

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Mama Laja, Piti Oy and the Gran
Machine (Mother-Capital,
Child-Profit and the Big Machine or
the Order of Capital)

By

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Introduction	4
Is not the market a spontaneous human expression?	13
The market is a pattern not a fetish	32
Mama laja, piti oy and the gran machine (Mother-capital, child-profit and the big machine)	53
Production, a mystere: the lakou, what does and does not grow there	62
Bibliography	70

Introduction

The essay starts by troubling the idea of production, my main thesis, conceived as a kind of unmediated transmission of substance into form, a forward moving arrow of directionality from an identifiable authorial source to an embodied thing. This is a move others have made on slightly different grounds— economic thinkers Johnathon Nitzan, Simpshon Bichler and Ann Pettifor are the main people I engage here. For instance, the idea of the capitalist “nomos”, of capital gains through rent-seeking, of wealth creation through investment, has been posed in opposition to a materialist understanding of capital, of an entrepreneurial capitalism based on profit that engages with land and labour. But these are just parallel debates and currents which I am seeking to return to my original language of inquiry, about the cosmological precepts of the ideology of production, and a search for a formalist aesthetic of value creativity. As my aim is to understand how value is created outside of a productivist framework, this critique is offered initially as a small provocation, to be a point of departure. There are multiple modes of writing adopted but I make use of a narrative style in the first instance to explain my starting-off point. Departing from production lands me at the level of market intermediation, where, we could say, nothing is made, simply gathered and reordered in form. There is a feminine gendered aspect to this which cannot be overlooked; see Gayle Rubin’s discussion of Claude Levi-Strauss on women as signs/conduits (1975); Gregory Duff Morton on women as managers not producers of household production, signalling an external party’s originary claim on the product (2015); Deidre de la Cruz on feminine religious mediation (2015); Sophie Lewis’ comparison of production with “circlusion”; Ursula le Guin’s metaphor of a gathering and the container as feminist practice, in contrast to ‘long hard pokey things’; and Marilyn Strathern on Melanesian wealth evaluations as bringing forth forms from other forms to ‘see the mother in the child’ (1992). Marketing in Haiti happens to be women’s work. I want to study how

value is created through mediatory processes. But how to express this without falling back on marxist feminist and feminist substantivist approaches which seem to counter-intuitively turn everyone into a producer while remaining ambivalent toward this strategy where I am left wondering what the feminist position toward production is. I suggest that an approach to understanding value creation through mediation involves overcoming the dualism I identify in social theory between creativity and order. This is the main subsidiary argument that supports the essay's overarching thesis, and is where a case for the use of semiotics for understanding political economy is formulated. And so this is where the essay begins, firstly with a critique of the spontaneity of markets. The subtle gradation to this critique is why if they're not, do markets appear spontaneous? This is the first tension which the essay sustains. I look at this first through a historical framework, with a discussion of theories of market formation, and then structurally, by focussing in on Haitian women market traders' role as historical actors, in accordance with Marx's line 'makers of history but not under conditions of their choosing', to think through the market as both made and imposed. An underlying question is that by seeing the women traders as creators of value are they then creators of capital, and so are they capitalists? This question is after the manner of John Holloway's line 'stop making capitalism' and is the second tension that this essay addresses, which I again suggest arises from our putting creativity and spontaneity on one side and order and intentionality on the other. Gradually, the essay works its way up to a resolution of the first and second tensions. The first by looking at ethnographic descriptions of the organisational lay-out of regional markets, transactional exchanges, and the madan saras own accounts of their calculations and forecasting, I show how market values come into being through Peirician semiotics, Goodwin's interactive turn-taking, Goffman's performativity, and Silverstein's improvisational modelling. Having recovered an idea of creative ordering from a limited sense of spontaneity, the second tension is then resolved by a deeper investigation of autonomy in relation to spontaneity, looking at how market orders emerge

from a paradox of social creativity, how it is that our creations can come to stand as something autonomous from ourselves, which I make sense of using Roman Jakobson's formalist poetics and Carlo Severi's parallelism, to critique whilst thinking with Marx's fetish—which was an exact response to this creative paradox in capitalist markets. I sense that where subjects act one way and say another thing is a moment of social creativity. Parallelism allows us to understand the market as a complex ideal consisting in and of conflicting class interests. Looking at interviews with informal market traders about their business plans, their desires and disinterest in modern ideals of city-life, and detailed field-notes on the role specifications within the intricate system of market intermediation, I broaden, and allude to, Marx's category of the "petty bourgeois" and Werner Sombart's "businessman" and their historical evolution, by reflecting on how the Haitian women traders perhaps see themselves, and what their pursuits are. Considering also the political sense of autonomy, I take into account examples where *madan saras* subvert market capitalism and are, we could say, "anti-capitalist". I consider this while still rejecting Braudel's notion of the "natural economy". I also choose not to adopt David Graeber's (2007) ascription "provisional autonomous zone", nor John Henry Gonzalez's (2019) romanticised notion of anarchic "marronage". Instead I see that Haitian local market operations don't open up straightforward pathways for capitalist moves and countermoves. Here I am starting to respond also to the subsumption debate (see Antonio Negri, 2000), my conclusions on this topic are fleshed-out in a later section with a critique of commodification and Polanyi's definition of the "market principle". To explain how the market women subvert the market I go into a brief analysis of monopoly capitalism inspired by Thorstein Veblen. This part, in sum, offers an approach to the semiotics of capitalism in transitional or post-colonial economies. Having outlined a preliminary approach to understanding how the market emerges from the practices of local market traders who also stand against it— by developing our understanding of creativity, spontaneity and autonomy— I then bring to the

fore wider debates on monetary theory and financialisation in order to redress how my earlier question of whether “if the marketers are creating value, do they create capital, and are they then capitalists?” and also “how does this linguistic shift from talking about marketplaces to the market economy occur?”, has been thought about by economic thinkers who basically say we cannot talk of exchange and commodity markets separately from financial capital which transpires the whole economy. However, my contention with some of these thinkers, which include Ann Pettifor, Fernand Braudel and Karl Polanyi, is they describe how capitalist institutions work and coordinate different levels of the economy (such as banks) but do not define what the principle that “penetrates” the economy is, and so there isn’t a way of defining what is or is not capitalist. This is the problem I see the theory of “capital as power”, by Jonathan Nitzan and Simpschon Bichler, as solving. Equipped with this theory of capital, I break it down into digestible chunks which can draw out and illuminate aspects from the ethnographic data, starting with the financial aspect. Here, I return to Mintz's field-notes on the Haitian marketer's informal credit system, which is called “pratik” and which Mintz wasn’t quite able to make sense of within his limited theory of markets, which doesn’t touch on finance and thus capitalisation in much depth. I then join this account of how madan saras capitalise in a financial sense with the other piece of Nitzan and Bichler’s integrative theory of capital, power, and basically argue madan saras are not capitalist because they don’t have capitalist power. To make this point I elaborate a theory of power, a subsidiary thesis, which adds to, and goes a little beyond the scope of, Nitzan and Bichler theory of power, building on the first two parts of the essay which overcome the dualism of spontaneity and order with regard to value creativity, to bring us to a firmer conclusion in terms of what the former can tell us about the nature of capitalist orders. The thesis on power and order I offer dialogues and debates directly with David Graeber’s theory of play, games and the violence of bureaucracy, introducing ideas of chance, rules and risk into how women source credit and try to secure returns, their limited potential to save, and

why they need liquidity, with reference to Hanks' deictics, and Peirce's abduction. While Nitzan and Bichler's theory of capital provides a way to say whether or not the practices of Haitian market traders is capitalist— and corroborates by main thesis because it doesn't talk about the creation of capital in productivist terms but rather in terms of a power ordering—I acknowledge the limitation of theory is that it openly works from a perspective of capital of the dominant capital class themselves—who can by and large capitalise state power and the legal system. I also recognise madan saras are talking about capital differently, and for them the state is oppressive and restricts their economic activity, and taking what they say seriously—as anthropologist love to say—can actually tell us more about how the capitalist order persists not in spite of but on the basis of these conflicting perspectives which markets open up. Ethnographic material becomes most pertinent here, folk conceptions advance social science. The form of speech the market traders' responses take, invoking the metaphor of mother and child to describe capital and profit in their experiences of running businesses through constant journeying, allows me to reformulate my initial criticism of the material-productivist idea of capital—which I identify with the Left as well as the Right through a discussion of neoclassical economics, Marxism and ideas promulgated by industrial sciences. This brings me to a new understanding of a feminist position toward production, one that is earthy and textural. You could say I make an admission, give space for something vital in terms of a cosmic rather than economic truth. Nonetheless, I finally want to demonstrate how pertinent a critique of production and a theory of capital as power is specifically to understanding the political economic and historical context of Haiti, which I do by revisiting Trouillot and challenging his marxist categories which lead him, I think, to make the problematic conclusions about the direction of future policy decisions in his home country and potentially even the true stakes of the Haitian revolution which was in fact a revolution in value that came about through the restructuring of land and labour. It is at this point that it should become clear to the reader that it is a smoke-screen to go from production

to market intermediation, which would imply a split between material and ideal, real economy and symbolic one, which my argument is precisely refuting. We could have just as easily proceeded from cultivation, labour, the making of goods because, as is revealed, the “lakou”– the traditional system of land tenure and cultivation in Haiti–is just as much a nomos, a nomological order. Which is why I end with a discussion of the lakou and what can and can’t be grown in it, for various reasons some ecological and some economic.

Upon reading my first draft, a tutor had the idea that I start with the lakou as an analytic metaphor which the essay recursively reflects in its form and a way of explaining what I want to plant side by side theoretically. This is perhaps because the essay doesn’t say certain things and lets myself, and the reader, have room, by alluding to things, raising things, without following every lead, but comes to a gentle thought process that I am taking. So some theories give shade and nutrients to others while others have to be grown on their own and at certain risk. I will give this a try. The examples of the semiosis of value creation beyond production, through creative ordering, that I introduce in this essay are the maize, rice and malanga, staple foods continuously supplied. The productivity-as-theology concept is like coffee, few things can be grown with it, and for those who cultivate the land to care for their community it poses risks that can harm their way of life, yet it cannot be cut down for spiritual reasons. The various economic theories and marxist and feminist theories are planted trees, they are what my semiotics of market trader practices climb on and the trees bear fruit, sirwel, mango, chadek, seriz, which can fetch good prices at the market some days but are not the most reliable stock owing to their perishability. The lakou is formed of houses, which form kin networks which make up larger communities. This in turn is how we might think of the shifting relationships forged between the local market-places and the market economy. The tension between creativity and order which this essay attempts to overcome in order to understand the mysteries of value creation is embodied in the very

state of the lakou which is orderly yet appears wild, haphazard and vague to outsiders Mintz notes, it has secretive codes and “lwas” (spirits/laws).

*

It’s custom to open with a note on method. By way of a methodology, I want to talk about seeking before seeing. My premise for this project is that the idea of production entails being able to credit the agency of a source for an embodied form. It is a semiotic presentation of creative processes modelled on the authority of a transcendent Creator. It renders a symbolic relation between entities through denotatively referencing a pre-givenness which ‘brings forth forms’. Value theorists’ inquiry into where, if money makes more money, does the ‘more money’ come from rehearses theological concerns about Creation at large. I seek theories of value creation not based on Judeo-Christian, or Newtonian, notions of productivity, nor vitalistic, or hermetic, notions of abstract labour which are advanced both by pro-capitalist narratives of capital and leftist positions toward social creativity. Understanding market mediation is my jumping off point for this intervention.

In May 2022, I conducted an archival research project using the Sidney Mintz Special Collections at John Hopkins University, Baltimore (US), to look at ethnographic fieldnotes and correspondences documenting the practices of Haitian female market-trader informants working in the informal economy in 1950’s Port au Prince. In a piece of speculative fiction writing, ‘Beneath Yaba’s Garden’ (B. Johnstone, 2020), the narrator visits an archive beneath a garden in Ghana where she discovered “no catalogue, no index, no more than hints and suggestions at what she may or may not find, that may or may not prove to be accurate, or even correctly interpreted” (B. Johnstone, INSERT PAGE No., 2020). I sat down with Mintz’s papers to learn about trade, hoping to grasp a thing that was theoretically ephemeral. It could be a thing or metaphor. Like Yaba’s garden, I had little idea what would be there. To

my disappointment, Mintz's extensive descriptive notes from his time in the field were missing. After months of communications, the primary sources were unearthed, in an unlisted box. I was able to recover the data Mintz gathered, fragmentary and inconclusive, for my own purposes. Yet one thing that appeared from my initial fruitless trip to the Collections was the activity of a projecting mind. To give heed to my informant, and the others, I want to open projects started but incomplete, projects that are not my own, in a triangulation of myself, Mintz, and the primary sources—which do speak. PLACEHOLDER (introduce lakou as an analytic metaphor which this essay recursively replicates in its form, what does and does not grow together and apart analytically, in a creative order, what do i want to plant side by side theoretically, so that some theories give shade and nutrients to other while others have grown on their own, at their own risk -) PLACEHOLDER spell out exactly what I aim to do in this essay. (gesturing in so many directions - Peircian semiotics, substantivist economic anthro, Black feminist theory (which all but falls away in the last third of the essay), theories of market formation, Jacobson's poetics, monetary theory, financialization, critique of Marxian productivism, what Fenella Cannell calls "the Christianity of Anthropology", the differences between Mintz and Trouillot's approaches) I am seeking a feminist praxis of value creation beyond what I have come to understand as the ideological enclosure of production. A creative ordering through abduction, legisla, contingent fixing, retrodictive and entailing indexicality, and the parallelism of poesis. Parallelism is how I approach a larger question, how institutions such as the market are created but appear autonomous. I hope to define how capital is created through instituted orders of varying kinds, tracing the structural relations between the market-economy and local marketplaces by situating Haitian women market traders' role within them. Pursuits, perceptions, and sense-making projects are followed within the context of Haiti's history of counter-plantation revolutionary politics and accompanying lakou cultivation system of wild, cryptic, underbush polyculture. This text will aim to generously present archival sources it

works from— textually layering descriptive data from the field-notes with image descriptions based on an online instagram archive of 1950's Haiti— to begin workshop-ing with the reader approaches to ethical cultural memory and protective knowledge creation/mediation.¹ My larger aim for this project is to provide practical value of anthropological insight about markets, from people who are resourcing and navigating them, to inform activists organising for alternative value systems, in terms of understanding what people need and desire.

¹ *We should think of knowledge creation as mediation rather than production. Without jumping ahead of myself, I note fashions of speaking in other cultural sectors tend to figure a denotational domain in ways that come to feel “the same” as the way the term production is perceived and presented by economists and marxist theorists alike. Seeing this term as a social-material complex, processes of state formation, the division of labour— including aesthetic labour— the subjection of everyday activities to routinisation and simplification under industrialism, the disruption of earlier ways of sharing and transmitting knowledge and techniques, are fundamental to the way practitioners and consumers appreciate, relate to and reflexively imagine ‘products’ rather than seeing relations mediated through forms (see Carlo Severi, Alfred Gell, and Wyatt Macgaffey on West African artworks that, like people, come in families, lineages, tribes, or whole populations and see David Wengrow on aesthetic labour and the evolution of simplicity).

Is not the market a spontaneous human expression?

This section is about what it means to say the market is not a spontaneous expression. We may start by thinking of emergence within a historical framework, temporality is a place to meditate on the birth-ing of worlds. Local markets in Haiti predate the revolution. From records, memories, personal accounts, it is possible to ascertain that familiar characteristics of Haitian markets have remained constant. Scenes pictured in @orlandooo7's Instagram archive² are as the ones Sidney Mintz observed in 1959, Haitians taking pride in their endeavours, mingling produce with steady flow, not fast, not slow, but always moving, travelling in active engagement, seeking, delivering, appreciating, examining, procuring. All dressed in clean fresh clothes, head-scarves, straw hats, with shopping bags, sun-shades, and carrying sometimes on their heads calabashes, walking upright, in constant momentum, rhythm, voices blend to create a hive of buzzing sound. There are no hold-ups, queues, or collisions. Things aren't added and taken, it seems more like a subtle distribution where (known) requirement and (planned) provision interact. The origins of marketing intrigued Mintz, in letters which granted permission to think on it aloud in a random sort of way. Wasp-nest markets in Jamaica, his correspondent claims, startup as someone "cotches" somewhere, near a terminal or convenient spot for resting, with a basket load of provisions. Others join. If the area is big enough or promising enough a market starts. Householders frequent the spot for their weekly supplies. The police are on guard. An open-air market is established. It doesn't grow appreciably but it is a constant spring³. However, market economies are reared by states, through taxation, which forces people into the marketplace to earn the currency that they pay in tax (Graeber, 2011), with what Lewis Mumford (X,X) has described as a machine-like power for organising society to do certain things for it.

² Aurélien, Orlando. INSERT DATE OF POST. Instagram. INSERT URL

³ Mintz, Sidney, a letter from an unknown correspondent, 20th June 1950-60's

On provision grounds, Sundays off — a rule bound by the Kode Noa (Black Code) in respect of the French Catholic holiday — gave enslaved people the time to support themselves through gardening, hunting, and craftsmanship. Raising cash-crops and export goods, tobacco, cotton, in-season fruits, Africans travelled from plantation districts to towns to trade and to hire out their labour (Johnson, 2022). Mintz’s correspondent says he read somewhere that slave artisans were allowed to move fairly freely from estate to estate. Plying their trade and acquiring incomes. This service was permitted by reason of its usefulness. Visitors from neighbouring estates request the facilities offered by the pioneer be expanded. Markets must have grown for similar reasons. The market is the next step, he resolves⁴. This gloss makes the market inevitable, subsistence production inevitably and historically extends to surplus for sale, “have you ever tried to produce peas?” Mintz jokes. However, this situation is the outcome of a specific spatial-corporeal re-mapping. When Gustave’s aunt, who lives by the Chapel, decides to steal back Time, pile up produce at the house of a relative on the Virgile road, carry it on a regular Port-au-Prince Fon-de-Negre route, with daughters, sisters and son helping to sew up the sacks before they are loaded, which they do for free, a displacement had already to have occurred. The systematic division of home (care labour) and workplace (making of things) is distinct to capitalism, and makes it possible for some to extract productive labour, and accumulate material wealth, without investment in provisioning life, of which slavery is a case par excellence (Graeber, 2006). The French famously divested from responsibility for provisioning slaves. Small commerce, local trade-barter systems, became custom and practice as a matter of subsistence and survival within this context (Johnson, 2022).

⁴ Mintz, Sidney, a letter from an unknown correspondent, 20th June 1950-60’s

“The market system hasn’t changed very much in two centuries.” Mintz wrote in his research proposal⁵. If change, of the revolutionary kind, is the elimination of class conflict, we can peer through the market and see class conflicts, which have not, in two centuries resolved themselves—which is important for understanding the ways freedom was secured (Trouillot, 2021). “Mulattoes”⁶ claimed legal rights to plantations through inheritance, their participation in the polis was precariously balanced upon their differential power compared with Black creoles, granted by France whose power balanced at the top of this racial hierarchy. The mercantilist system—exporting raw materials to a monopolistic metropole for industrial manufacture—could continue to serve them. Though this formulation of wealth acquisition is interesting, it requires recognition by a Third, France, in a triad which itself expresses a certain avowedly Christian metaphysics— father, son, holy spirit? It could not serve the vieux and nouveaux libres—categories created by the Kod Noa that had to be regulated— these Black creoles with newly gained property in land and slaves without prestige titles needed to open up trade with other places, such as Spain and Britain, a-la Adam Smith’s emerging capitalism. The Africans saw all this and were militantly strategic about who they fought with. They didn’t constitute a unitary group until, it’s said, the inaugural Bwa Kayman ritual attended by slaves, where a blood sacrifice of a pig was made, associated with the more ferocious Petwo spirits, to a Great Lwa and a female houngan famously declared they would kill all the whites and abandon their god to serve a new one. Is this history itself operating in a kind of speech-chain understanding of origin? Or must we say the origin arises retrodictively after the fact? In a revolving series of political reforms, land-titles are ordered to be verified, to diminish the power of black creole landowning

⁵ Mintz, Sidney, proposal to do fieldwork of the internal marketing system in Haiti. Date unknown, 1950’s

⁶ “Mulatto” is a term to identify the class of free people of colour of mixed white French and black African heritage in Haiti (Mocombe, 2022)

classes; insurrection spreads against perceived militarised agriculture; black creole leadership is contested and supplanted by Mulattoes; there's an attempt to reinstate plantation capitalism through a corvee system of indentured servitude, to appease the French; threat of attack leads to a land distribution programme. Black creole and mulattoes classes agreed on large scale export and a labour system that will produce the results, yet the intricacies of peasant labour processes resisted— i.e. aversion to wage labour and an ideological association between freedom and land/self-sufficiency (Trouillot, 2013). The government doesn't have control over the island, creoles conflict over enterprise with mulattoes who direct trades in Port au Prince, and a majority of Haitians do their own thing. Mintz's hypothesis was the internal marketing system, by providing cash for essential purposes, allows the majority class to avoid deep involvement in production of crops for the world market, and affords "peasants" — not a neutral word, it is populated with so many intentions— economic sovereignty while hampering the government. Trouillot added his inflections, to come at it from the other side of a Braudelian model, the peasant market system forms a mode of external rather than internal articulation. I'll elaborate on this later, Trouillot apprehends an elite class who in their longstanding role as intermediary brokers between Haiti and the world come to operate within another economic framework separate to mercantilist and liberal capitalist regimes, that we might call rentier capitalism, or techno-feudalism. The social and cultural importance of the Haitian market system rests largely on the fact that it is almost wholly in the hands of women. The iconic madan-sara emerged as women conducted commerce in the towns while men evaded conscription by cultivating rural farms. Perilous, beautiful voyages of women who, desiring their own freedom, sought opportunities in cities and fashioned themselves as merchant traders.

I decided, prior to my research trip, that I wanted to study women market traders; to know their institutional role, the services they perform, and techniques. From where do they source

their goods? How do they bring them to market? How do they conduct transactions? What calculations do they make? What types of items are traded and what contexts do these extend and travel toward? My underlying question was why women, why this pattern of gendered labour which recurs in different times and places, especially within African and diasporic communities? I thought this knowledge could help me answer another question, what is the feminist position toward value creation beyond what I have come to see as the ideological enclosure of production? I'll sign-post contributions here in a form that creates space and momentum for what is to follow. The feminist intervention in Marx's labour theory of value points out housework is essential to accumulation of surplus value (Rubin, 1975). But this makes visible a shadow economy only with recourse to what is recognisable under capitalism's analytical grid (Gonik, 2012). Marx's distinction of a natural economy where lies 'spontaneous actions' such as child-making "serves as the fundamental criterion by which the household is accorded a naturalised, transhistorical identity." (Harris, pp.14, 1981]). What's assumed (natural) and what's an endeavour (made) is a political matter (Strathern, 2012). Undermining the image of the natural means rejecting the biological essentialism of 'reproduction' and its 'self-creation story' (Tsing, 2015). Feminist Substantivism accounts for the generative aspect of social relations that go into the making of capitalism (Bear, Ho, Tsing, 2015). Yet, capitalism requires some things to be external for it to function (Federici, 2004). Does this signal another creative source, outside production? Marxist feminists cannot stress enough that to make the labour of social reproduction visible isn't an end in itself but a "needful demystification strategy" (Lewis, pp.73, 2019). Does this suggest production metaphors feel inadequate? Turning everything into production is a problem arising, in effect, from the Post-workerist re-definition of productive labour as prior to the wage system and to capital which attempts to encompass it. Where does marxian analysis inherit this conception of creation as production from? I was told to make a more researchable plan of action. One person said, playfully, to turn the proposal on its head, so

the theory would appear to proceed from an ethnographic source, a sort of rehashing of the text to mimic constructivist theory, substance to form. It's anthropologist code that the field should determine the research. Writing tricks, summoning authority through textual reconfigurations, attempt to do formally what should really be happening in the field, turning experience into knowledge. There's an acknowledged kinship between anthropology and feminism, they start with a concern for the particular then bring in general principles to support that initial commitment. I shared a joke with a friend that neither of us are good anthropologists or feminists because we tend to begin with an abstract shape then carve its contours. I was encouraged to pick a place. Ethnography is place-based not because it places the local in the context of a holistic frame, nor fills in grand system narratives with local studies, but because the global is an emergent effect of connections among local sites. Again there is this effort (which is constructivist) at aligning substance and form, the connections and associations on the ground define the form of argument theory takes. Trouillot argued that field of study can be "a type of problem, or a delimitation of theoretical inquiry" (in Fernando, 2014) rather than locale - the study of the Other is after all a study of the Self through recognition of another. It may be forgivable for a student tired of explaining anthropology is not the study of other, that the 'who' 'where' came as an afterthought to the 'what' 'why', since the principle of territorializing difference, reducing culture to locales, is arguably a reinventing of the primitive as the local. If the local was not my initial commitment I enthusiastically embrace the fact that fieldwork—someone else's— places and localises me. The political economic model in Haiti, which I glean through Mintz and his interlocutors, can be imagined as a dichotomous, hierarchical structure of dual, bifurcated orders: on one level, black creole large-scale landowners who run agribusiness, and mulatto elites who position themselves in the import-export trade between agribusiness owners and the international market, on another level, a majority class of (male) freeholders who cultivate land, and female commercial traders who circulate local goods within rural

markets. There's a split between cultivators and traders, and a stratification of urban oligarchs (operating a layer of rental extraction through tax levies) and labouring classes (who developed practises of tax evasion) which brings sectors of the economy together and apart along interesting—for my purposes— lines of symmetry and asymmetry when viewed at through the lens of productive/non-productive forms of wealth.

It is worth comparing the historical development of markets in Haiti and Europe. These histories are not apart, they form a contingent network. Braudel (1983) writes, the problem with the market in Europe was control, by public authorities. The solution to the problem was to find a detour. Vendors sought to anticipate the market, by meeting peasants and buying their produce before it went to the "halles". As such, there was a rise in fraudulent acts and secrecy. Merchants were providing themselves with goods at low cost to the detriment of normal supplies coming to market, through conducting private deals, in whispers, signs, and strange hidden words. E.P Thompson (1971) writes, the paternalistic model necessitates that between producer and consumer is unmediated transparency, no selling in fields or withholding goods to raise prices, transactions occur in the open, under a supervised market with set timings, procedures, weights, and regulated licensing for dealers who buy bulk. Consumer protection was built into the system, authorities regulated the assize of bread in order to keep bakers from profiteering off the poor, this also kept the baking trade, which deals in necessities, in the hands of small honest traders. At other times, though, when their grains were in short supply landowners would impose manufacture of coarser grades. The decline of the country market saw farmers shun the market, and begin to sell by samples, there was lack of transparency and increasing price-fixing. The easing of restrictions against forestallers seems to have come from the necessity of supplying cities, urban markets (E.P Thompson, 1971). The rules of a changing game were kept deliberately ambiguous. If the rioting crowd held a model in their minds it was a reconstruction of the

paternalist one. Price setting, but instituted from below, with a particular ethic, this was the rioter's call to action. The ethic of the subsistence economy is for the fulfilment of subsistence needs, is indifferent to external markets, such as export, and actively against them whenever commitment to the latter comes in the way of local supply. And we should note, taxes on foreign exports are paid for by ordinary people. The moral assumption appears to have been that exaction is bad, and it's wrong to profit from another's necessities.

The market has all the hopes and desires of a revolutionary movement sunk in it without a telos. It's an anti-anti-model, cutting away first from authoritative control, second from subterfuge, volatile freebooting—which of course is an anti model itself, and a market—; rivalling power with power, consolidating new forms of class dominance. Still traceable within it is a refraction of the people's desire for self organising mechanisms, such as the way movements of some bodies transmit to others in large crowds. The market is an unusual transcendental ideal in that it does actually get to experience itself, sometimes, as a crowd, flocked together in a fiction of equality, reeling against anyone giving orders, yet captured, in the very act of destroying representational images and hierarchies, in a domesticated experience of itself. Through the felicitousness of liberalism, it simultaneously threatens to break out and to crystallise into the constancy of order.

This essay is about how the market is made, hangs together and is imposed. I provided historical trajectories, some things came before others. Diachronic analysis lends a perspective but structures can't always be read in this way⁷.

⁷ Structuralism is concerned with what is logically not historically prior.

Mintz observed Haitian marketplaces in order to study something else, a scientific method of studying closed systems. In other words, causality. If everything is the product of everything else it's impossible to get to the why questions of behaviour, there needed to be something "primary", a generative mechanism. He was tempted, but not taken, by an economist friend's position; by isolating variables, technological units, organisational character, allocation structure for distribution of resources, and the valuational system of demand, and then assuming their fixed values, except for the one under immediate study, it is possible to logically deduce or induce a theory of causality, i.e. what processes have what serial effects, and then trial it out empirically⁸. Supposing systems are not points in time but streams of events, Mintz set-out to map each local market he attended as an interrelated regional network.

Market Day in Fond de Negre falls on a Tuesday. As day breaks the frequency of passing cars increases. Already jammed, they cannot pass without honking. The market extends itself, up onto the main road, and along it, in both directions. It's not a heavy market, beef is scarce in preparation of Holy week, it's weak, with few goods. There is "pwa kongo"⁹, sold for its seeds as much as to eat, no "piti mi"¹⁰ however, a sign of glut and stocks in people's homes. A lady from Miragoane comes to Fond de Negre market every Tuesday, she has different things to sell to that of the women from Port au Prince. There's a woman selling artisanal products, "batwel" which are wooden clothes beaters. A friend, Jilia, is there, selling beans for more than she bought them, the pwa she bought for three gourdes are sold for three-fifty. Whitish beans, "pwa daja", and other things are sold by girls in Fond de

⁸Mintz, Sidney, a letter from an economist named Mike at the Institute of Social and Economic Research, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, 5th February 1955

⁹ "Congolese Peas"? SEEK KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

¹⁰ "Maize"? SEEK KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Negres market, one of them sells beans in the market for 35 centimes the ti-mammit, that sell in the garden for 25 centimes. Millet and corn are common here, available between August and September. Checalot is brought from Port au Prince, originating somewhere else, there's lots of it. These are tributary markets to larger regional markets; people buy and accumulate stock in one to sell in another. People in Jacmel go to Sege and Marigot markets, not Jacmel. Buyers come from Jacmel and re-sell in Sege. Revadez buy in Sege in and sell in Furcy, only Sege women, not Furcy or Kenscoff women. Kenscoff women come down to Petionville market heavily on a Monday night. Market days are everyday there but the big ones are on Tuesday and Saturday.

Croix-de-Banquet market is strategically located. There is no clear order but it is orderly. It runs in an L-shape, North to East, most stock is mixed. Along the southern belt is cloth and miscellaneous items; minor perishables, notions, herbs, with rapid turnover and indeterminate margins. The rear of the market is an animal pound. Men are engaged in the following occupations: locksmith ("feblatie"), shoeshine boy ("netwaye soulie"), beverage salesman ("machan fresko"), charcoal seller ("charbonie"), shoemaker ("kodonie"), meat seller ("machan vian"). The men possess a monopoly on the sale of livestock. There's a woman selling only yams which could be due to not having enough money to buy other things or economic good sense. Yams are a fairly imperishable low unit value item, if you pick such an item it probably makes sense to go all the way with it and become a combination wholesaler. Five miles east of Croix-des-Banquet is a smaller market in Ganthier which is dusty and without buildings. People say it has a market every day which is tantamount to saying it has no market any day. There are a number of different places, including Port au Prince, which get lumped in this daily market category. Five miles from Ganthier, and the last market before the Massif de la Sella at the foothills, is Fond Parisien market. Though there are no buildings, it is positioned by a police station and an agronomist's office. It is fine, full of shrubbery, dry and hot. Produce is spread under some

trees on small tables and grass-covered partitions, neat and manageable. There's about 200-300 marketers selling avocados, yams, chocho, green bananas, coconut oil, sad soggy looking carrots and leeks; rice, black peas, millet, loose sugar, red peas. Perishables are few in kind and quantity. There's no men, so no livestock, but women fishmongers, all in a row, are selling small freshwater fish without a name, apparently, just "pwaso". The sellers at Fond Verrettes market, at the northern edge of Fore de Pins, must set off from its slopes to feed the lowlands from its heights. All these markets make up a sequence, each fills-in local need and casts off what is extra toward larger markets in rotation. A closed economy?¹¹

I want to shift now from power-free models of presumed automaticity of voluntary markets to look at how this structure is achieved. The type of analysis is distinct from feminist Substantivism. The claim that economic activity is submerged in and enacts social arrangements and conventions rather than obeying universal principles, pure logic, rehashes the same ambivalence in structuralism as to whether the production of language is vested in profane speakers, Sauseearean parole, the thing that individuals do, or whether the latter are themselves produced by Language, Sausurrean langue, the structure behind what individuals do, perched in the sacred nomic role of the social fact, the Universal Grammar, Locke's Divine Reason, Lacanian Symbolism, which reflexivity attempts to resolve through a series of binaries—langue/parole, system/execution. Undermining formal models, accounting for the generative aspect of social relations that go into the making of capitalism (Bear, Ho, Tsing, 2015), is an analytical framework for turning everyone into "producer". This dovetails with the production problem I identified with marxist feminism. Substantivism at least starts from the idea that social action happens through some kind of collective agreement or consensus about definitions of value, the ideal. But the desire for anti-hierarchical models of

¹¹ Mintz, Sidney, fieldnotes, 1959

society's "organising power" can come out as an aversion to structuralist principles, binary oppositions, which are what make it possible to observe how dichotomies form fields of possibility for the actualisation of values, which exist in relations between oppositions combinable and integratable at higher levels. A copernican revolution of the kind Marshall Sahlins (2017) proscribes is in order to invert the relationship of "dynamic content" into form. Economic behaviour doesn't obey objective laws, but neither is it without form, pattern or rules. Graeber's theory of fetishism (2005) explores reflexive and unconscious elaborations of social structures through the use of material-symbolic resources; how it is we create institutions then act as though they have power over us. Rather than either/or accounts—are we aware or not—we need a semiotic account of the gradient and multiply flavoured quality of awareness. Graeber was responding to a question in anthropology 'why, if they don't exist, do we imagine societies as total structures?' Totalities come into being as we invest in a value and the field around it becomes a taken-for-granted, naturalised architecture that is barely relevant for the subject/agent, he says. But what is value without a made-up order? Isn't a sense of order how our value-seeking projects become coherent to us. The capacity of order to sink below the threshold of 'awareness' could be due to the assumed stability of objects, Gombrich (1979) suggests. Action presupposes a cognitive map, "before feathers, shells, stones or beads are used they have to be searched for, collected, selected and prepared" (Gombrich, pp.INSERT PAGE REF, 1979). He speaks to that part of the agent that is reaching out to the world, projectively. In the foreword to Carlo Severi's "Chimera Principle" (2015), a book that explores the conditions and pragmatics of consciousness, Graeber asks armed with this understanding "would it not be possible to return to some of the foundational issues of classical social theory—Marx's fetishes, Durkheim's ritual effervescence—and see them in an entirely different light?" (Graeber, pp23, 2015). This is a line I walk in my research.

There are at least four unit measures in Haitian marketplaces, “ve”, “ti-ve”, “gro-mmit” “ti-mmit”¹². A gro-mamit holds five ti-mammit, or five and a half, though measures are not quite so exact as rendered by the ethnographer. Profit seems often to be a matter of measure difference which is slight. Coffee can be sold in a shot glass, cola bottle (five shot glasses), or litre bottle. The shot glass and the cola bottle are described as providing two profits since one makes a profit on price the other on quantity. A shot glass is never filled to brimming, the few drops difference is the profit. A tin can (originally used for dried milk) holds one pound and can be used as a measure for rice, black peas, piti mi, sugar, red peas.

There are many kinds of convertible measures at Bouzi Market near where Gustave lives. A woman is selling three piles of “pwa inkonu”¹³ for five centimes, another is selling five pounds for 20 centimes. A ti-mmit is a fifth of a gros mmit, a gallon, or 10 cans, a ti mmit (piti mmit) is 50 centimes a “mwayen mmit”¹⁴ is 60. Gustaves’ relative is selling “farine”¹⁵, a ti-mmit is 10 centimes, a ti-ve is 20 centimes; ti-mmit is 40 centimes. Cigarettes bought in a carton for nine-fifty, sold for ten, make 50 centimes profit. Ratio scales allow calculations of relations between items on a scale. A conventional mode of linking scales to one another is to link quantity in number, or quality in object classification, to monetary price of goods. Scales form repertoires within economies.

A girl sells Haitian soap of two grades, white and red, of which red is superior. The soap is purchased by the box in Port au Prince, and comes 250 sticks to the box. The red costs 130 gourdes, white 110. By the stick it’s 137.50 gourdes for red and 112.50 gourdes for white. A freight charge for a box of soap from Port au Prince to Fon de Negre is four gourdes, a porteur to carry the soap to the truck is 45 centimes. All this is charged against the profit

¹² INSERT KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION -" ti" as in "petite"

¹³ "Unknown peas" INSERT KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

¹⁴ "Medium" INSERT KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

¹⁵ "Flour"? INSERT KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

margin. The girl sells one box of soap each Tuesday and will also sell at Mache Bouzi on Thursday and Vigil on Friday. There can be no gain without mediating value scales.

There's two key ways price variation is handled. Quantity varies and price stays the same or price varies and quantity stays the same. With oranges, and tomatoes it's the quantity. With melon it's the price, likely because it's a per unit purchase. What is the further reason why price, rather than quantity, is the thing to vary? It could be that the buyer first indicates the quantity she desires as fixed, whereupon the price begins to slide, or that for some items, quantity is fixed by custom, so that price must vary.

This is also demonstrated in the moments when conversion fails. In Fon de Negre Market the units of measure are more miscellaneous. There's not a single glass measure, a thing like a gourd is used instead, called a "tiyo", as well as a smaller size called a "ka". Occasionally, a lack of an agreed upon measure can be an obstacle to exchange. In Artibonite, rice-sellers have difficulty with buyers because of lack of an agreed upon measure smaller than the *gromamit*. Repeatedly women ask to buy in smaller amounts but insist the sellers use their own measures, these porcelain objects which have handles.

Tin can, cola bottle, shot glass, melon, are classificatory types for a class of objects, shot glasses, melons, tin cans, cola bottles. These objects become object-signs with respects to the meta-sign which groups them as signs of the same type. The *legi-sign* is a measure of amount to which the object sign refers. The capacity of the object-sign to refer to the meta-sign is achieved through interpretation based on convention, habit, rules, this generates a Third sign, the interpretant, Pierce (1994) says, an imaginary creation. But also, they refer by way of their iconicity as signs which take part in the objects themselves. A melon is a melon. That they can operate both as *legi-sign* and *object-sign* simply demonstrates these positions are not formal identities, but dynamical relations. This code, this immanent structure, that renders these interactions intelligible, is a type of *legisla*, as Pierce would say,

which differentiates meaningful content into units that can be made intelligible. Scale construction consists of types, legi-signs, law. Signs occur in events, they give themselves over to this fact, in their form and their intelligibility. Each instance of scale conversion, of conveyance, brings into view a set of signs in their singularity, not as type but as tokens, an array of specifically embodied phenomena. The point here is not to describe form but how it is efficacious or is perceived to be so for those whose activity we are observing, their pragmatic sense of these intersubjectively deployable symbols. Rather than the discovery of assumed norms, such as symbol and icon, economic transactions reveal how norms get created and then normalised. The pragmatic question of what allows them to function. Scale construction is separate from commoditisation. On the other hand, conversions are part of the repertoire of monetary techniques of merchant and financial capitalism, consisting of unstable phases, pathways, barriers, thresholds where attributes are added or subtracted for commensuration to take place, a final destination achieved.

Price structuring is the process of assigning a numeral unit to things that can be measured and owned. This uniformity makes it possible to quantify and closely inter-relate things which are owned. Once one thing has a price everything does, you could say. This interrelation is how we get to a capitalist order. The unit of the order is price. The pattern of the order is the way prices are structured relative to one another. It's in this ordering that we can find an algorithm for driving capitalism, Jonathan Nitzan and Shimshon Bichler (2009) claim. The formula for capitalisation—the logic of the pattern— is price set as the discounted rate in the present of future earnings, and can be applied to almost anything. Numerical monetary scales invite linkages and can be pegged to any other scale of "things": objects, skills, personal qualities, services, and so on, as far as the cultural imagination can go. Control over measures is central to political economy. Capitalisation, which sets price as the rate of interest, is made possible by modernist commensuration, the metric system and

statistical techniques for calculating credit and interests with increasing precision (Guyer, 2004).

Conversions in the Haitian marketplace function partly to reference a code. The meta-linguistic nature of this becomes most apparent where certain tokens are excluded from being recruited. How does price take shape in Haitian marketplaces? What is the logic of the pattern? Pricing explicitly reveals how these exchange systems don't consist solely in the application of semiotic concepts, formal models, packets of information, norms emerge from processes of encounter, substantive interactive order.

“Revadez” (resellers) do comparative buying with performative skill. They quote a competitive price and if the seller doubts it they offer to take them to the other seller. Rosalita passes a marketer and asks how much their chicken is. “Three gourdes.” “Fair price, it?” Rosalita asks. “Take, for two-eighty gourdes” the marketer says. Rosalita offers two gourdes. The marketer says no. Rosalita buys the chicken by handing her the amount of two-twenty-five gourdes, which it is worth, she knows, once in Port au Prince, she will sell it for three gourdes and make 75 cent profit. Likewise, when she sees a marketer with a little sack of mazombells requesting eight gourdes, she offers six, as she can't sell for ten gourdes in Port au Prince and has calculated how much it will be to carry and unload.

Cinque bargains for a chicken, when she's offered six gourdes she walks away. Why? She can't offer three for it, that's too much. Later she buys one, it was put up for four gourdes, she offered two gourdes, and it was re-offered for two-fifty. We could say the seller offer and buyer offer are both in the realm of reality and they both need to close the gap, the buyer must know whether the original seller's price is out of bounds, the gap between the offer-to-buy figure and initial offer-to-sell figure is the price field. Buying and selling takes

place within a field. The field may be variable for each customer, due to differential capacity to pay. The buyer knows the minimum price. The seller knows the quality and how much cash is needed by the time stock is gone in order to make a profit. The field of buying and selling is defined in various ways by buyers and sellers.

Price is set by each seller according to what she finds out before the market and when she gets there. When Nana buys at L'Asile, she can name the price at which she will buy, having learned beforehand the going price for the preceding few days in Port au Prince. If she cannot get the price she needs to resell at an expected profit she will not buy. Of course, she can lose money in any given item or market-day, and does. But usually she makes a profit.

One wholesaler sells "shadek" in a depo, there's 25 potential buyers who are revadez and the haggling is violent and persistent, lasting two hours. Price emerges fairly quickly, but resellers have no assurance they can themselves clean-out at the end of the day. The competition is in finding buyers, rather than the price. Perishables are risky stock.

On a Wednesday, a group is carrying rice at an asking price of two-sixty-five gr mmt. Though they ask at this price they promptly follow by saying two-sixty when a buyer asks. Why is the asking price left slippery? Maybe because when the price is not yet known, when the sellers are yet to assess the market situation, in terms of the number of other sellers and demand, the asking price is deliberately left slippery in order to adjust by itself? The following day the asking price is still at two-sixty but sold for two-fifty, the going price at the time, which is Thursday am. People rarely clear stock when it's rice they're selling, thus they will drop in price to clear. If they don't succeed in selling they'll be carrying sacks of rice home¹⁶.

Market traders mingle simultaneous processes, performances, assessments. When buyers and sellers quote prices this is a performative act, naming a value, which has a promissory

¹⁶ Mintz, Sidney, fieldnotes, 1959

character, the saying does something, a price-range is formed. This is not a pure traversal, from original communication to produced effect—which would assume the absolute singularity of the signature-event and signature-form (Derrida, 1988). The efficacy of the naming act does rely on a structure. Events of pricing aren't singular, they form a stream, which are somewhat citationally linked, as when returning friends from Port au Prince bring word of the final going price of products. To the extent that these interactions recur in a particular way, they are types of event, types of action, there is a predictive ritualisation to the way buyers and sellers quote higher and lower prices, the custom of closing the gap, where an in-between space is created, entails a final price which arises to fulfil this function. The final arrived-at price is an assessment traced in a price field, the emergent structure of bargaining. But you can always lose, agreeing on a price is achieved by mapping contingent event onto consequential event (Silverstein, 1997). Contingent causality can be retrospective, such as what the going price was the other day. It can be based on a calculation into the future, what is needed to re-sell at a profit while factoring in transport and other charges will be costs; rational economic thinking; accounting logic; to summarise the past in calculative terms; and to plan in advance; to assess total costs. Judgements and justifications of price enrol others measure such as time. How long will it last? Experts can predict this quite accurately. The madan sara knows at what price to buy but she cannot know what the selling price will be, yet paradoxically, each assessment of fair prices based on projections of possible profits and possible losses, guides what the emergent structure of the marketplace will be, it's as Goodwin says, "analysis that produces behaviour which further elaborates guessed at activity" (Goodwin and Goodwin, 1992).

Mintz saw what the market traders were doing as an illustration of the pricing principle, economic laws in action, through communication. He noted, at Mo Bris Market a revadez of

grains drops her price for a gram of “pwa nwa”¹⁷ from two-sixty to two-fifty gourdes. A few feet away, someone is selling at two-fifty. These two sellers are not in sight of one another nor speak, but a woman who considers buying mentions the lower price of the competitor. The first woman made an adjustment in response to the behaviour of buyers. Mintz saw price as a genuine index, bearing an existential relation to supply levels and demand levels, a single point where supply and demand intersect, which assumes what these are in advance and makes bargaining the embodiment of market forces. However, there is a negotiated quality to the way price can come to stand as a sign, an interpretive process of assessment, traders go forwards and backwards, retrospectively and projectively, tracking what’s happening next; at a level beyond interpretation, in the unfolding of the sign itself, what allows price to function as an index is the mapping of presupposed causes— such as supply, or what the going prices are,— onto projected contexts— demand, or how much one can likely re-sell at. Market forces are not communicated through the impetus of price, yet price-index can be a source, a semiotic origin, which creatively transforms contexts, but only within the specific events of their occurrence.

¹⁷ “Black beans”

The market is a pattern not a fetish

Trade is carried out through a different intermediation here, with granular variety. Dealers called “abita”¹⁸ come to the farm house. If you sell a pig to a buyer who comes to the house you will get no less for it than you get at the market. Abita go from the countryside to town to sell off and buy their necessities. The abita prefers to sell to the “posye”¹⁹ to avoid the trip to the “isin”²⁰, who we know from the fieldnotes lend money and don’t buy bulk, from this I can extrapolate that they are likely urban-dwellers. Gustave’s aunt works as a posye, his mother carries on “komerzant”²¹ and revadez functions, that is, she buys and sells in both rural and urban loci, but she is essentially a country woman unlike the allegedly sophisticated revadez, the type of woman who lives in Port au Prince and buys in the countryside to sell in Port au Prince. Roadside revadez are not in the market but they use the market to find their wares, you sell for less on the road. The difference between the posye and the isin is the posye buys a full (gro) mmit, the isin buys a flat (ti) mmit, they both buy at the same price, but the posye bulks at the same time as buying which can offer them the opportunity to buy more for less. Sero is bought-up and bulked for resale to “spekoulateurs”. It is easier, Mintz writes, for buyers to push down the price of a product, such as sero when they balk because they have monoposonistic or oligoposonistic stake in it. Bossal market is a market where you break bulk. Charcoal and citron reaches Bossals in bulk where it is broken for resale. The process of breaking bulk at Bossal is higglers buy from trucks by the bag.

¹⁸ INSERT KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

¹⁹ INSERT KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

²⁰ INSERT KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

²¹ “Commercial agent” INSERT KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One man pays to have a depo, a lockable stall, with a thatched roof, which is unusual, most carry their goods home at the end of the day, the rent is seven gourdes and 35 centimes, he uses it on Tuesdays and Fridays. Gustave describes the people at Mache a Fe as “business people”, machan, or sellers, who store their produce and come back to sell the next day. They are not, in his view, dealers or komerzant. Most sellers have insufficient capital to allow them to store their unsold stock and buy new stock to carry back, such as Nana who sells off her incoming stock quickly, in order to be able to buy new stock to go back home with. The machan with sufficient capital for storage can store, buy new stock, sell off in the country, return. It cannot be assured that capacity to store means higher profits. It may just be the difference between some profit and no profit at all. The tendency to assume that the middleman by nature exploits people with less capital is probably unfortunate. The depo, someone says, plays a stabilising role for stocks, such as piti mi and other staples, because one can buy and wait. By doing so they tend to level the market when prices tilt up or down.. They are around when prices change, they sell off when the price rises. In contrast to the general economic process in marketing, note the role of the spekoulate, they are not a part of distributive and bulking processes, a different kind of intermediary, their role seems more invented, dispensable, if they couldn't make profit from their activities would they exist? It isn't proven with any facts and figures that they take an unfair part of the reward of cultivation and sale. There appears to be no hostility on the part of abita toward spekoulate. There are too many for this to happen. The spekoulate compete for sellers, and the same is true of isin, there's no lack of competition. The isin lends to the spekoulate who lends to the cultivateur against their subsequent crop. The spekoulate advances credit to a cultivateur against a crop at an agreed upon price. She does not know the price-to-be of rice in the market at the next season. She doesn't think of any interest being involved, since the price of rice is agreed on before the loan is made. She will lend up to 100 gourdes to an individual farmer. The amount of money is based on calculations of estimated yield when there is

sufficient water, 50 barrels to one careaux of land, which seems low, despite the fact that it will need husking and winnowing by her once harvested. Cultivateurs can borrow against their subsequent crop. He normally borrows against the crop without discussion of the price. Almost never will the coffee crop sell at a higher price than that at which they agreed to borrow/lend. He borrows at no fixed price, that is he pays no interest²².

Water always finds a level. Does the trade pass through too many hands? Mintz seems to sometimes think so, in letters he wrote to an economist named Robert L. West²³. He tampers with the efficiency idea in moments that are uneasy and uncertain. His thinking about the inefficiency of diversified intermediation rests on assumptions. The two considered whether this form of marketing organisation is determined by thin demand, fluctuating consumer incomes fluctuating, small receipts for sales, few numbers of consumers in each market, and low value of aggregate business in each market. The corollary assumption is that up-scaling through greater capital investment allows higglers to buy up more produce and decrease their labour investment— fewer journeys— making them better utilised, able to store; this wholesale trade brings down consumer prices, it raises labourer's earnings. I suggest this is a reversal of the truth. It thinly veils the superstition of the providential self-regulating economy, Say's law that goods supplied on the market will regularly stimulate the demand for them, John Stuart Mill's notion that every increase of production, if distributed without miscalculation among all kinds of produce in the proportion which private interest would dictate, creates or rather constitutes, its own demand. Classical economics explains

²² Mintz, Sidney, fieldnotes, 1959.

²³ INSERT FOOTNOTE about letter

everything in terms of these two concepts²⁴. The concepts lose meaning in the context of power, as I'll later discuss.

To pose trade in a-political terms of flows, guided by forces of supply and demand, is incoherent. So we need a theory, a formula, for how market systems cohere. That profit is the motivation for trade fails to explain what is being accumulated or how to measure it. Nitzan and Bichler sift out different approaches attempted by economists to get at this value. Their resolve is that accumulation is relative. To think of it as anything else “verges on the occult” (Nitzan and Bichler, pp.310, 2009) —faith in an intangible substance. This intangible substance is only known by its effects, when we peer through these effects, is it still there? They sit between a positivist and epistemological method, keeping the best of both; they start with effects not as fictions but empirical structures. They claim the capitalist market is a relative architecture working to integrate and codify the measure of things into the partition of ownership, articulating the quantitative —“economic”— with the qualitative —“political”—, where the goal, the thing that can be said to be real/quantifiable, is to possess not more but more than. ‘More than’ implies a structural relationship with another, so immediately power dynamics underlie marketing. This process unfolds through two counterposing patterns, towards depth or breadth, which algorithmically infuse ‘motion in the system’.

²⁴ ; Supply and demand emerge from the exchange they create and which creates them. This idea gains strength during the industrial revolution, gaining the attention of economists such as Adam Smith, James Stewart, Say, John Stuart Mills, Henri Guitton, and Turgot. Say's law is goods supplied on the market will regularly stimulate the demand for them. John Stuart Mills says every increase of production if distributed without miscalculation among all kinds of produce in the proportion which private interest would dictate, creates or rather constitutes, its own demand. Henri Guitton says supply and demand are two sides of the same coin. Turgot says of supply and demand, If I offer something I possess it is because I want something else. and I shall simultaneously request whatever it is I do not have at present. If I ask for something I do not possess. The four elements of Turgot's supply and demand are two things possessed, two things desired. Adam Smith famously says let it flow like water, prices will adjust themselves, over the course of the year, through the natural operation of supply and demand.

How this works is capitalists consolidate pathways for redistributing earnings to themselves to secure a differential advantage over the rest, they create monopolies. One pathway is to deepen the relative architecture. This is done through the active practice of raising prices slightly faster than the average—which challenges the idea that profit comes from increasing productivity and its efficiency flipside, cost-cutting. This means inflation is not associated with growth, it can occur in the context of stagnation; so-called supply constraints affecting prices are often artificially imposed. Another pathway is to broaden control over industry through amalgamation. This is achieved by fusing previously distinct earning streams through acquisitions and mergers. Again, this is not for the sake of efficiency nor increasing capacity—there's no evidence that mergers reduce intra-transaction costs, and a lot of production costs are still outsourced to smaller firms (Nitzan and Bichler, 2009).

A Saussurean model is at play here. It gives us a linguistic sense of economic value, economic values defined as the outcome of the meaningful distinctions one can make between them. To understand the meaning of something one must understand its place in a larger system. Production for gain is the production of a symbolically significant difference. In a consumer market it is the production of an appropriate social distinction by way of concrete contrast in the object. The criticism of the Saussurean model is that it can account for difference but not why something has more or less value than another. Marketing is often a matter of creating symbolic distinctions between products that are otherwise virtually identical, which does not explain why people are willing to spend more or less money on something. Jonathan Nitzan and Shimpson Bichler are setting out a social scientific project for restoring a kind of structuralism with an evaluative function rooted in class analysis. By evaluative, I mean concern with the “why questions” of people's active engagement in re/making the world. I'll return to this point later.

In this light, the practices of Haitian market traders can be envisaged as a pattern which appears to protect against the possibility of monopolisation of prices and monopolisation of distribution occurring. The pattern curbs depth. There is no reason, in natural laws, to say that having a monopsonistic stake in a good such as sero through bulking will push down its price—historically the opposite tends to be true— nor that having a depo to store goods across seasons will stabilise their price. These are deliberate measures. The pattern also curbs breadth. The legislative invention that you cannot get a lower price from a supplier than you can at the market keeps things so producers remain small-scale, there aren't routes to upsell the market and up-scale business. There are many buyers to pick among so price-fixing combinations are not possible, competition remains evenly spread. And while cultivation does involve a male monopoly over agriculture and livestock, everything happens through the patterment of women traders whose speculative intermediation, which pegs price to the measure of a real thing, yield, rather than an imagined thing, what a crops' selling price could be next season, the earnings it could be expected to generate, omits interest rate's self-expansion, and ensures land doesn't get transformed into a speculative asset.

There are parallels with “The Moral Economy of the English Crowd” but they are distinct. Price was to eighteenth century English peasants as the wage was to nineteenth century workers, which reveals something about their political function. Both are tools for the redistribution of income, which can move in either direction, depending on who (the upper or lower classes) has gained the advantage of bargaining power. The food riots which became more frequent in the eighteenth century display a complex form of direct action, whereby the legitimating notion for crowd action was based on popular consensus backed-up by public force. The trigger was rising food prices and the market was the arena for this

value struggle. The market could orient this action because, prior to its depersonalisation through the industrial era, it was a social nexus for interactions between people where they were numerous and could, fleetingly, feel strong. Because price inflation deepens the relative architecture, the inequality is more overt and thus is often the trigger for political action. Acquisitions, through breadth, may slip the public's attention, being less to do with their everyday existence, the financial aspects more mysterious, though the same pecuniary process is at play. It has an ideological association with progress and development. On the flipside of this Minz queries whether the wide dispersion of capital makes it less productive/creative. We can see where American development has been because of a noted irrigation canal, in an area, which increased the value of the land, apparently, and made other land available for cultivation. People there matter of factly boil their water. Two doctors hold clinics. There's nice new schools, one under construction using volunteer labour. SACT, a credit organisation, has a guesthouse, but it's shutting down operation, it had been there for many years. The most lasting effects are material improvements. The least lasting effects are on people. Nana says, the route to Port au Prince is the same as before the Americans except now there is no mud. Small markets, ones that do not grow, that do not undergo reformation programmes, are not behind. They are on a separate historical trajectory.

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The emergence of the middleman holds centre in capitalism origin stories, characterised by the triangulation of money-goods-money (M-G-M), an inversion of the goods-money-goods operations of subsistence peasants. An ambiguous figure, these middlemen have gone by many names, higgler, hawker, pedlar, in English, assuming various combinations of trades and categories (Braudel, 1983). They deal in small amounts and they travel. They spread trade and/or appear from its lack. Their journeys, errant paths, adjoin and circumvent

markets, compensating, supplementing and supplanting systems of distribution by other means. Higgler's index economic under development and vagrancy, enterprising, pioneering and strife of foretold fates. Their basis is adapting. As a subject of study they can only really be formulated as an axle point. Marx makes reference to the tertiary sector in the development of capitalism in the fifteenth century. Shops, Braudel says, were originally places where things were made, by artisans and artists— workshops. Markets were, enforceably, where things were traded. Some began selling things they made from their unsupervised shops. Shopkeepers made a deeper departure, rather than make, they got things to sell on credit, from suppliers further afield. Shopkeepers were entrepreneurs and belonged to the service economy. The profession became ordered by increasing degrees of specialisation —types were distinguished by longer and shorter distance trade, and by their dealing in weight, measure, objects, or utensils— and a hierarchisation, as a result of wealth competition —wealthier merchants set themselves apart and higher than. Shops became the picture of city life, 'todo se ha vuelto tiendas'.

Destin owns a small store (boutik) on the road to Penelles. She goes to Port-au-Prince perhaps once a month to buy stock. Since different stock runs out at different times she adjusts her stock accordingly. She carries “ara”, “makaroni”, “vemisel”, “pai-de-fe”, rum, alcohol, bay rum, insecticide, toilet paper, cinzano, tomato sauce, Splendid, salt, Cafenol, 7up, coca cola, chocolata milk, beer, cola, chiclets, mints, margarine, milk of magnesia, U.S. soap, batteries, combs, shoe polish—in cans and in bottles—, flashlights, envelopes, school notebooks, writing paper, toothpaste, pencils, razor blades, matches, thread, needles, bluing, brown sugar, white rum with herbs for medicine, vinegar, a Haitian cordial made with white rum, some clothing (especially for children). The only items Mintz ever saw her sell were candy, “sik rouj”, soda and cola, rum, cigarettes, chiclets, thread, envelopes. The exact volume of what she sells is unknown but she will likely tell once she knows the ethnographer

better. Based on what she carries with her, her capital investment is likely 150-200 gourdes. She says her profit margin is high on food, low on all else which is most of what she has. Nothing yields more than ten per cent, nothing is loaned at more than ten per cent there are no acknowledged sources of lending. She keeps very careful accounts, comically so, in view of the scale of her business. She has a staff of about five girls, Simone, Gilles, Madeleine, Elaine, and Efra, who maunder about lustre-lessly. It is a pleasant place much not much business goes on. Destin busies herself with little piles of dirty money, which are not kept in a register, but in endless piles, boxes, tins, cans, drawers, and folders. This is all part of her bookkeeping and she keeps book relentlessly.

Among madan saras there are dimly perceivable “levels” of operations. Business people, are they? There is a modern psychology of undertaking (Sombart, 1915), fore-casting, organising, well-defined plans, taking risks to achieve, picking out of a crowd individuals who are going to serve one’s purpose, making sure complex relationships are properly correlated; speculating and projecting. The city in the post-revolutionary era in Haiti contained hopes and desires of a black modernity — Trouillot notes urban slaves would have known the value of money and its enjoyment. In a questionnaire taken in 1959, market traders gave these responses. Example one says she prefers it in the country, she is accustomed to it, if she had little children she might want to live in the city for the schools. Example two says if she had the means she would move to the capital, you can do business more easily, also the nurses are better, she is thinking of her pregnancy. Example three would prefer to live in Port au Prince, there are better schools, she stays in Moussignac for her aged mother. Example four says in the city things are easier to get and you can have a store. She gave as her main reason for wanting to live in the city the chance of regular employment²⁵. Mintz noted down Example four is obviously not the sort of woman who would drift to the

²⁵Mintz, Sidney, fieldnotes questionnaire, 1959

city or go there to take a chance on domestic work, opportunities for business are much better there and, like most such women, she hasn't the slightest doubt about her own ability to carry business on intelligently.

Port au Prince pictured in the 1950's is a profusion of colour, movement and sound, main streets are lined with two-story buildings with square pillars painted in teal blue, white and yellow shades, bleached and washed-out by the sun, neon signage extends from store overhangs, lanes of traffic are backed-up, a traffic cop waves vehicles through, a jam of imported automobiles making slow progress. The city is growing, not on account of planning, the only government policies to affect the urban space have to do with private enterprise, which was the city's original purpose, colonial commercial control, which built-in a dependency on the countryside for extraction. Soon it will be a "slum", auto-constructed housing, ungoverned (Beckett, 2014). Scholars doubt if there is urbanisation so much as ruralisation, a reproduction in the cities of rural economic institutions, open-air markets and unbanked systems of exchange, residue of earlier political autonomy. Trouillot's claim that the Caribbean is not anti-modern but the very petri-dish of modernity still withstanding.

The women tell Mintz they want to sell out to get back home and buy more, and so on, ad infinitum. No one sells at a loss if she can help it. Everyone wants to sell at the best price possible, so they say. Pursuit of gain flavours their modes of reasoning. It matters what women market traders say of themselves, in order to understand their structural role. The effects of interactions can appear orderly, Agha argues, because, when people reflexively talk about what it is that's happening they construe the effects of interactions. What people say can typify acts. That is, they associate acts with meta-signs which the acts then become signs of. Those acts and behaviours can then become motivated as signs of meta-signs, such

as profit, capital, or being a ‘business-type’ person. It is in reflexive models where structures—orderly effects— lie, Agha argues.

So on the one hand, we have the pattern, the shape of the pragmatic process, which tends to be a bulwark against capitalist differential accumulation through monopolisation. On the other hand, is what market traders say, their desire for returns on their investments and to grow their business. Russian linguist, Roman Jakobson, says in ‘Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics’ a function of poetics is to build up semantic meaning through parallelism between form and content where semantic meaning cannot be reduced to either it emerges out of them both. For instance, to look at a poem with very short stanzas compared with one with long verses, we can glean that the one with short stanzas has a broken up flow, which gives the impression of ellipses in the stream of thought, or that the ideas are jagged, and disjointed, with staccato rhythm. The example Jakobson gives is rhyme, it creates a parallel between words with the same sound to highlight their semantic identity or dissimilarity which conjures resonances of sense even though rhyme is senseless. The poetic function is not confined to poetry, this function can be subordinated to others or appear as the organising function within various systems of signs. I suggest it is salient within value systems which designate desirable modes, means, and ends of action; the message/intent and code/pattern. Carlo Severi’s research allows us to understand the phenomena of parallelism is key to understanding autonomous authority. Two ethnographic cases can illustrate. Mvet is a repertoire of songs that prevail in Cameroon (Severi, 2016). On one level, traditional knowledge is transmitted master to master. But on another level, knowledge is not internalised and reproduced, he says, but rather the master has to acquire a voice by forming a relationship with a spirit. To play mvet the musician must have evur (knowledge, the power to bewitch, a magical force) and byang (have undergone an initiation). A whole network of relationships are condensed in the possession of mvet: evur is something the

musician must have eaten or consumed, conversely mvvet is something that possesses you, like a seductive woman, also you must undergo a symbolic death by mvvet, sometimes involving a sacrifice. That final part is vital, it is the annihilation of the identity of the player which allows for the emergence of the 'voice' as an authority. The musician learns one melody and 'acquires' another, then they play them together. This produces a musical cell that has an autonomous existence. The instrument's voice is transformed into an authority through a paradoxical definition of identity as evident and undecidable, anonymous, ungraspable. Another example, pictographs in the Kuna tribe in North America, apply exclusively to texts constructed according to parallelism. In "The Song of the Demon" the basic formula of the narrative is recited orally by a shaman; "far away, where the sun canoe rises, a village appears." The continuing lines "The village of monkeys appears...The village that rolls up like a thread appears... The village of the skirt appears" are visually represented by a pictographic image. The visual transcribes the oral text in a list of variations of the village names 'monkey', 'thread', 'skirt'. The villages are graphically represented using the shape of a triangle, an arbitrary shape, independent of the text. The narrative of journeying spirits is presented as lists of villages in a linear sequence that corresponds to their temporal order. The place they occupy makes a general structure apprehensible, the myth is remembered and transmitted through a process of entextualisation based on the parallelism between the oral recital by the shaman and the pictograph, the myth cannot be reduced to either, its autonomy as a 'text' is produced out of them both. Autonomous authority, how we create systems to author themselves, is the crux of Marx's idea of fetishism. Marx thought this happened through some fatal misrecognition, mistaking one's perspective on a system for the nature of the system itself through alienation. Graeber's intervention was to say really it is the moment people start saying they believe one thing but acting another way that creatively brings the system into being. I agree social creativity is paradoxical, it happens through duplexes. However, I think it is interesting that the focus on double-think, the idea

of misrecognition, can stand as self-evident fact to the social scientist already invested in the concept of consciousness/misrecognition. Carlo Severi asks under what conditions do we come to consciousness and what is its pragmatics, rather than either or accounts of what we are/are not aware of. The parallelism idea, the simultaneity of what the traders' say they're doing and the patterning effect of their practice is how I come to understand the market as an autonomous thing, a pattern not a fetish.

The term market is equivocal, Braudel says. One sense of market refers to exchange, trade, circulation, and commerce, which long predates capitalism in human history. Another sense of market refers to the market economy, a specific order, that is made up of so many institutional forms we wonder how they can be encompassed within a single term. The market lies somewhere between a pattern and a representation. It is a complex whose meaning and significance is never fixed. So much variety is reduced in the schematic rendering of a conceptual image. Maybe we should not get at a "system", and instead focus on emergent formulations. On the other hand, the elements/activities are compelled by a larger movement, a "spirit" (Appadurai, 2011) guides the process along.

Mintz and Trouillot come out at two sides of Braudel's thinking on capitalism as a pyramidal structure of rising degrees and hierarchical levels which at its base consists of a natural, subsistence market economy. Their differences assume the nature of a spiral polemic, internal/external articulation, upward/downward pressures. We must consider a financial architecture that runs through the market, all the way up and all the way down it. As Ann Pettifor says in 'The Production of Money' (2017), we cannot understand economic activity without accounting for wider financial and monetary systems. Braudel turns from the commodity marketplace where money is used to exchange goods, to a superstructure, in the sense of conditions of possibility, and motivating force. He focuses on the developed use of

credit by fairs which concentrated at the top of a pyramidal structure. At one level there are merchants handling goods; at another, business is conducted through the handling of credit. Large scale payments were made by elite merchants using bills of exchange for expensive goods transported across further distances. Wider trade circuits are enabled by these focal points for liquidation which crop up in different places in Europe during the 14th to 15th century, and were in decline by the 16th century to be replaced by Stock Exchanges, first in Amsterdam then in London. Exchanges began as open-air meetings where brokers put parties in contact and reported to potential shareholders opportunities in long distance trade, they were also places for money-changers and currency exchange. Exchanges combined the stock market, finance market and capital market. The stock market is the buying and selling of shares in goods; the finance market is services for liquidity, such as the ability to make conversions into paper money—which is the same as lending money—, and this enables the capital market, objects of speculation, such as ventures proposed but not underway which needed financing but also buying and selling of bonds, international loans, rentes - purely financial assets—although purchasability doesn't spring from convertibility to cash alone, legal structures also need to will . This is all stoked by brokers, middlemen, who didn't even have shares but, through their attendance at Exchanges, could quote higher or lower prices to influence buying activities from which they take a cut, and this creative process, assigning a price on the domestic stock market, could determine prices fetched on foreign markets. The main takeaway is that to understand commodity markets you need to look at money markets where liquidity can occur —which at a lower level is allowing payment for wholesalers, and shopkeepers to settle their accounts—; capital markets, where trade is financed through credit—which at a lower level is creating shops— and most importantly where dominant groups become invested in its control; and stock markets, which is how trade circuits are controlled by money circuits. Markets aren't just where things are priced and sold, prices are themselves for sale, everything transpires through this nominal field. These processes began

together, in fairs and early exchanges, and then later came to be organised apart—presumably through the process of modern state formation. The problem of the free market model is capitulated by the dynamic tension between fairs and markets in Braudel. Fairs represent the credit machinery from which the market transpires. While the latter makes it possible to envisage the circulation of objects possessing exchange values, the former makes it so no such thing can really exist, as exchange implies a formal equality—which obfuscates the goal of future returns— whereas credit/debt is based on inequality which is the source of capital value.

Exchange and trade between individuals and nations is reduced to barter without a study of the nature of money as credit. To give an example, when you spend money on a credit card, it's an expenditure out of nothing, all that exists is a contract with the bank to repay the debt incurred. Another example is the wage, from the perspective of the worker, it would appear that their wage is the outcome of their work, a point I'll return to in the context of theories of emergent structural planes. The wage is money loaned by a bank to a firm who pays the worker's wage, an overdraft. The worker in turn generates income for the firm—through economic activity such as producing and selling—some of which goes toward reducing the overdraft, repaying the debt. The credit machinery is backed up by state infrastructure, though intricacies of this are a little long winded.

How the financial system works is, central banks issue loans solely to licensed private banks, these are the private bank's reserves. Private banks lend money to economic actors (e.g. individuals and firms) on the basis of their collateral and whether their project will generate income to repay the credit/debt, not the amount of savings they have. The bank's reserves are an overdraft, not savings, which they use as a resource to settle deposits and liabilities at the end of day. So, if they've put an amount in someone's account or if they owe someone

an amount of credit, this amount is taken out of the reserves, but the reserves are not a real amount, it's a placeholder for an amount of value that will be generated in its place. The reserves never enter the actual economy, they're just there for the balance sheets. For example, when a bank pays another bank it's debited by the central bank, when a bank receives a payment from another bank it's credited by the central bank, all interbank payments are, for the most part, protected and guaranteed by the government. So, it's wrong to accuse the central banks of stoking inflation by printing too much money, they don't print any. The central banks are responsible for maintaining currency. Private banks apply to central banks for cash (notes and coins) with no limits applied. Nor are there limits on the credit private banks can apply to central banks for. It is a highly managed system. Why do accounts need to be balanced, what is the necessity of equilibrium? When banks lend credit that loan is a bank asset, because it bears interest. When banks deposit money in an account that is a liability, because they owe the person that amount and will need to provide it if they decide to withdraw money. Savings equal debt elsewhere, as explained, banknotes and bank deposits are a bank's liability, a government security such as reserves is a government's liability, a corporate bond (privately financed public value) is a private company liability. Bankers have to make sure funds are available when depositors withdraw deposits with the use of reserves. But if a bank's liabilities exceed its assets, central bank reserves aren't enough. If the public gets wind that the bank is having difficulty settling payments they withdraw from their accounts causing soaring liabilities. The relation between credit and debt is between owners of assets and owners of liabilities. In the case of central banks and private banks, the central bank has a duty (liability) to deliver the value of that currency to the bank that applies for it. The bank then has an asset (the dollar bill). The bank also owes something (a liability) to the central bank. When a commercial bank makes a deposit in a client's account it has a duty to disburse money to the person that applied for a loan . The borrower has an asset, the money deposited. The borrower also has a liability, a duty to pay

back the loan. And so while credit - or the relation between asset owners and liability owners - is in a sense unreal it is also fundamental, because it generates income for investment and employment and so on. Money, including printed money, comes from private banks. It's virtual in the sense that private banks by lending money create the bank's money. We accept bank money as money due the efficacy with which the bank facilitates transactions. But also because financial structural relations demand that we do. Credit used as money is created by private banks by obtaining a promise, but also by collateral and by legal force (Pettifor, 2017).

However, arguing money markets are capitalist because they are connected to state-financial institutions doesn't explain why they're capitalist. It's the same problem in Polanyi's (1944) notion of the penetration of the market principle which doesn't define what the market principle is. Penetration of the market principle means the creation of institutional conditions for the market to become an organising power, where everything is commodifiable, i.e. available for purchase on the market, and regulated by market prices, i.e supply of goods at a definite price will equal demand at that price so that production and distribution are ordered by prices alone, profit is production controlled by price, and income, formed by price, helps goods to be distributed amongst members of society. There is a thinning of what commodification means in Polanyi, commodity just means goods produced for the market. As a framework this produces these blunt binaries, money-bad, a sorting out what is and is not commodified, the commons thrown up as the constitutive boundary. Despite feminists claiming gift and commodity are ideal types— we cannot ever fully disentangle things from social relationships so ultimately commodification is a limited lens—it's continually reposed as a generative critical problem-space, possibly due to a lack of alternative theories. I don't think it is enough to just describe the various vital institutions to capitalism— abstract forms of money, private stores, legal enforcement of contracts, plantation systems, "the

military-industrial complex," banks, joint-stock companies and markets in their stock, insurance, mortgages, various kinds of derivative financial instruments and mechanisms for management of risk— , treating capitalism as a complex manifold. How do we know which way the arrows are pointing? Nitzan and Bichler's formula of capitalisation (discounted current price of future earnings) helps us to define the money market, rather than describe functions of monetary institutions, it shows us which way the arrows are pointing and is a generalisable rule that can be applied to different contexts. Semiotics moves away from Hymes' emic models, nonetheless, I agree that the way to know there is a system there is by showing not all things fit or work, not all "combinations" of "components", "participants", "codes", "channels" can occur (Hymes, 1964).

Pratik is another Kreyol word that sounds like it would be a concept but in fact refers to a role or identity. Nana, Mintz's friend, has "pratik pou van e pratik pou achte". One or two times she has been "gaste", someone able to make her money return after making purchases. Bargaining is an intimate aspect of Haitian marketing but the way it works is poorly understood by outsiders. Mintz observed that a butcher on a previous Monday was selling innards and dropped his price to consummate the sale. On the next Monday he is buying a "pit"²⁶, he argues with the woman over the amount, then buys the pit for seven-fifty gourdes and afterwards tips her and her husband 20 centimes to make a steady relationship. The sale was consummated before, the addition is after. To initiate the exchange they perform the role of competitors, equal opponents. They close it as unequal friends. Another day, Rosalita is seen closing a deal by handing—not saying— an amount, a little less than what was asked for, which they accept. These interactions appear to build upon a kind of normative structure. In a familiar Port au Prince scene from @orlandooo7's virtual scrapbook of Haitian history, many of the pick-ups are converted with a shelter on the back to taxi people and are painted

²⁶ INSERT KREYOL TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

with distinctive patterns, like spades from playing cards, and folk art in bright colours. One bigger truck has passengers riding up on top. The walk-way beyond is packed with people, full of bustle, colour and an array of straw hats and baskets, some carried over heads. A woman market trader named Rosalita explains²⁷, when you travel in a truck you make pratik, make custom, with the one sole driver because you may have any size load and you don't want him to leave you on the ground. You speak well with him and pay him well. On a day you don't have money he will take you because you habitually pay him. It is that which makes a customer. All who are in the truck you have as friends. You buy a roll and break it and give each a piece because you're all there for the same reason. You laugh, talk and calculate what they'll make when they arrive. If you don't make a good sale when you arrive you all complain of the trouble together. Those who are selfish you don't speak to, their interest is against yours. After the Substantivists came this attempt to resolve the investment problem with wealth in people, the idea that people enter into situations along with their social relations, wealth traces its origins in social relations. Jessica Marie Johnson writes "intimate economies were not altruistic", the ways of resourcing this "black geography" are specific (Johnson, pp. 183, 2022). A woman market trader defines three ways. Sell cheaper, for example, 50 centimes instead of 75. "Plie dègi", give on credit at the regular price for one week. Or encourage sellers by giving a little more money. You can get credit from your pratik but you can lose, Nana bought millet for 25 gourdes and had to sell at twelve gourdes last May. She has some pratik, in Fon de Negre, who buy from her on credit. Her pratik may receive a larger quantity from her but not a lower price. Conversely, when she buys at L'Asile on Thursdays she may give more to sellers to encourage them to come to her.

Pratik pricing does appear to trace a similar pattern to capitalisation, price is set based on expectations of ongoing custom with the other person who becomes a generative source of

²⁷ Mintz, Sidney. Fieldnotes, 1959

future earnings. This is a kind of borrowing from the future, where credit is lent from an amount of already existing savings, affecting money's dispersal. Another creative way to do this is without savings, by inventing an amount of money, in the present, which must be repaid in the future, affecting money's disbursal. Both types are based on trust, the word credit comes from *credo* which means belief; the price of money (interest rate) is set based on how trustworthy the borrower is. They contrast in terms of the social relations they configure. Savings are personally acquired—though this can be done collectively—they come into relationship with others through the decision to lend. Whereas the other type of money, from the get go, exists as a claim, with another, it's not a real amount that can be independently owned. The main distinction I want to draw attention to between pritik credit systems and financial monetary ones is that the latter is based on a promise of future repayment, whereas the former is just the potential of future returns. Pratik are not banks, they cannot create money by lending which, theoretically, allows for unlimited credit to finance the things society needs, they cannot do this because they are not sovereigns, their debts are not promises. The promise is to repay at a certain rate of interest. Collateral is private assets that guarantee against the liability incurred when the promise is made. Legal force is the terms of repayment layed-out in contracts, which relies on a monopoly of force.

In *Utopia of Rules* (2015) Graeber discusses rules backed up by force; the origins of state laws in illegitimate acts; police as bureaucrats—comically anarchist. My contention with this has always been that order can be really creative, which he knew himself. In his more recent work he talks about freedom imagined as action done for its own sake as an end in itself, and freedom as constraint, our power to create is our ability to submit to powerful creations. The impulse to generate rules is figured as a dialectic between games and play. Play is both improvisatory make-belief and gaming through rules. I don't posit these as opposites. The discipline of jazz music separated and idealised improvisation from classical training (Wilf,

2014), Marx was really into fermentation as a spontaneous life form, an organismic process, but the dualism of order and creativity was clearly thought up by people who don't know how to dance. Rules are the game, that *is* how we play. It all goes wrong, when rules, such as debts as promises, are perverted by a confluence of maths and violence. The market women are playing a game, they are following certain rules. I can see mostly these operations going on: buying to resell, dropping prices to clear, and paying more or selling for less to those you want to deal with again. The pragmatic semiosis is diverse between each case. There's the use of fictional units, such as ka. Temporal arbitrage over seasons, Anais Charles, for instance, sells chickens all the time; peanuts march till june, and fish in June; millet, tomatoes, and pumpkins in summer; corn and rice in september and october; in october all the prices rise, people buy more freely without a care, the state makes more money. Deictic usage makes up an implicit playing field for interaction. On a return trip From Port au Prince, a lady sometimes stops at L'Estere to buy rice to re-sell in. Deictically presupposing an origo, distal/proximal, immediate/non-immediate, which value pivots around through perception of relational features, the woman knows price variation in kenkai and certain stocks is slight because they are indefinitely preservable. Value is created through rules by equating marginal cost with marginal revenue, sometimes the madan sara cannot know at what price she will be able to sell; on the preceding Thursday she checks the price at the market for L'Estere rice, and this gives her some indication, she also knows at what price she cannot afford to sell. Another woman says, you never know the price you can sell at before you buy, when dealing in such things as onions, rice, legumes, etc. She deals in onions. This makes me think about Peirce's concept of semiosis as a kind of inquiry from premise to premise by the creative act of abduction (guessing), of the introduction of chance into life, and the conversion of chaos and law into habit, a plasticity of action that looks back to look forward (and vice versa) where one sign unfolds to the next, without origin and without telos but with a directionality. This is, as you say, creativity beyond the enclosure of production.

They are still free, it is still a free expression. There aren't contract, owners. They are generating these rules which are creating a market order which we think of as imposed design perhaps due to a tendency to perceive regularity as the sign of an intentional mind, artificial shapes which upset the medley of the surrounding environment. We might say order is the imposition of power, power is the ability to affect change with predictable effects - the ultimate way of doing this is through violence. So then we could say the extent to which an order is powerful is how predictable the intended effects are. And so while we can see that the market traders create order because of the recurring sequences, pattern of signs, which signal organisation, coordinated collective action, intention, they are still coming home often with no returns. So the game they are playing is actually really hard to predict. It is hard to predict who the winners are and who the losers are. A not so powerful order, which is what makes it genuinely a game, fair play. Dominant power does not play because it makes the outcome predictably turn out in their favour. One other difference between games and play is that in the former you can play for nothing and not keep track of the scores the latter is quantified with record-keeping, our ability to pass between them is corrupted when the winners stays the same, our ability to actively consent to rules is corrupted by the reign of capitalist order of quantification and monopoly— which orchestrate transactions on larger scales, much larger scales than our consciousness could maintain sealed off from social values, because it also managed through a built-in metric of future earnings—and when we lose the ability to break a promise, because of threat of violence, which is the basis for our class society based on a debt economy.

Mama laja, piti oy and the gran machine (Mother-capital, child-profit and the
big machine)

The formula shows us a pattern. Something to consider with patterns is that the elements can't illuminate the whole because of the hierarchical principle of arrangements, categories applying to one level of the design don't apply to the next, this could also be referred to as the principle of emergence

Nitzan and Bichler (2009) take a stance in defining capitalism in terms of the political economy of the 1%, in the terms of the capitalists themselves, what is real for them - as seen in the formula of capitalisation (discounted future earnings). What is to be gained from taking a definition of value (risk-profit) defined by financialists themselves? Notions of where value is thought to come from has shifted through the ages, early thinkers assumed it was labour; the 20th century reacted to that by saying it was in the eye of the consumer, utility; then cultural economics said value is defined from the perspective of the investor, the one controlling the market. The latter has been the mainstay of performativity and ontological ANT theories which say that the market consists of the enactment of economic behaviour of various agents, such as the people working in banks, with the social scientific implication that social structure exists purely at the level of actors/relations. JN & SB aren't in this camp. They aim to demonstrate a generative mechanism of capitalism, which implies capitalism is a thing, a structural reality more than the substance of actions/behaviours. Focusing on 'what is real for capitalists' doesn't mean their imaginative constructs, but their structural position relative to the rest of the economy, which is in fact what reproduces capital. Basically they are saying, this is what capitalism is because this is what capitalists do and what capitalists do is what makes them capitalists and the fact that there are capitalists is how come there is capitalism. The evaluative function, simply, is why the structural mechanism continues to benefit a certain class.

Yet, defining capitalism in terms of the elite worldview poses an issue for an anthropologist concerned with yielding knowledge through mediating standpoints of multiple interlocutors. So we need an approach which tends to a multiplicity of voices, that may amplify and contradict one another. But this doesn't have to mean a post-structuralist litany about unstable, contested perceptions and disorder; difference, after all, supposes a relationship, there's a system in and of differences. The (critical realist) idea of emergent stratification can perhaps offer a way out of this problem, by offering an explanation for how contrasting positional values can be brought about precisely by (capitalist) order itself.

When Rosalita begins commerce she buys “here” and sells “there”. Why? If she avoids paying for things in Port au Prince she avoids paying the “bad machine” and if she sells “inside” she won't make profit. First she buys, then she goes to sell. She starts with \$25, within \$20 she buys... . She doesn't spend the \$5 leftover. In Port au Prince she resells. She pays the “machine” 20 gourdes . She pays 5 cents to unload. She manages not to pay the depot, she “finds a way”. That day she makes 14 gourdes, she spends 12.50 gourdes on the truck for carrying goods. This first voyage cost 26.50 gourdes. She eats and smokes in the truck. On her second trip she buys a pig for \$12.50, when she arrives in Port au Prince at 10pm she fries the pig with other ingredients, plantain (50 cents), flour (30 cents), spices (10 cents), charcoal (50 cents). She completes the sale, and on a tray under a cloth she places 25.80 gourdes, she's made 11.40. On the third trip she loses money 15 gourde, since she bought goods inside for \$30, all her “mother” (capital) went on transport, and when she arrived in Port au Prince she had to pay the bad machine. On the fourth trip, she makes good money but the next day when she looks to count her money she finds someone has taken all of it with him. She loses mother (capital), she loses baby (profit).

This vignette of Rosalita brought me to consider how capital doesn't work for madan saras the way it might. What happens to the money she earns? It is striking to know for what low profit margins people are working. Mintz says that in Mo Bris Market, if anyone cleared 10% it would be a surprise. Yet labour investment is considerable. The measurement of market traders' profit is difficult to make if impossible. She must spend immediately what she earns. Uninvested capital cannot work for her, it stands still. She will never buy on credit. She says it is like buying stock (temporarily tying up capital) which you may not be able to sell. The creditor can make a judgements against you, you will have lost your stake. Capital is less still for those who specialise in purchase and sale. But it is not that simple for sellers simply to let their capital in liquid or stock form lie around. You always prefer for your money to be moving. If you lose Thursday your stock stands still. Yet it is quite clear, on their level, money doesn't grow and it is as though it had a short lifetime.

The state of capital is a looming absent presence throughout the accounts by madan saras, what Rosalita refers to as the gran machine. A kotribisyo, contributions agent, at Bouzi market comes to collect and has been doing so for six months. Bouzi market is a year old. The land bouzi market is on is owned by a man who is building a house there. The man who owns the land at first permitted machan to come freely to the market without collecting fees. Now he is able to start collecting, since the market has taken real shape. Who do the machans at Bouzi market pay? Both the landowner and the Leta. The fee system is not clear to understand and requires further investigation, Mintz notes. There is pretty continuous bitching about tax, in Mintz interviews with women traders, and it's justified. He is fairly sure the more produce one has the less tax one pays, proportionately. Nana's daughter bought corn (mai a gren) for 1 centimes/gro mammit which she expected to sell for 1.25 - so she can pay less in taxes - however she cant sell. There are many instances of tax evasion, Mintz sees sellers pay a tax to a kotribisyo of 10 to 30 centimes, one woman avoids it by leaving

her sack and then coming back for her money later. In an interview a woman says that her main costs are taxes and transport. On her last trip she paid 42.00 gourdes for transport and taxes were 7.50 gourdes. Commerce is paying poorly, she receives too little profit because transport and the state claim too much, she voted for Duvalier because he said he would give work. One girl who he No money to be made transport and taxes are too high, she pay 6.50 gourdes tax on her house. Taxes make it impossible to live. There is no way at all to make money. One girl who he interviews seems depressed, he notes, she says taxes make it impossible to live. There is no way at all to make money. She is beginning a pregnancy, she has worked hard all her life, is plainly but nicely dressed, polite, but seems sick.

It makes increasing sense to me to study the market as a structure of emergent strata. Like a pattern it assumes a hierarchical principle, and in each rising level of order and metaorder, the meaning shifts around, it doesn't stay in place. So our quest for 'the message' may eventually have to settle on the role of coded rhythm, the pattern of practices, in giving sense to a shape. I am thinking about how value in the sense of a meaningful representational object is created through order and so it changes based on your position within the structure, your perspectival order. As an example, the predilection for precise measurements in standardised increments among the peasantry could be an instance wherein what is used as a means to a meta-value by a dominant group is produced as an end for another interest group in a particular context where it may gain sense as a means to another meta-value within an order separate to, yet encompassed by, the metafunctions of the overarching system of power. I consider that based on your perspective capital can work differently, and so there could be more than one kind. What I am calling Capital 1 is oriented toward making profit, which cyclically grows and becomes the mother that can birth more profit. For Capital 2 profit is irrelevant until it is realised by being invested. this process isn't a short life-cycle, it

sets off in forward moving arrow of directionality with a self-creation story, it doesn't need a mother labour to birth it. Circles and arrows.

Marx's definition of capital can be gleaned from 'The German Ideology' which discusses material productive processes as the expression of a social order. Material subsistence involves coordination of people into groups. Features indexing groups appear, giving a reflexive sense of role. The media for meeting needs have, too, to be made. These means of coordinating production become objectified and abstracted. Production itself is produced, we might say, in so far as it is reflexive and thus becomes meaningful intentions that are retroactively the ideological motive for the process to begin with. Envisaged along a circle, it doesn't matter where you start, with ideas, things, or actions/relations, you still, dialectically end up at the whole of it. This is how we can understand capital. Capital is money, property rights, alienated forms of human ability that coordinate the process; not so much an analytical definition based in political economy as a philosophy of action in general. It's vague.

Marxist notions of capital come out more dualist. They trace the source of accumulation (the appearance of the self-expansion of money) in the nominal realm of income, assets, stocks and bonds to surplus extracted from a material sphere anchored in labour - in a forward arching arrow of indexicality. This has led to criticisms of an alleged 'transformation problem', to say productivity can be transmuted into capital means capital and productivity can be counted in the same universal unit, but, thermodynamics notwithstanding, the elementary unit, like God or the ether, is forever out of reach. This problem arises from Marxists naturalising the categories of Marx's internal critique of political economy. If neoclassical economists define capital in material-productive terms but they measure the appearance of this value through the products and levels of consumption, "an abstract

quantum of productive wealth”, then Marx is saying that according to the very logic of their input/output schemas, they would need also to count the shadowed, vast magnitude of relations and labour which reproduce the whole system. The notion of abstract labour is the key demonstration of this argument; the value the capitalist pays for in the form of a wage is not the product of labour (the output side) but the abstract labour, the labourer’s ability to (reproductively) sustain themselves. Marx was critiquing the logic of neoclassical economics by its own standards.

But if Marx wasn’t trying to do a mathematical equation of how production underlies how prices work, why then does this productivist-materialist sense of capital stick? It is especially ironic given that this was the original bourgeois justification for profits, during a momentary industrial phase in capitalism’s history where owners were in proximity to industry, resurfacing the nostalgic image of the Middle Ages craftsman who owns and makes. The answer lies with how what I’ve termed a “productivity-as-theology concept” becomes a materialised cosmology. I want to acknowledge that the term theology is becoming too elastic in my usage so while the concept could be extended to a number of areas - all politics can be boiled down to cosmological premises - I will be selective here in pinning it down, so it can keep having analytic value.

During the industrial revolution, Newtonian science sought the idea of energy, which was new and old projected and discovered, as a single scientific paradigm and unit of equivalence for bringing hitherto disparate forces and substances into one conceptual plane, and political vision (Dagget, 2019). Energy is understood as invisible force (there isn’t force without matter or matter without force), as source (behind motion and transformation), as primacy (a primordial substance and cause), as singular (all forces are manifestations of it), as universal (it’s perpetually renewed and infinitely malleable), as transcendental (inhering in

laws which do not distinguish between inorganic and organic nature, that are both abstract and immanent in the nature of things themselves). This idea was tied to the meaning of work, energy converted into use, a metaphor which can be applied to anything. If the labour theory of value has a conversion problem then so does thermodynamics. As critics have argued, converting socially necessary labour time, and that to abstract labour, is impossible to perform because “socially necessary” shades out into variable contingencies - and even if it were possible another translation would need to occur, from that to ‘actual’ prices in an unequal market outside perfect competition equilibrium. In a similar fashion, energy transformations are hard to measure because energy is both a unit for accounting and quantifying matter (i.e. a sign of quantifiable matter) and the quantifiable matter itself. So it’s never clear if the units are for accounting, or if we’re accounting for units. Furthermore, the signified, in practice, exceeds empirical measurement and is unquantifiable, for what counts as energy is not determinable. This is related to a referentialist ideology which assumes there is a pre-givens out there, rather than considering how the denotational is figured. The theory of conservation echoes to the Ancient Greek disdain of the void, for the number zero, and Descartes’ wish to prove the amount of motion in the universe has remained the same since Creation - ‘nothing is created from nothing’. The physicist’s riddle is that measuring energy is like counting toy blocks after they’ve been scattered everywhere. You can’t see them, but through maths you will still be able to arrive at the same amount, even if, as is the case, there, in fact, are no blocks, only abstraction.

This puzzle lies between the power of euro-american analogical relations which bring everything back to a sign-form that can incorporate it, and the ways of relating things that go beyond this (symbolism to iconicity). This is encapsulated by the eighteenth century phantasm of automata, the self-moving machine. Before the ‘discovery’ of energy, the machine’s power could only ever be an imitation, a mirror of processes in nature

(Rabinbach, 1992). Then, energy made it possible to think of machines powering themselves from an immanent organic source. Yet, this last point remained ambiguous for thinkers such as Helmholtz who maintained that matter and force are abstractions that attain conceptual coherence through their power to represent. We could say an analogical relation was extended from energy to human labour power. Though, if we are to assert chronological primacy, and say the first machines were humans whose labour was organised through the strict regimes of the plantation system, then the analogy travels in the opposite direction. The concept of capital (how money comes from money) is like the eighteenth century chimera of a machine that produces energy out of itself. There is this strong sense that it cannot and does not self-create, but rather appropriates energies, transferred form to form. But taking this model, where capital is analytically defined as extracted labour, and wage work is premised on the apriori commodification of slave labour, then the story of the transmutation of reserve energies of unpaid (black) workers, through the instrumentalisation of formerly living labour, into pure labour power transfigured, comes close to a form of transcendental materialism. It requires a degree of mysticism, an insistence on perceiving products as artefacts of underlying protean content (labour). It fights mystification by performing another kind of counter-magic.

Nonetheless, I still contend that, though the notion of the thermodynamic rendering of human labour is analytically fuzzy, the force it exerts is no less powerful in the life of racial capitalism and a story that needs to be told. I am still grappling with these tensions. But they serve as a reminder to reflect on how free science is from explanation that takes refuge in theology, and encourages contemplation about what we mean by worldviews and epistemes - and whose.

I choose to call this idea of capital ‘capital 1’: a metaphor, a representational image of nature to which society has assimilated and a model of the sciences that is materially actualised, transmitted in objects, technical networks, institutions, practices, administered through a global order shaping the material conditions of our existence, in the hands of scientists, engineers, politicians, civil servants, corporate managers, but also workers, activists and so on. It captures the sense of disturbance, the aesthetic response, to an apprehension that everything we own comes from unverifiable sources, and our own efforts, a meditation on the constellation of energies that flesh, matter bring into play. A metaphor and more than a metaphor, metonymic even, it is theoretically ephemeral, it can stay that way.

‘Capital 2’ pertains to how it is that a money system based on the ‘free’ pursuit of material wealth, coupled with a legal system where people’s rights in their material wealth are backed up by force, will lead to the ones with more wealth also having more power over others, i.e. the wealth-power-nexus. Marx is critical of bourgeois false consciousness, the perverted idea of freedom in a market as discussed by Macpherson. Rather than seeing society as governed by the voluntary exchange of private property which implies equality before the law, the accumulation of capital requires inequality. Yet, economic surplus, the idea of the market as a veil for exploitation that happens in the material realm of production, is a demystification strategy that, as I mentioned before, for marxist feminists ultimately feels inadequate. We wonder how Marx can exorcise the ghost when all he is seeing is the ghost.

Production, a mystere: the lakou, what does and does not grow there

Mintz's PhD student, Michel Rolph Trouillot, or "Rolph" as Mintz called him, made a counter move to his mentor, rather than look at the Haitian market system as exogenous he drew attention to the state-corporate system rental extraction which draws from it. The introduction to 'State Against Nation' (2013) has Trouillot's criticism of theories of the states, popular theories which treat it as an independent variable fail to consider the social context, functionalist theories swing too far the other way thus can't understand unpredictable tendencies, and marxist functionalists who pose the question of who the state is an instrument for struggle to account for the pluralised power in the haitian context, i.e. those who own the means of production and those who control the arm of the state aren't necessarily the same. Interesting discussion of Wallerstein mechanical core-periphery states model, where MRT suggests the paradox of peripheral states is that they must be outward looking, i.e. dependant on foreign influence (when states are by definition inward looking, focussing on their growth, capital, expansion etc.). He moves through swathes of history, starting with slave's provisional grounds, the revolution, militarised/enforced agriculture, which realises distinct class interest groups, starting with foreigners (supporting his argument about peripheral states). He provides insightful data on the circulation and direction of taxes, from predatory taxation systems targeting custom homes, to loans taken out by the state from foreign merchants, to state expenses such as the military, and high import of goods that could be produced on the islands from US, because of unequal exchange, and useless luxury import goods for elite consumers from France. There's the US, France, and mulatto middlemen in the import-export trade, and black landowners, who are particularly anachronistic, distinct from the state, extract surplus from peasant sharecroppers and, are limited by intricacies of labour process and local perceptions of rights and obligations. The overall take is an extractivist economy leaching off the wealth generated by a peasant underclass who have a "historical aversion to production". His argument uses

marxist analytical categories which I problematise, for they contain dualisms. Politics and economics are treated as related but distinct, the point being to join what the liberals and economists separate by demonstrating surplus accumulation is accumulated through exploitation sustained by ideological institutions, the nation-state. The second dualism is between Thing and Idea, fictitious capital—financial assets— and real capital—surplus value, dead labour, basically saying the bourgeois aren't productive the true source of their profit is created in a material sphere, through labour (which is ironic because the claim to being productive was originally bourgeois justification for profit). These categorial assumptions lead him to draw the following conclusions in 'Haiti's Nightmares' (Trouillot, 1994) and in 'A Social Contract for Whom' (1997). Firstly, that the problem in Haiti is that the state apparatus is socially and economically dislocated from the majority base—exemplified by the first tax proposal made under Petion's regime by self-appointed senate leader General Bonnet which established the peasantry as a source of government tax revenue at the same time as externalising the cost of reproduction. Secondly, that there is an urgency for peasant enfranchisement which would involve reforming the economic structure but he does not know what this would look like since they would need to somehow skip the stage of proletarianisation. Trouillot was strategic, the Trickster, so I am never sure whether I am tripping up over him. But the implications of his argument seem largely motivated by green field investment, which sees firms as production entities, and up-sizing as maximising efficiency and utilisation of material resources.

Remedying the dualisms, between political and economic, and between material and nominal, in Trouillot marxist-trained analysis takes us to the central thesis of "Capital as Power" which is to build a concept of capital based not in incalculable material quanta but the processes and institutions of power. From the perspective of the capitalist, enterprise value (the business of labour, production prices, and sales) doesn't really matter, it has little

to do with equity value (e.g. future projections of oil on a market), and politics and economics appear entangled (e.g. the use of state taxation laws for capital gains). Value is a field of constant political struggle to define the terms of reality. Pecuniary earnings are the symbolic representation of this conflict - between dominant interest groups, which shape and restructure the terms of social life. “In this struggle, what gets accumulated is not productivity as such, but the ability to subjugate creativity to power” (insert reference). Differential accumulation creates intra as well as inter class conflict which ends up being counterproductive, what Veblen would call industrial sabotage. The power features of government (education, prisons, military etc.) all influence differential capitalist earnings, the risk they are discounted, if only implicitly, into corporate stock and bond prices (money borrowed from private finance to spend on public sector at discounted price based estimated future earnings from public asset may be) on the flipside of that, a lot of private property (corporate stocks and bonds) is, in fact, capitalised government power (social control for profit, legal infrastructure) for instance.

My final question is, now that I've explored value creation beyond the ideological enclosure of production, where does that leave production in Haitian conceptions?

To walk from Virgile to Gustave's home takes an hour following a regular muddy path. It crosses a stream near a vodu base not frequented by local people where the drums are bathed every three years. The surrounding area is lowlands, sandy, which is good for growing rice, maize, and malanga. There's patchy forest, slightly cultivated slopes, with coffee, the crests heavily cultivated with fruit trees, sirwel, seriz, kokoe, soraj, mango, chadek, sweet potatoes scattered among pitimi. Yams are not poled but planted, so they can climb nearby trees. Sweet potatoes and yams give the greatest sense of order yet the yams look wild here (compared with jamaica). Joumou grows allover over as does melo. Land boundaries are marked with rocks, rock piles, vetiver patches, sisal land, and near the lakou is bamboo

fencing. There is no difficulty in knowing one is at a lakou, owing to the fencing, lawn, general tidiness and quality of continuous living. Houses form lakou here. The appearance of fine tough grass growing on the lakou is enchanting. Houses vary in size, quality and type, most have a two-sloped roof running longitudinally, with heavy thatching and partitions of raw slab with white wash surface, inside chairs made of wick and coarse wood frames. The outbuildings for cooking are far away from the house compared with Jamaica and Puerto Rico, suggesting a difference in family structures.

Lakous are small, one house and outbuildings, with relatives living nearby. In Joseph's lakou, in Jacmel, there's heavy foliage and coffee, bananas, and plantain growing. Some crops don't grow in the lakou but on the plains, such as pwa mayok, a root you can eat which resembles a sweet potato, it takes 12 months to grow, from March to March. The people of this lakou know it and make the pea into a necklace for children who have X. Living fences are used for protection of soil. Tobacco and sweet potatoes grow from October to April, before high water. The beans and peas are fast-growing, 1-3 months. High water in lowlands means beans need to harvest sooner.

One of Gustave's small holdings is a rhomboidal shape, the long side curving along the river, the high side devoted to coffee, with cover in the form of palms, mango, and hardwood, the Eastern side has sweet potatoes in rows in sandy ground and above that bananas backed up by malanga mazombel. Behind the malanga are clumps of bamboo, planted to hold the soil, and behind that more banana inter-planted with nayam jon. Between the malanga and the coffee in less sandy soil is pwa nwa intermixed with malanga kesto.

Shade trees have to be maintained and soil cleaned and cared for. It is brainless observers who think mixed cropping a vague haphazard mixing of crops. You can grow yams and some malanga with coffee. Laws to keep the land in a crop like coffee do not help the

economy. When the world market price is unknown and unpredictable it forces the peasant to play games.

Gustave claims a man can live “ak garanti” if he has two carreaux of land for cultivation and perhaps two more in reserve. If he has two carreaux of land for cultivation and perhaps two more in reserve. 4 carreaux is a lot of land - 13 acres. Even if he works half, he's working 7 acres. A large amount of abita have that amount of land. He thinks there are less than 25% landless. He will not estimate how many have 4 carreaux or more, a considerable number.

Peasants aren't allowed to cut down trees. Care of them likely declines when the reward is not promising. There's a tendency to move to food crops when coffee declines. Coffee yields once a year after three years, food twice a year. Since peasants can't cut coffee they don't, but they can whittle away at it (and probably do). There is little that can be grown with coffee if the coffee is to be really kept up.

Gustave's friend has 2 karro of land, he daren't grow more coffee because he doesn't want to depend on it, he would rather grow food on which can subsist. Coffee can be harvested once a year and is hard to cultivate. It takes six years before good prices are reflected in rising coffee production. It takes three years for a coffee plantation to begin to yield. The preceding year is when price justifies increased planting but the effect in increased yield won't be felt as soon as new trees are bearing. When the price of coffee is high, expansion is slow. When the price of coffee is low contraction is rapid

Land does have value quite apart from its economic yield. Gustave's family has more land than it can employ economically, nobody thinks about it as non-working capital. Buying land isn't a capitalistic venture but a form of saving which not increase production and in some

ways may limit further production since the capital employed to buy the land might be employed to increase productivity by other means.

They get 1 gourde for digging yams, 80 centimes for other work, women get 60 centimes, women don't dig. The peasant has no means of measuring the cash value of their effort (labour), they may have a better idea with a product like straw work or woodwork but even their measurement is extremely difficult, Gustave estimates it takes a day to gather the wood to make a saddle. Individual sellers have no satisfactory way of putting on a price on their labour - other than the cost of the latanier which is minor. Labor has no value; only the time in which the fruits of labor can be converted into capital has value. One without any capital can put no value at all on his time or labor; as capital increases, the value of labor time rises; but it is not as if determined by the acquired skill of the worker, but by the accumulation of capital²⁸.

Mimerose Bebrean asks Aunt Tansia about the structure and economy of the Lakou in her ethnography *Nan Domi* (2010), about the history and the structure of the Lakou.

“In the lakou, people do not own any material goods. They are all penniless, like outcasts.” “You lie when you say that they do not possess any goods. You do not know the economy of the lakou. Go do your research on the demanbre, then you can tell me what the economy of the lakou is like. Whoever wants to talk about the economy must necessarily speak also of the common holdings. Do you know that the demanbre represents the holdings of the lakou?” Then, in a rather long discourse, she continued to instruct me on the structure of the lakou, which she explained as follows: 1. The demanbre or Bitasyon represents the familial patrimony. It is the place reserved for

²⁸ Mintz, Sidney. *Fieldnotes*. 1959

divinities, where one finds the altar trees, the pyebwa sévi. “The powers are transmitted from one generation to the next.” 2. The sacred place called the houmfo, badji, sobadji or kay mistd is where the Pe are erected and also serves as a convent where the kouche (procedures, initiation rituals) are carried out for the new initiates. 3. The peristil or lasal is the place favored by the initiates and the profane when they join together to dance and celebrate with the lwa. “The structure of the lakou,” she told me, “is designed in accord with the state of consciousness of the founder; that is, it is based on a direct rapport with the unknown world, which can only be reached through trance. There are different degrees of trance. There are trances so deep that the chwal (individual possessed by a lwa) can spend a month or more outside himself. There is the inspirational trance that writers, musicians, poets and artists in general are familiar with. There is the trance in which one sees and hears the spirits, the one that dreamers know. The trance of ecstasy in which one travels through distant regions in full consciousness. The ecstatic trance that the dokté fey (leaf doctor, or healer) knows, in which the initiate acts lucidly while his spirit communicates at the same time with other spirits... Since the lakou had attracted me, I searched for the codes of its existence, if only to satisfy my need for consciousness and to reassure myself about my theses. Father Bien-Aimé had pressed my hands as if to tell me that he believed in my sincerity. After that, a certain bond was forged between us. “Whoever says ‘codes’ means numbers or letters,” he told me. “I know neither. I am illiterate. I cannot help you in this area. However, I am ready to teach you things in other areas.” (Mimerose Beaubrun, pp. 179, 2010)

Cultivation of the Lakou, like everything, is semiotically mediated. I spoke earlier of the state as an absent presence, an ideological institution through capital is carried out. The lakou is against the state, but it has lwas (law), which are spirits. We can only imagine the

meta-praxis by which I was ensouled the outcome of material processes there. A mystery in Haiti doesn't isn't something to be solved it is something discovered, when you have discovered a mystery you have gained knowledge. It was in this spirit, that I chose to allow Capital 1 to continue to work on our imagination despite the productivist material framework it's based upon, which is really spiritualist when you scratch their surface of it. Capital 1 arises from the question of unverified sources which is a human mystery that is constantly discovered and never solved.

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