**Research Article**

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# Citation as Exchange Value

https://doi.org/10.1515/culture-2018-0035
Received October 4, 2018; accepted November 19, 2018

**Abstract:** This article focuses on the interplay between correlated textual subject positions, insofar as they are differently legitimated across the New International Division of Labour (NIDL). In examining the academic system of referencing or *invocation*, I will pay particular attention to how it functions as a circuit of value production in the cultural domain. Marx's theory of value production will be used as an exegetic tool to locate the workings of economic power in the referential apparatus of the contemporary academy, showing how Third-World symbolic production is undervalued *despite its existence*, since economic conditions *retroactively* foreclose the validation of Third-World intellectual and artistic production as cultural capital. As a case study, I will analyse some of the citation strategies of postcolonial theorist Anthony Appiah in *In My Father's House*, which operates within the presupposition that textual subject positions (the place of enunciation in particular) are made available only to privileged subjects in the extra-textual world. Appiah's methodology opens up what I call a circumscribed redistribution of cultural capital across the NIDL. Hence, I take *In My Father's House* not only as an object of analysis but also as a critical source to understand how value production mediates academic writing, allowing Appiah's conceptualization of the relationship between textual and social subjects to inform my own.

**Keywords:** value, New International Division of Labour, citation, subject

> The currency of academia isn't truth or even concepts, its citation. You can tell a lot by who someone is (or isn't) quoting and a scholar's power comes largely from being cited.
> *Fuck Theory* (@ft_variations) 21 August 2018, 11.55 am. Tweet.

> By turning his money into commodities which serve as the building materials for a new product..., by incorporating living labour into their lifeless objectivity, the capitalist simultaneously transforms value, i.e. past labour in its objectified and lifeless form, into capital, value which can perform its own valorisation process, an animated monster which begins to "work," "as if its body were by love possessed."
> Karl Marx, *Capital* [ed. 1990] 302.

An epigraph motivates and predisposes the subsequent text. It is defined as a "short quotation or pithy sentence placed at the commencement of a work, a chapter, etc. to indicate the leading idea or sentiment" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Epigraphs hold, in condensed form, what is to be developed in the passages to follow. I have selected the epigraphs above for the way in which their qualitative specificity motivates the discussion to be held in this essay, that is to say, for their use value.

Yet, as forms of academic currency, both epigraphs participate in circuits of exchange value as well. The name of Marx furthers the circulation of the present text. In citing this classic, this essay at once reiterates its importance (it contributes to the value of "Marx" by circulating it) and with that very act gains access to an academic circuit of value production whereby texts with the adequate sources are subject in turn to being cited. And, as has been widely discussed, the number of citations one's work receives translates directly into academic status and, eventually, into economic value.

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While the second epigraph above invokes Marx, the first epigraph is a tweet published under a pseudonym. Although such a text can hardly function as an authoritative academic source, it may give this essay (the appearance of) currency, at least in the sense of being in tune with the times. While a tweet is at present not an established academic source, it does earn the citing author kudos by deploying the aura of the new. To counterpoise Marx and a semi-ephemeral semi-anonymous discourse circulating in social media, and to do so by granting them equal status (as epigraphs), is to put them to work together. There is (intellectual) use value in this gesture, but there is also exchange value, that is, a form of value produced in circulation. Although both epigraphs participate in the aforementioned circuit, they do not do so as equivalent categories. This lack of equivalence, particularly relevant when citing sources from different sides of the New International Division of Labour (NIDL) is what I want to discuss in the present essay. I will do so by analysing the citation strategies of postcolonial theorist Anthony Appiah, with the aid of Marx's theory of value production.

## Superinscribing the Body of the Text

The reason I began this essay with the meta-gesture of allowing my text to occupy the place of both subject and object of analysis was not to indulge in a poststructuralist ruse nor display discursive pirouettes. Rather, I am interested in grounding such textual performances with a Marxist anchor. That is why, in sections to come, I will sharpen my usage of Marx's theory of value as an exegetic tool to locate the workings of economic power in the referential apparatus of the contemporary academy. But, before moving on to Marx as an analytical framework (and to Appiah as a case study), let us stay a little longer with the Marxian text as an object of analysis.

Consider again the epigraph above. We could trace texts by Ricardo or Hegel as discursive preconditions to Marx's own discourse here but, in either case, they are—to use the cannibalistic metaphor of psychoanalysis—entirely "digested" or introjected, we encounter no visible remainders, no textual traces of either author kept whole inside quotation marks. In contrast, the relationship between Marx's text and his direct quotation of Goethe can be conceived as a "swallowing whole," as an incorporation.[1]

The words from Goethe's *Faust* find their articulating principle in a distinct source that is external to Marx's *Capital*. This allows them to operate as a site of resistance within *Capital* itself. Here, I do not use the term "resistance" in an explicitly political nor strictly ideological sense, but simply to name the presence of a different logic that, articulated from an external point of cohesion, defies complete assimilation at the *material* level of discourse by the main authorial voice of *Capital*.

In his analysis of Marx's quotation of Goethe, Thomas Kemple is impressed by how Goethe's words serve as a "moment of interruption" in Marx's own thought (31). In that way, Kemple implicitly points to the intervention of the remainder of the other that the quote entails. In his comparative analysis of the scene from Faust and the part of *Capital* that are brought together in this passage, he concludes that in the quoted episode of the play, as in Marx's act of quotation, "words substitute for thoughts" (40). Hence, Kemple also implicitly points to the fact that we are witnessing an *objectified* remainder of another subjectivity. Marx's citation of Goethe is originally unreferenced; yet, as both Kemple and Michael DeGolyer have indicated, the phrase from Faust would rarely escape Marx's contemporary readers (Kemple 30; DeGoyler 109).

Indeed, naming the source is not essential because the material dimension of Goethe's *Faust* is literally incorporated into the text. The fragment of Goethe's play in Marx's *Capital* is physically distinguishable: it has its own material dimension and is separated from the rest of the text by quotation marks. Goethe's ideas in Marx's text have a corresponding *body*.

Goethe as quoted by Marx would qualify as a material remainder of a subject that is other to the text. Yet, insofar as the fragment of this extraneous body resists full assimilation to the work of the quoting author, the bodily dimension of the fragment does not negate but rather foregrounds Goethe in his capacity as an author, as the abstract articulating principle of the words. In the quote from *Faust* in *Capital*, Marx

1 See Khanna's reworking of Freud (22-24).

functions as an incorporate subject: a subject whose subjectivity cannot be located in words themselves, but who is nonetheless presupposed as their meta-articulating principle. Like Marx's *surrounding* words, the words in the quote from *Faust* cohere around a presupposed autonomous subjectivity associated to the physical dimension of the letter. Insofar as they operate in this way, they can function as a site of critical agency in relation to the wider logical and discursive complex in which they are inserted.

With this brief example, I have highlighted some of the potential of citations as qualitatively specific crystallizations of another's discourse within one's own. The quotation also denotes a writer's situatedness as well as the political character of his relationship with the quoted material, taking politics here as the choice to actualise a specific historical claim. Hence, not only do I intend to explore textual subject positions as sites of critical agency, but am particularly concerned with the ways in which those positions are selectively made available to or foreclosed for specific subjects in the extra-textual world. Therefore, although quotations are much more than invocations of authority, my focus in this essay is on their role as such. I seek to understand how and to what effect concrete historical subjects are included or excluded as authorised subjects of enunciation.

I am interested in textual subject positions insofar as they are differently legitimated across the NIDL. In examining the academic system of referencing or *invocation*, I will pay particular attention to how it functions as a circuit of value production in the cultural domain. I will focus on how the restricted access to textual subject positions mediates that process through a close-reading of Appiah's *In My Father's House*. The book operates within the presupposition that textual subject positions (the place of enunciation in particular) are made available only to privileged subjects in the extra-textual world. Appiah's methodology opens up what I call a circumscribed redistribution of cultural capital across the NIDL. For that reason, I will take *In My Father's Hous*e not only as an object of analysis but also as a critical source, allowing its conceptualization of the relationship between textual and social subjects to inform my own.

## The Subject Position as Cultural Capital

The self-reflexive act by which the subject is constituted as such is necessarily situated. As Gayatri Spivak suggests, Western philosophers have failed to appreciate the mediation of cultural specificity in this ontological act ("More on Power/Knowledge"). Yet the fact stands that self-reflexivity is still the decisive element in the constitution of the subject. This is visibly the case when one is concerned with *textual* subject positions. Since the subject's historical situatedness is not intrinsic to a text as a text, the purely formal aspect of self-reflexivity becomes more clearly distinguishable.

That self-reflexive element may be spotted when a textual subject produces the effect that is described by Slavoj Žižek, "there is no positive substantial determination of [wo/]man: [wo/]man is the animal which recognises itself as [wo/]man, what makes [her/]him human is this formal gesture of recognition… [Wo/]Man is a lack which, in order to fill itself in, recognises itself as something" (*The Parallax View* 44). At the textual level, represented subjects may be present exclusively as "recognised content." In principle, only the author can be aligned with the subject. Extrapolating Žižek's definition of "[wo/]man" to textuality suggests the author is aligned, not with the signifier, nor with the signified, but with the formal gesture by which the chain of signifiers, in order to "fill itself in," recognises itself as "something." Hence, drawing on another text by Žižek, let me conceive this textual subject as an externality that emulates self-reflexive thought without having the ontological status of thought ("How Did Marx Invent the Symptom?"19).

Two extra-textual elements also participate in stressing that position as one of self-reflexivity. The first is that the author is the conflation in the reception of the text's articulating principle with an actual ontological subject. The second element concerns the conventions of scholarly criticism. Within those conventions, a third subject position—besides those of the author and the represented subjects— arises. I am referring to citations that invoke other authors who function as sources of intellectual authority. This third position emerges at the conjunction of the textual and conventional specificity of academic writing. The cited author—particularly if just named rather than quoted—does not actually function as a structuring principle in the text that draws from her authority; yet, she is called forth in that capacity. Considering

the etymological root of "invoke" as "to call upon, esp. as a witness or for aid," we can say that the cited author functions as an invoked rather than a represented subject (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Furthermore, her distinct position is signalled by citational norms that distinguish her from represented subjects. By convention as well as a common assumption, she is granted a position that is equivalent to, but once removed from, the citing author herself.

The connections between the three textual positions that I have distinguished—the author, the represented other, and the invoked other—may be thought through with Pierre Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital.[2] In principle, the place of the phenomenological subject could be associated with what Bourdieu calls the embodied state of cultural capital, while the textual subject could be associated with cultural capital in its objectified state.[3] Just as the objectified state of cultural capital relies on its presupposition of and connections with the embodied form, the figure of the author relies on the conflation of the textual and phenomenological subject. This conflation constitutes a metaphysical claim.[4] However, the equivalent of the institutionalised state of cultural capital also plays a role. Theories entail not just texts in the abstract but specific discursive practices that are shaped by a particular set of conventions of reading and writing. The more these conventions intervene in the constitution of a given subject position, the more it may be regarded as an institutionalised form of cultural capital, and the greater distance it will have from its foundational support in the embodied state.

When approaching academic reading and writing as a cultural practice, the distinction between the objectified and the institutionalised dimensions of the subject position as a form of cultural capital becomes blurry. While in the case of the citing as well as the cited author both dimensions intervene, the objectified state plays a greater role in the configuration of the former. In the case of the cited author, the objectified state plays a lesser role and, if he is only called forth by name, none at all.

Michel Foucault's definition of an author as the conflation of a writer and the articulating principle of a text also operates in what I have termed the invoked, or quoted, subject.[5] However, while in the first case a formal self-reflexivity at the textual level does exist, in the latter self-reflexivity is either only presupposed or formally present but now with a greater degree of mediation. When the invoked author is only summoned by his name, the claim to that name as a legitimate source of cultural capital is not only one step further removed from its source of validation in actual thought, but also holds no intrinsic relation with that source. The link is of an exclusively conventional nature. As in the case of the institutionalised form of cultural capital, the metaphysical claim that accompanies the author that is summoned by name only institutes itself "by collective magic," that is, without the support of any emulation of thought at the material level

**2** Bourdieu conceives of "cultural capital" as one of three major types of capital: cultural, economic and social. While each of those categories accounts for a set of resources, "symbolic capital," refers to a dimension of any of the three sets, to the socially legitimised representational value of material resources. Cultural capital is particularly "predisposed to function as symbolic capital" (245).It is most likely to "be unrecognised as capital and recognised as legitimate competence, as authority" (245). Cultural capital thrives on its existence as a scarce value.

**3** Bourdieu subdivides cultural capital into embodied, objectified and institutionalised. Even if the embodied state is the foundational form of cultural capital, through its objectification and institutionalization, it circulates and becomes subject to capitalist processes of appropriation and accumulation. Although in its embodied state cultural capital is indivisible from the person, in its objectified state, and even more so in its institutionalised one, its symbolic value is maintained through the simulation of a strong and continued reliance on the subject positions that granted it legitimacy and distinction, to begin with.

**4** The objectified state of cultural capital is not only teleologically derived from its embodied form, but it also emulates that form by presenting "itself with all the appearances of an autonomous, coherent whole" (Bourdieu 247). In its institutionalised state, cultural capital is one step further removed from the biological limits of the possessor of embodied capital and is not necessarily equivalent to the cultural capital "he effectively possesses" (248). Yet, the "social alchemy" by which the institutionalised forms of cultural capital are legitimated requires a belief in that equivalence and continues to rely on cultural capital in its embodied state, of which it is a validation. Thus, both the objectified and the institutionalised forms of cultural capital rely on a metaphysical claim.

**5** Foucault has established that the author emerged after the Renaissance in association with the entrance of literature into circuits of property values. The author is a "rational entity," and "this construction is assigned a 'realistic' dimension" by conflating the writer (as social agent) and the "author-function" in a single figure. The "author-function" is the projection into this figure of "our way of handling texts... the traits we extract as pertinent, the continuities we assign, or the exclusions we practice" (127).

of the text (Bourdieu 248). Conversely, when specific words of the invoked author are *incorporated* into the quoting text, the difference between cited and citing author is one of degree, not of kind.

A quote's capacity to trigger the presupposition of a coherent and autonomous articulating principle takes place across the temporal and material deferral of the mediating text. Because of my concern with the way in which such validation of the past operates as its retroactive constitution, I turn to Marx's theory of value. The possibility to produce cultural and symbolic capital and in particular to have access to the privileged position of the enunciating subject is a result of the unequal distribution of resources. Here I am only concerned with the question of the differentiated value assigned *a posteriori* to otherwise equivalent positions. The reason for this focus is that it allows me to understand how Third-World symbolic production is undervalued *despite its existence*, rather than focusing exclusively on how economic conditions foreclose such symbolic production in the first place. My focus does not entail a lack of interest in economic determinants, but rather a concern with how economic conditions *retroactively* foreclose the validation of Third-World intellectual and artistic production as cultural capital.

A resonant interpretation of Marx's theory of value is elaborated by Kōjin Karatani. Karatani argues that, contrary to common misreadings of Marx, he was one of the first critics of teleology: "for Marx, concepts of historical 'origins' are shaped by a projection of the present onto the ancient" (570). Žižek sums up Karatani's account of Marx's theory of value as follows: "value is created in the production process; however, it is created there, as it were, only potentially, since it is actualised as value only when the produced commodity is sold, and the circle M-C-M' is thus completed… the temporality here is that of the *future antérieur*: value 'is' not immediately, it only 'will have been', it is retroactively actualised, performatively enacted. (*The Parallax View* 52) The theory enables me to focus on the moment of retroactive production of cultural capital. More importantly, it enables me to do so while still viewing that moment as part of the causality by which labour operates as the foundational source of capitalist accumulation.

My interest is on the different valorisation of otherwise equivalent subject positions on a *worldwide* scale, that is to say, across the NIDL. To address the circulation of cultural capital in that global dimension, let us turn to Appiah's 1992 book, *In My Father's House* (*IFH*). *IFH* is critical of the alignment of the opposition between Self and Other with the First and Third World respectively, particularly with respect to Africa (251). Appiah claims that African intellectuals are treated as, and always at risk of becoming, "Otherness machines" (253). Furthermore, he proposes that the demand for the African as Other is a key feature of postmodernism (253-54). And, referring to Fredric Jameson's analysis of postmodernism as the logic of late capitalism, mentions "the commodification of 'cultures' as a central feature" of it (232).

Appiah mocks the commodification of African art in a postmodernist exhibition in New York, where Leela Kouakou, a Baule, is excluded from participating in the general selection process: "This authentic African villager, the message is, does not know what *we*, authentic postmodernists, now know: that the first and last mistake is to judge the Other on one's own terms" (224). Kouakou may not participate as part of the structuring principle of the exhibition. Kouakou's access to the subject position is foreclosed. In the conversion of the other-as-subject into the other-as-commodity, Kouakou is deprived of the subject status. Thus, Appiah exposes the rift between enunciating and enunciated subjects in conflation with specific geo-cultural zones. The distance between those two positions is critical when considering the question of cultural capital. The rift between the two is insurmountable because it stages the distance between the subject position of enunciation as the place of accumulation of cultural capital and the place of the enunciated object as a commodity form. In the following section, I substantiate this statement.

## Academic Citation as a Source of Value

According to Marx, labour—and its actualization in circulation—is key to understanding the production of value. In addition, as Spivak postulates, value production through labour is one of the ways in which the subject may be "predicated" and "subject predication is methodologically necessary" ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 73). In consequence, in this section, I take Marx's theory of value to unravel the way in which subject positions are produced and circulate in scholarly texts.

Labour, I contend, is also key to understanding value when it operates in objectified forms of cultural capital, such as in the case of the conventional subject positions at the textual level of academic texts. What Marx calls commodity fetishism operates according to the same confusion as the one between cultural capital in its embodied and objectified state. As Marx famously put forward in *Capital*: "There is a physical relation between things. But it is different with commodities... There, it is a definite relation between men that assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things... This is what I call *fetishism* which attaches itself to the products of labour" (*Capital* [ed. 1952] 31, emphasis in text). All products of labour "have one common quality, viz., that of having value." Here, the value is "a relation between persons expressed as a relation between things"; hence, "to stamp an object of utility as a value, is as much a social product as language." Yet, this discovery "by no means dissipates the mist through which the social character of labour appears to us to be an objective character of the products themselves" (32).

Moreover, through the buying and selling of labour power the labourer him/herself is commodified. The ideological legitimization of capitalism requires that

> the owner of the labour power should sell it [his labour power] only for a definite period, for if he were to sell it rump and stump, once and for all, he would be selling himself, converting himself from a free man into a slave, from an owner of a commodity into a commodity. (Marx, *Capital* [ed. 1952] 79)

But that mechanism serves more than ideological purposes because, through temporally limited contracts, wage labourers are constantly kept at the brink of unemployment. Hence, an excess of supply in relation to the demand for labour power is produced. Consequently, its value as a commodity in the market falls. Furthermore, the buyer of labour power usufructs from the product of labour before the labourer gets paid, that is, after a month or whatever the period fixed by the contract ([ed. 1952] 82-83). Through these mechanisms, the market value of labour power is maintained constantly low, and the labourer constantly kept in debt, ensuring that the worker remains structurally subjected to her position. Therefore, "the labourer, instead of being in the position to sell commodities in which his labour is incorporated, must be obliged to offer for sale as a commodity that very labour power, which exists only in his living self" (80). In this way, the wage labourer is deprived of her subject status.

In addition, the depravation of the labourer's subject status is the foundation stone for the appropriation and accumulation of value. The value of a commodity is determined by the labour time invested in its production. This also holds true for labour power. In the case of labour power as a commodity, its value is determined by the labour time necessary for its production and reproduction. This labour time entails what is invested in the food, clothing, etcetera, necessary for the subsistence and maintenance of the labourer ([ed. 1952] 81).

If, for example, I grow potatoes but want to buy clothes, I sell a kilo of potatoes for a value that is established in the market at, say, five euro, and buy a sweater for that. My interest is in the use-value of the commodity I buy, and the value of what I sell and what I buy is equivalent because it is established by the market in accordance with the amount of labour time spent in the production of each. This is the C-M-C, Commodity-Money-Commodity circuit ([ed. 1952] 69-70).

However, if I am a capitalist, what I have to begin with is money, and what I want to obtain in the end is money. I participate in the circulation of commodities, not because I am interested in their use-value, but because I am interested in exchange-value. I do not spend money, but advance it, buying a commodity I will later sell to obtain money again. This is the diagram M-C-M, Money-Commodity-Money. This exercise "at first sight appears purposeless, because tautological" ([ed. 1952] 71). The value of commodities is fixed in the market according to the labour time spent on their production; so, I will regularly only get back as much as I advanced. Except for the fact that labour power as a commodity produces surplus value when consumed.

The market value of labour power as a commodity is established by the labour time that is necessary for the labourer's subsistence. Yet, the labourer's work, while being a commodity, is a commodity that generates more commodities. She generates more money than she costs. This surplus value is appropriated by the capitalist. When he advances money to buy labour power as a commodity, he gets more money back than he advanced. Hence M-C-M is actually M-C-M**'**. Marx explains:

> where M' = M + Δ M = the original sum advanced, plus an increment. This increment or excess over the original value I call *surplus value*. The value originally advanced, therefore, not only remains intact while in circulation, but adds to itself a surplus value or expands itself. It is this movement that converts it into capital. ([ed. 1952] 71, emphasis in text)

In this way, the capitalist occupies a privileged position that is reliant on the commodification of the other and the subsequent appropriation of the surplus value that is generated by her. The position of the capitalist is not only privileged in economic terms but also, when the mechanism is formally considered, privileged in the sense that it places the capitalist in the unique position of control over, rather than subjugation to, the processes of circulation. Given this structural advantage of his position and the fact that the position he occupies is exempt from commodification, it may be said that he occupies the equivalent of the universal subject position in the context of economic relations.

Furthermore, this may be connected with his participation in the M-C-M as opposed to the C-M-C cycle, for "both the money and the commodity represent only different modes of existence of value itself, the money its general mode, and the commodity its particular... mode" ([ed. 1952] 73). The mechanism is analogous to what Walter Mignolo describes as that which produces "the epistemic privilege of modernity." Mignolo proposes that the superior element in a binary opposition has the benefit of being "on the one hand, part of the opposition paradigm itself and, on the other, the locus of enunciation of the paradigm itself"; furthermore, that element does so "while being able to make believe that the place of enunciation [is] a nonplace" (947, 935). Thus, the privileged element of a binary opposition functions as a disguised meta-position: it is simultaneously one of the enunciated binaries and the overall point of articulation. Because of this double standard, one of the opposing pairs can be seen as the place of the subject. Both content and structuring principle, the superior opposite appears to have the self-reflexivity that defines the subject as such.

My argument so far is not just meant to produce a fortuitous analogy between the capitalist position and that of the universal subject. Rather, subscribing to Marx's analysis, I intend to account for two other issues. The most important of these is the role of the differentiated textual subject positions in the circulation of cultural capital within academic texts. To a lesser degree, I also address the direct intervention of economic forces in the constitution of such texts. Both questions are at stake in Anthony Appiah's *IFH*.

As its title states, Appiah's fifth chapter offers an assessment of "Ethnophilosophy and its Critics." Engaging with the way in which René Descartes employs as prime material what Appiah describes as traditional pre-reflexive belief systems, but converts this material into "philosophy" through critical analysis, he focuses on what legitimates philosophy as such. Appiah discerns philosophy's coincidence with and divergence from the category of ethnophilosophy, to which African endeavours have been systematically reduced. Ethnophilosophy consists merely in the *description* of traditional belief systems. Even a "careful conceptual analysis" by ethnophilosophers of their findings is only "preliminary to the philosophical project," because the latter seeks "to assess our most general concepts and beliefs, to look for system in them, to evaluate them critically, and, where necessary, to propose and develop new ways of thinking about the world" (154). In this concern with the way in which African philosophy has been reduced to particular content, Appiah points to the lack of access of Africa as other to the structural site of enunciation, the place that would function as the critical organizing principle of the offered content. What has been categorised as African philosophy is characterised by the impossibility of Africans to occupy just that position. Appiah's critique of Minkus's paper compiled in Richard Wright's *African Philosophy* (1979) is telling. Appiah blames Minkus for the absence of critical or value judgment regarding the traditional belief systems she describes and documents. The absence points to an *absolute* value judgment: it disqualifies the object in question as worthy of critical engagement (153).[6]

**6** Pointing to the fetishistic nature of Minkus's relation to the material, Appiah asks, "Why should anyone who is neither from Akwapim nor from Yorubaland take an interest in these papers?... even an unphilosophical Asante might wish to raise the question Minkus never addresses, the question of whether what the Akwapim Akan believe is *true*." (153, emphasis in text). The ethnographic approach criticised by Appiah negates the material as a source of value and forecloses its power to access the position of legitimate (and legitimating) source for the academic referencing system.

Critical engagement with a source tends to perpetuate the legitimacy of that source as well as the work of the author who engages with it. That is precisely what capital is: "value which, through its circulation, generates more value" (Žižek, *The Parallax View* 59). The academic author's value is established with regard to the number of publications and the number of appearances of her name in citation indexes. The work of the citing author gains value through reference to accepted sources, while these in turn increase in value by the number of citations to which they are subjected. As Appiah's analysis of the reduction of African philosophy to ethnophilosophy shows, the continent's theoretical production is excluded from the possibility of entering the place of accumulation of cultural capital. It may access the market not from the position of accumulation, but only as commodity-fetish, as the means for the accumulation of value elsewhere.

The contemporary tendency in academic and artistic spheres to include Third-World cultural and intellectual production tends to take in those contributions as mere commodities. Furthermore, Western postmodernist artistic and academic production thrives on that inclusion, what Appiah terms "the marketing of differences" (230). While in the academic value system the reification of certain subject positions, such as the names of canonical or accepted authors, function as value which, through its circulation, generates more value, the geo-economic other is systematically excluded from accessing that position.

Let me recall that, as established by way of Marx, commodities are the particular form of value, while money is its universal form. Always already inscribed as a cultural particularity, the geo-economic other can only participate in circulation as a commodity, the exchange of which produces a value that is accumulated elsewhere. That is to say, his entrance to the process of circulation of cultural capital is always limited to the equivalent of the C-M-C formula. By contrast, those who, from the outset, occupy a place that, while being particular, is legitimised as the universal site of enunciation, gain more value by the inclusion of the cultural other in their work as a commodity form. Their entrance to the academic or artistic value system is structured as an equivalent of the M-C-M' formula. In this way, the intellectual or artistic work of the geo-economic other is systematically exploited to produce more value for those who occupy the "capitalist" position within art or academia.

The geo-economic other is commodified in two ways. First, she is commodified by the selection criteria and marketing policies of publishers, citation indexes and other institutionalised forms of legitimation and distribution of cultural capital. Second, she is commodified in the textual practices themselves, as exemplified by Appiah's critique of intercultural postmodernist discursive habits. Within those practices, the work of the citing author tends to gain value from the inclusion of cultural difference as a commodity. Meanwhile, the citing and cited authors legitimate each other as valid subject positions and objectified forms of cultural capital, thus propelling a process of circulation by which each other's value is increased.

Nevertheless, the legitimating process at work ultimately relies on a metaphysical claim. While many contemporary critics insist on the pitfalls of representation, declaring the unfeasibility of engaging with the marginalised other precisely because of the metaphysical claims with which their discourse would become polluted, they seldom recognise the metaphysical nature of their own invocation of authors on whom the legitimacy of their claims rests. Understanding, as Dube does regarding the "enchantments of modernity," that such metaphysical claims are not merely "mistaken practices," but also "formative entities and key coordinates of our worlds," in the following section, rather than dismantle these procedures, I focus on how Appiah offers a politically more productive usage of them (751).

## The Cited Subject

*In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (1992) is an academic book with autobiographical overtones. In it, the psychoanalytic connection between the father and the realm of signification is reinforced by the fact that Appiah writes that his father passed away while he was finishing the book (x). The dedication of *IFH* reads: "and in memory of my father/Joe Appiah/1918-1990." In this way, the book can be seen as a literal realization of the transmutation of the physical into the symbolic father figure. The transmutation is crucial not because of the personal issues it may index, but precisely because it liberates

Africa from its bonds to the particular and the bodily. In the transmutation of the physical into the symbolic father, Appiah's renewed relationship to his biological father is extended to include his African cultural inheritance at large.

As Anthony's "Papa" becomes the public "Paa Joe," and as this figure is further extrapolated to African (intellectual) authority at large, Africa is reframed as a legitimate site for symbolic elaboration, while Anthony marginalises himself as the universal subject of enunciation. In the *Epilogue*, he quotes extensively from Joe Appiah's autobiography to the point that Anthony appears at times as a complementary narrator (see 295-97). The quotations from his father's book are not only long but also practically unabridged. As relatively autonomous texts, those quotations are present as objectified forms of cultural capital, that is, as incorporated externalities that emulate thought. Hence, a non-essentialist notion of the other as subject may well be recuperated here.

The internal coherence of the quotes is due to an articulating principle which resides outside *IFH*. This relativisation of Anthony's role as author is pushed further by the fact that Joe Appiah is one of his own "articulating principles" at both biological and symbolic levels. Furthermore, since Joe Appiah is not a recognised intellectual or literary authority across the postcolonial epistemic divide, Anthony's recognition functions as a retroactive *constitution* of Joe's position of authority. This same process he technically repeats when dealing with other African thinkers and writers. Those other African authors also share, by extension and as part of his father's legacy, the symbolic weight of intellectual parents. Hence, Joe Appiah's position as quoted subject in Anthony's book sets some of the groundwork for an intellectual filiation which aligns the psychoanalytic association between the father and the realm of the symbolic to the African continent. In sum, an association between Africa and the intellect is superimposed on the stereotypical association between that continent and the body.

Appiah's African philosophical precursors are more widely quoted and discussed than their European or Anglo-American counterparts. More importantly, the African philosophers are not merely the object of his analysis, but, by and large, also serve as the authorities on which Appiah rests his claims. This is to say, he may quote philosophers then working in African universities such as Paulin Hountondji or Kwasi Wiredu for the same methodological and/or legitimating purposes that Spivak may quote Derrida, or Bhabha refer to Lacan.

Appiah's dialogic approach is epitomised by his handling of epigraphs. Epigraphs are the most autonomous forms of citation. Not only do they endow the quoted text with relative independence in relation to the quoter's text that follows but, placed at the beginning, they symbolically function as the originating principle of the citer's discourse. Etymologically rooted in the Greek "inscription" and "to write upon," to epigraph a text may also be understood as to superimpose upon it, in a gesture that is inextricably associated with the act of writing (Oxford English Dictionary).

All of Appiah's epigraphs are of African authorship. His fifth chapter may be literally taken as a systematic reflection on its epigraph, where Hountondji writes: "By 'African philosophy' I mean a set of texts, specifically the set of texts written by Africans themselves and described as philosophical by the authors themselves" (135). Appiah's epigraphs not only motivate and at times organise the chapters in which they appear but may also serve as a junction to articulate different chapters at key turning points in his argument. Appiah's fourth chapter, for example, is introduced by an epigraph in which Chinua Achebe in an interview reflects on the different identities by which he is constituted: Ibo, Nigerian, African, black and writer. The quote of Achebe's answer to his interviewer concludes with an inversion: "This is what it means to be black. Or an African—the same: what does Africa mean to the world? When you see an African what does it mean to be a white man?" (116). Appiah benefits from Achebe's words to elaborate on African identity as constructed by the European gaze. The reflection leads Appiah to rethink and modify the conclusions he reached in previous chapters concerning race and African-American identity.

Achebe's complication of African identity as constructed through the other's gaze runs parallel to the disruption of his role as an interviewee, himself asking the interviewer: "When you see an African, what does it mean to be a white man?" (116). Achebe's inversion of the discursive, general construction of the African as other is intricately linked to this performative inversion of his immediate and situated subject position. Although Achebe is being interviewed in his capacity as an intellectual, his discourse is

literally structured and circumscribed by his interviewer's questions. By citing Achebe in the epigraphic space, Appiah places the drama between the abstract construction of the African as other and Achebe's situated intervention in it at centre stage. Appiah, by way of Achebe, "epigraphs," that is, "writes upon" the construction of Africans as objects of enunciation and as individuals who are displaced as "others" from their subject position. He does so by handing the microphone over to someone who reaffirms his subject position not by speaking, but by pointing to the conditions that structure his speech.

Proverbs are another resource for Appiah to implicate African subjects through their textual remainders. Proverbs actually function as epigraphs in three of his chapters (see 172, 255, 294). Since proverbs are by definition of communitarian and anonymous authorship, their placement as epigraphs produces a double standard. This is because the proverbs are located at the exact point where Appiah exploits the Western stylistic conventions to democratise access to the author position.

The inclusion of proverbs also contributes to the continuities between the public and the private, the academic and the personal. Note the unproblematic flow between academic clarification and personal commentary in the following endnote to the translation of an Akan proverb:

> Akan proverb. (Proverbs are notoriously difficult to interpret, and thus, also to translate. But the idea is that states collapse from within, and the proverb is used to express the sentiment that people suffer as a result of their own weaknesses. My father would never have forgiven the solecism of trying to explain a proverb!) (339)

The movement across the divide between the academic and autobiographical resonates with the movement of the narrating voice to and fro the postcolonial divide signalled by the opposition between West and other in Appiah's unstable use of "we" and "us," "here" and "there." Indeed, he uses the locatives interchangeably, depending on context, to refer sometimes to the West, sometimes to Africa. Likewise with the pronouns: the "we" to which Appiah refers is at times the West, at times its designated other (see 148, 189, 192, 195, 217-18, 263). Such a blurring of the frontiers between the individual and the various collective subjects in which he participates is also produced as an effect of Appiah's interweaving of proverbs with his own words.

Overall, it can be said that Appiah's approach sets him at a great distance from Spivak in her claim that "for the people who are making the claims, the history of the Enlightenment episteme is 'cited' even on an individual level, as the script is cited for an actor's interpretation" ("More on Power/Knowledge" 48). Spivak's subaltern does not have access to the (hegemonic) symbolic order. Hence, she is reduced to the strategic citing of someone else's hegemonic words. But the subject positions Appiah addresses are relatively privileged. Yet, they remain marginal *relative to* both authors and are also marginal in relation to the generic position of the reader that the text presupposes. I emphasise the contrast between Appiah and Spivak because together they point to a question at the core of the postcolonial dilemma: the rift between the addressed and the represented other.

Above I quoted Appiah's dedication of the book to his father. There, I left out the single, final line of that dedication. The full quote reads:

> And in memory of my father
> Joe Appiah
> 1918-1990
> *Abusua-dua yƐntwa*

I do not know Akan. Neither does the generic reader that the author presupposes and explicitly identifies as Western throughout the book. Nonetheless, the text in the quote remains untranslated. In fact, it is the only text left untranslated in the whole book. But perhaps it is not for us to read. Joe Appiah, Anthony's father, displaces us as readers, literally occupying the textual position of addressee. The detail suggests Anthony's key shift: addressing the position of the other in terms that are formally and structurally corresponding with and co-constitutive of his own. He may address the other as an actual subject insofar as the latter is given access to a co-constitutive position of the text—the position of addressee—for it is here that both subjects meet on corresponding terms.

Yet, Joe Appiah's position as addressee is not absolute. The text is published for us to read after his

death. This play "at the brink between reference and deixis" (Aydemir 122) is what grants Joe Appiah the double standard proper to the privileged subject. Paradoxically, it is due to Appiah's introduction of the postcolonial other at the material, objectified level that he may address him on equal terms to the classic (Western) incorporate subject, in whose invocation academic value continues to rest.

Placing his father as the main invoked subject—one of the subject positions of accumulation in the circulation of cultural capital within academic writing—Appiah legitimates him as a source of value. Most importantly, in the transformation of the physical father into the symbolic father, Appiah extends this renewed bond to incorporate the whole of his African cultural and intellectual legacy. Appiah's handling of quotes from intellectuals based in Africa sets to work literary and critical resources that are capable of emphasizing the self-reflexive qualities that were already present in the quotes themselves. He foregrounds the structural capacity of their formal traits. By also engaging in critical analyses of the texts and in relying on their authority to further his own argument, Appiah approaches them as objectified forms of cultural capital. The key issue making Appiah's procedure viable is that his subject position and that of the other are in a situation of correspondence at the textual level. That is, they share the same material basis or language for intersubjectivity to occur.

## Conclusions

When understanding academic criticism as a specific form of writing and seeking to define the pertinent subject positions at stake, it is not sufficient to focus on the strictly linguistic level. When only that aspect is taken into account, the grammatical subject emerges as the unique subject position, and any "other" subject is reduced to a sub-subjective position, only implicit at the level of the silences and gaps of the dominant discourse. By focusing on the juncture between the strictly textual and the *conventional* elements proper to academic writing—its established literary uses—new subject positions emerge: the addressed other, and the invoked other.

I have turned to Appiah to discover ways in which to productively appropriate, rather than simply dismantle, those subject positions. Incorporating the postcolonial other as the material remainder of a subject that is independent from the text at hand, Appiah salvages that other as an autonomous subjectivity associated with the material dimension of the letter. This autonomy is defined by the presupposed correspondence between the bodily dimension of a text—of which a fragment is extracted—and the abstract articulating principle of that other body conceived as an organic whole. In Appiah's book, we may appreciate invoked others that are materialised in concrete textual configurations through which we appreciate how value production mediates academic writing.

The position of the invoked other operates at the *conventional* level that defines the text as an academic one and grants it the status of cultural capital. This conventional level begs the question of the mechanisms of production and circulation of value. As mentioned before, Spivak points out that one "of the determinations of the question of value is the predication of the subject. The modern 'idealist' predication of the subject is consciousness. Labour-power is a 'materialist' predication" ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 73). Though endorsing Spivak's distinction, I have put emphasis on the fact that a materialist predication of the subject does not necessarily negate consciousness, but merely does not grant it teleological anteriority to labour power. A materialist predication perhaps suggests a concern with epistemological rather than ontological questions. Instead of focusing on the subject's ontological consistency, that predication allows one to focus on elucidating the actual operation of the place, mode and fact of invoking that ontology.

Invocation is a political activity because calling forth a particular history entails a narrative bias. Furthermore, retroactive naturalizations of an arbitrarily selected history are not only "ideological aberrations," but also have "dense ontological dimensions, which simultaneously name and work on the world" (Dube 751). While I have in a sense equated subject positions with their institutional legitimation, that subjectivity may be understood precisely as the surplus or remainder of legitimate condensations of value. Paradoxically, this predication of the subject equates it to that in the elusion of which it is defined: value. As Spivak has observed, value itself "seems to escape the onto-phenomenological question: what is it" ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 75). In lacking any ontic substance, value may be conceived from a

materialist perspective in conventional terms.

Throughout this essay, I have attempted to emphasise that the incorporate subject (not unlike the psychoanalytic phallus) is not bodiless, but requires to be at once body and not-body to transcend itself and thus be defined in terms of its self-reflexive capacity. As I commented in the case of Marx's quotation of Goethe, the bodily dimension of the quoted fragment does not negate but rather foregrounds Goethe as the abstract articulating principle of the words. Insofar as Goethe's words are articulated by a presupposed autonomous subjectivity associated with the physical dimension of the letter, they operate at the same level as Marx's surrounding words.

Let us finally recall that the surplus value that, according to Spivak, defines the subject from a materialist perspective, also defines capital's formal self-reflexivity in the economic context. Marx's theory of value does not only serve to draw an analogy between capital and the self-reflexive incorporate subject in the sphere of literature but, more importantly, to understand the mechanisms of selection and exclusion that operate in the sphere of cultural capital, as well as to draw a causal relation between geo-economic factors and the distribution of legitimate subject positions across the NIDL. While drawing such a narrative serves to distinguish cause from effect, it does not necessarily imply an irreflexive teleology. Here, I have been committed to the interpretation of the Marxist theory of value that holds that value is created in the production process, yet actualised *post facto* during the process of circulation. Understood in that way, Marx's theory of value helps to appreciate the way in which the temporal disjuncture by which value is created plays into the creation of that very "consciousness" that is claimed for the subject.

In the case of citations as objectified forms of cultural capital, the lapse between the production of value and its accumulation is mediated by its actualization in circulation within academic texts. Therefore, the (postcolonial) theorist may intervene in the geo-economic configuration of the production of cultural capital, determining whether to actualise, and thus retroactively produce, the symbolic capital entailed by legitimate and legitimating subject positions on the preposterously marginalised side of the international division of labour. Conversely, she may prioritise the valorisation of her own subject position, a process that requires the continued reliance on authorised sources and the unceasing introduction of new commodities from all over the globe.

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