionary step of loved, invaluable flesh’s instantiating interplay of artifice and intelligence, it’s blessedness inseparable from its woundedness, both new, interinanimate in beatitude, in poverty’s radical theoretical attitude, M. NourbeSe Philip’s Zong! documents descent and dissent, experiments in ascension and consent, as an emergence in anticipation but after the fact of the ongoing imposition of a submarine state of emergency that the dispersed sovereign (the executive whose sentences are constrained to administer the brutalities of broken felicity, fractured enjoyment), having commenced merchant, is serially enjoined to declare.

There’s an unruly interplay of silence and chatter that Ian Baucom’s assemblage and idiosyncretic archive, Spectres of the Atlantic, replays. There, the Zong’s exhausted, inspiring cargo—132 or 143 or 150 persons (documentation of the number always changes

as if marking an insistent incalculability) thrown into the sea whose trace was buried in the hold of the official language and documents of the governmental and financial entities that authored their disappearance—enacts its emergence and meta-emergence again. Thinking, but also living, between silence and chatter persists on other registers, in all languages: not only the silencing of things, the silence of an unheard case, of a muffled appeal consigned to lower frequencies, of disruptive wave and terminally colliding particle where no one can observe; and not only that other effect that constantly nascent and dying capitalism and colonialism produces, the ceaseless chatter of administration, regulation and what Baucom calls “phenomenal busy-ness”: but also the silence and chatter of song, which thinkers have been known to misrecognize as an unbearable lightness; but also the hard, sweet life of language on “the spectrum,” where I am an initiate under the protection of my son. He moves between silence and chatter, where the set pieces that adults usually reserve for the forced participation of kids break down in the face of a constant contact improvisation that you have to be ready for, as Al Green or Danielle Goldman would say. The brilliant surprise of the silly abcs (ba, dc, fe, h... sung to the rhythm and melody of the old tune) or the belated christening of a dinosaur (the protocerealbox, his bones discovered in illicit breakfast reading) must be heard to be believed. But those impositions (How old are you? Are you ready for Santa Claus? Are you strong? Show me your muscles! Do you like school?) aren’t the only scripts, all of which aren’t so easily done without. Every returned I love you is treasure when every incalculable gift was occasioned by an unimaginable loss and when the gift is often harder to accept, or would be, if it weren’t for what you had already been given by poems, which Charles Bernstein, thinking about Robin Blaser, calls “the flowers of

associational thinking.” Lorenzo gives me a fresh bouquet every day as I learn to stop mourning for something I never had.

One of the hard parts of caring for a child with an “Autism Spectrum Disorder” is the problem of where he should go to school. And if you’re picky about school to the point of not believing in it even though you love it so much you never want to leave it, if you’re so committed to the conservation of the strange and beautiful that your mistrust of the normal is redoubled to a level of intensity that can actually keep up with your desire for your child to have a normal life, then the general necessity of the alternative (school), which may have been a principle you’ve been trying to live by, now becomes concrete and absolute. It requires you to go back to kindergarten, at least every Tuesday morning, in order to play and get dirty and paint and make birdbaths and talk about princesses. Lorenzo and I facilitate communication with the other kids for one another out in the woods, where all the flowers grow. On Tuesday afternoon I go to school with the big kids, whose interest in flowers often goes against the grain of their schooling, where critical and creative attendance upon both silence and chatter is frowned upon in the interest of a whole other kind of preparation. In the afternoon we try to read Zong! This means we get together to decide how to get together to decide how to read it. The implication of a collective enterprise is now explicit—I don’t think anybody can do it by themselves. Philip’s memorial bouquet—faded, fading, murmured, submerged, displaced, misspaced, overlaid, is an effect of a range of (a)voided superimposition exposed as beauty, the amplification of an associational field

that evokes the mutual aid that it also requires, the terrible intimacy of the irreparable where everything is less and more than itself.

The logic of reparation is grounded on notions of originary wholeness, on the one hand, and abstract / general equivalence, on the other. Baucom thinks this in relation to credit and imagination but I wonder if it's not really bound up with a strange kind of empiricism.

What's the relation between the logic of reparation and the logic of representation? And what does that relation have to do with telling the truth, or the story, or the whole truth, or the whole story, with truth telling as a way of making whole? The normative arc of becoming (a subject, a citizen) is part of this logic. What if there were a radical politics of innovation whose condition of possibility is memory, which remains untranslated, whose resistance, in turn, makes innovation possible? Not to resuscitate! No resurrection. Make it new, like they used to say, so that indexicality is an effect, a technique, so that the recording is part of an experimental impulse. The archive is an assemblage. The assemblage is an image of disaster. But I just want you to enjoy yourself and I want you to believe that. This is an enthusiasm. This is the new thing and a lot of what it's about is just trying to figure out how to say something. How to read. Not (or not only) how to offer a reading, or even an interpretation, but a performance of a text, in the face of its unintelligibility, as if one were forced/privileged to access some other other world where representation and unrepresentability were beside the point, so that the response to the terrors and chances of history were not about calculation, not bound to replicate, even in a blunted and ethically

responsible way, the horrors of speculation, where new materialities of imagination were already on the other side of the logic of equivalence.

In a long set of unmade circles, the conditions and effects of miscommunication are brutal and glorious. They keep going till you stop—to revel in something that breaks you up; to rebel in dread of reverse and whatever brings it because if there were nothing it would be impossible and easier. I'm trying to talk about zones of miscommunication + areas of disaster + their affective ground and atmosphere and terrible beauty. They're the same but really close to one another but unbridgeably far from one another, connected by some inside stories we keep running from, the way people flee a broken park when the island is a shipwreck. The crumbled refuge is a hold and a language lab. Half the school falls away from the other half that escapes. Help in the form of a madman's persistent gunship. The settler's exceptional and invasive mobile fortress. Aggressive, hovering neglect of the instructor. He says the constant variety of distraction makes collaborating impossible and the other story's been buried again, concrete taken for water. The serially disrupted plan should have been disrupted but the disruption is serial—the same, enlarged catastrophe whose sociomusical, sociopoetic anticipation will peek through every once in a while as suppressed reports of suppression. Somebody has to imagine that, and how we keep dying for the shit we live for. The slave trade's death toll takes another shock today and still we cannot quite engage, always a little turned away and elsewhere, a little alone. At 1:15 we have to see if we want to figure out a way to work through this, which is to say in this. To

move in, which is to say through, the obscenity of poetry. This, too, is what Zong! is about, having claimed the catastrophe.

Poetry is rhythm breaking something to say that broke rhythm, an afterlife installation where knowledge takes the form of pauses, a soundscape made of risen questions, a machine made out of what happened when we were together in the open in secret. It miscommunicates catastrophe with unseemly festivity, in an obscenity of objection; it knows not seems, it doesn't know like that, its Julianic showings go past meaning, in social encryption, presuming the form of life whose submergence it represents. But it doesn't represent. It more and less than represents. There's a rough, unsutured transaction that moves against repair to make a scar. The new thing is a scar. It's hard to look at something when you can't look away. In Scenes of Subjection, Saidiya Hartman says re-dress is "a remembering of the social body that occurs through the recognition and articulation of devastation, captivity and enslavement..." I don't know if redress is obscene; I just know that it's cognate with administration. The social life of poetry strains against a grammar that seeks to defy both decay and generativity in the name of a self-possessed equivalence that, in any case, you know you can't have because you know you can't have a case. Some folks strive for that impossibility, rather than claim the exhaustion they are and have, as if this were either the only world or the real one. Encrypted celebration of the ongoing encryption is an analytic of the surreal world in and out of this one. It's not about cultural identity and it's not about origin; it's the disruptive innovation of one and the voluntary evasion of the other.

Catastrophe is the absence of the realistic account. Unflinching realism cannot account for such exhaustion. Attempts at such accounting are brazen in their hubris unless whatever such account moves up and down an incalculable scale. The assignment of a specific value to the incalculable is a kind of terror. At the same time, the incalculable is the very instantiation of value. The incalculable is what I think I mean by innovation. You could think about it in relation to Hannah Arendt's understanding of natality, but only by way of a suspension of her stringent exclusions. This is Hartman's encryption. The logic of reparation is vulgar. It's inseparable from representation understood as the thing—which is presumed to have a hole in it, whose fantasy in the hold is serially denied—made whole. To make whole, as if one could ever find completion, as if completion weren't an absolute brutality, as if the whole were static, as if it were the original, as if it were ever anything other than more and less than itself, as if the simple logic of the synecdoche could ever have been adequate to the mobile assemblage (the Benjaminian constellation where what has been comes together with the now), is an act of violence. The thing made whole is a heuristic device for attorneys and their post-literary critical clerks, who have no sense of time. Meanwhile, Jetztsein is the supplement like Selassie is the chapel.

The commitment to repair is how a refusal to represent terror redoubles the logic of representation. The refusal of our ongoing afterlife can only ever replicate a worn-out grammar. The event remains, in the depths. The event-remains are deep and we stand before them, to express them, as their expression. These bits are a mystery, a new machine

for the incalculable, which is next, having defied its starting place. I almost remembered this in a dream, where we were just talking, and nothing happened, and then it was over, until just now, with your hands, and light on the breeze's edge. I just can't help feeling that this is what we're supposed to do—to conserve what we are and what we can do by expansion, whose prompt, more often than not, shows up as loss (which shows up, more often than not, as a prompt). More shows up more often than nought if you can stand it.

There's a mutual transformation that occurs when the thing is engaged, a mutual supplement that serrates fantasmatic scenes of repair, that is always manifest as getting through or past or behind it to its essence or its message. What if the message were displaced by the ongoing production of code, which is our social life and what our social life is meant to conserve? What if what we talked about under the rubric of silence were discussed under the rubric of space? Or, in a different register, air? Or water? What is it like to be in the world with some other thing? What does it mean to consider that the relation between the reader, the poem, and history is spatial, a special relation, a north Atlantic entreaty, a plea, an exhortation in the form of a world embrace in resistance to enclosure? To speak the space-time of articulation as futurity, as projection? There's a mutual transportation that occurs when the poem is engaged, a mutual indirection that turns the way back round, this beckoning descent onto the gallery floor or fire or floor or banquet or bouquet.

Fragmentation is also about more, an initiation of the work's interior social life, a rending of that interiority by the outside that materializes it. The logic of the supplement is instantiated with every blur, every gliss, every melismatic torque, every twist of the drone, every turn of held syllable. I want to attend to the necessary polyphony. I don't want to represent anything and I don't want to repair anything but I do want to be here more, in another way. I think, in the end, Zong! works this way but even if it doesn't work this way I want it to work this way. I want to work it this way, in coded memory, as the history of no repair, as the ongoing event of more and less than representing. Zong! is about what hasn't happened yet. It is a bridge, which is to say a witness, to the ecstatic and general before. It moves in the irreducible, multiply lined relation between document and speculation, where the laws of time and history, of physics and biochemistry, are suspended, remade, in transubstantiation. The ones who have been rendered speechless are given to and by a speaker, in code, whose message, finally, is that there is speech, that there will have been speech, that radical enunciation (announcement, prophecy, preface, introduction) is being offered in its irreducible animateriality. No mercantile citizenship, no transcendental subject, no neuro-typical self matters as much as this: the refusal of administration by those who are destined for a life of being thrown, thrown out, thrown over, overlooked for their enthusiasms, which they keep having to learn to look for and honor in having been thrown, which keep coming to them, which they keep on coming upon, always up ahead, again and again from way back, as out recording, submerged encoding, faded script that can't be faded, joining the sound of the ones who have (been) sounded, under an absolute duress of

water, flesh that keeps speaking to us here and now, in contratechnical, counterstrophic, macrophonic amplification of the incalculable.

At circle time on Thursday, Lorenzo declared that when he makes smores for Julian (which I wasn't aware that he'd ever done, because I think he's never done it) he makes them with bricks, sticks and snow. He has become an anoriginal king of comedy. When everybody stopped laughing all the other jokes started flying around. Have you ever seen a Bethany eat another Bethany? Have you ever seen a Christopher eat a dishtopher? The circle broke up into a whole bunch of fiery, delectable shapes driven further out by chocolate milk. Orchard Hill School became the river of rivers in North Carolina (centrifugal curriculum, vigor, local abstraction). Then it was time for me to go to real school and time for them to go to the sleds. I wish my class were at the surreal school. That's what I'm trying for. But I have been lecturing my ass off, driven by the Holy Ghost that Philip is giving away. The only way I'm gonna be able to shut up is to go to Chicago. But I hadn't gone yet last week so my poor students had to bear with me, sitting around the table, while I repeated myself again, hoping that it was in a different way and hoping that the difference mattered. Then I said, in desperation, that the thing about this class is that I just want to be in a band, preferably this band, pointing to the speakers, listening to that first modification of the one/s that cause/s Baraka to use atom bomb and switchblade in the same phrase, Miles and them in '60, in Stockholm, with Wynton instead of Red, Jimmy instead of Philly Joe. There's a sped-up deepening of "All Blues" that was only gonna get faster and more lowdown over the next handful of years as the universal machines kept blowing things up. From there we went back

to “The Buzzard Song,” a Gil Evans installation, arranged horns chasing measure into the room with the moving walls. Abram said, “Well, he’s just so cool that he can play his way out of any situation.”

When we immerse ourselves in Zong!, throw ourselves into its terrible analytic of flesh, its beautiful analytic of being-thrown, we are the touring machine, dedicated to the thinking of the incalculable, suspended in the break of computation, held on the other side in always being sent, saturated in what Edouard Glissant—speaking of the middle passage as an insistent and ongoing worrying of inauguration—calls the “consent not to be a single being,” still in movement, in the quartet’s sober enthusiasm, from which the soloist flashes, as striated glide, to introduce us, once again, to our multiplicity. Which reminds me of a little girl named Mykah, noted for her refusal of administration, her resistance to calculation, her tendency to get in over her head. She keeps caring, carefully, not taking care of herself with others all the time, is so exorbitantly common that she keeps folks worried about her executive and her administrator, who seem too often to go on tour. One day, standing in front of a hollow place in a tree almost big enough for them to enter, Mykah said to my boy: “Come on, Lorenzo, let’s take a walk into the future.”

In “Will Sovereignty Ever Be Deconstructed,” Catherine Malabou impatiently notes that political philosophy is still organized by the problem of sovereignty. This might appear to be a problem that political theory needs to overcome; on the other hand, perhaps the problem is with politics. In other words, what if the theory of politics understands and

properly calculates its object? What if political philosophy is, and can be, nothing other than the theory of sovereignty? What if the biopolitical deconstruction of sovereignty (which Angela Mitropoulos describes as sovereignty's "democratization" and which we might think of as the condition in which every properly self-possessed, property-owning person is the king of his castle) marks the modern convergence of politics and its theory? What if that convergence is the very constitution of our contemporaneity precisely insofar as it keeps the strange untimeliness that demarcates what it is to be a contemporary (to be an other for another as Frantz Fanon once said, in a kind of militant despair)? What if our contemporaneity is the emergence of the citizen as general equivalent (the abstract and empty signifier that Malabou aligns with the symbolic life of those who are constrained to stand in for one another)? What if the citizen, serially remade, as it were, by his right to life, which is given in the regulation of her life, is nothing other than an executive function that turns out to be the form that sovereignty takes, the way that it shows up, the airy structure of its phenomenality? Such appearance, or manifestation, marks a movement that Malabou traces from natural history to biology—from the political subject to the living subject. And the living subject, the biologized subject, is not just vulnerable to but instantiated by a kind of instrumentalization of the one who bears and is the regulated right to regulated life that operates in and by way of something like a loss of enchantment, a purposive deficit that is given in the turn from natural history to biology, predicated on the absence of a teleological principle. When Immanuel Kant attempts to supply that principle is he already engaged in something like the deconstruction of biopolitical deconstruction,

allowing the biological and the political to touch? This is, I think, an interesting and nagging question, given the particular tools that he invents and deploys in the interest of that deconstruction. What's at stake is that resistance to instrumentalization is driven by a kind of panic in the face of generativity and destruction, of a certain unregulated interplay of fecundity and finitude that might be something like what Malabou has been elaborating under the rubric of "plasticity." The transcendental subject, the sovereign, dispersed in and as the new citizen with a right to life, returns in the interest of a certain security, in a way that recognizes what I think it is that animates Malabou's essay, *the notion that there is nothing other than biological resistance to bio-power*. She allows and requires us to ask what if the *bios* is nothing other than mutual instrumentalization and, even, indebtedness within a massive field of means without end/s? Then, "biological determination" is what we would conceptualize, constantly and paradoxically, as a necessary and unavoidable indeterminacy within the general structure of the interplay of fecundity and finitude. This is what the re-introduction of plasticity allows us to approach.

More pointedly, Malabou's work requires consideration of the relationships between law and the sovereign, the sovereign and the state? If it's possible to detach law from the state, as Robert Cover suggests, then it might also be possible to detach law from the sovereign. Kant joins those philosophers who see the biological as an instrument of power. He fears the play of life and death, which is characterized as the "state of nature," which Hobbes famously describes as "the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, [when] they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war as

is of every man against every man," delimiting life as "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." What's just as crucial as the assumption of the need for a common power to keep men in awe is the simple fact that the anarchic in/determinations of the biological are submitted to statist terminology, a kind of transcendental clue that seduces us to consider its mirror image, that nature is nothing other than resistance to the state/sovereign. Unseduced, Kant lays down a certain pathway, which more recently Arendt follows and maps, that traces the interplay between teleological principle and the state (a universal history whose cosmopolitan intent is carried out by sovereignty-in-dispersion). Along that line we would speak of the administration of/in natural history, as opposed to biology, which has no executive. Insofar as Kant appeals to natural history he tries to deconstruct biopolitical deconstruction; insofar as he remains committed to sovereignty in the form of a kind of world citizenship, he remains committed to the biopolitical deconstruction. Natural (or universal) history reifies and recollects the dispersed sovereign. After all, even "the critique or deconstruction of sovereignty is structured as the very entity it tends to critique or deconstruct," says Malabou, such that "contemporary philosophers reaffirm the theory of sovereignty, that is the split between the symbolic and the biological."¹³

By way of Foucault, and also by way of Eric Santner's updating of Ernst Kantorowicz, Malabou implies that the distinction between the symbolic and the biological (given first in the medieval notion of the king's two bodies and then dispersed throughout the citizenry) corresponds to the distinction between the body and (divested, devalued [insofar as they have been assigned and reduced to an exchange value],

supposedly deanimated) flesh. She accesses Giorgio Agamben's assertion that the bare life of divested flesh is somehow incorporated into every body, as a kind of essence, that dwells in the biological. Mere flesh is within, as well as outside, the symbolic economy, as the thing itself of incorporative exclusion. Necessarily degraded essence, flesh is within, at the core of, the body, as its reduction to the deathliness of merely living though the merely living, homeless and adrift, are incapable, precisely in their unlocatability, of being or having a body. The merely living fall short of the basic spatio-temporal requirements of self-hood which is, in turn, the basic requirement of sovereignty. Flesh is unaccommodated, which further implies the impossibility of something like an analytic of flesh that might pierce the distinction between the biological and the symbolic by thinking the flesh as invaluable, as the continual disruption of the very idea of (symbolic) value, which moves by way of the reduction of substance. This is to say that the reduction to substance (body to flesh) is inseparable from the reduction of substance. Saussure speaks, for instance, of the reduction of phonic substance as a fundamental maneuver for the formation of a universal science of language that is given in the terms of a theory of value; some thinkers (Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan) endorse this reduction in their different ways; others (such as Félix Guattari) assert that this materiality is irreducible; Malabou refines and extends that assertion, challenging the ascription of non-value to the one whose value is only in the arbitrariness of exchange or signification.

Malabou's challenge echoes without fully acknowledging a recent history of the theory of flesh that moves from detached analysis to immanent critique to ritual

celebration. Before Malabou, before Agamben, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Fanon, move in a kind of mutual orbit.

And then we were given the occasion to confront the white gaze. An unusual weight descended on us. The real world robbed us of our share. In the white world, the man of color encounters difficulties in elaborating his body schema. The image of one's body is solely negating. It's an image in the third person. All around the body reigns an atmosphere of certain uncertainty. I know that if I want to smoke, I shall have to stretch out my right arm and grab the pack of cigarettes lying at the other end of the table. As for the matches, they are in the left drawer, and I shall have to move back a little. And I make all these moves, not out of habit, but by implicit knowledge. A slow construction of my self as a body in a spatial and temporal world—such seems to be the schema. It is not imposed on me; it is rather a definitive structuring of my self and the world—definitive because it creates a genuine dialectic between my body and the world.

For some years now, certain laboratories have been searching for a “denegrification” serum. In all seriousness they have been rinsing out their test tubes and adjusting their scales and have begun research on how the wretched black man could whiten himself and this rid himself of the burden of this bodily curse. Beneath the bodily schema I had created a historical-racial schema. The data I used were provided not by “remnant of feelings and notions of the tactile, vestibular, kinesthetic, or visual nature” but by the Other, the white man, who had

woven me out of a thousand details, anecdotes, and stories. I thought I was being asked to construct a psychological self, to balance space and localize sensations, when all the time they were clamoring for more.¹⁴

...my body is made of the same flesh as the world (it is perceived), and moreover that this flesh of my body is shared by the world, the world *reflects* it, encroaches upon it and it encroaches upon the world (the felt [*senti*] at the same time the culmination of subjectivity and the culmination of materiality), they are in a relation of transgression or of overlapping.

...The *touching itself, seeing itself* of the body is itself to be understood in terms of what we said of the seeing and the visible, the touching and the touchable. I.e., it is not an act, it is a being at (*être à*). To touch *oneself*, to see *oneself*, accordingly, is not to apprehend oneself as an ob-ject, it is to be open to oneself, destined to oneself (narcissism)—Nor, therefore, is it to reach *oneself*, it is on the contrary to escape *oneself*, to be ignorant of *oneself*, the self in question is by divergence (*d'écart*), is *Unverborgenheit of the Verborgenen* as such, which consequently does not cease to be hidden or latent—

...It is by the flesh of the world that in the last analysis once can understand the lived body (*corps proper*)—the flesh of the world is of the Being-seen, i.e., is a Being that is *eminently percipi*, and it is by it that we can understand the *percipere*: this perceived that we call my body applying itself to the rest of the perceived, i.e., treating itself as a perceived by itself and hence as a perceiving...¹⁵

Merleau-Ponty discovers territory that Fanon had already begun to explore in Merleau-Ponty's wake, namely the difference and relation between flesh and body and the theory that emerges from bodily position and fleshly apposition (in and against and before imposition). In Fanon, the reduction to flesh that is implied in the loss of bodily schema is a reduction to the bare materiality of the thing whose very existence is ontologically and epistemologically dark to itself. Flesh, in its unlocatable immanence, because it is nowhere in being everywhere, nothing in being everything, is reduced to what it is made to signify. The immaterial is not given in flesh as the very animation of the invaluable but ascribed to or inscribed upon the flesh as mark/sign/value. Fanon is forced to inhabit the double edge of this experiment; a dehiscence is imposed upon him, his torn flesh opened to the experiment's irruptive possibilities. Who could fathom such enjoyment? Is it to his credit that Merleau-Ponty can want to approach it, that scandalous commitment to phenomenological exploration of which Husserl speaks, revealing the close proximity of coloniality to philosophy that Fanon had not only to interpret but also negotiate? In their mutual orbit, where philosophical conquest is unsettled by a constant anti-colonial insurgency, Merleau-Ponty and Fanon theorize the experimental inhabitation of flesh, in and as the naked declivity of being-perceived, pierces objecthood, making possible body and all the acts of consciousness that body, in turn, makes possible even unto the establishment of a real presence, a full inhabitation of and with rather than a kind of standing against or observing—given in and as an openness to things.

After Fanon and Merleau-Ponty, but in a way that is before them, in anticipation of them, Philip considers flesh that is mortified beyond the constraints of the symbolic (within which the keeping/writing of books instantiates the self as a financial instrument) in a violent hapticality while, for Toni Morrison, that hapticality brings us back to the revelation that Merleau-Ponty imagines, which is only materialized after the fact of a profound history of denial and deprivation that neither he nor Fanon hadn't fully taken into account—the impossibilities that follow from not having easy access to the “lived body” due to the very possibility of body's already having been overwhelmed by a negative signification that takes the form of an imposition of race and a denial of gender. Together, this quartet of the flesh of the world, exploring a general and generative resistance to what ontology can think and narrative can tell, protect Malabou's approach to the investigation of what is it to achieve fleshliness and what is it to be relegated to it. Her investment in flesh would, in turn, result in a kind of analytic, “a complete lysis of this morbid body” that is the king's two bodies. What emerges in Philip and, here, in Morrison, on the other hand, is a ceremonial poetics:

It started that way: laughing children, dancing men, crying women and then it got mixed up. Women stopped crying and danced; men sat down and cried; children danced, women laughed, children cried until, exhausted and riven, all and each lay about the Clearing damp and gasping for breath. In the silence that followed, Baby Suggs, holy, offered up to them her great big heart.

She did not tell them to clean up their lives or to go and sin no more. She did not tell them they the blessed of the earth, its inheriting meek or its glorybound pure.

She told them that the only grace they could have was the grace they could imagine. That if they could not see it, they would not have it.

“Here,” she said, “in this here place, we flesh: flesh that weeps, laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard. Yonder they do not love your flesh. They despise it. They don’t love your eyes; they’d just as soon pick em out. No more do they love the skin on your back. Yonder they flay it. And O my people they do not love your hands. Those they only use, tie, bind chop off and leave empty. Love your hands! Love them. Raise them up and kiss them. Touch others with them, pat them together, stroke them on your face ‘cause they don’t love that either. *You* got to love it, *you*! And no, they ain’t in love with your mouth. Yonder, out there, they will see it broken and break it again. What you say out of it they will not heed. What you scream from it they do not hear. What you put into it to nourish your body they will snatch away and give you leavins instead. No, they don’t love your mouth. *You* got to love it. This is flesh I’m talking about here. Flesh that needs to be loved.”¹⁶

Is Baby Suggs’s fugitive sermon to the fugitives who embody the disruption of the distinction between things and persons, her injunction to them to love the flesh that they are, the flesh that has been unloved and devalued in an ongoing, violent valuation, an

attempt at reinvestment or does she preach the impossibility of flesh's divestment, therein further implying something like a radical displacement of the symbolic and its supposed force? This touches on a certain problematic of resurrection and transubstantiation that comes into quite specific analytic relief in experience of, which is always also to say over, the edge where being valued in exchange and having no value outside of exchange converge. In the age of the biopolitical deconstruction of sovereignty, such experience is racialized and gendered so that Malabou's resounding of Derrida's insight that "the dignity of life can only subsist beyond the present living being" comes fully into its own by way of the analytic of invaluable flesh that is given in that exhaustive "consent not to be a single being" that Glissant locates in middle passage's brutal emergency. This is something Hortense Spillers elaborates in her grammar, which must also be understood as a poetics, of (being-held in the terrible) interval.

...First of all, their New-World, diasporic plight marked a *theft of the body*—a willful and violent (and unimaginable from this distance) severing of the captive body from its motive will, its active desire. Under these conditions, we lose at least *gender difference in the outcome*, and the female body and the male body become a territory of cultural and political maneuver, not at all gender-related, gender-specific. But this body, at least from the point of view of the captive community, focuses a private and particular space, at which point of convergence biological, sexual, social, cultural, linguistic, ritualistic and psychological features join. This profound intimacy of interlocking detail is disrupted, however, by externally

imposed meanings and uses: 1) the captive body becomes the source of an irresistible, destructive sensuality; 2) at the same time—in stunning contradiction—the captive body reduces to a thing, becoming *being for the captor*; 3) in this absence *from* a subject position, the captured sexualities provide a physical and biological expression of “otherness”; 4) as a category of “otherness,” the captive body translates into a potential for pornotroping and embodies sheer physical powerlessness that slides into a more general “powerlessness,” resonating through various centers of human and social meaning.

But I would make a distinction in this case between “body” and “flesh” and impose that distinction as the central one between captive and liberated subject-positions. In that sense, before the “body” there is the “flesh,” that zero degree of social conceptualization that does not escape concealment under the brush of discourse, or the reflexes of iconography. Even though the European hegemonies stole bodies—some of them female—out of West African communities in concert with the African “middleman,” we regard this human and social irreparability as high crimes against the *flesh*, as the person of the African females and African males registered the wounding. If we think of the “flesh” as a primary narrative, then we mean its seared, divided, ripped-apartness, riveted to the ship’s hole, fallen, or “escaped” overboard.¹⁷

Against and through every erasure, every legal record, every historiographic forgetting, every patrimonial repression, Spillers argues, “this materialized scene of unprotected

female flesh—of female flesh ‘ungendered’—offers a praxis and a theory, a text for living and for dying, and a method for reading both through their diverse mediations.”¹⁸ Bare life is supposed to be (degraded) essence, sacred and sacrificable. But flesh and bare life are not the same. If, as Malabou suggests, “the space which separates bare life from the biological body can only be the space of the symbolic,” then flesh is the biological that, in its finitude and fecundity, is before the body. The biological is the essence of the symbolic (it’s impetus, its initiation) just as flesh is the essence of the body. Essence is, here, as Malabou suggests, neither and both inside and outside. It has no place, it is insofar as it is displacement. Flesh might then also be thought as the irreducible materiality of Derridean *différance*, “the non-full, non-simple structured and differentiating origin of differences.”¹⁹

Perhaps Malabou would say, by way of Levi-Strauss, that flesh, as Spillers theorizes it, as Morrison recites it, is a floating signifier, possessing a “value zero” that it is the very engine of the symbolic, the very instantiation of valuation. And they would agree except for the fact that it also constitutes the most radical endangerment of the system of value, of the symbolic, of the discursive. What happens, then, if the traditional placement of flesh within the outer depths of the king’s two—symbolic and biological—bodies is refused by the Africanist presence’s fleshly, thingly displacement of “American grammar”? What happens, then, if we follow Mama’s Baby Suggs in claiming the monstrosity of “mere” flesh? This is another way of thinking about Malabou’s assertion of the brain’s plasticity, its explosive capacity to give and take form, which emerges for her most recently and most emphatically, in the impossible experience of the those with severe

brain injury or impairment, the ones she calls the new wounded, *la nouvelle blessee*. It allows us to imagine Malabou desire to put an end to the split between the two bodies, the symbolic and the biological, being performed in lingering for a while in/with the unclaimed experience of flesh—the *merely* biological, the *mottled* biothanatical, which is, itself, supposed to make no claims, which cannot, itself, be claimed though it can be bought and sold. Or to imagine, more broadly, that the discourse of cognitive science would take the deviant, non-neurotypical imagination of the Lorenzo bird, the lover and the poet as its new, constantly self-disruptive standard. What they know of their blessing is given in what they know of their woundedness, by way of the analytic that flesh makes possible, as if there were something already there, in the persistence of its difference from, rather than in its reintegration with, the discursive body, in and as its very exhaustion and exhaustibility. This is what is given in and as Baby Suggs’s festival of things.

There is something in the flesh, in its disintegration from and of the body, its personality, and its place. There is something to be thought from the flesh’s givenness in displacement, the violence it does to positionality that instantiates positional violence. Sovereignty may very well be located or instantiated in the split between the king’s two bodies but this still requires us to consider that sovereignty, which can never be separated from the (symbolic) body, is detachable from the (biological) flesh, which would justify some interest in the fleshliness, the thingliness, of the ones whose sovereignty, subjectivity, citizenship and selfhood are placed in question, in a question they consent to inhabit. It is this inalienable heritability of owned, disowned, unowned flesh and not “my

body” that makes such questioning resound while rendering the difference and distance between the king’s two bodies inoperative and inarticulate. The merger and dispersion of those bodies is biopolitics. In this sense, the merger of *bios* and *ta politika* is inseparable from and is manifest as the political rejection of the biological, which is given in the regulative conferral of the right to life. This is why, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has suggested, the first right must be the right to refuse, and not to have, rights, even if it is exercised as the refusal of what has been refused which is, in the end, the monstrous emergence that occurs where right, power, life and death converge.

In her desire for a rehabilitation of the biological that will have been accomplished by way of a liberation of “continental philosophy from the rigid separation it has always maintained between the biological, hence the material, and the symbolic, that is the non-material, or the transcendental, ” Malabou might be said to cause the brain to appear as re-invested, symbolical, transcendental, flesh.²⁰ But, in this regard, isn’t the deconstruction of biopolitical deconstruction still a sovereign operation? Not only in Malabou’s work but also in a great deal of philosophical reflection and cultural criticism, isn’t the brain, in a way that flesh precisely exhausts, where the sovereign (the executive; the administrator) is said now to reside? Maybe the trouble we have with the king’s head, its indefatigable resistance to all our would-be decapitative weaponry, is that it has a brain in it. Maybe we can appose the transcendental brain, and its scientific underwriting of self-concern, to the flesh’s dislocative immanence. Malabou says, “We are the authors of our own brains.”²¹ But who are “we”? How can “we” resist a tendency to isolate the brain from the rest of “our” (phenotypical/genotypical) flesh so that

authorship doesn't reify an old administrative or executive function that is nothing other than a new version of sovereignty? How can we prevent the body's inspirited materiality (the brain) leaving the flesh behind? Or a plasticization of sovereignty, which is also a placement of sovereignty, a reconfiguration or opening of sovereignty's place, leaving behind what flesh-in-displacement allows us to think, a new analytic of sociality, a new analytic of thingliness-in-festivity?

In the end, I'd like you to consider that the transition from a philosophy, or a natural history, to a biology of race accompanies and informs the pseudoscientific emergence of what we now recognize as the science of the brain; and that the Kantian revolution in moral, aesthetic and political theory, and the theory of mind, are fatefully and fatally coupled with and enabled by the invention of the philosophical concept of race that submits difference to a sovereign power that will have been both refined (in the recovery of a single originary purpose, a monogenetic impetus) and dispersed (wherein that purpose is, as it were, replicated and reproduced as human mental endowment). Do so while keeping in mind that the revolution in theories and techniques of computation (especially the computation of risk and maritime positioning that helped significantly to fuel the transition from mercantilism to [the interplay of the dispersion of sovereignty and the refinement of private accumulation and the conceptualization and regulative exclusion of externalities that we call] capitalism) that began to emerge in the mid-nineteenth century with the work of Charles Babbage and which took more immediately practical and efficient shape in the mid twentieth century by way of the contributions of Alan Turing, Norbert Wiener and others coincide roughly with the inception and return

of Afro-diasporic revolutionary social movement and the new modes of consciousness (and their globalized dispersal) such movement reflected and helped to shape. The desire to study the black insurgency whose traces remain in and as the dissemination of phonic substance in literature and music is now inseparable from attending to the history of the interplay of calculation, displacement and abolition. Baby Suggs's music—in the noise it brings to the opposition of score and performance, writing and reading; in its insistent worrying of the executive line—preserves what Foucault once called “the thought of the outside” so that the potential solipsism that autonomy and autopoiesis might be said to carry is given over to a desire for the informal, which will have been given, or will have been seen to have been instantiated, in every held, unheld, ruptured, ruptural social generativity that goes over the edge. Over the edge of the ship. Overboard. Thrown. Fallen. Inescaped. The touring machine is a diving bell, an instrument for sounding that becomes, at the end of exhaustion, ascent, accent, a certain song like, sing song quality, a sing sing sing kinda quality, a fugitive sing sing kinda thing, an instrument whose forced movement in thinking the unregulated, the un-self-possessed, the un-self-concerned, its rubbed, performed, informal interiority, its flash, is flesh thought inside out.

¹ Jerry Fodor, “Fire the Press Secretary,” *London Review of Books* 28 (April 2011): 24.

² Fodor, “Fire the Press Secretary,” 25; Michel Foucault, “Technologies of the Self,” Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman & Patrick H. Hutton, ed. *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (Amherst: The University Press of Massachusetts, 1988) 31.

³ See Theodore A. Harris & Amiri Baraka, *Our Flesh of Flames* (Philadelphia: Anvil Arts Press, 2008).

⁴ Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," 18.

⁵ See Nahum Chandler, "Of Exorbitance: The Problem of the Negro as a Problem for Thought," *Criticism* 50:3 (Summer 2008): 345-410.

⁶ Fodor, "Fire the Press Secretary," 24.

⁷ Robert Kurzban, *Why Everyone (Else) Is a Hypocrite: Evolution and the Modular Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011) 22.

⁸ Fodor, "Fire the Press Secretary," 24.

⁹ See David Kazanjian, *The Colonizing Trick: National Culture and Imperial Citizenship in Early America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004) 27. There, Kazanjian writes that "in the strictest sense the term refers to the process of igniting a liquid, of turning a liquid into flame. Here, I interpret such a process less as a breaking out of chaos than as a material transformation with powerful effects. 'Flashpoint' in this sense refers to the process by which someone or something emerges or bursts into action or being, not out of nothing but transformed from one form to another; and, it refers to the powerful effects of that emergence or transformation." In his concern with the conjunction of form and explosiveness, Kazanjian takes a theoretical path that can be said to parallel that of Catharine Malabou. In his concern with the irreducible sociality of the flash, Kazanjian can be said to diverge from or overrun Malabou, about whom more later.

¹⁰ Fodor, "Fire the Press Secretary," 25.

¹¹ I'm thinking a very specific interpenetration, which is, I think, only disguised as an impenetrability. The first permutation/permeation emerges in part of an epigraph for Polly Greenberg, *The Devil Has Slippery Shoes: A Biased Biography of the Child*

Development Group of Mississippi (London: The Macmillan Company, 1969) xv: “Course CDGM’s good,” said a large lady from Lauderdale County. “Cept the things about it that’s bad. There’s a lotta good folks come here to help us. ‘Course, there’s a lot just come to cause a fuss too. And the federal government’s finally recognized us down here—‘course sometimes that ain’t so good, ‘cause for every smile it gives us, it gives us a kick too. Well, at least it’s got us colored peoples workin’ for oursel’s. ‘Cept the ones that won’t. One thing, though, it’s great for the kids. On’y thing, it’s kinda hard on ‘em when they get to real school and it ain’t like our school. God’s helpin’ us, ain’t no doubt. It’s just that the Devil keeps skippin’ in and outa things so’s we won’t get spoilt. He really keeps you guessin’! Each thing, you gotta study it to see if it’s God in the disguise of difficulty, or the Devil in the disguise of somebody good. This whole thing really keep us workin’ our mind.” The second comes into relief in Noam Chomsky, “What We Know: On the Universals of Language and Rights, *Boston Review* (Summer 2005). “A significant insight of the first cognitive revolution was that properties of the world that are informally called mental may involve unbounded capacities of a finite organ, the “infinite use of finite means,” in Wilhelm von Humboldt’s phrase. In a rather similar vein, Hume had recognized that our moral judgments are unbounded in scope, and must be founded on general principles that are part of our nature though they are beyond our “original instincts.” That observation poses Huarte’s problem in a different domain, where we might find part of the thin thread that links the search for cognitive and moral universals. By mid-20th century, it had become possible to face such problems in more substantive ways than before. By then, there was a clear understanding, from the study of recursive

functions, of finite generative systems with unbounded scope—which could be readily adapted to the reframing and investigation of some of the traditional questions that had necessarily been left obscure—though only some, it is important to stress. Humboldt referred to the infinite use of language, quite a different matter from the unbounded scope of the finite means that characterizes language, where a finite set of elements yields a potentially infinite array of discrete expressions: discrete, because there are six-word sentences and seven-word sentences, but no 6.2 word sentences; infinite because there is no longest sentence (append “I think that” to the start of any sentence). Another influential factor in the renewal of the cognitive revolution was the work of ethologists, then just coming to be more widely known, with their concern for “the innate working hypotheses present in subhuman organisms” (Nikolaas Tinbergen) and the “human a priori” (Konrad Lorenz), which should have much the same character. That framework too could be adapted to the study of human cognitive organs (for example, the language faculty) and their genetically determined nature, which constructs experience and guides the general path of development, as in other aspects of growth of organisms, including the human visual, circulatory, and digestive systems, among others.”

¹² Angela Mitropoulos, “Oikopolitics, and Storms,” *The Global South* 3:1 (Spring 2009): 68.

¹³ Catherine Malabou, “Will Sovereignty Ever Be Deconstructed?” pagination unkn (I’m assuming you’ll want to refer to the pagination in the book).

¹⁴ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, Richard Philcox, trans. (New York: Grove Press, 2008) 90-91.

¹⁵ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible (Followed by Working Notes)*.

Claude Lefort, ed. Alphonso Lingis, trans. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968) 248-50.

¹⁶ Toni Morrison, *Beloved*. (New York: Plume, 1988) 88.

¹⁷ Hortense J. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," *Diacritics* 17:2 (Summer, 1987): 67.

¹⁸ Spillers, "Mama's Baby," 68.

¹⁹ Jacques Derrida, "Différance," Alan Bass, trans. *Margins of Philosophy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985) 11.

²⁰ Malabou, "Will Sovereignty Ever be Deconstructed?" page unkn.

²¹ Malabou, "Will Sovereignty Ever be Deconstructed?" page unkn.