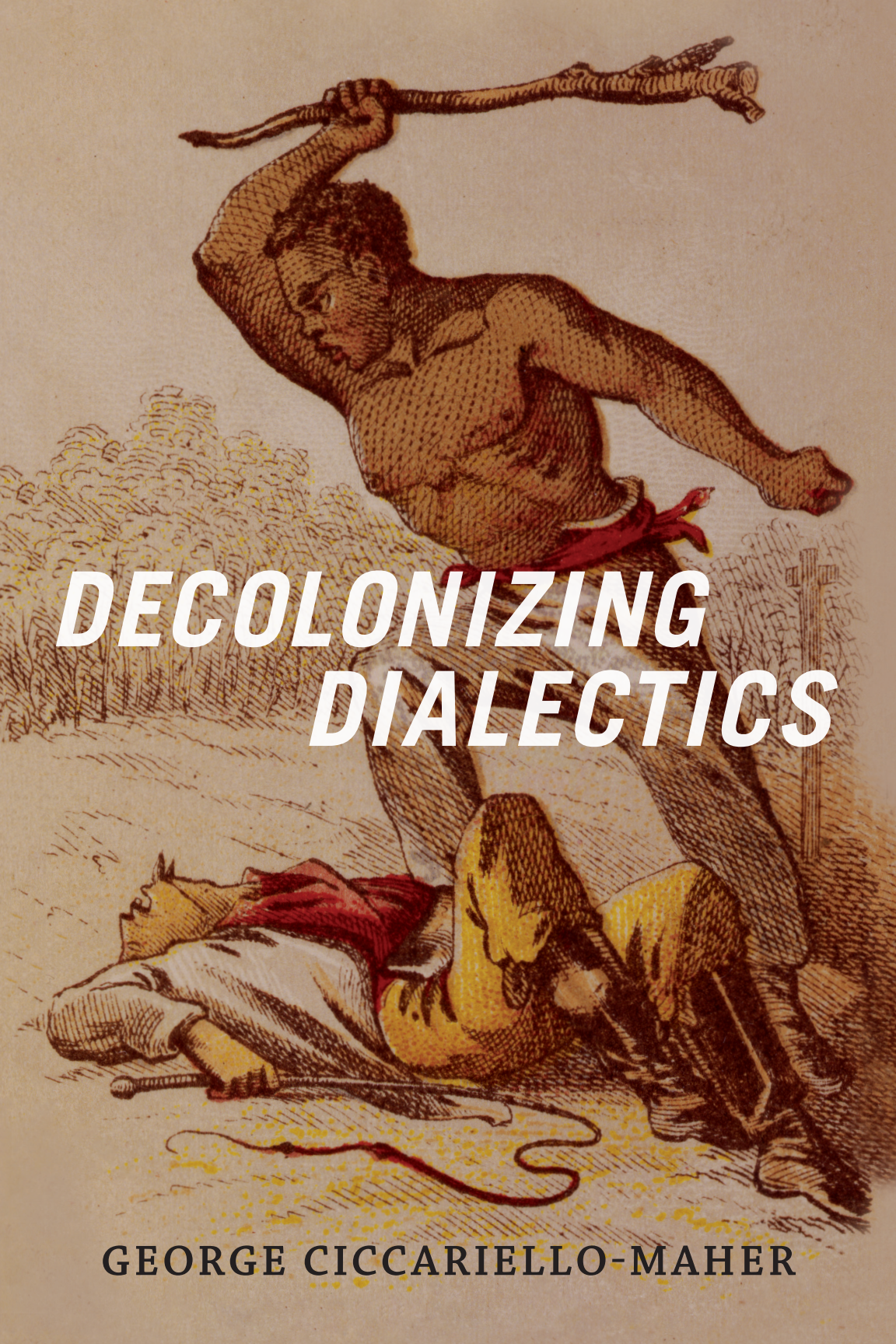

DECOLONIZING DIALECTICS

GEORGE CICCARIELLO-MAHER

DECOLONIZING DIALECTICS

RADICAL AMÉRICAS

A series edited by Bruno Bosteels and George Ciccariello-Maher

DECOLONIZING
DIALECTICS

GEORGE CICCARIELLO-MAHER

Duke University Press Durham and London 2017

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞
Designed by Heather Hensley
Typeset in Chaparral Pro by Westchester Publishing Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Ciccariello-Maher, George, author.
Title: Decolonizing dialectics / George Ciccariello-Maher.
Other titles: Radical Américas.
Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2016. |
Series: Radical Américas | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2016028024 (print)
LCCN 2016029328 (ebook)
ISBN 9780822362234 (hardcover : alk. paper)
ISBN 9780822362432 (pbk. : alk. paper)
ISBN 9780822373704 (e-book)
Subjects: LCSH: Dialectic. | Postcolonialism. | Critical theory.
Classification: LCC B809.7 .C54 2016 (print) | LCC B809.7 (ebook) |
DDC 190—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2016028024

Cover art: H. L. Stephens, *Blow for Blow* (detail), ca. 1863; reproduction number LC-USZC4-2523. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

G. W. F.

W. E. B.

C. L. R.

F. O. F.

H. C. F.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book was conceived in Berkeley, written largely in Caracas, and completed in Philadelphia—it bears the marks of each within it. Forever ago, it was not a book at all, but a dissertation, and before that a list of theoretical provocateurs. For helping guide and shape its metamorphosis, my greatest debt goes to my dissertation committee: Wendy Brown, Mark Bevir, Pheng Cheah, Kiren Chaudhry, and Nelson Maldonado-Torres. Wendy guided and pressed me to overcome my own limitations and blind spots, to think harder and to think better, and to prize commitment, all with a firm generosity that I can only hope to emulate. I arrived a pretender without much in the way of social graces, and she was kind even when I put my foot in my mouth. No single individual has seen more of what follows than she has, and even what she has not seen bears her indelible mark. Few of us are so lucky.

When I asked Wendy whether my dissertation project was a good idea, she didn't hesitate for a second—was I really going to do anything else? No, I wasn't. When I decided to move to Caracas for no apparent reason, and then to write a different book—*We Created Chávez*—when I should have been writing my dissertation, no one objected to such apparent lunacy. Kiren even memorably suggested that it would be the perfect place to get into just enough trouble; she was more than right, and I am more than grateful. Mark instilled in me a no-nonsense historical sensibility that has been consistently valuable. Pheng's commentary always combined a lucid rigor with an only occasionally daunting bluntness.

Nelson Maldonado-Torres welcomed me warmly into the fold of ethnic studies: by introducing me to Fanon and Dussel, inviting my participation in the Caribbean Philosophical Association and last-minute trips to Zapatista territory in the Selva Lacandona, he helped to set me down the path I now tread. He brought me into a supportive community including Jorge Gonzalez, Ramón Grosfoguel, Roberto D. Hernández, Richard Pithouse, Aníbal Quijano, Neil Roberts, Daphne Taylor-García, and many others, not to mention the inimitable Jane Anna Gordon and Lewis Gordon, and the entire board of the Caribbean Philosophical Association—which remains one of the most welcoming and supportive intellectual communities in existence. Nelson further encouraged me to translate Latin American theory, a sometimes-thankless task but one without which this book would never have been what it is. Enrique Dussel has been a disarmingly kind collaborator and supportive interlocutor along the way.

Wendy's dissertation group provided essential feedback in the early stages of this project, and was the perfect ratio of comradely and challenging: Diana Anders, Libby Anker, Ivan Ascher, Ali Bond, Mona Bower, Matt Baxter, Yasmeen Daifallah, Jennifer Denbow, Tim Fisken, Jack Jackson, Asaf Kedar, Sarah Kendall, Annika Thiem, Zhivka Valiavicharska, Yves Winter, and others I have inevitably forgotten. Senior cadres—particularly Jimmy Casas Klausen, Robyn Marasco, and Sharon Stanley—led us by example, as they continue to lead.

While at Berkeley, I taught some of these thinkers alongside Jeffrey Paris in the Prison University Project at San Quentin State Prison. To our students, whose insatiable taste for the concrete did not undermine the pleasure they took in abstraction: seeing some of you escape the gulag is more than I could possibly ask for.

As I was finishing my time at Berkeley, the upsurge came—and it is this same upsurge that we are still living today. The murder of Oscar Grant on New Year's Day 2009 was one of many, but one that thankfully came to matter more than most. From the flames of Oakland came the occupations at Berkeley, from which Occupy was born as a strange progeny. I treasure my friends and comrades from that period, in particular Nima Bassiri, Jasper Bernes, Joshua Clover, Robeson Taj Frazier, Satyel Larson, and Annie McClanahan, not to mention the original troublemakers at *Reclamations* journal: Chris Chen and Zhivka Valiavicharska. My appreciation as well to the University of California Police Department for its sheer incompetence, for never discovering my identity despite the fact that I worked right next door every day.

This book is inextricable from the context of Venezuela, where I moved in 2006 to begin teaching and learning, learning by teaching, struggling and being struggled with by student-militants at the Venezuelan School of Planning. In many senses, *Decolonizing Dialectics* is a theoretical companion piece to *We Created Chávez*, since I read and thought with these thinkers amid the combative heat of the Venezuelan crucible. It should be said, however, that from Venezuela I have taken far more than I have given, from those revolutionary movements that have provided me not only inspiration but also the concrete foundation required for any thought to become real. Today, Venezuelans continue to teach what it means to not back down, turning defeat into new victories, one step back into two steps forward.

My colleagues at Drexel have been sympathetic and supportive, and the university has been both understanding and patient, despite the hate mail it has brought. Julie Mostov in particular has been unfailingly kind. At the University of Pennsylvania, Tulia Falleti, Jeff Green, Andy Lamas, Anne Norton, Rogers Smith, and Bot Vitalis have been encouraging, as have many UPenn graduate students, Osman Balkan in particular. I am more than grateful for the recent support that many have shown for this project: particularly Amy Allen, Linda Martín Alcoff, and Charles Mills, not to mention my theory comrades of various shades of red: Paul Apostolidis, Anita Chari, Glen Coulthard, Andrew Dilts, Jeanne Morefield, Robert Nichols, Corey Robin, Jakeet Singh, and Antonio Vázquez-Arroyo.

The arguments that make up this book have been tested and enunciated, in written form but just as often in the streets. In their clearer expressions, they have been presented at APSA, WPSA, APA, APT, and the CPA; Rethinking Marxism; the Sciences Po; the University of Pennsylvania Political Theory Workshop; Ed Emery's autonomist conference at Cambridge some years back; the Georgetown University Institute for Global History; the International Association for Philosophy and Literature; and the International Congress of Americanists. Early versions of some arguments have appeared in *The Commoner*, *Contemporary Political Theory*, *Human Architecture*, *Listening*, and *Theory & Event*. The last of these warrants special comment, since past and current editors of *Theory & Event*—Jodi Dean, Davide Panagia, and James Martel, in particular—welcomed me immediately and warmly as a combative fellow traveler.

Courtney Berger at Duke University Press has been unnecessarily supportive of this project from the outset. I thank her for reminding me, gently but firmly, that Duke is where this book belongs—as usual, she was right. Moreover, both she and Gisela Fosado embraced my early suggestion for

a book series geared toward our new hemispheric reality, and the series that this volume inaugurates—Radical Américas—is the result. My appreciation to comrade Bruno Bosteels for being willing to co-navigate these waters with me in the hopes of turning the tide. The entire Duke team has been a pleasure to work with, joke with, and tweet with throughout the years—Laura Sell in particular; I look forward to more of the same. Anonymous reviews from two different presses improved the manuscript enormously, and Andrew Dilts and Jason E. Smith both read closely and gave thoughtful feedback. Participants in the Tri-College Political Theory Workshop—Susan Liebell, Joel Schlosser, Molly Farneth, Craig Borowiak, Jill Stauffer, Osman Balkan, Gabe Salgado, Zach Smith, Tom Donahue, and Paulina Ochoa Espejo—provided invaluable comments and advice on the penultimate draft of the introduction.

As a dissertation, this project was not about dialectics in name, but soon enough—in good dialectical fashion—its content outstripped its form through the tight spiral of theory-practice-theory. In the 1970s, the Sojourner Truth Organization (STO) began to train its militants in dialectics, through an intensive curriculum entitled, with a hubris that only Lenin could have inspired, *How to Think*. As a member of Bring the Ruckus—an organizational heir to STO—we continued to study and teach dialectics according to their model, based on readings from Hegel, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg, C. L. R. James, and W. E. B. Du Bois, alongside those readings that grounded our political tradition in the centrality of white supremacy in the United States. In Bring the Ruckus, we practiced a self-consciously combative dialectics that we often described as drawing hard lines. The painful discovery that not everyone draws those lines in the same place doomed us, but not without strengthening the resolve of those who still walk the crookedly dialectical path. To comrades past and present, this book is an imperfect attempt to put what we have been doing into words.

One comrade, Taryn Jordan, knows better than any other the pain of combat, but also that rage—while explosive—is the best fuel. Thanks to my Philly comrades for their patience above all else, and for never backing down. In 2015 Philadelphia—as in 2009 Oakland—a small group of those that Huey Newton would call "the implacables" helped to tip the balance and press an entire city in new and unforeseen directions. Joel Olson, political theorist and founding member of Bring the Ruckus, left us nearly five years ago. A walking, talking double helix of militant theory and practice, Joel was completing a book on fanaticism when he died. At our best, all we can hope is to be half as fanatical as he was. I count among my most

treasured friends and comrades those who continue to build upon his legacy, including Alberto Toscano, Jord/ana Rosenberg, and the decolonial fanatics coalescing around *Abolition* journal, for which Eli Meyerhoff's efforts have been heroic and indispensable.

I learned combat young and of all those who have had my back in a fight, my parents were the first and the most important. My best memories are of them fighting for their children and themselves; my worst memories are of the pain that left them no choice but to do so. They showed by example why it's important to struggle, and I'm sure they have occasionally regretted just how well the lesson stuck. My gratitude to the Ciccariello family for lending me their name—I'll give it back, I promise. My deepest thanks and mustache emojis to Andrew Dilts and John Drabinski—confidants and sounding boards—and what the hell, to Sheela Cheong and Rich Porter too, whoever you are. Sina Kramer has been generous and patient in pressing me to think Hegel better, and Marisa Parham coached me best when I needed it. As always, Alicia, Jeff, and Lyla Bell are a refuge.

Finally there is Oakley Francisco, who if he wants—and I suspect he will—may one day suffer the painful dialectics of parenthood. There is nothing worse than struggling against pristine young beings, setting before them the barriers they must overcome if they are ever to learn for themselves. In every overcoming we take one step closer to self-consciousness, and nothing is more selfish than robbing them of that opportunity. My deepest gratitude to Abbey Irene for her patience with him and with me, crying, laughing, or more often laugh-crying, while we shake our heads to the same question as always: "what even *is* this child?"

Frantz Fanon once blamed the lateness of a book on his boiling blood. But having found in him a kindred spirit like no other, I don't believe that—in his brief life—his blood ever truly stopped boiling. Wary of zealotry, Fanon was in fact the best kind of zealot. In any case, I have no such excuse. This book could have been written before, and the temperature has not dropped but only risen. I can only hope that in this world, which every day proves itself unworthy of existence, this book may be useful, if only for the sharpening of weapons.

RUPTURES

OURS IS A NEWLY DIALECTICAL AGE, the much-touted teleological resolution of the "end of history" having collapsed like the myth that it always was into fragmentation, division, and dynamic oppositions, new struggles erupting over old questions. For too long, however, *dialectics* has not served to denote such moments of combative division that give its name, but instead the opposite: a harmonious closure often announced but rarely experienced. For this, Hegel bears as much responsibility as anyone: driven by a profound anxiety toward rupture and "intense longing" for unity, Hegel's dialectical vision would enable conservative resolutions even as it opened radical possibilities.[1]

It is perhaps little surprise, then, that the most famous recent attempt to recruit Hegel for the task of declaring history over—Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History*—took much the same form as Hegel's own preemptive dialectical closure nearly two centuries prior, albeit in a more transparently conservative way. Blind to the internal tensions of globalizing capital, Fukuyama even more than Hegel fell back on a faith in the impossible: the resolution of the utterly contradictory, the reconciliation of humanity with its opposite, through the same vehicle: civil society.[2] Today, more than two decades after the banner of civil society was hoisted to topple the Soviet Union and usher in a temporarily unipolar neoliberal world, that banner now dangles in tatters, its internal tensions bared and its complicities with power ever more apparent—the vehicle of choice for removing intransigent regimes from Yugoslavia to Haiti, Ukraine, and Venezuela.[3]

By contrast, new struggles are emerging, new ruptures throwing forth new and renewed identities that deepen contradictions and press toward different possible futures. I do not refer to what for years was offered to disprove liberal optimism—namely, the resurgence of political Islam—although this too is a clear enough indication that history has yet to reach its terminus. I refer instead primarily to those struggles that have surged forth in opposition to the neoliberal onslaught and which pose the possibility of a postneoliberal world: the Latin American "pink tide" (especially in its darker red variants), a veritable global wave of riots and rebellions returning like the repressed to the heart of the Old World (Paris, London), and more recently the broad upsurge comprising the Arab Spring, the Spanish *indignados*, and the Occupy Movement. New identities, new struggles, and new forms of sociability, the novelty of each never expressed in absolute terms, but instead as an occasionally painful process of strategic and tactical refinement whose defeats and reversals are as pronounced as its victories and advances.

Not surprisingly, this newly combative moment has been accompanied by and intertwined as both cause and effect with a rebirth of dialectical thought. Whether in recent attempts to rethink the Hegelian legacy, to renovate the Marxist and communist tradition, or to mobilize against the current political and economic crises racking the globe, the question of dialectics—the dynamic movement of conflictive oppositions—is once again firmly on the table.[4] In this process, the dialectical questions par excellence—what to preserve and what to discard, how to move forward without reproducing the errors of the past—are re-posed with heightened urgency. But in the context of struggles that are powerfully global, at the intersection of the inverse but complicit dynamics of outsourcing and exodus-migration, white supremacist containment and suburban rebellion, we cannot escape the historically fraught relationship between dialectics and decolonization, one long characterized by mutual suspicion.

On the one hand, while Hegel and especially Karl Marx have long served as go-to sources for struggles emerging from the global periphery, these same authors have been viewed with skepticism due to their shared Eurocentrism and the linear, progressive, determinist, and teleological elements of their approaches. As a result, most postcolonial theory has "eluded engagement with . . . the reworking of dialectical thinking."[5] Viewed from the opposite direction, however, this postcolonial suspicion is not without reason, since despite the undeniable resources that Hegel and Marx furnished for later decolonial thought, many contemporary neodialec-

ticians have done little to alleviate the concerns of their would-be decolonial allies. Reacting to poststructuralist and postcolonial critiques of the universal, thinkers from Slavoj Žižek to Alain Badiou have effectively bent the stick in the opposite direction, occasionally to a troubling degree. Where Badiou has assailed an "ethics of difference" that is complicit with capitalist multiculturalism, his alternative is the unalloyed universalism of a "generic humanity" that is fundamentally "*indifferent to differences*."[6] Žižek, with a characteristic zeal for the provocative, has gone even further in urging the Left to openly embrace Eurocentrism.[7] But as a boomerang effect of the poststructural politics of difference, much is missed in this precipitous return swing toward the universal.

Troubling Unity

Despite the palpable divisions increasingly embraced in theory and incarnated in practice, political logics of the present remain curiously trained on unity. In a maneuver that Michel Foucault describes as *recentering* and even *recolonization*, unitary logics stalk political oppositions, seeking to deactivate unruly movements in the name of power and sovereignty. Political leaders from Right to Left, Republicans and Democrats alike, maneuver and jockey less over substantive differences than over who can claim the mantle of speaking for everyone and whose unity is therefore preferable. Thus we unify against our enemies under Barack Obama as we did under George W. Bush, with the sole proviso that Afghanistan is a "good war" while Iraq was a "bad war," a merely qualitative metric for determining who "our" absolute enemy is.

So too in domestic affairs, where the question is not "what price unity?" but instead, "who is the *us* that is unified?" Obama's famous 2008 "race speech" was accordingly titled "A More Perfect Union," but four years later his cynical pretensions shone through when he admitted that "the nature of this office is also to tell a story that gives them a sense of unity and purpose and optimism." Here Hegelian themes are clearly on display: totality (we are unified), teleology (we have a purpose), and the promise of progress (we are optimistic). The inescapability of this logic of unity was clear as day just two months later when Mitt Romney violated this cardinal rule in a leaked video, scornfully dismissing the laziness of the 47 percent. Having accidentally proven his unsuitability for "the nature of this office," Romney paid the price for speaking the inverted truth of a class warfare he rejected in public.

The differences between the two candidates would prove more rhetorical than substantive as a result: Obama's watered-down immigration

reform is a drop in the bucket compared with record deportations; in terms of human rights abuses abroad, one unnamed government official spoke of "no change at all . . . an almost seamless transition from Bush to Obama";[8] Obama's much-touted Affordable Care Act has left the private insurance sector firmly in the driver's seat; and the long-promised integration of Black Americans into this unified nation has been little more than window dressing. Rather than the crowning resolution of struggles past, Obama's election has instead represented, as Glen Ford presciently predicted, "the antithesis of Black Power"—a dialectical identity if ever there was one—its deactivation and incorporation into the status quo ante.[9]

If we had any reason to doubt this diagnosis in an age of mass incarceration and resurgent white fascism, then the names turned hashtags Oscar Grant, Trayvon Martin, Renisha McBride, Tamir Rice, CeCe McDonald, Sandra Bland, and Mike Brown—among thousands of others—serve as a painful reminder. The nation remains fundamentally unchanged, albeit adorned with fewer Confederate flags. But even the most cynical campaign rhetoric and even the emptiest promises can produce social blowback: if theorists of revolutionary change have long emphasized how rising and frustrated expectations can spark social upheaval, we find this confirmed in the militant resistance that broke out at the dawn of the age of Obama and has only escalated in the falling dusk of his promised hope and change, in those local names turned national symbols: Ferguson and Baltimore. And lest we dismiss the unitary rhetoric of sovereignty as *simply* a ruse, reducing it to the disingenuousness of political power, such logics permeate far more deeply, cutting into and across oppositional movements and discourses themselves, disarming movements from within and preparing them for reincorporation into the governing apparatus.

Here, the Occupy Movement provides a dire warning. While Occupy gained initial traction as a clarion call for social equality by re-posing class conflict in the now-famous ratio of the wealthiest 1 percent against the remaining 99 percent, swirling immediately in and around the occupied camps was the sharp interrogation of this ratio, not from advocates of unity, but from those posing division in different terms. Those criticizing the slogan of the 99 percent from a class perspective rightly worried that this ratio displaced hostility from capitalist exploiters to the recently popularized category of the "super-rich," usually associated with high finance. Inversely, others argued that there was little practical use for a category in which one could still earn over $300,000 annually and technically be a member of the "99 percent": in this view, demonizing the super-rich simply acquitted the

just plain rich of their exploitative role. Others shunned a strictly economic approach entirely, insisting that the fault lines racking U.S. society have more to do with anti-Black racism, colonization (whose relation to calls to "occupy" is tense at best), or gender. Ultimately, the most militant of occupations—in Oakland, California—divided into two wings known as "Occupy Oakland" and "Decolonize Oakland," although the question of whether this particular division of one into two was a dialectical one, remains open.[10]

Those who defended the idea of the 99 percent, and especially those who enforced it in practice in the Occupy encampments, testified to both the lure of unity and its dangers. For many, the strength of the slogan of the 99 percent was its *inclusivity*, the laudable aspiration to gather rather than disperse our forces. But by asymptotically approaching the inclusion of everyone, we run the risk of sliding into far more treacherous territory, moving from rupture, division, and opposition toward the aspirational recasting of a near-total unity. If anything, *this* is the most ideological gesture of all, one that seeks to reconcile rupture with its opposite, taking refuge in the comforting idea that we are all in this together rather than engaging in risky solidarity *against*. While dangerous in its own right, this slide toward unitary logic also enacted-while-concealing concrete *exclusions* as well: critics were tarred as "divisive," as a mortal threat to the unity of the 99 percent, and this label was reserved especially for those who sought to establish people of color or women's caucuses within the camps.

In banishing difference, this homogeneous universalism jealously reproduced the unity it had once claimed to oppose, and demands for internal unity proved complicit with the even more dangerous openness that some camps demonstrated toward the power structure itself: welcoming local mayors and police into the warm embrace of the 99 percent all the while silencing internal dissidents. In many places, Occupy thereby became a safe space for those already safe, refusing to even exclude white supremacists, anti-immigrant activists, and Ron Paul supporters, while embattled radicals drifted away. It was only a matter of time before Occupy candidates began to make electoral bids, and large sectors of the movement were reincorporated into the same power structure it had sought to oppose. As I write this, moreover, it is clear that such threats were not limited to Occupy: observe the ease with which political opportunists and foundation funders are currently working to recolonize the oppositional energy of the Black Lives Matter movement by exploiting the political naiveté of some of its leaders—we can only hope that the explosiveness of Ferguson and Baltimore will not be bought off so cheaply.

Beyond revealing the seductions of unity, such dynamics point toward the contested nature of the identities in question and tenacious debates about the relationship between race, class, nation, and gender.[11] How to negotiate these dynamics, these microdialectics that cut into and across oppositional movements themselves, while always keeping a wary eye toward that dangerous lure that Cristina Beltrán calls "the trouble with unity"?[12] Whether in the theoretical chasm between Žižek's universalism and postcolonial theory or the on-the-ground clash between "Decolonize" and "Occupy," I argue that much is neglected in between. It is this vast and generative space—one constituted by the unavoidable judgment of where and when to draw hard lines, divide unities, and press oppositions—that I hope to probe in this book, with the following questions in mind.

First, against those postcolonial thinkers who discard dialectics out of hand, is it possible to subject the dialectical tradition to its own decolonizing *Aufhebung*, transcending its limitations by preserving what is useful and shedding what is not? Second, and inversely, is there a dialectical understanding capable of accommodating the continuing project of decolonization, and the questions of race and nation that this process inevitably confronts, or is the historical baggage of dialectical thought simply too heavy to be worth the trouble? My response to both lies in the affirmative: just as any attempt to systematically grasp the conflicts and identities that structure our world requires that we rupture the boundaries of European thought, we cannot grasp the parameters of decolonization as a profound and ongoing process without recourse to some modified understanding of that dynamic and combative motion that many give the name "dialectics."

Decolonizing Dialectics

In this book, I approach the task of decolonizing dialectics by excavating a largely subterranean current of thought, what I call a *counterdiscourse*, that I argue constitutes a radicalization of the dialectical tradition while also opening outward toward its decolonization. This is a dialectical counterdiscourse that, by foregrounding rupture and shunning the lure of unity, makes its home in the center of the dialectic and revels in the spirit of combat, the indeterminacies of political identities slamming against one another, transforming themselves and their worlds unpredictably in the process. This is a dialectical counterdiscourse that, by grasping the momentary hardening of group identities, grants weight to a separatist *moment* in dialectics—at the expense of premature reconciliation—but does so without succumbing to a hermetically essentialist separatism, be it of class,

race, nation, or otherwise. Identities are forged in struggle, and there too are they reforged. This is a dialectical counterdiscourse that, as a result, tosses off many of the shackles of a conservative dialectical tradition that traffics under the phrase, only dubiously attributable to Hegel: "the real is rational."[13] In confronting the antidialectical immobility of false universals that portray the present as complete, the thinkers considered here resist all teleology, determinism, linearity, refuse all comforting promises of inherent progress, and defer all premature declarations that history has indeed reached its conclusion. Their horizon remains a horizon.[14]

I begin with the turn-of-the-century French syndicalist Georges Sorel to distill the basic contours of a radicalized dialectic of European class struggle. Confronting the false promise of social unity that had deactivated the class struggle, Sorel concluded that working-class conditions (class-in-itself) were no guarantee of an oppositional working-class identity (class-for-itself) and that the latter must be actively constructed and subjectively projected in an openly combative struggle. In part through Sorel's peculiar attentiveness to the importance of ideology—and thereby the centrality of class identity—he is able to glimpse at a surprisingly early moment the contours of a broad Marxist dialectics of history stripped of all determinism and teleology, in which the identitarian intervention of the working class serves as the fundamental but not invincible motor force. Despite, or better put, *as a result of* his intransigent class-centrism—one that foregrounds ideology, identity, and active intervention—Sorel's immanent critique of European Marxism provides *not* the origin of decolonized dialectics, but a radically combative baseline that is open to subsequent decolonization

I then turn to the Martinican-born and French-trained psychiatrist turned Algerian revolutionary Frantz Fanon, who serves as a bridge between Europe and the colonies and thereby from a European to a more openly decolonial dialectics. Not unaware of Sorel's work, Fanon nevertheless took an ostensibly different approach, engaging race (rather than class) in the European context and doing so through a critical engagement with the Hegelian master-slave dialectic (rather than the Marxist dialectic of class struggle). Surface differences conceal substantive similarities, however: where Sorel saw a dialectic frozen by the ideology of unity, Fanon saw one short-circuited by white supremacy, in which the basis for reciprocity—which Hegel took for granted—did not yet exist. Like Sorel, he advocated subjective, identitarian struggle to jumpstart dialectical motion, but by injecting subontological racial difference into Hegel's formulation, he also

crucially "decolonized" the master-slave dialectic itself. After shifting to the revolutionary Algerian context, Fanon confronted a similar context, albeit one characterized not by frozen unity, but by the congealed opposition that he famously diagnosed as Manichaean. In response, he would project this radicalized dialectic onto the global scale, posing a broad opposition between the decolonial nation as a complex, shifting, and dialectical entity and those (neo)colonial forces intent on freezing its motion both from within and from without.

Finally, I turn to the exiled Argentine philosopher of liberation Enrique Dussel Ambrosini, who poses what would appear to be a direct challenge to both the coherence of this counterdiscourse and to the possibility of a decolonized dialectics more generally. Influenced by Emmanuel Levinas's ethics of alterity, Dussel is sharply critical of dialectics and instead embraces what he calls an *analectics* rooted in the embrace of the Other as exteriority. However, as I show, Dussel's break with dialectics is far from complete, and rather than refuting a decolonized dialectics, his insistence on incorporating the category of exteriority into a dialectics of national and popular identity provides an essential ingredient for my own project that—through a sort of productive parallax—is visible in Fanon's work as well.

It is this dynamic fusion of internal oppositions and decolonial appeal to excluded exteriorities that, I then argue, we see playing out in the combative dialectics and multiple subdialectics swirling around and coalescing in Venezuela's "Bolivarian Revolution." In the last chapter, I test the traction of this decolonized dialectical approach through a reading of the dynamic movement of "the people" (*el pueblo*) in a moment still shaped by the combative specter of the late president Hugo Chávez. While some Eurocentric critics dismiss popular identity as inherently unitary and homogenizing, I show how its contextual function in Venezuela—and much of Latin America—tends instead to be combative and divisive. The dynamic movement of the Venezuelan people in recent years has done more than simply draw together different sectors in struggle; it has marked for many the overcoming of ontological exclusions discernible only through a decolonized dialectical lens, their entrance into being itself.

A word on terminology and categories: the thinkers that I draw together here write in markedly different registers. Thus Sorel, a more unabashedly political and practical thinker, speaks scornfully of unity and "social harmony." Fanon, who oscillates between political and ontological registers, takes aim instead at false universals, whether at the foundation of Hegel's own system or in the politics of formal emancipation. In Dussel, finally,

the philosophical register takes center stage with his frontal critique of "totality," which he nevertheless translates into the categories of colonization and exclusion. To smooth such terminological disjunctions, I use the language of the authors themselves, while anchoring the discussion conceptually to Martin Jay's typology of the category of totality: specifically, the distinction between descriptive and normative totalities, as well as the more powerful conceptions of expressive totality (history as the unified expression of a single principle) and longitudinal totality (a temporal unity in which that singular history moves progressively forward).[15]

Why Dialectics?

Each of the thinkers considered here is a sharp critic of the dialectical tradition in its different manifestations. Sorel goes so far as to denounce dialectics as illusory, Fanon aims his sharpest theoretical barbs at Hegel's dialectic of recognition, and Dussel turns to exteriority against what he reads—transposing concepts with geopolitics—as a sort of dialectical imperialism. Each rejects elements so common to dialectical thinking as to be considered by some its essential ingredients: teleology, determinism, progress, class-centrism, and two-sidedness, among others. If dialectics—or better, "*the* dialectic"—is necessarily totalizing, deterministic, or teleological, one could argue that the thinkers in question here move, each in their own way, and perhaps without knowing it, irreversibly beyond anything that could be called properly dialectical. More precisely, one might argue that what passes for dialectics in this book, especially a decolonized dialectics that foregrounds the category of subontological difference and exteriority, has crossed the crucial Hegelian threshold that divides *difference* (an internal relationship) from *diversity* (the indifferent difference of a purely external relation).[16] Without the ties that bind opposing elements by necessity to one another—without, in other words, the unified ground of totality to grant meaning to oppositions—nothing remains but unrelated multiplicity.

Why then attempt to unite such a motley band of theoretical heretics under the banner of dialectics in the first place? Is it not fairer and safer to circumvent thorny philological and Marxological debates by simply opting out? While tempting in its simplicity, I believe that to evade dialectics entirely would be a cop-out, for at least three reasons: two theoretical reasons that point, from inverse directions and at opposite extremes, toward the danger of bad dialectics on the one hand and bad multiplicity on the other. These two theoretical reasons then ground the potentially too-obvious practical argument for a dialectical approach that nevertheless, in

its simplicity, conceals its own theoretical rationale: that the thinkers in question considered themselves to be doing the same.

First, to surrender the name *dialectics* would be to hand dialectical thinking over to its more conservative proponents, as a phenomenon oriented toward internal closure or centered too stringently on the internal nature of oppositions. If we hold too tightly to what binds the two sides to one another in a predetermined logic, we foreclose on a radicalized dialectics by succumbing to what Fredric Jameson describes as "the possibility that difference might vanish altogether in some premature identity."[17] This threat should not be a surprise, since the question of unity constitutes a fundamental tension and perennial temptation for even the inaugurators of the tradition. Whether it be Hegel's own anxieties toward dialectical rupture and desire to theorize systematic reunification, or Marx's posing of a less systematic but still reconciled logic and end of history, master dialecticians past were not immune to those elements so scrutinized in the past century: teleology, determinism, linearity, progressivism, and the lure of totality.

This is not and cannot be a book about Hegel or Marx however—about those who draw them together or oppose them—for space limitations, for the interminable debates this would provoke, and above all because we must set such questions aside if we are ever going to get where we are going. What can and must be said is that the powerful ambivalence both Hegel and Marx display toward unity bespeaks radical kernels of possibility at the very least, kernels that the thinkers discussed in this book seize upon, transform, and exploit in more unabashedly combative directions.[18] This is not to suggest that there have been no previous efforts to decolonize the dialectical tradition, and much less to strip that tradition of its more conservative residues.[19] Suffice it to say, however, many attempts to liberate the dialectical tradition from such fetters have ended up inadvertently reproducing elements of the same, with even the best examples showing just how far epistemic decolonization still has to go.[20]

My approach, and that of the thinkers—not to mention the political processes and movements discussed here—will be more directly trained on the dual task of radically rethinking dialectics in a manner faithful to the combative dialectical spirit *and* decolonizing dialectical thought in the process, insisting all the way that this ostensibly dual task is in fact but a single one. If radicalizing dialectics to the very point of incommensurability runs the risk of moving beyond dialectics entirely, it has the virtue of bringing into the dialectical purview oppositions that are too often obscured. If radicalizing dialectics means attempting to strip away all tele-

ology, decolonizing dialectics underscores how the telos of Hegelian and Marxian conceptions of history emerges from a particular location (Europe), and assumes forms of dialectical resolution specific to it (*Sittlichkeit* through civil society for Hegel, the resolution of the industrial proletariat-bourgeoisie class opposition for Marx).

If a radicalized dialectics resists the idea that the dialectic moves inexorably and deterministically according to its own internal oppositions, a decolonized dialectics recognizes both the historical source of that motion *outside* Europe in the colonies as well as the brutal reality that for colonial subjects, history often seems to move backward rather than forward, if it moves at all. If a radicalized dialectics questions the fixed linearity of dialectical movement and recognizes the subjective capacity to set relations into motion and change course, a decolonized dialectics sets out from the historical experience of those who have been instructed to either catch up with Europe by completing the necessary "stages" or to await "objective conditions" that are possible only under a full-fledged capitalism.

Although it is possible to radicalize dialectics without decolonizing, as Sorel does, I argue that it is not possible to decolonize without radicalizing. Any process of decolonization that shies away from incessant dialectical tensions, the contingency of struggle, and the indeterminacy of the future risks reiterating the history of actually existing decolonization that Fanon unceremoniously dismissed as the "dead end" and "sterile formalism" of bourgeois nationalist rule.[21] To the extent that we refuse this straitjacketed view of a dialectical difference that refuses or subsumes diversity—foregrounding instead division, rupture, and dynamic opposition—we will always be confronted with a subversive and unpredictable remainder that, as we move toward decolonization, gains a distinct valence in what Fanon calls "nonbeing" and Dussel calls "exteriority," that which lies beyond the realm of division and which by appearing makes a more profound rupture manifest. And to the extent that the turn toward this remainder pulls us from internal to external difference, our dialectics will lose all the comforts of predictable motion or inevitable progress.

Second, if we do not put up a fight for the name *dialectics*, we risk abandoning the field of dynamic oppositions—especially those macro-oppositions that cut across society and globe—to the many theories of multiplicity so prevalent today, theories that would see us willfully neglect or deny the broad swing of motion such oppositions often entail. In what follows, I resist this danger not only by reclaiming dialectics, but also—simultaneously and from the opposite direction—by reclaiming Foucault's conception of

counterdiscourse as itself dialectical, thereby robbing uncritical theories of multiplicity of a caricatured Foucault reducible to the micropolitical. It was against such bad multiplicities—and that of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in particular—that Hegel sought to fold diversity immediately into dialectical opposition, and while mindful of this concern, I hope to instead slow this folding, to sit with and inhabit the category of diversity and the external relation it poses as a key to decolonizing Hegel himself.

Third: it is between these two reasons—bad dialectics on the one hand and bad multiplicity on the other—that we can then walk the practical line set out by the thinkers considered here, not to mention an entire trajectory of decolonial organic intellectuals. In other words, this is a dialectical project in part because the thinkers involved took the dialectical tradition—however critically understood—as a central point of reference. These are thinkers who saw Hegel, Marx, or both as powerful and necessary interlocutors, and in this they were not alone: for more than a century, for better or for worse, the dialectical tradition has served as a go-to weapon in the struggle for not only class liberation but also—all ambiguities and tensions aside—for racial and national liberation.

These ambiguities and tensions are not to be set aside entirely, however, but are instead a central part of the story. An entire litany of radical and decolonial thinkers—George Padmore, Richard Wright, and Aimé Césaire, to name only a few—were even members of official communist parties before breaking with those parties precisely amid sharp debates over race and colonialism.[22] These are thinkers who found in Hegel and Marx values of autonomous selfhood and liberation, tools to diagnose and critique global capitalism, methods that began—as they knew they should—not from negotiation but from struggle, and weapons to sharpen against the "slavery and social death" left in the wake of colonization.[23]

But these are also thinkers who often found Hegel and Marx unable, and their political heirs unwilling, to grapple seriously with the legacy of *actual* slavery. Once we add those such as Frederick Douglass, who as I will argue in the conclusion puts forth a decolonized dialectics without having read either, it becomes clear that to argue, as Timothy Brennan does, that "the parentage of the postcolonial is, ultimately, a communist one," is misleading at best, and furthermore evades entirely the central tension posed here.[24] Rather than skirt the questions that this tension raises on both sides—and losing in the process either the importance of communism for decolonization or its failings, *why* so many were members

but also *why* they left—my goal here is to confront the tension head on as one to be grappled with.

Which is another way of saying that we must walk in theory the same fine line that decolonial militants have often walked in practice: neither rejecting nor uncritically embracing the dialectical tradition, but instead attempting to rescue a theory of dynamic oppositions from being recolonized by logics of unity or dispersed into meaningless multiplicity. These are thinkers who, while stubborn in their insistence on the rupture of the existing order, are simultaneously and for the same reason deeply hostile to the recuperation of dialectics into unitary logics. As a result, the radicalized dialectical approach they produce, with its combative oppositions and refusal to see divisions subsumed into the whole, is arguably *more* faithful to the dialectical spirit than even some who gave the approach its name. Viewed this way, the thinkers considered here, as a result of their liminal position that straddles the very border of dialectical thought, might just be the best defenders of any dialectics worth its salt.

Here again, Jameson is productive for his nuanced mapping of the terrain to be traversed between the uncritical unity of conservative dialectics and the uncritical multiplicity of deconstructive temptations, between which lay the terrain of a radicalized dialectics:

> the dialectic moves jerkily from moment to moment like a slide show, where deconstruction dizzily fast-forwards . . . both work to bring up into the light the structural incoherences of the "idea" or conceptual "positions" or interpretations which are their object of critique. But where the dialectic pauses, waiting for the new "dialectical" solution to freeze over in its turn and become an idea or an ideology to which the dialectic can again be "applied" . . . deconstruction races forward . . . devour[ing] its own tail, and thus itself in the process. One of the outcomes thus devoured and unraveled is of course the dialectic itself, which paused too long, and became an ideology in its own right, yet another object of deconstruction.[25]

It is in this generative space between the stalled hesitancy of a dialectic that waits too long and the ravenous appetite of a deconstruction that, in the absence of sustenance, is content to feed on itself, that my project also moves.

In lieu of offering a preemptive definition of dialectics that might violate the spirit of the term, I begin provisionally from Jameson's own methodological insistence that "any opposition can be the starting point for a

dialectic in its own right," allowing a proliferation of local dialectics and dynamic oppositions, and I follow him in generally shunning the definite article denoting "the" dialectic.[26] However, my approach is different in two ways: first, I trail slightly closer to deconstruction in the degree to which contingency, indeterminacy, and an open hostility to totality imbue the multiple and local dialectics of the thinkers considered here. Furthermore, I move toward a dialectics understood above all as a *practice*, or what C. L. R. James aspired to do in his *Notes on Dialectics*: "not explanations of the dialectic but directly the dialectic itself."[27] The thinkers considered here are more organic intellectuals than world-historical philosophers looking down with a bird's-eye-view from above, thinkers who do theory on the basis of actors pressing the dialectic forward themselves through collective solidarities and combat. If this sounds like a strange way to speak of dialectics, this is precisely because the closer we trail toward a conservative dialectics, the less often we hear of one *acting* dialectically or *engaging* in dialectical struggle. In this caricatured view—certainly more Hegel than Marx, and a conservative Hegel at that—the dialectic (and here it is almost always *the*) is something that happens to us and acts upon us, in which we are enmeshed whether we know it or not, unconsciously doing the grand work of history.[28]

The thinkers considered here are *doing* something different, and to approach dialectics as practice helps to partially allay the dangerous flights that have characterized some previous attempts to think dialectics beyond its conservative forms: to take refuge in paradox or incommensurability in which there is no motion but the (not inconsequential) whirring of the philosopher's mental gears. Actual struggles, ongoing and permanent, can thereby recede into the background, or worse still, be unilaterally dismissed by master dialecticians. If dialectical thought is instead localized and embedded in concrete material practice, however, to be a dialectician gains a wholly new meaning: that of pressing subjectively forward in collective combat, embodying Lenin's "leaps, leaps, leaps!" without any certainty whatsoever that a better world will be the inevitable result.[29]

Why Counterdiscourse?

As should be clear by now, we cannot decolonize dialectics solely by prying open the cracks of immanent critique—although this is crucial, and the thinkers that make up this volume embody such cracks each in their own way. Rather, radicalizing dialectical oppositions to the very breaking point at which internal verge on external differences, and opening such opposi-

tions toward the substantive exteriority of a decolonial critique, requires that we step to the very limits of dialectics—or even beyond—before casting our gaze back. If this involves stepping beyond the *geographical* boundaries of traditional dialectics, so too with *methodological* boundaries, and it is here that Foucault offers some useful tools. I turn and return to Foucault more than simply to reclaim his theories for a radicalized dialectics, but also because he provides concrete cues for both the method and content of this project. However, as will become clear, Foucault—like the thinkers that constitute this book—is more liminal to than outside of the scope of the dialectical, and while he would locate the incommensurable oppositions he identifies as being beyond dialectics, I see these as instead marking and opening its outer limits.

This claim might seem a scandalous affront to Foucault, the avowed antidialectician, not to mention those who understand Foucault's genealogical method as a purely critical project. But while tracing the surface and measuring the mass of Foucault's oeuvre certainly reveals more critique than positive construct, lying beneath and slightly to the side of Foucault's critical genealogies are subjugated counterdiscourses, counterhistories, and countermemories to be excavated and set into motion.[30] To bind counterdiscourse to genealogy—the form of discourse to the mode of its recovery—is moreover but a single gesture, as the two are utterly inseparable from one another and from the subject matter of this study. Critique, for Foucault, aims "to dig" subjugated knowledges "out of the sand," but it is the very existence of these knowledges—grounded in "struggles and the raw memory of fights"—that makes critique both possible and effective.[31] This is more than mere excavation, and the fight is not limited to memory: the goal is instead one of "reactivating" combative memories toward "contemporary tactics," "to set them free . . . *to enable them to oppose and struggle*."[32] The result of this reactivation of oppositional counterdiscourses and their setting into combative motion is, I argue, dialectical in both form and content. Genealogy, through the counterdiscourse it frees, presses toward dialectical motion.[33]

With regard to content, counterdiscourses stand against the unitary pretensions of what Foucault calls "science" (traditional dialectics included). Genealogies are thus "antisciences" because they incite an "insurrection of knowledges" against the "centralizing power-effects" of scientific discourse, which legitimizes some knowledges and disqualifies others, establishing the ground of what does and does not count.[34] The problem with Marxism, for Foucault—and indeed with dialectics tout court—is not

that it *lacks* scientific rigor, but that it *aspires* to be a science in the first place (this is a sentiment that Sorel shared). Hence genealogy as *method* is doubled in terms of the very *content* that renders it effective: what is recovered is not just *any* historical discourse that has been occluded from sight, but rather those discourses that pose a challenge to prevailing logics and practices of unity.[35] Nowhere is this coincidence of method and content clearer than in Foucault's excavation of what is arguably *the* paradigmatic counterdiscourse: what he calls, revealingly and provocatively, the "race war."

Toward the end of the sixteenth century, according to Foucault, European states consolidated their monopoly on violence and "war was expelled to the limits of the State," to the border, exiled from society to interstate relations.[36] But a counterdiscourse to this milestone in sovereign unity emerged almost immediately, according to which "a battlefront runs through the whole of society, continuously and permanently, and it is this battlefront that puts us all on one side or the other."[37] Such a "binary" view has clear epistemological implications: if society is divided, then no subject can be "universal, totalizing, or neutral," and all knowledge is "perspectival . . . interested in the totality only to the extent that it can see it *in one-sided terms*, distort it and see it from its own point of view." "The truth is, in other words," he writes, "a truth that can be deployed only from its combat position." The idea of the "race war" as absolute incommensurability stands against not only ruling discourse but all unitary discourse, "tears society apart and speaks of legitimate rights solely in order to declare war on laws."[38]

But the immediate danger that confronts all radically oppositional discourses is that they "will be recoded, recolonized by the unitary discourses."[39] The counterdiscourse of the race war was no exception, and as a result, Foucault shows how this formerly "decentered" counterdiscourse was eventually "recentered" to "become the discourse of power itself."[40] While one path this recentering took was the biological reification of race in Nazism, less noted but equally insidious for Foucault was the *dialectical* recentering of the "race war": "the dialectic codifies struggle, war, and confrontations into a logic, or so-called logic, of contradiction . . . ensures the historical constitution of a universal subject, a reconciled truth, and a right in which all particularities have their ordained place. The Hegelian dialectic and *all those that come after it* must . . . be understood as philosophy and right's *colonization* . . . of a historico-political discourse that was both a statement of fact, a proclamation, and a practice of social warfare."[41]

In his attempt to reject *all* dialectics, however, Foucault provides potent guidance for how best to rescue and reclaim a radicalized dialectical vision. If the fundamental danger is that combative discourses will almost inevitably suffer reincorporation, recolonization, and recentering into governing doctrines of unity, it is precisely this danger that we must resist. To do so also obviously means to overcome Foucault's own unambiguous hostility to dialectics and the mistakenly sweeping generalization, "all those that come after it must . . ." Such reverse totalization—a perennial difficulty of poststructuralist approaches that slide too easily from critique to the insistence that nothing exists beyond the object of that critique—seems to openly contradict Foucault's own methodological sensibilities. But it also comes on the heels of a long list of qualifiers—totalization, rationality, irreversibility, universal subject, reconciled truth—to be added to a conspicuously singular term, *the* dialectic. What if there were to exist many dialectic*s* that do not carry these pernicious attributes of *the* dialectic and that instead prioritize oppositional combat over unity?

Despite being frequently associated with the micropolitical, itself a much abused term, Foucault's own critiques of logics of unity go hand in hand with an arguably dialectical account of the strategic (macro)unification of the tactical (micro)moments of power. As he puts it, "No 'local center,' no 'pattern of transformation' could function if . . . it did not eventually enter into an over-all strategy," and as a result, power relations "form a general line of force that traverses the local oppositions and links them together."[42] While certainly incompatible with what Foucault most loathes about dialectics, such a view *is* nevertheless compatible with the radicalized and decolonized dialectics that emerge from the thinkers considered in this book, for whom the subjective moment of combative, one-sided rupture (Foucault's "social warfare") is jealously maintained at the expense of any final resolution, any determinist progression, in short, any foreseeable horizon for reconciled unity. Again, it is *only* with the help of Foucault and others who similarly walk the fine line between dialectics and its opposites—and here I count Sorel, Fanon, and Dussel—that we can approach the task of truly radicalizing and decolonizing dialectical thought.[43]

In a crucially different time and place, Foucault would grant dialectics the same indeterminate duality he ascribes to other discourses, the ability to serve different and even opposing purposes. This time the dialectics were Marxian and the place was Tunisia, where "everyone was drawn into Marxism with radical violence and intensity and with a staggeringly powerful thrust." "For those young people," he continues, "Marxism did

not represent merely a way of analyzing reality; it was also a kind of moral force . . . And that led me to believe that without a doubt the role of political ideology, or of a political perception of the world, was indispensable to the goal of setting off the struggle."[44] Violence, ideology, myth, and subjectively "setting off the struggle"—all explicitly echo elements of the radicalized dialectical counterdiscourse that I sketch in this book. Far from the French Communist Party, whose influence had overdetermined Foucault's entire understanding of dialectics, the "scientific character" of Marxism—its claim to a unified truth—receded into the background as "an entirely secondary question."[45] In other words, the primary practical function of Tunisian Marxism was the opposite of what had so alienated Foucault from its European counterparts.[46]

It was no coincidence that this transformation occurred in the Tunisian context, beyond the "motionless movement" of Europe, where for Fanon "dialectics has gradually turned into a logic of equilibrium."[47] And nor is it any mistake that Foucault named his paradigmatically oppositional discourse the "race war" and described its eventual recentering as a process of "recolonization." Even if this equation of recolonization with recentering gains a concrete literalness in the hands of decolonial thinkers, Foucault is already pointing us in the right direction. Decolonization for Fanon as for Dussel entails and indeed requires a fundamental break with the paradigm of totality, a deferral of dialectical closure, and the rejection of a more straightforwardly colonial variant of Foucault's "science," one that disqualifies not only knowledges (epistemological disqualification) but those very beings deemed innately incapable of producing such knowledges (ontological disqualification).

Black *Anti*-Jacobins?

A final note before I begin. Latent in all that has been said above is an ambitious comparative project, one that is both broader and narrower than what currently goes by the name "comparative political theory." If we strip away the thinkers, contexts, and methods, we are left with four identities that are too often considered to be utterly irreconcilable: class, race, nation, and people. But this irreconcilability is grounded in naturalized unities, some of which are thankfully receding into the past: structural notions of class, biological conceptions of race, the nation as a priori, or the people as a modern expression of undivided sovereignty. Built into the structure of this book, then, is an insistence on the equivalence and coevalness of different forms of political identity, and a rejection of the all-

too-frequent contempt for so-called identity politics. The idea that class is "real" whereas race is simply a backward idea to be abandoned, or that nations are "imagined communities" and nothing more, is bound up with the idea of reason in history that is so central to the same conservative dialectics we hope to bury.[48] Just as class identity is fully capable of losing its political meaning if severed from class condition, so too does race exist in a dialectic of *identifying* and *being identified* that is itself a form of class-ification.[49]

This is not to suggest that no communities are imagined, but instead that *all* communities are, that imagination is a part of all political identities—class very much included—and this imagination is never divorced from material practices. It is to release those political identities from the straitjacket of teleological determinism, to allow and indeed demand that they stand forth and function, assuming their proper position at the heart of any dialectics worthy of the name. Inversely, if conservative dialectics is complicit with a hierarchy of identities, to radicalize and decolonize dialectics in a way that foregrounds the active subjectivity of their constituents is to open up a space to consider their functions comparatively, a space for the contingency of multiple overlapping and clashing identities that is better suited to what Aníbal Quijano calls the "historical-structural heterogeneity" of ostensibly postcolonial societies.[50]

If there is a model for the sort of comparative political theorizing I hope to undertake here, for the joint analysis of race, class, nation, and people—not to mention a radicalized dialectic of decolonization in which contingency and unpredictability stand firmly in the foreground—it is C. L. R. James's *The Black Jacobins*. While James's concrete task was to recover the memory of the most systematically expunged and "disavowed" event in "modern" history, the Haitian Revolution, the implications of his work far exceed this already monumental task.[51] The radical kernel of *The Black Jacobins* lies in the fact that it was not merely a history of the world's first successful slave revolution, but also of that decisive event with which it did not run parallel—a metaphor loaded with misleading equidistance—but was instead fully intertwined and, finally, entangled: the French Revolution. One revolution systematically erased, the other upheld on a pedestal as *the* "bourgeois" revolution—tipping point in a world-historic dialectical progression—the colonial veil separating the two cannot survive the piercing blow of James's analysis, and with it goes much else.

James's insistence on the coevalness of these intertwined revolutionary processes sets into motion an uncontrollable avalanche whose theoretical

devastation arguably exceeds the author's own intentions, leading to the collapse of strict class oppositions, and with them the notion of historical stages and inevitable progress. If the pedestal cracks under James's blunt insistence that so prefeudal a phenomenon as slavery constituted "the economic basis of the [bourgeois] French Revolution," feet of clay collapse as the narrative unfolds.[52] Rebellions on the old continent fueled freedom dreams on the new, and the unprecedented—and unthinkable—resistance of heretofore nonhumans propelled French revolutionaries to ever more radical lengths. Were it not for Thermidor, Toussaint would never have been thrust toward independence; were it not for France's utter reliance on the colonial economy, Bonaparte would never have given the final and decisive push.

More subversively still, James—a Marxist—transposes the political identities Marxists had reserved for Europe onto the colonial world and vice versa: the French masses were analogous to the Black slaves, the French aristocracy to colonial planters, and the French bourgeoisie to the privileged mulattoes of San Domingo. In sum: "Had the monarchists been white, the bourgeoisie brown, and the masses of France black, the French Revolution would have gone down in history as a race war."[53] That James uses the same term that Foucault would deploy to describe the binary division of European societies is as productive in its suggestive similarity as in the gap it reflects. The slaves were the *same* as the proletariat, these "half-savage slaves of San Domingo were showing themselves subject to the *same historical laws* as the advanced workers of revolutionary Paris."[54] But this sameness unleashed a radical difference according to which Black slaves even prefigured the European proletariat itself: "working and living together in gangs of hundreds on the huge sugar-factories . . . they were closer to a modern proletariat *than any group of workers in existence at the time*."[55]

To subject slaves to these "same historical laws," however, was to open a Pandora's box that explodes their status as laws: without sharp class oppositions—as Sorel also insisted—there can be no historical determinism, and it was instead the revolutionary self-activity of the masses in Paris and Port-au-Prince that drove the revolutions forward, and fear of the same that would prompt their retreat.[56] Class is race, and European civilization is little more than barbaric brutality.[57] Amid the swirling contingency of transatlantic combat, no single dialectic can claim either centrality or inevitability. The pretense of automatic forward motion—itself tightly bound up with Eurocentric history—disintegrates into James's fa-

mously tragic view of history: "Sad though it may be, that is the way that humanity progresses. The anniversary orators and the historians supply the prose-poetry and the flowers."[58] But tragedy is only tragic if we know what is coming, and the collapse of dialectical determinism is in itself a liberation in the knowledge that, in Fanon's words, "the war goes on . . ."[59]

I hope, however immodestly, to walk in the footsteps of this radically comparative theoretical project, drawing together multiple dialectics whose central identities—class, race, nation, and people—are neither distinguished categorically from nor reduced to one another. But to embrace *Black Jacobins* as a methodological model for thinking a decolonized dialectics raises a peculiar question: How to square the bold assertion contained in James's title with the radicalized dialectical counterdiscourse running through Sorel, Fanon, and Dussel that, I argue, can be understood on some level as "anti-Jacobin"? We are getting ahead of ourselves, however. In the wildly swirling dialectical eddies of this "tragic" history; the dynamic interaction between masses and leadership; and the fraught role of Black identity, tradition, and positivity, James's initially celebratory view of Jacobinism gives way to something far more ambivalent and indeterminate that is characteristic of a decolonized dialectics.

Where Sorel presses the dialectic of the European class struggle to its very breaking point, insisting that between worker and capitalist the only relation is one of war, Fanon and Dussel will theorize more fully the edges of the dialectic where its internal oppositions give way to not meaningless difference, but new grounds for decolonization. And if Fanon insisted that "decolonization is truly the creation of new people" through a process in which "the colonized 'thing' becomes a person through the very process of self-liberation," then Venezuela today stands as confirmation of both the radical potential of this dialectics and its lack of guarantees.[60]

Hannah Arendt, in her critical zeal, tacitly attests to C. L. R. James's ambitiously expansive homology between metropole and colony, arguing that both the slaves and the unfortunate *malheureux* of the French Revolution "carried with them necessity, to which they had been subject as long as memory reaches, together with the violence that had always been used to overcome necessity. Both together, necessity and violence, made them appear irresistible—*la puissance de la terre*."[61] But to this *puissance* celebrated by Saint-Just, I hope to reply with a different constellation, one that spans *not* the distance separating the Bastille and Saint-Domingue—as in the Jamesian version—but rather between the puissance of the

twentieth-century French working class and the process, still unfinished, of revolutionary decolonization. But to do so requires that we instead shift toward that subterranean source of decolonial dialectical motion that lay not above *la terre* but below it, in those condemned nonbeings known as the *damnés*.

NOTES

Ruptures

1. For Stephen B. Smith, this concern unified Hegel's theoretical production while justifying philosophy as a project of reconciliation. *Hegel's Critique of Liberalism: Rights in Context* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 17.
2. This is not to reduce Hegel to his disciples on the Right, and while Fukuyama is at pains to defend Hegel from the Marxian critique of civil society, he leans heavily on Alexandre Kojève's "end of history" argument to do so. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006 [1992]), 60–65. On Fukuyama as a characteristically Right Hegelian, see Fredric Jameson, *The Hegel Variations: On the* Phenomenology of Spirit (London: Verso, 2010), 5. To be clear, Hegel is far more concerned with the dangerous tendencies of the market than his conservative heirs, but civil society (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*) remains nevertheless a space of mediation, its inevitable imperfection resolved through the "police" function of the state. G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991 [1820]), "Section 2: Civil Society," a subset of which is "The Police." On the tendency of civil society to generate poverty, see §§ 241–45; on its tendency to require colonial expansion, see §§ 246–48. For a nuanced discussion, see Reinhart Klemens Maurer, "Hegel and the End of History," in *Hegel Myths and Legends*, ed. J. Stewart (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1996), 199–222.
3. Where Fukuyama would consider such regime changes mere "events," hardly noticeable bumps on the ever-smoother road of "universal civil society," civil society's double-role as both *measure* and ambitious *means* for actively securing the end of history should be enough to reveal the cynical circularity

of his system. This complicity of civil society with power is most evident in the discourses and practices of human rights, which Wendy Brown cautions "are not simply rules and defenses against power, but can themselves be tactics and vehicles of governance and domination." "'The Most We Can Hope For . . .': Human Rights and the Politics of Fatalism," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 103, nos. 2/3 (2004): 459. Slavoj Žižek characterizes human rights discourse as "a false ideological universality, which masks and legitimizes a concrete politics of Western imperialism, military interventions and neocolonialism." "Against Human Rights," *New Left Review* 34 (2005): 128–29. See also Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. P. Hallward (London: Verso, 2001), 8–10; and José-Manuel Barreto, ed., *Human Rights from a Third World Perspective: Critique, History, and International Law* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2013).

4. On Hegel, see Fredric Jameson, *Valences of the Dialectic* (London: Verso, 2009), as well as Slavoj Žižek's gargantuan *Less Than Nothing* (London: Verso, 2012). On the renewal of communism, see especially Alain Badiou, *The Communist Hypothesis* (London: Verso, 2010); Bruno Bosteels, *The Actuality of Communism* (London: Verso, 2011); and Jodi Dean, *The Communist Horizon* (London: Verso, 2012). On contemporary forms of struggle, see Badiou's more recent *The Rebirth of History* (London: Verso: 2012). On dialectics more broadly, see, e.g., Andrew Douglas, *In the Spirit of Critique: Thinking Politically in the Dialectical Tradition* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2013); John Grant, *Dialectics and Contemporary Politics: Critique and Transformation from Hegel through Post-Marxism* (London: Routledge, 2013); and Brian Lovato, *Democracy, Dialectics, and Difference: Hegel, Marx, and 21st Century Social Movements* (London: Routledge, 2015). Elements of what follows have appeared in George Ciccariello-Maher, "'So Much the Worse for the Whites': Dialectics of the Haitian Revolution," *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy* 22, no. 1 (2014): 19–39.
5. Antonio Vázquez-Arroyo, "Universal History Disavowed: On Critical Theory and Postcolonialism," *Postcolonial Studies* 11, no. 4 (2008): 452.
6. Alain Badiou, *Metapolitics*, trans. J. Barker (London, Verso, 2005), 97; Badiou, *Ethics*, 27.
7. Slavoj Žižek, "A Leftist Plea for 'Eurocentrism,'" *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 4 (summer 1998): 988–1009. For a critique of the latter, see Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Decolonization and the New Identitarian Logics After September 11," *Radical Philosophy Review* 8, no. 1 (2005): 35–67. Even more troubling has been Žižek's recent call to embrace Western culture and "our freedoms" in the face of an influx of refugees—a partial indication of the dead-end into which such an uncritical universalism leads. "In the Wake of Paris Attacks the Left Must Embrace Its Radical Western Roots," *In These Times* (November 16, 2015), http://inthesetimes.com/article/18605/breaking-the-taboos-in-the-wake-of-paris-attacks-the-left-must-embrace-its. Glen Coulthard similarly maps the tensions between decolonization and the "left-materialist" critique

of so-called identity politics in his excellent *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

8. Glenn Greenwald, "Two Short Paragraphs That Summarize the U.S. Approach to Human Rights Advocacy," *Intercept* (September 13, 2015), https://theintercept.com/2015/09/13/two-short-paragraphs-summarize-us-approach-human-rights-advocacy/.
9. Glen Ford, "Obama's Siren Song," *Counterpunch* (June 14, 2007), http://www.counterpunch.org/2007/06/14/obama-s-siren-song/.
10. The debate surrounding this division was nasty and destructive in many ways. While there might seem to be overlap between the proposal to "decolonize" the Occupy Movement and my objectives in this book, in practice it raised troubling questions about the relationship between nonprofits and the state, race-baiting opportunism, and the role (and indeed category) of white "allies." See the original statement, "Communiqué from Decolonize Oakland" (March 18, 2012), http://unsettlingamerica.wordpress.com/2012/03/18/communique-from-decolonize-oakland/. In retrospect, this marked a turning point, prompting a reverse pendulum swing toward a renewed critique of "identity politics" within post-Occupy political formations that both responds to real conditions while arguably throwing out the decolonial baby with the bathwater in a manner akin to Žižek and Badiou. For the best statement on race in the Occupy Movement, and for a more dialectical understanding of the 99 percent, see Joel Olson, "Whiteness and the 99%" (October 20, 2011), reprinted in *We Are Many: Reflections on Movement Strategy From Occupation to Liberation*, ed. K. Khatib, M. Killjoy, and M. McGuire (Oakland: AK Press, 2012), 46–51.
11. Due to the historical weight of the dialectical tradition, the particular trajectory of thinkers I trace in this book, and my own theoretical limitations, this is not a book that deals substantially with gender identity as a dialectical category alongside class, race, nation, and people. However, some—notably Sina Kramer—have already theorized gender at the border of dialectics, where internal and external relations meet. "Derrida's 'Antigonanette': On the Quasi-Transcendental," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 52, no. 4 (December 2014), 521–51. However, posing gender as an external incommensurability also runs up against the classed and raced complicity *across* genders, a challenge raised in particular by the decolonial and Black feminisms I return to in the conclusion. See, in particular, Hortense Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," *Diacritics* 17, no. 2 (summer 1987): 65–81.
12. Cristina Beltrán, *The Trouble with Unity: Latino Politics and the Creation of Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). While I take Beltrán's warning seriously, my approach will tread closer to a radicalized dialectics than the sort of rhizomatics associated with Gilles Deleuze.

13. See M. W. Jackson, "Hegel: The Real and the Rational," in *Hegel Myths and Legends*, 19–25.
14. It should be clear here that I mean *teleology* in the strong and literal sense: not the mere existence of a horizon but the idea that the present anticipates and is structured according to that horizon.
15. Martin Jay, *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukács to Habermas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984). Jay's book expands upon and systematizes his previous fivefold typology of totality discussed in Martin Jay, "The Concept of Totality in Lukács and Adorno," in *Varieties of Marxism*, ed. S. Avineri (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), 147–74.
16. The reference point here is Hegel's very rapid transition through diversity in the *Logic*, greater and lesser. As to the first, in which diversity (*Verschiedenheit*) appears as the "indifference of difference" and an immediate bridge to opposition, see *The Science of Logic*, trans. G. di Giovanno (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 362–67 (II.268–272). For the latter, see *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, trans. T. F. Geraets, W. A. Suchting, and H. S. Harris (Cambridge: Hackett, 1991), 182–93 (§117). For Jameson, the question is whether relations are "so intimate as to fold it back into unity, [or] so distant or external as to break apart into two distinct zones or fields, two different objects." To accommodate this "ambiguous no man's land between . . . internal and external relations, or unity and incommensurability," he insists on stretching the term *contradiction* (*Valences of the Dialectic*, 25, 42–43). Sina Kramer emphasizes Hegel's failed attempt to exclude diversity from the dialectic—an exclusion that founds the distinction between the speculative and the empirical, but which by failing to be fully banished contaminates the former with the latter. Sina Kramer, *Excluded Within: The (Un)Intelligibility of Radical Political Actors* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).
17. Jameson, *Valences of the Dialectic*, 25.
18. Jameson, for example, divides Hegel's oeuvre, defending the radicalism of *Phenomenology*. Some, like Timothy Brennan, argue that *Philosophy of Right* is actually Hegel's most radical text for its concreteness and its political imperative to transform the law. *Borrowed Light*: *Vico, Hegel, and the Colonies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014). Many Marxists, following Lenin's *Conspectus*, argue that Hegel's *Logic* is his radical work par excellence. Still more identify ambivalences running throughout Hegel's work, for example what Patchen Markell characterizes as the tension between a "diagnostic voice" that is "most clearly audible" in the *Phenomenology*, one geared toward constantly rooting out contradiction, and the "voice of the *system*," a voice of reconciliation, "the voice that promises us that at the end of this journey there lies the prospect of a homecoming, of finally arriving at a state in which contradiction, division, suffering, and other manifestations of negativity have been not necessarily eliminated, but at least *redeemed* as moments of an intelligible, internally articulated, encompassing whole." *Bound By Recognition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 92–93.

For a truly stunning recent example that seeks to reclaim despair as a revolutionary and "dialectical passion"—with a specific focus on the *Phenomenology*—see Robyn Marasco, *The Highway of Despair: Critical Theory After Hegel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 5. For Marasco, "the *Phenomenology* is best read not as a roadmap to reconciliation . . . but as a philosophical staging of despair and its persistence" (29). Despair, "a condition that survives the ruins of the [Hegelian] system," is "the name for that undoing that the dialectic endlessly initiates" (2, 6). The dialectic she unfolds, which holds out "no *rational* hope that a brighter future will repay patient struggle in the present," shares much with my project, for reasons that might be easily guessed (1). And while not a strictly decolonial vision, Marasco's embrace of "forms of hope that survive against all hope" is peculiarly suited to (post)colonial conditions (10).

On Marx, it is worth simply rehearsing the historical debates between those who emphasize the early and late and who centered the notion of the epistemological rupture, but also those breaks undertaken by Marx himself that are central to the discussion at hand, namely, his later interrogation of the linear stageism he had previously associated with historical materialism. In later writings and letters to Vera Zasulich, for example, Marx began to consider the possibility of a noncapitalist transition to communism, and these writings would provide crucial leverage for decolonial Marxists. See Kevin Anderson, *Marx at the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

19. The lineage that runs through Western Marxism and into the early Frankfurt School and its task of thinking a "negative dialectics" speaks directly to the latter, as do recent efforts to reconsider Hegelian and Marxist thought. Other promising tendencies, notably thinkers such as Antonio Negri and some of the tradition of Italian Autonomia, posed sharp challenges to traditional dialectics before veering sharply off, under the influence of Deleuzian theories of immanence, into professedly nondialectical territory. A recent speech by Negri is nevertheless surprisingly ambivalent on the question of dialectics, and certainly not as hostile as one might expect. Antonio Negri, "Some Thoughts on the Use of Dialectics," trans. A. Bove (June 2009), http://antonionegriinenglish.wordpress.com/2010/11/25/some-thoughts-on-the-use-of-dialectics/.
20. Thus the recent attempt by Susan Buck-Morss to shed the "anticipation of unity" in Hegelian thought by drawing Hegel into open conversation with the unspoken inspiration of the Haitian Revolution is dashed on the stubborn rocks of undialectical Eurocentrism. Not only does Buck-Morss fall directly into this "anticipation of unity" by rejecting divisive political identities outright—race and nation in particular—in favor of the immediate and unconditional assertion of universality as a fact, but the parameters of her universal remain conspicuously Eurocentric as well. Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh

Press, 2009), x, 149–51. I make this argument more fully in "'So Much the Worse for the Whites.'"

Similarly limited approaches can be found in Brennan's *Borrowed Light*, which seeks to ground decolonial thought in Europe itself, and in Bruce Baum's recent article "Decolonizing Critical Theory," which, notwithstanding the grand claims of the title, provides in reality a very limited and almost wholly immanent critique of the Frankfurt School. *Constellations* 22, no. 3 (2015): 420–34.

21. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. R. Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004 [1961]), 144, translation modified; *Œuvres* (Paris: La Découverte, 2011), 585.
22. On these ambiguities, see Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000 [1983]), 183–84.
23. Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).
24. Brennan, *Borrowed Light*, 99.
25. Jameson, *Valences of the Dialectic*, 26–27.
26. Jameson, *Valences of the Dialectic*, 19.
27. Cited in Raya Dunayevskaya, "On C. L. R. James' Notes on Dialectics," *News and Letters* (1997 [1972]): 4.
28. Such a view clearly conflicts with Robert Pippin's more stripped-down reading of Hegel as a practical philosopher concerned with the concrete, for whom dialectics is above all diagnostic and even heuristic. *Hegel's Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). See also Brennan, *Borrowed Light*, for a similar reading of Hegel's orientation toward the concrete. Even more than Hegel, of course, Marx threw himself subjectively into the condensation of identities at the same time that he analyzed the play of those identities from above and inserted them into a transhistorical dialectical vision—raising the question of where the center of gravity in the analysis falls, a situation not improved by the incorporation of Marx into the academy.
29. I hope it is clear, here and elsewhere, that simply eschewing a strictly economic language or displacing the centrality of class does not in any way minimize the *materiality* of dialectics. I take a cue here from the "insurgent" dialectics suggested by Iris Marion Young in *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990). Young similarly puts poststructural insights to powerfully material use by insisting that, "reducing differences to unity means bringing them under a universal category, which requires expelling those aspects of the different things that do not fit into the category." "Difference thus becomes," she writes, "a hierarchical opposition between what lies inside and what lies outside the category, valuing more what lies inside than what lies outside" (102).

30. Beneath the critique of medical-psychological containment there lies the counterdiscourse of "madness"; to the critique of carceral containment, the counterdiscourse of "prisoners" (this being, in fact, the context for one of Foucault's first uses of the term *counterdiscourse*). See Michel Foucault, *History of Madness*, trans. J. Murphy and J. Khalfa (London: Routledge, 2006 [1961]); *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. A. Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979 [1975]). For the reference to the "counterdiscourse of prisoners," see "Intellectuals and Power: A Conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze" (1972), in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 209.
31. Michel Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended": Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976*, trans. D. Macey (New York: Picador, 2003 [1997]), 7–8. Despite the informal nature of the lectures, they effectively sharpen themes underlying Foucault's work as a whole. We can read this productively as self-criticism of his own lopsided emphasis on the negative (after all, how many pages are devoted to counterdiscourse in *History of Madness* or *Discipline and Punish*?). Anna Laura Stoler recognized early on the importance of this clarification of genealogy in the 1975–76 lectures; see *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's* History of Sexuality *and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), 60–65. For a critique of those who see Foucault's project as foreclosing on the very possibility of counterdiscourse, see Mario Moussa and Ron Scapp, "The Practical Theorizing of Michel Foucault: Politics and Counterdiscourse," *Cultural Critique* 33 (spring 1996), 87–112. For Foucault's own reconceptualization of the concept of critique, see Michel Foucault, "What Is Critique?," trans. L. Hochroth, in *The Politics of Truth*, ed. S. Lotringer (New York: Semiotext(e), 1997).
32. Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 8, 10, my emphasis.
33. This is suggested as well by Richard Terdiman, who speaks of a "dialectic of discursive struggle," *Discourse/Counterdiscourse* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 68–69. See also Grant, *Dialectics and Contemporary Politics*.
34. Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 9.
35. Conversely, this explains why some discourses are subjugated while others are not, as the task is to "disinter something that has been hidden," but not only hidden: "carefully, deliberately, and wickedly misrepresented." Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 72.
36. Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 49.
37. Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 51.
38. Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 52, my emphasis; 73.
39. Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 11. This subject is discussed as well by Moussa and Scapp, who speak of the "insidious" way that "counterdiscourses almost inevitably become discourses." Moussa and Scapp, "The Practical Theorizing of Michel Foucault," 92, 106.

40. Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 49, 61.
41. Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 58, my emphasis.
42. Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1: *An Introduction* (New York: Pantheon, 1978 [1976]), 99, 94.
43. Others have similarly turned Foucault's insights, especially those delineated in the lectures, toward the analysis of race. For a pioneering work in this vein, see Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*. For a powerful use of Foucault's lectures on abnormality to understand race in the U.S. context, see Ladelle McWhorter, *Racism and Sexual Oppression in Anglo-America: A Genealogy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009). For an account that melds Foucault with Martin Heidegger to understand racializing dynamics, see Falguni Sheth, *Toward a Political Philosophy of Race* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009). See also Eduardo Mendieta, "'To Make Live and Let Die': Foucault on Racism," published in Spanish in *Tabula Rasa* 6 (2007), 138–52, and available in English at http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/philosophy/people/faculty_pages/docs/foucault.pdf.
44. Marxism did not relinquish its dangerous function as a "means of deception," however. Michel Foucault, *Remarks on Marx*, trans. R. J. Goldstein and J. Cascaito (New York: Semiotext(e), 1991 [1978/1981]), 134, 137.
45. Foucault, *Remarks on Marx*, 137.
46. In an interview from 1978, Foucault admits to never having explicitly embraced Marxism, but not because he considers his work anti-Marxist. Rather, he considers Marxism "so complex, so tangled . . . made up of so many successive historical layers" and political interests that the question of connecting to it on a systematic level seems impossible, or at least boring. When it comes to Marx himself, however, Foucault is clear: "I situate my work in the lineage of the second book of *Capital*," in other words, not the genesis of *Capital*, but "the genealogy of capitalism." To openly cite Marx, he worried, would be to shoulder unnecessary baggage in France, and so he opted for "secret citations of Marx, that the Marxists themselves are not able to recognize." Michel Foucault, Colin Gordon, and Paul Patton, "Interview: Considerations on Marxism, Phenomenology and Power. Interview With Michel Foucault; Recorded on April 3rd, 1978," *Foucault Studies* 14 (September 2012): 100–101. I am grateful to Andrew Dilts for bringing this passage to my attention. For a coherent analysis of the Foucauldian project that emphasizes the relevance of Immanuel Kant for Foucault's "critical inquiry into the present" in a way that helps to break down the opposition between genealogy and counterdiscourse, see Colin Koopman, *Genealogy as Critique: Foucault and the Problems of Modernity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 12.
47. Fanon, *Wretched*, 237, translation modified; *Œuvres*, 675.
48. This phrase, often cited in passing from Benedict Anderson, often serves to conceal the *materiality* he granted the idea. *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1982).

49. In Fanon's words, the relationship between being overdetermined from within and from without. See also Aníbal Quijano, "The Coloniality of Power and Social Classification," trans. G. Ciccariello-Maher, published in Spanish in *Journal of World-Systems Research* 6, no. 2 (2000): 342–86. See also Robert Gooding-Williams's joining of the "first person" and "third person" aspects of racial overdetermination, in "Race, Multiculturalism and Democracy," *Constellations* 5, no. 1 (1998): 18–41.
50. Quijano, "The Coloniality of Power and Social Classification."
51. C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Overture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1989 [1938]). On the disavowal of the Haitian Revolution, see Sibylle Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).
52. James, *Black Jacobins*, 47. Alongside the decisive self-activity of the slaves, their economic centrality is the most important takeaway from that other towering example published almost at the same time: W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860–1880* (New York: Free Press, 1998 [1935]).
53. James, *Black Jacobins*, 128.
54. James, *Black Jacobins*, 243, my emphasis.
55. James, *Black Jacobins*, 85–86, my emphasis.
56. Rather than a heroically creative class, the bourgeoisie—like the mulattoes—was a politically unstable "intermediate" class with "an immense respect for royal blood" and a concomitant fear of the masses. James, *Black Jacobins*, 207, 230, 71.
57. James, *Black Jacobins*, 7, 88, 212. This latter point would be made best by fellow communist and Fanon mentor Aimé Césaire in his *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. J. Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review, 2000 [1956]).
58. James, *Black Jacobins*, 63. David Scott has argued that the revised 1963 edition of *The Black Jacobins* showed a marked shift from a romantic to a tragic emplotment, but he overlooks how this tragic perspective—as the quote indicates—is present from the very outset. David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).
59. Fanon, *Wretched*, repeated on 90, 91, 181; *Œuvres*, 534 [*la guerre dure*], 625 [*la guerre continue*], the latter having previously appeared in *A Dying Colonialism*, trans. H. Chevalier (New York: Grove Press, 1965 [1959]), 27; *Œuvres*, 265 . For an analysis that turns to this phrase to exemplify a dialectic that "resists deliverance at every turn," see Marasco, *The Highway of Despair*, 151. Or, to borrow Alberto Toscano's recent description of Franco Fortini, a "communism without guarantees." Alberto Toscano, "Communism Without Guarantees: On Franco Fortini," *Salvage* (September 18, 2015), http://salvage.zone/in-print/communism-without-guarantees-on-franco-fortini/. For Toscano's call to embrace tragedy, see "Politics in a Tragic Key," *Radical Philosophy* 180 (July/August 2013): 25–34. For a reading of tragedy through Fanon and James, see Lewis R. Gordon, "Fanon's Tragic Revolutionary Violence,"

in *Fanon: A Critical Reader*, ed. L. Gordon, T. Sharpley-Whiting, and R. White (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

60. Fanon, *Wretched*, 2, translation modified; *Œuvres*, 452.
61. Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York: Penguin, 1990 [1963]), 114.

Chapter 1: Jumpstarting the Class Struggle

1. Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 111; *Réflexions sur la violence* (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1910 [1908]), 159.
2. Bertell Ollman, *Dance of the Dialectic: Steps in Marx's Method* (Champaign: University of Illinois, 2003), 59.
3. Sorel, *Reflections*, 112n3; *Réflexions*, 159n1.
4. Georges Sorel, "Necessity and Fatalism in Marxism," in *From Georges Sorel*, ed. J. L. Stanley (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1987), 115 (hereafter *FGS*).
5. Rosa Luxemburg, *Reform or Revolution and Other Writings* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2006).
6. Sorel, "Necessity and Fatalism in Marxism," 115.
7. Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken, 1968), 257.
8. Neil McInnes, "Georges Sorel on the Trial of Socrates," *Politics: Australian Journal of Political Science* 10, no. 1 (May 1975): 40.
9. Georges Sorel, *Le Procès de Socrate: Examen critique des thèses socratiques* (Paris: Alcan, 1889), 171.
10. Enthusiasm was historically considered the "nobler cousin" of fanaticism. Alberto Toscano, *Fanaticism: On the Uses of an Idea* (London: Verso, 2010), xxi. Enthusiasm in both love and war would remain central for Sorel, who decades later wrote that "love, by the enthusiasm it begets, can produce that sublimity without which there would be no effective morality" (*Reflections*, 236; *Réflexions*, 342). In the martial realm, he projected the division inaugurated by Socrates forward onto the degeneration of military virtue under Napoleon: "The best officers of that time fully realized that their talent consisted in furnishing their troops with the material means of expressing their enthusiasm [*élan*]," and by their own (egalitarian) example were "merely the first combatants, like true Homeric kings" (241, 350–51). But by this point, military examples were merely metaphors for the class struggle: "The same spirit is found in the working-class groups who are enthusiastic [*passionnés*] about the general strike" (242, 352).
11. Citing Xenophon's *Symposium* (VIII.9), Sorel accuses Socrates of elevating heavenly love (*Aphroditê Ourania*) at the expense of a more common or vulgar "pandemic" love available to any member of the *demos* (*Aphroditê Pandêmos*) (*Le Procès*, 87), adding that "it is not with his ignorant wife that the Athenian [man] could conclude this union of souls, so vaunted by the phi-