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SLAVERY'S CAPITALISM

A New History of American Economic Development

Edited by

Sven Beckert

and

Seth Rockman

PENN

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To Ruth J. Simmons, President of Brown University, 2001–2012

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CHAPTER 6

"Broad is de Road dat Leads ter Death"

Human Capital and Enslaved Mortality

DAINA RAMEY BERRY

In December 1800, Jacob, "a valuable Waterman" and "an honest inoffensive negro," committed suicide by "stab[bing] himself." Because he was considered valuable, his enslaver, William Wilson, submitted a petition to the Virginia governor's office seeking compensation for the loss of Jacob, whom he referred to as his "chief support."¹ It might seem unusual to contemporary readers that a slaveholder would file for compensation on the death of his bondman, but this was common in the late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century United States. Today we think of compensation for the enslaved as reparations, but rarely do we think about payments being made to those who profited from owning slaves. Historical records in British and U.S. archives confirm that enslavers received compensation on the death of their human chattel under specific circumstances. Enslaved bodies, valued for their labor while alive, also had value in death. Such practices indicate that the life cycle of the enslaved extended beyond human years and into postmortem spaces that few scholars have explored.²

Enslaved people represented a movable form of property known as chattel. They had monetary values reflecting their net worth and were itemized the same way as other forms of property. From Jacob's story we learn that enslaved bodies had value even after they died.³ In the same vein, some colonial legislation valued enslaved people before they were born. Seventeenth-century Virginia laws confirmed enslavement through the bodies of enslaved women

according to the legal doctrine of *partus sequitur ventrem*, which held that the offspring followed the condition of the mother.⁴ This evidence compels us to rethink notions of the life cycle of the enslaved. The biological, spiritual, and economic bodies of enslaved people preceded birth and extended after death. This chapter explores how enslaved persons died, what role they had in their death, and the economic value attributed to their death. It also addresses the link between the cause of death and the price tag put on it.

How are we to make sense of the value of black life in a historical context? How are we to make sense of the value of black life in a contemporary moment? These are important questions in current conversations about slavery, social justice, and reparations. This interest in how black lives are valued appears in protest language and news coverage associated with the black lives matter movement. One way to understand the historical antecedent is to examine the life cycle of the enslaved, looking beyond the embodied presence and the humanity to explore enslaved bodies as commodities in both the physical and the nonphysical worlds. Doing so acknowledges that the thought of a person's life marked the beginning of valuation, and interment or legal proceedings after death represented the end of his or her capital value. With this in mind, there are two concurrent and contrasting perspectives on human property: one, the commodity logic of slaveholding, which viewed the enslaved as an economic body that could be commodified from before conception to after death, thereby exceeding the normal temporal frame set by these two endpoints, and the other representing the humanity logic of the enslaved that worked against their commodification during and after their natural lives.

Scholars have been involved in these conversations for some time. Contemporary political discourse questions the temporal meaning of slavery, the value of life, and the legacy of the peculiar institution. Legal scholars have advanced this discussion by looking at specific cases relating to the arguments for and against reparations.⁵ Historians of slavery are also trying to make sense of the ways in which slavery and capitalism are interrelated. Activists such as Randall Robinson, Senator John Conyers, and Deadria Farmer-Paellmann, among others, started this conversation in the 1980s by arguing that the U.S. government had a debt to pay the descendants of African Americans who toiled in fields, factories, and homes as enslaved laborers for nearly 300 years. I enter this conversation with others who have recently addressed capitalism and slavery and are interested in seeking historical explanations for the commodification of enslaved laborers who shaped the American economy. Wilson,

Jacob's enslaver, certainly made this connection, as the petition he filed after Jacob's death illustrates.

By Virginia law, slaveholders like Wilson could receive \$500 for the death of an enslaved worker under court-specified circumstances. Wilson had a large family, and he hoped that the state would provide him with enough compensation to replace Jacob, his once trusted servant. However, the court rejected his claim, and it is with this decision that the historical record of Jacob ends.⁶ We know that this was the end of his natural life, and it appears that it was the end of his life as a commodity. What happened to Jacob's body? Was he laid to rest, or was his body desecrated and discarded? Did he have a funeral during which family and friends paid their final respects? The answers to these questions remain a mystery because the institution of slavery in the United States defined Jacob as a marketable commodity, not a human being. However, his insurrectionary actions, and the fact that he literally chose death, represent the point at which the commodification and the humanity of the enslaved converge. This convergence marks a point in our understanding of human chattel that warrants further attention. Enslaved people had economic values that extended beyond their natural and spiritual lives.

How does one identify the moment a human captive becomes a measurable commodity? At what point or stage of development does "humanness" disappear, transforming the person into a tradable good, primed and ready for the market? Unlike ginning equipment, plows, whips, or other plantation tools, enslaved people embodied a unique form of commodity. Often described as "human hoeing machines," bondpeople represented the instrument used by planters to cultivate crops for the market.⁷ They also served as valuable goods that were traded at the market. Enslaved people could never escape commodification, but they found clever ways to assert their humanity. They cried and moaned when being separated from loved ones at auction, often leaving a deep impression on bystanders and potential buyers. Their very public and terrible grief made it difficult for some to ignore their humanity. Scholars interested in the value of human chattel identify the complexities of appraisals and sales based on a variety of factors, including age, sex, skill, health, and region.⁸ However, a slave's value at death has scarcely been addressed.⁹ The enslaved could not even escape commodification at the moment of death and beyond.

This chapter tells the story of the enslaved body in life *and* in death. It is a story of the history of exploitation, marketability, and adaptation. It is also a story about the financial decisions people make to end their lives, knowing that their lives have already been taken. In the case of enslaved mortality, one

cannot overlook slaves' dual status as property and person. They were "a person with a price," and this led to several responses to their passing, from sophisticated capital transactions to respectful burials to callous disregard of black life in the moment of death.¹⁰ This chapter moves through the arenas of homicide and suicide, life insurance, and state violence to see where the temporal boundaries of life diverged, before devoting some final thoughts to how enslaved people understood and responded to death.

Jacob's death gives us insight into enslaved people's actions within the larger history of capitalism and slavery, one that included a reign of terror that sometimes resulted in rebellions, conspiracies, and widespread death. He took his own life in 1800 after being "implicated in the late conspiracy of the Slaves," along with well-known martyrs such as Gabriel Prosser, the leader of this group of "rebels." Several scholars interested in the aftermath of slave rebellions and conspiracies have discussed deceased rebels such as Charles Deslondes (1811), Denmark Vesey (1822), and Nat Turner (1831) in the context of trials, confessions, executions, or acquittals. However, few historians have explored the literal and figurative expressions of death anchored in capitalism. In short, what happened when the enslaved died? Were the "rebels" buried? How did the slave community respond? Did their slaveholding families receive compensation? Even though we know very little about Jacob, his demise and afterlife cast into sharp relief the relationship between and among capitalism, slavery, and death.

Suicide and Homicide

Recent scholarship on death among the enslaved, including deaths by suicide and homicide, supports my thesis of the commodification of bodies beyond death.¹¹ Suicide, or, as I prefer to call it, the "act of self-destruction," was a bold decision for an enslaved person. It served as the final act of their commodification and should not carry the contemporary negative stigma often attached to such events. Court records show that enslavers took one another to court seeking compensation when their human property died through homicide. Yet exploring the cause of death in both cases allows conversations about the enslaved as active participants in controlling their own destiny to take place. Viewed as an assertion of their humanity, suicide and homicide meant that they could escape the commodification of their lives; they had no idea the commodification would continue post-mortem.

In November 1848, the lives of a South Carolina enslaved family were about to be turned upside down. Bob, Binah, and two children worked for Andrew Bunch, and it is likely that they were well adjusted to their routine on the Bunch plantation. However, William Smith purchased them from Bunch, agreeing to pay \$1,100 for the lot. When he arrived with the notes in hand, he asked Bob if he would like him to be his new master. Bob said he "would not suit." Smith explained to Bob, "I have not come to consult you . . . you are mine." The new owner instructed his human property to "reconcile to the change" and give him no trouble. Bob finished his task and got up and walked toward his cabin. Anticipating flight, Smith offered a word of caution: "it is no use for you to run, for I have my dogs, and can catch you." Bob said that he "would run from no man," and he proceeded to his cabin. After some time passed, Smith and the other people present went to the cabin. "Bob came out of the door with his throat cut, and bleeding; he made a few turns in the yard, fell on his knees, sank to the ground, and there bled to death."¹² Before his body had stiffened, the two gentlemen started arguing over the sale because Bob died on the scene and had not been delivered to Smith.

Even though Bob was responsible for his own death, his "life" continued in court for three years more. Immediately after the harrowing scene, Smith amended the note to create "A new trade . . . for \$650" instead of \$1,100, since Bob had killed himself. But agitated by "the shocking spectacle of Bob's death," Bunch spent the next three years pursuing the \$450 value of his deceased bondman. Bunch believed Smith should bear the financial burden of Bob's death, and sued to recover the original terms of sale. The court agreed, and "the jury found a verdict for the plaintiff for \$456, with interest, from the 14th November 1848," requiring Smith to cover Bob's value with interest for three years post-mortem even though he had never reaped the benefits of Bob's labor.¹³ The jury's willingness to charge Smith interest clearly confirms the expanded life cycle of enslaved people's economic value beyond death. Even though Bob's physical body was gone, his financial value lived on in the courts for three years, while state funds were used to hear the case and appeals. Bob's deceased body continued to make money for Bunch at a rate of 0.5 percent per year; interest on dead slaves was another way their fiscal impact continued in post-mortem spaces.

Slaveholding whites sought compensation for enslaved laborers' deaths, especially when others were responsible. Southern magistrates recognized that communities contained dishonest slaveholders as well as slaves, yet their charge was to render decisions based on the material presented. In the case of an Ala-

bama bondman murdered for stealing "a piece of old carpet," a local innkeeper and his son took the law into their own hands and beat him. First, the innkeeper "struck him with a stake . . . [and] punched him in the face and mouth," knocking out some of his teeth. The remaining details come from Theodore Dwight Weld, an abolitionist who wrote about the horrors of slavery. The following quotation provides insight into abolitionist discourse on the value of enslaved bodies:

They whipped him by turns, with heavy cowskins, and made the dogs shake him. A Mr. Phillips, who lodged at the house, heard the cruelty during the night. On getting up he found the negro in the bar-room, terribly mangled with the whip, and his flesh so torn by the dogs, that the cords were bare. He remarked to the landlord that he was dangerously hurt, and needed care. The landlord replied that he deserved none. Mr. Phillips went to a neighboring magistrate, who took the slave home with him, where he soon died. The father and son were both tried, and acquitted!! A suit was brought, however, for damages in behalf of the owner of the slave, a young lady by the name of Agnes Jones. I was on the jury when these facts were stated on oath. Two men testified, one that he would have given \$1000 for him, the other \$900 or \$950. The jury found the latter sum.¹⁴

In this case, a magistrate tried to care for the badly beaten bondman, but a jury trial acquitted the father-and-son duo of the crime. When the alleged owner, Agnes Jones, sued for damages, she received \$950 for the death of her bondman. One cannot determine how long it took for Jones to receive compensation for her deceased slave. However, his postmortem financial value included at least two hearings, confirming that the court contested his worth beyond his death.

In some cases neighbors took legal action against slaveholders for using excessive force on their own human chattel. Such was the case of Major Harney, who went to court for a coroner's inquest on the death of his bondwoman Hannah and the suicide of her unnamed husband. Witnesses claimed that Harney excessively beat her for "three successive days" because he believed she stole his keys. Apparently "Her flesh was so lacerated and torn, that it was impossible for the jury to say whether it had been done with a whip or hot iron; some think both." In the end, Hannah "was tortured to death." Did members

of the jury see sketches of the deceased bondwoman's body, or was her lacerated frame brought to court and displayed? It is likely that the jury visited the coroner's office to gaze at the "evidence," or that they read an autopsy detailing Hannah's badly maimed body. In either case, this postmortem analysis extended Hannah's physical existence in court after an unusually violent death. But the story did not end there. When Major Harney failed to locate his keys, he turned to Hannah's "husband" and "commenced [to] torturing him." In response, Hannah's husband "ran into the Mississippi [River] and drowned himself." Although his motive is unclear, it seems probable that he desired to join his wife in death rather than suffer similar consequences. During the coroner's inquest, community members testified about the "pious" and "industrious" nature of the deceased bondman.¹⁵ The value of Hannah and her husband lived beyond their deaths through state-administered funds used to investigate Harney's behavior and his financial loss.¹⁶

The actions of Samuel Williams, a slaveholder from Bourbon County, Kentucky, represent another side to the story of human capital and enslaved mortality. This case illustrates the distance people traveled to collect human property and their responses when enslaved persons, as Bob did, destroyed themselves at the moment of sale or transfer. Just before the Panic of 1837 plunged the nation into financial turmoil, Williams experienced a different sort of crash when a recently purchased slave took his own life. Williams had sent his agent, "Frank," to purchase and deliver this "Negro fellow" to his son, who lived nearly 500 miles away. Frank paid "nine hundred dollars and put [the bondman] in jail for safe keeping" in preparation for the long journey ahead. But when the jailer went to retrieve the bondman, "he found him dead hanging by the neck." Apparently Williams lost other human capital that year, for he noted, "This is about the 10th we have lost and like to lose." He wrestled with the ramifications of such loss, conceding that "the hand of providence is sorely against us." Even though the death of this bondman saved Williams transportation expenses, it left him with no one to "do jobs" for him. It also forced him to reevaluate his assets as he sought to recover the \$900 paid for the now deceased bondman.¹⁷ We do not have records indicating whether or not Williams took legal action to record the loss of the bondman, but we do know he felt burned by the "Negro fellow's" action.

Like most nineteenth-century investors, Williams faced financial losses in human and agricultural property. The loss in 1837 was profound. Investors rushed to collect on debts and tried to find ways to circumvent an inevitable

decline. Williams was not alone; like many others, he persevered through this difficult financial time by pursuing payment for outstanding loans. For example, Williams asked his son to collect monies owed to him by a man named George Redman, but the debtor failed to cooperate. Surveying the situation, Williams instructed his son to warn Redman that "he had better mortgage his land and negroes" to raise the money owed because he was no longer paying "for dead negroes," perhaps reflecting on the \$900 loss from the undelivered bondman.¹⁸ When an enslaved person took his or her own life, some members of the planter class questioned the meaning of their investments in human chattel. Even if they did not abandon slaveholding altogether, slave suicide may have encouraged some enslavers to recognize the enslaved as human beings.

For some captives, self-destruction marked an active rejection of their commodification and served as a final, tragic attempt to claim their personhood. Sales and transfers from one slaveholder to another marked moments in which a human being was treated as a commensurable commodity. Aside from livestock and other animals, no other products have personalities, express feelings, or display opinions. There is something unique about enslaved people because they represented and produced marketable goods. Those who terminated their lives just before a sale saved themselves from witnessing the capital side of their existence. They hastened their transition into the spiritual realm, allowing their humanity to have the last word. Like Jacob's decision to evade trial by stabbing himself in the aftermath of the Gabriel Prosser uprising, Bob's suicide protected him from the physical transfer to a new slaveholder. Yet the sale still took place, three years after his death. In both cases, the postmortem financial value of these bondmen appeared in legal records that documented the commodification of their bodies beyond their physical existence.

Bondpeople knew their labor held value; some defied slaveholders through self-destruction or death by suicide.¹⁹ Their objective was to prevent traders, agents, and slaveholding whites from capitalizing on their value, and they chose to do so through self-destruction. No other marketable product had the ability to destroy or botch a sale. For some it was a hasty response to separation from a loved one; for others it was an overt rejection of their captivity and commodification. Annie Tate of North Carolina, for example, vividly remembered her grandmother's death following the severe beating and sale of her grandfather. The moment her grandmother learned that her husband had

been sold, she was "bout crazy so she walks off en de plantation." The North Carolina plantation on which she lived bordered the Neuse River, and "gran maw gits dar, and jumps in."²⁰ Similarly, Michael, a bondman from Missouri, could not tolerate being separated from his wife when shipped to the Deep South. During his transport, "at the mouth of the Ohio River," he filed off his irons and attempted to flee to her residence. Michael "refused to be sent to the South, unless his wife should also accompany him." He resisted separation at every stage, but when he failed to "surrender himself," he was placed in jail. The moment he learned he was "about to be sent away without his wife, and that he would in all probability, never again see her, he resolved to end both his life and his servitude." Michael hanged himself in the jail cell, alone on a Tuesday evening in the summer of 1835.²¹ Like Tate's grandmother, he chose death over separation through one final act, asserting his humanity through suicide. Francis Black, on the other hand, lost the desire to live after being kidnapped as a young girl, yet she did not choose self-destruction. During her abduction from a Mississippi plantation, she yelled and screamed, but the kidnapper told her to "shet up . . . or I'll kill you." Her response was simple, "kill me if you wants to—you stole me from my folks."²² In her eyes, the kidnapper literally took her life. Black, like many enslaved people, could not imagine life without her parents. Although she lived to experience freedom, marry, and give birth to six children, she never reunited with her birth family. Years later, when she shared her testimony with Works Progress Administration workers in the 1930s, she was blind and approximately eighty-seven years old.

No matter how often their humanity was ignored, enslaved people yearned to be treated as respectable individuals. Former bondman Charles Ball noted that owners tried to cover up an enslaved person's suicide because of the negative social stigma it brought to their homestead. "When a negro kills himself," he explained, "the master is unwilling to let it be known, least the deed should be attributed to his own cruelty." Evidently, "A certain degree of disgrace falls upon the master whose slave has committed suicide."²³

Life Insurance and Compensation

Life insurance policies provided a measure of security for those uncertain about investing in human chattel. As a relatively new area of slavery scholarship, historians argue that insurance policies were designed to protect slave-

holders' fiscal investment in the enslaved, but legal proceedings sometimes did not rule in favor of administering funds.²⁴ Evidence of this appears in ship records of the transatlantic slave trade, particularly in the case of the *Zong* massacre. This famous case involved the murder of approximately 132 African captives who were thrown overboard a slave ship in 1781. They were alive and sacrificed so that the crew could focus their efforts on saving the remaining cargo, given limited supplies. Upon the ship's arrival in Jamaica, the ship owners filed an insurance claim for their loss. The court ruled in favor of the owners, identifying the African captives as goods, not people. However, the insurers appealed and won their case with a ruling that overturned the original decision.²⁵ The debates surrounding this case created a public discourse on the value of captives' lives.

Similar conversations occurred in the United States in 1841 when captives rebelled on the *Creole*.²⁶ However, in this case the enslaved people mutinied on board the slave ship and won the case because they had been illegally enslaved. Both cases led to questions about whether or not shippers were indemnified against loss. More important is the idea that enslaved captives were insured in anticipation of a loss, and that their lives held value at death. Slaveholders lost value in enslaved people without slaves having died; and indeed, slaves had the ability to lower their market values significantly through various actions of self-destruction and self-liberation, such as damaging their bodies or running away.²⁷ Yet slaveholders maximized the value of their enslaved laborers in life and in death. They tried to recover the financial loss of deceased bondpeople in private and public settings through legislative petitions, coroner's inquests, and other legal actions. They also tried to make wise financial decisions about speculation in human capital, seeking healthy and obedient laborers who they believed would not give them trouble.

Insurance protected their investments in a slave workforce, particularly when their laborers toiled in risky work environments, traveled to markets, or worked in urban settings. The insurance industry wavered over slave policies in the 1830s, then developed them in the 1840s, and by the mid- to late 1850s planters in the South had several options for slave policies.²⁸ In February 1854, the Alabama Senate and House of Representatives submitted "an act to incorporate the Planters' Insurance Company." Section 5 included security "upon the Lives and Health, both of white persons and slaves" in the event of "loss in any manner, by Fire, Dangers of the Seas, Rivers, or otherwise."²⁹ Slaveholders who purchased a policy through this company could rest assured that death during transportation guaranteed compensation. Because of the vague

language, it is also likely that slaveholders could collect the financial value of deceased slaves who committed suicide as some—but not all—policies covered “loss in any manner.”

The Petersburg Marine Insurance Company specialized in insuring slaves transported from Virginia to Louisiana. On April 18, 1853, William Haxall purchased a \$1,850 policy to insure five slaves: Cairo and Jepe, valued at \$300 each; Beverly, valued at \$350; Charlotte, valued at \$400; and Sydney, valued at \$500. In addition to this protection, Haxall listed the brig and captain as responsible parties, holding the latter accountable for payment with “no deduction to be made from the sum insured, except two per cent.” The policy also contained protection against “fire, enemies, pirates, rovers, thieves, jettisons.”³⁰ It is difficult to determine whether Haxall ever had to cash in on this policy, yet we know that slaveholders throughout the United States protected the transportation costs of their newly purchased bondpeople as part of the domestic slave trade.³¹

Mary Moncure, also a Virginia resident, insured two enslaved laborers under much different circumstances. Rather than insuring bondpeople prior to travel, Moncure secured four-year policies from the Virginia Life Insurance Company for her valuable house servants.³² In June 1860, Moncure insured Austin for \$1,000 and Mary Jane for \$800. The policy, however, contained a unique clause that protected the insurance company, not the policyholder, in the event of self-destruction. Virginia Life stipulated that “in case the said slave shall commit suicide, or shall die by any means of any invasion, insurrection, riot, or civil commotion . . . the policy shall be void, null, and of no effect.”³³ In other words, the company refused to indemnify enslavers for enslaved people who participated in insurrections, perhaps because Virginia Life’s directors recalled compensation provided to slaveholders whose bondpeople fled to the British during the American Revolution and the War of 1812. They also may have denied insurance for “rebels,” given the recompense enslavers received in the aftermath of the Southampton rebellion.³⁴

Slaveholders such as H. C. Cox, J. R. Cates, and W. H. Wilson agreed to one-year policies for their bondmen, Alfred, Charles, and Stephen, despite Virginia Life’s suicide exemption. They insured these bondmen because of the risky nature of their work.³⁵ Enslaved men faced death on a daily basis as they labored in Virginia coal mines. The records of the Chesterfield County mines are replete with accounts of individual bondmen losing their lives in explo-

sions, fires, floods, and other mining accidents. Enslaved men such as Bob Burton, David Depp, John Goode, and Richard Handcock, among countless others, died as a result of “pit explosions.”³⁶ Their deaths were reported in local newspapers such as the *Daily Dispatch*, the *South-Side Democrat*, and the *Richmond Enquirer*, and some of their owners cashed in insurance policies. Ninety-seven enslaved workers in the Virginia coal mines had life insurance policies from companies such as Baltimore Life, Nautilus Insurance Company of New York, and Virginia Life. The sort of one-year policies taken out on Alfred, Charles, and Stephen usually cost \$10 or less annually, and several mandated medical examinations.³⁷ Such examinations represent another space—beyond the auction block—where enslaved people were subjected to degrading inspection to assess their monetary value. Slaveholders were willing to pay extra money to insure their slaves in order to avoid, in the words of the aggrieved Kentucky slaveholder Samuel Williams, “paying for dead negroes.”³⁸

State Violence and Redemption

Enslaved people had values that their enslavers capitalized on, but, owing to their chattel status, the state also had rights over their bodies. In addition to being able to take enslaved people away, the state also provided monetary redemption for them. Despite their status as private property, it is clear that their dual identity as human beings led to tenuous rights and ownership issues among slaveholders, who went to the state for protection and compensation.

Slaveholders who sent their bondpeople to work on public projects also turned to the state when their laborers died by accident or homicide. Some of these projects included building roads, canals, and bridges, as well as service on fire brigades and in repairing levees.³⁹ In July 1848, William B. Williamson, William Maxey, and John D. Turner of Polk County, Texas, lost three bondmen in the Trinity River. They believed that Thomas (age twenty-five), Charles (age twenty-one), and Goodwin (age twenty-one) had “accidentally” died for lack of “proper care and attention” while conducting roadwork on the bank of the river. Three years after their deaths, these slaveholders submitted a petition to the Senate and House of Representatives of Texas seeking compensation for the \$800–\$900 value of these enslaved men. It is not

clear why there was a delay in submitting the petition, but a local newspaper confirmed that the Texas legislature "indefinitely postponed" any discussion of this request.⁴⁰ It is likely that Wilson, Moxey, and Turner filed for compensation prior to the 1851 legislative session, but we do not have records to confirm such actions. We do know, however, that the men felt that "private property under the Constitution of our state cannot be taken for public use without just compensation."⁴¹ Since their slaves were "taken" unjustly and used to benefit the state rather than individual owners, Williamson, Moxey, and Turner sought "reasonable compensation" for their losses. In November 1851 the postmortem values of Thomas, Charles, and Goodwin were still being contested, and the case was referred to "the committee on state affairs."⁴² The historical record of these bondmen ends at this point, but it appears that the state continued its investigation. Once again, valuation of deceased slaves continued beyond the immediate time of death. We may never know whether Williamson, Moxey, or Turner received compensation for their enslaved workers, but it is clear that the enslaved men were still "alive" financially, three years post-mortem.

Sometimes former slaveholders profited from the death of their slaves, often their most rebellious ones. Evidence of compensation for murdered slaves can be found in scholarship on slave resistance and rebellion.⁴³ The Virginia court of Oyer and Terminer set a precedent for compensation of executed enslaved "felons" as early as 1705. According to a legal historian, Phillips J. Schwarz, "the intention of that compensation was to enable slave owners to regain the financial value of the executed person." This practice also sought to "encourage owners not to cover up felonies in order to retain—or to sell away privately—a particularly valuable laborer."⁴⁴ In South Carolina, an enslaved man named Prince participated in a similar hearing, though for a lesser crime. He received the death penalty after being accused and convicted of burglary. Prior to the day of execution, Prince was valued at \$500 and his owner, John Davidson, received compensation.⁴⁵

Some enslavers, such as Samuel Davis, also from South Carolina, took advantage of the law. He "procured the conviction and execution of his own slave for stealing" a gingerbread cake from a local baker in order to capitalize on the man's monetary value.⁴⁶ Even when the shopkeeper forgave the accused bondman, Davis insisted on the conviction because the slave's "assessed value, brought him more money than he could have obtained for the slave in market."⁴⁷ The idea that a dead slave could be worth more than a living one presented a problem that the courts had to resolve, and had been trying to rectify since the 1781 *Zong* case. As a result, court investigations involved de-

tailed depositions, thorough medical examinations, reviews of diverse evidence, and sometimes a trial by jury.

Burial Rituals and Enslaved Humanity

Enslaved people's funerary rituals and concepts of death have long been the subject of scholarly inquiry. From the 1970s scholarship of Albert Raboteau and Eugene D. Genovese to the recent work of Vincent Brown, Walter Rucker, and Stephanie Smallwood, we have a deeper understanding of how the enslaved responded to death.⁴⁸ Some of this work comes from the field of historical archeology, where sites of study reveal the rituals and experiences of enslaved people.⁴⁹ This scholarship has allowed us to enter a sacred space where the human side of chattel slaves celebrated life and death. It is a rich and well-documented literature that is too long to recap here. Instead, I will close with a reading of the first few stanzas of "I'se Born to Die," the 1763 hymn composed by Charles Wesley, an itinerant Methodist clergyman who visited colonial Georgia and South Carolina during the peak years of the first Great Awakening. Enslaved people sang this hymn and others at their loved ones' funerals.

The use of this hymn reflects the temporal understanding of life and death that this chapter highlights. Just as the economic body lived on in postmortem spaces, this song does so as well. Many who sang this hymn believed life continued on in some fashion beyond the expiration of the body. Scholars of African and African American religious philosophies describe the importance of the African afterlife, noting that ancestor spirits played a role in the everyday lives of Africans and their descendants. Family tradition and lore gave Africans and African Americans familiarity with departed extended family members whom they had never met. Likewise, African conceptions of time allowed people to think about the afterlife as a place that was active in the present.⁵⁰

In response to their commodification, the enslaved cleaved to their humanity in a variety of ways. Knowing that the slaveholding class viewed them as goods used to produce marketable items, some enslaved people embraced death as a tangible escape from commodification. Here I recall the story of Jacob, the bondman who took his life in Gabriel's rebellion rather than face execution. But the acceptance of death as an exit strategy did not satisfy all. Some shrugged their shoulders and kept on working when an enslaved

comrade passed away; others were sad and mourned for weeks.⁵¹ "If a slave died on our place," a bondman named Robert recalled, "nobody went to de fields 'til atter de buryin.'" ⁵² His slaveholder required strict burying practices, for he "never let nobody be buried 'til dey had been dead 24 hours."⁵³ According to Robert, his owner implemented this rule because "it warn't right to hurry 'em off into de ground too quick atter dey died."⁵⁴ Since there were no "undertakers dem days," bondpeople helped prepare the body. Robert's slaveholder provided "cooling boards" and coffins to his enslaved property. Robert's Uncle Squire served as the coffin maker, and the community pitched in and "painted [them] to make 'em look nice."⁵⁵ It seems as though his slaveholder made an effort to balance the duality between humanity and property.

During slave funeral services, a preacher shared words of encouragement and sang songs. Staking claim to their humanity in the face of commodification, enslaved mourners grappled with the meaning of death. The first three stanzas of Wesley's hymn are as follows:

AND am I born to die?
To lay this body down?
And must my trembling spirit fly
Into a world unknown -
A land of deepest shade,
Unpierced by human thought,
The dreary regions of the dead,
Where all things are forgot?

Soon as from earth I go,
What will become of me?
Eternal happiness or woe
Must then my portion be;
Waked by the trumpet's sound,
I from my grave shall rise,
And see the Judge with glory crowned,
And see the flaming skies.

How shall I leave my tomb?
With triumph or regret?
A fearful or a joyful doom,
A curse or blessing meet?
Will angel-bands convey

Their brother to the bar?

Or devils drag my soul away,

To meet its sentence there?⁵⁶

Identifying with the hymn, enslaved people tried to understand the meaning of the afterlife. These words reflected their hope for redemption, resurrection, and likeness with Jesus, but they also questioned and gave some comfort during difficult times. Slaves embraced a spiritual Judge whom they hoped to see "with glory crowned." But, with humility, they also saw tension between good and evil, "a curse or blessing," and perhaps recognized God's final judgment. After the song and a prayer at the grave, the body was laid to rest, and the mourners shoveled dirt to cover the coffin.

The burial practices on Robert's estate may have been the exception, not the rule. Kate of Texas remembered that her owner made the coffin and instructed them not to take too long with the burial. Maintaining a tight rein on burial rituals may have been a strategy Kate's slaveholder utilized to quash the humanity of those enslaved and emphasize their role as human machines. They were not allowed to sing or pray; instead, he reprimanded them to "jus' put them in the ground and cover 'em up and hurry back to that field."⁵⁷ John, also from Texas, recalled that "dey didn't have no funerals for de slaves, but jes' bury dem like a cow or a hoss, jes' dig a hole and roll 'em in it and cover 'em up."⁵⁸ Regardless of funerary rituals, slaves remembered scriptures and songs, often resulting in formal or informal funerals. They used these moments to grapple with the cycles of life and found ways to make peace with the departed.

"Broad is de Road dat Leads ter Death / An' there an' here we travel": this remark captures one bondwoman's reflection on her experience with slavery.⁵⁹ It is taken, a bit out of context, from Matthew 7:13-14, which reads: "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."⁶⁰ This bondwoman understood that enslaved people faced more occasions to die than to live; she also recognized that they traveled on the road to death and destruction on a daily basis. Whether they found solace in life or in taking their own lives, slaves understood the circumstances of their enslavement, even if their opinions differed from those of their enslavers.

Despite the denial of their humanity, enslaved people strived to be viewed as people, not products.⁶¹ In the eyes of slaveholders, the enslaved were human

capital, not only during their lifetime but also before birth and after death. Unpredictable loss from suicide and murder carried significant consequences in the southern marketplace. The outcomes of these events were capricious, but some planters found security through insurance policies. From the first appraisal of the enslaved to their valuation at death, southern slaveholders used extreme measures to protect their investment. They appraised, hired, insured, transferred, mortgaged, and used slaves as collateral for debt. By contrast, bondpeople embraced their humanity in public and private settings. They struggled with the balance between being both person and product on a daily basis because their existence did not start or end with commodification. Their lives as people began when they entered the physical world and ended when they departed, whereas their lives as products began prior to conception and lasted years into postmortem. Funerary rituals challenged their enslavers to recognize them as human beings. As a result, enslaved men, women and children entered their graves hoping for a seat in God's Kingdom, clinging to their humanity until their very last breath.

CHAPTER 7

August Belmont and the World the Slaves Made

KATHRYN BOODRY

Recent work on the financial history of slavery has focused on the creation of slave-backed securities and the entangled relationship of state-chartered banks, government-issued bonds, and remote investors in Europe and the northern United States. Such scholars as Edward Baptist and Richard Kilbourne have recovered the precarious schemes of the Consolidated Association of the Planters of Louisiana (a bank that took slaves as collateral for loans issued to purchase additional slaves) and the United States Bank of Philadelphia (Nicholas Biddle's post-Bank War enterprise that invested heavily in upstart southern banks). It is crucial, however, to remember that the most important transactions in the financial history of slavery involved the transatlantic marketing of agricultural commodities produced by enslaved people under violent coercion. Indeed, the place where American slavery most significantly intersected with the global financial system was in the credit-driven method of marketing the cotton of the American South to brokers in Liverpool and merchant bankers in London and Lancashire.¹

In the nineteenth century, cotton was the primary export item produced by the United States for a global market. As early as 1815 the United States was the largest producer and Great Britain the largest consumer of cotton. As Friedrich Engels noted, "England and the United States are bound together by a single thread of cotton, which, weak and fragile as it may appear, is, nevertheless, stronger than an iron cable." But this common thread was woven not only from a raw fiber but also from increasingly sophisticated ways of

wrought by slavery, and on the significance of Leavitt's tract, see Julian P. Bretz, "The Economic Background of the Liberty Party," *American Historical Review* 34, no. 2 (1929): 252–56.

52. *Fourth Annual Report of the American Anti-Slavery Society*, 55; Bretz, "Economic Background of the Liberty Party," 253.

53. *Fourth Annual Report of the American Anti-Slavery Society*, 57, 56, 52.

54. *Ibid.*, 51; Leavitt, "The Financial Power of Slavery"; Kilbourn, *Slave Agriculture and Financial Markets*, 108–9, 127–40, quotation at 127.

55. Gray, *History of Agriculture*, 1027; Sharp, *Jacksonians Versus the Banks*, 60–88; Miles, *Jacksonian Democracy in Mississippi*, 146–59; Bond, *Political Culture in the Nineteenth-Century South*, 82–89; Schweikart, *Banking in the American South*, 26–27, 180–82.

56. Madison County Deed Book G (1839–1840), 330–32, MDAH.

57. Madison County Deed Book G (1839–1840), 361, and Madison County Deed Book I (1841–1843), 322–23, MDAH; Seventh Census of the United States, Slave Schedule, Mississippi, Madison County; Moore, *Emergence of the Cotton Kingdom*, 118.

CHAPTER 6. "BROAD IS DE ROAD DAT LEADS TER DEATH"

1. *Petition of William Wilson to the Virginia General Assembly*, December 23, 1800, Legislative Petitions, State Archives Collections, Library of Virginia, Richmond (original provided by Sandra Treadway via email on February 12, 2011). I thank Loren Schweninger, James Sidbury, Elizabeth Dunn, Nedra Lee, and Sandra Treadway for their assistance in locating and transcribing this petition. For more on the Prosser Conspiracy, see Douglas Egerton, *Gabriel's Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies of 1800 and 1802* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Michael Nicholls, *Whispers of Rebellion: Narrating Gabriel's Conspiracy* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011); Philip J. Schwartz, ed., *Gabriel's Conspiracy: A Documentary History* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012); and James Sidbury, *Ploughshares into Swords: Race, Rebellion and Identity in Gabriel's Virginia 1790–1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

2. See Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008); James M. Davidson, "Keeping the Devil at Bay: The Shoe on the Coffin Lid and Other Grave Charms in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century America," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 14 (2010): 614–49; Erik R. Seeman, *Death in the New World Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1492–1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Douglas Egerton, "A Peculiar Mark of Infamy: Dismemberment, Burial, and Rebelliousness in Slave Societies," in *Mortal Remains: Death in Early America*, ed. Nancy Isenberg and Andrew Burstein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 148–60; and Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008).

3. I expand on this in my forthcoming book, *The Price for Their Pound of Flesh: The Value of Human Property from Preconception to Postmortem* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2017).

4. Jennifer L. Morgan, "Partus Sequitur Ventrem," paper delivered at the "Sexuality and Slavery" conference, Institute for Historical Studies, University of Texas, Austin; Berry, *The Price for Their Pound of Flesh*, chap. 1; and Christopher Curtis, "Partus Sequitur Ventrem: Slavery, Property Rights, and the Language of Republicanism in Virginia's House of Delegates, 1831–1832," *Australian Journal of Legal History* 6 (2000): 93–114.

5. See Alfred Brophy, *Reparations: Pro and Con* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Ariela Gross, "'When Is the Time of Slavery?' The History of Slavery in Contemporary Legal and Political Argument," *California Law Review* 96 (2008): 283–321; and Adrienne D. Davis with A. Aiyetoro, "Historic and Modern Social Movements for Reparations: The National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA) and Its Antecedents," *Texas Wesleyan Law Review* 16 (2010): 687.

6. *Petition of William Wilson to the Virginia General Assembly*.

7. Frances Kemble, *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation in 1838–1839* (1863; reprint Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

8. See, e.g., Daina Ramey Berry, "'In Pressing Need of Cash': Gender, Skill, and Family Persistence in the Domestic Slave Trade," *Journal of African American History* 92 (Winter 2007): 22–36, and *idem*, "We um Fus Rate Bargain: Value, Labor, and Price in a Georgia Slave Community," in *The Chattel Principal: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas*, ed. Walter Johnson (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004): 55–171; David Eltis and David Richardson, "Prices of African Slaves Newly Arrived in the Americas, 1673–1865: New Evidence on Long-Run Trends and Regional Differentials," and Laird W. Bergad, "American Slave Markets During the 1850s: Slave Price Rises in the United States, Cuba, and Brazil in Comparative Perspective," both in *Slavery in the Development of the Americas*, ed. David Eltis, Frank D. Lewis, and Kenneth L. Sokoloff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), 59–126; Lawrence J. Kotlikoff, "The Structure of Slave Prices in New Orleans, 1804–1862," *Economics Inquiry* 17 (October 1979): 496–518; Peter C. Mancall, Joshua L. Rosenbloom, and Thomas Joseph Weiss, "Slave Prices in the Lower South, 1722–1815," NBER Working Paper 120 (Cambridge, Mass.: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2000); and Peter Passell and Gavin Wright, "The Effects of Pre-Civil War Territorial Expansion on the Price of Slaves," *Journal of Political Economy* 80 (November–December 1972): 1188–1202.

9. See, e.g., Berry, *Pound of Flesh*; Josiah C. Nott, "Statistics of Southern Slave Population: With Special Reference to Life Insurance," *De Bow's Review* 4 (November 1847): 275–89; Todd L. Savitt, "Slave Life Insurance in Virginia and North Carolina," *Journal of Southern History* 43 (November 1977): 583–600; Eugene D. Genovese, "The Medical and Insurance Costs of Slaveholding in the Cotton Belt," *Journal of Negro History* 45 (July 1960): 146–55; and Sharon Anne Murphy, "Securing Human Property: Slavery, Life Insurance, and Industrialization in the Upper South," *Journal of the Early Republic* 25 (Winter 2003): 615–52.

10. Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

11. Terri Snyder, *The Power to Die: Slavery and Suicide in British North America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015); Richard Bell, *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012).

12. *Andrew Bunch v. William Smith*, 1851 WL 2545 (S.C. App. L.), in J. S. G. Richardson, *Reports of Cases at Law, Argued and Determined in the Court of Appeals and Court of Errors of South Carolina* (Columbia, S.C.: A. S. Johnston, 1851), 4:581–85.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Theodore Dwight Weld, ed., *American Slavery As It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses* (New York: American Anti-Slavery Society, 1839), 90.

15. *Ibid.*, 89–90. Coroner's inquests varied by state and county and it is difficult to determine the fiscal impact of such hearings. The archives of the Monmouth County, New Jersey,

County Clerk's Office contain coroner inquests from 1786 to 1915, which is an unusually complete set of records. See <http://www.visitmonmouth.com/page.aspx?Id=1695> (accessed January 15, 2013).

16. Unfortunately, the historical record does not indicate the outcome of this inquest, but the fact that it occurred addresses the link between capitalism and slavery. I maintain that explorations of postmortem financial values add to our understanding of appraisals and sales prior to death. We cannot discuss enslaved persons' prices without looking at the full spectrum of their valuation.

17. Samuel Williams to Dear Son, December 14, 1836, Samuel Williams Papers, 1836–1850, Special Collections, University of Kentucky, Lexington. I thank Eliza Robinson of the National Humanities Center, Durham, N.C., for locating this source.

18. Samuel Williams to Dear Son, December 25, 1836, Samuel Williams Papers. See also Bonnie Martin, "Slavery's Invisible Engine: Mortgaging Human Property," *Journal of Southern History* 76 (November 2010): 817–66.

19. My contribution to the suicide ecology is to explore self-destruction at the moment of separation and sale. Doing so embraces the "historical cost accounting" Nell Painter challenges scholars to accomplish in "Soul Murder and Slavery: Toward a Fully Loaded Cost Accounting," in *U.S. History as Women's History: New Feminist Essays*, ed. Linda Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Kathryn Kish Sklar (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 125–46. See also Bell, *We Shall Be No More*; Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*; Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Louis A. Pérez, *To Die in Cuba: Suicide and Society* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); William D. Pierson, "White Cannibals, Black Martyrs: Fear, Depression, and Religious Faith as Causes of Suicide Among New Slaves," *Journal of Negro History* 62 (April 1977): 147–59; Terri L. Snyder, "Suicide, Slavery, and Memory in North America," *Journal of American History* 97 (June 2010): 39–62, and idem, *The Power to Die*; and Daniel E. Walker, "Suicidal Tendencies: African Transmigration in the History and Folklore of the Americas," *Griot* 18 (Spring 1999): 10–18.

20. Works Progress Administration (WPA), *Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from Interviews with Former Slaves*, "Annie Tate," North Carolina Narratives, vol. 2, pt. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1941), 332–34, <http://www.memory.loc.gov> (accessed December 9, 2009).

21. *The Liberator* (Boston), June 6, 1835.

22. WPA, *Slave Narratives*, Texas Narratives, pt. 1, 88, www.gutenberg.net (accessed December 9, 2009). For evidence of reunification, see Heather Williams, *Help Me to Find My People: The African American Search for Family Lost in Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

23. Charles Ball, *Slavery in the United States* (New York: John Taylor, 1837), 69–70.

24. The literature on life insurance and slavery contains scattered information on compensation for deceased bondpeople. See, e.g., Josiah C. Nott, "Statistics of Southern Slave Population: With Special Reference to Life Insurance," *De Bow's Review* 4 (November 1847): 275–89; Todd L. Savitt, "Slave Life Insurance in Virginia and North Carolina," *Journal of Southern History* 43 (November 1977): 583–600; and Genovese, "Medical and Insurance Costs." More recent work in this field includes Sharon Anne Murphy, *Investing in Life: Insurance in Antebellum America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013); Karen Ryder, "'Permanant Property': Slave Life Insurance in the Antebellum Southern United States, 1820–1866"

(PhD diss., University of Delaware, 2012); and Michael Ralph, "'Life . . . in the midst of Death': Notes on the Relationship Between Slave Insurance, Life Insurance and Disability," *Disability Studies Quarterly* 32 (2012), <http://dsq-sds.org/article/view/3267/3100> (accessed July 26, 2015).

25. Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003); James Walvin, *The Zong: A Massacre, the Law and the End of Slavery* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2011); Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1440–1870* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999).

26. George Hendrick and Willene Hendrick, *The Creole Mutiny: A Tale of Revolt Aboard a Slave Ship* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2003); Jonathan Levy, *Freaks of Fortune: The Emerging World of Capitalism and Risk in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012).

27. T. Stephen Whitman, *The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Freedom in Baltimore and Early National Maryland* (Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, 1997).

28. Ralph, "Life . . . in the midst of Death."

29. Broadside, *Planters Life Insurance Company*, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

30. Haxall Family Papers, 1835–1920, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond (hereafter VHS).

31. Berry, *The Price for Their Pound of Flesh*; Calvin Shermerhorn, *The Business of Slavery and the Rise of American Capitalism 1815–1860* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2015).

32. According to Murphy and Savitt, four-year policies were not common as most companies agreed to one to two year policies that required renewal at the end of the term. Additionally, "few slaveowners took out policies on valuable or favorite servants not hired out." Savitt, "Slave Life Insurance in Virginia and North Carolina," 583; Murphy, "Securing Human Property."

33. Haxall Family Papers, 1835–1920, VHS. The American Life Insurance and Trust Company also contained language to nullify policies in cases of an enslaved person's suicide.

34. Alan Taylor, *The Internal Enemy: Slavery and War in Virginia, 1772–1832* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2013). For an extensive discussion of executions and compensation see David Barry Gaspar, "To Bring Their Offending Slaves to Justice: Compensation and Slave Resistance in Antigua 1669–1763," *Caribbean Quarterly* 30 (September–December 1984): 45–60; Vincent Brown, "Spiritual Terror and Sacred Authority in Jamaican Slave Society," *Slavery & Abolition* 24 (2003): 24–53; and Berry, *Pound of Flesh*.

35. Alfred, Charles, and Stephen were hired out to work at the Beaver and Raccoon pits of the Clover Hill Coal Company, which involved dangerous work in underground mines. See *Virginia Life Insurance Company*, VHS; and Ralph, "Life . . . in the midst of Death."

36. See Nancy C. Frantel, *Chesterfield County Virginia Uncovered: The Records of Death and Slave Insurance for the Coal Mining Industry, 1810–1895* (Westminster, Md.: Heritage Books, 2008).

37. Frantel, *Chesterfield County Virginia Uncovered*, 68–91.

38. Samuel Williams to Dear Son, December 25, 1836, Samuel Williams Papers.

39. Leslie M. Harris and Daina Ramey Berry, eds., *Slavery and Freedom in Savannah* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014); Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 262; Amy Dru Stanley, *From Bondage to Contract: Wage Labor, Marriage and the Market in the Age of Slave Emancipation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

40. *Texas State Gazette*, December 6, 1851.

41. *Race and Slavery Petitions Project*, Series I, Legislative Petitions, Record Group 100, Records of the Legislature, Memorials and Petitions, Texas State Library-Archives, Austin. This is a direct reference to Fifth Amendment due process claims, determined in 32 U.S. (7 Pet.) 243 (1833).

42. *Ibid.*

43. For the Gabriel Prosser Conspiracy, see note 1. For the John Brown executions, see Franny Nudelman, *John Brown's Body: Slavery, Violence & the Culture of War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Paul Finkelman, ed., *His Soul Goes Marching On: Responses to John Brown and the Harpers Ferry Raid* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995); and Richard J. Hinton, *John Brown and His Men: with Some Account of the Roads They Traveled to Reach Harper's Ferry* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1894).

44. Schwarz, ed., *Gabriel's Conspiracy*, xxv.

45. "Sentence of David, 1802," James Davidson Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

46. Weld, ed., *American Slavery As It Is*, 90.

47. *Ibid.*, 90.

48. Albert Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976); Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*; Walter Rucker, *The Rivers Flows On: Black Resistance, Culture and Identity Formation in Early America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007); Stephanie Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007).

49. Davidson, "Keeping the Devil at Bay"; Seeman, *Death in the New World*. See also the classic work such as Raboteau, *Slave Religion*, and Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

50. John S. Mbiti, *Africans Religions & Philosophy* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1990); Raboteau, *Slave Religion*; Rucker, *The Rivers Flows On*; Jason Young, *Rituals of Resistance: African Atlantic Religion in Congo and the Lowcountry South in the Era of Slavery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011).

51. Much of the work on enslaved burials evolved from the New York African Burial Ground Project. See, e.g., Ira Berlin and Leslie Harris, eds., *Slavery in New York* (New York: New Press, 2005); Allison Blakey, "Putting Flesh on the Bones: History-Anthropology Collaboration on the New York City African Burial Ground Project," in *African Re-Genesis: Confronting Social Issues in the Diaspora*, ed. Jay B. Haviser and Kevin C. MacDonald (London: University College of London Press, 2006), 62–69; Thomas J. Davis, *A Rumor of Revolt: The "Great Negro Plot" in Colonial New York* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1900); Andrea E. Frohne, "Reclaiming Space: The African Burial Ground in New York City," in *We Shall Independent Be: African American Place Making and the Struggle to Claim Space in the United States*, ed. Angel David Nieves and Leslie M. Alexander (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2008), 489–510; and Joyce Hansen and Gary McGowan, *Breaking Ground, Breaking Silence: The Story of New York's African Burial Ground* (New York: Henry Holt, 1988). For other studies on death and burial, see Egerton, "A Peculiar Mark of Infamy"; Faust, *Republic of Suffering*; Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*, and idem, "Spiritual Terror and Sacred Authority in a Jamaican Slave Society," *Slavery & Abolition* 24 (2003): 24–53; João José Reis, *Death Is a Festival: Funeral Rites and Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Chapel Hill: University of

North Carolina Press, 2003); and Karla F. C. Holloway, *Passed On: African American Mourning Stories* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002).

52. WPA, *Slave Narratives*, Georgia Narratives, 251.

53. *Ibid.*, 251.

54. *Ibid.*, 251.

55. *Ibid.*, 252.

56. Charles Wesley, *Hymns for Children*, 1763, or *The Southern Harmony* (1835), http://www.hymnary.org/text/and_am_i_born_to_die (accessed July 22, 2013). Several former slaves recalled this hymn in their narratives when interviewed by WPA fieldworkers in the 1930s.

57. WPA, *Slave Narratives*, Texas Narratives, pt. 1, 279, www.gutenberg.net (accessed December 2009).

58. *Ibid.*, 53.

59. WPA, *Slave Narratives*, Georgia Narratives.

60. New International Version of the Bible, Matthew 7:13–14.

61. Wesley, *Hymns for Children*, 1763.

CHAPTER 7. AUGUST BELMONT AND THE WORLD THE SLAVES MADE

1. See Edward E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014); Richard Kilbourne, Jr., *Slave Agriculture and Financial Markets in Antebellum America: The Bank of the United States in Mississippi, 1831–1852* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2006).

2. See Douglass C. North, *The Economic Growth of the United States 1790–1860* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966), 10; Sven Beckert, *The Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014); Kathryn Boodry "The Common Thread: Slavery, Cotton and Atlantic Finance from the Louisiana Purchase to Reconstruction" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2014); Harold Woodman, *King Cotton and His Retainers: Financing and Marketing the Cotton Crop of the South* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1969). Friedrich Engels's "iron cable" observation entered American political discourse as an illustrative quote within an 1858 Department of the Interior report to Congress: John C. Claiborne, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 35th Congress, 1st Sess., Executive Document no. 35, read and ordered tabled March 22, 1858, 93. For additional context, see Brian Schoen, *The Fragile Fabric of Union: Cotton, Federal Politics and the Global Origins of the Civil War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 225.

3. See Peter E. Austin, *Baring Brothers and the Birth of Modern Finance* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2007); Howard Bodenhorn, *A History of Banking in Antebellum America: Financial Markets and Economic Development in an Era of Nation-Building* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); John Crosby Brown, *A Hundred Years of Merchant Banking: A History of Brown Brothers and Company*, Brown Shipley & Company and the Allied Firms, Alexander Brown and Sons, Baltimore; William and James Brown and Company, Liverpool; John A. Brown and Company, Browns and Bowen, Brown Brothers and Company, Philadelphia; Brown Brothers and Company, Boston (New York: n.p., 1909); Niall Ferguson, "The Rise of the Rothschilds: The Family Firm as a Multinational," in *The World of Private Banking*, ed. Youssef Cassis (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009); Niall Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild*, vol. 1, *Money's Prophets* (New York: Viking, 1998); George D. Green, *Finance and Economic Development in the Old South: Louisiana Banking, 1804–1861* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1972); David