

## 2 UNPARALLELED CATASTROPHE FOR OUR SPECIES?

Or, to Give Humanness a Different Future: Conversations

**Katherine McKittrick:** These conversations began in 2007. Since that time, a series of ideas and exchanges have taken place and unfolded into ongoing discussions about humanism, monohumanism, natural scarcity, genetic codes, race, location, and more. This document archives the key ideas that arose through what was originally, in 2007, an “interview” while also assembling, around and through these ideas, the call-and-response conversations between Wynter and McKittrick that have taken place since.<sup>1</sup> The call-and-response has been textual, telephonic, computerized, and musical—with one document repurposing and mashing up the breaking of the levees and geographies of the Ninth Ward with the 2007 “interview” archives, Kansas Joe McCoy and Memphis Minnie, the Detroit electronica band Drexciya, and others.<sup>2</sup> The narratives here, though, in text form, are conversations that draw specific attention to Sylvia Wynter’s ongoing concerns about the ways in which the figure of the human is tied to epistemological histories that presently value a *genre* of the human that reifies Western bourgeois tenets; the human is therefore wrought with physiological and narrative matters that systemically excise the world’s most marginalized. Here, her comprehensive knowledge of arts, letters, history, geography, science, and nature comes together—in relation to different times and spaces—and provides a meaningful pathway to dwell on what means to be human and, more important, how we might give humanness a different future.

This conversation should be read with Wynter’s earlier work in mind. Her writings on the overrepresentation of Man and her conceptualization of Man<sub>1</sub> and Man<sub>2</sub>, which are explored throughout her writings and in the essays collected here, inform much of what is put forth below.<sup>3</sup> The human,

in Wynter's writings, is representatively linked to the figure of Man<sub>1</sub> (invented by the Renaissance's *studia humanitatis* as *homo politicus* and therefore differentiated but not wholly separate from the *homo religiosus* conception of human) that was tethered to the theological order of knowledge of pre-Renaissance Latin-Christian medieval Europe; this figure opened up a slot for Man<sub>2</sub>, a figure based on the Western bourgeoisie's model of being human that has been articulated as, since the latter half of the nineteenth century, liberal monohumanism's *homo oeconomicus*.<sup>4</sup> These figures, both Man<sub>1</sub> and Man<sub>2</sub>, are also inflected by powerful knowledge systems and origin stories that explain who/what we are. These systems and stories produce the lived and racialized categories of the rational and irrational, the selected and the dysselected, the haves and the have-nots as asymmetrical naturalized racial-sexual human groupings that are specific to time, place, and personhood yet signal the processes through which the empirical and experiential lives of *all* humans are increasingly subordinated to a figure that thrives on accumulation.

Added to this, Wynter thinks about the neurological responses that such figures induce: with our biblical and Darwinian origin stories in mind, she locates how the human remains beholden to these pervasive knowledge systems. Thus our postbiblical origin stories might also be described as *macro-origin* stories—as they are tightly knitted to the figures of Man<sub>1</sub> and Man<sub>2</sub> and consequently function to semantically activate the endogenous opiate reward-and-punishment system of the human brain.<sup>5</sup> The paradoxical way in which *race*—as the naturalized and secular organizing principle of those global relations that are wedded to the Darwinian/Malthusian macro-origin stories that iterate and normalize *homo oeconomicus*—will continue, too, to cast an apocalyptic shadow on any possibility of our thereby *just*, existence as a species. We presently live in a moment where the human is understood as a purely biological mechanism that is subordinated to a teleological economic script that governs our global well-being/ill-being—a script, therefore, whose macro-origin story calcifies the *hero figure* of *homo oeconomicus* who practices, indeed normalizes, accumulation in the name of (economic) freedom. Capital is thus projected as the indispensable, empirical, and metaphysical source of all human life, thus semantically activating the neurochemistry of our brain's opiate reward/punishment system to act accordingly!

Sylvia Wynter offers a different origin narrative possibility. Extending Frantz Fanon's new descriptive statement, which redefines our being hu-

man in both meta-Freudian and meta-Darwinian terms, she offers an ecumenically human (origin) story. Specifically, she works through the ways in which Fanon's concept of sociogeny (our codes or masks or *mythoi* or origin narratives) is *linked in semantically activating causal terms*, with the *bios* phenomena of phylogeny/ontogeny.<sup>6</sup> Our *mythoi*, our origin stories, are therefore always formulaically patterned so as to co-function with the endogenous neurochemical behavior regulatory system of our human brain. Humans are, then, a biomutationally evolved, hybrid species—*storytellers who now storytellingly invent themselves as being purely biological*. With this, particular (presently biocentric) macro-origin stories are overrepresented as the singular narrative through which the stakes of human freedom are articulated and marked.<sup>7</sup> Our contemporary moment thus demands a normalized origin narrative of survival-through-ever-increasing-processes-of-consumption-and-accumulation. This is reinforced by the epistemological elaboration of a story line—here we should be mindful of the disciplinary discourses of natural scarcity, the bell curve, and so forth, together with the “planet of slums” reality that is before us—which is nevertheless *made to appear, in commonsense terms*, as being *naturally* determined.<sup>8</sup> This commonsense naturalized story is cast as the only *possible* realization of the way the world must be, and “is.”

Working alongside W. E. B. DuBois, C. L. R. James, Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, and Elsa Goveia, among others, Wynter dedicates her own past and still ongoing work to the furthering of the “gaze from below” emancipatory legacy. This legacy had been born out of the overall global range of anticolonial and antiapartheid struggles against the overtly imperial and colonial liberal monohumanist premises. Those struggles were to eventually fail; *politically independent* nation-states came to be epistemologically co-opted and globally reincorporated into the Western world system—a system that is now in its postcolonial, postapartheid but still liberal (or now neoliberal) monohumanist symbolically encoded configuration. Because her ongoing work still strives, as her earlier work had done, to fully realize that emancipatory legacy by putting forward an alternative, *yet no less secular*, version of humanness imagined outside liberal monohumanism, her overall project can be identified as that of a *counterhumanism*—one now ecumenically “made to the measure of the world.”<sup>9</sup>

Some preparatory remarks on the document that follows: The discussion is framed by four guide quotes, which, ideally, the reader will keep in mind throughout. The guide quotes are followed by the larger textual

document—the conversations. The conversations are divided into sections that the reader can study in order, out of order, separately, or all together. Each section includes a heading and a very short preamble by McKittrick, which leads into the subsequent insights by Wynter. The entire document reflects the questions from the original 2007 conversation, parts of that conversation that have not been reproduced, verbatim, here, and the call-and-response pattern mentioned above. This is to say that the headings, preambles, and insights are anchored to Wynter’s ideas and were generated through what I can only describe as a broader conversational praxis. The endnotes—in the spirit of Wynter and others—draw attention to those areas of the conversations that have been omitted in the text but are relevant to thematic concerns and, perhaps more important, will encourage further explorations of narratives that think through and across humanness, location, and knowledge.<sup>10</sup>

### Guide Quotes

We know that when we talk about the processes of civilization, or evaluate human behavior, human organization, or any biological system, *we are concerned with self-corrective systems*. Basically these systems are always *conservative* of something. As in the engine with a governor, the fuel supply is changed to conserve—to keep constant—the speed of the flywheel, so always in such systems changes occur to conserve the truth of some descriptive statement, some component of the *status quo* . . . fundamentally, we deal with three of these enormously complex systems or arrangements of conservative loops. One is the human individual. Its physiology and neurology conserve body temperature, blood chemistry, the length and size and shape of organs during growth and embryology, and all the rest of the body’s characteristics. This is a system which conserves descriptive statements about the human being, body or soul. For the same is true of the psychology of the individual, *where learning occurs to conserve the opinions and components of the status quo* . . . Second, we deal with the society in which that individual lives—and that society is again a system of the same general kind. . . . And third, we deal with the ecosystem, the natural biological surroundings of these human animals.

—Gregory Bateson, “Conscious Purpose versus Nature” (emphasis added)<sup>11</sup>

How was *Homo oeconomicus* foisted on us? In spite of his elegant foreign name, he is selfish and unmannered, *brutish as Caliban, naïve as Man Friday*. We all love to speak scathingly of him. Judging from the bad press he receives, we actually

dislike him a lot and cannot believe anyone *could really be so greedy and selfish. He is logical*, but even that is unattractive. His shadow stretches across our thoughts so effectively that *we even use his language for criticizing him*. . . . Our subject is about his origins: *Where did someone without social attributes come from in the first place*, and why has he expanded from a small, theoretical niche to become an all-embracing mythological figure . . . like a *republican parallel to the imperial microcosm of former civilizations?*

—Mary Douglas and Steven Ney, *Missing Persons* (emphasis added)

What if we did not know where we are and who we are? What if all previous answers to the question of who we are were merely based upon the application of an answer given long ago, an answer that does not correspond to what is perhaps asked in the question *now touched upon of who we are?* For we do not now ask about ourselves “as human,” assuming we understand this name in its traditional meaning. According to this meaning, man is a kind of “organism” (animal), that exists among others on the inhabited earth and in the universe. We know this organism, *especially since we ourselves are of this type*. There is a whole contingent of “sciences” that give information about this organism—named man—and we collect them together under the name “anthropology.”

—Martin Heidegger, *Basic Concepts* (emphasis added)

What is by common consent called the human sciences have their own drama. . . . All these discoveries, all these inquiries lead only in one direction: to make man admit that he is nothing, absolutely nothing—and that he must put an end to the narcissism on which he relies in order to imagine that he is different from the other “animals.” . . . This amounts to nothing more nor less than man’s surrender. . . . Having reflected on that, I grasp my narcissism with both hands and I turn my back on the degradation of those who would make man a mere [biological] mechanism. . . . And truly what is to be done is to set man free.

—Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

### **Toward the Counterauthority of a New Science in the Global Context of Our Contemporary Crisis-Ridden Times**

**Katherine McKittrick:** In the following, Wynter sets out her project, delineating the ways in which the Copernican leap was to be iconic of the Renaissance transformative mutation. She outlines how the redefinition of the meaning of being human during this epoch, within the overall context of a *studia humanitatis* order of knowledge, was being effected, for the first time, in implicitly desupernaturalizing terms. The premise of this counterpoetics,

initially realized by Copernicus's new astronomy, later came to be developed as the physical sciences together with their uniquely new self-correcting mode of cognition. This was followed by a redefined purely secular liberal monohumanist figure that enacts, presently, the hegemonically bourgeois *homo oeconomicus* "descriptive statement" of being human: *pari passu* with the rise and development from the late nineteenth century onward of the Darwinian / neo-Darwinian biological sciences that now underwrite our contemporary epistemological order.<sup>12</sup>

**Sylvia Wynter:** What I'm going to propose is that we are now challenged with envisioning a new "science of the Word," which I take from Aimé Césaire.<sup>13</sup> This challenge can be likened to that made by Copernicus when he declared that, while it may *seem* absurd, the Earth indeed also moves! Then Galileo tried to support this view, and he was imprisoned by the Inquisition and had to recant specifically that the Earth indeed does not move. Yet of course, the Earth *does* move. Yet, the premise that the Earth did not move was very central to the form of Christian theology that was hegemonic at the time. Thus, as the famous Cardinal Bellarmine—in the later context of Galileo's heresy trial for his defense of Copernicus's thesis—said: if the Earth moves, it would vitiate our entire plan of salvation.<sup>14</sup> Thus the context of that history demonstrates that, within that theologically absolute system of knowledge, the Earth was supposed to be *fixed* at the center of the universe, as the divinely condemned abode of post-Adamic fallen man. Now, many bourgeois scholars keep saying: Oh, Copernicus took man away from the center, thereby *devalorizing* the human. But they are liberal scholars, right? They see the world *biocentrically*. And they do not understand that, seen *theocentrically*—as would have been the case then—to *be at the center was to be at the dregs of the universe*. The center was then the *most degraded* place to be! So when Copernicus says that the Earth also moves, he is *revalorizing* the Earth. With his challenge, what now has to be recognized is that since the Earth also moves, *and is therefore a star like any other*, it also has to be, over against the traditional astronomy, *of the same homogeneous physical substance as the heavenly bodies*! But he's *also* changing the center to the Sun—and instead of the center being a degraded place, it's now an exalted place.<sup>15</sup> So unless we move out of the liberal monohumanist mindset, it's very difficult to see where we've been, where we're going. Once the Earth had been proved to move, medieval Latin-Christian Europe's then hegemonic theologically absolute worldview had begun to come to an end.

Let us say if you were a Christian subject—now you and I, we don't feel the Earth to move, right? But we take it for granted that the natural scientists are right when they tell us it moves. But for those inhabiting the medieval order of Copernicus's time, when they didn't feel the Earth to move, they would say: ah, I am sinful because Adam and Eve fell and this Earth, divinely condemned to be nonmoving, is justly my abode. If the Earth moved, the theo-Scholastic order of knowledge would have to go. It disappeared.

Copernicus's proposed new astronomy fundamentally breached what was, at that time, the still hegemonic and theologically absolute Scholastic order of knowledge. At the same time, the lay or largely secular scholars—the humanists—projected *studia humanitatis*, which had also come to counterpose itself against that of the theologically absolute order of knowledge together with the overall vertically caste-stratified hierarchical order of medieval Latin-Christian Europe; this was a legitimated order of knowledge wherein a vertically hierarchical order was dominated *spiritually* and *epistemologically* by the church and its celibate clergy. Thus, as an imperative function of the above, *before* the challenge of Copernicus's new astronomy, the hierarchies of the order of late Latin-Christian medieval Europe, the latter in both its spiritual (i.e., sexually celibate) and profane (i.e., sexually non-celibate) clergy/laity forms, had anchored itself on, inter alia, an orthodox Ptolemaic astronomy, for which the cosmos had continued to be defined by a projected fundamental (Heaven/Earth) divide. While this millennially held tradition of knowing the macrocosmos and, co-relatedly, the role allocations of the respective microcosmoi of all societal orders in analogically reinforcing or *mirroring* terms, had logically led, at its Ptolemaic best, to a technically proficient yet at the same time epistemologically resigned astronomy.<sup>16</sup> An astronomy and ordering that, although theologically elaborated in then Latin Christianity's monotheistic Heaven/Earth divide terms, had hitherto remained unchallengeable, reaching all the way back as it did, to Greek astronomy (and there evidencing, if philosophically elaborated, the no less fundamental macrocosmic Form/Matter divide).

Copernicus's epochal breaching of the Heaven/Earth divide was only to be made possible during the Renaissance, first, in generic terms, by the revalorizing/reinvention of Latin-Christian medieval Europe's *homo religiosus Adamic fallen Man* as *homo politicus*, a figure now self-governed by its/his reason, articulated as reasons of state. This was a newly invented Renaissance humanist counterpoetics that was projected over and against the Absolute and conceptually all-powerful, *uncaring* and arbitrary God of the

church's then late-medieval orthodox theology. In the terms of the latter's counterpoetics, therefore, the relation was now renarrated as one between the traditional biblical Christian God and a mankind *for whose sake* (*propter nos homines*), rather than merely *for the sake* of his own glory (as the then nominalist orthodox theology held), he had indeed *created the Universe*.<sup>17</sup> And he, as Copernicus was to centrally argue, as "the best and most systematic artisan of all," would *have had to have created* the universe's "world machine" according to rules that made it *law-likely* knowable by the human reason of those creatures *for whose sake* he had done so.<sup>18</sup>

The result was that Copernicus's new (1543) astronomy would, over several centuries and with further development by other scholars, come to be fully realized as a uniquely new and *cognitively open*—because, normally, *imperatively self-correcting*—order of knowledge, just as that of the physical sciences. That premise was therefore to also open up a generalized *natural scientific* conceptual space. This conceptual space provided a context for the biological sciences of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries to become increasingly institutionalized. This conceptual space, then, was therefore to make possible Darwin's epistemological rupture or leap—that is, its far-reaching challenge to Christianity's biblical macro-origin story's theocosmogonically projected divinely created divide between an ostensibly generically Christian mankind, on the one hand, and all other species, on the other. These natural (biological) sciences, however—as they too function, for the main part, in cognitively open and self-correcting terms—must be taken into account with the aporia of their now globally hegemonic Janus-faced *purely biocentric* version of humanness.

The Renaissance humanist mutation and resulting eventual disappearance of the theo-Scholastic order of knowledge reveal that our own now purely secular and purely biocentric order of knowledge can also cease to exist; we see an analogical challenge to that advanced by Copernicus when he challenged the order of knowledge of his time. What I'm putting forward as a challenge here, as a wager, is therefore that the human is, meta-Darwinianly, a hybrid being, both *bios* and *logos* (or, as I have recently come to redefine it, *bios* and *mythoi*). Or, as Fanon says, phylogeny, ontogeny, and sociogeny, *together, define what it is to be human*. With this hypothesis, should it prove to be true, our system of knowledge as we have it *now*, goes. Because our present system of knowledge is based on the premise that the human is, like all purely biological species, a natural organism; or, the human is defined biocentrically and therefore exists, as such, in a relationship



of pure continuity with all other living beings (rather than in one of both continuity and discontinuity).<sup>19</sup> So, if the biocentrists are right, then everything I'm saying is wrong; but, if I am right, I cannot expect them to accept it easily. For our entire order of secular knowledge/truth, as it has to do with *ourselves*, is devastated if we are hybrid beings! If humans are conceptualized as hybrid beings, you can no longer classify human individuals, as well as human groups, as *naturally selected* (i.e., eugenic) and *naturally dysselected* (i.e., dysgenic) beings. This goes away. It is no longer meaningful. So I have to be realistic and say how can I expect people whose *discipline is their identity* to accept this hybrid model? When what they/we are being faced with is the total removal of their discipline as an autonomous field of inquiry? But then think of the dazzling creativity of the alternative challenge that would be opened up!

So if you are an economist, for example—and I'm anticipating myself here—instead of economics as a behavior-regulatory order of discourse that is, how shall I say, *indispensable to the replication of our present economically homogenized world-systemic order*, you remake it instead into a *science of all genre-specific human modes of material provisioning*, this including our contemporary own. How are these past and present economies understood when seen from a post-*homo oeconomicus* perspective? This is going to be related in a sense to what you call geography. But then geography will not exist as a discipline *by itself* anymore. A part of it will be physical geography—what was the Earth like before we came on the scene, even before any living beings came? And then, as all forms of biological life exploded, how did our later auto-instituting of ourselves as uniquely hybrid living beings bring this new form of specifically humanized geography into being? But geography will no longer be an *in-itself*; geography also becomes part of the study of our planet's overall self-organizing environmental-ecological system.

Now what I'm saying has to do with many of the papers and essays you have read. But what I'm saying also goes beyond those papers in order to attempt to make it all more hearable. Therefore, in what we'll be talking about, I'll be bringing in points that are coming from a book I have been working on. The first part of its title—"In the Great Silence of Scientific Knowledge"—is taken from Aimé Césaire, from "Poetry and Knowledge," a talk he gave at a 1946 conference in Haiti. He proposed that as brilliant as the feats of the natural sciences are, they themselves are half starved—because they cannot deal with our human predicament.<sup>20</sup> He then puts forth the idea of a new science, a hybrid science: a science of the Word. This idea is one in

which the study of the Word (the *mythoi*) will condition the study of nature (the *bios*). What my work has led me to think about is that—like Cardinal Bellarmine, who had opposed theologically any suggestion that the Earth also moved—we are, collectively, in a similar situation. Specifically, we are stuck, committed to our now secular, no longer theocentric but no less absolute biocentric premise, that the human is also a purely natural organism, like any other. What I have been attempting to put forward on the basis of Césaire’s proposed new science will therefore necessarily call for a rewriting of our present now globally institutionalized order of knowledge.

What I’ve been struggling with and working on, then, is to come up with a way of getting the above across, without falling into the traps laid down by our present system of knowledge, which means that I am often afraid that I will not be able to get it all across, and that’s why I was so delighted by your book. In *Demonic Grounds* you are extending—you’ve caught what I am struggling to say—and you’re making it become your own, argued in your terms.<sup>21</sup> And I know that that’s how it’s going to be, because the struggle we are confronted with cannot be in any way a one-person task. We must now collectively undertake a rewriting of knowledge as we know it. This is a rewriting in which, inter alia, I want the West to recognize the dimensions of what it has brought into the world—this with respect to, inter alia, our now purely naturalized modes or genres of humanness. You see? Because the West *did* change the world, *totally*. And I want to suggest that it is *that* change that has now made our own proposed far-reaching changes *now* as imperative as they are inevitable. As Einstein said, once physical scientists had split the atom, if we continue with our old way of thinking—the pre-nuclear way of thinking—we drift as a species toward an unparalleled catastrophe.<sup>22</sup>

**White Radiance/Aesthetic Normalcy and the Teleology of Our  
Ostensibly Ecumenically Human Development: The Genre-Specific/  
Culture-Specific Objective Truths of Economic Development**

**KM:** The enactment of our present biocentric descriptive statement (and thus its eugenic and dysgenic sociogenic codes of symbolic life and death) is linked to the law-like normalization of the corporeal features of Western Europeans in their now ethno-class bourgeois aesthetic configuration. This normalization is most strikingly evident in the consumer marketing of skin-bleaching creams and cosmetic surgery, as well as by the proposed mainline genetic engineering of designer babies. Such techniques and procedures

prescriptively imply that all humans, globally, be corporeally and aesthetically homogenized according to a single genre-specific (ethno-class) Western European model.<sup>23</sup> This model, of course, must be understood against and with the range of our incomplete postcolonial, postapartheid, post-1960s “politics of identity/identity politics” emancipatory struggles and, therefore, the now incomplete (and paradoxical reversal of the) “beautification” in bourgeois-consumer terms of, most markedly, blackness. The failure and eventual co-optation of these struggles are not, as we know, limited to the corporeal. They reflect, instead, the emergence of a global free-market-driven and consumer-oriented mimetic desire that is anchored to a single genre-specific Western European bourgeois model of being that is, itself, projected onto, and incorporates, all those who belong to the now globally economically Westernized middle classes; their working classes; and their criminalized and jobless underclasses. This then reifies an ostensibly *humanly normative* social category: *homo oeconomicus* (the virtuous breadwinner, the stable job holder, the taxpayer, the savvy investor, the master of natural scarcity).<sup>24</sup> This figure also unveils, Wynter explains, the *symbolic death* of the denizens of the “planet of slums” just as it uncovers the teleological underpinnings of the story-lie of ostensibly human development, as well as the reality of climate change/instability, to which, inter alia, it gives rise.<sup>25</sup>

**SW:** There are two contemporary issues that make this project urgent for me. One of them is a small-scale issue, although its implications are not. The Jamaican health minister—I think it was in February [2007]—announced that they were putting a ban on the sale of skin-whitening cream by unlicensed vendors because they were selling cheaper versions, which were harmful.<sup>26</sup> It turned out that all across the country, men and women are using these skin-whitening creams. At the same time, in several newspaper articles, you see that the same thing is going on in Asia. And you find that many of these women’s faces are now blotched, especially the poorer women. And Olay, for example, is turning out products like White Radiance. In the United States, a \$15 billion-a-year plastic surgery industry flourishes. Its clients include everybody—whites themselves but, of course, many many blacks and many nonwhites, too: those who don’t look sufficiently like the Western bourgeoisie’s projected Grecian norm of being and of beauty. Think of the systemically induced self-aversive plastic-surgical mutilation tragedy of the brilliantly gifted Michael Jackson! James Watson, one of the two techno-scientists whose feat was to crack the DNA code, un-

derscores a second, correlated but even more extreme issue, specifically, the dangerous ethical implications of his proposal that techno-scientists mainline-genetically engineer designer babies because he said he doesn't like ugly people and he doesn't like stupid people.<sup>27</sup> Ugly and stupid, that is, from his own genre-specific perspective as a Western bourgeois subject who is, however, at the same time, when in his lab, a natural scientist.<sup>28</sup> Okay. So this is what I mean by the biocentric Scholasticism or the bio-Scholasticism, of our present episteme. This is an episteme that functions, with respect to the knowledge of our contemporary world and its systemic reality, *according to the same cognitively closed descriptive statement and its sociogenically encoded truth of solidarity as that of the theo-Scholastic knowledge system of the medieval order of Latin-Christian Europe*. So this is what gives me the urgency, do you see what I mean? For we cannot allow ourselves to *continue* thinking in this way. This way of thinking is linked to the *same* ethno-class mode of behavior-regulatory and cognitively closed order of knowledge that has led to our now major collectively human predicament: the ongoing process of global warming, climate instability, and ecosystemic catastrophe.

Regarding the above, a 2007 report in *Time* magazine on global warming tells us two things: first, that global warming is a result of *human* activities; and, second, that this problem began in about 1750 but accelerated from about 1950 onward.<sup>29</sup> Now, the date 1750 points to the Industrial Revolution. But the article, which builds on the expertise of a U.N. climate panel, fails to explain *why* global warming accelerated in 1950. What happened by 1950? What began to happen? The majority of the world's peoples who had been colonial subjects of a then overtly imperial West had now become politically independent. At that time, we who, after our respective anticolonial uprisings, were almost all now subjects of postcolonial nations, nevertheless fell into the mimetic trap of what Jean Price-Mars calls, in the earlier nineteenth-century case of Haiti, "collective Bovaryism"<sup>30</sup>—because the West is now going to *reincorporate* us neocolonially, and thereby mimetically, by telling us that the problem with us *wasn't* that we'd been imperially subordinated, *wasn't* that we'd been both socioculturally dominated and economically exploited, but that we were *underdeveloped*.<sup>31</sup> The West said: "Oh, well, no longer be a *native* but come and be Man like us! Become *homo oeconomicus*!" While the only way we could, they further told us, become *un-underdeveloped*, was by following the plans of both their and our economists. The catch was that our economists, like the distinguished Caribbean economist Sir Arthur Lewis, had been educated in British im-

perial universities, like many of us. This is the same kind of model as in the Roman Empire: all the elites of the imperially subordinated populations were educated in Roman imperial schools! And so these mimetically educated elites, proud to be incorporated as Roman citizens, had helped to keep the Roman Empire going; and then when the Roman Empire was going to break down, among such elites you had a scholar like Augustine, who before his conversion to Christianity had been a professor of rhetoric and of the imperial Roman theory of high and low styles. After his conversion he had then taken all of that knowledge, then shifted the above rhetorical strategies to reinforce the revolutionary *sermo humilis* of the then new “gaze from below,” postpagan, postclassical monotheistic religion of Christianity—this latter as one whose projected promise of eternal salvation in the City of God will far outstrip the glories of the cities of Man, including that of Rome itself. This is what I call an Augustinian turn, the taking and revising of an existing system of knowledge, in order to create that which is imperatively emancipatorily new.<sup>32</sup>

There is one profound difference here, however. Rome’s empire was *Roman*. Instead, as studies of contemporary neocolonialism as well as of its predecessors colonialism and postcolonialism reveal, the West, over the last five hundred years, has brought the *whole* human species into its *hegemonic*, now purely secular (post-monotheistic, post-civic monohumanist, therefore, itself also transumptively liberal *monohumanist*) model of being *human*. This is the version in whose terms the human has now been redefined, since the nineteenth century, on the *natural scientific model* of a *natural* organism. This is a model that *supposedly* preexists—rather than *coexists* with—all the models of other human societies *and* their religions/cultures. That is, all human societies have their ostensibly natural scientific organic basis, with their religions/cultures being merely superstructural. All the peoples of the world, whatever their religions/cultures, are drawn into the homogenizing global structures that are based on the-model-of-a-natural-organism world-systemic order. This is the enacting of a uniquely secular liberal monohumanist *conception* of the human—Man-as-*homo oeconomicus*—as well as of its rhetorical overrepresenting of that member-class conception of being human (as if it is the *class of classes* of being human itself). Guess what happens? Its empirical results, for both good and ill, have been no less large-scale. Yet at the same time, no less *genre-specifically* caused! So that’s the terrifying thing with the *Time* report. It thinks the causes of global warming are *human* activities, but they are not! The Masai who were (and

are) being displaced have nothing to do with global warming! It's all of us—the Western and mimetically Westernized middle classes—after we fell into the trap of modeling ourselves on the mimetic model of the Western bourgeoisie's liberal monohumanist Man2. But mind you, at the time—just prior to, during, and after the anticolonial and civil rights struggles—what other model was there?<sup>33</sup> Except, of course, for the hitherto neocolonially neglected yet uniquely ecumenically human model put forward by Frantz Fanon from what had been his activist “gaze from below” antibourgeois, anticolonial, anti-imperial perspective. A uniquely ecumenically Fanonian human model that could (and can) in no way law-likely exist within the *vrai* of our present epistemological order. The *vrai* of, that is, in Richard Rorty's terms, its “truth of solidarity” rather than that of, ostensibly, objectivity.<sup>34</sup>

Yet it is precisely within the law-like epistemic terms of the now globally homogenized descriptive statement model of being human specific to the above order that the climate panel's report and recommendations are generated; these terms are also transmitted, postcolonially, by each ex-colony's branch plant university variant of the West's overall liberal monohumanist academic system. Consequently, the report's recommendations must be put forward in the terms set by the master discipline of economics and its disciplinary “truth of solidarity.” This means that the genre-specific preprescribed “truth” of economics must itself analogically elaborate an ethno-class *descriptive statement* mode of *material provisioning* that can, law-likely, be *only that of homo oeconomicus's* single absolute model of free-market capitalism. This model's imperative supraordinate telos of increasing capital accumulation thereby predefines it as the *only* means of production indispensable to the enacting of the economic system of free-trade-market capitalism's unceasing processes of techno-industrial economic growth. This model can, at the same time, be enacted only on the homogenized basis of the systemic repression of all other alternative modes of material provisioning. In this mode of material provisioning, therefore, there can ostensibly be no alternative to its attendant planetarily-ecologically extended, increasingly *techno-automated*, thereby job-destroying, postindustrial, yet no less fossil fuel-driven, thereby climate-destabilizing free-market capitalist economic system, in its now extreme neoliberal transnational technocratic configuration. The exceptions, however, are those clusters of still extant nomadic or sedentary indigenous traditionally *stateless* societies—for example, those of the Masai, the San, or the Pygmy in Africa, as well as the range of other such

societies in Australia, the Americas, and elsewhere. Many of these groups are now being pushed out of their ostensibly “underdeveloped” “places” totally.<sup>35</sup>

The larger issue is, then, the incorporation of all forms of human being into a single homogenized descriptive statement that is based on the figure of the West’s liberal monohumanist *Man*. And this conception of being, because ostensibly natural-scientific, is biocentric. So when Fanon says, “I take my narcissism in both hands and I say that the human is not a mere [biological] mechanism,” he overturns this biocentric conception.<sup>36</sup> That doesn’t mean that this ethno-class natural organism model of the human doesn’t bring you knowledge—as Heidegger points out, it brings you all kinds of knowledge.<sup>37</sup> But it is *not* the knowledge of the human reconceptualized in the direction of a hybridly, both *mythoi* and *bios*, being. We therefore now need to initiate the exploration of the new reconceptualized form of knowledge that would be called for by Fanon’s redefinition of being human as that of skins (phylogeny/ontogeny) and masks (sociogeny). Therefore *bios* and *mythoi*. And notice! One major implication here: *humanness* is no longer a noun. *Being human is a praxis*.<sup>38</sup>

Now with respect to the *challenges* to the single biocentric model of liberal monohumanist *Man*, the sixties’ movements were really the first opening phase of the dynamic in which the series of “isms” (initiated by the black antiapartheid struggle for civil rights, women’s rights/feminism, indigenous and other of-color rights, gay and lesbian rights, and so forth) had erupted to challenge *Man*’s episteme, its truth, and therefore its biocentric descriptive statement. And momentarily, they were making these challenges *all together*. Ah, but when you separate them, you retreat into the bourgeois order of things. And that was the remimeticized Bovaryism trap into which we all fell.<sup>39</sup> The sixties’ movements had begun that whole ripping apart of the emperor’s clothes—and remember, the sixties movements had been fueled by the earlier anticolonial movements all over the world, which had climaxed in Vietnam, Algeria, and elsewhere. All such humanly emancipatory struggles, all then so fiercely fought for! *You bring them together*, and the world system had begun to question itself! To me Derrida’s most radical essay was his revised version of a talk he gave at a philosophy conference in 1968, where he refers to the fact that Martin Luther King had been assassinated, that the Vietnam War was going on, and the student uprisings in Paris were in full force. Now his talk was called “The Ends of *Man*.”<sup>40</sup> At the end he asks,

“But who, ‘we’?” The *referent-we* of man and of its ends, he implies, is *not* the *referent-we* of the human species itself. Yet, he says, French philosophers have assumed that, as middle-class philosophers, their *referent-we* (that of Man<sub>2</sub>) is isomorphic with the *referent-we* in the *horizon of humanity*. I am saying here that the above is *the* single issue with which global warming and climate instability now confronts us and that we have to replace the ends of the *referent-we* of liberal monohumanist Man<sub>2</sub> with the ecumenically human ends of the *referent-we in the horizon of humanity*. We have no choice.

If we take the report put forth by the climate panel in *Time* seriously, what we find is this: the authors of the report, as natural scientists and also bourgeois subjects, logically assume that the *referent-we*—whose normal behaviors are destroying the habitability of our planet—is that of *the human population as a whole*. The “we” who are destroying the planet in these findings are not understood as the *referent-we* of *homo oeconomicus* (a “we” that includes themselves/ourselves as bourgeois academics). *Therefore, the proposals that they’re going to give for change are going to be devastating!* And most devastating of all for the global poor, who have already begun to pay the greatest price. Devastating, because the proposals made, if nonconsciously so, are made from the perspective of *homo oeconomicus* and its attendant master discipline of economics, whose behavior-regulatory metaphysical telos of mastering Malthusian natural scarcity is precisely *the cause* of the problem itself. So for us to deal with global warming, this will call for a far-reaching transformation of knowledge—this *pari passu* with a new mutation of the answer (its “descriptive statement”) that we give to the question as to *who* as humans *we are*. Again, this kind of transformation of knowledge, which had occurred some five hundred years ago and had put forth—what at the time was to be profoundly revalorizing for the secularizing (reasons-of-state) ruling elites of the then Western European population’s *referent-we*—an epochally mutational new answer. Seeing that the Renaissance West, in bringing to an end the then totally hegemonic *theologically Absolute*, because cognitively closed, world of late-medieval Latin-Christian Europe—thereby, *inter alia*, making the Copernican leap and later the physical sciences possible—had also brought into existence what has become today our now planetarily extended, globally incorporated Western and Westernized hegemonically secular world of contemporary modernity—a worldview that is, in transumptively inherited yet dialectical terms, being articulated and engendered as *biologically Absolute*.



**Genre-Specific Narratives of Who “We” Are, Césaire’s Science of the Word, Fanon’s Sociogenic Masks: The Origin of Their/ Our Uniquely Human Codes and the Third Event**

**KM:** Informed, in part, by Erik Erikson’s concept of pseudospeciation and Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela’s theory of autopoiesis, Sylvia Wynter’s hypothesis of auto-speciation suggests that we have been uniquely enabled, by means of our origin myths and cosmogonically charted narratives, to subjectively experience ourselves as semantically-neurochemically opiate-rewarded, thereby fictively eusocializing, inter-altruistic, kin-recognizing member subjects of the same *symbolic life kind* (here “kind” refers to our *genre-specific* or *pseudo-species-specific* human groupings—our class, our tribe, and so forth).<sup>41</sup> Our origin myths and cosmogonies, she explains, are the storytelling “grounds” of the institution of initiation, by means of which we fictively auto-institute or pseudospeciate ourselves as hybridly human.<sup>42</sup> Here Wynter highlights the dynamic interaction between our genetic and nongenetic codes—what she describes, respectively, as our *first set of instructions* and our *second set of instructions*—in order to think through how our subjective sense of self and our subjective sense of *we* (the *referent-we* that determines our sense of place-and-kin to be specific) is intimately connected to the interrelational activities *between* or *across* the physiological and the storytelling-symbolic (*bios and mythoi, skins and masks*).

**SW:** The paleontologist Juan Luis Arsuaga proposes that the human is not only a languaging being but also a storytelling species.<sup>43</sup> In my own terms, the human is *homo narrans*. This means that as a species, our *hybrid* origins only emerged in the wake of what I have come to define over the last decade as the Third Event. The First and Second Events are the origin of the universe and the explosion of all forms of biological life, respectively. I identify the Third Event in Fanonian-adapted terms as the origin of the human as a hybrid-auto-instituting-languaging-storytelling species: *bios/mythoi*. The Third Event is defined by the singularity of the *co-evolution* of the human brain *with*—and, unlike those of all the other primates, *with it alone*—the emergent faculties of language, storytelling. This co-evolution must be understood concomitantly with the uniquely *mythmaking* region of the human brain, as the brain scientists Andrew Newberg, Eugene D’Aquili, and Vince Rause document.<sup>44</sup> Further, and together with all of the above,

as Ernesto Grassi adds, is the already presupposed—*with* the emergence of language—behavior-regulatory phenomenon of religion, together with its vast range of Holy Kosmoi.<sup>45</sup>

Here the insights of both Maurice Guchet and Ernesto Grassi are relevant; they demonstrate that all human societies had instituted themselves from our origin by means of the phenomenon of religion.<sup>46</sup> Grassi's point in this respect was that in the same way that genetic signs function to necessitate the behaviors of purely organic species, religion—with its “what is to be said” and “what is to be done” sacred imperatives—would have been able to necessitate the behaviors of languaging human groups. Guchet was to later show the way in which, multimillennially later, the monotheistic Christian religion's concept of Christ's Incarnation would eventually enable the exit from religion and come to function as secular discourses. Then, R. H. Nelson, an economist, demonstrated the way in which the practitioners of our present master discipline of economics discursively function as a *secular priesthood* of the U.S. nation-state's economic system.<sup>47</sup> As well as, therefore, of the overall globally incorporated world-systemic capitalist economic order in its now neoliberal and neo-imperial, *homo oeconomicus* bourgeois ruling-class configuration at a world-systemic level—of which the United States is still its superpower hegemon.

The master discipline of economics functions now, therefore, according to the *same* behavior-regulatory imperatives, and/or laws, that the master discipline of theology had functioned, in the past, for the overall societal order of Christendom. The transumptive correlation between the two master disciplines (theology and economics) thus points to N. J. Girardot's identification of all religions (together with their secular substitutes) as functioning according to a behavior-regulatory formulaic schema of a “significant ill,” on the one hand, and its “cure” or “plan of salvation,” on the other.<sup>48</sup> Our present episteme's economic system and its formulaic schema delineate, therefore, mankind's enslavement to natural scarcity—which has replaced what had been its/our enslavement to original sin. The new and present plan of salvation is, therefore, that of the unceasing mastery of natural scarcity by means of ever-increasing economic growth!<sup>49</sup>

Our third and hybrid level of existence, as shown in these cases, is therefore a domain specific to Aimé Césaire's proposed new science of the Word. Such a science would be defined by the fact that the study of the Word would now determine the study of nature.<sup>50</sup> The implication is this: the study of nature, in this context, will now be specifically a study of the *imple-*

menting *bios* agency of the human brain. Here the “first set of instructions” (genetic codes) and the “second set of instructions” (nongenetic codes) emerge; the study of the Word in this light is the study of an *agency* that functions according to the laws of nature and its genetically programmed “first set of instructions” (biological genetic codes) whose role in *this bios/mythoi* hybrid context is to *neurochemically implement* the “second set of instructions” (nongenetically chartered origin stories and myths). This dynamic emerges, for example, in the “imagined communities” of our respective ethno-class nation-states: the genre-specific subjects of each such nation-state are enabled to subjectively experience themselves/ourselves in fictively eusocialized terms—this across all stratified status quo role allocations—as inter-altruistic kin-recognizing member subjects of the same *referent-we* and its imagined community. As such, kin-recognizing member subjects law-likely and performatively enact themselves/ourselves as “good men and women” of their/our *kind* according to a *nongenetically* determined, origin-mythically chartered symbolically encoded and semantically enacted set of *symbolic life/death* instructions. *At the same time*, at the level of *bios/the brain*, the above second set of instructions are genetically (neurochemically) *implemented*. This implementation occurs according to the “laws of nature” first set of instructions, with the second set of instructions, thereby, being alchemically *made flesh!*

I discuss these “instructions” further later, but with this in mind, what I want to uncover, to reveal, here is that which lies behind the ostensible truths of our everyday reality, but which we normally cannot see. It is that of the dynamic of what I now call *the autopoiesis of being hybridly human*. I’m getting this concept, autopoiesis, from Maturana and Varela, who wrote the book *Autopoiesis and Cognition*.<sup>51</sup> They were biologists who, for a long while, had been working on the frog’s vision. At that time, the orthodox idea was that the frog’s environment impacted on the frog, determining what it was to *see*. Maturana and Varela were trying to think outside that paradigm. But they didn’t dare until the sixties, when everything turned upside down, including at the university in Chile. Maturana explains:

Early in May of 1968 the University of Chile entered a state of revolution. The students took over the University in an attempt to reformulate the philosophy that had inspired its organization. I joined them. All standard academic activities stopped and students and some members of faculty tried to say something new. It was not easy. Language was a trap, but the

whole experience was a wonderful school in which one could discover how mute, deaf, and blind one was. It was easy to be caught in one's own ego, but if one succeeded in attaining at least some degree of freedom from it, one began to listen and one's language began to change; and then, but only then, new things could be said.<sup>52</sup>

So you notice we're now saying that social uprisings have tremendous links to the transformation of knowledge? Okay. So Maturana and Varela said they wanted to find a way to say that the living system that is the frog *specifies* what is to be known of the environment. They were therefore talking about an entirely different kind of perception of the world, right? They wanted to think about the idea of biological organisms as *autonomously functioning, living* (i.e., autopoietic) systems. And this is related to our human social systems—a point they also put forward in their later work.<sup>53</sup> Now if you look at living systems such as the beehive, they are purely biological eusocial systems. Our human eusocial systems are instead *hybrid languaging cum storytelling (if biologically implemented) living systems*; but they function according to laws analogous to those regulatory laws of the supra-autopoietic system, which is the beehive. So I call these the *laws of hybrid human auto-speciation*, thereby of *autopoiesis*. Yet what we also find is that these laws, as the very condition of their ostensibly *extrahumanly* mandated functioning, are nevertheless ones that have hitherto been enacted *outside* of our conscious awareness—even though we ourselves have always rigorously and behaviorally adhered to them as indispensable to our respective genre-specific praxes of being hybridly human! And this is precisely the fact with which we must now come to grips: given that as an already *postnuclear* cum post-cracking-the-code-of-our-genome species, we are now faced with an additional climate crisis situation in which it becomes even more imperative that these laws, for the first time in our species' history, be no longer allowed to function *outside our conscious awareness*.

More specifically, while it is clear that as a species we humans ourselves are, with respect to our eusocial behaviors, no longer subordinated to our genetically coded “first set of instructions”—no longer subordinated as are the also highly eusocial bees in a beehive, right?—what we nevertheless normally overlook is the following: that, from our Third Event origin until today, the hybrid laws that engender the empirical reality of our own always genre-specific fictively eusocializing are storytellingly chartered, symbolically encoded, thereby self-organizing living autopoietic systems; these

regulatory laws function at our uniquely third level of hybrid *bios/mythoi* existence and, while we ourselves behaviorally enact them, are nevertheless ones of which we have remained unaware. With this, and taking into account our Third Event origin, the following questions emerge: What had been the cost that had to be paid for the bringing into existence of the above, uniquely human, non-primate-like level of existence? What had been the cost of its law-likely mandated mutational singularity that, as a species, wherein, with respect to *all* our behaviors, we alone no longer had to remain subordinated to the sole set of instructions of our genome's DNA code? The answer to the above is one of which we must now for the first time in our existence imperatively become aware. The cost of that exchange? That of our subordination, instead, to our genre-specific storytelling codes of *symbolic life/death*! Their *Words*—or, in Bateson's terms, their *descriptive statements*. Put differently, we need to think about the way in which, for example, our present transnational world-systemic social order must itself continue to be known in the terms of a rigorously elaborated order of knowledge whose truth of solidarity is itself *prespecified* by our present now globally hegemonic purely secular biocentric descriptive statement of the human: its Code, its Word. Thus, our contemporary now globalized order of knowledge, its truths of solidarity, are always already preprescribed by the storytelling-chartered code of *symbolic life/death* of *homo oeconomicus* and its descriptive statement. We must therefore now think about *why* it must be so! We must think about why, for example, our present Darwinian *descriptive statement*—that we are purely biological beings—is a descriptive statement *about which* our present globally extended and hierarchized, Western world-systemic societal order enacts and replicates itself as a self-organizing and autonomously functioning autopoietic eusocial system. This, at the same time as the latter system is itself, circularly encoded/re-encoded, enacted by means of a discursively elaborated order of truth/knowledge, which itself, while partly *natural-scientific* on the one hand (this with respect to its *bios* dimensions), must, on the other hand, paradoxically *deny* the storytelling origins of the “ground” that constitutes it as such an order of truth/knowledge. The hybridity of humanness—that we are *simultaneously* storytelling *and* biological beings—is thereby denied.

To understand all human societal orders, you must therefore look for the sociogenic principle. This can be thought of in the same way as physicists' conception of the anthropic principle: that there must be certain dimensions, physical dimensions and so on, that make human life possible. The

analogy of this model therefore enables the following hypothesis: in order to understand the functioning of our present world-systemic societal order *as it is*—rather than as it must law-likely represent itself to be within the “truth of solidarity” terms of our present knowledge orders—one must go to the sociogenic principle. Now when we speak in Western terms about *cultures*, we are also talking about that *principle*! Since it is about that principle’s always already cosmogonically chartered sociogenic replicator code of *symbolic life/death* that each *culture* auto-institutes itself as a genre-specific autopoietic field. So when I wrote—in a 1997 essay—about feminist thought and Western thought in general as being *a-cultural*, I meant to underscore that they are *a-sociogenic* or *a-autopoietic*.<sup>54</sup> These areas of thought define the human as a purely biological being; their intellectuals cannot therefore recognize their own culture’s autopoietic field as being *the genre-specific field* that it is, assuming instead that its field is simply *reality-in-general*. We see the same problem within, if only for the main part, the field of philosophy—which also tends to be *a-cultural*, *a-sociogenic*, *a-autopoietic*. Since it, too, can, for the main part, in no way *relativize* being human (except paradoxically, for example, with the also deeply, in other ways problematic, counterphilosophy of Heidegger as well as that of the no less, in some ways also problematic yet also challenging heretical pragmatist philosophy of Rorty). Orthodox philosophy, however, in philosophizing about the West’s biocentric man—and philosophizing within the terms of *its own* version and genre and class of being human—must also necessarily assume that it is reasoning instead from the perspective of the *being of being human*, in *class of classes*, therefore, ecumenically human *homo narrans* terms. Mind you, as I mentioned earlier, this does not mean to say that being human (as biocentrally defined in the direction of Heidegger’s *animalitas*, and therefore on the model of a natural organism) does not provide useful knowledge. It does: it provides our *present* order of knowledge—an order of knowledge that is indispensable to the continued reproduction of our present neoliberal/neo-imperial, secularly biocentric, global order of words and of things.<sup>55</sup>

This led me to Césaire’s science of the Word and thinking about it as the completion of the West’s two natural sciences. This, however, presupposes that our very origin as a species be defined by a “Third Event”—and you notice now that we are going to have to redefine the origin of our being human in meta-Darwinian terms? To do so, I see three events as crucial to the understanding of the origin of the planetary world, its universe, as well as of ourselves. Ilya Prigogine identifies the first two events:

The law-event duality is at the heart of the conflicts, which run through the history of ideas in the Western world, starting with the pre-Socratic speculations and continuing right up to our own time through quantum mechanics and relativity. Laws were associated to a continuous unfolding, to intelligibility, to deterministic predictions and ultimately to the very negation of time. Events imply an element of arbitrariness as they involve discontinuities, probabilities and irreversible evolution. We have to face the fact that we live in a dual universe, whose description involves both laws and events, certitudes and probabilities. Obviously the most decisive events we know are related to the birth of our universe and to the emergence of life.<sup>56</sup>

To revisit the above: the First Event is the origin of the universe; the Second Event is the explosion of all forms of biological life. The Third Event, I identify in Fanonian-adapted terms, as the origin of the human as a hybridly auto-instituting, languaging cum storytelling species—which we can trace to the continent of Africa. Yes! The Third Event! And on the continent of Africa, no less! A continent that, as you know—within the terms of the West’s religious and secular chartering cosmogonies—has been seen as either the site of the biblical Ham’s *curse* *descendants* or the site of the *missing link* between apes and fully evolved Western European humans. Now if Africa is instead, in now meta-Western, meta-Darwinian terms, the site of the Third Event, it is thereby the site of our third level of hybrid *bios/mythoi* existence, and concomitantly of our hitherto also genre-specifically instituted orders of consciousness and modes of mind. I would be prepared, like a Christian in a Roman imperial auditorium, to go to the lions in defense of that hypothesis.<sup>57</sup> But I also say that if my wager is wrong, then, Katherine, don’t waste your time!

We shall therefore need, though, if my wager is right, to relativize the West’s hitherto secular liberal monohumanist conception of our being human, its overrepresentation as the being of being human itself. We need to speak instead of our *genres of being human*.<sup>58</sup> Once you redefine being human in hybrid *mythoi* and *bios* terms, and therefore in terms that draw attention to the relativity and original multiplicity of our *genres* of being human, all of a sudden what you begin to recognize is the central role that our discursive *formations*, aesthetic fields, and systems of knowledge must play in the performative enactment of all such genres of being hybridly human.<sup>59</sup> You will begin to understand, in the case of the latter, that the role of

all such knowledge-making practices with respect to each such genre is *not* to elaborate truth-in-general. Instead, the role of such knowledge-making practices is to elaborate the *genre-specific* (and/or *culture-specific*) orders of *truth* through which we know reality, from the perspective of the no less genre-specific *who* that we already are. These genre-specific orders of truth then serve to motivate, *semantically-neurochemically*, in positive/negative *symbolic life/symbolic death* terms, the ensemble of individual and collective behaviors needed to dynamically enact and stably replicate each such fictively made eusocial human order *as an autopoietic, autonomously functioning, languaging, living system*. This system functions according to the same analogical rules, at the third *bios/mythoi* level of our existence, as a beehive functions at the second level. So that in the same way as the bee can never have knowledge of the higher-level system that is its hive, we too can in no way normally gain cognitive access to the higher level of the genre-specific autopoietic living system of our status quo structured social worlds, ones in whose terms we are always already initiated as fictively eusocialized, thereby kin-recognizing subjects.

To resolve the aporia of this cognitive dilemma, I turn again to Césaire's proposed new and hybrid *bios/mythoi* science of the Word. Here because, as he proposed, and as earlier cited, the study of the *Word/the mythoi* will now determine the study of the *bios/of the brain*, and this will thereby enable us to gain an external (demonic ground) perspective on the always already storytellingly chartered/encoded discursive formations/aesthetic fields, as well as of, co-relatedly, our systems of knowledge. And, with this gain insight into how these systems of knowledge, each together with its genre-specific "truth of solidarity," all institute and stably replicate our genres of being hybridly human with the also communitarian viability of each respective societal order.

Yet with all of the above—including, in macro terms, the instituting of our contemporary secular and "single model" liberal (now neoliberal) monohumanist Western/Westernized transnational world system—what again must be emphasized is that the respective "truths" of their knowledge systems are always already *prespecified* by our storytellingly chartered socio-genic replicator code of *symbolic life/death*, its Word and/or Bateson-type "descriptive statement" as rigorously discursively elaborated by its "status quo system of learning" and its overall epistemological order. This order circularly ensures that each such genre-specific regime/program of truth, will law-likely function to *semantically-neurochemically induce* the performative



enactment of our ensemble of always already role-allocated individual and collective behaviors within the reflexly and subjectively experienced terms of a cognitively closed, thereby genre-specific and fictively eusocializing, autonomously functioning, higher-level living autopoietic system.

**Cosmogonies of Our Planetary Life and Our Chartered Codes of Symbolic Life and Symbolic Death: Fictively Induced Modes of Inter-Altruistic Kin Recognition and Auto-Instituted Pseudospeciati Mode of Kind**

**KM:** Here Wynter elaborates on storytelling beginnings and cosmogonies. She returns to her extension of Frantz Fanon's conception of our being hybridly human, both *bios* and *mythoi*, in order to address the unsolved phenomenon of human consciousness. She explores how our chartering/encoding genre-specific cosmogonies provide the narrative source of our fictively eusocializing subjectivities, thus enabling us to be reborn-through-initiation as always already sociogenically encoded inter-altruistically kin-recognizing members of each *referent-we*. At the same time, however, the law-like reification of each fictively induced and subjectively experienced order of consciousness of each *referent-we* is, itself, absolutized by what Wynter identifies as the law of cognitive closure.

**SW:** Fanon put forward the idea of our skin/masks, thereby of the hybridity of our being human, in 1952. Crick and Watson cracked the genetic code in 1953. Now, I argue that Fanon's masks enact a "second set of instructions": that of the sociogenic code of symbolic *life/death*. Further, within the overall enactment of each such "second set of instructions," the *ism* of gender is itself—while only one member class—a *founding* member class. Gender is a founding member because in order to auto-institute ourselves as subjects of a genre-specific *referent-we*, we must, first, co-relatedly and performatively enact each such code's "second set of instructions" at the *familial level*, in terms of our *gender roles*. We know of this brilliant concept of the performative enactment of gender from Judith Butler.<sup>60</sup> I am suggesting that the enactments of such gender roles are always a function of the enacting of a specific *genre* of being hybridly human. Butler's illuminating redefinition of gender as a praxis rather than a noun, therefore, set off bells ringing everywhere! Why not, then, the performative enactment of *all our roles*, of all our *role allocations* as, in our contemporary Western/Westernized case, in terms of, inter alia, gender, race, class/underclass, and, across them all, sexual orientation? All as praxes, therefore, rather than *nouns*. So here you have

the idea that with being human *everything is praxis*. For we are not purely biological beings! As far as the eusocial insects like bees are concerned, their roles are genetically *prescribed* for them. Ours are not, even though the biocentric meritocratic IQ bourgeois ideologues, such as the authors of *The Bell Curve*, try to tell us that they/we are.<sup>61</sup>

So the question is: What are the mechanisms, what are the technologies, what are the strategies by which we prescribe our own roles? What is common to all are cosmogonies and origin narratives. The representations of origin, which we ourselves invent, are then retroactively projected onto an imagined past. Why so? Because each such projection is the shared storytelling origin out of which we are initiatedly *reborn*. In this case we are no longer, as individual biological subjects, primarily *born of the womb*; rather, we are both *initiated* and *reborn* as fictively instituted inter-altruistic kin-recognizing members of each such *symbolically re-encoded* genre-specific *referent-we*. This is to say we are all *initiatedly reborn* — *renatus* in Saint Thomas Aquinas's Christian term — to subjectively experience ourselves as subjects of the same encoded *symbolic life* kind. Why this imperative? Because for all genre-specific subjects who are reborn from the same eusocializing origin myth and/or cosmogony, their *genetically encoded individual biological life* and its attendant imperative of naked self-preservation must at the same time be, via initiation, *aversively experienced* as *symbolic death*.<sup>62</sup> This is the concomitant condition of inducing in all subjects the *mimetic desire* for the group-collective *symbolic life* of its genre-specific *referent-we*, its fictive mode of pseudospeciati *kind*. The centrality of the ritually initiated and enacted storytelling codes, and thus their *positive/negative, symbolic life/death* semantically-neurochemically activated “second set of instructions,” emerges here: these codes are specific to each *kind*. The positive *verbal meanings* attributed to their respective modes of kind are alchemically transformed into living flesh, as its members all reflexly subjectively experience themselves, in the *mimetically desirable*, because opiate-rewarded, placebo terms of that mode of *symbolic life* prescribed by the storytelling code. This at the same time as they subjectively experience their former “born of the womb” purely biological life as *mimetically aversive*, because they are doing so in now opiate-reward-blocked *symbolic death, nocebo* terms.<sup>63</sup> For the preservation of *which* of these lives, then, do you think wars are fought?

In the wake of the answer to the above, we see our chartering cosmogonies as being isomorphic with what we now define as our “cultures” — in both cases we are talking about our hybrid sociogenic codes and their

“second set of instructions.” These are codes that are even able to *override* where necessary—this with respect to our auto-instituted, non-genetically restricted fictive modes of eusociality—the *first set of instructions* of our own DNA (unlike as is the case with all other primates). The logical corollary is this: our modes of auto-institution, together with their *initiatory* rituals of rebirth—as iconized by the ritual of Christian baptism—are indispensable to the enacting of the human as the only living species on Earth who is the denizen of its third and hybrid *bios/mythoi* level of existence! Our mode of hybrid living being alone—this together with our also hitherto always genre-specific *bios/mythoi* enacted orders of supraindividual consciousness—is thereby to arrive on the scene *all at once!* With the Big Bang of the biomutational Third Event! So you see now why we still can’t solve the problem of consciousness? In spite of the most dedicated efforts of natural scientists, brain scientists, and philosophers? For what becomes clear here is that our human orders of consciousness/modes of mind cannot exist *outside* the terms of a specific cosmogony. Therefore, human orders of consciousness/modes of mind cannot *preexist* the terms of the always already mythically chartered, genre-specific code of symbolic life/death, its “second set of instructions” and thus its governing sociogenic principle—or, as Keith Ward puts it, its nonphysical principle of causality.<sup>64</sup>

To give an example: here we are, we are talking and thinking. We are, in fact, reflexly talking and thinking in terms of Darwin’s biocosmogonically chartered definitive version—in *The Descent of Man* (1871)—of the British bourgeoisie’s ruling class’s earlier reinvention of Man<sub>1</sub>’s civic humanist *homo politicus* as that of liberal monohumanist Man<sub>2</sub> as *homo oeconomicus*, together with its now fully *desupernaturalized* sociogenically encoded order of consciousness. These are the very terms, therefore, in which we ourselves, in now historically postcolonial/postapartheid contexts, *are*. If in our case, only mimetically so! This at the same time as we are also struggling to think *outside* the limits of the purely biocentric order of consciousness that is genre-specific to the Western bourgeoisie’s *homo oeconomicus*. But it’s extremely difficult to do, right? You know why? Because Darwinism’s powerful, seductive force as a cosmogony, or origin narrative, is due to the fact that it is the first in our human history to be not only *part myth* but also *part natural science*. In fact, this mutation—the part myth/part natural science workings of Darwinism—draws attention to Darwin’s powerful neo-Malthusian conceptual leap.<sup>65</sup> A leap by means of which—over and against Cardinal Bellarmine—Darwin was to definitively replace the biblical Cre-

ation account of the origin of all forms of biological life, including the major *bios* aspect of our being hybridly human, with a new evolutionary account. Why, then, say that this Darwinian account is only *part science*? Biologist Glyn Isaac, in his essay “Aspects of Human Evolution” (1983), provides the answer. Isaac makes us aware of the ecumenically human trap into which Darwin had also partly fallen:

Understanding the literature on human evolution calls for the recognition of special problems that confront scientists who report on this topic. Regardless of how the scientists present them, accounts of human origins are read as replacement materials for genesis. They fulfill needs that are reflected in the fact that all societies have in their culture some form of origin beliefs, that is, some narrative or configurational notion of how the world and humanity began. Usually, these beliefs do more than cope with curiosity, they have allegorical content, and they convey values, ethics and attitudes. The Adam and Eve creation story of the Bible is simply one of a wide variety of such poetic formulations. . . . The scientific movement which culminated in Darwin’s compelling formulation of evolution as a mode of origin seemed to sweep away earlier beliefs and relegate them to the realm of myth and legend. Following on from this, it is often supposed that the myths have been replaced by something quite different, which we call “science.” However, this is only partly true; scientific theories and information about human origins have been slotted into the same old places in our minds and our cultures that used to be occupied by the myths. . . . *Our new origin beliefs are in fact surrogate myths, that are themselves part science, part myths.*<sup>66</sup>

So the trap, you see, is that of the paradox that lies at the core of our meta-Darwinian hybridity. For what I’m saying is that as humans, *we cannot/do not preexist our cosmogonies*, our representations of our origins—even though it is we ourselves who invent those cosmogonies and then retroactively project them onto a past. We invent them in formulaic storytelling terms, as “donor figures” or “entities,” who have *extrahumanly* (supernaturally, but now also *naturally* and/or bioevolutionarily, therefore secularly) *mandated* what the structuring societal order of our genre-specific, eusocial or cultural *present* would have to be.<sup>67</sup>

As the French cultural anthropologist Maurice Godelier also makes clear, with respect to the above: we, too, hitherto have also systematically kept the reality of our own agency—from our origins until today—*opaque*

to ourselves.<sup>68</sup> Thus all our humanly invented chartering cosmogonies, including our contemporary macro (monohumanistic/monotheistic) cosmogonies, are law-likely configured as being extrahumanly mandated.<sup>69</sup> All such sacred theological discourses (Judaism, Islamism, Christianity, for example) continue to function in the already theo-cosmogonically mandated cognitively closed terms that are indispensable to the enacting of their respective behavior-inducing and behavior-regulatory fictively eusocializing imperative. This is especially apparent, too, in the secular substitute monohumanist religion of Darwin's neo-Malthusian biocosmogony: here, in the biocosmogony of *symbolic life/death*—as that of *selection/dysselection* and *eugenic/dysgenic* codes—the *incarnation of symbolic life*, will law-likely be that of the ruling-class bourgeoisie as *the naturally selected (eugenic) master of Malthusian natural scarcity*. With this emerges, cumulatively, the *virtuous breadwinner*, together with his pre-1960s virtuous housewife, and, co-relatedly, the savvy investor, the capital accumulator, or at least the steady job holder.<sup>70</sup> In effect, wealth, no longer in its traditional, inherited freehold landowning form, but in its now unceasingly capital-accumulating, global form, is itself the sole macro-signifier of ultimate *symbolic life*. *Symbolic death*, therefore, is that of having been naturally dysselected and mastered by Malthusian natural scarcity: as are the globally homogenized dysgenic non-breadwinning jobless poor/the pauper/homeless/the welfare queens. Poverty itself, therefore, is the “significant ill” signifier of *ultimate symbolic death* and, consequently, capital accumulation, and therefore *symbolic life* signifies and narrates a plan of salvation that will cure the dysselected significant ill! The systemic reproduction of the real-life categories of both signifiers are indispensable to the continued enactment of the ruling-class bourgeoisie's governing code of *symbolic life/death* and the defining of liberal (now neoliberal) monohumanist Man2. This now purely secular coding of life/death is itself discursively—indeed rigorously—elaborated bioepistemologically, *on the model of a natural organism*, by the disciplines of our social sciences and humanities, together with their respective genre-specific and ethno-class truths of solidarity.<sup>71</sup> Consequently, within the laws of hybrid auto-institution and/or pseudospeciation the (humanities and social science) disciplinary truths of solidarity enact their biocosmogonically chartered sociogenic code of *symbolic life/death*, also imperatively calling to be discursively elaborated *in cognitively* (cum psychoaffectively/aesthetically) *closed terms*.

To sum up: the “representations of origin,” whose cosmogonies have

chartered all (genre-specific) human societies from our origins until now, as always already fictively eusocializing, inter-altruistic, kin-recognizing (even where totally nongenetically related) good men and women member subjects of the same *symbolic life* kind, thereby of the same *referent-we*, have all hitherto, together with our autopoietic social systems, been projected onto a *formulaically invented* origin-mythic past whose time-out-of-time brings into being an invented range of meta-transcendental “donor figures” all conceptualized as the extrahumanly mandating source of their respective story line’s symbolically encoded “second set of instructions.” This thereby canonizes, once and for all, what the inviolate (status quo) order of their/our *referent-we*’s fictively instituted autopoietic eusocial systems would *have to be*: the genre-specific societal order, that is, of each such autopoietic system’s performatively enacted magma of role allocations, these centrally including our roles with respect to the latter’s modes of material provisioning, themselves correlated to different degrees of dominance and subordination. As a result, all such relative degrees of domination and subordination *law-likely* come to be reflexly and subjectively experienced by their respective subjects as being *normally, the only possible expression* of that “once upon a time’s” *extrahuman* mandating of what the magma of role allocations structuring of each such genre-specific societal order’s always already sociogenically encoded *higher level, self-organizing, autonomously functioning, living autopoietic, now humanly* (i.e., storytellingly chartered) *encoded eusocial system*, would have had to be.

The concomitant reification of both small-scale and immensely large-scale systemic injustices that have been indispensable to the institutionalization of all our formulaically invented origin stories and narratively chartered genre-specific modes of fictively eusocializing auto-speciation (or in Erik Erikson’s terms, pseudospeciation) has therefore functioned *in a law-like manner* from our origins until today.<sup>72</sup> The result is that our now immensely large-scale systemic injustices, as extended across the planet, are all themselves as law-likely and *co-relatedly indispensable* to the institutionalization of our now purely secular and therefore Western and Westernized liberal/neoliberal Man’s *homo oeconomicus*’s biocosmogonically chartering origin narrative!<sup>73</sup> In our present case, *homo oeconomicus*’s bio-origin narrative, together with its *sociogenically encoded* genre-specific mode of auto-speciation being itself, is one that epochally and uniquely overrepresents and reifies its genre-specific (ethno-class) *referent-we* as being isomorphic with that of the now *emergent-referent-we* “in the horizon of humanity.”<sup>74</sup> Given this

overrepresentation, the logic by which it pervasively informs the present is therefore dangerously illusory, seeing that its genre-specific *referent-we* correlatedly overrepresents its ethno-class conceptions — such as, for example, those *human rights* and *crimes against humanity*, together with their ostensibly universally applicable international laws of justice, as applied within an international court of justice — as if these formations were ecumenically human conceptions.<sup>75</sup>

**Our Global Problematique: The Praxis of Mind/Minding as It Relates to Our Biocosmologically Chartered Codes and the Intellectual Imperatives of Our Academic/Public Intellectual/Middle-Class Worldviews**

**KM:** As a figure who partook in and witnessed civil rights and anticolonial struggles, Wynter illuminates the limitations of Marxism and, in doing so, draws attention to the ways in which all (Western and Westernized) anti-capitalist and antieconomic critiques, with their sole focus on one form of (economically driven labor) oppression, cannot comprehensively attend to the interrelatedness of our colonial-global predicaments. The ongoing struggles of the ex-slave archipelago, beginning with the anticolonial native labor/*damnés de la terre* uprisings, as well as the increasingly embattled global archipelagoes of poverty, are therefore themselves nuanced, complex struggles that are folded into multifarious social processes that are intimately linked to, yet can in no way can be identified simply as, *economic*. Wynter thus calls for a solution that understands our global crises in relation to her correlated models of being human (Man<sub>1</sub> and Man<sub>2</sub>) and, therefore imperatively, for interrelated solutions to interrelated problems, rather than as singular and particular dilemmas that merely require singular and particular disciplinary solutions.<sup>76</sup>

**SW:** How are we *not* to think, after Adam Smith and the Scottish School of the Enlightenment, that all human societies are *not* teleologically determined with respect to their successive modes of economic production that determine *who* they are? How are we *not* to think in terms of an ostensibly universal human history, that itself has been identified as one in which all human societies, without exception, must law-likely move from hunter-gatherer, to pastoral, to agricultural modes of material provisioning, to one based on a manufacturing economy?<sup>77</sup> Therefore, how are we *not* to think in the *same* correlated terms of the teleologically determined hegemony of the *bios* (i.e., the material) aspect of our being human? And after Marx's proposed

humanly emancipatory antibourgeois project—one itself that was, in fact, unaware that it had become discursively entrapped in what had been Adam Smith and his contemporaries’ eighteenth-century projected modality of a post-landed gentry, *bourgeois* account of *origin*—how are we not to think that this teleological hunter-gatherer-to-manufacturing-accumulating society framework was not indeed *the* template for all of human history? So when Marx had put forward the above, as the basis of his ostensibly *scientific* hypothesis, how would it have been possible for us not to consider that this hypothesis was perhaps *the* humanly emancipatory *answer* to all our issues? Marx’s proposed hypothesis was nothing less than the following: that in all human societies, from their origins, the respective magma of role allocations (together with their genre-specific status-ordering degrees of domination/subordination) had been merely law-likely generated by—thereby as merely a superstructural function of—each such society’s material infrastructural base, its mode of economic production. This *pari passu* with the class struggle, as waged primarily over *the ownership* of each such mode’s *means of production* (yet which, rather than being, as it is, *de facto*, a function of the performative enactment of the Western world system’s role-allocating degrees of domination/subordination), was nevertheless itself held out to be *the* principle of causality whose imperative transformation would be the very condition of our progressive human emancipation! That is, the focus is on the expropriation of that ownership, rather than of what that ownership subserves! Who were we, then, to doubt?! Indeed, as many of us were to do for many years, including Marxist feminists, we would attempt to theoretically fit all our existentially experienced issues—in my case, that to which we give the name of *race*—onto the Procrustean bed of Marx’s *mode of economic production* paradigm and its all-encompassing “mirror of production.”<sup>78</sup>

Furthermore, in the context of the politico-militarily actualized principle of a then overtly Western-imperial colonizing project of global domination/subordination, organized according to an ostensibly immutable “men/native” divide, there is something we must not forget: both before and during the post-World War II global anticolonial and antiapartheid uprisings, fought for and imagined by a multiplicity of colonized “native” peoples, Marx’s then prophetic-poetic emancipatory project—its call, for example, that while philosophers have interpreted the world, the point is to change it!—had been, for so long, the *only* ostensibly ecumenically human emancipatory project around!<sup>79</sup> One put forward from a seemingly



ecumenically human perspective! The result was that, then, many of us had thought that what first had to be transformed, was, above all, our present free-market/free-trade mode of capitalist economic production exploitation system into a new socialist mode of production. The idea was that once this was done, everything else would follow—including our collective human emancipation from what is, for Marxism, merely our present law-likely generated *superstructural relations of production*! What was also expected to automatically change, therefore, was that of the empirical reality of our still ongoing, status-ordered hierarchically structured, world-systemic order of domination/subordination. This change was to automatically follow! It didn't, of course.

Little by little, however, in the wake of the series of anticolonial and antiapartheid uprisings, which were followed by the sixties' uprising movements in the very core of liberal democratic nation-states of North America and Western Europe—all as struggles against the then still overtly imposed imperial world order—my theoretical landscape had begun to shift. Seismically so. I was teaching, from 1977 onward, in one of the earliest black studies programs for which the sixties black students had struggled, at Stanford.<sup>80</sup> I had come to be struck by the in-depth parallels between the black U.S. antiapartheid movement cum civil rights movement and what had been my own direct childhood memories of the anticolonial and “native” labor uprisings that had taken place in British imperial Jamaica. The parallels had led me to see these uprising movements—that in the United States and those not only in Jamaica but also throughout what was then called the British West Indies—as similar movements. With both understood in relation to the major precursor emancipatory projects that began with the founding, by Marcus Garvey, of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities (Imperial) League (UNIA-ACL) in 1914, his Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World (1920) and Back-to-Africa movement, together with their overall revalorization of both Africa and all African-descended peoples, and so on.<sup>81</sup> This legacy was to powerfully fuel the anticolonial and antiapartheid emancipatory struggles and uprisings as they erupted in separate areas of the overall ex-slave-labor archipelago of the post-1492 Caribbean and the Americas—the first in the then British imperial West Indies during the 1930s, the second beginning in the segregated southern United States during the 1950s and 1960s, then spreading out to the inner cities in the rest of the United States (as well as other parts of Europe and North America).

This ex-slave archipelago is one whose first slave labor form (i.e., the Negro/Negra) had been indispensable, as Immanuel Wallerstein points out, to the West's institutionalization of the first form of its "modern world-system" in the post-1492 Caribbean and the Americas.<sup>82</sup> What this makes clear is that when taken together, the respective anticolonial and antiapartheid uprisings of the British West Indies and the United States reveal that while a major component of them was, indeed, *economically driven*—the after-shocks of the great crash of 1929 had been severe in the 1930s British West Indies plantation colonies—nevertheless, this itself was only *one* aspect of the uprisings. These struggles had at a fundamental level been directed overall, by means of their respective *gaze-from-below* uprising acts of *moving out of place*, at the overtly imperial *homo oeconomicus* genre-specific and class-specific capitalist economic system as it was co-relatedly indispensable to the dynamic yet stable replication of the bourgeoisie's genre-specific socially structured and role-allocated status quo order of domination/subordination. With this, these series of uprisings, taken together, had also called into question the following: the hitherto orthodox Marxian presupposition that each society's status system of social relations, together with their respectively role-allocated hierarchies, was merely the superstructural function of the enacting of the infrastructural (i.e., material-economic) base, instituting of each such societal order.

This was the context that had made it possible for me to begin to think that, unlike Soviet Russia's heroic mode/mirror of production Revolution (which was indeed cataclysmic but still *intra-European*), what the range of "native" global uprisings had fundamentally called into question had been, instead, Man2's biocosmogonical and Darwinian-chartered ethno-class descriptive statement. The statement called into question, then, is a biocentric genre of being that carries in it the sociogenic code of symbolic life/death that is actualized by a eugenic/dysgenic *men/native* behavior-regulatory principle of dominion. The "native" challenges to that Man2 "principle of dominion" also brought into focus, therefore, the *mode of auto-institution or of pseudospeciation* central to the institutionalized enactment of liberal monohumanism's Man2 as *homo oeconomicus*. The long-standing and attendant system to this "principal of domination" includes both the socially stratified divisions of labor internal to each bourgeois nation-state, as well as the transnational macro-divisions of labor that are performatively enacted by the dominant/subordinate categories of First/developed, Second/developing, Third/Fourth/underdeveloped so-called worlds. *Both*

forms of socially stratified and role-allocated divisions of labor are, thereby *co-relatedly*, indispensable to the overall enactment of *homo oeconomicus* and its genre-specific (ethno-class) world-systemic capitalist free-market economic system in its now globally homogenized—post-Soviet and post-Mao—neoliberal consumer-driven cum politically liberal-democratic, for the main part, modality.<sup>83</sup>

The result here is that, for the first time in our history, we find ourselves having to confront, *as a species*, the overall negative costs now being paid on a planetary level for the continued dynamic enactment, yet stable reproduction, of the above. This as understood with respect to the surplus quantity of these costs, specifically the costs of the single-model free-market competitive capitalist economy in its now, post-1989, homogenizing, transnational/transreligious and/or transcultural, techno-automated cum mechanized agriculture form: an economy, thereby, all the more fossil fuel *and* consumer driven in its homogenizedly neoliberal globalizing enactment. The large-scale human costs incurred are therefore indispensable—at the level of the societal order enacting of its overall self-organizing, globally incorporating and autopoietic eusocial system—to *that to which that economy gives rise*. Inter alia, that is, the logically induced technologically automated labor process cum large-scale *joblessness* by means of large-scale mechanized agriculture cum peasant farmer landlessness and attendant hunger/poverty/anxiety cum increasing drug addiction, with the latter's surplus demand, as augmented by the surplus consumer demand by the First World nations' giving origin to, in turn, on the one hand, the large-scale criminalized drug trafficking engaged in by the otherwise now landless/jobless and, on the other hand, to the endless rich/poor divisive conflicts of our post-2001 war-torn, because necessarily unjust, global order.<sup>84</sup> A global order, then, in which secular smart drones vie with religious suicide bombers, the nuclear "haves" (United States/Israel) vie with Islamic Iran's ongoing attempt to join the nuclear club in order to defend itself against the kind of by-proxy regime change now taking place in Syria—just as an also nuclear-armed Russia warns the United States against any overt unilateral intervention in the conflict! So, once again, we find ourselves in a nuclear-threatened world. The fundamental issue is therefore one having to do not only with all of the above costs but also with the species-threatening nature of these negative costs, including that of the relentlessly increasing fossil fuel-driven climate instability's ongoing catastrophe.

Once "we humans" begin to think globally, Gerald Barney proposes,

such costs/problems will no longer continue to be thought of as they have hitherto been—within, by implication, the normative terms of our present status quo’s “system of learning’s” episteme, which inevitably calls for *separate* disciplinary solutions.<sup>85</sup> What at once becomes clear is this: rather than positing that “we humans have a poverty problem, or a habitat problem, or an energy problem, or a trade problem, or a population problem, or an atmosphere problem, or a waste problem or a resource problem,” these, on a planetary scale, are understood, together, as “inter-connected problems.”<sup>86</sup> Thus, thinking globally, what “we really have is a poverty-hunger-habitat-energy-trade-population-atmosphere-waste-resource problem,” none of whose separate parts can be solved on their own.<sup>87</sup> They all interact and are interconnected and thus, together, are constitutive of our species’ now seemingly inescapable, hitherto unresolvable “global problematique.”<sup>88</sup> The main problem with respect to solving the cognitive contradiction with which we are now confronted is therefore how we can begin not only to draw attention to but also to *mind about* those *outside* our specific and particular *referent-we* perspectives and worldviews. If, as Nicholas Humphrey suggests, the mind is itself a praxis—a praxis by means of which *minds must necessarily be always engaged in minding about* what happens, positively or negatively, to a biological species-specific and hybrid (*bios/mythoi*) genre-specific living entity and overall well-being, the following question arises: How can we be enabled to come to *mind about* the well-being or ill-being of those inhabiting worlds *outside* that of our normatively politically liberal democratic *referent-we* of *homo-oeconomicus* rather than to continue, as we reflexly do, to mind about *only* the well-being of the above *referent-we*, as the one to which we, as hegemonically secular middle-class/bourgeois academics belong?<sup>89</sup> Keeping in mind, too, that those “outside” the *referent-we* of *homo oeconomicus* also indicate that they themselves had only been brought into existence as such “outsiders” over the last five hundred years or so, by Western civilization’s globally and territorially incorporating planetary imperializing world system. How to envision a system, then, that would no longer follow a biocentric naturally selected/dysselected bioevolutionary teleological logic and necessitates accumulation, but rather engenders a worldview and outlook, reconceptualized, in new meta-Darwinian terms, from the ecumenically human hybrid perspective of our Third Event origin as a species as *homo narrans*?

As Western or Westernized academics and/or public intellectuals and/or creative poets, writers, storytellers, therefore, what we ourselves, as mem-

bers of the now secular cadre, specific to the Western bourgeoisie's liberal monohumanist Man2, must now recognize is the following: that as such a cadre, our shaman-like role, from our origins until today, has been to elaborate, by means of our genre-specific or culture-specific "system of learning" and our aesthetics, our particular genre-specific auto-speciating, always already storytellingly chartered/encoded "descriptive statement" of being human.<sup>90</sup> This includes a "truth of solidarity" that enacts as well as rigorously conserves our *descriptive statement*, together with the order of consciousness or *mode of mind/minding* to which each such statement's sociogenic code of symbolic life/death, gives origin. The catch has been the following: because we too must continue, together with all other members of our genre-specific (or culture-specific) *referent-we*, to subjectively experience ourselves through the mediation of the same order of consciousness and its mode of mind/minding (thereby reifying the us/not us composed of our inter-altruistic kin-recognizing individual member subjects of *the same symbolic life kind*), this means that we, too, must keep the reality of *our own agency opaque* by attributing that *agency* to extrahumanly mandating entities (sacred Malthusian-Darwinian entities).

So how do we deal with the new reality of the now emergent empirically ecumenically human *referent-we* "in the horizon of humanity"? And how do we grapple with this in relation to the cognitive contradiction that our law-likely correlated genre-specific mode of mind/minding/consciousness, that is necessarily opiate rewarded, in the terms of its genre-specific sociogenic code of symbolic life/death, must law-likely undermine a *species perspective* in favor of a *genre-specific perspective* that honors those of us who are interpellated as "normal subjects" and who thereby constitute the middle-class *referent-we*?<sup>91</sup> How, then, as Thomas Nagel proposes, can we be enabled and empowered "to climb out of our present order of consciousness?"<sup>92</sup> How can we come to know/think/feel/behavior and subjectively experience ourselves—doing so for the first time in our human history *consciously* now—in *quite different terms*? How do we *be*, in Fanonian terms, hybridly human?

**The Periphery Perspective of the Post-1492 Ex-Slave-Labor Ultimate Human Other Archipelago: W. E. B. DuBois's Double Consciousness, Frantz Fanon's Skins/Masks, and the Reverse Paradox**

**KM:** Turning to the work of W. E. B. DuBois and Frantz Fanon, Wynter draws attention to their respective analyses of their experiential "double

consciousness” as it is understood within the context of the post-1492 slave labor archipelago and the fictive and material production of blackness as naturally dysselected. In their delineation of being both *normally* and *abnormally* human, Wynter argues, DuBois’s and Fanon’s self-reflexive questioning of this “double consciousness” initiated a new Copernican leap: one not with respect to the movements of the planets but with respect to the unsolved—in spite of the best efforts of contemporary neuroscientists—phenomenon of our human consciousness. Fanon’s insights on human consciousness create a space to establish his own “double consciousness” as the point of departure both for his *skin/masks* epochal redefinition of our being hybridly human and for what Wynter describes as his transcultural and transcosmogonic “reverse paradox.”

**SW:** To further address the sections above and the struggles ahead, I want us to move back in time. What do we find? We find that the very same Nagel-type problematic not only had been *existentially experienced as fundamental* but also had been agonistically confronted and grappled with, beginning almost a century ago. It is therefore imperative for us to understand the kind of far-reaching mutational leap that W. E. B. DuBois, together with Frantz Fanon, was to initiate. This leap is one that itself could only have been made from the existential ground of the then ex-slave-labor (Negro/Negra) periphery archipelago of the post-1492 New World—a founding politico-statal mercantilist economic system that had called for the institution of a hierarchically stratified triadic system (black enslaved, indentured conquered neo-serf indigenous, white) of labor.<sup>93</sup> With this, as the anthropologist Jacob Pandian documents in his study *Anthropology and Western Tradition* (1985), the above triadic hierarchy of labors was itself one whose principle of domination was inextricably interlinked with the no less hierarchically stratified, triadic classificatory system of ostensibly differential degrees of being human/of humanness (degrees of humanness that, of course, coalesce with the inventions of Man<sub>1</sub> and Man<sub>2</sub> and bring into focus those black, indigenous enemies of Christ, irrational savages, human-Other(s)-by-nature, with postslave black subject occupying the most subordinated status of nigger/wholly Other).

Yet the West’s continued planetary imperializing expansion led to the following paradox: it was only to be in the wake of the West’s *abolition* of Negro/Negra slavery—this itself of course as precipitated by, inter alia, the earlier success of the Haitian slave revolution—that all peoples of black Af-

rican descent were made to embody this most subordinated *wholly human Other* status. Modeled on the natural organism, the Western bourgeoisie's liberal monohumanist self-narrating descriptive statement had therefore, *as the condition of its postslavery enactment*, logically called for all peoples of black African descent to reoccupy the transumptively inherited Man's *symbolic death* role. Thus those of black African descent were cast as the naturally dysselected Native/Nigger figure, ostensibly bioevolutionarily situated between apes and humans. This is a figure barely evolved and wholly subhuman that is Other to the fully evolved, thereby only True Human Self and its genre-specific mode of *symbolic life* that is optimally incarnated in the Western bourgeois liberal monohumanist *homo oeconomicus*. The former, wholly subhuman, together with its black race, is *dysgenically* dysselected to be *racially inferior* cum deficient in intelligence (IQ), in *symbolic death* terms; the latter wholly evolved is, therefore, together with its white race, eugenically selected to be racially superior, proficient in intelligence (in *symbolic life* terms). Furthermore, both premises, together with Man's descriptive statement and that of its biocosmogonically chartered code of *symbolic life/death*, are thereby discursively enacted by the disciplines of the social sciences and the humanities and therefore a status quo "system of learning."

The ultimate periphery slave/ex-slave archipelago's underside of the Western world system, together with its black African-descended men and women (all generically classified as Negroes and/or as colonial *natives*), has thus been made to function, over several centuries, as that of the ultimate embodiment of *symbolic death*—as wholly human Others to *symbolic life*.<sup>94</sup> It is in this context that W. E. B. DuBois wrote, in 1903, from his experience in a then neo-periphery and apartheid U.S. South, about his *double consciousness*. Let's note what he is saying: that to be a professional middle-class American, with a doctorate from Harvard (perhaps the first such), DuBois would have to be anti-Negro! He *cannot* trust his own normative middle class American consciousness, structured as it is by "the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity."<sup>95</sup> He is therefore saying: I have to wage war against this consciousness. Yet who knows when I will not let my guard down? Then this consciousness—which is not my own, *at the same time as it also is my own*—will reflexly be in command once more! So *The Souls of Black Folk*, in which DuBois published his "double consciousness" essay, "Of Our Spiritual Strivings," is itself the first phase of the war against that (unbeknownst to him then, genre-specific) order of consciousness.<sup>96</sup> This struggle would therefore make apparent to him his reflexly subjective

experience of being both *positively* a middle-class American (and implicitly, therefore, of also being *normally* fully human) and negatively a Negro (the abnormal human Other to his normal middle-class self). He experienced this doubleness *in the very terms of his own ostensibly autonomous individual order of consciousness*. This was a war that was to be, therefore, an intellectual, imaginative, and sustained political one. Yet, in passing, let us also note this: DuBois is also implying that the “governing tape of the world” to which he refers, rather than being biologically natural, as it represents itself to be, is instead an *epistemologically and humanly structured one*. This even though the governing tape has been made to be reflexly and subjectively experienced both by him and by all other Americans, white and Negro, as if it were indeed a *bio-instinctually experienced one*, on the part of *each* individual.

Now, the region of the ex-slave periphery archipelago from which DuBois was writing at the time was, as earlier noted, that of the pre-1960s racially segregated apartheid U.S. South. But look at this! A century and a half later, when Frantz Fanon writes of the existential reality from another region of the Western world system’s periphery ex-slave archipelago—this time from a then French colonial Martinique—he is saying exactly the same thing! In his *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), Fanon is saying, by implication, that in order to be a middle-class professional as well as a colonial *evolué* Frenchman—and thereby alone being able, in Western terms, to experience himself as fully human—I *have to be* at times reflexly anti-Negro and, therefore, opposed to, averse to, my own ostensibly nonevolved self.<sup>97</sup>

Now let us fast-forward here a minute to the sixties uprisings in the United States. We see Eldridge Cleaver puzzling over another aspect of the same dilemma: Why, he asks, do I find myself, *against my will*, reflexly desiring white women and reflexly being averse to black women? Then, *against* our orthodox biocentric conceptual grain, he hits on the concept of the *symbolic*. What, Cleaver asks, is *the symbol* of which white women have been made the incarnation of, and conversely, black women made the absolute embodied *negation of*?<sup>98</sup> Larry Neal had also noted that his crucial daily struggle was the struggle against “the white thing” within him—at the same time as all other “of color” Americans actively struggled with the same thing reflexly within themselves/ourselves.<sup>99</sup> In the sixties, gays struggling against the no less normative (thereby also opiate-rewarded) “heterosexual thing” within them had started to come out of the closet, as newly minted feminists engaged in *consciousness-raising* sessions against the normatively canonized as the generic sex “male thing” within them. Here I recall one of



the more iconic examples of this attempt at “climbing out” of that normative order of consciousness, as it was to take place in the overall dynamic context of the U.S. sixties uprisings: “I have”—here I cite from memory—“sometimes hated myself for being homosexual,” the Chicana feminist Rosalie Morales writes. And what’s more, Morales continues, “I keep a ten-foot pole to keep myself away from black people.”<sup>100</sup> *So the enemy to me*—she’s saying, like DuBois, Fanon, and Neal before her—is *also myself!* Are we on the same page here? Because we too are also now struggling to move beyond the knee-jerk limits of the *Us* and the *Them*.

To bring this together, let’s return to Fanon. Listen to what he’s implicitly saying: I can’t trust this order of consciousness—its mode of mind—in whose terms I now subjectively experience myself as a *colonial* middle-class professional *evolué* Frenchman who is *also* a Negro! I am now in fief to an order of consciousness whose powerfully induced reflex responses of *desire/aversion* impel and induce me not only to desire *against myself* but also to work against the emancipatory interest of the world-systemic subordinated and inferiorized Negro population to which I belong! For these reflex responses of *desire/aversion* are *not* my own! They are only *mimetically* made to be so, through my French imperial/bourgeois education (cum *initiation*) system of French Martinique and through my colonial history lessons that taught me—exactly like a proper member of the French bourgeoisie—that my ancestors, too, were the Gauls (and not the Franks!).<sup>101</sup> This is, of course, because the Gauls had been *storied* as *the* origin-mythic ancestors by the revolutionary French bourgeoisie, over against what had been, pre-Revolution, the *ancien régime’s* privileged hereditary *storied* claim to the Franks and their ruling-caste status as *noblemen, noblewomen!*<sup>102</sup> Importantly, the above counterclaim regarding the Gauls is emerging in the wake of the French Revolution’s declaration of the ostensibly universally applicable “natural rights of *man*.” So you see, one could further read Fanon as thinking: Since my real-life ancestors, then, were slaves (*notres ancêtres, les esclaves!*) *they* were not Man/human—nor am I, then, human myself. Such ‘rights’ are therefore neither *natural* nor *universally applicable!* With this being so, and given the interests of my present subjectively experienced middle class order of consciousness and its normative ‘tape of the world’—based as it is on such ‘natural rights’—do not these laws/rights, *everywhere*, work *against* me? That is, do not these ostensibly universal laws work against my own now consciously, because politically willed, self-emancipatory own?

It is here that Fanon, in 1951 and as a newly qualified psychiatrist, and as

such a “specific intellectual,” puts forward what is to be an illuminating—because *transcultural* and transcosmogonic—comparison.<sup>103</sup> Fanon explains: if I were instead a millennially existing Pygmy, in Africa, and therefore one still “at the center of my own cultural constellation, its rites, and its myths,” *I could never have subjectively experienced myself, negatively, as a Negro!*<sup>104</sup> As I try to explain to others, this is the neo-Copernican leap that Fanon, out of this “gaze from below” Western world-systemic, ultimate underside, periphery ex-slave archipelago’s liminally deviant, perspective, is going to make here! A perspective that is, Katherine, a *demonic ground* perspective! This time, however, the leap is not with respect to the Copernican reality of an also moving earth, a *star like any other*, but instead with respect to the hitherto unexplored regions of our uniquely hybrid orders of consciousness, their storytellingly genre-specific modes of mind/minding, yet ones whose hybrid laws of functioning, together with their *non-biologically determined*, yet *biologically implemented principle of causality*, continue to be enacted by us outside the (still unfound) *plus ultra* of our cognitively conscious awareness.

Put in more immediate terms, this is the contradiction that Michel Foucault had also attempted to come to grips with, from his own self-questioning perspective: “What I am trying to do is grasp the implicit systems which *determine our most familiar behaviour without our knowing it*. I am trying to *find their origin, to show their formation, the constraint they impose upon us*; I am therefore trying to place myself at a distance from them and to show *how one could escape*.”<sup>105</sup> Without our knowing it! This parallels the self-questioning made earlier by DuBois and Fanon with respect to their own reflexly subjectively experienced behavior-inducing Western ethno-class order of “normal” consciousness.<sup>106</sup> In the case of Fanon and DuBois, however, this questioning had taken on an even more anguished form: one as a U.S. apartheid subject, the other as a French colonized one, they would have had to subjectively experience themselves as both *normal* (thereby in reflexly opiate-rewarded *placebo* terms) middle-class and highly educated professionals and *abnormal* (thereby in reflexly opiate-rewarded blocked *nocebo* terms) Negroes. What we nevertheless find is that already, in 1903, not only had DuBois been anticipating a Foucault-type question—how can I escape from the burden of my also reflexly experienced double consciousness of normalcy *and* abnormality—but that he, like Fanon, will set out to answer it.

In the essay “Of Our Spiritual Strivings,” from *The Souls of Black Folk*,

DuBois had put forward his proposed solution. The first thrust of the solution was posed in terms of “a wish,” a “longing.” His own longing, he tells us, had been “to attain to self-conscious manhood,” to do so “by merging” his double self into “a better and truer self.”<sup>107</sup> In this “merging,” he would wish that “neither of the older selves be lost,” but rather to “make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American *without* being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face.”<sup>108</sup> In effect, the wish is to attain to “a better” because “truer self”; one whose reinstated “tape of the world,” its order of consciousness and mode of *mind/minding*, would have to be, because now *consciously* and collectively willed to be so, an ecumenically inclusive one. Nevertheless, the second thrust of his answer had already been identified in his “Forethought” to the *Souls* collection. There he identified the nature of the implacable barrier that *blocked* any such wished-for solution, any such longed-for escape. The barrier of the color line had come to constitute a Problem—one that ensured that 1903 was the dawn of the century that was to be “the bloodiest in human history.”<sup>109</sup> This meant that the brutally harsh nature of the postslavery, post–Civil War, post–Reconstruction U.S. South institutionalized white/Negro apartheid system—itsself often lynchingly reinforced and having come to govern the everyday lives of U.S. Negroes—was itself nevertheless world-systemically interlinked. Thus, as DuBois was to further write in “Of the Dawn of Freedom,” this Problem had come to constitute what was to be *the* Problem of the twentieth century precisely because its global reach was already being enacted by the West’s second wave of large-scale imperialism; in its now bourgeois ruling-class articulation, a militarily enforced *colonizer versus colonized cum men versus natives* territorially expanding and incorporating project was imposed and was an action that also intersected with what DuBois described as “the *darker* to the *lighter* races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea.”<sup>110</sup>

This meant, for DuBois, that in order for his own wished-for *truer self* to be made possible, the objectively institutionalized Problem of the color line would itself have to be concomitantly solved—and solved by means of a multiplicity of local, small-scale anticolonial, antisetler apartheid, and overall anti-imperial “gaze from below” perspectives and struggles that were as global in their reach as that of the color line itself. The outcome of his wished-for solution was to be this: for the rest of his very long life, DuBois was to be politically and theoretically as actively engaged in the global, world-systemic series of “gaze from below” anti–color line, therefore anti-

colonial cum antiapartheid struggles, as he was to be in his own “local” U.S. one—a position Fanon would similarly adopt.

Both DuBois and Fanon were, therefore, to uniquely take as their initial point of departure the struggle against the contradictory doubleness that lay at the core of their own reflexly (as if *bio-instinctually*) subjectively experienced order of consciousness. DuBois, in the context of his time, had thereby initiated a self-questioning *heuristics of mistrust* with respect to his own consciousness; a half century later, Fanon, as a young psychiatrist, would find himself engaged in a struggle to provide the explanatory cause that lay behind the reflexly subjectively experienced “doubled” (normal/abnormal) order of consciousness and its mode of mind/minding.<sup>111</sup> In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon’s own self-questioning heuristic(s) of mistrust was therefore also to be the springboard for his thinking. It was in doing so that he was to come upon the functioning of what can be recognized, from today’s hindsight, as the hitherto unknown, unsuspected, yet law-likely functioning, nonphysically, nonbiologically *determined*, if itself biologically implemented, principle of causality. The principle alone—as I note above—explains the “why” of the phenomenon that underwrites our *genre-specific* and hybridly instituted human orders of consciousness, together with their respective modes of mind/minding.

Fanon too, like DuBois before him, had not wanted to let go of either of his two existentially lived selves. At the same time Fanon also knew that the continued existence of the same color line barrier meant that any merging of his two selves—French, on the one hand, his colonized *evolué* Negro self, on the other—into a better, because “truer,” self would continue to be impossible. It will be precisely on the basis of this parallel recognition that, with Fanon, we shall also see his two selves, including centrally that of his trained professional self as a psychiatrist, jointly dedicated to the war *against* the same formidable metaphysical (because origin-mythic) barrier that DuBois identified as the color line. *How do we extricate ourselves?* Fanon writes:

The white man is sealed in his whiteness.  
The black man in his blackness.

We shall seek to ascertain the direction of this dual narcissism, *and the motivations that inspire it*. . . . I believe that *the fact of the juxtaposition of the White and the black races* has created a massive psychoexistential complex. I hope by analysing it to destroy it.<sup>112</sup>

Fanon's exploration of the explanatory cause that lay behind the above juxtaposition was to lead to the humanly emancipatory breakthrough put forward by him in his *Black Skin, White Masks*. Here, Fanon first identifies the conceptual breakthrough earlier made by Sigmund Freud. "Against the constitutionalist tendency of the nineteenth century," he writes, "Freud insisted that *the individual factor be taken into account*. He substituted for the phylogenetic theory an *ontogenetic perspective*. It will be seen, however," Fanon counterargues, "that the black man's alienation is not an *individual* question."<sup>113</sup> With this, Fanon puts forward (some half century before Godelier), the earlier cited hypothesis with respect to our human agency: as the creators of our societies we must recognize the condition of our being able to live, thereby to *be*, hybridly human: "Beside phylogeny and ontogeny, there stands sociogeny."<sup>114</sup> Society, he further argues, cannot "escape human influences," and "*Man is what brings society into being*."<sup>115</sup> What Fanon meant by this is that the "*sociodiagnostic prognosis*" for the black man's/ the black human's collective alienation will—as distinct from an individual *psychoanalytic* one—have to be instead "in the hands of those who are [themselves] willing to get rid of the worm-eaten roots of the structure."<sup>116</sup> This means, by implication, getting rid of the structure of the humanly invented Western world-systemic society whose status quo institutionalized hierarchical order is (also by implication) the cause of their black skins (at the level of ontogeny) having, at the level of sociogeny, to mimetically desire to adopt *white masks*. This mimetic desire and the adoption of white masks uncover an attempt by black subjects to realize themselves/ourselves in non-self-aversive terms as truly human, this reflex, so to speak, an auto-genocidal mimeticism, being *the* cause of their/our collective alienation. Fanon therefore concludes:

The black man must wage his war *on both levels*: Since historically they influence each other, *any unilateral liberation is incomplete*, and the gravest mistake would be to believe *in their automatic interdependence*. Besides, such a systematic tendency is contrary to the facts. This will be proved.

Reality, for once, requires a total understanding. *On the objective level as on the subjective level, a solution has to be supplied.*<sup>117</sup>

Three hypotheses that Fanon puts forward here, taken together, show his conceptual leap to be that of reimagining and redefining the human as a hybrid being. First is his hypothesis that "it is Man" (the human, both men

and women) that “brings[s] society into being.” Second is his proposal that the black man can only bring his alienation to an end if he, together with his fellows, are also prepared to bring to an end the then still overtly colonizing Western world-systemic societal order, which from its institutionalized origin had led to their collective alienation as a population of black African and slave descent, both generically classified in racially inferiorized *Negro* and/or *native*, ultimately subhuman Other (i.e., Nigger) terms.<sup>118</sup> Finally, and over against the above, is Fanon’s counterhypothesis, which is outlined in his further discussion of the earlier Pygmy/Negro’s contradiction, which I deal with later.

What the overall insights of Fanon’s work therefore demonstrate is that all of us, too, will also be able to begin to come to grips with the ecumenically human—thereby meta-Freudian *and* meta-Darwinian—implications of our having been, from our species origin, *hybridly* (skins/masks, phylogeny/ontogeny/sociogeny, *bios/mythoi*, and thereby always hitherto, *relatively*) *human*. We might, then, not only learn to think cosmogonically, as Conrad Hyers advises other scholars to do, but also *transcosmogonically*.<sup>119</sup> With this, we will find ourselves, whether white or nonwhite, black or non-black, now cognitively empowered to, as Fanon urges us, “tear off with all [our] strength, the shameful livery put together by centuries of *incomprehension*.”<sup>120</sup>

Through Fanon’s insights what we find is this. That it had precisely been on the cognitively empowering basis of his own elaborated cosmogonic, cultural, and transcosmogonic/transcultural perspective that he would develop his counterhypothesis with respect to the Pygmy/Negro contradiction in the terms of a triadic reverse paradox. To do so, he first puts forward in his chapter “The Negro and Psychopathology” a brief but epistemologically heretical comparative *sociodiagnostic* analysis of the ethnic or *band* societal order of a Pygmy group before “the [homogenizing] flood of civilization” engulfed it.<sup>121</sup> Drawing on Father Trilles’s study *L’âme Pygmée d’Afrique*, Fanon emphasizes the fact that, in spite of its author’s attempt at a Christian evangelizing interpretation, he had nevertheless given a description of the Pygmy society’s “whole culture,” together with “the [latter’s] persistence of rites, the survival of myths.”<sup>122</sup> *L’âme Pygmée d’Afrique* had therefore provided him with knowledge of several of the major aspects of a then still *religio-origin-mythically* chartered and *auto-centered* Pygmy society. This knowledge allowed Fanon, by means of a sociodiagnostic analysis, to compare and contrast the Pygmy society with that of the no less auto-centered

society of France (with which he is already familiar and a society in whose biocosmogonically chartering secular terms, it can be added here, the *psyche* has now transumptively replaced the *soul*). What he is therefore emphasizing, in his reading of the Pygmy and French societies—over against psychoanalysis’s privileging of the individual factor—is the sociogenic and its sociodiagnostic perspective. Thus, he writes, that if in France, for example, the family is itself “a miniature of the nation,” then in the Pygmy society the family is also, by implication, “a miniature of the ‘band;’” or ethnic group.<sup>123</sup> In both cases, therefore, when the French male child and the Pygmy male child grow and are initiated into manhood, through their respective “rites,” they will both have come to subjectively experience themselves, reflexly in the respective terms of their own unquestioned, genre-specific, *normalcy of being human*.<sup>124</sup> In both cases, therefore, *normalcy* underwrites their respective societal orders’ status quo system of role allocations, as well as that of their also, always already autonomously invented, storytellingly chartered and encoded, thereby auto-centered, genre-specific notions of the Self.

Over against both the Pygmy and the French bourgeois subjects, what Fanon puts forward in now triadic terms, however, is the quite different reality of the Negro subject of France’s then still overtly colonized (ex-slave/ now “native labor”) island of Martinique. This is a status and reality in which, when growing up, the Negro *evolué* is cast supposedly as a part of the extended “family” of France; the Negro *evolué* would have thereby been initiated into adulthood in the bosom of a seemingly “normal”/Franco-phone (Negro middle-class) family. At the same time, however, Fanon, the Negro *evolué* was taught a colonial curriculum at school, the terms of which would ensure that he would become “*abnormal* on the slightest contact with the white world.”<sup>125</sup> This is to say that the colonial variant of the Western bourgeoisie *paideia*-type initiatory system of education would have taught Fanon, above all, that to be *normally* and acceptably middle-class—and only as such, therefore, as normally, generically human—one must also *normally* perceive Africans as *savage, primitive, wicked*, and, as such, the predestined target villains, in French adventure stories, of a range of imperially civilizing French heroes! These heroes—as over against the villains—have as the objects of their heroic deeds the abnormal, primitive, wicked, savage Africans. With this, as is always the case, the Negro *evolué* schoolboys would have primarily mimetically identified themselves just as the “normal” (non-African) French schoolboys would have (as vicariously and no less mimetically) also identified themselves.

Now in my essay “Towards the Sociogenic Principle” (1995), I attempt, as you may recall, Katherine, to explore in some depth the phenomenological dynamic of Fanon’s charting of his own subjectively experienced doubled consciousness of being at one and the same time *normally* and *abnormally* human, that will eventually come to grip him.<sup>126</sup> Upon first arriving in France, he will find that if the French populace’s response to him as a phobic object is a *reflex* response—a response often expressed in shouted cries of “dirty nigger” or “mama, the negro is going to eat me up”—all of which are uttered as if bio-instinctually and, indeed, seemingly without their knowing it! This response itself is, nevertheless, in no way simply a phobic and arbitrary response, but is instead a law-likely and collectively formulaic response. A phobic response, therefore, that is uttered in objectively and disciplinarily instituted “tape of the world” terms at the same time as it is subjectively, indeed reflexly, experienced by the *referent-we* populace of the then overtly imperial nation-state of France, as if also it were merely, in Western cultural terminology, a *human nature* one.<sup>127</sup>

Fanon, as an *evolué* Antillean, will thus be forced to recognize that he himself, like the “savage primitive” Negroes of Africa, is also a *Negro!* Indeed, he is a phobia-inducing *Dirty Nigger!* One always already correlated with the genital and whose Reason is nonexistent.<sup>128</sup> As a member of the highly Western-educated bourgeois category to which DuBois before him had belonged, Fanon would thus, from then on, come to be consciously aware of how he was reflexly and subjectively experiencing himself as being at one and the same time *both normally and abnormally human*. Yet this latter, he begins to see, would itself be experienced according to the same white masks or sociogenic code in whose prescriptive terms the French populace of the overtly imperial nation-state of France, at that time, would have also reflexly experienced themselves as being *normally* and indeed *generically* human.

Now, if it had been that traumatic experience that was eventually to make possible the profound irony of Fanon’s reverse paradox, one of the major revelations of the latter is the following: that in the everyday run of things—as in the transcoscogonic, transcultural cases of the auto-centered Pygmy and French bourgeois subjects—any *questioning* on their respective parts of their shared *reflexly subjectively experienced normalcy of being human* is law-likely foreclosed. Fanon’s transcoscogonic analysis has also centrally revealed, remember, the fact of the empirical functioning of a law-like *continuity* between the family structure and that of the larger societal order.<sup>129</sup>



One that would have further entailed, one can surmise here, the following: that the adult Pygmy subject and the French adult individual bourgeois subject would have *both* reflexly subjectively experienced the normalcy of their being human in the respective genre-specific Bateson-type “descriptive statement” of the self. At the same time, their experiences would, in turn, have been law-likely *mirrored* by those kin-recognizing subjects who, too, were always already experiencing the cosmogonically chartered terms and sociogenic life/death terms underwriting their collective and fictively eusocialized genre-specific *referent-we*. Each respective *referent-we* draws attention to the ways in which subjective experience is *extrahumanly mandated* yet experienced, reflexly, as though it is *normally human*. This is how both the Pygmy and the French bourgeois subjects would, individually, have reflexly subjectively experienced their differential *normalcy of being human*.

If we read the above from today’s Western and globally Westernized secular (biocentric liberal/neoliberal and thereby bourgeois monohumanist) perspective, the seemingly vast and unbridgeable differences between the then still noncolonized (ostensibly irredeemably “primitive” and thereby barely evolved darker-skinned, small-statured Pygmy subject) and the highly civilized (ostensibly fully evolved, taller, white-skinned French bourgeois subject), then what becomes apparent here is the following: it is the projected macrocosmic *color line cum physiognomic barrier’s* ostensible *nonhomogeneity of genetic substance* (and our divisively markedly different *eugenic/dysgenic* populations) that will now be breached by the identification of what is, *for them both*, a shared, nonnegotiable imperative.<sup>130</sup>

With this, two major questions emerge. First, what is this nonnegotiable imperative? Second, why would this recognition only be made possible by means of the major *reverse paradox* implications of Frantz Fanon’s transcosmogonic and transcultural cum triadic comparison/contrast? Regarding the first question, what is made recognizable is this: the respective genre-specific descriptive statements of the Pygmy and French bourgeois subjects, at the sociogenic level of *the self/the soul*—as distinct from the phylogeny/ontogeny descriptive statement at the level of the physiological body—would itself have functioned in starkly different terms.<sup>131</sup> That is, their respective descriptive statements law-likely functioned according to the *same* hybrid (*bios/mythoi*) behavior-regulatory sociogenic *principle of causality* that was enacted in the *genre-specific* and/or *pseudospecies symbolic life/death* terms of their respective *referent-we* and its *us/not us*. Put differently, *both* their

nongenetically determined and their encoded sociogenic masks are demonstrative of, as described earlier, a law-likely functioning, nonphysically and nonbiologically determined behavior-regulatory principle of causality that is neurochemically *implemented*. In the terms of my own Fanonianly adapted hindsight hypothesis, therefore, what this entails is that each such mask's origin-mythically chartered sociogenic replicator code of *symbolic life/death*—its second set of instructions—must also therefore law-likely function, in both cases, to *activate*, in positively/negatively marked *semantic* (*symbolic life/symbolic death*) terms, the opiate-reward (placebo) and opiate-blocking (nocebo) neurochemical system of the Third Event's uniquely evolved human brain.<sup>132</sup> At the same time, however, each such “genre-specific” sociogenic replicator code can only be brought into existence through the chartering storytelling mediation of their respective versions of their *representations of origins*.<sup>133</sup> Thus, and with the second question regarding the triadic comparative frame provided by Fanon: their specific sociogenic replicator codes serve to illuminate both the *religio-centered*—thereby theo-cosmogonically chartering/encoding representation of origins—instituting of the Pygmy subject as well as that of the liberal monohumanist *purely secular*, thereby biocosmogonically coded and Darwinian chartered representation of origins of the French bourgeois subject.

The nonnegotiable imperative result—when understood through Fanon's sociodiagnostic comparison and as earlier noted in an analogical context—is that there can in no way be, on the part of their respective *normal* subjects, any questioning with respect to what is, for them, the *self-evident unchallengeable unassailable truths* of their genre-specific storytelling *representations of origins*. Concomitantly also, there is no questioning with respect to that which the chartering and encoding praxis of each such *representation of origins* can alone bring into existence: the “second set of instructions,” which are experienced through the opiate-rewarded conceptions that are determinant of what it is to be *normally human* within the genre-specific terms of their respective *referent-we* and its attendant *us/not us* theocentric-biocentric scripts.

In the above context, the third major question with respect to the far-reaching aspect of Fanon's reverse paradox—his transcogonic sociodiagnostic analysis—now emerges. Why is it, one must ask here, that he, a Western-trained professional and thereby an also Westernized academic middle-class subject *and* a French colonized Negro *evolué* subject, must find himself irredeemably, indeed irrevocably, excluded from that which, for

both the Pygmy and French bourgeois subjects, is so assuredly guaranteed to them *as if by birthright*? What now becomes clear in the terms of his reverse paradox is that he is excluded from the always hitherto group-specific auto-centered definitional and storied terms of human normalcy. Put another way, this as a law-like logic which, as a French-colonized Negro *evolué* subject, would necessarily entail his total exclusion from being able to subjectively experience himself—in opiate placebo-rewarded terms, too—in the analogical terms of the auto-centered, autonomously storied, genre-specific representations of origins he had been able to deduce in the culture-specific cases of the Pygmy and the French bourgeois subjects.

In his own Negro *evolué* case—as also demonstrated by W. E. B. DuBois—Fanon is *compelled* to reflexly subjectively experience himself in the painfully contradictory terms of being at one and the same time both normally and *abnormally* human. Fanon's nonnegotiable imperative is therefore one that, rather than calling for reflex assent, instead calls upon his Westernized Negro *evolué* self to agonistically *call into question* his reflexly and subjectively experienced *nonbeing of being normally human* as enacted by the ultimate *symbolic death* (dysgenic) that, together with his population, he is made to embody as a Negro. In addition, importantly, Fanon—as a Western-trained psychiatrist and therefore a *specific intellectual*—is urgently calling into question the very *being* of being human, as incarnated in its globally hegemonic Western bourgeois definition. The above questioning, in turn, calls for the in-depth probing of what is cast and naturalized as a purely biocentric definition of our order of *consciousness*.

Fanon's insights point to the ways in which all Western assimilated and overtly colonized Negro *evolué* subjects had thus been impelled—as the condition of continuing to reflexly subjectively experience the Westernized colonial world—to realize ourselves as *normally human* in the Western bourgeoisie's always already biocentrically chartered, thereby sociogenically encoded and semantically activated, *symbolic life's* opiate-rewarded (*placebo*) terms. The above experience, however, is law-likely made possible only through the sacrificial *symbolic death* (thereby opiate reward blocked) price, of our Negro/Negra *evolué's* reflexly subjectively experienced “wrongness of being” of our individual selves; it is also, concomitantly, made possible at the even vaster sacrificial price of the then Western world system's hegemonic bourgeois genre of human normalcy that is enacted by and through the empirically institutionalized ultimate *symbolic death* subhuman status of the Negro (i.e., black African–descended) population as a whole. It is made

possible, then, in the ultimate metaphysical color line terms of bourgeois malediction: *Nigger!* Don't behave like a nigger!

The politically activist anticolonial and antiapartheid 1950s and 1960s period that was to witness both the emergence of Fanon's *Black Skin/White Masks* and other similar interrogations of how black selfhood was understood in relation to the normative "tape of the world" also witnessed the emergence of a range of black women's similarly évolué voices that also engaged in the above interrogation of consciousness. An iconic example is that put forth in Toni Morrison's scalpel-like portrayal of the overlapping workings of blackness and gender in her first major classic novel, *The Bluest Eye* (1970). In this work, Morrison discloses the mimetically induced and constant self-rejection of our black selves and those who are like us, not only generically as a population but also specifically as women. Morrison uncovers the terms of being educationally and socially habituated and domesticated in a world where *the bluest eye* is not only iconic of the Western bourgeois liberal monohumanist phenotypically—racially white—esthetic corporeal standard. In addition, she also gives origin to what can now be seen, in hindsight, as the positive signifiers—the institutionalized and ostensibly universally applicable norm of being *human* and thereby of (white) beauty!—that semantically activate the neurochemical opiate reward process. The color line's range of subjectively experienced *nonnormalcy of being* was therefore to be taken up and further elaborated by a range of black feminists, black lesbians, and black novelists and poets—with this questioning iconically captured not only throughout the work of black/lesbian/feminist sixties activist poet June Jordan but specifically in her wrenching outcry against what she defines as our "unbearable wrongness of being."<sup>134</sup> This as a definition that directly parallels that of Fanon's fellow Martinique and Negro évolué, the negritude poet/intellectual/political activist Aimé Césaire, who uses the poetically powerful term *désêtre*, which translates, in English, as the neologism *dysbeing: symbolic death* as out of place with respect to being human.<sup>135</sup>

Dysbeing, via Fanon's reverse paradox, reveals the quest for a hitherto unknown/unknowable now ecumenically inclusive conception of our human freedom as a species; it will also identify the unique terrain of struggle that had to be waged generically by the overall Negro (i.e., Negro/Negra) populations of black African descent, as well as by individual activists, both against their/our (Negroes/Negro/Negra) reflexly subjectively experienced self-aversive *désêtre* and wrongness of being, as well as against their/

our imposed mimetic desire to adopt white masks. In the above context, Katherine, nowhere has this “terrain of struggle,” together with its historical origin, been more precisely yet at the same time imaginatively portrayed than in your aptly entitled study *Demonic Grounds*.<sup>136</sup> *Demonic Grounds* is, you write,

in its broadest sense, an interdisciplinary analysis of black women’s geographies in the black diaspora. It seeks to consider what kinds of possibilities emerge when black studies encounters human geography. Drawing on creative, conceptual, and material geographies of domination (such as transatlantic slavery and racial-sexual displacement) and black women’s geographies (such as their knowledges, negotiations, and experiences). This interplay interests me because it enables a way to think about the place of black subjects in a diasporic context that takes up spatial histories as they constitute our present geographic organization.

This therefore means the following:

The relationship between black populations and geography—and here I am referring to geography as space, place, and location in their physical materiality and imaginative configurations—allows us to engage with a narrative that locates and draws on black histories and black subjects in order to make visible social lives which are often displaced, rendered ungeographic. . . . Let me give a telling example to outline the ways in which progress and exploration are entwined with a different sense of (black) place. The ships of transatlantic slavery moving across the middle passage, transporting humans for slave labor into “newer worlds” do not only site modern technological progression, which materially moves diasporic subjects through space, that is, on and across the ocean, and on and across landmasses such as Canada, the United States, the Caribbean; these vessels also expose a very meaningful struggle for freedom *in place*. Technologies of transportation, *in this case the ship, while materially and ideologically enclosing black subjects—economic objects inside and often bound to the ship’s walls—also contribute to the formation of an oppositional geography: the ship as a location of black subjectivity and human terror, black resistance, and in some cases, black possession.*<sup>137</sup>

Your citation seminally enables us to see, Katherine, two epochally new transformative historico-mutational conceptions of human freedom: one in the process of being empirically actualized, as that of the now increas-

ingly natural-scientifically enabled *technological* mastery over nature, as well as other peoples, and the other to be only potentially realizable over many centuries.<sup>138</sup> Each epochally new historico-mutational conceptions of freedom will be law-likely inseparable from, in both cases, a no less epochally historico-mutational reconception of, in Heidegger's earlier cited guide quote terms, a new answer to the question of who we are *as humans*. Both of which, as you show incisively, were to emerge, inter alia, in the postmedieval dynamic of the politico-statal monarchical and imperializing Western world system's mercantilist transatlantic Negro/Negra slave-trading ships of the Middle Passage from black Africa to the Americas. The latter voyages themselves, therefore, were made possible by the West's postmedieval and increasingly *cognitively open* geographies, these correlatedly with the techno-scientifically applicable physical sciences initiated in the wake of Copernicus's new astronomy. Their mastery over nature, and correlated conception of human freedom, as actualized in the increasing size and power of the Negro/Negra slave-trading ships. At the same time, as you movingly show, it was to be in the holds of the slave ships among the chained-to-the-walls-cum-chained-to-each-other Negro/Negra as commercial cargo, thereby, out of their collective experience of being cast as the total negation of human freedom, as well as, indeed, of being another genus to being human in the West's now monohumanist, secularizing terms, that the dialectical *terrain of struggle* would begin to increasingly emerge. This terrain of struggle—and the holds of the slave ship as origin—identifies what was to be, however eventually and over the long haul, a historico-mutational reconception of a hitherto unknown and unknowable ecumenically inclusive version of our human freedom, together with its now profoundly revalorizing, meta-Western answer to the question as to who we are as humans.

### **Toward Blombos Cave, the Third Event, a (New) Science of the Word**

**KM:** Wynter's critical reading of DuBois and Fanon foregrounds the imperative need for a new intellectual praxis, one that enables us to now *both consciously* and *communally* re-create ourselves in ecumenically interaltruistically kin-recognizing *species-oriented* terms. Wynter's engagement with and extension of the Martiniquais poet and political activist Aimé Césaire's "Science of the Word" thereby illuminates what would have to be the complex underpinnings of a now species-oriented perspective—just as that perspective opens us up to an unknown framework through which new be-

ginnings become imaginable. To begin again and open up: Aimé Césaire, ochre, Blombos Cave, and the *plus ultra* of our emancipatory futures.<sup>139</sup>

**SW:** In the Frantz Fanon guide quote above he puts forth a challenge: *what is to be done is to set man free.*<sup>140</sup> The challenge is one that imperatively calls for our collective and now fully conscious *plus ultra* recognition of our human history as it had veridically begun with our *homo narrans* species—our uniquely hybrid Third Event origin on the continent of black Africa—and to thereby grasp the hitherto *unknowable conception of human freedom that is to be now imperatively realized, this for the first time, in ecumenically human terms.*<sup>141</sup> These are terms that demand a now entirely new (because nonexclusivist) meta-answer to the question of *who we are as human*. This question is, importantly, no longer asked from the biocentric perspective of the human as a natural organism. This task—to set the human free—therefore demands that we must begin, for the first time, to track a complete version of our species' history as it had been performatively enacted from its origins. As such, one conceptualized, as Bruno Latour proposes, from the perspective of our “whole human community.”<sup>142</sup> Or perhaps, even more precisely, to set forth a vision of our species' history in Derrida's earlier cited “Ends of Man” terms, doing so therefore from the perspective of the (now emergent referent) “*we . . . in the horizon of humanity.*”<sup>143</sup> The latter “we” itself was brought into being, remember, by a *humanly emancipatory* and homogenizing Western world system that is, *at the same time*, a no less *humanly subjugating* imperial system. “We,” as such, is *institutionally* enacted by the story-tellingly chartered and sociogenically encoded behavior-regulatory terms prescribed, as noted earlier, by the laws of hybrid auto-speciation. Thereby, with its complementary process—the *emancipatory* and the *subjugating*—having functioned, as they continue to do, *each as the nonnegotiable condition of the enacting of the other*. This entails what can now be recognized as the West's founding aporia of the secular, which has hitherto law-likely remained *irresolvable*.

It is in both of these contexts that Frantz Fanon's former teacher—Martiniquais-French colonial subject, Negro évolué, negritude poet, and political activist Aimé Césaire—both anticipates and enacts, like Fanon, a meta-Darwinian redefinition of the human as a hybrid being.<sup>144</sup> Consequently, on the basis of this earlier reconception, Césaire was to later emphasize that the imperative struggles of the (still then) physically/militarily

colonized subjects of the West could in no way be waged on the basis of a going back to a pre-Europe (to its then, also religious presecular world). By implication, these struggles could only be waged on the basis of a going forward.<sup>145</sup> Going forward, as will become clear, will alone be able to make possible, inter alia, the resolution of the West's hitherto globally hegemonic irresolvable aporia of the secular. In a talk given at a conference held in Haiti in 1946, entitled "Poetry and Knowledge," Césaire had therefore begun with his definition of what to him was the main problem with which the West and the rest of us are confronted: that of the "great silence of [natural] scientific thought."<sup>146</sup> That is, seeing that, in spite of the West's many techno-scientific feats—themselves only dazzlingly made possible by its (natural) scientific thought—this "great silence" has itself to do with nothing less than the causes of our collective human predicament as a species. Now, to be noted here, with respect to the latter, is that at the time Césaire gave his "Poetry and Knowledge" talk, the immensely tragic human suffering of the Second World War had only just ended. Over against the dimensions of the natural sciences and the conspicuous silence with respect to what had been *law-like* causes of the above, Césaire counterproposed a new *human scientific* (rather than only *natural scientific*) order of knowledge. This would be able to deal, for the first time, with the hitherto unsolved phenomenon of human consciousness.<sup>147</sup> His primary hypothesis is therefore worth citing at length here:

Poetic knowledge is born in the *great silence* of *scientific knowledge*. . . . A view of the world, yes; science affords a view of the world, but a summary and superficial view.

Physics classifies and explains, but the essence of things eludes it. The natural sciences classify, but the *quid proprium* of things eludes them.

But it is not sufficient to state that scientific knowledge is summary. It is necessary to add that it is *poor and half-starved*. . . .

And mankind has gradually become aware that side by side with this half-starved scientific knowledge there is another kind of knowledge. A fulfilling knowledge . . .

*And it is on the word*, a chip off the world, secret and chaste slice of the world, *that he* [the poet] *gambles all our possibilities*. . . . *Our first and last chance*.



More and more the word promises to be an algebraic equation that makes the world intelligible. Just as the new Cartesian algebra permitted the construction of theoretical physics, so too the original handling of the word can make possible at any moment a new theoretical and heedless science that poetry could already give an approximate notion of. Then the time will come again *when the study of the word will condition the study of nature. But at this juncture we are still in the shadows.*<sup>148</sup>

Reading with and through Aimé Césaire's proposed science of the Word is therefore particularly urgent because it demands that we both acknowledge and think *outside* the belief system of a biocentric cosmogony, which, as noted above, gives rise to a *naturally selected/dysselected* bioevolutionary teleological logic that necessitates, above all, the accumulation of capital, with the mandatory imperative of its bottom line, which itself is ostensibly the only solution able to master the Malthusian storytelling trope of *natural scarcity*. As such, this logic is therefore itself law-likely enacted, circularly replicated and reproduced, as well as reflexly behaviorally responded to, by all, according to the Darwinian/neo-Darwinian storytelling chartered Word, its liberal (now neoliberal) democratic monohumanist Word/sociogenic code/descriptive statement. This is, too, a sociogenic code of symbolic *life/death* that, while itself *non-biologically* determined (at the level of its mythos, or origin story), is nevertheless *biologically* (i.e., neurochemically) implemented at the level of the *bios*, the brain, its opiate reward/punishment (placebo/nocebo) behavior-regulatory system. This at the same time as that Word/code descriptive statement's "governing principle of causality" is rigorously discursively enacted by its status quo system of learning, together with its no less imperative Rorty-type "truths of solidarity" and overall episteme. The logic of environmental disasters is one itself, which, correlatedly and empirically, *also* enacts the descriptive statement of *homo oeconomicus-on-the-model-of-a-natural-organism*, its codes of a non-biologically determined principle of causality. Hence, the fact that the ever-increasing ratios of economic growth, concomitantly with its also ever-increasing ratios of fossil fuel-driven capital accumulation, are themselves also law-likely equated with ever-increasing ratios of global warming, climate change, and environmental instability. This is an interacting dynamic, therefore, whose ongoing ecosystemic consequences had first been evidenced by the drought-desertification-famine and resultant intergroup conflict in the Horn of Africa, this itself followed by a now vast

range of varying, humanly/ecosystemically destructive consequences all over the planet.

It is therefore the above circularly reinforcing—*seemingly no-way-out-Catch-22* situation of our contemporary secular Western and Westernized world system, in its now globally and transnationally *economically homogenized* capitalist neoliberal and corporate financial bourgeoisie ruling class (*homo oeconomicus*) configuration—that we must now all confront. While it is precisely such a way out that Aimé Césaire’s proposed hybrid science of the Word (the *mythoi*), in its simultaneous interaction *with* nature (the *bios*, the *brain*), whose new paradigm not only provides a *cognitive opening* onto our Western and Westernized bourgeoisie-Darwinian-chartered word/code/descriptive statement, together with its status quo system of learning, truths of solidarity, and overall genre-specific episteme, but at the same time, also powerfully deconstructs that biocentric word’s *homo oeconomicus*’s claim to *the monopoly of humanity*.

With this, I turn to Blombos Cave, South Africa, which I argue is the empirically actualized evidence for the verification of Césaire’s proposed way out, as one that—within the context of the above-mentioned fossil fuel-driven ever-increasing ratios of global warming and climate change, as well as their attendant war-torn processes themselves concomitant globally with ever-increasing degrees of human immiseration based on increasing degrees of *racially, socially, and religiously* stratified economic inequality—is now ever more urgently sought.

Now Blombos Cave, as described by Guy Gugliotta in his essay “The Great Human Migration” (2008), is situated in a *calcarenite* limestone cliff that overlooks “the rocky coast of what is now the Indian Ocean.”<sup>149</sup> At the first level of excavation the archaeologist Christopher Henshilwood and his team had found a 77,000-year-old piece of ochre, on which there is “etched a geometric design . . . with a stone point on the flat polished surface.”<sup>150</sup> The design is a “simple crosshatching framed by two parallel lines with a third line down the middle,” which therefore means that “the scratchings on this piece of red ochre mudstone are the oldest known example of *an intricate design made by a human being*.”<sup>151</sup> As Henshilwood, himself a white South African, further points out with respect to this piece of ochre, for him, “the [very] ability to *create and communicate using such symbols*” is itself “an unambiguous marker” of “modern humans,” therefore a marker “of one of the characteristics *that separate us from any other species, living or extinct*.”<sup>152</sup> Concurring with this thesis, David Lewis Williams, in his book *The Mind in*

*the Cave: Consciousness and the Origin of Art* (2002), also proposes that because the “piece of ochre” is “carefully engraved with crosses with a central and containing line,” this reveals not only that it is the oldest dated “art” in the world but that it also shows “*indisputably modern behavior at an unexpectedly early date.*”<sup>153</sup>

In its first excavation, along with the engraved piece of ochre, the Henshilwood team had also found decorative beads made of shells, together with the material technology of bone tools that were dated at eighty thousand years. These, together with the widespread debris of discarded clamshells, provided evidence of the communal cooking of seafood, as well as of widespread shell-fishing activity.<sup>154</sup> Surpassing all these finds, however, were the results of a further excavation: when digging deeper, they were to discover the even earlier “100,000 year old *workshop* holding the tools and ingredients with which early modern humans mixed some of the first known paints.”<sup>155</sup> Specifically, “These *cave artisans* have stones for pounding and grinding colorful dirt, enriched with a kind of iron oxide to a powder, known as ocher,” which was then “blended with the binding fat of mammal bone marrow and a dash of charcoal.”<sup>156</sup> The special significance here is that the workshop allows us to see the earliest example, to date, of how our emergent species—*homo narrans* in my own proposed meta-Darwinian and meta-*Homo sapiens* terms—“processed ocher . . . its red color apparently *rich in symbolic significance.*”<sup>157</sup> A process, therefore, producing materials “for protection or simple decorations” or, as other experts suggest, perhaps used as “their way of making *social and artistic statements on their bodies* or their artifacts.”<sup>158</sup>

However, in spite of the above’s finely noted other forms of symbolizing recognition, what we find is the following: that both archaeologists and art experts are like ourselves, normally bourgeois and therefore biocentric (and neo-Darwinianly chartered) subjects; what they too—when outside their fields of expertise—must *law-likely overlook*, within the terms of their/our shaman-like genre-specific “truth of solidarity,” is the Third Event dimensions of that processed ochre’s supraordinate symbolic significance. These are the findings of a heretical anthropologist that were/are nothing less than that of the *symbolic transformation of biological identity.*<sup>159</sup> What his heresy therefore enables us to see is what the findings of the shells, the ochre, and the workshop uncover: the praxis of the ecumenically human ritual of initiation by means of which *individually born biological life* whose macrosymbol and signifier, as Judy Granh argues, is that of *menstrual blood*,

is itself transformed into that of the genre-specific communal *referent-we* of *symbolic life*—one whose master symbol and signifier is that of the processed ochre, its *fictive* menstrual blood.<sup>160</sup> The praxis of the ritual initiatory transformation of the first form of life (biologically born individual life) into the second form of life (communal/*fictive* or *symbolic life*) therefore reveals that the workshop of ochre excavated at the second level can only itself be fully understood in conjunction with the shells and other findings that had been excavated at the first level. This is so not only with respect to the finding of the piece of ochre—itself also *aesthetically transformed* into an engraved symbolic design—but even more so with respect to that of the debris of the discarded seashells, itself as evidence of the analogically also profoundly transformative process of the communal cooking and reciprocal sharing of food.<sup>161</sup>

Materially and symbolically, therefore, Blombos Cave reveals the ritual-initiatory transformation of the biologically born individual subject *into* that of a now fictively chartered and encoded, thereby hybrid, *bios/mythoi* autopoietic form of symbolic life. The ritually initiated individual is thereby now made to reflexly *subjectively experience* themselves as *reborn* in now opiate-rewarded communal *symbolic life* terms. The ritually initiated individual is thus made to reflexly experience themselves as an inter-altruistic kin-recognizing member of an *origin-narratively* chartered, sociogenically encoded, thereby *fictive*, genre-specific *referent-we*, it's us / not us—with the latter's now institutionalized supra-individual order of consciousness therefore now serving to underwrite each such respective societal order's stable (anti-entropic) communitarian replication. This given that the individual subjects—together with their fellow initiates—are *all now reborn of the same origin story rather than of the womb*. Consequently, each such subject is now enabled to displace/replace, at the reflexly and subjectively experienced level of consciousness, what would have earlier been its *prior-to-initiation-biologically-born*, innately experienced, individual self-interest. Consequently, each such genre-specific displacement/replacement origin narrative would have therefore imperatively functioned—all the more so in traditional *stateless* societies—against their individual subjects, giving priority either to the genetically encoded innate interests of one's (familial) kin or to the even more powerful, genetically encoded imperative interest of one's own Hobbesian bodily self-preservation.

Now because this latter is itself *the* ethical imperative by means of which

our first human ancestors would have been alone enabled to communally deal with the then even more formidable constraints of material life, what such an imperative ethics unveils is nothing less than the *why* of the laws of *hybrid* human auto-speciation or pseudospeciation. As such, laws themselves would have been initiatory enacted in the wake of our *homo narrans*'s species uniquely biomutational Third Event, which had itself given origin not only to the faculties of language and storytelling but correlatedly to the mythmaking regions of the brain. This at the same time as the matrix enactment of the Third Event, its mandated ritual-initiatory processes of our *homo narrans* species' hybrid praxis of genre-specific auto-speciation, or pseudospeciation, would have correlatedly had its iconic origin at Blombos Cave (or indeed at any other black African surrogate origin sites, whether already or still to be discovered). This, at the same time, however, as the always genre-specific (i.e., us/not us) enactment of the praxis of our being hybridly human (later described by Fanon in ontogeny/sociogeny terms as that of our skins/masks) had itself been auto-instituted according to the very Third Event laws of whose functioning, even when rigorously behaviorally adhering to them, we ourselves, as earlier noted, have hitherto (until today) necessarily *remained unaware*.

In this way, then, given that it is these very Third Event laws, as they have hitherto hybridly functioned outside our conscious awareness—that now also constitute the domain of Césaire's proposed *hybrid* science of the Word/Nature—the following is revealed: that the *two-level findings* at Blombos Cave can now be seen to validate his proposed new science by providing empirical evidence in support of its epochally new *human scientific* analytical frame and/or paradigm, one whose Word/Nature *hybridity* deductively provides an account of what would have had to have been, as Blombos Cave itself empirically actualizes, our uniquely Third Event origin *as homo narrans*. As such, an analytical frame or paradigm whose metaperspective now allows us to both read and concomitantly *relativize* our still globally hegemonic purely biocentric, Darwinian/neo-Darwinianly chartered and encoded representation of origins. Even further, to read it as one which, because it must law-likely provide a part-myth-part-science storytelling account of our species' origin (i.e., as secular Man2's *Homo sapiens/homo oeconomicus* in genre-specific biocentric bourgeois terms), itself must as law-likely predefine our *homo narrans* species' iconic origin site of Blombos Cave in abductive purely *biological birth* terminology as that of “the cradle of humankind.”<sup>162</sup>

### **On Ends/Beginnings and Giving Humanness a Different Future by Giving It a Different Past**

**KM:** The conversation concludes with a different past; this is a past that knots together the science of the Word, African human-geographic-genetic beginnings, the practice of narratively-experientially-empirically-neurologically knowing and telling our worlds, all of which together illuminate Césaire's remarkable antibiocentric and species-oriented worldview and emancipatory breach.

**SW:** As noted earlier, with the proposed simultaneity of the hybrid *bios/mythoi*, articulated through Césaire's science of the Word, the Third Event origin of today's black Africa provides an additional twist. The origin that situates the emergence of the human within the southwest region of Africa has now been proved by Western and Westernized research scholars both in population genetics—in the wake of and due to the techno-scientific feat of cracking the DNA code in 1953—and in archaeology and linguistics.<sup>163</sup> Thus, Africa as *human origin geography* that, simultaneously, signals the birthplace of language, intervenes in and complements the techno-science inherent to genetics. The biocentric origin story, anchored to the *referent-we* of *homo oeconomicus*—which itself has unfolded into discourses of natural scarcity and neo-imperial territorialization—is dislodged by the correlated simultaneity of language-myth-genetics unearthed in southwest Africa. What is further uncovered, with this, is the very belief system that posits genetics and biology alone as the sole origins of biological life (and death)—a belief system that can neither sustain itself nor replicate itself through accumulation, *if the aforementioned co-relatedness is brought into view*.

Why, then, one must ask here, in spite of the above “dislodging,” do all of the negative consequences to which that belief system gives origin nevertheless continue to seem “natural” to its global subjects within the terms of the latter's correlatedly institutionalized, bourgeois order of consciousness? Its mode/praxis of mind/minding? It is in this context that Aimé Césaire's proposed hybrid, thereby human-scientific, study of the Word/Nature (i.e., the brain) can be recognized, first, as one whose primary focus is necessarily that of the hitherto unsolved also hybrid phenomenon of human consciousness; second, and correlatedly, one whose unique domain is therefore also necessarily that of the hitherto nonrecognized, thereby hitherto unsolved, functioning of the Third Event's laws of hybrid human

auto-speciation or pseudospeciation. The result is that his proposed study of the Word (i.e., its sociogenic code and/or descriptive statement) is itself, according to those laws, necessarily that of the latter's always hitherto *genre-specific* (or, in contemporary terms, *culture-specific*) respective governing principle of *nonbiological causality*: therefore, of its always already storytellingly, thereby mythically chartered and sociogenically encoded "second set of instructions." These instructions, are ones that, as earlier noted, law-likely co-function at the level of the brain together with our genetic code's "first set of instructions." Thus, it is with respect to the *nonbiological principle* of causality, its second set of instructions, that Césaire's study must begin with an analysis of the way in which that principle must be both discursively enacted and rigorously conserved by means of each genre-specific societal world's correlated status quo system of learning and Rorty-type truths of solidarity.

Both, in turn, thereby give origin to a no less genre-specific (culture-specific) order of consciousness that is itself indispensable to the antientropic integration of each such human world's fictively eusocializing genre-specific or culture-specific *referent-we*. This has the result that each such Word's/Code's descriptive statement's governing principle of non-biologically determined causality comes to be thereby circularly, stably conserved by means of each such world's (i.e., its *referent-we*) integrating, supraindividual order of consciousness together with its genre-specific or culture-specific mode/praxis of mind/minding. It is in this sense, therefore, that consciousness, to draw on Keith Ward, is "a constituent and fundamental element of world *as we* [each *referent-we*] see it," and, consequently, "consciousness is not just a by-product of matter as we perceive it. The material world as it appears to us is, at least in part, a *product of consciousness*."<sup>164</sup>

These dynamics, between the outside world, our orders of consciousness, our systems of learning and respective *referent-we* and overall epistemic modes of knowledge, can be therefore understood alongside the proposals put forward by several neuroscientists. For me, the earliest of these, that of J. F. Danielli's heretically pathbreaking paper "Altruism and the Internal Reward System, or the Opium of the People" (1980) can be constructively read alongside Césaire's 1946 human-scientific perspective on the study of the Word. These two texts, together, draw attention to the way in which the non-biologically determined principle of causality would now determine the study of nature, the study of the brain (the study of the brain which, as we know, has hitherto fruitlessly been the exclusive domain of inquiry of

the natural sciences).<sup>165</sup> Thus, the study of *nature*/the brain as proposed by Césaire will therefore begin by that of each human world's, to use Fanon's definition of the word, *sociogenic code of symbolic life/death and/or its descriptive statement at the level of the psyche or the soul*.

As such, the discursively enacted governing non-biologically determined principle of causality of each genre-specific or culture-specific *referent-we* is also subjectively experienced at the level of the brain; this reveals that genre-specific narratives of symbolic life/death (us/not us), and their respective positive/negative semantic activations of the opiate-rewarding and opiate-blocking behaviors, are bound up in the regulatory motivating/demotivating neurochemical system of our uniquely human, because storytelling-mythmaking, brain.<sup>166</sup> Put differently, the human's brain's agential implementations of its internal opiate-rewarding and opiate-blocking behavior motivating/demotivating behavior-regulatory neurochemical system are themselves activated by means of the symbolic life/death, their semantically positively/negatively marked terms, thereby biologically implementing the genre-specific and/or culture-specific human world's sociogenic code of *symbolic life/death*—sociogenic and symbolic codes that are specific to each *descriptive statement's* respective principle of nonphysical and nonbiological causality, thereby, its Word. The Word's sociogenic code of *symbolic life/death* therefore itself functions to *activate* the human brain's internal opiate-rewarding (placebo) and reward-blocking (nocebo) behavior regulatory motivating/demotivating neurochemical system, and always does so in the precisely mediated terms of each such storytellingly chartered *referent-we*, its human world's genre-specific or culture-specific behavior-regulatory principle of non-biologically determined causality.

Understood alongside the earlier discussion of origin myths and origin narratives as always hitherto genre-specific representations of origins, it follows therefore that the human-as-a-*homo-narrans*-species cannot preexist their hitherto always genre-specific or culture-specific representations of origin any more than—at the Second Event level of existence, that based on the emergence of (purely) biological life—*bees can preexist their beehives*. This then enables us to understand what had been the defining characteristics of our hybrid human origin: *the fully completed co-evolution, with the human brain, of the faculties of language and of storytelling*.

It is in the context of the above “nonnegotiable imperative,” therefore, that the successful conclusion of our conversation's quest to “give humanity



a different future” by giving it a new and species-inclusive account of our meta-Darwinian/neo-Darwinian, therefore hybrid Third Event origins entails the following: that the phenomenological experience of having both conceptually and imaginatively shared what had been the then Blombos Cave–type enactment of our matrix ancestral origins, one that had preceded all later differentiating enactment of origins, can itself be only made possible by the poetic extract as cited from Césaire’s “Poetry and Knowledge” — the latter as one in which he had not only put forward his proposal for a new and hybrid science of the Word/Nature but had also insisted, correlately, that the latter was also itself a science of which only “poetry can give an approximation of.” It is therefore as such a cited extract that it not only seems to bring before our very eyes, but at the same time enables us, within the terms of what had been South Africa’s martyred Steven Biko’s ecumenically inclusive call for a “new humanity,” to vicariously take part in the imagined reality of what would have been, de facto, performatively enacted by the then denizens of South Africa’s Blombos Cave. The latter as the quite different enactment of our species’ origin, its vastly extended past, that would now make possible for the peoples of contemporary post-Mandela South Africa, as well as our also Western and Westernized global selves, to now collectively give humanness a different future, itself historically chartered by that past.

Thus as Césaire wrote:

And here we are taken back to the first days of humanity. It is an error to believe that knowledge, to be born, had to await the methodical exercise of thought or the scruples of experimentation. I even believe that mankind has never been closer to certain truths than in the first days of the species. At the time when mankind discovered with emotion the first sun, the first rain, the first breath, the first moon. At the time when mankind discovered in fear and rapture the throbbing newness of the world.<sup>167</sup>

Césaire is here reenacting, therefore, in now *antibiocentric* terms, what had been Copernicus’s and the lay humanists of Renaissance Europe’s then also emancipatory *antinominalist theocentric* poetics of the *propter nos homines* — but now extending their then secularizing *referent-we* poetics to that of a *propter nos homines* remade to the now species-oriented “measure of the world.”

## Notes

1. Rinaldo Walcott was present at the original interview in 2007, and his contribution to that conversation is greatly appreciated by Wynter and McKittrick. Many of his ideas and questions impacted upon their collaborative dialogue between 2007 and 2014. Many thanks are extended to Mark Campbell, who transcribed and worked closely with the original interview in an earlier iteration. Jack Dresnick and Johanna Fraley have been thoughtful players in this conversation, working closely with Sylvia Wynter as interlocutors and collaborators for more than ten years. The assistance and insights of Nick Mitchell have also been invaluable; his contributions to this conversation—writing, ideas, transcribing, and more—are immeasurably appreciated. We are grateful for the compu-technological facilitation provided by Jack, Johanna, and Nick, too, of course. The work put forth by Wynter here can be understood alongside the 2001 seminar that took place at the Centre for Caribbean Thought at the University of West Indies, Mona, “After Man, towards the Human,” which dislodged and unblocked some difficult ideas for her. This was followed up by the edited collection Bogues, *After Man, towards the Human*, an important set of essays that are appreciated by Wynter (and KM!).
2. McKittrick, “The Science of the Word.”
3. Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being,” 257–337.
4. See Douglas and Ney on *homo oeconomicus* in their *Missing Persons*.
5. Danielli, “Altruism and the Internal Reward System,” 87–94. See also Goldstein, *Addiction*. See also, for an updated version of the above two, Stein, *The Genius Engine*.
6. “Beside phylogeny and ontogeny stands sociogeny.” Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 11.
7. Wynter is extending the concept of the performative enactment of gender to the performative enactment of all role allocations instituting of each genre of being human. This identifies her thinking on gender-genre, which stems from a long tradition of the relationship between both “gender” and “genre” as terms meaning “kind.” Here, “gender” is an indispensable function of our enacting of our “genres” of being human. Etymologically, “gender” and “genre” derive from the same root word (the Middle French *gendre*), which in turn derives from the Latin *genus*, both meaning “kind, sort.” On gender performance, see Butler, *Gender Trouble*.
8. Davis, *Planet of Slums*.
9. Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, 73. The links between Wynter’s work and that of Césaire’s meta-Western project was first put forward by Scott in “The Re-enchantment of Humanism,” 119–207. This is also taken up in Eudell, “Afterword,” 311–340.
10. Wallace, *Infinite Jest*; Nabokov, *Pale Fire*.

11. Note that Bateson's hybridly dual descriptive statement had been originally put forward in a paper presented under a similar title, "Conscious Purpose vs. Nature," at the July 1967 Congress on the Dialectics of Liberation. The paper was then published as part of the proceedings — themselves all then part of the emancipatory rethinking of the sixties hiatus.
12. On Wynter's use of "descriptive statement," see the Bateson guide quote and Bateson, "The Logical Categories of Learning and Communication," 282–283.
13. Césaire, "Poetry and Knowledge," 134–146. Note that in Césaire's original text, "word" is small case; in her interpretation and extension of his ideas, Wynter capitalizes "Word," drawing attention to its agentive and dynamic relationship with bios/nature while also nodding to the biblical "Word." See also Eudell, "Modernity and the 'Work of History,'" 1–24, for a discussion of Wynter's "Word."
14. Wynter is referring to Robert Bellarmine, an Italian Jesuit and cardinal of the Catholic Church, who demanded in 1616 that Galileo refuse Copernican insights with regard to the moving Earth and the immobile sun, since they called into question the church's original sin/spiritual redemption, behavior-regulatory schema.
15. Chorover, *From Genesis to Genocide*; Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*.
16. Hocart, *Kings and Councillors*. See also the guide quote by Mary Douglas and Steven Ney, as well as their discussion of this millennially functioning and ecumenically human modality of thought in Douglas and Ney, *Missing Persons*, 22–23.
17. Cf. Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, 159–163.
18. For this citation by Copernicus, as well as the overall implications of the counterpoetics of the *propter nos* as elaborated by Ficino and other Renaissance figures, see Hallyn, *The Poetic Structure of the World*, 53–57. See also Wynter, "Columbus and the Poetics of the *Propter Nos*," 251–286; Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*.
19. In her interview with Joyce King, Wynter writes: "The central point of biocentrism is that this conception of the human is the first universally applicable conception, which is, since Darwin, that we are biological beings . . . the belief is that we are biological beings who *then* create culture." King, "Race and Our Biocentric Belief System," 361 (emphasis added).
20. Wynter is referring to Aimé Césaire's keynote address, given at a philosophy conference in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in 1944. It was first published as "Poésie et connaissance" and has been reprinted in English (as "Poetry and Knowledge") and in French numerous times. See also Aimé Césaire, "Poetry and Knowledge," 134–146.
21. McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds*.
22. McKibben, *The End of Nature*.

23. This section should be thought about alongside the phenotypic relativization of concepts of beauty. In the case of the pre-Western Congolese who were, in the nineteenth century, documented by a Christian missionary priest as putting forth that “the one who is of the deepest black color is . . . to be the most beautiful. . . . [So] we Europeans appear ugly in their eyes.” Related, but different, in his 1871 representation of origins, *The Descent of Man*, Darwin draws on travelers’ reports from the early to middle nineteenth century to show that almost all human populations continued, precolonially, to take *their own* phenotypic physiognomy as *the* norm of beauty (non-Europeans had therefore also found Europeans ugly from their respective perspectives). Darwin had therefore collected a wide range of travelers’ reports in order to validate his own hypothesis with respect to sexual selection/sexual choice (which, with natural selection, could be seen as the cause of differentiation between all species, including, if perhaps less so, the human). Although the above sexual selection hypothesis was to be totally disproved by Mendelian genetics, the material Darwin had collected still provides valuable insight regarding the range of what was then the still origin-mythically, therefore also the aesthetically auto-centered magma of genre-specific precolonial peoples—the majority of whom were to be eventually and forcibly incorporated by the West during its second wave of imperial politico-territorial cum free-trade/economic expansion. With economic expansion, global populations are also folded into the single-model terms, therefore, of the West’s genre-specific uniquely secular norm of being and of beauty. The latter norm of beauty is overrepresented as if it were, therefore, the only highly evolved aesthetic norm of being human and underwrites, in Pierre Bourdieu’s terms, a “monopoly of humanity.” Axelson, *Culture Confrontation in the Lower Congo*; Darwin, *The Descent of Man*; Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being,” 291–292; Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 491. See also Teruel, “Narrative Description of the Kingdom of the Congo.”
24. The *material* underpinnings sustaining the globalized mode of *mimetic* desire began to abruptly come to an end in the wake of our interview (with the Great Crash/credit crisis beginning in 2008). This led directly to, as Wynter pointed out in a different telephonic context, the far-reaching implications of the new “gaze from below” movements such as those of the *Indignados* movement in Spain, or the Occupy movement(s) in the United States, Canada, and elsewhere. Centrally, those of the now *trans-class-trans-race* mode of trade union labor struggles directed, for the first time, at the West’s overall *liberal/neoliberal* monohumanist world-systemic societal order and its principle of domination/subordination.
25. At the time of our first interview in 2007, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had released a report that shaped our conversation. See United Nations, “Evidence Is Now ‘Unequivocal’ That Humans Are Causing Global Warming.”
26. Cf. “Skin Bleach Ban Fails.”

27. James Dewey Watson codiscovered the structure of DNA, with Francis Crick, in 1953. See also McKibben, *Enough*.
28. These two issues—skin bleaching/whitening/lightening and designer babies—are interlocking and draw attention to the links between climatic-environmental factors and the genetic-hereditary history of our phenotypic/physiognomic differentiation as a species. The climatic-environmental correspondence between high degrees of melanin, on the one hand, and the shutting off of the genes for the production of high degrees of melanin, on the other hand, is meaningful. The latter dynamic, the shutting off of genes for the production of high degrees of melanin, must be understood in relation to the definition of white and whiteness, as the biological norm, *only in the original context of a specific climatic-environmental situation and, indeed, geographic location*. See Juan Luis Arsuaga for an important discussion on race, phenotype, location (i.e., Europe, Africa, European skins, African skins), and vitamin D<sub>3</sub>, as this contextualization serves to explode the ostensible link between white skin color (physiognomy) and our contemporary Western-bourgeois origin-mythic belief that the European branch of our species is *the* bioevolutionarily evolved aesthetic norm of being human. Here the long-standing links between racial differentiation/phenotype and intelligence emerge as fictive while also propping up the grounded materiality of race and racism: the Western and Westernized *bourgeois* norms of beauty and the Western bourgeois *single model* of intelligence (or IQ in Herrnstein and Murray's genre-specific eugenic/dysgenic terms) are enjoined. Arsuaga, *The Neanderthal's Necklace*, 75–76; Herrnstein and Murray, *The Bell Curve*.
29. "A Warming Report," explains that "A U.N. climate panel is set to release a smoking gun report soon that confirms human activities are to blame for global warming and that predicts catastrophic global disruptions by 2100."
30. Price-Mars, *So Spoke the Uncle/Ainsi parla l'oncle*.
31. Wynter, "Is 'Development' a Purely Empirical Concept or Also Teleological?," 299–316.
32. Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God*.
33. Wynter further proposes that what we did not realize at the time was this: it was precisely such an alternative, now ecumenically human, thereby post-*homo oeconomicus* mode of material provisioning that was being concomitantly made thinkable. It was made thinkable by what had been the then multiple challenges of the anticolonial struggles, as well as those of the sixties' movements in the imperial centers themselves. The far-reaching anticolonial movements of the sixties, which, when taken together, had been collectively proposing a challenge to the West's prototype of being human in its second reinvented, now hegemonically bourgeois concept of Man<sub>2</sub> (in biocentric-liberal monohumanist terms, *homo oeconomicus*). Frantz Fanon was therefore to precisely diagnose the reasons—especially in the case of the non-Western anticolonial struggles—for our failure to have fully recognized what had then been, as it

still is, and even more urgently so now, the fundamental issue underlying all other issues: that is, the imperative of redefining, thereby of reinstitutionalizing, our being human in now meta-Freudian and meta-Darwinian, thereby meta-*secular* and thereby ecumenically human, profoundly revalorizing hybrid terms, that he himself had earlier put forward in 1952 in *Black Skin, White Masks*. As Fanon later wrote in his anti-imperial manifesto *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963), “Western Bourgeois racial prejudice as regards the nigger and Arab is a racism of contempt; it is a racism which minimizes what it hates. Bourgeois ideology, however, which is the proclamation of an essential quality between men, manages to appear logical in its own eyes by *inviting the sub-men to become human, and to take as their prototype Western humanity as incarnated in the Western bourgeoisie.*” Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, (trans. Farrington), 103.

34. See for this Rorty’s essay “Solidarity or Objectivity.”
35. For example, the ongoing struggle for the San to maintain and/or return to their homeland (currently identified as the Central Kalahari Game Reserve in Botswana). Many San have been forced to resettle in New Xade, an area on the outskirts of the ancestral land, even though their tribal geographies span South Africa, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Botswana, Namibia, and Angola. Add to this that various Y chromosome studies have demonstrated that the San carry some of the most divergent (oldest) Y chromosome haplogroups (thus, the San have proved to be a rich bioscientific resource for biologists, if not as yet a humanly culture/historical resource for anthropologists). For the biologists, these haplogroups are specific subgroups of haplogroups A and B, the two earliest branches on the human Y chromosome tree. The Masai, a semimigratory group located in Kenya and northern Tanzania, have also been pressured to settle rather than maintain their migratory lifestyle and nomadic farming techniques; they also continue the practice of circumcision, biocentrically defined as *genital cutting* by the West. Other initiatory rites of passage within Masai culture have also generated further controversy for Western and Westernized subjects. Both the San and the Masai have resisted the government demands to settle/resettle in the terms of their ruling Westernized elites’ mimetically adopted plans for so-called human/economic development.
36. Wynter is here paraphrasing the following quotation from Frantz Fanon (also presented in the guide quote above): “Having reflected on that, I grasp my narcissism with both hands and I turn my back on the degradation of those who would make man a mere mechanism.” (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 23).
37. Wynter refers here to Heidegger’s 1946 essay “Letter on Humanism,” 239–276.
38. Wynter was to further develop this hypothesis in an unpublished paper made available to the editor entitled “Human Being as Noun.”
39. Wynter credits Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido for initiating her early discussion of correlated “isms.” In their contributions to their edited col-

- lection *Out of the Kumbia*, both Boyce Davies and Fido avoid the trap of the separating identity categories (individual “isms”) by calling for a triadic perspectival approach (i.e., race, class, and gender), which had then made possible Wynter’s own essay “Afterword: Beyond Miranda’s Meanings,” as well as the kind of thinking that went into it. See Boyce Davies and Fido, “Preface,” ix–xx; Boyce Davies and Fido, “Introduction,” 1–24; Wynter, “Beyond Miranda’s Meanings,” 355–372.
40. Derrida, “The Ends of Man,” 31–57.
  41. Erikson, *Life History and the Historical Moment*; Maturana and Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition*.
  42. Erikson, *Life History and the Historical Moment*; Maturana and Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition*.
  43. Arsuaga, *The Neanderthal’s Necklace*.
  44. Newberg, D’Aquila, and Rause, *Why God Won’t Go Away*.
  45. Grassi, *Rhetoric as Philosophy*, 102–103. Grassi writes that religion “is defined as man’s endeavor to construct a holy and intact cosmos which he conceives to be an overpowering reality other than himself. . . . [the cosmos] surrounds men and encloses him in its order of reality.”
  46. Gauchet, *The Disenchantment of the World*.
  47. Nelson, *Economics as Religion*, xv. Here, as Nelson writes, “Another basic role of economists is to serve as the priesthood of a modern secular religion of economic progress that serves many of the same functions in contemporary society as earlier Christian and other religions did in their time.”
  48. Girardot, *Myth and Meaning in Early Taoism*, 6–8.
  49. Stackhouse, “Foreword,” ix.
  50. Cf. Ward, *The Big Questions in Science and Religion*.
  51. Maturana and Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition*.
  52. Maturana, “Introduction,” xvi.
  53. For example, Maturana and Varela, *The Tree of Knowledge*; Maturana and Poerksen, *From Being to Doing*; Varela, *Principles of Biological Autonomy*.
  54. Wynter, “‘Genital Mutilation’ or ‘Symbolic Birth?’,” 501–522.
  55. Heidegger, “Letter on Humanism,” 239–276.
  56. Prigogine, “Foreword,” 16.
  57. Cf. Rolston, *Three Big Bangs*.
  58. Wynter put forward this hypothesis, revolving around “gender” and “genre,” in the paper “Gender or the Genre of the Human?,” presented at a symposium held in honor of Sherley Anne Williams. A writer, poet, and professor of literature at UC San Diego, Williams first invited Wynter to join the faculty in the Department of Literature there.
  59. Wynter, “Rethinking ‘Aesthetics,’” 237–279.
  60. Butler, *Gender Trouble*.
  61. Herrnstein and Murray, *The Bell Curve*.
  62. Sahlins, *Apologies to Thucydides*.

63. On the functioning of the brain's endogenous opiate-reward (placebo) and opiate-blocking (nocebo) neurochemical system, see Stein, *The Genius Engine*.
64. Ward, *The Big Questions in Science and Religion*.
65. See, in this context, Hans Blumenberg's citation of Darwin's admission that it had been the clergyman cum economist Thomas Malthus whose seminal *Essay on Population* (1798) had given him "a theory with which to work," the result of which was to lead to far-reaching negative consequences. See for this Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, 224–225.
66. Isaac, "Aspects of Human Evolution," 509–543 (emphasis added).
67. The innovative proposal that we should see all origin accounts, including both those to which we give the name "origin myths" and those, like Darwin's, to which we give the name "science," as being functions of each human society's "representation of origins" is also put forth in Yanagisako and Delaney, "Naturalizing Power," 1–22.
68. Godelier, *The Enigma of the Gift*, 171–175.
69. The biblical monotheistic theo-cosmogony of Genesis, in its Christian variant, reveals this with its sociogenic code of symbolic life/death (redeemed spirit/fallen flesh) and its invented extrahumanly mandating agent—the sole creator God (himself portrayed with the redemptive figure of his Son, Christ, the Messiah. This, too, is seen in Islam with its sole creator god, Allah, absolutized by a sociogenic code of symbolic life (that adheres to the central *tawhid* doctrine of the faith and the belief "that there is no god but God and Muhammad is God's messenger") and the code of *symbolic death* (that adheres to shirk, the practice of "obscuring God's oneness in any way"). In Islam, too, the sociogenic code recognizes the sin of greed, of not paying the tithe or *zakat* and eschewing the *divine obligation* to care for and protect the poor (and any other grave sin that keeps the believer apart from God, *One God*). In Judaism the first Abrahamic monotheism is the theo-cosmogony where the sole creator god Yahweh is the extrahumanly mandating forerunner analogue—when seen transcognomically, in relation to Christianity's Jehovah and Islam's Allah. Here the sociogenic code of *symbolic life* requires being religiously adherent to the covenant that Yahweh had made with his chosen people; *symbolic death* is that of a turning away from any such adherence. This because, as in the other two later Abrahamic theo-cosmogonies, their respective codes of *symbolic life/death* would have also had to be enacted in subjectively experienced terms, by means of the semantically, positively/negatively marked terms able to activate the opiate-reward (*placebo*) effect (defining of *symbolic life*) and the opiate reward-blocking (*nocebo*) effect (defining of *symbolic death*). In all three cases, therefore, this would have enabled the three monotheisms, their positively/negatively marked *symbolic life/death* terms, to be chartered by their respective theo-cosmogonically chartered theologies and therefore co-function at the *bios* level with the storytelling cum mythmaking mechanisms unique to the



- human brain See Aslan, *No God but God*; Newberg, D'Aquili, and Rause, *Why God Won't Go Away*, especially 54–76.
70. Cf. Yanagisako and Delaney, “Naturalizing Power,” 1–22. For an in-depth critique of Darwin’s projected agency of natural selection/dysselection in relation to artificial breeding/artificial selection, see Fodor and Piatelli-Palmarini, *What Darwin Got Wrong*, as well as Lewontin, “Not So Natural Selection.”
  71. Cf. Michel Foucault, who writes: “The configuration that defines their positivity and gives them their roots in the modern episteme at the same time *makes it impossible for them to be sciences*; and if it is then asked why they assumed that title, it is sufficient to recall that it pertains to the *archaeological* definition of their roots that they summon and receive the *transference of models borrowed from the sciences*. It is therefore not man’s irreducibility, what is designated as his invincible transcendence, nor even his excessively great complexity, that prevents him from becoming an object of sciences. Western culture has constituted, under the name of *man*, a being who, by one and the same interplay of reasons, must be a positive domain of *knowledge* and cannot be *an object of science*.” Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 400 (emphasis added).
  72. Erikson, *Toys and Reason*.
  73. For an up-to-date yet precise post-the-fall-of-the-Berlin-Wall description of the scale of these now globally incorporated systemic injustices, see Badiou, “The Communist Hypothesis,” 38.
  74. Derrida, “The Ends of Man,” 35.
  75. Pagden, “Human Rights, Natural Rights, and Europe’s Imperial Legacy,” 171–197; Williams, *The Divided World*.
  76. For example, and as so often presently tackled, the climate problem is discrete from the poverty problem, which is discrete from the addiction problem, and so forth. Wynter’s insights here thus also point to the limits of disciplinary boundaries (i.e., only economists can define economic well-being and “solve” the problem of economic crises).
  77. Pocock, “Civic Humanism and Its Role in Anglo-American Thought,” 80–103.
  78. See, for this concept, Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production*.
  79. On the men/native divide, Jean-Paul Sartre wrote: “The earth numbered two thousand million inhabitants, *five* hundred million *men* and one thousand five hundred million *natives*. The former had the Word; the others had the use of it.” Sartre, “Preface,” 7. To be noted here also is C. L. R. James’s proposal that a more adequate translation of Fanon’s 1961 text title would be, literally, *The Condemned of the World*—that is, condemned to their/our overall subordinated status according to the *principle of dominion* (i.e., that of the governing sociogenic principle enacting of our present Western bourgeois genre of being human). See James, “C. L. R. James on the Origins,” 29. Many thanks to Aaron Kamugisha for his archival assistance with the James reference. Wynter also asks us to note that Fanon’s call, at the end of *Les damnés*, to set forth a “new man,” is usually interpreted in Marxian terms: as that of instituting

a new mode of production that itself will bring forth a new man. In his first chapter, “Concerning Violence,” however, what he emphasizes is the issue of *decolonization*—and, one can add, de-settler apartheidization, and indeed, de-imperializing—as instituting a new *species* of man.

80. Wynter also notes: This program, then entitled African and Afro-American studies, had the good fortune to have been first headed by Professor St. Clair Drake, who was a distinguished full professor of anthropology and sociology. St. Clair Drake had no hesitation in helping to initiate as well as teach in the new program, since, as he was to later argue, the black students who called for the program were asking new questions that could not be answered in any of the available disciplinary fields. His own involvement in African studies, as well as that of his fellow anthropologist Professor James Lowell Gibbs, ensured that the program’s intellectual focus also drew attention to the ways in which the Afro-American historico-cultural tradition had uniquely crossed the Atlantic from Africa to the New World, traveling with the Negro/Negra slaves in the holds of the Middle Passage slave ships to be then rerooted in the New World, thereby giving origin to what is one of the now hegemonic popular-political musical cultures of the globe. This program was to be later reduced—fortunately for me, just prior to my own already planned retirement from Stanford—to being merely one aspect of the Stanford history department’s intellectual Counter-Reformation Program, entitled Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity!
81. See also Jacques-Garvey, ed., *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, Hill, ed., *Marcus Garvey, Life and Lessons*, Lewis, *Marcus Garvey*.
82. Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, vol. 1; Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, vol. 2.
83. Cf. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*; Heilbroner, *Behind the Veil of Economics*; Badiou, “The Emblem of Democracy,” especially 6–8.
84. Maté, *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts*. In a recent talk, Gabor Maté stressed the systemically induced nature of the epidemic of drug addiction; however, he attributed it only to the capitalist *economy*, rather than to the overall world system’s enacting of *homo oeconomicus* and its attendant ethno-class genre of being human that is overrepresented—in liberal monohumanist terms—as if its *member class* were isomorphic with the *class of classes* of being human. Maté, “Capitalism Makes Us Crazy.”
85. Barney, cited in Rue, *Everybody’s Story*, 3. See also Barney, *Global 2000 Revisited*.
86. Barney, cited in Rue, *Everybody’s Story*, 3.
87. Barney, cited in Rue, *Everybody’s Story*, 3.
88. Barney, cited in Rue, *Everybody’s Story*, 3.
89. Cf. Humphrey, *A History of the Mind*.
90. On our shaman-like roles from our origin until today, see Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*, 8–21. Note also his further revelation that in all human societies, the self-definition of their respective intellectual cadres involves, often

- unknowingly, “the reproduction and reinforcement of a given social configuration and—with it, a given (or claimed) status for the group” (8–9).
91. Notably, while we may not all occupy the 1 percent of the upper bourgeoisie’s corporate financial oligarchy, we are, in the context of, inter alia, our status quo system of initiatory learning, at the symbolic life core of our own now globally hegemonic Western and Westernized ethno-class, national, and transnational world-systemic order.
  92. Nagel, *The View from Nowhere*, 11. John Davis gives an illuminating example of this auto-instituting, pseudospeciating, behavior-inducing imperative. In *Exchange*, he writes of Trobrianders: those “who wished to be considered *good of his kind* had to participate in *urigubu* and *youlo*, in *kula* and *kovisi*, and to do so fairly and honestly with some success. We expect our acquaintances to try to be rounded people with a reasonable personal repertoire, then we may call them good of their kind—good men, good women, good shopkeepers, good Registrars. In my view, *it is the notion we have of what a full life and what a whole rounded person should be* that leads us to attempt to play a number of different pieces from the repertoire available.” Davis, *Exchange*, 46 (emphasis added). Davis outlines what is, in effect, a *bios/mythoi* law of auto-institution; therefore, a Trobriand man *cannot preexist* the cosmogonically chartered sociogenic code of symbolic *life/death*, by means of whose “second set of instructions” alone he can performatively enact himself as being human in the *genre-specific terms* of being a “good man” of his Trobriander *kind*. Nor, indeed, with respect to our contemporary, now purely secular, therefore Western/Westernized bourgeois (i.e., Man2) own, can we.
  93. For a discussion of the ways in which transatlantic slavery interconnected with Man1 and Man2, see Wynter, “1492,” 5–57; Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being,” 257–337; Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*; Mudimbe, “Romanus Pontifex (1454) and the Expansion of Europe,” 58–65.
  94. For the role of the Negro/Negra archipelago’s embodiment of ultimate human Otherness to the West’s now secularizing self-conceptions, see, for example, Césaire, *La Tragédie du Roi Christophe*; Césaire, *Aimé Césaire*.
  95. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 8. W. E. B. DuBois was the first black graduate to receive a PhD from Harvard, in 1895.
  96. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 7–15.
  97. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 30.
  98. Cleaver, *Soul on Ice*. It is therefore important to also note that the issue of “double consciousness,” as raised by Cleaver, enabled him to pose such a question only in the context of his own self-awakening, which had been made possible by the then ongoing 1960s range of uprisings. This awakening, therefore, enabled him to pose questions regarding the then nonconscious drives that had led to his earlier brutal rape assaults on white women, while preparing for doing so by “practicing on black women” as merely, so to speak, their *stand-ins*.
  99. Neal, “The Black Arts Movement,” 36.

100. Wynter is referring to Rosalie Morales's poem "We're All in the Same Boat," 91–93.
101. The process and enactment of *initiation*, as originally invented by the so-called primitive peoples of the first *nomadic* human societies of black Africa, is *the* institution specific to all human societies, whether given the Greek name of *paideia*, articulated through Christian baptism or Jewish bar mitzvahs, or enacted vis-à-vis secular societies' *education systems*. Anne Solomon's description of the rock paintings of the ancient San of the Kalahari, some of whose groups have been proved to be genetically nearest to our real-life empirical human ancestors—that is, not Adam and Eve—are meaningful in this respect. On the rock paintings, she found depicted what seemed to be initiation ceremonies, many of which were specific to the women. Solomon, "Rock Art in Southern Africa," 42–51. We can extend this hypothesis to notice the fictively eusocializing institution of initiation, as the founding institution of our being human (itself enacting of the Third Event origin of our hybrid human-level existence both biological and metabiological). With respect to the variant pseudospeciating origin myths of Franks, Gauls, Britons (from Brutus), and a range of others, see the extraordinarily brilliant study of Richard Waswo, *The Founding Legend of Western Civilization*. Waswo investigates the multiple ramifications of the founding origin myth, or legend of descent, on whose basis post-Renaissance Western civilization was to institute itself from then on until today, as the first planetarily extended, globally incorporated empire in our human history. See also Eudell, "Modernity and the 'Work of History,'" 1–24. On Frantz Fanon and the Gauls, see Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 147.
102. For both the claim and the counterclaim's wider context, as that of the West's chartering Renaissance literary-poetic origin-mythic or *Legend of Descent*, see Waswo, *The Founding Legend of Western Civilization*.
103. Michel Foucault discusses the "specific intellectual" in the essay "Truth and Power." See Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 109–133. Mikhail Epstein's thinking on "transcultural" can be found in Berry, Johnson, and Miller-Pogcagar, "An Interview with Mikhail Epstein," 103–118. In this interview Epstein proposes that while the institution of *culture* freed the human species from subordination to nature, only a *transcultural* perspective can free us from our subordination to any *one* culture.
104. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 142.
105. Simon, "A Conversation with Michel Foucault," 201 (emphasis added).
106. There is another parallel here, however. Foucault—although a "normal" French/Western bourgeois subject—would, with respect to his sexual orientation, have also experienced the "double consciousness" of being. On the one hand, he was a "*normal*" middle-class professional subject, and as such—if only potentially so—was also a French colonizer, to be entrusted, if now only in neo-imperial terms, with France's "civilizing mission." On the other hand, within the same ethno-class "governing tape of the world," he would have also

- had to experience himself as being “abnormal” as nonheterosexual. Thus, in Darwin’s implicit terms—at the end of *The Descent of Man*—Foucault would be cast as *naturally dysselected*, because he is a *nonbiological procreator* of “the fittest” progeny. Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 310–311.
107. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 9.
  108. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 9.
  109. Arsuaga, *The Neanderthal’s Necklace*, 304.
  110. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 16.
  111. Note, too, that Fanon—born out of the same objectively instituted contradictory, subjectively experienced situation as DuBois—had himself gone on to fight as a Frenchman (*evolué* or not) when France was invaded by a then intra-European imperializing Nazi-Aryan Germany. This occurred in spite of what was to be his later relentless indictment of French settler imperialism and its ruthlessly deployed militarized force against the indigenous anticolonial struggle of the Algerian Arabs. As we know, Fanon was to actively take part in this anticolonial struggle on the side of the Algerians. To be noted here, therefore is that the telos of all his struggles was against the institution of *empire* itself, whether that of totalitarian Nazi Germany or that of liberal-democratic France. Empire, then, is an institution whose destructive effects he was determined to bring to an end. His joining the Algerian anticolonial struggle was therefore the result of what had been his own personal experience when fighting for the French and of the reality, nevertheless, that its imperial attitudes with respect to non-European peoples were themselves a variant of the Nazis’ with respect to other European peoples.
  112. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 9–10 (emphasis added). On the generic and gendered uses of Man—albeit through a normative white and middle-class feminist thought lens—see Gallop, *Reading Lacan*. Fanon’s use of “he” and “man” as universal, of course, reflects his discursive-historical context, although the many debates on his privileging of masculinity are also informative. For an overview, see Sharpley-Whiting, *Frantz Fanon*.
  113. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 11 (emphasis added).
  114. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 11 (emphasis added).
  115. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 11 (emphasis added).
  116. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 11 (emphasis added).
  117. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 9–12 (emphasis added).
  118. As the historian Peter Green points out, before the Industrial Revolution, all imperial world civilizations, including that of the West, had to be slaveholding ones. Green, *The Hellenistic Age*, 77. This, however, had also been the case *before* the West, of the “even more” large-scale slaveholding civilization of a religio-imperial Islam. In this context, slaves had been composed of many pagan peoples or races, including pagan Europeans. This was an extensive slave trade, emerging out of a largely decentralized stateless black Africa and coexisting with several large, even imperial states and kingdoms. The pagan slaves,

however, were to be both classified respectively as *abd* rather than as *mamluk*, and thereby treated as the most stigmatized and inferiorized of all slaves. While given that, from the eighth century onward, Islam had also conquered the Iberian Peninsula (i.e., Spain and Portugal), with this only ending with the final reconquest of the peninsula by Portugal and Spain in 1492, this tradition of the stigmatization of black slaves, both in Ham's curse biblical terms and in *by nature irrational ones*—a stigma that Islam itself had also inherited from the Greco-Roman imperial slaveholding cum philosophical tradition of Aristotle—had then been passed on from Islam to Christian Spain and Portugal. See, in this respect, Segal, *The Other Black Diaspora*. See also Sweet, "The Iberian Roots of American Racist Thought," 143–166.

119. Hyers, *The Meaning of Creation*.
120. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 12 (emphasis added).
121. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 142.
122. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 142.
123. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 142. The terms "band" or "ethnic" to describe the groupings of the foraging/hunter/gathering Pygmy peoples are themselves merely provisional ones, seeing that, as the ethnographer Colin Turnbull emphasizes, the Mbuti (Pygmy) people whom he studied "frequently changed the groups to which they belonged, through a process of 'fission and fusion,'" and were therefore not "subject to the clan system of the agricultural peoples of Africa with whom they had millennially coexisted and exchanged services." Turnbull, cited in Ichikawa, "The Japanese Tradition in Central African Hunter-Gatherer Studies," 105.
124. Regarding these initiation rites in the case of the French bourgeois subject, see Louis Althusser on teachers, teaching, and the role of school, where he represents it as a transumptively inherited ideological state apparatus (thereby, Wynter proposes, the state's *initiatory apparatus*). Althusser writes, "So little do [teachers] suspect . . . that their own devotion contributes to the maintenance and nourishment of this ideological representation of the School, which makes the School today as 'natural,' indispensable, useful and even beneficial for our contemporaries as the Church was 'natural,' indispensable and generous for our ancestors a few centuries ago." Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," 85–126. For the initiation rites of the Pygmy, see Turnbull, *The Forest People*.
125. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 143 (emphasis added).
126. The most powerfully illuminating pages of Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* are those that chronicle his own personal experience of the above trauma in the wake of his arrival as an adult in France. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 109–140. See also Wynter, "Towards the Sociogenic Principle," 30–66.
127. See, for this *relativizing* identification of the West's concept of *human nature* as if an ecumenically human one, Rorty, "Solidarity or Objectivity?"
128. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 157–163; cf. Gordon, *Fanon and the Crisis of European Man*.

129. This emphasis on cultural continuity between the familial and the societal points to Fanon's residency under radical François de Tosquelles, who emphasized the role of culture in psychopathology.
130. Wynter's discussion of the Pygmy is to be read alongside Colin Turnbull's research on the Pygmy, who, when understood through the religio-centered world of Egypt's pharaonic civilization, were defined as a "tiny people who sing and dance to their gods, a dance that had never been seen before," and therefore as *Dancers of God*. At the beginning of the modern world, however, the English anatomist Edward Tyson had classified the Pygmy in "Chain of Being" terms—which is apparent in the title of his treatise "The Anatomy of a Pygmy Compared with That of a Monkey and a Man." As it turned out, however, the skeleton he had thought was that of a Pygmy had been that of a chimpanzee! See Turnbull, *The Forest People*, 15–16. The latter classification was to live on, however, as part of the popular folklore superstitions of the West, if no longer as part of what had long been its natural-scientific racism, in the wake of the cracking of our species' DNA code. Wynter's discussion of the color line and the eugenic/dysgenic divide can be read in Wynter, "Columbus, the Ocean Blue and 'Fables That Stir the Mind,'" 141–164.
131. See for the above process as distinct from Darwin's ostensible purely top-down natural selection, the following, as now identified by the new field of *evo-devo*: "Genes and phenotypes still count, of course; but the *evo-devo* revolution has stressed that evolution is essentially the evolution of the arrow that connects them. The slogan is: evolution is the evolution of ontogenies. In other words, the whole process of development, from the fertilized egg to the adult, modulates the phenotypic effects of genotypic changes, and thus 'filters' the phenotypic options that ecological variables ever have a chance to select from." See Fodor and Piatelli-Palmarini, *What Darwin Got Wrong*, 27.
132. Newberg, D'Aquili, and Rause, *Why God Won't Go Away*.
133. Cf. Yanagisako and Delaney, "Naturalizing Power," 1–22.
134. Cf. Jordan, "Poem about My Rights," 309–311. See also Audre Lorde, Nikki Giovanni, the Combahee River Collective, Dionne Brand, Angela Davis, and Jayne Cortez.
135. See also Wynter, "On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory," 108.
136. McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds*, 38. The concept "terrain of struggle"—as discussed in *Demonic Grounds*—is borrowed from Scott, *Refashioning Futures*, 31.
137. McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds*, x–xi (emphasis added).
138. Cf. Headrick, *Power over Peoples*.
139. In our discussions of Blombos, we returned again and again to the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre (which Wynter wrote an elegiac poem about while residing in the United Kingdom, which was read on a BBC program and beamed to South Africa) and the 2011 Marikana Massacre. Wynter's reading of Blombos here is thought about alongside these specific geopolitical contexts of *les*

- damnés*—and the practice reinvention in relation to Steven Biko’s call, before his death in a prison cell, for a new humanity. Biko, *I Write What I Like*.
140. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 23.
  141. See, for an insightful analogy, Sahlins, *Apologies to Thucydides*.
  142. Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, 68.
  143. Derrida, “The Ends of Man,” 35.
  144. The shared existential experiences of Césaire and Fanon, although of different generations, had led to the shared quality of their thought. While Fanon is partly dismissive of the movement of negritude, which had been spearheaded by Césaire as well as by Leopold Senghor of Senegal, in an interview with Marie-Line Sephoclé, Césaire had stressed that there would have been no need for the counter-self-assertion of negritude (the normal humanness of being black) had there been no *Blanchitude* (i.e., the West’s imperializing assertion of its hereditary variation or *race*’s generic claim to be the *only* incarnation of “civilized,” thereby of highly evolved, human normalcy). Thus, as Césaire further argued, while for him “Negritude is simply the state of being Black,” one should not forget that there had been a time when “alienation prevailed among Black people,” to such an extent that “there were men whose ideal was to make people *forget that they were Black*.” Indeed, in the Paris of his student days, there were Antilleans who wanted “to pass for South Americans. It was a very serious problem!” This “problem” was to be central to Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952). Sephoclé, “Interview with Aimé Césaire,” 369 (emphasis added).
  145. Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, 23. Césaire writes: “It seems that in certain circles they pretend to have discovered in me an ‘enemy of Europe’ and a prophet of the return to the ante-European past. For my part, I search in vain for the place where I could have expressed such views; where I ever underestimated the importance of Europe in the history of human thought; where I ever preached a *return* of any kind; where I ever claimed that there could be a *return*. What I have said was something quite different.”
  146. This talk, written by Césaire in French as well as in the highly poetic prose, whose form was thereby intended to emphasize the quite different dimensions of his new proposal, is one whose most successful English translation is that by A. J. Arnold, published in Césaire, *Lyric and Dramatic Poetry*, xlii–lvi. Also cited above as Césaire, “Poésie et connaissance,” 158–170; Césaire, “Poetry and Knowledge,” 134–146.
  147. Keith Ward’s insights are important to note here as he explores the phenomenon of human consciousness, with respect both to quantum physics and to religion and its theological Word, functioning at the level of consciousness of a uniquely *non-biologically determined*, if biologically implemented (i.e., at the level of the brain by the “laws of nature”), behavior-regulatory *principle of causality*. See Ward, *The Big Questions in Science and Religion*. See also Rosenblum and Kuttner, *Quantum Enigma*.
  148. Césaire, *Lyric and Dramatic Poetry*, xliii–xliv (emphasis added).



149. Gugliotta, "The Great Human Migration."
150. Gugliotta, "The Great Human Migration." See also Henshilwood, d'Errico, and Watts, "Engraved Ochres from the Middle Stone Age," 27–47.
151. Gugliotta, "The Great Human Migration," (emphasis added).
152. Gugliotta, "The Great Human Migration," (emphasis added).
153. Williams, *The Mind in the Cave*, 98 (emphasis added).
154. Gugliotta, "The Great Human Migration."
155. Wilfred, "In African Cave," A14 (emphasis added).
156. Wilfred, "In African Cave," A14 (emphasis added).
157. Wilfred, "In African Cave," A14 (emphasis added).
158. Wilfred, "In African Cave," A14 (emphasis added).
159. Cf. Pandian, *Culture, Religion, and the Sacred Self*.
160. See, for this, Granh, *Blood, Bread, and Roses*.
161. Cf. Lévi-Strauss, *Mythologiques*.
162. The Blombos/southern African region was deemed a world heritage site—and officially named "the cradle of humankind"—by UNESCO in 1999. See UNESCO, "Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa." See also Wayman, "Evolution World Tour."
163. On the origin of humans (where today's Angola and Namibia meet), see Wade, "Eden Maybe," A6. On genetic diversity and genetic drift within and beyond southwest Africa, see Tishkoff and Kidd, "Implications of Biogeography," 21–27; Destro-Bisol, "Interview with Sarah Tishkoff," 637–644. On the correlation of language and genetic diversity in Africa, see Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa*. On language diversity, genetic diversity, and the origin of human language in Africa, see Atkinson, "Phonemic Diversity," 346–349. Atkinson studied the phonemes—or the perceptually distinctive sounds that differentiate words used in 504 languages—and found that the number of phonemes is highest in Africa, and decreases with increasing distance from Africa. Atkinson also notes that "the pattern of phoneme usage around the world mirrors the pattern of human genetic diversity, which also declines as humans expanded to colonize [i.e., humanize] other regions."
164. Ward, *The Big Questions in Science and Religion*, 267 (emphasis added).
165. Danielli, "Altruism and the Internal Reward System," 87–94. Note Danielli's brilliant universalizing of Marx's seminal "opium of the people" concept—itsself originally applied only to religion and its order of discourse—which he connects to all orders of discourse, including that of our now purely secular biocentric (rather than theocentric) own.
166. Briggs and Peat, "Interview," 69–74; Goldstein, *Addiction*; Stein, *The Genius Engine*; Newberg, D'Aquili, and Rause, *Why God Won't Go Away*.
167. Césaire, *Lyric and Dramatic Poetry*, xliii–xlix (emphasis added).

Sylvia Wynter  
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**Katherine McKittrick, ed.**  
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