

INTRODUCTION

Imperialism was and still is a political philosophy whose aim and purpose for being is territorial expansion and its legitimation. A serious underestimation of imperialism, however, would be to consider territory in too literal a way. Gaining and holding an *imperium* means gaining and holding a domain, which includes a variety of operations, among them constituting an area, accumulating its inhabitants, having power over its ideas, people and, of course, its land, converting people and ideas to the purposes and for the use of a hegemonic imperial design; all this as a result of being able to treat reality appropriatively.

—Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine*

When you have no knowledge of your history, you're just another animal; in fact, you're a Negro; something that's nothing.

—Malcolm X, *By Any Means Necessary*

How can we marry our thought so that we can now pose the questions whose answers can resolve the plight of the Jobless archipelagoes, the N.H.I. categories, and the environment?

—Sylvia Wynter, “‘No Humans Involved’:
An Open Letter to My Colleagues”

A RACIAL NON-BEING

Malcolm X makes the preceding statement on June 28, 1964, at the founding rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU). His reference to the Negro as a kind of nothingness is not a stray remark.

He is making a historical, political, and philosophical point about non-White people, and it is a theme that runs through many of his speeches and interviews from the early 1960s. The sort of non-being X invokes is not a logical negation where one might begin with p and then derive not-p. Nor is it the nothingness one encounters in daily affairs, as when checking the mailbox and finding nothing. It does not find precursors in the history of philosophy in Nietzsche's nihilism or the nothingness Heidegger claims one faces in anxiety. As he makes clear, the non-being X is concerned with is distinctively racial. This singular experience of the nothing, unique to those denied history, land, culture, and identity, is captured by the word Negro insofar as that name "attaches you to nothing."¹ In this case, 'Negro' is a racial non-being.

A commonplace holds that racism is a doctrine representing certain peoples as inferior, as less than human, or even as animals. X is not testifying here to that experience of racism. He will not say that once a person is identified as a Negro they are stripped of their humanity and treated as an animal. Notice that X corrects himself in the preceding quote and draws a sharp distinction between the animal and the Negro. Rather, 'Negro' strips a person of any existence whatsoever, as he makes clear in a speech from January 24, 1965:

Negro doesn't tell you anything, I mean nothing, absolutely nothing. What do you identify with it? Tell me. Nothing. What do you attach to it? Nothing. It's completely in the middle of nowhere. It doesn't give you a language because there is no such thing as a Negro language. It doesn't give you a country because there is no such thing as a Negro country. It doesn't give you a culture—there's no such thing as a Negro culture, it doesn't exist. The land doesn't exist, the culture doesn't exist, the language doesn't exist, and the man doesn't exist. They take you out of existence by calling you a Negro.²

It is not that the Negro is somehow 'less-than,' as if one could measure intelligence, skull size, or IQ and then plot it on a scale below the White

race. ‘Negro’ is beyond measurement. The Negro X is talking about does not exist to be measured. Denied history, culture, and existence—this is how one is chained to the nothing. Whence this nothingness?

Malcolm X is among the first to comment on this question of a racial non-being, but he is not the first, and he is certainly not the last. One finds references to an experience of a racial non-being dating back at least to Sojourner Truth’s testimony from 1850.³ It would not be surprising were X himself expounding on a theme found in Marcus Garvey’s writings. Garvey agrees that the narrative of racial inferiority does not do justice to the meaning of ‘Negro,’ and he too wants to dissociate the word from that interpretation. On April 16, 1923, Garvey publishes an article called “Who and What Is a Negro?” in which he criticizes the anthropologist Franz Boas for refusing to identify as Negroes the Moroccans and Algerians employed by France to invade Germany in World War I. Garvey points out that, according to the logic of Boas and other European anthropologists, as soon as one is “recognized in any useful occupation or activity,”⁴ he or she ceases to be a Negro. In other words, the Negro is, by definition, without purpose. One ceases to be a Negro once one is given a purpose, even if that purpose is to merely serve as a thing or tool. Garvey makes this clear in his definition of ‘Negro’: “A person of dark complexion or race, who has not accomplished anything and to whom others are not obligated for any useful service.”⁵ He goes on to state,

If the Moroccans and Algerians were not needed [. . .] to save the French nation from extinction, they would have been called Negroes as usual, but now that they have rendered themselves useful to the higher appreciation of France they are no longer members of the Negro race.⁶

By this logic, the non-White, non-Negro is identified as a tool; they render a reason to Europe. With a use, a purpose, a reason, the Algerian and Moroccan become a kind of thing, however minimal that might be in the eyes of the anthropologists. But the Negro is without reason. The Negro is not even a thing. *Nihil est sine ratio*—Nothing is without reason.

It is no accident that when Malcolm X concludes his presentation on the problem of non-being at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem, he goes on to announce the schedule for a number of regular classes offered by the OAAU in Arabic, Swahili, and Huasa.⁷ For if that with neither culture nor history is nothing, it is logical to develop those characteristics in order to escape non-being. Of course, X's resistance to this nothingness is diverse and nuanced. It includes not only the 'ballot and the bullet' but above all a program aimed at becoming human through historical self-determination. It could even be said that the overriding motivation behind all X's political work is to reclaim a kind of destiny for non-White peoples around the world. This idea, which is not unique to X and can be found throughout the works of Marcus Garvey and others, concerns the future insofar as it addresses the political and economic prospects of a people. However, this future is not possible without a rigorous reckoning with the past, a point X makes clear when he states, for example,

Armed with the knowledge of our past, we can with confidence charter a course for the future. Culture is an indispensable weapon in the freedom struggle. We must take hold of it and forge the future with the past.⁸

The future being forged is humanity. That is, X seeks a metamorphosis from the nothing to the human. Of course, Islam, politics, and even violence remain essential to X's program. Yet, if a people are to become human, then one must recognize the "inalienable right of all our people to control our own destiny."⁹ And that future requires a methodical consideration of the past, since it is precisely the lack of history and the racist construction of a people that have supposedly neither accomplished anything in history nor even served any purpose, that binds one to non-being in the first place. I am talking about Malcolm X here, but one can just as well find nearly identical decolonial strategies in Latin America and the Middle East. Gustavo Gutiérrez writes that liberation in Latin America must include not only economic and political reform but

also the creation of a society that “will be the artisan of its own destiny.”¹⁰ In Lebanon, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary General of Hezbollah, declares the primary aim of America’s ‘war on terror’ has been to deny Arabs the right to “assuming the historical roles that people select for themselves.”¹¹ One might begin to wonder if Malcolm X’s ‘Negro’ is a not global phenomenon, the product of an imperial ideology aimed at colonizing time and history just as much as territorial space.

The problem of racial non-being is certainly broad. However, the ambition of this book is to cultivate a new understanding of philosophy’s mind-body problem. I concede it is not entirely obvious the extent to which Malcolm X is articulating and thinking through a particular mind-body problem. However, X comprehends philosophy’s mind-body problem exceedingly well if readers are open to the possibility that professional academic philosophy has not entirely grasped the history and contours of that problem. As a result of that oversight, the field is not well positioned to recognize a range of solutions and experts, of which Malcolm X is but one. The intersection of X’s ‘Negro’ and the mind-body problem can be clarified if one considers the possibility of a mind-body problem that is, at its roots, a problem of racism. In this book, I trace Modern Europe’s invention of a hereditary and racialized mind-body union. This racial union, deemed in some cases to be born ‘without reason,’ becomes the site of a racial non-being. The institution of a racial non-being, conceived as a mind-body union without reason, does not begin with Descartes, as is often claimed for philosophy’s orthodox mind-body problem. The overlap of a certain brand of racism with the question of the mind-body union is only fully realized in Immanuel Kant’s work. In Kant’s essays on race from the 1770s and 1780s one discovers the orthodox mind-body problem is solved when he manages to formulate a theory of race that simultaneously accounts for the sexual regeneration of the human being and the union of mind and body. Accordingly, a key premise in the extrapolation of another mind-body problem is that ‘race,’ as Kant conceives it, effectively solves the problem of how mind and body relate. However, Kant’s solution is not fully appreciated if one does not also see

it opening onto another mind-body problem. Specifically, once Kant offers a theory of sex that accounts for the mind-body union, this science instantly strips certain racial mind-body unions of any relationship to being. Hence the problem of a racialized union without being, a problem that both grows within and yet is heterogeneous to the problem of how a being, composed of mind and body, can be united.

This other mind-body problem is grounded in its own history, with its alternate protagonists and innovators, but perhaps more importantly this problem is grounded in a distinct testimony. When one speaks of the orthodox problem of *a being* that is *not one*, this discourse refers to certain basic experiences such as the death of another or even sleep, wherein the body is present but the functions of the intellect, be it a soul, mind, or consciousness, are no longer animated. These experiences suggest human existence is a composite, leading to philosophical speculations on the nature of the conjunction between these parts. In more contemporary terms, one might highlight the experience of consciousness insofar as it reduces to neither neural processes nor the elements of the physical world as they are currently understood. The longstanding question for philosophers has been just how the experience of consciousness can arise from the purely physical systems of the brain, a problem David Chalmers famously calls ‘the hard problem of consciousness.’

To some extent this is a legitimate question, grasped by nearly every lay person. Although phenomenologists might point out how this problem was long ago dissolved in the early works of Heidegger or Merleau-Ponty, my aim is neither to defend nor outright reject the orthodox problem, but rather to use it as a pivot to move in a new direction. As I will continue to emphasize throughout the book, the experience of a single being that is nevertheless composed of supposedly irreconcilable parts is not the only way for the human being to experience him- or herself as ‘broken up,’ nor is the meaning of the phrase ‘mind-body problem’ necessarily determined or governed by this experience. When one speculates on the problem of *a* (one) human being, certainly the oneness of the being is not the only point in question. What experience is there of the (non-)being

of the one? Is there not conceivably a unity of mind and body without being, a notion just as baffling and contradictory as that of a being that is not one? Is this other experience not possible? Can anyone testify to it? When was it instituted? When Frantz Fanon says, “Let us endeavor to create a man in full [*l’homme total*], something which Europe has been incapable of achieving,”¹² the kind of brokenness of those not *total* is not the same kind of fracture or damage referred to by advocates of dualism, panpsychism, or materialism. The problem Fanon is pointing to is imposed by a colonial violence upon one “broken in the very depth of his substance.”¹³ As I argue, this is a brokenness peculiar to those races deemed ‘without purpose’ and thus disposable. The intersection of unity, non-being, and violence is essential to what I understand as a mind-body problem in the Kantian tradition. Moreover, because the problem addresses itself only to a racial union of mind and body that is non-White—and thus stands without reason, without purpose, and is thereby a non-being, a nothingness, or a waste—it can be solved neither by doctrines of materialism, dualism, nor monism, nor by those currently recognized as ‘mind-body experts.’

THE THESIS AND GOAL OF THIS STUDY

In tracing the historical development of the experience of another mind-body problem, I return to a discounted, mostly abandoned outpost in the history of the race discourse. In 1933 a political theorist named Eric Voegelin published two books, *Rasse und Staat* (*Race and State*) and its later companion, *Die Rassenidee in der Geistesgeschichte von Ray bis Carus* (*The History of the Race Idea from Ray to Carus*). *Race and State* is a survey of the theoretical foundations of White supremacy from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, while *The History of the Race Idea* covers the development of race thinking from the late seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century. Although his works are largely snubbed by contemporary anthologies and surveys of racism, Hannah Arendt,

for instance, once cited *Race and State* as “the best historical account of race-thinking in the pattern of a ‘history of ideas.’”¹⁴ Over six decades later, Arendt’s estimation still holds some truth. At a time when many of my contemporaries in philosophy are motivated to dissociate canonical thinkers from their writings on race, Voegelin’s works remain relevant insofar as they accomplish a most thorough integration of philosophy’s Modern historical canon with the emergence of race and racism. He examines the contributions made by figures such as Descartes, Leibniz, Herder, Kant, Goethe, and Schiller, orchestrating a broad range of texts and concepts while demonstrating their roles in the construction of racial concepts and political practices. In this way, Voegelin incorporates not only familiar philosophical figures into the history of the development of racism but their concepts and precepts as well, many of which were not explicitly theorized as ideas about race or racism.

Voegelin’s study of racism is motivated by his desire to subvert National Socialism by scrutinizing the ways in which it is founded upon certain understandings of racial difference. In brief, Voegelin’s interest in the race idea and racism is grounded in his belief that the State is organized around certain racial myths of the body. Although these myths are based on common experiences, throughout their long history they have transformed into a political ideology that goes beyond empirical biological or anthropological analyses.¹⁵ This approach, known as *Staatslehre*, assumes “that the roots of the state must be sought by the nature of man,”¹⁶ and thus the historical conditions for the rise and fall of a racial state will be found in the emergence of a racialized human being.

This is not a book in *Staatslehre*, nor do I measure up to Voegelin’s ambition to grasp the racist foundations of society. Nevertheless, the conceptual framework of Voegelin’s research is of such relevance to the present work that it must be recognized as the thread guiding my entire investigation. This is particularly true of one assertion from *The History of the Race Idea*, where Voegelin states, “The race concept is a part of the body-soul problem; the former requires for its adequate understanding complete clarity about the latter and therefore about the nature of

man.”¹⁷ The second half of that text is then dedicated to a demonstration of “how the modern race idea gradually grew out of the problem of body and mind in the eighteenth century.”¹⁸ My study of the mind-body problem will return to this hypothesis repeatedly. In Voegelin’s work, the claim refers to a race idea that can only emerge in the eighteenth century once Cartesian mind-body dualism has been imagined anew and the supernatural, transcendent soul has been reconceived as immanent in the development of organic matter.¹⁹ My own study, while significantly indebted to Voegelin’s research, seeks to advance his thesis in new directions and with the help of over eight decades of new scholarship. Accordingly, this work is much less a study of Eric Voegelin as it is a reengagement with his thesis in order to reassert the place of the study of racism in philosophy’s mind-body discourse.

Although Voegelin’s hypothesis is helpful, it cannot survive without some basic modifications. While to a certain extent Voegelin is justified in claiming that ‘the race concept is a part of the body-soul problem,’ his analysis does not go far enough. Upon uncovering another mind-body problem, that is, a mind-body union without being, I amend his hypothesis to more accurately reflect the status of the mind-body problem in the wake of Kant’s contributions. What is at stake in the following pages is something much less benign than ‘race.’ What one will find in not only Kant’s writings but also throughout the work of thinkers like Charles Bonnet, Edward Long, and Arthur de Gobineau is simply racism, and, more accurately, White supremacy. This important distinction would then lead to the following reformulation of Voegelin’s thesis: ‘White supremacy is a part of the body-soul problem; the former requires for its adequate understanding complete clarity about the latter and therefore about the nature of man.’ Yet, that statement does not capture the thesis of my argument much more precisely than Voegelin’s original assertion. As is well known, racism is hardly monolithic and it cannot be distilled to a simple formula and then wholly attributed to any one thinker. Many manifestations of White supremacy do not concern the representation of non-White people as a kind of non-being without reason that thereby

invites a genocidal violence. There are varieties of racist violence that go well beyond the scope of this book, including racisms that are medico-biological as is the case of biopower, philological as with orientalist racism,²⁰ or ‘auto-genocidal’ narratives that depict indigenous peoples as self-extminating.²¹ Kant’s racial non-being and the logic of its violence cannot be so casually conflated with these other forms of racist violence even though they all fall under the heading of ‘racism’ and (perhaps with the exception of biopower) ‘White supremacy.’

That said, it is not satisfactory to claim, ‘White supremacy is a part of the body-soul problem,’ since many manifestations of racism do not depend on any theory of the mind-body union whatsoever. To accurately reformulate Voegelin’s hypothesis in a way that does not give readers the impression that this is an exhaustive and final declaration on the proper definition and history of an abstract monolith called ‘racism,’ I submit the following statement as the thesis of the book: The body-soul problem is a part of White supremacy; the former requires for its understanding further clarity about the latter and therefore about the nature of the human being.

This is to say that a study of racism is prerequisite to any thorough and comprehensive engagement with the mind-body problem today, and specifically the racism that declares being the singular domain of Whiteness and relegates all others to nonexistence. If readers are convinced of my argument, then one should further recognize that given the relationship between the mind-body problem and racism, such that the former is a division of the latter, students and others studying the mind-body problem will require a training that diverges sharply with the one they receive today. In fact, beyond my main conclusion, I encourage philosophers to reckon with the possibility of a basic shift not only in the discursive elements of the mind-body problem but, more importantly, with the nondiscursive economic aspects of the industry. This includes questions of just who testifies to the experience of a racial non-being, what training students must receive to be employed in this field, who should receive funding to solve the problem, and above all, who best

represents those most qualified to serve as paid experts in this research area. To better understand this essential point, I must address the nexus of history, problems, solutions, and those recognized as ‘in the know.’

For philosophers today, the term ‘mind-body problem’ is hardly spoken univocally, and although the core problem is commonly grounded in the experience of consciousness, there are various subsidiary problems. Nevertheless, one can delineate some of the broad contours uniting the debate. Philosophers trying to solve the mind-body problem today commonly work within the landscape of solutions taking the form of materialism, property dualism, monism, and the like. Broadly speaking, these concepts are generated in response to a problem of *unity*: How do minds and bodies *interact*? What is their *relation*?²² Or, if, like nearly all my contemporaries, one rejects the notion of distinct substances, the question becomes, ‘What kind of thing is consciousness and how does it *fit* into the natural world?’ These questions begin with minds or consciousness on the one hand, and bodies or nature on the other. The two then must be connected or put into some rapport that accounts for the unity of the human being. For instance, while mind-body dualism may struggle to provide a causal interpretation of the union, a materialist might identify ‘mind’ with the physical world and thereby account for the unity of the being. Then again, this attempt at a solution may be eroded by the introduction of certain ontological and epistemological gaps between the physical world and consciousness.²³ In general terms, much of philosophy’s mind-body debate is aimed at closing these gaps through various renditions of monism, materialism, and the like. As Todd Moody frames it in a recent article on the exact terms of the debate, the ‘mind-body problem’ refers to “a problem of *accommodating* the facts about the mental into a physical world.”²⁴ Similarly, in David Chalmers’s formulation of the ‘hard problem’ one still detects the problem of how *two* can be scientifically known as *one*:

The hard problem of consciousness is that of explaining how and why physical processes *give rise to* phenomenal consciousness.

A solution to the hard problem would involve an account of the *relation* between physical processes and consciousness, explaining on the basis of natural principles how and why it is that physical processes are *associated with* states of experience.²⁵

This is to say, on the one hand one finds physical processes and natural principles, and on the other, there is consciousness and states of experience. This problem of a single being that is nevertheless two will find its solution in the form of a 'relation,' a 'giving rise,' an 'association,' or as Moody phrases it, an 'accommodation.'²⁶ In much of Anglophone philosophy, Descartes's name is nearly synonymous with this problem. Of course, it should be noted the phrase 'mind-body problem' never appears in any of his writings or correspondence, making the problem as such entirely foreign to his corpus. In any case, thanks to Pierre Gassendi and Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, at least the question of how the mind and body interact is present in his work, and he is routinely cited as an early precedent.²⁷ This is all a fairly stock assessment of the mind-body problem, but it is important to pay attention to all the elements at work and how they fit together: the mind-body problem is a problem of relations between minds and bodies (or consciousness and brain states), it maintains a long precedent in the history of philosophy (at least since Descartes), and experts on the problem and its solutions include names like Chalmers, McGinn, and Nagel.

I too am concerned with the mind-body problem, its history, and those best qualified to solve it. However, I am not concerned with investing myself in any of the current solutions on offer in the literature on the mind-body problem. Rather, what interests me is the way in which all of these solutions are organized along the same plane of discourse that allows each to stand in opposition to another. For instance, a Cartesian dualist might argue that mind and body are united through some kind of causal interaction between the mind and brain. In this case, the unity of mind and body is called 'causation.' At the same time, a functionalist might call this union a 'realizing,' insofar as the mental event of pain,

for instance, is realized in the nervous system although it is not reducible to it. Yet another camp, the property dualists, will call the unity a 'dependence,' since mental and material properties are distinct, but the former depends on the latter. Whether one wants to call the union 'causal,' an 'identity,' a 'realization,' or anything else is not the concern of this book. Instead, I am attracted to the landscape upon which each of these camps operate, affording each a common ground upon which they can oppose each other and converse. This terrain, which is the problem itself, allows each hypothesis to be defined not only in relation to other camps but also relative to a very specific understanding of the history of philosophy from which the discourse draws. History grants philosophy this problem today, and even though philosophers may continue to invent new and plausible solutions, it is the problem as it is understood historically that provides a valid backdrop against which his or her statements can be heard as solutions. That is to say, a certain understanding of history and the problem philosophy has inherited calls these thinkers and their solutions to presence.

To date philosophers have been largely satisfied with a history of the mind-body problem that calls forth solutions to this question of unity. Without doubt, the contemporary philosophy of mind has not summoned this problem from thin air. If I were interested in writing a history of the orthodox mind-body problem, I might dwell on the problem of the mind-body union and trace its roots.²⁸ While this sort of project is not entirely foreign to what follows in this book, it does not accurately capture my aims. There are a number of books already detailing the history of mind and body in ways that go well beyond Descartes.²⁹ Instead, what follows is a study of the history of the orthodox problem and its overriding concern with unity and relations, but only to the degree that this history contains within itself another problem of mind and body. This opens the way to a kind of counterhistory. In other words, I will not be describing the historical emergence of the orthodox problem. Rather, I use that history, starting with Descartes, to discover within the orthodox history another mind-body problem that has long been enveloped and

harbored by the orthodox problem. The goal is to discover the old roots of another problem, a problem that stands as the historical unconscious informing the statements of a thinker like Malcolm X. This is not to say that I am inventing another mind-body problem. It was the *Annales* historian François Furet who once wrote, “[The historian] constructs his own object of study by defining not only the period—the complex of events—but also the problems that are raised by that period and by the events that need to be solved.”³⁰ On my understanding, however, Furet has the relationship between problems and history turned upside down. It is not I who institutes the mind-body problem of a racial non-being under evaluation in this book. Malcolm X, Sojourner Truth, Albert Memmi, Edward Said, and Frantz Fanon had all noted the experience of a racialized non-being long before this book was dreamt of. Still, they did not make the problem either. Rather, it is more accurate to say the problem made them, a problem that receives its first, most coherent formulation with Kant’s writings.

If this work is worried about the historical roots of the mind-body problem, I am only excavating those roots in order to comprehend the contours of a problem this history continuously supports. If I am so concerned with the nature of the problem, it is not only because the problem delineates its appropriate and concomitant field of solutions. And yet, I did not set out to write this book with the sole ambition of altering a problem and its discursive field. While I can agree with Henri Bergson when he writes, “I consider a philosopher the one who creates the necessarily unique solution to a problem posed anew by the very effort to solve it,”³¹ the overriding importance of the problem and its history is not limited to the discursive realm. At times in the pages to follow the reader will encounter various references to a ‘job initiative,’ or ‘the economics of an industry.’ If I am so concerned with the historical roots of the problem and the various solutions that branch off from it, then this interest ultimately derives from an overriding concern for the fruits of labor. By that I am referring to the money. A problem does not only call forth its own field of discourse in the form of concepts and solutions; it

highlights those individuals most familiar with the problem and most qualified to alter it and formulate responses. In this way every problem has its economics insofar as it bears the fruits of labor, which is to say the jobs, for those most competent to address it. If philosophy departments did not employ, say, Malcolm X, to take just one example, to work toward a solution to the mind-body problem, that is in part a consequence of philosophers' limited view of the history of the problem, a myopia that cut X not only out of the discourse, but also academic employment. Accordingly, I cannot be entirely certain of where this project leaves those currently specializing in the orthodox mind-body problem. Nevertheless, I can say that insofar as philosophy has a long-established commitment to solving the problems defining its core areas, it would be productive to make room for those familiar with this other, most basic, mind-body problem enveloped in the history of European thought.

Beyond Malcolm X and those mentioned earlier, the fundamental experience of a racial non-being has already been described and elaborated by a broad range of qualified intellectuals from fields including liberation theology to critical race theory to postcolonialism. Scarcely any of these authors are or were employed as professional philosophers. However, beyond a range of published comments on a racial non-being (which I will visit in chapter 3), there exists a much broader field of qualified individuals currently at the margins of the profession and society as a whole. It would be a stretch to call these individuals 'unemployed,' since that would seem to imply a temporary condition. 'Unemployed' means, presumably, the individual will at some point return to work and again participate in society. The segment of humanity highlighted by another mind-body problem is more accurately captured by what the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman has referred to as 'human waste,' a group for which society's current projects and problems have no use. These individuals are thereby not just 'unemployed' but rather 'redundant':

To be 'redundant' means to be supernumerary, unneeded, of no use—whatever the needs and uses are that set the standard of

usefulness and indispensability. The others do not need you; they can do as well, and better, without you. There is no self-evident reason for your being around and no obvious justification for your claim to stay around. To be declared redundant means to have been disposed of *because of being disposable*—just like the empty and non-refundable plastic bottle or once-used syringe, an unattractive commodity with no buyers, or a substandard or stained product without use thrown off the assembly line by the quality inspectors. ‘Redundancy’ shares its semantic space with ‘rejects,’ ‘wastrels,’ ‘garbage,’ ‘refuse’—with *waste*.³²

These individuals are unneeded not just by philosophy and the problem sets philosophy works to resolve, but they are disposable to modernity as a whole. Moreover, this sector is not just unneeded, they are unwanted. As such, ‘human waste,’ those ‘without reason,’ are often the objects of worldwide security initiatives that designate redundancy not only as ‘criminals,’ ‘felons,’ and ‘vagabonds’ but also the closely related categories of asylee and, above all, refugee. Other times, redundancy is made synonymous with a place—‘Lampedusa.’ Of course, one should add ‘Negro’ as Garvey and X define it to this list of synonyms for the redundant. As I will explain in more detail, this label is far from benign. It carries along its own rationale for violence insofar as that which is ‘waste’ or ‘without reason’ is thereby eliminable. In this counterhistory of the mind-body problem, readers will witness the initial characterization of ‘refuse’ as a peculiarly racial phenomenon, entitling this demographic to the role of experts on the mind-body problem.

With Bergson surely in mind, Gilles Deleuze once wrote of philosophy as a problem-making discipline, one that runs the risk of leaving thinkers in a subordinate position to masters or those in power, “so long as we do not possess a right to the problems, to a participation and management of problems.”³³ In my recounting of the history of the mind-body problem, I am open to the criticism from postcolonialists and race scholars that in my reformulation of the problem I am only taking up

the role of the master myself and then nominating this 'refuse' to function as problem-solvers or 'servants,' to borrow Deleuze's language. However, my intent is not to homogenize a 'redundant' class and invoke a pure and authentic expertise on the problem of a racial non-being. Without doubt this purity is immediately spoiled once I merely articulate the terms of the problem. In other words, I readily acknowledge that the problem of a racial non-being operates as a kind of boundary that gathers together certain discourses and individuals while at the same time excluding others. As I wrote earlier, not every experience of racism should be understood this way. However, part of the reason this book is concerned with history and the mechanics of the problem over and against its solutions is because I endeavor to bring to light various forms of domination manifested in particular understandings of the problem of mind and body. I intend to demonstrate the contingency of a discourse on mind and body that has long rendered certain peoples not only mute but entirely irrelevant. Philosophers will certainly argue that what follows is not the only or the best account of the mind-body problem. They might also argue that this is not even a good account. Nonetheless, what I want to lay emphasis on above all is the question, For whom is this or any formulation of the mind-body problem the 'best'? Might there be some reflection among philosophers on how self-interested the orthodox mind-body problem is for those around whom the academy, philosophy, and the mind-body discourse were built? Precisely the point of this project is to reopen the space of the mind-body problem in a way that permits the reformulation of how that knowledge is produced. That may very well include a reconsideration of the terms I have laid out here so as to bring about a wholesale rejection of the problem of a racial non-being. Yet, that is just to say that knowledge production involves not only providing answers but, more importantly, a partaking in the construction of the problems themselves. Furthermore, one reason why I keep returning to the question of employment is because the university platform affords a privileged opportunity for intellectuals to reshape problems and the historical narratives from which they are

born. The question of who is qualified to occupy that platform is essential in all of this, much more so than whether anyone uses it to edify the problem I unearth. Thus, my reformulation does have its limits insofar as certain forms of resistance to racism cannot be seen as responding to the problem of a racial non-being. Nevertheless, I would consider this book a success if within those limits a space is opened up for those deemed a 'waste' and targeted by a particularly genocidal racist tradition to speak and be paid for their insights.

THE METHODOLOGY OF A CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE MIND-BODY PROBLEM

To summarize a central claim of this book, I argue that the question of how mind and body relate is solved by Kant's invention of an unprecedented concept of race. Kant's particular formulation of the race concept should be seen as a solution to the orthodox mind-body problem insofar as he racially determines the mind and body in terms of those elements of the person that regenerate unfailingly and in unison across generations. This results in four mind-body unions corresponding to Kant's four races, such that, for instance, a Hindu mind incapable of abstract thought will forever repeat in unison with an olive-yellow skin. Furthermore, each of these races must obey Kant's 'principle of purposes,' which declares nature does nothing without reason. Regeneration, which is both essential to Kant's concept of race as an object of science and the very fabric of the mind-body union, must have a reason or purpose. Kant locates this purpose in the progressive development of reason through culture, which depends on the 'transmission of enlightenment' over the course of generations. Yet, by defining the races precisely in terms of their capacity for culture, Kant renders all non-White peoples without any relation to the purpose of the species. Without reason, Kant's non-White races stand without ground as a kind of non-being. That is to say that while other racisms are operative in Kant's corpus, one form that is unique to

his thinking is based on a racial mind-body union with neither reason nor being. This is the historical backdrop to what Malcolm X will two centuries later call the 'Negro,' although Kant thinks this condition envelopes all non-White people. Of course, Kant does not develop this concept *ex nihilo*, and I will devote much of the book to a demonstration of how a Modern European discourse on mind and body developed around questions of sex, regeneration, historical progress, and early doctrines of human difference.

Given this argument, two questions arise. On the one hand, philosophers may wonder what will be done with Kant and Kantianism if he is in fact racist to the point of having developed a racism hitherto unknown by his contemporaries. At the same time, critical race theorists and postcolonial scholars may find it paradoxical that I propose a decolonization of the mind-body problem only to then go on and yet again interpret Descartes, Kant, and the like. These two questions are but two sides of the same coin.

Regarding the question of whether Kant (or any canonical Modern figure) is racist and what will become of him if he in fact is, I first point out that my ultimate aim in this book is not to convict Kant or any other thinker on charges of racism. Rather, in this book I have begun with the institution of a racism that systematically designates non-White people as useless and nonexistent. As an institution, I would like to understand when and how this racism was instituted. In pursuing that end, I begin with certain testimonies to a racial non-being and conduct a kind of genealogy, turning to history to clarify this racism and its inherent violence. Furthermore, I am attracted to antiracist opportunities that may lay within that narrative. I am hardly alone in this approach, but it is not the norm when it comes to philosophy's discussion around racism in the canon.

Currently, one can generally detect two approaches to the problem of racism in philosophy's canon. On the one hand, what seems to me a majority of philosophers seem to agree on two precepts guiding their methodology. First, any rigorous philosophical thinking must start with a set of clearly defined terms. Second, racism, however it is defined,

manifests itself in the form of individuals' racist statements and personal beliefs. Together, these two principles lead some philosophers to examine whether this or that statement from some author or another is 'truly racist.' With a definition of racism already in hand, the focus shifts to the perpetrator, and questions are posed regarding the maturity or sincerity of the philosopher in question when he or she wrote the statement under review. In other words, researchers want to know if the philosopher's statement meets a standard of racism selected in advance, and if it does, can the philosopher legitimately plead insanity, or immaturity, or ignorance, or senility, or some other alibi.

Clearly for this methodology everything depends upon which definition of racism one chooses to then measure the philosopher against. An example is helpful to illustrate how this can play out. In Justin E. H. Smith's recent work, he attempts to exonerate Leibniz of charges of racism by pointing to the fact that Leibniz only makes distinctions within the human species on the basis of language, leaving physical characteristics to the side. According to Smith, Leibniz's linguistic taxonomy is not racial—and hence has no place in a history of racism—because 'race,' as Smith defines it, concerns corporeal differences.³⁴ Meanwhile, just a few years earlier, Pauline Kleingeld mounts a defense of Kant by underscoring how, supposedly, after 1794 Kant only racialized the body, leaving minds out of the taxonomy. Thus, according to Kleingeld, 'race,' the foundation of 'racism,' is predicated on a racialization of the mind. Because Kant only racialized bodies, he is not 'racist.'³⁵ Just taking these two examples, there is on the one hand a definition of racism grounded in a taxonomy of phenotypes and physical attributes from which Leibniz is exempted, and on the other hand, one finds a racism predicated on mental types that Kant does not support. Given the definitions of racism brought along in advance and the statements chosen for analysis, everyone is innocent. It scarcely merits mention that if one only switched around Smith's and Kleingeld's definitions of race and racism, both Leibniz and Kant could stand as exemplary racists. One begins to detect a kind of shell game.