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Red, Black, Green — and Proud (RBG-P)
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of anti-establishment activity, and spontaneous revolts, as well as in "identitarian" focused currents. In my view, these are all expressions of how valency in non-hegemonic nexuses yields (dis)organized possibilities for negotiating the conditions of one's living, embodiment, and position within dominant material/power relations.

As this occurs, the spectre of revolution haunts the global consciousness — with its possibilities of total structural change, the fall of class society, the withering of State power, and the final slaughter of "the Man" and his demiurge, or his ethnoclass, his caste, his ruling party. In response, through what Sanyika Shakur spoke of as a "grand distortion of reality," the nexus of patriarchy must impinge upon consciousness. In other words, the patriarchal counterrevolution comes to reorient a new constellation of emancipatory impulses towards the hegemonic parameters: fascism and reform. The dysconsciousness imposed by the patriarchal counterrevolution ensures that the polyvalent configuration of embodiment is mystified and reified.

as a Minor Patriarchy, and expanded the available configurations of embodiment to be repressed by outside-home truncation — enabling the growth of an underclass of imprisoned slave-laborers.

Surrounding the expansion of the lumpen-criminal element on one hand, and the consumer-worker/manager-professional element on the other, late stage American capitalism/empire was shifting overseas in the face of flag independence which had been achieved across the world for former colonies. There was also a shift into the post-Cold War geopolitical landscape, as (nominally) socialist polities would reorient their relationship to bourgeois Statecraft. The realpolitikal stalement achieved between the capitalist blocs of "East" and "West" had required transformation of the Third World. Finally, there was the rise of neoliberalism amidst unanticipated crises of ecology and the natural environment. The confluence of these global developments and the ones occurring in America meant the emergence of a new wave of social movements. But, the organized dimension of these emancipatory impulses — which had been previously moving toward solidarity across Worker's, National, and Gender Self-Determination struggles — got disorganized under the valency that Patriarchy (Grand and Minor) exhibits within the modern organization of the biological-abiotic environment. So also, the "unorganized" dimension of these emancipatory impulses was disimbricated by the hegemonic nexus — through a two-pronged approach: various methods of inclusion within and exclusion by way of the binary-conjugal-familial unit.

The emancipatory impulse persists, however. It is not overdetermined by the pressures of the exogenously imposed substructure/superstructure. This is in part because of its interpenetration with substructural/superstructural "nexuses" (Seniority, Lineality, Dyocephaly, Spirituality, Ability, and more) endogenous to various cultures and societies under the heel of modernity. The emancipatory impulses have shown their articulation in a constellation of spiritual revivals, and countercultures, in flashpoints

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relations, and the stasis of the law. What these progressive segments sought to do was expand the available configurations of embodiment for in-home truncation in the production process. They enabled the growth of a privileged "middle" class consumer-worker and manager-professional base, especially during and subsequent to the post-WWII industrial boom.

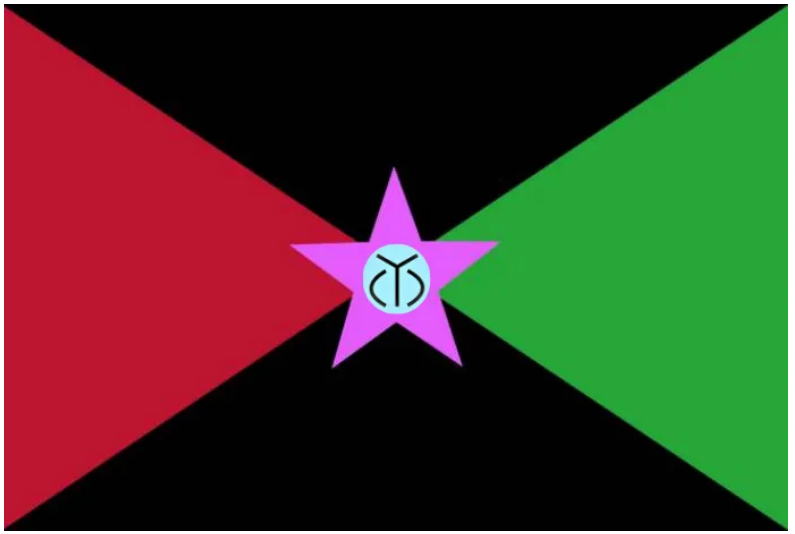
While the Grand Patriarchy made these "liberal" overtures, its right wing forces did not vanish, however. When segregationists fled the old Democrat party during the mid-20th century and formed the contemporary Republican party, they clamored for an anti-civil rights, anti-abortion, anti-gay, and now anti-trans agenda. The key to doing this was fomenting a myth of a drug-addicted/drug-selling criminal pathology that put a spotlight on "broken" family structure. Through the aegis of a "drug war," the US could surveill and disrupt all its domestic security threats, especially after deindustrialization changed the literal landscape and economic conditions of the country. Black Power, Gay Power, Women's Liberation, the anti-war movement, the hippie movement, environmental movement and more were all under attack: and the "law and order" emphasis ultimately meant suppressing any group positioned as threats to the nuclear household, and ultimately as threats to the bourgeois relations anchored upon it.

This repressive technology incentivized many in Black struggles to distance themselves from those positioned outside the binary-conjugal-familial unit. Quite a few heterosexual cis men during that era would take the Moynihan Report at face value, for example, genuinely blaming economic and social crises in the ghetto on "matriarchy." The celebrities and "respectable" stratum of the Black community, furthermore, would regularly engage in demonization of "absent fathers." And a few militants found themselves insisting on a great deal of male chauvinism in revolutionary organizations, thinking it necessary to "restore" male headship if liberation movements were to alleviate Black oppression. Such a project aligned them with the Grand Patriarchy,

organizational elitism and chauvinism eventually exacerbated distinctions in regional focus among Panther chapters (such as the divide between West Coast and East Coast factions).

Importantly, COINTELPRO and federal infiltration took advantage of these differences, and thereby reactionary forces in other organizations and some gangs could draw the party into feuds and warfare. In turn, more Panthers got caught up in prison and in court cases. As these criminal-legal developments unfolded, one criticism we learn from queer militant Kuwasi Balagoon is that the energy and resources from party leadership got primarily swept up in efforts to bail out jailed comrades — and often with a concentration on more high profile figures. This focus was something Balagoon identified as a symptom of inner-party hierarchies, which had frustrated him and women comrades as well as an entire chapter who had been expelled from the party by Huey Newton's faction. Taken altogether, Minor Patriarchy "nexed" the hierarchical dynamics within the BPP that weakened its unity, impinging on the capacity to struggle around internal differences and external repression. And in regards to queer/trans liberation and women's struggle, this meant that opportunities for deeper alliances were harder to build.

As Minor Patriarchy anchored barriers to solidarity between Black Power and Gay Power/women's liberation, homonationalism continued to exert pressures against the militant wing of the Gay movement, and liberal feminism similarly displaced the revolutionary currents in women's liberation struggle. Together, these forces disimbricated the subversive potentials of QTGNC radicals who had come out of communist and nationalist movements. Homonationalism was an extension of the Grand Patriarchy, focusing on integration within the family, marital configuration, and overall bourgeois society. The TERF phenomenon emerges from the "progressive" segments of the Grand Patriarchy as homonationalism, with the same counterinsurgent insistence on the binary-conjugal-family unit, the maintenance of property



The RBG-P flag. It has four large triangles: a red one to the left and a green one to the right, a black one at the top, and another black one at the bottom. The bases of all four triangles are on the borders of the image, such that the sides of the triangles touch each other to form an "x-shape." At the center of this x-shape is a purple colored star. The star has five points. In the heart of the star is a blue colored circle, which features a small symbol, "fè," an Nsibidi ideogram that represents "flight."

Introduction

"If the child is not embraced by the village, he will set it on fire to feel its warmth," says an old African proverb. The "lockdown" and "quarantine" during that winter/spring of 2020 had not done much to protect Black communities from being ravaged by the pandemic. And despite staying at home — save for those who had to be "essential workers," — police were still murdering Black folks. This

lack of regard for Black life, such that even during a global catastrophe — a seemingly apocalyptic moment — America still didn't think we mattered, surely angered thousands. Hence, from May 31st to sometime at the end of August 2020, Black folks went into the streets and set America ablaze through riot, protest, civil unrest, and looting. As Kimberly Jones once put it (in her viral Monopoly Game speech):

> "There's a social contract that we all have, that if you steal, or if I steal, then the person who is the authority comes in and they fix the situation. But the person who fixes the situation is killing us. So the social contract is broken. And if the social contract is broken, why the f*** do I give a shit about burning the f***ing Football Hall of Fame, about burning a f***ing Target?"

Jones' speech emphasized the overall class and political basis for the "red hot summer" of 2020. Outlining the exploitation of labor that undergirded the history of chattel slavery, Jones connected the violence of that "peculiar institution" to ongoing barriers to economic uplift in the Black community. In this way, she challenged the idea that Black people were destroying their "own" neighborhoods. Jones highlights instead that the property and goods and businesses were not owned by us, and were regularly stolen from us whenever historical attempts at accumulation (such as Black Wall Street) were attempted.

A broken social contract, exclusion from property relations, exploitation of labor, the failure of law and religion and the home to protect us from violence and death for centuries brought on probably the biggest outpouring of social unrest on US soil in the 21st century. Police forces lost a lot of members because of how low morale had gotten in their ranks, in the wake of a popular distrust toward not just cops but American institutions as a whole. People of all walks of life, furthermore, began to express support for Black

> are our friends, they are our potential allies, and we need as many allies as possible." (*The Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation Movements)*

What Newton challenges here is an interpretation of gender/sexual struggles that categorically associates them with liberalism and/or with bourgeois decadence. He insists that flaws in some expressions of these movements should not discount them as a whole, and that women and gays should be able to struggle through mistakes, as they are friends/comrades and allies to the revolution. Gay Power militants like Marsha and Sylvia for example were critical of homonationalism, as homonationalism was the liberal wing of the "homosexual movement" of which Newton speaks. Homonationalism had been viewed by some Black Power militants as the representative of the Gay movement as a whole; in this way, queerness/transness was triangulated with the bourgeoisie and white supremacy. This is the historical basis for misperceptions that queer/trans movements have nothing to do with Black revolution or class struggle.

In essence, Newton hoped to augment the Black Power struggle, to maximize a revolutionary coalition (as opposed to giving room to fascistic tendencies), by not casting the whole Gay Power struggle as on par with homonationalism. And yet, aside from this speech, concrete efforts to address Minor Patriarchy and actually build inroads with women's and gay struggle were seldom practiced by Newton and party leadership. In fact, from Panther women like JoNina Abron Ervin, Assata Shakur, Afeni Shakur, Elaine Brown we learn that despite huge women's presence in the rank-and-file and local chapters, some cis male leaders often conducted themselves chauvinistically and violently (Eldridge Cleaver being the most well known). These patriarchal contradictions incentivized cults of personality around figures like Huey Newton, stifling criticism of ideological lines and practice handed top-down from him and his chapter to other chapters. In turn,

Newton here tried to addresses what we now understand to be homophobia, sexism, and transphobia in tandem. He connects these contradictions to fascism and white supremacy and classism. Throughout the speech, Newton implicates himself in the need to work through these biases, and connects that struggle to the overall struggle for revolution. He is adamant that working through such "insecurities" and "fear" around these questions is as needed as concrete solidarity, connecting the former to socialization within American society. Therefore Newton also acknowledges the role of the life of the mind in homophobia and sexism. In this manner, while he is addressing class, Huey Newton isn't pushing a materialism that ignores subjectivity. This is reminiscent of how Fanon, Wynter, Malcolm, and Harriet Jacobs had to deal with the metaphysical dimensions of Black struggle. The insecurities are specifically attitudes that Newton associates with fascistic tendencies among poor whites; in this way Newton is identifying a material basis in how heterosexual cis men within Black Power movements were conducting themselves (we might recall earlier discussions about Wynter's sociogenic principle and the valency of a hegemonic nexus). Newton also says:

> "If we feel that the group in spirit means to be revolutionary in practice, but they make mistakes in interpretation of the revolutionary philosophy, or they do not understand the dialectics of the social forces in operation, we should criticize that and not criticize them because they are women trying to be free. And the same is true for homosexuals. We should never say a whole movement is dishonest when in fact they are trying to be honest. They are just making honest mistakes. Friends are allowed to make mistakes. The enemy is not allowed to make mistakes because his whole existence is a mistake, and we suffer from it. But the women's liberation front and gay liberation front

Lives Matter that summer, in ways that folks had refused to do in the 2010s. Corporations of all sorts began to gear their advertisements, policies, and more toward conversations on racial justice.

The founders of the Black Lives Matter organization were able to pocket tons of donations. And as that occurred, so also did a whole host of new self-proclaimed radical leaders rise into the fray, making money off Black Revolt. Out of the ashes of the fires from that summer, new DEIA positions and new Black businesses, entertainment opportunities, and more were available for the taking. America started to grant the people the inclusion they always wanted, at least for those who had been able to "grind" in a way to reap the benefits and gains of the country's attempt at racial reckoning.

But the Black feminist principle of "centering the most marginal" was lost. Everything from social distancing to the entire rebellions ceased. The pandemic raged on, rent prices skyrocketed, and though natural disasters became more prominent — pushing thousands out of house and home — no more were neighborhoods being ripped apart by revolt. Biden's promise of "normal," the declaration of Juneteenth as a national holiday, Kamala's rise as the first woman Vice President of African descent: these were enough to signal attempts at restoring a social contract between Black people and the US.

My argument in this piece is that over the course of the previous decade, and culminating in 2020, we witnessed phenomena like the coalitions emerging in and around Black Lives Matter as a slogan: for, was at stake was not just the configurations of embodiment that were being said to matter or to not matter. What was at stake was a competition for a *social contract with the State* that should supposedly grant "all" lives (embodied configurations) some semblance of mattering. And indeed, all contemporary "civil unrest" and conflicts around "rights" (human, civil, etc) is something which I find could be transected in this manner: a confused quasi-universalism, symptom of how different factions are negoti-

ating what I call the "nexus" in the superstructure and substructure — for which the many kinds of embodiment are consequences. This concerns what I describe as the *imbrication of the dominant material and power relations* in an age of neocolonialism, integration, and assimilation.

Imbrication 101: Transfeminist Material Analytic

The verb "imbricate" describes when two or more things are connected by "overlapping." The specific way this connection looks is an overlapping "at the edges." Think of shingles on a roof, or fish scales, or the tips of an asparagus. My theory of imbrication posits that processes of State-building and class development "overlap" at ways of organizing the body, but in a way that remains at the "edges" of our consciousness. This is why I mentioned in *Dispatches from Among the Damned: On the History and Present of Trans* Survival*, that the aftermath of the Floyd/Taylor Revolts centers on a specifically patriarchal maintenance of the property system and labor divisions in a bourgeois society against any further rebellions. What I identify as central to the post-2020 carceral apparatus are the campaigns against "critical race theory" and against "gender ideology," and biases against so-called "wokeness"/"cancel culture."

490 anti-LGBT bills have been either considered or passed across the United States in just the year 2023 alone, along with the end of *Roe v Wade* and of affirmative action, as well as massive pro-police funding campaigns and the construction of several, large-scale police training facilities. Further, many Black folks have engaged in conservative rhetoric alongside racist white Americans. Black mayors, police chiefs, clergy, non-profit execs, and business owners have each leaned into rhetoric about "public safety," including "clean ups" against lumpen (especially homeless, disabled folks, addicts) individuals whilst the general populace

stop with STAR, though. This is clear when we look at a speech once delivered by Black Panther Party co-founder, Huey P Newton. He urges support for both the women's movement *and* the gay movement, insisting:

> "We must gain security in ourselves and therefore have respect and feelings for all oppressed people. We must not use the racist attitude that the white racists use against our people because they are Black and poor. Many times the poorest white person is the most racist because he is afraid that he might lose something, or discover something that he does not have. So you're some kind of a threat to him. This kind of psychology is in operation when we view oppressed people and we are angry with them because of their particular kind of behavior, or their particular kind of deviation from the established norm.
>
> Remember, we have not established a revolutionary value system; we are only in the process of establishing it. I do not remember our ever constituting any value that said that a revolutionary must say offensive things towards homosexuals, or that a revolutionary should make sure that women do not speak out about their own particular kind of oppression. As a matter of fact, it is just the opposite: we say that we recognize the women's right to be free. We have not said much about the homosexual at all, but we must relate to the homosexual movement because it is a real thing. And I know through reading, and through my life experience and observations that homosexuals are not given freedom and liberty by anyone in the society. They might be the most oppressed people in the society."

the decline of "American" pre-eminence (articulated as Grand Patriarchy's concern with "white genocide" and "family values").

Conclusion

Transfeminist material analysis must contend with the patriarchal counterrevolution and its reformist corrollaries. The hypothesis is that fascism and reform are two sides of the same coin, because they both articulate the "imbrication" of material and power relations. Imbrication occurs vis-a-vis social forms at the "nexus" of the substructure (economic forces) and the superstructure (non-economic forces). These nexing-forms exhibit a combining and displacing power, or "valence," in the sociogenic constraints of biologically potentiated trait expressions. Those valences organize (but do not determine) possibilities for how various groups, populations, individuals, persons, negotiate the socio-ecological conditions of their life.

The precursor for imbrication theory is the emphasis on bodily autonomy that came out of the alliances within last century's "self-determination" movements. Here, the corporeal locus could not so easily be coerced by the Man and his continuums of truncation. The metaphysics of "self" and the material mode of "determining" that self had bucked against Western bourgeois society — through what EA Stanley calls the "various and ongoing anticolonial, Black Power, and antiprison movements" (*Gender Self-Determination,* 2014). Insisting on bodily autonomy, hewn out of the interstices of gender, national, and worker's self-determination struggles, was most clearly synthesized in the STAR manifesto. The star queens had an outlook that, as EA Stanley once put it, "collectivizes" the struggle against "both interpersonal and state violence." According to EA Stanley, this is something that is key to making "space for multiple embodiments." The linkage of gender/sexual liberation with national struggle and class struggle did not start or

leans into narratives about "broken families" and the supposedly criminal behaviors associated with "low value" (or "beta") forms of manhood and womanhood (or "sexual deviancy"). The unity of Black and white communities around the State, class oppression, and gender reaction — despite apparent opposition on racial matters — is something a transfeminist material analytic must help us explain. I try to do this by underscoring how property/labor relations (the focus of a social contract with the State) are anchored through what I will speak of as a "nexus" which anchors coercion of the body in the home, and coercion of the body for those outside the home.

My article *Star Queen for Autonomy and Defense: An Analysis of Trans Liberation, Class Struggle, and Black Revolt* introduces us to the so-called Nexus hypothesis by having us think about how in-home exploitation and outside-home domination are traced to the dynamics of what Marxists call the "substructure" and what Marxists call the "superstructure." Substructure refers to the economic base of a society. The so-called "base" reorganizes the relationship between the biological and abiotic environment. Meanwhile, the superstructure refers to the metaphysical. That is the cultural and political phenomena which are caused by the base economic organization. As I had discussed in *Why I am A Materialist Transfeminist and Not a Marxist/Proletarian/R*dical Feminist,* the most honest among Marxists will allow the idea that the "superstructure" can influence the "substructure." This is like saying nurture affects nature. But very few would suggest that the former precedes the latter: ie, that nature is created by nurture, substructure caused by superstructure. Which is to say, class always comes first, because the mode of production — if it does not determine everything else about social life — it is at best the primary condition of possibility for the other phenomena in human societies to occur.

I had discussed in *Against Sex Class Theory: Some Notes on Science, Materialism, and Gender Self-Determination*, many Black/Afrikan radicals look at historical patterns in the organization

of socio-ecological life and activity that predate class. There are phenomena which exceed economic reduction, and that not only influence the "base" but seem to entrench or engender it, perhaps even determine its conditions. From this view, it would be culture, the State, metaphysics — the "superstructure" — which shapes the relationship between the biological and the abiotic environment, so that the base then arises out of that. The most honest among these theorists would say that there is such an interpenetration of substructure and superstructure that the former is also the latter, the latter is also the former. No divide between nature and nurture here. In this way, class exploitation, the accumulation of value and of capital, cannot exist without a simultaneous racial-colonial domination of social "others" that keeps the labor and property relations upon which bourgeois production and reproduction are founded intact. In my series *Nexus Hypothesis: An Introduction* (which can be found in my article *They Thought They Could Bury Me But Ain't Know I was a Star Queen*), I tried to suggest that this is the contribution of decolonial and Black feminist thought: attending to ways material and metaphysical analysis must work together.

It is on that foundation I derived a theory of "imbrication," with reference to feminist, Marxist, and Black radical theories. Imbrication theory looks *simultaneously at substructure (economic forces) and superstructure (non-economic forces).* But it is not merely a theory of "intersections," nor the typical Black Left Feminist conception of "interlocking oppressions," nor even simply a Marxist vision of "interpenetration." It is a uniquely transfeminist intervention, a perspective I think is missing in many analyses of the post-George Floyd/post-Breonna Taylor moment. Transfeminism is necessary because it offers a non-dualist conception of the *embodied consequences in superstructural and substructural organization.*

As a transfeminist, I do not focus on whether economic factors ad hoc determine the non-economic factors of the biological-abiotic environment. Nor do I focus on if non-economic factors ad

during the civil rights movement with the pacifist, integrationist organizing of what he calls the "negrosie," — identifying the latter as a largely *adult-led* and specifically *church-aligned* as well as *upwardly mobile* stratum with ties to the *political apparatus.* An age-imbricated Minor Patriarchy can therefore be identified as the Negrosie organized against to the rebellious segments of the civil rights movement.

This Minor Patriarchy is what yields the so-called "respectability politics" of the petit bourgeois and bourgeois-aspiring strata of Black struggle. This is why they are known for making the charges of "degenerate" behavior in popular music and fashion styles associated with hip hop (and ballroom) culture. Lock in step with Grand Patriarchy's narratives about inner city "depravity" that justified mass incarceration in the late 20th century, the Negrosie's views of hip hop (and ballroom) often scandalize urban and lumpen/working class *youth* with regards to an *overall pathologization* of the "absent father"/"single mother." As the 21st century rolled around, especially after the 9/11 attacks, configurations of youthfulness relative to denigration of non-nuclear family structure took on a more explicitly Christian nationalist character: spinning terrorist attacks as warnings of impending Divine judgement in the face of unrepentant "depravity" or "degeneracy." Then, in the 2010s, when a queer/trans-led wave of anti-carceral struggles entered into the public consciousness (especially on social media), both the Grand and Minor Patriarchy would come to insist on religious paternalistic relations to youth in a way that targeted not just "parental absenteeism" and also the so-called "gay agenda." This laid the groundwork for the baseless conflation of queerness and transness with child predation that we see after the 2020 uprisings. At its core is a triangulation of "gender ideology" and "wokeness" with a supposedly both *spiritual and national security threat,* informed by how the Negrosie's "respectable" view of Black/hood culture and family structure (rooted in an *age-imbricated* Minor Patriarchy) has converged with the white nationalist's post-9/11 anxieties about

especially if kids are involved in semi-underground subcultures, or in underground economies.

Lumpencapitalists may profit off the labor or bodies of street kids, use them as cannon fodder or illicit soldiers or collateral in gang wars, and more. Homeless youth are disproportionately at risk of being trafficked, furthermore, because of this kind of patriarchal imbrication. Kids and teens confronting these "nexings" of their embodiment then become adults whose relation to class, gender, race is informed by how Age complicated their position in the household unit, labor divisions, the law, and more. The constraints of Age-forms at the nexus of substructure and superstructure then impose not just selective pressures on what traits of embodiment are socially relevant but also what possibilities for social conception and social activity may emerge.

We may still transect subversive potentials even as the valency of Age and other non-hegemonic nexuses are rearticulated visavis in-home or outside-home truncation. This is part of why Grand Patriarchy denigrates especially Black youth children as the quintessence of "depravity." There is a regular fear-mongering about youth, focusing on trivial matters like shifting consumer spending habits and entertainment media fan bases to supposed "decline" in moral values. Carceral propaganda, furthermore, may find itself augmented here, especially when exhibited through Black church leaders, local Black politicians, Black school administrators, athletes, entertainers, etc who view things like hip hop (and ball culture) as a "corruption" of the youth (respectability politics).

This becomes a central part of how these ideologues negotiate the imbrication of State power and bourgeois property relations. At its core, what's to be disimbricated is the participation of youth in revolts and revolutionary activities. Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin makes clear that the more militant segments of the anti-segregation struggle in his hometown of Chattanooga, Tennessee were often *youth-led.* He contrasts youth-led subversive activity

hoc determine the economic factors of the biological-abiotic environment. I'm interested in what I hypothesize to be the social forms emerging at the "nexus" of substructural and superstructural organization. This is a way of understanding the "connecting points" currently being discussed in terms of either "intersections" or of "interlocking" oppressions or of dialectical "interpenetration" — all without reducing them to the very social beings who are "corporeal locus" of interactions between the biological and abiotic environment.

I hoped that I could express a non-reductionist view of social being in works like *Late Night Thoughts from a Dialectical Transfeminist,* to argue for how a corporeal locus personified vis-a-vis a range of biotic-abiotic interactions is neither completely determining of nor determined by the constraints of their "metabolic" existence and life-activity. In *The Letter 'I' Paradox: Some More Musings from a Dialectical Transfeminist*, I tried to revisit this perspective, by outlining how a personified corporeality navigates the "imbrication" of the dominant system of material and power relations in multiple ways, with regards to substructural/superstructural "nexing-forms." The key term I offer is that of "truncation" which I highlight as the source of many dualist configurations of the embodiment: male vs female, dark vs light, and more.

Importantly, continuums of truncation are possible because of how a hegemonic nexus "disimbricates" the material and power relations of non-Western/non-capitalist communities. I offer the term "valency" to describe the manner by which both non-hegemonic as well hegemonic substructural/superstructural nexuses organize the corporeal locus. Valency, I find, is how aspects of the biological-abiotic environment, specifically norms and patterns of activity, become "selected for" artificially in our configurations of personhood, identity, the self, societal roles, etc.

The scientific lingo I draw on is aimed at moving away from reductionist explanations, a point I tried to outline in *The Eye Upon US Has Turned Upon Them.* With reference to George Jackson's con-

tributions, I hope to turn a "conspiratorial" mentality among those deceived by the reactionaries/reformists invested in the property relation, into a "roots-grasping mentality" suited to the necessary militant assault on said relations. A transfeminist material analytic as I propose it might achieve this by underscoring how, as a non-adaptive consequence of the development of material and power relations, "nexing-forms" exert both constraints and possibilities on how actual, living, human organisms negotiate the property system, division of labor, law, the production process, social reproduction, hierarchies and status, age, gender/sexuality, race, religion, and more.

Thus, the living beings "nexed" by such forms become not just passive recipients of the structural dynamics that organize the corporeal (biological-abiotic) locus, but also active participants in the evolutionary construction thereof. This principle is why, in my view, folks like Marsha, Sylvia, and other star queens could emerge as transgender women, as spiritual innovators, and as lumpenized militants: all in spite of coercive gender assignation, colonial acculturation, and class oppression. It is how/why in *Femme Queen, Warrior Queen: Beyond Representation, Towards Self-Determination,* I foreground Black trans women's leadership and cultural contributions in the face of a colonial "manichaeism" that curates transmisogynoir to scapegoat all expressions of bodily autonomy as a civilizational threat. It is how/why in *Racial Class Paternalism and the Trojan Horse of Anti-transmasculinity,* I foreground Black trans men's and transmasculine experience and resistance in the face of a historical erasure fostered by a colonial "manichaeism" that organizes and disorganizes which embodiments deserve "protection" from said civilizational threat.

Black transfeminism as I try to describe it is elusive, however, because many people hold to not only reductive views of the body, but they also take the "nexus" which configures their embodiment at face value. Therefore, attempts to navigate or negotiate the conditions of their living are, from the perspective of imbrication

There are reactionary tendencies to consider, however, when transecting the valency of these nexuses. It may very well be that patterns of "adultification" or "parentification" put on many youth are a structural consequence of how patriarchy rearticulates age gradation and initiation customs. Demands for youth conformity to cisheteronormative standards are often framed as a responsibility to maintain the social standing (status) of the family and the community, especially from a religious standpoint (honor thy mother and thy father). These also come with a host of *labor relegations* put onto children. The in-home implications of this often means the same domestic labor exploitation visited upon mothers is forced onto children. Daughters become quasi-mothers and sons become quasi-fathers. Queer/trans kids are also sequestered into these surrogate homemaker roles, whilst being repressed for gender/sexual variance. All of these impositions are posed as a duty to one's family or one's god/church. Thus, what was once a communal project found in the responsibilities apportioned by age-grade institutions is reorganized as deference to the authority of "head of household" by the State and organized religion.

The valency of Age, therefore, can be rearticulated so that household production and social reproduction involve the labor inputs qua "obedience" (especially regarding domestic upkeep) of children — especially older siblings and cousins. Sometimes this might mean taking on wage-labor employment in the formal workplace, although this is illegal in some cases (and may be done "off the books" instead). In this way we see "parentified"/"adultified" children configured as surrogate breadwinners too. Part of this process may even include in-house (though not necessarily formal) deputization of parental authority to the adultified/parentified, such that these may become agents of "discipline" enacted upon "disobedient" dependents. As this occurs, some youth may find themselves drawn to or even pushed out to the streets, where they confront truncation by outside-home forces of domination. In this context, "parentification" and "adultification" is still apparent,

> this circumstance — trifling as it may seem, it was the commencement of that belief which has grown with time, and even now, sir, in this dungeon, helpless and forsaken as I am, I cannot divest myself of. Being at play with other children, when three or four years old, I was telling them something, which my mother overhearing, said it had happened before I was I born — I stuck to my story, however, and related somethings which went, in her opinion, to confirm it — others being called on were greatly astonished, knowing that these things had happened, and caused them to say in my hearing, I surely would be a prophet, as the Lord had shewn me things that had happened before my birth. And my father and mother strengthened me in this my first impression, saying in my presence, I was intended for some great purpose" (*THE CONFESSIONS OF NAT TURNER, THE LEADER OF THE LATE INSURRECTION IN SOUTHAMPTON, VA*)

Nat Turner's testimony before the law puts an emphasis on his maturation through roles and expectations that were laid upon him from his youth. The context in which this occurred was, by his admission, religious or spiritual, concerning the belief that he would be a prophet, and thus his subsequent education in the Bible. Turner also describes his learning experience allowing him access to a number of manufacturing skills. Further, Turner claims that growing up, quite a few of the "rogue" slaves would come to him for support in their schemes and robberies, because of their "confidence in [his] superior judgement," which he suggests was reinforced by the preternatural character of "the circumstances of [his] infancy." The valency of Age and Spirituality organized Nat Turner's youth in a way that prepared him with the skills and knowledge he would eventually utilize to recruit his peers in a rebellion.

theory, a problem for consciousness. For example, there are certain gender assumptions apparent in how George Jackson and his mother Georgia Jackson talk about George's younger brother, Jonathan Jackson, Georgia's other son. George tried to model a revolutionary brotherhood for Jonathan; he spoke of this as trying to teach his brother "to fly." Jonathan was a teenager, but was known to be quite astute, and as the Jacksons developed a relationship with Angela Davis during the Soledad Brothers case, Jonathan became a sort of bodyguard to her. Jonathan's militancy then turned toward an attempt to liberate his big brother and the other defendants. He orchestrated a hostage situation at the Marion County Courthouse, although he and his comrades were intercepted by law enforcement, which cost Jonathan his life.

Now, Angela Davis became a fugitive after Jonathan's raid on the courthouse. She was wanted for supposedly supplying the guns that the younger Jackson had used. The State and white ruling class attempted to frame Angela as a manipulative older woman who had brainwashed an unthinking teenage boy into engaging in armed struggle. But, the boy's older brother George Jackson would insist that, on the contrary, Jonathan had acted of his own mind. Comrade George spoke of Jonathan as a "man-child" when emphasizing his brother's cognitive autonomy. Similarly, the boys' mother, Georgia Jackson would highlight how Jonathan had essentially needed to man up from a young age after he lost his father. Georgia, furthermore, challenges the idea that her younger child was led astray by Angela Davis; she even insists that Jonathan would never even have taken direction from a woman in the first place.

What's important to sit with here is the "nexings" of embodiment involved, both gendered and non-gendered. George's relationship to his brother served as a model for the kind of "brotherhood" he established with other men in San Quentin prison, a revolutionary brotherhood necessary during a time when young Black men were reclaiming the term "brother" as a statement of racial/na-

tional unity and affinity or camaraderie. On the other hand, Angela Davis was a queer Black woman; and her being framed as someone who had manipulated the underage Jonathan Jackson into his liberation attempt historically coincided with a moment in time during which Black women as a whole were being blamed for youth-led revolts. As we learn from Tiffany Lethabo King in *Black Feminisms and Pessimism: Abolishing Moynihan's Negro Family*, it was specifically a narrative of a "broken" family that was used to villainize Black mothers, as part of "the sociologist's attempt to police and surveil unruly Black urban life." Such rhetoric about the supposedly "broken" family was also used to support the notion of an "absent father," thus pathologizing Black men and further reinforcing the illegitimacy of youth-led resistance.

As white supremacy weaponized family rhetoric against rebellious youth (and in denigration of sistas as "matriarchal" women and of brothas as "absent" men), quite a few Black people during that era would take the "broken family" myth at face value. Instead of honoring sistas, these would denigrate women's role in the Black struggle, framing it as part of a plot to "emasculate" brothas and thus weaken the community through undermining male headship. This racialized family rhetoric, and the implications from the lens of age and cognitive ability, all exhibited valency in how/why George Jackson and Georgia Jackson spoke about the young Jonathan Jackson. The latter was an adultified child, who was not raised with his father in the home, who had to mature from very young, who was precocious and intelligent as a result. Thus, "man-child" is celebrated as simultaneously a non-hegemonic configuration of manhood, one capable of leadership, regardless of age, even within the non-nuclear structure of Jonathan's upbringing. Additionally, "man-child" as a concept served as a rejection of the claim that Angela Davis orchestrated the kid Jackson's actions (again, tied to narratives that ensured Black/queer women get villainized whilst Black men and boys get infantilized).

followed in Dingizwayo's footsteps. Once again, the cause is the consequence.

If we examine Gullah and the antebellum Hush Harbor traditions, we might hypothesize that the valence of age gradation and initiation customs were rearticulated within the syncretic religiocultural context of enslaved Afro-americans in the South. It is often suggested that the ceremonies of early Black churches (such as the ring shout) enabled unity across ethnic lines. The Praise House, one of the places where shouts might be held, structured relationships between elders and youth with regards to the kinds of communal and ecclesial roles that could be attained. Such roles were reckoned with regards to gender norms and notions of spiritual belonging, but age-gradation contributed the regulatory procedures for how they could be embodied. The Gullah practice of "seekin'" is illustrative. Young boys and young girls are guided by older men and older women respectively in religious education, whilst they prepare for a fast and other sacred undertakings which have as their outcome a formal sort of "graduation" into a host of responsibilities within the community. Subversive potentials correlated to the possible retention of gradation/initiation customs are worth exploring. One example of this can be illuminated from the testimony of Nat Turner:

> "SIR, — You have asked me to give a history of the motives which induced me to undertake the late insurrection, as you call it — To do so I must go back to the days of my infancy, and even before I was born. I was thirty-one years of age the 2d of October last, and born the property of Benj. Turner, of this county. In my childhood a circumstance occurred which made an indelible impression on my mind, and laid the ground work of that enthusiasm, which has terminated so fatally to many, both white and black, and for which I am about to atone at the gallows. It is here necessary to relate

among the Ama-Ngoni. Historically, population density and spatial distribution were constraints on competition between clan heads. Junior members of the clans could break away to form their own social units. But fights became more commonplace as changes in relation to land and in population arose, for which some clan heads sought a solution as follows:

> "In the politico-military sphere, Shaka was following in the footsteps of his original protector, Dingizwayo, and to some extent in the footsteps of Zwide, who was a rival to both Dingizwayo and Shaka. Dingizwayo opened up trade with the Portuguese at Delagoa Bay in 1797 (mainly in ivory), and he stimulated arts and crafts. His most distinguished innovation was in the army, when he instituted a system of recruiting regiments according to age grades. Previously, each locality tended to dominate within a given regiment; and, in any event, people were accustomed to fighting side by side with members of their own kraal, locality and clan. However, when all men in a given age-grade were brought into the same regiment, this emphasised a greater national feeling and also increased Dingizwayo's power vis-a-vis the smaller clan heads."

Three figures, Shaka Zulu among them, had to negotiate the exogenous forces of Portuguese commerce with the endogenous forces of historical Ama-Ngoni clan and territorial relations. One of these clan heads, Dingizwayo, opened up economic relations to Portuguese traders, artisans, craftsmen, while also establishing new military regiments using the age grades. The age grades organized potentials for military-political unity that transcended other configurations of social belonging. And thereby clan competition could be minimized, the consequence of which was cross-clan, proto-nationalist unity. Shaka Zulu's famous military campaigns

Still, even as we transect subversive potentials for honoring a young, lumpen male autonomy and rejecting white supremacist family rhetoric through the construction of the "man-child" out of Jonathan's memory, there's still a way that normative confines for what womanhood and manhood mean are taken as a given in the ways both George and Georgia Jackson remember the young Jonathan. A conscious analysis of how the binary-conjugal-familial unit creates the figure of the "matriarchy" or of the "infantile male" — which was so useful in the State's repression of either Angela Davis or Jonathan Jackson — does not figure too prominently in how the "man-child" is honored. The questions of Age and Ability are also not consciously dealt with, at least not adequately enough to foster inroads of solidarity across struggles. My point in grappling with the contradictions in "man-child" is to ask us how we might transect the complicated ways the *family unit* configures embodiment at the nexus of a colonizing substructure and superstructure. This way we can give name to both the constraints and potentials of the gender struggle within the Jacksons' and Davis' contributions to the Black Liberation Movement.

Why is that important for understanding the way progressivism and reform is also fascism and reaction? Let us look at some more historical and literary examples. Some early Black suffragettes during the 19th century fell into the same trap of being dysconscious about the "nexus" configuring their gender embodiment. Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents of the Life of a Slave Girl* is considered a pioneering Black feminist text that exposes racial-sexual violence under chattel slavery in the South. Jacobs' autobiography was controversial for being written in a style typically associated with novels, a form of literature that US culture associated with white women. Jacobs used these stylistic conventions to challenge white-centered notions of sexual victimization that negated the experiences of enslaved women. Immense doubt was cast on Jacobs' claims, however, and so her white suffragette counterparts had to help validate the truth and veracity of her

accounts. Jacobs herself would make regular appeals to Christian ideas of spiritual brotherhood to reinforce the intentions of the autobiography.

Further, Harriet Jacobs took issue with racial myths of that time about the "inability" of enslaved men to "protect" their children and their children's mothers. Jacobs highlighted that the capacity for fulfilling Christian responsibility of "properly" safeguarding mothers and children was hindered by nothing but the institution of slavery itself. Jacobs' critique therefore put attention on an *institutional configuration* of Black paternal embodiment, and used this to identify the similarly *institutional configuration* of Black maternal embodiment. Still, the "nexus" concerning both — which involves the truncation of the family unit, the household, and heteronormativity — is taken as a given. This is in no small part due to a religious frame and its role in the struggle for "rights" to emancipation, franchisement, protections, etc. Thus, Jacobs would represent Black sexual struggles vis-a-vis the rhetoric of the family, as a way to negotiate the *imbrication* of dominant material/power relations.

The valency exhibited by the binary-conjugal-familial unit in Jacobs' case organized some subversive activities: a critique of racism, exposé on sexual assault, struggles for emancipation and the franchise. To that point, in the face of widespread refusals to preach the Gospel to the enslaved, Harriet Jacobs identifies the ways she and her peers still sought to embrace its doctrines, its sacred text, and to use its moral strictures or ethical mandates in their critique of slavery and pursuit of freedom and access. At one point, Jacobs describes helping an old man learn to read, which was not just illegal but viewed as sexually improper based on Pauline admonitions of women having authority in the church.

So, Jacobs avidly broke legal and theological codes, to help her friend (an elderly man) learn to read the Bible, because reclaiming Christianity was central to her fight against slavery. While she challenges dominant norms in this way, the valency that the binary-conjugal-familial unit exhibits in her praxis still

grades cut across families and lineages" (pg 32). The sociogenic valence of age gradation and initiation customs could organize potentials for a *range* of communal labors and tasks, furthermore, in ways that affiliation with clan/lineage does not. The authors give name to farm work, sanitation work, aspects of production and distribution, even the arbitration of disputes and "quasi-military functions" (pg 32) as examples. In Mande societies, the institution of *Tons* yield age-gradating and intiatory forms of social configuration. The *Jonton* in particular was used to create a caste of war captives who were deployed in military campaigns. This interaction of slave-Caste nexing with the specific co-valence of Spirituality, Seniority, Gender, and Lineality out of which the *Ton* age-grade/initiation customs emerge eventually anchored the rise of a feudal State. The possibility for an age-grade to have such an impact on its very conditions of possibility, reshaping the trajectory of the developing system for which it was a byproduct, can be observed in other instances. According to Walter Rodney, a certain head of the Zulu among the Ama-Ngoni people, named Shaka, made use of age gradation in his military unification of diverse clan units.

> "Early in the 19th century, the casual tempo of Ama-Zulu life and politics had changed considerably. A greater population meant less and less room for junior members to 'hive off' on their own. It meant less grazing land for cattle, and disputes over cattle and land. As the Ama-Zulu began to fight more frequently, so they began to feel the necessity to fight more effectively. At the same time, senior clan heads began to recognise the need for a political structure to ensure unity, the maximisation of resources and the minimisation of internecine conflicts." (*How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*)

In this particular case, the exogenous forces that came of 19th century modernity contributed to changes in inter-clan relations

of a largely pedagogical affair, where the focus was on education of juniors by seniors to stabilize the reproduction of this class of male rulers. In other instances of pederasty, the younger receptive "partner" was of lower status, which is still a question of material/power relations and not of "sexual identity." The higher status "partner" was categorially in the active sexual role here because in general society he was *domus* of the home, with ownership over his wives and children as well as his servants/slaves. Patriarchal nexing is what's at work in these configurations of gender/sexual embodiment. Attraction, desire, pleasure — the stuff of "sexuality" as we understand it today — were *not* the traits being selected for in these age-imbricated patriarchal class relations.

That patriarchy as a nexus of substructural (economic) and superstructural (non-economic) relations could articulate the valency of Age has implications beyond just our understanding of sexual coercion. According to Sam Mbah and IE Igariwey's *African Anarchism: A History of a Movement*, the phenomenon of age-gradation and initiation ceremonies played an important role in what "bound communities together" (pg 31). These were different ways that populations could be organized into "age sets." The configuration thereof depended on how gender and actual physical age (or ability) is conceived in the local culture. Thus, *many* aspects of human phenotypes are "selected" for artificially, in a variety of ways as far as their social relevance within the age-grade/initiation customs as an institution. These "age-sets" as units of embodied configuration typically emerged vis-a-vis the valence of Spirituality, Seniority, Gender, Caste, Ability and Lineality as sociogenic forms at the nexus of substructure and superstructure. In this way, gradation and initiation rites organize the locus of biotic-abiotic environment in such a way so as to anchor how one's position in material and power relations is embodied.

Per Mbah and Igariwey, "the rise of age grades was in itself a response to the need for greater communal solidarity, since age

disorganized the potential for other more subversive acts, namely those which didn't align with Christian gender norms and their historical emphasis on complementarianism — where male headship is augmented by female support. Many of Harriet Jacobs' motivations, for example, revolved around the safety and future of her children and the propagation of Christian message in her political activity.

Outside of Black Christian political struggles, we see how the valency of a binary-conjugal-familial unit *organizes some subversive tendencies while disorganizing the potential for others*. El-hajj Malik el-Shabazz, also known as Malcolm X, spoke to an audience of Black women in May of 1962, inspiring them to embrace their skin tone and natural hair. Speaking from a nationalist perspective as a member of the NOI, he emphasized Elijah Muhammad's message on self-respect and self-love.

Malcolm had been raised by Garveyite parents and after a life of crime, came to the radical movement and the Black Muslim movement while studying in prison. His exhortations circled around a message of self-defense, in contrast to the nonviolent approach of Christian civil rights leaders contemporaneous to him. He believed in the necessity of militancy in the struggle against Jim Crow segregation, and part of that, for him, meant knowing that the Black woman is "the most disrespected" and "the most unprotected" and "the most neglected" person in America. So, speaking as a Black man in the NOI, Malcolm reminds his audience that their religion teaches respect and protection for women:

> "We will kill you, for our women I'm making it plain yes, we will kill you for our women. We believe that if the white man will do whatever is necessary, to see that his woman get respect and protection, then you and I will never be recognized as men. Until we stand up like men and pays the same penalty over the head

> of anyone, who puts his filthy hands out, to put it in a direction of our women."

In Malcolm X's time, many Black women were sexually assaulted during lynching campaigns, with no hope of legal recourse. This was a continuation of sexual violence during chattel slavery, and constituted part of what Pauli Murray, a non-cis minister, civil rights activist, and lawyer, once called "Jane Crow." Malcolm here is highlighting the *institutional configuration* of manly embodiment, where white men protect their women from sexual assault; he urges Black (Muslim) men to chart their own recognition as such by confronting sexual violence and other aspects of Jane Crow in tandem with the struggle against segregation (Jim Crow).

Malcolm's words demonstrate a *negotiation of the superstructural and substructural social form* that configures how manhood is embodied within a racial capitalist order. He recognizes that inability to "stand up as men" is not a simply biological matter, just as Harriet Jacobs had done, but one shaped by religious and economic institutions — hence his emphasis on the philosophy of Elijah Muhammad and self-defense in how he articulates masculinity. He urges an *alternative configuration of manly embodiment* rooted in the overall "self-reliance" program of Black nationalism and the Nation of Islam. For him, this is key to advancing an *alternative configuration of womanly embodiment* whereby Black women can finally "get respect and protection." Thus, Malcolm's masculinism was a negotiation of the gendered imbrication of dominant material/power relations.

Malcolm's views on gender were never fixed in time. At some point in his life, he describes having had to unlearn a traditionally hierarchical way of relating to his wife, Dr Betty Shabazz (who insisted that he begin treating her in a more egalitarian fashion). And he eventually left the NOI and began to staunchly condemn Elijah Muhammad, after learning about the minister's abuse of underage girls in the organization. Furthermore, according to Eric S.

sexual assault. Headlines and legislation focused on "mutilation of children" not only completely misrepresent the science of transgender healthcare, but also frame Christian cisheteronormativity as key to protecting children from sexual violence.

However, if we regard age in terms of social forms at the nexus of substructure and superstructure, we immediately can identify the material and power relations both endogenous to and exogenous to various societies. Thus, age-stratified sexual coercion, whether "heterosexual" (Anlo case) or "homosexual" (Mwanga case) may be critiqued in a more robust manner that also acknowledges flaws in the archival data and the possible biases driving such flaws. It has been noted, for example, that in US legal custody battles, should children or their mothers accuse a father of sexual or domestic violence, the courts are *less likely* to rule in favor of the mother — privileging the father instead. Child sexual violence is much more likely to happen at the hands of someone a youth is familiar with — relatives, mentors, pastors, schoolteacher, etc — but the rates of occurrence are vastly underreported because of whose accounts are privileged and whose reports are ignored or overlooked. The privilege often skews in favor of white, heterosexual men, or men of property or some other kind of prestige or social status, who are typically given authority over children in various ways (especially if they are clergy).

With this in mind, should we visit the data on Greco-Roman pederasty — the historical context for Christian homophobia — we realize that "sexuality" as an atomized trait is irrelevant to the configurations of embodiment involved. It was not considered a "homosexual" affair because it was deeply tied to the patriarchal imbrication of class relations and the Political order. Specifically, men of a certain status or rank were expected to reserve their sexual activities for the conjugal-familial unit. These were men of property who in places like Athens had been the only ones with rights to participate in democratic procedure. "Sexual" relations imposed by older men upon young boys in these contexts was a consequence

across ancient societies, both within and outside the West, and this was true even of cisheteronormative contexts (Abrahamic religious cultures included). Many of the customs involved with age-stratified so-called same sex relations (such as the paying of bride price) align with the customs observed in age-stratified so-called cisheteronormative relations, and very often both emerge in contexts that are stratified in other ways.

The choice to single out one example of a hierarchical pattern detected in many societies around the world is aimed at obscuring the dynamics of power and class as they are "nexed" vis-a-vis differential constructions of youthfulness across time and space. This betrays a lack of a genuine concern for the fate of youth, on account of widespread ahistorical and immaterial views of transness and queerness. And to be clear, I don't say this because I support age-stratified sexual and romantic relationships of any kind; on the contrary, I say this because a material/power analysis helps us struggle against these hierarchical/class relationships by illuminating the ways in which modern Patriarchy has absorbed and exacerbated the contradictions involved with the nexuses for which age-stratified and non-age stratified expressions of gender expansivity are a consequence.

It is no exaggeration to say that as often as the Grand Patriarchy will scapegoat these expressions in order to paint African societies and queerness/transness as predatory, Grand Patriarchy will also conceal the ways that sexual predation (whether of children or adults) is fundamental to its own maintenance, including within the church. Minor Patriarchy follows suit, emerging as a force to demonize all gender expansive characteristics of African societies, through fear mongering around decontextualized framing of age-stratified "sexual" experiences. In the United States, this kind of outlook is fueling the "parents' rights" segments of anti-trans movements. Insisting on the nuclear family as divinely appointed source of authority on gender/sexual relations, the "parents' rights" framework is often used to cast pro-trans voices as supporters of child

McDuffie's *Sojourning for Freedom: Black Women, American Communism, and the Making of Black Left Feminism*, it was the influence of Black women radicals like Queen Mother Audley Moore that helped Malcolm develop his politics in a more socialist, internationalist, and gender inclusive direction.

Prior to these evolutions in Malcolm's outlook, however, we may observe how his definition of gendered social being shared a certain *paternalism* in common with white men. Hegemonic parameters for how manhood and womanhood can be constructed are *taken at face value*, and so his initial "protect the woman" masculinism, while noble in its ideals, had still concealed exploitative dynamics within the binary-conjugal-family unit that he would later have to challenge. Therefore, in an initial phase, the valency of a *hegemonic gender nexus had disorganized certain subversive potentials* in Malcolm's thinking. Truncation visavis in-home and outside-home forms of oppression went unquestioned for Malcolm; it would take the more "expansive" approach to gendered embodiment associated with the leftist wings of Black nationalist struggle to shift that.

That a socialist consciousness is correlated to shifts in Malcolm's understanding of gender embodiment is relevant when we think of Frantz Fanon. As he writes in *Black Skin White Masks*, "the effective disalienation of the [B]lack man entails an immediate recognition of social and economic realities" (pg 4). Grappling with the configuration of the body involves dealing with the institutions and social forms which structure the biological-abiotic environment in certain ways. Fanon was not explicitly engaged in feminist thought here, however, nor with concerns about the family or gender per se. Instead, he was wrestling with how one's *health* under colonialism relates to the simultaneously substructural and superstructural configuration of the biological-abiotic locus.

Specifically, as a psychiatrist, he was dealing with what he called "an inferiority complex" among his patients. He identified

these health issues as "the outcome of a double process," which he identifies as first economic (substructural) and then also "internalized" or even "epidermalized" (superstructural). Still, both Black cognition and Black gendered embodiment are consequences of the same nexus; for Fanon's patients had to grapple with a sense of racial inferiority tied to the same forces that guided Malcolm's concern with what it meant for Black men and Black women to be recognized as such, or Harriet Jacobs' concern with challenging representations of Black men and Black women as inferior, or George and Georgia Jackson's wrestling with infantilization and emasculation of the younger Jonathan Jackson.

The simultaneously metaphysical and material source of the disabilities Fanon hoped to treat were, as he outlined in *The Wretched of the Earth*, rooted in the fact that "what parcels out the world is to begin with the fact of belonging to or not belonging to a given race, a given species." Now, he does not mean "race" in a biological sense. In his earlier text, *Black Skin, White Masks*, he was determined to challenge a bioreductive account of race, as it failed to explain the mental illnesses with which his patients were wrestling. Fanon grounded his observations in a scientific conception he termed "sociogeny." His patients' health issues were reframed through a *nature-nurture* conception of social being; similarly, a sociogenic view of how colonialism-capitalism ordered the world was nature-nurture in its conception of the matter. Again, this is akin to the ways Harriet Jacobs, George, Georgia, and Jonathan Jackson, or Malcolm X grapple with the *institutional configuration* of racial-sexual embodiment, challenging bioreductive explanations. Therefore, Fanon argued:

> "In the colonies the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich. This is why Marxist analysis should always be

> when travelling… The two slept together at night, the husband satisfying his desires between the boy's thighs. When the boy grew up he joined the company and took a boy-wife in his turn."

Similar to this, the text *A Third Sex Around the World* (Galva 108), reports:

> "The royal kings of early Uganda are well known for their harems containing both women and men. Prior to the British takeover in 1886, King Mwanga's persecution of Christian pages was said to be largely motivated by their rejection of his amorous advances. The king found it increasingly difficult to staff his harem of pageboys and became enraged when his favorite, Mwafu, also refused him."

Documentation of events like these are often pathologized rather than contextualized through a material analysis. In the case of the story about King Mwanga especially, the inherited narrative has been so uncritically adopted (and not just by the source above) that modern notions of queerness/transness are triangulated with child sexual assault. This view serves the aims of the Christian church, which has canonized the pages-turned-converts who reportedly refused their master King Mwanga's "homosexual" advances. The reality is, King Mwanga's struggle was with foreign religious threats to Buganda sovereignty. By making his subjects martyrs for the church, however, the Christian religion interprets the contradiction as solely between King Mwanga and his pages. This is a way to associate so-called queerness/transness with rape, child sexual assault, and overall "sexual immorality."

Even if we were to take reports on King Mwanga's sexuality as fact, we would still have to acknowledge the reality that age-stratified "sexual" relations are hierarchical and classed affairs

sexual control of youth (specifically but not solely younger women). The *polyvalent* negotiation of prestige becomes instead a *competition* for prestige organized with regards to *reproductive concerns*.

While Greene's focus is specific to the dynamics of Anlo culture, and their evolution from pre-colonial times to the conditions of the 18th and 19th century, this case is relevant to the discussion of Minor Patriarchy overall. We see in the Anlo struggle the entrenchment of a hegemonic nexus that has parallels throughout African struggle. With the intrusion of racial capitalism, the dominant nexus impacts local nexuses within the material/power relations of in non-Western societies, whether they were gendered/sexed or not, subordinating them to an eventually globalized and homogenized (grand) Patriarchy that helped to buttress the imposition of capitalism and the State. The pressures of the grand patriarchy become interpenetrated with the valency exhibited by local nexing-forms, creating the conditions for a regional and local "minor patriarchy" to emerge.

Local contradictions being exacerbated by the transplantation of colonialism and capitalism is relevant when discussing how Patriarchy relates to so-called same sex or gender variant patterns in Africa. In texts like *Parallels in the Gender Minority/Sexual Minority Histories of Africa and Asia* (from the online journal colorq.org), we read:

> "The Azande, an ethnic group occupying southwestern Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the northeastern Congo, practised institutionalized bonding between a warrior and a younger warrior apprentice. "Many of the young warriors married boys… When a warrior married a boy he paid spears [bride price]… to the boy's parents… addressed the parents as … 'my father-in-law' and 'my mother-in-law'. The boy fetched water for his husband… bore his shield

> slightly stretched every time we have to do with the colonial problem.
>
> Everything up to and including the very nature of pre-capitalist society, so well explained by Marx, must here be thought out again. The serf is in essence different from the knight, but a reference to divine right is necessary to legitimize this statutory difference. In the colonies, the foreigner coming from another country imposed his rule by means of guns and machines. In defiance of his successful transplantation, in spite of his appropriation, the settler still remains a foreigner. It is neither the act of owning factories, nor estates, nor a bank balance which distinguishes the governing classes. The governing race is first and foremost those who come from elsewhere, those who are unlike the original inhabitants, 'the others.'" (page 39, *The Wretched of the Earth*)

For Fanon, cultural-geographic distinction gets flattened as anatomical, psychological or otherwise innate difference. This structurally re-articulates the historical emergence of distinct embodiments within human socio-ecological relations. The maintenance of substructural/superstructural "ties" has objective relevance to the dialectical motion of colonial rule, of possession of property, of exploitation and theft, the division of labor, of pollution, of disease.

But Fanon ultimately does not attend to the *polyvalent* "nexings" of embodiment, as I term it, comprising the many "social forms" that give rise to what he had spoken of as "legitimation of statutory difference." And this is because of how the binary-conjugal-familial unit impinged upon his awareness of populations and individuals' many ways of navigating the coercive organization of the biological-abiotic (corporeal) locus. Thus, he correctly identified the embodied consequences of substructural/

superstructural constraints for the dynamics of each specific order: ie, a unique configuration of bodily "difference" (between serf and knight) under European feudalism versus modern colonialism (between Black and white). But he does not adequately lay out the *gender imbricated* social forms that coerce how material/power relations are embodied at the "nexus" of substructure and the superstructure.

Yet, these very social forms for the "legitimation of statutory difference" are what "disalienated" Black manhood in this first place — by projecting the ableist/racist idea of Black men "lacking" the capacity to reason as adults. One of the first pioneers of this idea was the scientist who first coined biological taxa (or categories) for living species, Carl Linnaeus. In Linnaeus' categories we find one of the first attempts to "scientifically" lay out a racial/sexual view of humanity that upheld both white supremacy and patriarchy. Stephen Jay Gould renowned paleontologist, biologist, and historian, once detailed Linnaeus' racial/sexual hierarchy of humankind as follows:

> "In the first formal definition of human races in modern taxonomic terms, Linnaeus mixed character with anatomy (Systema naturae, 1758). Homo sapiens afer (the African black), he proclaimed, is 'ruled by caprice'; Homo sapiens europaeus is 'ruled by customs.' Of African women, he wrote: mammae lactantes prolixae — breasts lactate profusely. The men, he added, are indolent and anoint themselves with grease."

What we see with Linnaeus is a construction of anatomical femaleness that is part and parcel of how racial taxonomy is developed. Anatomical "femaleness" is construed as basically animalistic (breasts never stop producing milk) in the Black context. This is reminiscent of narratives created around the bodies of Khoisan

namics are embodied. One example of this is something Sandra E Greene mentions:

> "…male-dominated patrilineages and clans exercised far more control over the productive and reproductive capacities of the young women than the young men in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Anlo. But I avoid demonizing African men or those African elders (older men and older women) who controlled the fate of the young women under their authority. I do so by discussing the increasing pressures felt by family elders as a result of demographic changes and the competition for prestige that arose because of the expanding influence of the Atlantic slave trade. Rather than excuse or deny the negative impact that decisions made by largely male elders (but also by female elders) had on young women, I emphasize the particular historical context in which these elders acted in order to meet specific challenges, not simply to make the lives of the young women in their families miserable." (*Family Concerns: Gender and Ethnicity in Pre-Colonial West Africa*)

Here, Greene speaks to the existence of a contradiction endogenous (internal) to societies of the Anlo people. These were structural consequences of nexuses that threaded material/power relations — Age, Lineality and Gender. The valency of these nexuses gets rearticulated, however, vis-a-vis the exogenously imposed forces of the slave trade. Therefore, the three co-valent nexuses anchored how prestige was reckoned, but the effects of the transatlantic trade saw a local Patriarchal nexus emerge, that absorbs Age dynamics and pre-existing Gender/Lineal forms alike. And so, the elders, across gender embodiments — especially but not solely so-called males — start to participate in an increased

patrilineal forms such as *fadenya* — a point noted by Cedric Robinson in his *Black Movements in America* when describing a slave revolt on board the ship called l'Annibal. It is Lineal nexuses that persisted on the plantation and in the afterlife of slavery via "atypical" gender/family configurations of our community; that is how notions of kinship persisted despite natal alienation in the slavemaking project, which often motivated either escape attempts or struggles for manumission. Nexings of spiritual headship would be rearticulated within the early Black Church visavis the liberatory preaching of Afro-american ministers, or the use of medico-magical knowledge in disrupting racial capitalism among female slaves (such as the use of herbal abortifacents to interrupt slavers' access to newborn chattel). The nexuses for which warrior queens, merchant queens, female husbands, etc were embodied consequences would be rearticulated visavis what gets denigrated as "matriarchal" tendencies in Black communities.

We would also begin to see figures like Kimpa Vita, Romaine-La-Prophetesse, Xica Manicongo, whose expressions of bodily autonomy mirror the cross- and mixed-gender roles associated with mediumship in a range of African societies. Alongside them, figures like Mary Jones, or Cathay Williams, or Frances Thompson, or William Dorsey Swann, or Marsha P Johnson and the militants at Stonewall, the militants in the Compton Cafeteria Riots — among the many expansive gender rebels of Africa and the Third World. Altogether, because their "niche" had become more rigid — they had to meet new material and metaphysical demands. This in turn meant a shift in the artificial "selective" forces that were operating on their bodies, on their expenditures of energy and of focus, on their engagement in social labor, on their self-concept and cosmological preoccupations, their beliefs and lifeways.

For every subversive tendency, however, reactionary organization was never too far, precisely because the rearticulation of valency anchors how changing substructural and superstructural dy-

women like Sarah Baartman during chattel slavery, or the Jezebel trope which was used to construct enslaved Black women in the US as inhumanly dangerous and threatening. With Linnaeus' definition of anatomical "maleness," though, what he focuses on is "indolent" behavior among African men, which basically means laziness, incompetence, idleness, slothfulness. Anyone who doesn't fit these two categories is *not even thought about altogether*. It is this racial/sexual/ableist construction of African men as "lazy" working alongside the racial/sexual/ableist dehumanization of African women, which was used to classify Africans as a whole with words like "capricious," which means unpredictable, chaotic. The suggestion is that being unwomanly and being unmanly, at an intrinsic level (a racial and sexual level) is why we are "governed by caprice": ie, impulsive or *unreasonable*.

The substructural and superstructural "nexus" at work here anchored the configuration of "rights" to property ownership. Here, we turn to insights from Sylvia Wynter, who corrects Fanon by actually dealing with gender in an explicit manner:

> "Those who had property only revealed the high degree of 'natural reason' that nature had endowed them with; those who lacked property revealed the degrees of lack of reason that nature had endowed them with. Thus after the English Civil War, to protect their newly acquired property, the Independents forced through and the Levellers acquiesced a social division based on men-of-property.
>
> Men-of-property-as-men-of-reason got the vote, and were governed only by their consent and were therefore 'autonomous.' The 'servants and almstakers' dependent on others, without property, without natural reason, were excluded from the vote. They became the signifier of the body to the signifier of the reason of the

propertied." (*Beyond the Categories of the Master Conception*)

In British law, and later colonial-slave societies, the rights framework and bourgeois property relations were "linked" to an embodied configuration that Sylvia Wynter refers to as the "genre of Man." The so-called "rights" of "Man" indicated that material and power relations overlapped at a "nexus" which organized the biological-abiotic environment in terms of *accumulation by men who possessed "reason."* This was a consequence of the developing bourgeois substructure and its liberal humanist superstructure. It was also itself the cause of developments within those structures, especially in the colonies. Rights to not just property but to the franchise in England and its territories were reckoned and negotiated vis-a-vis this "genre of Man." The production and reproduction demands of bourgeois-colonial society were stabilized at this hegemonic nexus.

In the US, for example, Black men were referred to as "boy" by white supremacists, especially during Jim Crow, to reinforce sociogenic "difference." This meant exclusion from the social contract with the State configured in terms of "man" as a *reasoned subject*. Barred access to property rights, the capacity for free (as opposed to indentured and enslaved) labor, and more, the combining and displacing power (valency) exhibited by "Man" eventually led anti-slavery organizers in places like the US to respond with the question: "am I not a man, and a brother?" This was a challenge to a hegemonic organization of the corporeal locus that had positioned them as "boy." Invoking Christian imagery, such as on the famous Wedgwood anti-slavery medallion, their *appeals to manhood and brotherhood were negotiations of how "rights" to freedom, to property*, and to the franchise within bourgeois society were anchored in the "rational" (as opposed to "heathen") religion of Christ, anchored by a gendered imbrication of substructure and superstructure.

borders and sovereignty frameworks on the Continent, brings the threading of bourgeois divisions of labor by new gendered configurations of the body. Antiblack slavery in particular contributed to the erasure of diverse patterns of sexual diversity in the continent; so the valence of the grand patriarchy, and its imbrication of a dominant system of material/power relations, attenuated racial dehumanization and ableist pathologization as much as it entrenched various cis/hetero/inter/allo-sexisms. Ultimately, this meant the transformation of the substructure and superstructure, thus new ways of organizing the biological-abiotic environment.

The changes in the conditions of living co-occured with a shift in local spiritualities, as well as the recombining and displacing of the characteristics of corporeal organization that concerned them. The exogenous forces introduced new selective pressures on the biological potentiality for diverse trait expressions. We begin to observe, then — as a dominant mode of production, arrangement of power and authority, and patterns of social reproduction is globalized — the evolutionary "convergence" of what Sanyika Shakur spoke of as "gender outlaw"-hood across the globe. As an example, the spiritual role of "gatekeepers" in Dagara culture described by Malidoma Patrice Some become simply "gay" in the pathologized understanding crafted by Western sexologists and religious thought. So also, groups like the *'an daudu*, the *jimbandaa*, the *mugawe*, the *ashtime*, the *okule*, the *mwaami*, the *jo apele*, and so many others become "abominations" within Western religious-sexual vocabulary. Their diasporic counterparts become "LGBTQIA+" within the Western humanist rights framework.

Importantly, as the grand patriarchy would impose its constraints, with each shift, came forms of resistance that negotiated indigenous and imposed patterns, that navigated exogenous constraints and possibilities vis-a-vis those exerted in the social forms endogenous to each regional context. "Nexed" in this manner, we would see subversive tendencies in the rearticulation of Mande

> not dress like other men or who do not do typical men's work are more visible to observers-insiders as well as outsiders. It is literally easier to observe cross- or mixed-gender dress and hairstyles than to monitor sexual behavior, which is usually performed in private and in the dark. However, the apparent predominance of the gender pattern is almost certainly not an artifact of superficial observation. Sexually receptive males who dressed or wore their hair partially or completely in female ways have been noted throughout Africa. In several cases, they are also spirit mediums in possession religions or shamans."

From these authors, we might gather that gender non-dualist patterns can at times be differentiated or stratified, although very often they are egalitarian or mutual. That point is very important. The possibility of non-hegemonic substructural/superstructural nexings of embodiment is not a suggestion that indigenous societies are utopias. In African contexts, stratified and differentiated gender non-dualist patterns correlate to societies that exhibit stratification and differentiation in other ways; more or less egalitarian and mutual gender non-dualist patterns correlate to societies that are more or less egalitarian and mutual in other ways. Correlation is not causation, but correlation does suggest the possibility of selective constraints upon the biological potentiality for these gender non-dualist expressions. The particulars of economic and non-economic organization of corporeal life are important here, especially the valency exhibited by the social forms at the "nexus" thereof. Using insights from studies of gender/sexuality in the African context, I hope to derive understandings for a generalized application of a transfeminist material analysis. We must start with the origin of humanity to understand the whole.

The arrival of slavery, Western states and empires, colonialism, cultural genocide through religious authority, the creation of

This Nexus contestation set the precedent for why struggles against disfranchisement eventually became focused on property and citizenship rights for *men of color*. Racial justice struggles had, in effect, adopted an uncritical attitude towards a certain outcome of gender imbrication. Many civil rights organizations, for example, became divided internally because of this sexual bias within them; the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee had to form a Black Women's Liberation Committee under the leadership of Frances Beal to address this problem. Later, scholars like Kimberle Crenshaw developed a legal analytic focused on "intersections," an attempt to grapple with consequences of gender imbrication. In *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex*, Crenshaw wrote:

> "I argue that Black women are sometimes excluded from feminist theory and antiracist policy discourse because both are predicated on a discrete set of experiences that often does not accurately reflect the interaction of race and gender. These problems of exclusion cannot be solved simply by including Black women within an already established analytical structure. Because the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism, any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated. Thus, for feminist theory and antiracist policy discourse to embrace the experiences and concerns of Black women, the entire framework that has been used as a basis for translating 'women's experience' or 'the Black experience' into concrete policy demands must be rethought and recast."

Crenshaw used concrete examples, looking at how courts "frame and interpret the stories of Black women plaintiffs." In

her first case study, five Black women plaintiffs had their lawsuit rejected because the legal antidiscrimination framework could only address instances that either affected "Blacks" or affected "women," never the experience of Black women specifically. The atomistic conception of these struggles within the US "rights" framework is informed by gendered imbrication. The "legitimation of statutory difference" upon which such rights are reckoned or stabilized "disalienates" Black issues from "women's" issues as an extension of Jane Crow and of the violence against enslaved women which Malcolm X and Harriet Jacobs had been wrestling with.

Trying to "intersect" these atomized configurations without addressing the nexus out of which the truncation thereof emerges — and the "certain economic and political realities" imbricated by that nexus — would eventually lead to Crenshaw stumbling into the same problem as other "rights" focused frameworks had. Thus, many Black feminists have taken the issues of cisgender Black women as the *primary frame of reference for their political organizing*. For example, among the Black feminist organizers that strove to deal with the carceral state during the drug war and war on crime, a focus on the configurations of embodiment being misrepresented as a "welfare queen" "single mother" "matriarchy" emerged. And this began to delimit possibilities for an "expansive" gender analysis, one that was inclusive of non-cis Black women's struggles and the oppression of queer Black folks. Ultimately, an attempt to *represent particular "intersectional" experiences within the legal system* was most important a project which would become useful for the inclusivity/diversity measures of late 20th century and early 21st century neoliberal capitalism.

Negotiating conditions of one's embodiment in a progressive "rights" focus has yielded a navel-gazing or exclusionary tendency in the Afrikan community *across* political divides, a consequence of gender imbrication. An anti-trans coalition is one of the many organizational processes that have emerged here. Whether Laetitia Ky

Valency and the Contradictions of Gender Non-Dualism

Valency, biological potentiality, the nexus hypothesis, an understanding of substructure and superstructure, sociogeny, a non-dualist view of the corporeal locus — these concepts are most suited to a transfeminist material analysis of the roles, experiences, ontologies, and kinds of embodiment in African (and non-Western) societies more broadly. And they are essential to understanding the evolution of "minor patriarchy" vis-a-vis exogenous and endogenous social forces. This can help us historicize the ways reactionary tendencies may co-occur with the subversive potentials in Black/African-led movements.

I always start with Africa because as we learn from the essay *Diversity and Identity: The Challenge of African Homosexualities* (pg. 268), Africa exhibits the world's greatest diversity of gender/sexual patterns, with some of the most notable being those which Westerners would eventually speak of as pathologies of "gender inversion." The authors identify correlations between the diverse gender/sexual patterns and every region, language, form of social organization, and subsistence practice on the Continent. The preponderance of these gender non-dualist patterns analyzed by the authors is described as follows:

> "The three most common patterns are gender-differentiated roles, age-differentiated roles, and (more or less) egalitarian or mutual relations, examples of which can be found for both males and females. (Age and gender in general are key bases for social organization, not just homosexuality, throughout Africa.) The most often reported pattern is that of a social status for males and sometimes females who engage in varying degrees of cross- and mixed-gendered behavior. It must be remembered that males who do

> Uko. Early on, she told McCall, she 'was interested in manly activities' and felt that she 'was meant to be a man' and so 'went as my nature was given to me — to behave as a man' (McCall 1996: 129). She was initiated as a woman but after being married for a time and producing no children, she was divorced. She subsequently farmed and hunted while dressed as a man, was initiated into various men's societies (including the most exclusive one), and took two wives of her own."

Nne Uko self-reports interest in "manly activities" despite being considered in terms of a womanly embodiment. The constraints on corporeal organization exerted by the Gender Dyad, Patrilineality, Seniority, and Gerontocephaly enabled alternative constructions of gender in the Ohafia Igbo context for Nne Uko to negotiate. I caution against taking these, or other accounts on face value, by the way, for we have to consider multiple factors here: the perspectives of anthropologists versus cultural insiders, neither category of which is always cut and dry. Plus, each report comes from different points in time, many of them modern, and some make more uncritical use of dimorphist sex categories than others. Further, we would have to also consider that one may attribute developments in Igbo gender/sex merely to modern influence especially as a conservative denigration, or could try to interpret these developments through the lens of modern labels such as transgender (especially as a progressive affirmation). The role of agendas is important to keep in mind. Still, even these interpretive acts, alongside the accounts of Igbo gender/sex themselves, should be viewed in light of my overall point about the construction of gender/sex: an embodied consequence of substructural and substructural developments. And once this is taken into account, we can bring clarity to descriptions of other *dike-nwami* and even *oke-nwami* in Igbo cultures.

or Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie, or several Womanist preachers, or even Dave Chappelle, a number of Afrikan people have come out in support of so-called "TERF" ideology. Each of them are part of the entertainer-artist professional and university/clergy strata which has grown immensely from equity and equality/integration/assimilation policies. When they claim that trans rights are a threat to their own "rights" this betrays a competitive orientation toward how material benefits and political power are imbricated. Competition is one of the many consequences of the hegemonic nexus, which configures how we embody the relations of the substructure and superstructure.

Related to this, in Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana, and several other African countries, anti-LGBT laws are being passed through an insistence on "family values." Local political rulers often point to the nuclear household as a flex for "cultural sovereignty." Most especially when their campaign promises have failed to ameliorate various economic troubles, they will point fingers at the existence of Western homonationalism to explain the relatively "underdeveloped" positions of their own nations. Their suggestion is that the human rights framework (especially concerning LGBT+ rights) has forced a trade off between accepting aid and other resources while relinquishing one's beliefs. This is the extent of their "anti-colonial" thought and it manifests most egregiously in claims that "homosexuality is unAfrican" or that "transgenderism is genocide."

Even then, what is at work is a twisted evolution in the history of independence struggles. Movements that had valiantly fought to overturn old colonialism, liberate their lands, and oust Western control are now led by figures who simply define what it means to be African around transphobic and homophobic policy. They are virtually silent on the fact that homonationalism is but one expression of imperialist domination; for debtedness in general, aid, NGOs, the IMF, and more all back African nations into a corner despite flag independence. But Black/African leadership conceal full extent of African history, and ultimately the truth of mod-

ern imperialism-colonialism, because of the benefits they gain as a class. There is a patriarchal imbrication of the capitalist mode of production, and of its destruction of African environments, and of its subjection of the masses to exploitation and domination to the benefit of not only the haute bourgeoisie (and labor aristocracy) of the West but the local rulers (and petit bourgeoisie as well as some rich peasants) in formerly colonized territories.

The Origins of the Patriarchal Nexus

The former Crip and New Afrikan prison revolutionary named Sanyika Shakur once articulated a theory of "grand patriarchy" that resonates with my transfeminist material analysis in many ways. Writing in "The Pathology of Patriarchy," Shakur argues that:

> "The same patriarchy which first oppressed women, (after having perfected the methods on animals) as 'inferiors,' went on to evolve into the judeo-christian and Islamic institutions or theology that have scorched the planet today. This is why in every major religion god is a he or him — Father, i.e. male (according to 'gender'). The last messenger, prophet, offspring and the last one god supposedly spoke to — yep, you guessed it, men. Coincidence? Natural? Not a chance. To make matters worse, as if patriarchy could even be content with one form of oppression, Euro-Supremacists went a step further than some unseen spirit in the sky, they painted a picture of their god-father's son in their image. They in effect became the prototype of the son of god image and thus in the direct lineage from god himself. Plato, Aristotle's teacher created the idea of the Great Chain of Being this formalized the belief of the Greeks that they ranked higher than non-Greeks, women, slaves and of course animals."

form, selecting from sex associated traits to anchor exploitation of reproductive labor visavis a nuclear household. *Nwoke* and *nwanyi* are not positioned in hierarchical and oppositional relation to each other, nor is a gender dyad mutually exclusive with other forms of sexual embodiment.

Gerontocephaly is also a relevant factor to consider here. We already established Age exhibits sociogenic valence in the substructural/superstructural nexing of embodiment for Igbo *lineal* forms. But, headship by the "elders" demonstrates combining and displacing power outside the question of lineality. Per Averill Earls:

> "There weren't many kings in Igboland at all; while West Africa was politically diverse with a range of governing structures, Igboland was largely in the 19th and early 20th centuries characterized by decentralized gerontocratic systems—that is, rule by a council of elder men." (*King Ahebi Ugbabe: Sex, Gender, and Power in Colonial Nigeria*)

Here, Igbo society, involves an ostensibly stateless formation. Rather than a formal, hierarchical system of governance such as a monarchy, decision making authority is organized vis-a-vis the elders, specifically elder men. The distribution of authority towards elder men is not biologically determined, but because of how Patrilineal and Gerontocephalous nexing interact. In moving away from biological deterministic explanation, the nexus hypothesis allows us to also make sense of reports of *female leadership* in Igboland. This phenomenon was apparently a regular (as opposed to situational) institution in the Igbo context according to Nwando Achebe's *Female Monarchs and Merchant Queens in Africa*. Furthermore, there are reports like the following (which is documented in *Woman-Woman Marriage in Africa*):

> "In Nigeria, John McCall interviewed an elderly Ohafia Igbo *dike-nwarmi* (brave-woman) named Nne

observed, but exhibits considerably gender expansive characteristics, in part because of the valency of an Age-nexus that co-occurs with Lineal nexings of embodiment. This gender non-dualism and fluidity in Nnobi-Igbo patriocephaly is present in social affairs outside of husbandry and familial headship. In the last photograph before the preface section of the book, Amadiume reports the so-called "third gender" embodiment of a priest of the goddess Idemili named Eze Agba, who "must not pass his loincloth between his legs" in a way traditionally associated with other *nwoke* (anatomical males). It is not the phenotypic traits associated with sexual reproduction being selected for in these Igbo traditions of corporeal organization.

Dyocephaly may be an applicable term here, in which "headship" over a particular set of social affairs is organized visavis a gender *pairing* as configuration of embodiment. A pairing emerges at the nexus of substructure and superstructure in a *dyadic* rather than binary unit of organization for many traditional African societies. As a dyad, this is distinct from a binary or dualism — both of which suggest opposition, hierarchy, exclusivity. When a dyad is "selected" for out of the range of available trait presentations, this can look a number of ways (in sociology, the "dyad" is the smallest organized unit of regular interactions in a societal context). In Igbo tradition, for example, spiritual roles are anchored on "headship" configured visavis certain *nwoke* embodiments, while the distribution of social surplus is anchored on "headship" configured visavis certain *nwanyi* embodiments. Thus, certain masquerades and other religious affairs are associated with *nwoke* and reserved for their participation. But, the four market days and their commercial dealings are associated with *nwanyi* and managed accordingly. This kind of dyadic configuration by "headship" over social affairs is a structural consequence of several nexuses (Gender, Age, Lineality, Spirituality) that exhibit their own degrees of valency *alongside each other* within the same geographic-cultural context. Gender here is not, as it is for patriarchy in the West, the *primary* nexing-

While not explicitly calling his thinking "transfeminist," Shakur defines Patriarchy as a "good ole boy network." He says this "network" has roots in particular patterns of ownership. These patterns include property relations that domesticated animals and subjected children and their mothers to a so-called "husband" and "father." For Shakur, this "good ole boy network" has been flexible enough to adapt itself in numerous contexts across time: ancient Greece, Abrahamic faiths, capitalism, and even in socialism. The term "Grand Patriarchy" describes how the "network" was first globalized by European colonialism and imperialism.

Sanyika Shakur's lens attends to both substructural and superstructural dynamics in the coercion of the body. It is this which enables him to have a polyvalent conception of how "different" embodiments are configured within a system of material and power relations. Having charted the "network" which "threads" those configurations to ethnoreligious supremacist civilizations, we see through Shakur's view the seeds being laid for what come to be the later "imbrication" of a colonial-imperial political order and economic mode of production, a problem that is simultaneously material and "metaphysical." Thus, he writes:

> "We focus our attention on euro-supremacy as an attendant ill/side effect of patriarchy because it was them (English, French, Spaniards, Portuguese, Dutch, Belgians etc.) who weaponized paternal relations in myriad conquests across the globe. It was the British Empire upon whom it was said 'the sun never set.' In other words, its domination was global. And it is a fact that 99% of the borders between countries, nations and states were drawn by European colonialism."

For Shakur, the construction of race and gender alike are embodied consequences of what he calls a "good ole boy network," of patriarchy. It is grand patriarchy that "threads" the social forms

which have "legitimated" the "statutory difference" of race, ability, and sex. Understanding grand patriarchy as having organized both racial, abled, and sexual embodiment in the capitalist-colonial order is aligned with transfeminist material analysis. While Sanyika Shakur does not use the term "nexus," his view is resonant in that regard. Further, Shakur begins to describe how patriarchal coercion organizes both human and non-human embodiment under capitalist industrialization:

> "there was always a symbiotic relationship of know-how used between the two areas of domestication of animals, including their mass killing for capitalist markets and the mass production of commodities, such as cars, in the development of capitalist industry."

The emphasis on "know-how" that involves animal domestication and class exploitation lines up with my attention to how the nexus of substructure and superstructure organizes aspects of the biological-abiotic locus. For Shakur, corporeal organization — the locus of the biological and abiotic interactions — is structured by a "network" that must be described as patriarchal. To illustrate this, Sanyika Shakur cites *Man and the Natural World: A History of the Modern Sensibility* by Keith Thomas:

> "In his autobiography My life and Work (1922) Henry Ford revealed that his inspiration for assembly-line production came from a visit he made as a young man to a Chicago slaughterhouse. 'I believe that this was the first moving line ever installed,' he wrote, 'The idea [of the assembly line] came in a general way from the overhead trolley that the Chicago packers use in dressing beef.'"

Here, Sanyika Shakur connects capitalism, patriarchy, ecological questions, and colonialism. The production process,

not determine the embodied configurations at hand. This is a consequence of how either the person at the head of the patriline, or their eldest child, is positioned with a more significant degree of status, authority, etc regardless of anatomy or gender. We could arguably speak of this as "patriocephaly" (agnatic headship). The substructural/superstructural nexing-form at work concerns Lineality and Age. The relative sexual fluidity in a patriocephalous set of configurations is an embodied consequence of how, on one hand, Age and Lineality co-occur as nexuses — but on the other Seniority exhibits more sociogenic valence than does Lineality. This is a well established pattern detected in the production and reproduction of quite a few West African societies. Oyeronke Oyewumi writes on this pattern:

> "Social anthropologist Ifi Amadiume writes about male daughters, female husbands, and the institution of woman marriage in Igbo society (Amadiume 1987) These conceptions confound the Western mind and therefore should not be imprisoned by the feminist framework." (*Conceptualizing Gender: The Eurocentric Foundations of Feminist Concepts and the Challenge of African Epistemologies*)

Oyeronke Oyewumi's essay makes a critique of the idea that all so-called anatomical females are universally gendered as women, and that such a gendered nexing is ad hoc configured in an oppositional and hierarchical format. This is a false universalist conception which does not speak to all realities, including the Nnobi-Igbo context of Ifi Amadiume's consideration. In the text *Male Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society*, Amadiume insists that "husbandry" in Igboland is a gender non-dualist affair, even if in a patrilineal context. One embodied consequence of this is not just the appearance of female headship, but also of marriage between *nwanyi* (anatomical females). Patriocephaly is

nating in the imbrication of the dominant mode of production and patterns of social reproduction) whereby the "sexual division" organizes socio-ecological relations. In this way, dualism can be reframed as but one subset of biologically potentiated trait expressions "selected" for artificially with regards to the "valency" of sociogenic forms at the "nexus" of substructure and superstructure. Essentially we do not necessarily have to organize the corporeal locus in that binary manner: so there must be views of biological-abiotic organization in other contexts. Here is how I hypothesize that there are non-hegemonic "nexuses," each with their own degrees of valence, that allow for non-dualist configurations of embodiment even despite the exogenous forces of the Grand Patriarchy.

Looking at Africa, for example, Joseph M Carrier and Stephen O Murray report scholarship on the uneven valence of Seniority even when it comes to husbandry among Yoruba as well as other contexts. In their essay *Woman-Woman Marriage in Africa*, they report that:

> "In her survey of the status of women, Niara Sudarkasa argues that there is a general de-emphasis on gender in 'traditional' African societies and a corresponding emphasis on status ('personal standing'), which is usually, but not always, determined by wealth (Sudarkasa 1986: 97). Robertson also argues that age and lineage override gender in traditional African societies (1987: 111), while Matory distinguishes 'gender' from 'sex' and stresses (in reference to the Yoruba) that 'far stronger than the ideology of male superiority to the female is the ideology of senior's superiority to junior' (1994: 108)" (*Boy Wives, Female Husbands: Studies in African Homosexualities*)

In these particular settings, the "gender" of the so-called "female" patrilineal head isn't clear. So-called anatomical sex does

accumulation of labor power, expropriation of value, alongside exploitation of animals are interpenetrated at the "nexus" of embodied coercions. In this way the biological-abiotic locus is organized, for Shakur, by social forms at a substructural and superstructural "nexus" — patriarchal forms, a "network" in his terms. Importantly, the "threads" configure human and non-human embodiment through concrete strategies:

> "… the same techniques used to domesticate animals were also used in the colonization of women and children and eventually every culture they encountered. Breeding, birth control, castration, segregation, exploitation, and mass murder were methods learned first on animals and then on humans."

For Shakur, patriarchal coercive *techniques and strategies* encompass various carceral, fascistic, disabling, and ultimately domesticating technologies that evolved over time. It is this which entrenches the configurations of embodiment most profitable to exploitation and domination in a racial capitalist society. The "network" structures how populations and individuals negotiate the organization and disorganization of the traits and features in their biological and abiotic environment. And thus, we start to observe the imbrication of State power and material relations at a substructural and superstructural "nexus."

Additionally, according to Sanyika Shakur, the oppressed themselves can become invested in the "ties that bind which keep the masses tethered to the machine." Sanyika Shakur uses the term "Minor Patriarchy" to describe how the hegemonic substructural/superstructural nexus evolves among those who became colonial subjects. He traces this to the manner by which such populations became "dependent" on Western empire. His definition of this network, importantly, is gender expansive:

> "Women tell their sons to 'be the man of the house.' Men tell their wives to 'stay in a woman's place.' Men who show emotions are said to be 'acting like little girls.' Women who exert themselves as humans are called 'dykes and bulldaggers or butch.' Violence is masculinized and passivity is feminized. This is so because patriarchy has created two exclusive genders. Two neat little boxes to insert all of humanity."

The nexus of a "minor patriarchy" emerges visavis the material and power relations of subjugated nations and peoples. Through binary-conjugal-familial truncation, those most affected by in-home and outside-home oppression may still find themselves replicating patriarchal ideologies and practice. I already went over how this might occur even despite the subversive potentials in forms of resistance by Harriet Jacobs, Malcolm, X, Frantz Fanon, George Jackson, civil rights struggles, or legal analytic Black feminism. The contradiction has wide-ranging implications; even among some who claim affiliation with the New Afrikan Independence Movement and Republic of New Afrika itself, there are non-leftist actors who believe in capitalist development for a decolonial struggle. And for these, the national struggle's pursuit of State sovereignty rests on the binary-conjugal-family unit, i.e. the imbrication of Minor Patriarchy.

Outside of these movements, there are self-described Pan Africanists like Umar Johnson who find that Black entrepreneurship and the nuclear family alike are key to liberation and national "self-determination." For Johnson in particular, alternative substructural/superstructural "nexings" of embodiment are so untenable that he villainizes LGBT+ identities as being on par with genocide of the Black "race." Furthermore, just like Moynihan, he suggests that paternal absenteeism and matriocephaly (female headship) are the cause of Black subjugation in the US. Johnson demonstrates an alignment with the pathologization of social

cially for aspects of the internal and external environment deemed most relevant to the homeostasis of the now socialized corporeal locus. I see the sociogenic principle as emerging at a higher level of complexity with regards to a phenomenon in which every organism "meets" endogenous and exogenous features of the environment "as information" (to borrow a phrase from Lewontin et. al 1985, *The Dialectical Biologist*). At a lower level of complexity, no organism can realistically be "exposed to all possible combinations" (pg 53) of those endogenous and exogenous features of the environment, and must instead "use some conditions" as indicators and predictors of other conditions, or of their frequencies and durations of occurrence.

The *asociogenic* view makes a logical leap from the lower-level observation, however, to assert a linear-causal relationship between traits associated with biological reproduction and the organization of early human subsistence patterns ("hunting and gathering"). For this reason, male-female dualism is framed as the foundation upon which all later structures of biological-abiotic organization were established. But, according to a recent ethnographic study, looking at present-day foraging societies, and building on past archaeological evidence, one should question this "paradigm" about the "sexual division of labor" (Anderson, et. al 2023, *The Myth of Man the Hunter*). The false universalization of that paradigm in modernity is a consequence of the Grand Patriarchy. The valency in that case has roots in the particulars of the binary-conjugal-familial unit in some societies where husbandry divided populations vis-a-vis control over domestic affairs and property. It was then structurally rearticulated through global coloniality.

And so, the superficially bimodal distribution of sex-associated traits may be expressed in terms of a "binary" organization of social embodiment in one or a few societies. But, if sociogenic valence is how a "nexus" of substructure and superstructure emerges, then it is only a *hegemonic* system of material/power relations (culmi-

"natural fact" known as sexual dimorphism (biology in "two forms"). It's a circular logic: humans are "socialized," according to TERFs into rigid categories of Man and Woman, so gender isn't natural; and yet that "socialization" is because of the dualist composition of traits in human biology according to TERFs, so gender is natural. In this way, behaviors that organize anatomical "difference" within the substructure and superstructure are already predetermined by nature. Whereas, from a dialectical perspective, the substructural/superstructural "nexing" of the corporeal (biological-abiotic) locus anchors selective constraints on biologically *potentiated* expression, with a range of embodied consequences that are not predetermined.

The term I use to describe those forces of artificial selection is "valency." In chemistry, valency refers to the combining or displacing power of an atom. The valence of an element determines the number of other atoms with which the atoms of an element can or cannot combine. Valence in my theory of imbrication has to do with the role a "nexus" plays in the substructural/substructural organization of the biological-abiotic environment (corporeal locus). Drawing from Sylvia Wynter, I recognize that our tendency towards reorganizing and disorganizing features of the organic and inorganic environment meant our evolutionary construction underwent selective pressures from not only its conditions of possibility but the embodied consequences of said conditions. Thus, it has been observed in the archeological record an inherently cultural nature of our biological/ecological development going back to our earliest anatomical ancestors, where areas of the brain associated with tool use and areas of the brain associated with language seem to have developed simultaneously (de Leon, et. al 2021, *The Primitive Brain of Early Homo*).

This is essentially what Wynter speaks of as a sociogenic principle. It means that cultural self-concept is interpenetrated with what Wynter describes as a "neurochemical behavior-regulatory mechanism." It is this which constrains trait expression, "selecting" artifi-

"others" associated with "atypical" family configurations. Umar even advocates for the fascistic repression of threats to the stasis of bourgeois property/labor relations, and an overall insistence on the process of production and reproduction central to the capitalist expropriation of value — all because of how he upholds the Minor Patriarchy.

Outside him, in the general population, there are many Black individuals who seek advancement within "business" ventures. They typically align with either the Democrats or the Republicans, but despite seemingly opposed political affiliations, they unite against the possibility of other "nexuses" within the corporeal (biological-abiotic) organization of human life/activity. Thus, they represent in their own ways the Minor Patriarchy. Among these is a constellation of populist or "anti-establishment" milieus — focused on entrepreneurship, "chasing the bag" through the entertainment industry or even underground economies, and a corporatized "self-help" ethos pushed by prosperity gospel ministers and unscientific wellness/fitness influencers — that each have bourgeois class interests and counterrevolutionary ideological affiliations.

On account of their material pursuits, they support either in thought or deed the coercive technologies of in-home exploitation and outside-home domination. They esteem the notion of women's submission as "divine femininity" and of men's lordship as "divine masculinity"; they pathologize women who don't "submit" and men who do not lord themselves as operating outside of "feminine energy" or outside of "masculine energy." Both characterizations portray an imbrication of certain binary-conjugal-nuclear household relations, involving family and finances, and a vision of positive socio-economic outcomes: all of which are viewed as key to transcending Black people's disproportionately negative standing in the dominant order.

On a global level, this is observed too, as the leadership of formerly colonized and presently "underdeveloped" territories tries to catch up to, rival, or successfully compete within capitalist pro-

duction. Wherever a sovereignty tries to achieve "development" of its industries on par with the West in this manner, there you will see the imbrication of Minor Patriarchy. Hence, for example, the stimulation of Ghana's tourism industry around the "Year of Return" has since co-occurred with developments in local anti-LGBT repression and sexual exploitation of women and young girls. Further, non-Western capitalist rulers have encroached upon African lands (on the instance that they do not emerge from among local strata), or have established relations of exploitation and domination elsewhere, with child exploitation and sexual violence never too far from the resultant zones of extraction, touristic hubs, factories and farms, and contested regions.

But it is not enough to examine how the *exogenous* forces yielding "grand patriarchy" structure these reactionary tendencies in colonized people's nations. The transfeminist material analytic has to illuminate the *endogenous* dynamics that yield the "minor patriarchy" within oppressed peoples' embodied negotiation of material and power relations. Here is where my thinking departs from that of Sanyika Shakur. Exogenous is a scientific term that refers to when something is introduced from *outside* an organism, or *external* to a system of interactions. Endogenous is a scientific term that refers to when something develops or has origins *internal* to an organism, or *inside* a system of interactions. I borrow these terms from transgender healthcare. They are typically used when speaking of the hormones that are produced within the body (endogenous) and the hormones a person introduces to their body through remediation therapy (exogenous). I apply them to a non-dualist intervention within Black radical, Marxist, and feminist insights.

For me, the same scientific principles that explain how individuals and populations artificially select what is relevant about endogenous and exogenous hormones can be articulated at a higher level of complexity when looking at substructural and superstructural "nexing" of embodiment. In the former case, which is a lower level of complexity, individuals can negotiate

the interpenetration of endogenous hormone and exogenous hormone, thus co-constructing what traits are relevant to their embodiment. In the latter case, which is a higher level of complexity, populations must negotiate substructural/superstructural nexuses endogenous to precapitalist and precolonial societies as with the exogenously imposed modern substructural/superstructural nexus under capitalism-colonialism. And this is how material and power relations impose "selective" constraints on the configurations of the body that are available. *Social constructs are, in this way, biologically potentiated, not biologically-reduced.*

Biological potentiality is a scientific concept from Stephen Jay Gould. He describes it as an understanding of "a brain capable of the full range of human behaviors and predisposed towards none." Gould sought to challenge the idea of "biological determinism," which he describes as having "always been used to defend existing social arrangements as biologically inevitable." In his argument for biological potentiality, Gould looks at a range of human behavioral traits, describing them as a "subset" of what is "possible."

Biological potentiality does not mean there are *infinite* potentials contained in the genome, which the individual has determination over as something to personally unlock or unleash. That is a pseudo-Lamarckian view of epigenetic development pushed by the likes of Jordan Peterson. For Gould, the "influence" of each phenotypic "subset" would "increase" if *structures* are created to "permit them to flourish." Therefore, in Gouldian biology, which he offers as a complement to the *Darwinian* view of descent by modification, social structure exists in dialectic with biological potentiality, enabling an artificial selection from among the available range of human trait presentations.

An undialectical view of biology, however, such as the one pushed by TERFs, will acknowledge that gender is socially constructed, but still define gender in a bioreductive manner. The TERF insists that the experience of gender — in all its diversity and variation — will never not be a function of the underlying