17th-century Paradoxes:
End of blood inheritance /
Creation of blood inheritance

Week 9 – Lecture 1

30 October 2007
I. Inventing “Europe” and “Race”:
17th-century TURN TO THE BODY

1496:
Christians v. heathens/infidels
“Race” = religious tribe

1746:
European powers v. non-Euro
“Race” = geographical ➔ biological phenotype
II. Problem: What is “Europe”?

- Ex-French President Snubs Turks on Union Bid

Says Turkey ‘Is Not a European Country’

By ELAINE SCIOLINO
PARIS, Nov. 8 — The verbal bombshell came from an unlikely source. Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, the former French president and the man overseeing plans for the future of Europe, said that Turkey was not a European country and that inviting it to join the elite club would mean “the end of Europe.”

In a wide-ranging interview in Saturday’s issue of Le Monde, Mr. Giscard d’Estaing was also quoted as saying people who backed Turkey’s accession were “the adversaries of the European Union.” Of Turkey, he said: “Its capital is not in Europe; 95 percent of its population live outside Europe; it is not a European country.”

valéry giscard d’Estaing, head of the Convention on the Future of Europe, at a meeting of the group on Thursday in Brussels.

Valéry Giscard d’Estaing is not the only European Union official to refute assertions recently. Last month,
III. Problem: Who is a “European”?

Phenotype

“all the observable characteristics of an organism --- such as shape, size, color and behavior --- that result from the interaction of its genotype (total genetic inheritance) with the environment.”

17th CENTURY: From “race” as religious [“heathen”] to “race” as physical/ biological [“non-white”]
IV. A New Relationship to the “Body”

“The body is a machine.”
---René Descartes (1600s)

“Look, the body really is a machine!”
A Passion for Observation!

Corpse

Cloth

V. Indentureship: The Terrible Transformation from “temporary” to “one’s natural life”
VI. Racialism: Inventing “Whiteness” through Legislation
8

The Terrible Transformation: told in marriage legislation

FROM HEATHENISM TO RACIALISM
The American Colonial Example

From *American Negro Slavery and Abolition: A Sociological Study*

1630 Christian-heathen union forbidden: “religious rationality”

“the shame of Christians… defiling his body in lying with a negro” [Virginia]

1663 Free / slave rationality… But germ of racial disqualification first introduced:

“diverse free-born English women, forgetful of their free condition, do intermarry with negro slaves…” [Maryland]

cf. Mary Douglas: anxieties of the body politic are written on individual bodies
--- e.g., legislation regarding sexual unions of bodies

1705

Turning point: Virginia General Assembly

• “All servants imported and brought into this County… who were not Christians in their native Country… shall be accounted and be slaves. All Negro, mulatto and Indian slaves within this dominion… shall be held to be real estate…"

• “If any slave resist his master… and shall happen to be killed in such correction… the master shall be free of all punishment… as if such accident never happened.”
I. Conclude: Transformation from 1650-1700
From “Heathen” to “Phenotype”

- **1639**: Maryland: Christian baptism does not make a slave free
  - NB: COMPARE NAZIS
  - The end of Christian/non-Christian distinction
  - From now on: biological [phenotype: skin color] rationality, not religious

- **1640**: Jamestown: an African is punished for escaping with “being an indentured servant *for the time of his natural life.*”

Epilogue: 1670
Anthony and Mary

- **1670**: Anthony Johnson dies a free man
- Wife Mary renegotiates the lease for 99 yrs
- August 1670: all-white jury rules that Anthony’s land can be seized by the state “because he was a Negro and by consequence an alien”
  - NB: SANDER GILMAN: distance / foreign / alien
• Son Richard—a free man with wife and children evicted
• Property goes to wealthy white neighbor George Parker
• Sum: Virginians no longer needed to “lure” workers to plantations; now they could buy them and chain them there.

Africans in America: The Terrible Transformation
O'Neill Media Center Stacks E441 .A37 1998 pt. 1
1650-1700
17th-c. timeline: Invention of racialized slavery

- 1618: Begin 30-yrs war
- 1632: Galileo at Inquisition
- 1632: Rembrandt *Anatomy Lesson*

- 1648: Peace of Westphalia

- 1641: MASSACHUSETTS becomes first colony in North America to recognize slavery as a legal institution:
  - 1650: Connecticut
  - 1661: Virginia
  - 1663: Virginia law: if a child is born to a slave, that child also enslaved
    - NB: *BLOOD INHERITANCE*

- 1687: Newton, *Principia Mathematica*

“We study history not in order to make the unfamiliar familiar … but in order to make the familiar unfamiliar.”

“You show me the thing you think is most natural in the world … and I’ll show you just how contingent and constructed it really is.”
• A “terrible transformation” between 1650 and 1750: from heathenism to racialism.

• NB: THERE WERE OPTIONS:
  – Blacks and whites both indentured
  – Both condemned to lifelong servitude
  – The conscious choice was made: invent the system of color difference.
  – NOTHING INEVITABLE OR ‘NATURAL’ ABOUT ‘RACE’ AS BIO-CONSTRUCT

• cf. social contract! A “nominalist” agreement

• Root in THE BODY: make what is arbitrary seem “natural”

NOTE PARADOX OF 17TH CENTURY:

Capitalism is ending the old system based on land/blood-inheritance … i.e., the “order/estates” system

“Third estate” becoming “middle class”

AT THE SAME TIME:

Racialism is the invention of a new kind of relationship based on blood-inheritance
II. “Modernity”: from “Nature” to “Social Convention”
[or: from essentialism to nominalism]

How Much is Something Worth?

FIRST ARTICLE

Whether a man may lawfully sell a thing for more than it is worth.

The first article is analyzed as follows:
Thomas Aquinas: Summa Theologica [1200s]

NB: What is a thing worth? Fixed essences = essentialism = eternal
First, Aquinas sets up his opponents’ arguments:

1. It seems that a man may lawfully sell a thing for more than it is worth. For in the exchanges of human life, justice is determined by law. But according to this it is lawful for the buyer and seller to deceive each other (Cod., lib IV, tit. 44 de rescindenda ventitione), and this takes place when the seller sells a thing for more than it is worth, or the buyer pays less than it is worth.

2. Furthermore, that which is common to all men seems to be natural and not sinful. But as Augustine relates (13 de Trin.), the saying of a certain actor was: buy cheap and sell dear; which again

NB: There is such a thing as a FIXED (just) price for an item (what would a nominalist say???)

Then Aquinas answers his opponents and draws his own conclusion --- he appeals to the Gospel of Matthew in his deduction:

But opposed to this is the saying in Matthew, vii, 12: All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them. But no man wishes to have a thing sold to him for more than it is worth. Therefore no man should sell a thing to another for more than it is worth.

I answer that it is wholly sinful to practice fraud for the express purpose of selling a thing for more than its just price, inasmuch as a man deceives his neighbor to his loss. Hence Cicero says (de Offic., III): All deception should therefore be eliminated from contracts: the seller should not procure someone to bid up, nor the buyer someone to bid down the price.\(^5\)

NB: There is such a thing as a FIXED (just) price for an item (what would a nominalist say???)
REVIEW:

Essentialism v. “NOMINALISM”

There is no essential connection between a thing and the name (representation / meaning) we give it.

IN OTHER WORDS:

names --- and meanings AND PRICES--- are ARBITRARY and CONTINGENT agreements

Shakespeare: “A rose by any other name would still smell sweet as a rose.”

• “Real [natural] price” = price in labor; exchange of labor
  “Nominal [market] price” = price in capital [value consented to]

Note: radical shift from Aquinas/essentialist questions, e.g.,
  What is a thing “worth”?  What is a “just price”?
  These “essentialist” questions don’t make sense in this system.
The Great Tulip Crash of 1637

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eight fat pigs</td>
<td>240 guilders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four fat oxen</td>
<td>480 guilders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelve fat sheep</td>
<td>120 guilders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twenty-four tons of wheat</td>
<td>448 guilders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forty-eight tons of rye</td>
<td>558 guilders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two hogsheads of wine</td>
<td>70 guilders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four barrels of eight-guilder beer</td>
<td>32 guilders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two tons of butter</td>
<td>192 guilders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A thousand pounds of cheese</td>
<td>120 guilders</td>
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<tr>
<td>A silver drinking cup</td>
<td>60 guilders</td>
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<td>A pack of clothes</td>
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<tr>
<td>A bed with mattress and bedding</td>
<td>100 guilders</td>
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<tr>
<td>A ship</td>
<td>500 guilders</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,000 guilders</td>
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Cf. Voltaire on “luxury” !!!
India Says Activists Hyping Child Labor

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published: October 30, 2007
Filed at 6:15 a.m. ET

NEW DELHI (AP) -- India's trade minister insisted Tuesday that activists were hyping accusations of child labor in the country, taking a defensive stand following a report that Gap Inc. had sold clothes made by children in a New Delhi sweatshop. Commerce Minister Kamal Nath warned the result of the bad publicity could be rich countries limiting exports from poor nations such as India, which has a well-documented problem with child labor.


New Gap classic T: $12.95
Made of: 100% cotton. Factored in cost of labor?
Banana Republic Basic Crew: $15.50
Also made of: 100% cotton --- advertised with a smiling face

Abercrombie T: $24.50
Cost of materials + labor?
What is a just price?
“Real” price = materials + labor

“Market” price = object’s value as a commodity [i.e., as interchangeable unit of exchange].

NB: What is the commodity being sold?

Q: Why do we buy commodities at “market prices” that are grossly inflated with respect to “real” prices?

A: Adam Smith:

“vanity and pageantry”
i.e.: we purchase luxuries in order to symbolize our place in a society’s hierarchy.

NB: In a capitalist system one’s identity is no longer based on blood inheritance. Purely arbitrary and contingent agreement. i.e., in terms of capital/status

In a commercial country abounding with every sort of expensive luxury, the sovereign, in the same manner as almost all the great proprietors in his dominions, naturally spends a great part of his revenue in purchasing those luxuries. His own and the neighbouring countries supply him abundantly with all the costly trinkets which compose the splendid but insignificant pageantry of a court.

http://www.adamsmith.org smith won won-b5-c3-ss1.html
From “Estates/Orders” to “Social Class”: From old “essentialist” order to new “nominalist” order

Status / hierarchy: no longer based on “nature” [blood inheritance]; rather, on social “convention” [accumulated capital [Locke: “labor”]]
Field songs--> Negro spirituals--> Gospel -->Blues--> Ragtime--> Jazz -->
-->1950s Rock 'n Roll [Elvis] -->  -->1960s Motown -->Rap -->Hip-hop
Note irony: the only uniquely American art form comes from African slave tradition

“Good Lord [Run Old Jeremiah]”

Ring Shout:  African slave/Christian worship
NB: hybridity!!!
African: Rhythms; scales; percussion; improvisation (shouts: call-response)

Christian: baptism; Biblical stories; worship
Pre-Civil War: moving in a counterclockwise circle, singing, clapping, stomping and beating on the floor rhythmically with a stick or broom.
NB: drums had been outlawed in South

LYRICS: http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5759/
http://www.ringshout.org/definitionofringshout
http://ctl.du.edu/spirituals/Times/pure.cfm

Georg Friedrich Handel:
“All We Like Sheep Have Gone Astray”
Third Estate: “upward mobility” ---

*All we have gone each to his own way like sheep...*

• “All we like sheep have gone astray, everyone to his own way...”
  – We have turned / Everyone to his own way...”
Musical joke:
They’re talking about sin – self-interest / narcissism – and they’re having a great time doing so! This is the fun part …

Then comes the slow/sad conclusion: We were saved …

“And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”
Georg Friedrich Handel: “All We Like Sheep Have Gone Astray”