# RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD: THE GOSPEL OF MARK AND OTHER HAUNTED PLACES

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ABSTRACT

Return of the Living Dead:
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Ph.D. Dissertation by

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Euro-American biblical scholarship has traditionally conceived of the Bible in a way that removes privileged readers from personal responsibility in the subjugation of marginalized communities. This practice, termed in this project *gentrified biblical scholarship*, understands the reader and their community as unique, isolated interpreters of texts, separated from other past or present reading communities. Readers removed from difference, because of the gentrification of space in the West, are left without the conceptual resources to understand their relationship with the Bible as simultaneous relationship with minoritized communities.

This dissertation deploys the theoretical fields of hauntology and critical space theory to argue that the Gospel of Mark is a haunted place. A project written largely in New Jersey's wealthy northern suburbs, each chapter converses with vignettes from Newark, New Jersey's Ironbound neighborhood—a low income, largely Latinx and immigrant community—to explore relations between these two otherwise isolated locales. The result is a discussion of gentrifications harmful effects on vibrant communities, made invisible to suburban Christian readers.

The first chapter establishes this methodology, arguing that readers of Mark are subjected to ghosts of marginalized people from the historical world around the second

gospel and contemporary contexts, where neocolonialism has forced material bodies into squalor. With critical space theory, this project contends, specters help to create Mark as a space. The second chapter provides a framework for reading Mark that begins at the end: the passion narrative (Mark 14-16). With Jesus' declaration that "you always have the poor with you" (14:7) as a guidepost, chapter two contends that Mark's protagonist slowly fades into social death throughout this chapter, eventually disappearing entirely, and leaving the reader with nothing but the ghosts of society's detritus. The dissertation's third chapter turns to the Gerasene demoniac (5:1-20) and, alongside an examination of "broken windows" policing in sanctuary cities, argues that Jesus' exorcism of the demon named Legion is instead policing of non-normative behavior. Finally, the project turns to harmful interpretations of the dual healings of Jairus' daughter and the woman with the flow of blood (5:21-43). The third chapter observes how justifications for uneven economic development in Newark mirror the racist degradation of Jews through scholarly readings of this pericope.

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## INTRODUCTION:

## MARK'S GENTRIFIED READERS AND THE GHOSTS WHO HAUNT THEM

Sacred texts are accelerating modern gentrification. As biblical scholars have come to recognize the critical role context plays in individual and collective understanding of and identification with sacred texts, a corollary reality has taken hold: the distancing of such contexts from one another. That is, the Bible is increasingly operating as a tool for maintaining distance from the Other in the West. Historical critics maintain the importance of cultural distance between contemporary readers and antique settings; narrative critics cast doubt on the ability to reach much meaning from the past; contextual biblical hermeneutics remain marginal in the Euro-American guild and their perspective tied to place and identity; all the while, preachers are rightfully taught to preach to their contexts, a dictum often shaped in practice by the siloed reality of gentrification and Christian religious practice.[1] This need not be the case, and a

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[1] I discuss this in greater detail in chapter one. Here I riff on Stephen D. Moore and Yvonne Sherwood, *Invention of the Biblical Scholar: A Critical Manifesto* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 73-121. My observation of gentrified biblical scholarship is restricted entirely to the white, Euro-American neighborhood of the guild. In fact, in the global south, biblical scholarship is far less segregated within itself. As Justin Ukpong wrote of biblical studies in the African continent, all work there is contextual and interested in "linking the biblical text to the reader's context" ("Developments in Biblical Interpretation in Africa: Historical and Hermeneutical Directions," in *The Bible in Africa: Transactions, Trajectories and Trends*, ed. Gerald O. West and Musa W. Dube [Leiden: Brill, 2000], 25). Similarly, in Asia, Philip Chia argues, "To make biblical studies relevant to Asians…the text (the Bible) and the context (Asia) need to intersect with each other" ("Biblical Studies in a Rising Asia: An Asian Perspective on the Future of the Biblical Past," in *The Future of the Biblical Past: Envisioning Biblical Studies on a Global Key*, ed. Roland Boer and Fernando F. Segovia [Semeia Studies 66; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012], 92). See Stephen D. Moore, "Those Incommensurate Activities We Call 'Biblical Studies': A Future-Oriented History of Their Bifurcated Present," in *Present and Future of Biblical Studies: Celebrating 25*

reimagination of scriptures' potential, as undertaken here, holds the potential to begin constructing a new epistemology of engagement with sacred texts: not as fortification of or catalyst for deepening differences, but as a meeting place for different and dissident bodies.

I recognize the scriptural problem of distance outlined in this project as part of a broader social phenomenon throughout the globalized world: gentrification. While it has become commonplace to hear tell of an increasingly "smaller" or "shrinking" global reality resulting from the increased pace of telecommunications, transportation, and logistics development, this shift has been accompanied by a homogenization of communities throughout the world.[2] I define *gentrification* as Sarah Schulman does in her exploration of its role in the loss of agency in queer politics:

> Physically [gentrification] is an urban [phenomenon]: the removal of communities of diverse classes, ethnicities, races, sexualities, languages, and points of view from the central neighborhoods of cities, and their replacement by more homogenized groups. With this comes the destruction of culture and relationship, and this destruction has profound consequences for the future lives of cities.[3]

I therefore want to deploy "gentrification" broadly, to describe the erasure of communities, relationships, and difference through the establishment Western neocapitalist institutions.[4] This new reality has fundamentally altered the consciousness

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*Years of Brill's* Biblical Interpretation, ed. Tat-siong Benny Liew (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 280-282.

[2] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (London: Blackwell, 2004), 150.

[3] Sarah Schulman, *The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2013), 14.

[4] As Loretta Lees, Hyun Bang Shin, and Ernesto López-Morales argue, it is no longer sufficient to think about gentrification as the improvement of a neighborhood, but as a global force that is creating an "increasingly neoliberalized and interconnected world" (*Planetary Gentrification* [Cambridge: Polity, 2016], 13). Here they detail a shift away from the traditional definition of "gentrification" set down by sociologist Ruth Glass,

of people touched by gentrification that removes themselves from politics: "There was a gentrification of the mind, an internal replacement that alienated people from the concrete process of social and artistic change."[5] Homogeneity in one's imagination of the world extends to their engagement with any medium, including biblical texts. If people's appetite for agitation and politics is muted by local homogeneity, scholars interested in the individual's interpretation of sacred texts must also recognize readers' lack of conscious connection to difference as a limit on the potential for political change to emerge from biblical interpretation.

My project assumes that gentrification as identified by Schulman is a force working upon gentrified interpreters of the Gospel of Mark and that failure to account for social homogeneity on readers of the text limit its political potential. Politics are themselves social, as Doreen Massey defines them: the "question of the political" is the "question of our living together."[6] Gentrification's replacement of meaningful difference with homogeneity in the lived experience of neocapitalist life therefore corrals politics. Otherness is forced *outside* everyday life, muting the demands of different constituencies *within* everyday community life. For gentrified biblical interpreters, the voices of minoritized people are just as absent from the text as they are from the interpreter's community. With no presence in the gentrified mind, these othered communities lack political agency in the realm of privilege and social and political power. Gentrified readers interpret the Bible from homogeneous places and thus read without any conscious

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which thought more narrowly about the displacement of people, not the homogenization of space (Ruth Glass, *London: Aspects of Change* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1964).
[5] Ibid.
[6] Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage Publications, 2005), 151.

connection to a world—past and present—of people harmed by neocapitalist values and practices.

This dissertation reads Mark's Gospel with a view toward social death, in the world of the text and of its gentrified readers. My commitment to this work reveals a second assumption: our neocapitalist Western world participates in, and even depends on, the social death of an untold number of people. The concept of *necropolitics* is helpful here. Elaborated by Achille Mbembe, necropolitics accounts for practices by which privileged populations' power—in the postcolonial West, among the wealthy, in gentrified neighborhoods—is reliant on "the generalized instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations."[7] Put simply, in the contemporary world order, certain people's lives are said to be free, to count as lives, while others are subject to the constant reality or threat of death because they do not conform to the cultural values or racial-ethnic identities of the neocolonial West. Gentrification participates in this process by restricting the existence of those who do not conform to what Mbembe calls "death worlds": discrete locations, divorced from privilege, marked by "new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of *living dead*."[8] This place-making process keeps the discomfort of social otherness out of sight and out of mind of gentrified subjects, whose wealth and comfort come at the expense of those same socially dead.

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[7] Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," trans. Libby Meintjes, *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003): 14.
[8] Ibid., 40. Emphasis original.

My third assumption is that biblical "interpretation," as commonly perceived, cannot make room for gentrified readers to politically address the marginalization of people, in which they are complicit, because it is not a relational exercise. While gentrification forces heterogenous groups away from one another, interpretation is an isolated exercise. Nicole Wilkinson Duran has observed that Western, biblical readers interpret as "separate, self-contained subjects," with the sense that "every individual stands apart."[9] Not only are homogenous communities removed from difference, but the Western world values the self-contained individual, themselves spatially apart from others. At base, such interpretation is not relational and is dependent entirely upon the reading subject's communion with their scholarly library. With a gentrified mind, that experience will necessarily be limited, homogenized. The gentrified subject has no conceptual tools for conceiving demands of those harmed by gentrification and live elsewhere. Cut off from the agency of the socially dead, gentrified communities remain ignorant of the sort of action needed for social change.

My project, therefore, proposes a conceptualization of Mark's Gospel that makes gentrified readers persistently vulnerable to the agencies and demands of the socially dead. Rather than imagining Mark as a text to be interpreted, I argue that it is a place constituted by the social activity of both its readers and those affected by their everyday lives. To use Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre's term, summarizing David Carr, scripturalized texts are "multivoiced and multivalent" as it is redeployed persistently by its users.[10]

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[9] Nicole Wilkinson Duran, "Other People's Demons: Reading Mark's Demons in the Disbelieving West," in *Mark*, ed., Duran, Teresa Okure, and Daniel M. Patte (Texts @ Contexts; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 38.
[10] Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, "Narrative, Multiplicity, and the Letters of Paul," in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative*, ed. Danna Nolan Fewell (Oxford: Oxford

Rather than thinking of Mark as a book with readers, I want to completely rethink its essence, away from text and toward space. How can we think about Mark as a gathering point?

This reconceptualization of a sacred text as a place, not only a text, is empowered by the work of critical space theorists who contend that space is not an empty dimension, but a creation of sociality. Most prominently, I follow Massey, who has defined space as a thing that emerges through everyday "practices of place, the negotiation of intersecting trajectories" that inject place with multiplicity.[11] Thus the gentrified neighborhood is not divorced from submerged voices of minoritized people, but is instead co-created by those people of color who work in them or by the inner cities that house suburban garbage. Yet, those who live outside gentrified places are more than features of a place; they act with agency, make demands, have histories. For this reason, this project also imagines Mark to be created by populations silenced by gentrification, haunting privileged readers. When gentrification erases people and histories from consciousness, those people and histories do not disappear, they haunt. As María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren define them, hauntologies variously work at the limits of "visibility and invisibility, life and death, materiality and immateriality" in order to lend academic credibility to the real effects of silenced histories, traumatic memories, and forgotten effects of ancestors on contemporary people.[12] Submerged social activity, too, creates Markan space and infuses it with diverse agencies from an untold number of subjugated communities, all of which

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University Press, 2016), 372. See David Carr, "Untamable Text of an Untamable God: Genesis and Rethinking the Character of Scripture," *Interpretation*, 54 (2000), 347-362.

[11] Massey, *For Space*, 154.

[12] María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren, "Introduction: Conceptualizing Spectralities," in *The Spectralities Reader*, ed. idem. (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 1-2.

are necessary for injecting gentrified locales with the difference necessary for politics to flourish. Mark is a political place because of the social activity of both its gentrified readers and those whose presences have been relegated to death by neocapitalist practices.

**Haunting My Own Gentrified Mind**

This project emerges from my own gentrified mind and reflects the experience of being haunted as a biblical reader. I was raised in the wealthy, mainly white St. Paul suburb of Shoreview, Minnesota. This lack of racial and economic diversity was reflected in both my college and seminary experience. Even now, I live in an affluent suburb in Bergen County, New Jersey and received my doctorate an even more fabulously wealthy town. Life in these segregated locales created in me a consciousness that whiteness and prosperity were the normative condition for human existence and that impoverished communities were invariably brown and always lived elsewhere. In short, marginalized people were present in my mind only as a homogenous abstraction. Lack of multiplicity in my imagination limited my political consciousness, because it was limited to particular places—the capitol building, the city hall, protests—while politics were prohibited, even impossible, in other places—the home, the school, the church. Indeed, as Massey's description of late capitalist space makes clear, my formative community only made certain types of difference legible, removed those differences from that community, and therefore eliminated the proximity of politics from its residents.

Entering pedagogical places that had made the pursuit of multiplicity core to their identity conscientized me to the persistence of politics. No doubt, different races and classes, sexual difference, and gender politics were not absent from my early life: our

household frequently discussed questions of justice and responsibility for the other and we often spent time in lower-income neighborhoods; I even recall canvassing for progressive political campaigns as a young child. But these were exceptions, they were choices; my everyday life in the Minnesota suburbs was wealthy and white. My liberal, but gentrified mind had developed in a way that only gentrified communities could be full of life, while communities of color were abstract, lacked agency, and in need of *my* action for rescue from death. Encountering the sheer multiplicity of legible differences among my colleagues at Drew University, however, shocked me into consciousness of my own privilege. My peers' individual brilliance—on display in the classroom, at parties, and in personal conversations—arising from their unique subjectivities performed for me both the fragility of my privilege and its pervasiveness, for the first time. While I had imagined myself a political agent, one whose opinions and ideas could rescue the less fortunate from unjust conditions, the spatial conditions of my formative years prevented myself from ever comprehending the agency of marginalized people always already active in the world. Contextual hermeneutics had long been on my radar—my work in my master's program was in queer biblical hermeneutics—but a material community made all the difference. That is, encounters with difference in an intentionally diverse place, showed me how my life had been entirely political all along. Underrepresented communities never needed my agency to do political work.

This disruption to my gentrified conscience caused a shift in my everyday hermeneutic: recognizing the contingency of gentrified life on the social death of others and therefore subject to the agencies of the socially dead. With this hypothesis in mind, I began looking for places and people comprising the small New Jersey suburb, Allendale,

from the outside, those who existed as specters or nobodies. The thing is: suburbia does a great job at maintaining its whiteness and wealth. Yes, people of color work in town and some even live there; certainly, people are poor, but this is hidden behind massive lawns and luxury cars. But when one looks *elsewhere* they can find a vast network of hidden places where people were literally dying for the everyday lives of Allendale residents—where they lawn care workers live, where their access to a wide range of commercial goods comes from, where their trash goes. This project self-consciously situates itself from a privileged location and attunes itself to the invisible, but material, subjects comprising it. I create a conversation with invisible places, opening a space for subjugated people to make themselves known to gentrified readers of the Bible.

**The Ironbound: A Material Conversation Partner**

This project primarily addresses those readers sequestered in gentrified contexts, like the one from which I have emerged; it also seeks to raise consciousness for gentrified readers of their complicity in the oppression of those with less access to privilege. With this effort in view, my exegetical chapters have recourse to particular problems facing the Ironbound neighborhood of Newark, New Jersey. This community, relatively close to the suburban locations where I have written the lion's share of this dissertation, faces challenges familiar to most communities segregated by gentrification: its residents are majority people of color and low-income, the neighborhood is home to a large number of unauthorized immigrants, it faces a legacy of toxic industrial waste dumping and hosts a garbage incinerator, and container trucks from Port Newark have contributed to abnormally high rates of childhood asthma. The gentrified locales where I live have been removed from their material participation in neighborhoods like the Ironbound. With

consciousness as the identified issue, I pose a question even before a search for a solution: how can a gentrified audience become aware of the suffering so close to their homes?

The Ironbound is present in this project as a conversation partner from the perspective of a haunted, gentrified mind. I do not perform ethnography, nor do I engage interpretations of Mark by Ironbound residents—although those would be both be worthy endeavors. Instead, the Ironbound works in my argument as a conversation partner and example of how those harmed by gentrification make themselves present in the lives of those who benefit from gentrification. Numerous scholars have recommended "reading with" oppressed groups.[13] These efforts take seriously the knowledge of wo/men in colonized environs as equally legitimate vehicles for understanding biblical narrative.[14] I feature this sort of work at numerous points in this project, but I do not engage it in conversation with faith communities in the Ironbound. My primary quarry is with neocapitalism's indiscriminate erasure of minoritized communities and biblical studies' implicit participation in that erasure. As I note above, neocapitalist gentrification partitions people from one another; biblical scholarship has done the same, insofar as the field has restricted presence within the Bible to people who engage it properly. However, gentrified biblical interpreters will participate in the social death of those subjugated by Western neocolonialism, whether those harmed read the Bible or not, insofar as they benefit from the trappings of privilege. For this reason, I deploy material illustrations of

[13] For more on this phenomenon, see chapter one.
[14] See, for example, Daniel Patte, *Ethics of Biblical Interpretation: A Reevaluation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995); Musa W. Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000).

wealthy and middle class New Jersey's complicity in the degradation of Newark's East Ward. Those are ghosts that haunt Mark's gospel, not because they read, but because they are linked to privileged interpreters by life in a globalizing world.

My exegetical chapters (two through four), will each introduce a discrete challenge facing the Ironbound and, with the Gospel of Mark as a vehicle, invite gentrified readers into consciousness of oppressed populations within the text. Through a combination of personal interviews with activists, review of environmental and immigration studies, and accounts in news stories, I inject particular concerns from a place and concerns that are largely invisible from, but still intertwined with, white suburban life, where scholarship of the global North is by-in-large conceived.

**The Structure of the Argument**

As an effort to reconceptualize Mark as a place haunted by those forced into social death by neocapitalism, this project dwells in locations across the second gospel where death features prominently. My priority throughout my argument is to consciously perform the creation of space, as Massey terms it, through *throwntogetherness*: Mark is constituted as "open" to a multiplicity of "stories."[15] The stories that make up a place have histories and, as one attuned to hauntologies would posit, they also act with agency on contemporary people who enter a place. With the goal of multiplicty in view, my exegetical chapters often avoid traditional exegetical questions in favor of a reading that helps the reader populate the given Markan passage with ancient and contemporary ghosts, and aids them in imagining the demands made upon them from the text. I

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[15] Massey uses the word "story" and "trajectory" interchangeably (*For Space*, 12, 148-162).

therefore seek to explore the Gospel of Mark as a place where readers are made vulnerable to an undetermined number of marginalized others.

Chapter One proposes a methodology for imagining Mark as a place haunted by those excluded from privilege and power in the Western world. I begin the chapter exploring in more detail the problematic spatial assumptions of foregrounding "interpretation" as a practice. "Interpreters," I argue, depend on the notion that space separates individuals from other individuals, one place from another. The modern West conceives of space as easily "territorialized," so as to partition people from one another, based on abstracted identifiers, like race, class, gender, and nationality.[16] The mind formed in gentrified spaces, therefore, is conscious of very little difference in its midst, making the *individual's* interpretive practice one with few tools for conceiving responsibility to the other. With a concern for how the gentrified subject is complicit in the social death of marginalized populations, I turn to hauntologies to populate homogenous communities with difference. While neocapitalism melds and abstracts people and place together, haunting observes how individuals, things, and stories always act in excess of those descriptors, working with their own agency and disobeying boundaries.[17] Taking this into account, my first chapter unfolds alongside exegesis of Mark's ending (16:1-8), an act that highlights uncertainty in the Gospel and disrupting the desire of narrative critics to tie up loose threads for the evangelist. The moment of Jesus' resurrection is infused with doubt: doubt that Jesus is alive, doubt that he was ever as powerful as he seemed in the earlier stories, doubt that the story is even true. And

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[16] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 26.
[17] Del Pilar Blanco and Peeren, "Introduction," 2.

doubt crosses borders, because it causes people to question what came before and wonder what will happen in the future. Indeed, traversing boundaries leads me to the final move of the chapter: reconceiving the second gospel as a *place*, created by ghosts. The gospel of Mark, through its use by gentrified readers, has gained trajectories, stories that its interpreters bring to it. And yet, if these readers are haunted by the participation in gentrification, the ghosts of their complicity must also force their way into the narrative world. In short, Mark is spatially created by its privileged readers, but is also populated by the very communities who would demand something from them. It has become a meeting place.

In the second chapter I engage Mark's passion narrative with environmental degradation in the Ironbound, paying special attention to Jesus' declaration, "You will always have the poor with you" (14:7), as a conjuration of the innumerable victims of the conditions that maintain poverty.[18] Proximity to Port Newark's truck shipping routes has created an epidemic of childhood asthma in the Ironbound. This problem, I observe, is fed by nearby suburban demand for accessible goods from international markets, a material example of how gentrified privilege is both dependent upon and complicit in the social and physical death of poor communities. I establish this trajectory in Mark's concluding passion narrative (Mark 14-16) with Jesus' call for the poor to be present "always" (πάντοτε), while he tells his followers that he will eventually not be with them. I contend that throughout the rest of Mark's passion, Jesus becomes more recognizable as

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[18] "Conjuration" is a term deployed by Jacques Derrida to account for the diverse ways ghosts haunt contemporary subjects (*Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf [New York and London: Routledge, 2003; 1st ed. 1994] 49-58). I discuss this at length in chapters one and two.

societal detritus—at his trial (15:1-15) and on the cross (vv. 16-41)—while bandits and criminals take a more prominent place in the narrative. Jesus slowly fades into social, and eventually physical, death while the poor make themselves known within the story as a persistent presence—"always." I argue in this chapter, therefore, that Jesus' vague universal conjuring of the poor into "always," calls forth any, specific "poor" person into the reading community, given prominence above Jesus' own self. Thus, while Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre and Laura Nasrallah have sought to decenter Paul from the reading of his letters, in favor of the communities with whom he engaged, I make a modest contribution to the project by decentering Jesus.[19] As he fades into the background, Mark's narrative draws forward subjugated presences into the plot. The house of Simon the Leper (14:3-9) is a place of the dead created by the dead conjured into it from across time-spaces.

My third chapter sees a tension between Jesus' allegorical liberation of the Decapolis from Roman occupation (5:1-20) and liberatory tactics that mirror Roman conquest. Sometimes death worlds are created by apparently good intentions, as when sanctuary cities both declare openness to unauthorized migrants, while subjecting them to deportation through "broken windows" police tactics. I see a connection between these two examples in a general desire for privileged communities to police the behavior of their neighbors, whose lifestyles often look different. Before we can meet any of the characters in the scene, Mark identifies the region by its "tombs" and a demoniac,

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[19] Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre and Laura S. Nasrallah, "Beyond the Heroic Paul: Toward a Feminist and Decolonizing Approach to the Letters of Paul," in *The Colonized Apostle: Paul in Postcolonial Eyes*, ed., Christopher Staley [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011], 161-174).

possessed by a spirit named "Legion" (5:1-9). The narrator tells us that the demoniac's fellow Gerasenes had chained him up repeatedly, but were never able to solve the problem (vv. 3-4), and even when the problem was solved, they were afraid of the result (vv. 14-15). Mark's narrative puts the Gerasenes into a situation in which their home is imagined as dead—from the tombs and the non-normative behavior of the demoniac. For that reason, they must be policed, but policing they cannot perform themselves because, as residents of the death world, they are automatically failed officers of the peace. Here I level a critique of gentrified police strategies that depend on what I term a *discourse of illegitimacy*, which creates non-normative populations to police, in order to maintain power for normative populations. I therefore turn away from this passage's Jesus as a political resource, who participates in the imperial norm in order to empower his messianic self-image, and toward Legion, who demonstrates a refusal of the narrative's colonizing logics. Legion shows an ability to build alliances apart from the neat, territorial spatial ideologies of a discourse of illegitimacy.

The bleeding woman (5:21-43) demonstrates that even in death worlds, colonizing definitions of provincial zones are not final, but instead are always contested by their residents, demonstrating spaces of the dead to be teeming with life. Both the Markan narrative and real estate developers eyeing the Ironbound imagine homes of the socially dead to be devoid of resources, and in need of life that only their power—Jesus for Mark, capital for developers—can provide; this becomes my point of contemporary contact for this chapter. As my argument develops, I flood this passage with different trajectories that have and continue to contest its interpretive meaning: the competition for healing within the narrative between Jairus' daughter and the bleeding woman; Christian

interpreters who have read supersessionism into the encounter, by accusing the Jews of backward, legalistic theology; contextual interpretations that have read people of color into this narrative; even real estate developers and city planners, who carry with them the same ideology, that their solutions to suffering are necessarily preferable to solutions that arise organically from local community members. My final turn is to follow the woman's agency, as she makes space by her action for the ghosts of all those who contest the hegemonic claims to monopoly on abundant life. Her demand for healing amongst scarcity (vv. 24b-34) reveals a politics that emerges from suffering and contests a gentrified politics of erasure.

The Gospel of Mark is a resource for addressing the gentrified mind of biblical interpretation, because it is a haunted place. Whereas gentrification replaces multiplicity of space with homogeneity, haunting shows that homogenous space is in fact constituted by a multiplicity of people made invisible by gentrification. Recognition of this phenomenon requires a mode of engagement with sacred texts beyond "interpretation," which privileges the individual's experience from within their gentrified locale. Mark's places of the dead reflect contemporary power dynamics that subject people of color to over-policing; Mark's places of the dead are populated by an excess of low-income residents on the verge of losing their homes to uneven development; these places of the dead are polluted by the burning of suburban trash. Indeed, the New Jersey reader, steeped in neocapitalist suburban life, may not personally know the Ironbound children choked by drayage truck exhaust, but those kids' illnesses follow the retail goods in the suburban home. As invisible as these marginalized people are in gentrified communities,

they are still present, even if only residually; privilege depends on the suffering of others, and removing it from view ensures the gentrified mind will care little for those who are oppressed by it. But Mark's conjuring of the ghosts of all impoverished people across time-spaces (14:7), the insistent agency of subjects turned into socially dead specters (5:25-34), the pattern of chaining undesirables to spaces of the dead (vv. 1-20), all arrest the gentrified mind with the potential for becoming conscious of their complicity in death.

# CHAPTER ONE

## THEORY AND METHOD:

## THE GOSPEL OF MARK AS A HAUNTED PLACE

> "Do not be terrified; you are searching for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified; he has been raised, he is not here. See the place where they laid him." (Mark 16:6)
>
> After the end of history, the spirit comes back by *coming back*, it figures *both* a dead man who comes back and a ghost whose expected return repeats itself, again and again.
>
> —Jacques Derrida[1]

What better place to start than the ending? Mark's empty tomb (16:1-8)—without Jesus, with only an imprint of a body (v. 6), a promise to that he will meet the reader in Galilee (v. 7), the silence of the women who witnessed the absent corpse, and a concluding conjunction (γάρ; v. 8)—makes for an open-ended terminus to the second gospel. The only specificity offered by the narrator is locative, naming Galilee as the place disciples should meet. Recalling the events from the first calling of the disciples onward (1:16-20), this command from the spectral figure in the tomb returns readers to the earlier story.[2] As the story harkens back to events from the beginning, from Galilee,

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[1] Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 10.

[2] Ched Myers, *Binding the Strongman: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus*. Twentieth Anniversary Edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2008), 399-401. Myers writes, "Mark is not pointing 'beyond' his narrative world at all. This 'future' point of reference is the same as the 'past' one: Galilee. And where is that? It is where 'the disciples and Peter' were first called, named, sent on mission, and taught by Jesus." Myers also reminds us that Galilee is itself a marginal place. While I do not want to take the space to go into an in-depth discussion of its politics in relation to the Roman Empire and the rest of Judea, a reading of subalterns and ghosts might well be enhanced by the notion that Galilee itself was on the margins of the Roman world (ibid., 53-54). Scholarly literature on Mark's ending over the past half century has been too abundant to list here.

the absence of a material body and lack of reliable witnesses leave only traces of certainty in a narrative flooded with doubt. With only gauze from a resurrected body and a lack of proof, Mark enlists readers to participate in a haunted narrative. If we follow the narrator back to the beginning, the uncertain ending lurks as a dubious conclusion to this heroic biography; if we remain in the tomb, we are left with any number of possibilities for the fate of Jesus' body. Thus, as one might start the story over again, these doubts of Jesus' corporeal fate haunt anybody expecting a full, material resurrection. As the body of Mark's protagonist fades into uncertainty through a return to the beginning, other characters take his place. The son of God's incorporeal and unbelievable form, also makes room for their countless stories. Indeed, while Jesus remains the near-sole focus of the gentrified scholarly reader, many of these people subsist near-invisibly on the margins. Their lack of power makes them of less interest for those who cannot identify with them, merely spectral to those with privilege. But the slow, fading death of Jesus allows Mark's marginalized to take center stage from the savior, demanding life on their own terms.

This project also makes demands: in part to hear these voices, in part to reimagine Mark's gospel as a haunted place. I am concerned with neocapitalism's gentrifying effects on the practice of reading, called "interpretation." Much like gentrification, interpretation isolates individuals and communities of readers from others. This has the

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Particularly relevant for my own interests, however, is Joel Marcus's argument (echoing that of many narrative critics and reader-response critics) that "since Mark does not wrap up all the loose ends, we have no alternative but to return to the inception of his narrative, 'the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ' (1:1), and to start to read it again as *our* story…we take it up where Mark leaves off" (*Mark 8-16: A New Translation and Commentary* [The Anchor Yale Bible, Volume 27A; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009], 1096).

practical effect of leaving practicing Christian communities unaware of both (a) the opportunities for political and theological alliances through engagement with the Bible and (b) the call to privileged communities to engage in justice work for those they cannot and do not see in their daily lives. Problematically, reading-as-interpretation does not privilege contact with or consciousness of marginalized people, because it focuses on individual extraction of meaning from the homogenized context of neocapitalist privilege. While privileged people may not be aware of communities suffering because of neocapitalist division of wealth, this does not mean they are absent or without agency. I argue that those whose lives are called into question by such spatial separations make themselves known within scripturalized texts. Instead, I contend that precisely because they haunt, marginalized subjects make privileged readers conscious of their participation in death-dealing gentrification. Just as ghosts exercise the agency they are not afforded in life, socially dead communities' exercise of agency shows them exercising power not afforded them in gentrified neighborhoods. Conceiving of Mark in this way demands readers necessarily consider the Other when they read the text, both who the Other is and how the Other impacts them when they read.

This chapter proceeds with three theoretical explorations as Mark unfolds as a haunted place: (1) the socialization of scriptures like Mark's gospel, (2) the haunted character of time and place, and (3) the constitution of space through social activity rather than dimension. To the first point, I note both the importance of contextual hermeneutics for biblical studies, and that interpretation has isolated these marginalized readings from dominant, privileged readers. In response to this problem, I engage with scholars interested in the constitution of sacred texts through a social process of *scripturalization*.

These scholars contend that scriptures are more than texts, but are artifacts whose meaning is contested by social practices around them. Second, I argue that social activity does not just occur in contemporaneous moments, between physically proximate individuals, but across time-spaces: I argue that all reading, and indeed, all being is haunted. So-called "hauntologies" expand concepts of who and what can act in any given moment. According to Avery Gordon, haunting permits minoritized people to re-narrate their history and "control the barely visible structures" of the cosmos, showing how hegemonies lack ultimate power over marginalized communities.[3] With voices from out-of-time participating in the social creation of sacred text, I make my third contribution, to conceive of space, much like scriptures, as constituted by the social activity in and around it. I argue that haunting forces readers to expand their understanding of the sociality of scriptures—even beyond the diversity of religious readers—toward social activity that includes *any* specter haunting a privileged reader. Thus, the gentrified reader who does not know the oppressed Other who lurks just outside their consciousness draws this marginalized subject into Mark's gospel. I therefore argue that Mark's gospel, as a sacred text used across time and place, is itself a haunted place, whose very existence is persistently (re)created by an unknowable number of invisible subjects.

As I explore below, hauntology accounts for both emotional ghosts—who haunt the living through feelings like regret, fear, and hope—and material ghosts—whose actual stories have been lost to history or are made invisible in the present. People reading Mark, as theories of spectralities make clear, are never free from the presences of

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[3] Avery F. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 151.

specters from elsewhere and elsewhen. Additionally, my methodology unfolds throughout the chapter in conversation with an exegesis of Mark 16:1-8. My goal here is to anchor my theoretical conversation in a text to demonstrate that Mark's uncertainty opens it up to an indeterminate number of specters haunting its readers. Indeed, the central contention of this project is that engaging with sacred texts is a political act, precisely because readers encounter people from outside their cognition and everyday life. Because specters present themselves within the pages of the Bible, the act of interpreting is more than an act of making meaning, but of responding to someone else. When Christians from the suburbs of northern New Jersey enter Jesus' tomb, to find the apparent protagonist absent, replaced by uncertainty and visions of Galilee, how certain can they be that the trace "where they laid him" is not also the trace of unauthorized migrants fearfully subsisting within the Ironbound? How certain can they be that their neighborhoods, homogenized through gentrification, have nothing in common with the Gerasene Demoniac's imprisonment among the tombs?

Haunted scriptures necessarily disrupt the certainty and order demanded by the neocapitalist West. As we see below, capitalizing enterprises and biblical scholars alike territorialize space for its exploitation. Exploitation for profit requires precision, measurability, predictability. As a haunted place, Mark's gospel resists these propositions, challenging their hegemony with the mystery—perhaps even threat—of a missing body where one might expect it. With predictability gone, but ghosts flooding into the narrative, the possibility of another metaphysical reality becomes possible. That is, because social activity, even the activity of ghosts, constructs this scripturalized place, privileged voices no longer monopolize it. The gentrified reader might feel that Mark is

an apolitical place, but on the other side of the tracks, but equally within the pages of the second gospel, are those who stake a different claim, an oppressed claim to the text. Though they tried to keep the dead at bay, haunting ensures us of ghosts' agency and self-advocacy. The spectral bodies inhabiting the Markan narrative do not obey the walls of Jesus' tomb; why should they not resist the boundary of text and reader? As a haunted place, the Gospel of Mark challenges the apparently inevitable forces of Western, neocapitalist privilege by demonstrating that the gentrified world is constituted by those it has marginalized.[4]

**"Go and Tell His Disciples": Mark as Scripture, Scripture as Social**

That the witnesses at the empty tomb are told to tell the news to the disciples and fail to do so (16:7-8) injects doubt into Mark's narrative precisely because scriptures are social. At base, social activity is required for narrative transmission—to say nothing of developing scriptural authority. When the women refuse to tell of their experience, the narrative denies its own existence, because it denies the source of its transmission to the New Testament. But if the women did not transmit the final passage of Mark, then who? The young man at the tomb (v. 5)? A secret, unnamed witness? God, through revelation? The author, deploying doubt and surprise as a narrative device? In any event, someone transmits this story; someone receives it, interprets it; someone finds it authoritative. Though this pericope's genesis is dubious, another form of social activity around it is its contemporary use. Even if a reader is conscious of their encounter with the Marys and

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[4] Lees, Shun, and López-Morales write that "gentrification is a phenomenon that cities worldwide have experienced (it is not totally new in the twenty-first century to the global South) and are experiencing (through different types of urban restructuring)" (*Planetary Gentrification*, 5).

Salome or the young messenger as characters, through the act of "interpretation," they still draw the text into their own world. That is, readers draw from their own contextual cues and values when they engage sacred stories. But the presence of an anonymous man and the absence of the expected body raise the question of who or what *is* in fact encountered through this text.[5] The presence of the Other expands the possibilities for who else meets readers in the tomb.

Biblical scholarship has an interpretation problem. Raquel St. Clair, in her womanist reading of Mark, has put it plainly: "Questions raised from an African American female context were not questions Markan scholars were asking."[6] St. Clair's critique follows Brian Blount's observation that biblical scholarship, in general, and Markan narrative criticism, in particular, has spent centuries establishing Euro-American norms for the field. "Cultural interpretation," argues Blount, "contest[s] the requirement that marginal members of society adapt their understanding of the text to Eurocentric values and norms already in place."[7] In short, because white Western scholarship has established itself as the norm, and because it persists in a world where difference is commodified, it marginalizes non-normative readings, interpretation from the margins. Thus, minoritized interpretation is not the problem with biblical interpretation; interpretation as a phenomenon is the problem with gentrified biblical studies. Like neocapitalist transformation of material space, biblical scholars have homogenized the vehicles for reading, by eliminating unacceptable difference from the entire field—by

[5] See below for more on this conversation of contextual interpretation.
[6] Raquel A. St. Clair, *Call and Consequences: A Womanist Reading of Mark* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 71, cf. 39-70.
[7] Ibid., 72. Brian K. Blount, *Cultural Interpretation: Reorienting New Testament Criticism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 3.

eliminating difference from the neighborhood, as it were. St. Clair observes that, because "interpretation involves a relationship with others in a social environment, changes in the social environment will affect the act and, therefore, the conclusions of the interpretive process."[8] The gentrification of the field has prevented minoritized scholarship from entering what has become normative biblical studies, even though that world of interpretation is itself local.

This partitioned reality of Euro-American biblical studies raises a methodological question for people concerned with justice work and sacred texts: If the real, fleshly experiences of marginalized communities are forced to the margins of biblical studies, as alternative "interpretations," what conceptual and strategic resources do readers of the Bible have for encountering the other through reading? On the one hand, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza has interrogated the apparently neutral methods of analysis in biblical studies that reinforce white male subject positions. In their place, she advocates for emancipatory hermeneutics, which shift the analytic tools of the biblical studies guild to the embodied knowledge of readers within their social locations.[9] While Schüssler Fiorenza's work poses an alternative mode of creating meaning from biblical texts outside the normative privilege of the academy, Stephen Moore and Yvonne Sherwood question whether readers who read "intentionally [locally]" are thwarted by neoliberal identity politics: identities of real, material readers are understood by normative biblical scholars as "opinions, belief, and practices…cast not as matters of conscience, education, or revelation but as the material of the person of which certain attributes…are an

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[8] St. Clair, *Call and Consequences*, 75.

[9] Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic: The Politics of Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 24

index."[10] There are places within biblical studies where minoritized scholarship flourishes, but readers within the halls of Western academia, in leafy suburban congregations, and among the sparkling new high rises have few contextual resources for consciousness of difference within the Bible.

The present project is not an apology for emancipatory and contextual biblical scholarship—although it uplifts those voices as much as possible—but a critical take on the erasure of difference within the Euro-American guild and a call to responsibility to those who are marginalized by neocolonialism. Pursuant to this goal, I reconceive an object of study for biblical scholars—Mark's gospel as a haunted place—in order to reframe the very act of reading as precarious and vulnerable for the Western interpreter. Therefore, my work is *not an interpretation* or even the elaboration of a new hermeneutic; it is a proposal for a new conceptual framework for the work of the gentrified biblical scholar: not to attempt, in Schüssler Fiorenza's words, "disinterested and dispassionate" investigation of "the minds and world of historical people…unencumbered by contemporary questions, values, and interests."[11] As St. Clair argues above, this localized interpretation, understanding itself as universal, simply does not have the ability to speak to or hear the material realities of minoritized readers.

Dominant Euro-American interpretation further prioritizes the localized "I" of the reader, presuming the subject is insulated from the demands of the Other. In the Western

[10] Stephen D. Moore and Yvonne Sherwood, *Invention of the Biblical Scholar: A Critical Manifesto* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 73-121, esp. 121. Moore and Sherwood see the need for "social justice" in biblical studies, but note that the conventions of the field hinder such pursuit of justice through biblical scholarship.
[11] Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic*, 24.

world, as Nicole Wilkinson Duran puts it, is thought of as autonomous, isolated from effects of encountering others. Duran continues,

> Not only do we prefer that people should be separate, self-contained subjects, but we find it hard to see people any other way. The sense that every individual stands apart, literally, and can and must control his or her own fate, with the help of reason and hard work, is an essential tenet of Western culture.[12]

Individuals—in the case of biblical reading, "interpreters"—are conceived in the western imagination to be unmoved by the act of engaging texts, privileging their *personal* interpretation. Problematically, isolated, gentrified readers are distanced from marginalized populations.[13] Privileged readers' context, to elaborate on Blount's cultural hermeneutics, is devoid of "relationship" with the very people that privilege harms.[14] The white, neocapitalist, Christian "I" has eliminated conscious difference from its environs. The problem, for politically-engaged readers is the lack of political responsibility imagined by white biblical interpretations, responsibility that might arise, as Massey points out, through multiplicity, where the spaces of our everyday life become "co-constitutive."[15] Thus, I turn to scholars interested in rethinking not *only* the subject who

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[12] Nicole Wilkinson Duran, "Other People's Demons," 38.

[13] Moore and Sherwood argue that this tendency "serves to set the truth of the One or universal in dichotomous contrast to the truths of the local or particular, with right clearly on one side and not the other. The totalizing One of early modern certainty, epitomized by the moral myopia of an elite white gentlemen's club, is thereby juxtaposed with a 'postmodern' collapse of faith in universals" (*Invention of the Biblical Scholar*, 71). See also Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert, eds., "'And They Began to Speak in Other Tongues': Competing Modes of Discourse in Contemporary Biblical Criticism," in *Reading from This Place; Vol. 1: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States*, ed. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 1-34.

[14] Blount, *Cultural Interpretation*, 11.

[15] Doreen Massey argues, "Second, that we understand space as the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity in the sense of contemporaneous plurality; as the sphere in which distinct trajectories coexist; as the sphere therefore of coexisting heterogeneity. Without space, no multiplicity; without multiplicity, no space. If space is

interacts with the text, but what that text *is* and *what happens* when that text is engaged. In short, what does it mean for Mark to be a text *scripturalized* by a diverse range of practitioners.

In response to the problem of the sidelining of minoritized scholarship, Schüssler Fiorenza famously recommended a turn to rhetorical and emancipatory hermeneutics:

> A critical ethical-political emancipatory-rhetorical analysis does not simply begin with individualized and privatized experience. Rather, it begins with a critical reflection on how experience with the biblical text is shaped by one's sociopolitical location. Equally, it will ask for the experiences of wo/men and their cultural locations inscribed in the biblical text. Hence a hermeneutics of experience critically problematizes the social-religious and intellectual locations not only of biblical interpreters but also of those biblical texts in relation to global struggles for survival and well-being.[16]

That is, encounters with the biblical text are populated and most fully understood through the knowledge of marginalized subjects. This emancipatory hermeneutic speaks to oppression across time-spaces by privileging the social location of marginalized readers over the methodological lens of an apolitical critic. In so doing, the experience of marginalized readers becomes an analytic that bridges the gap between text and reader, past and present.

To account for both the prevalence of gentrified biblical scholarship and the vast reservoir of submerged knowledge and agencies, I will make significant use of Schüssler Fiorenza's concept of *kyriarchy* throughout this project. In coining this neologism, she addresses the domination of marginalized bodies that has continued generally, but shifted historically, in its particular tactics:

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indeed the product of interrelations, then it must be predicated upon the existence of plurality. Multiplicity and space as co-constitutive" (*For Space* [London: Sage Publications, 2005], 9).

[16] Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic*, 49-50.

> Kyriarchy is constituted as a sociocultural and religious system of dominations by intersecting multiplicative structures of oppression. The different sets of relations of domination shift historically and produce a different constellation of oppression in different times and cultures. The structural positions of subordination that have been fashioned by kyriarchal relations stand in tension with those required by radical democracy.[17]

Oppression is never a simple performance of patriarchy or racism, but a constantly shifting set of relations that marginalize bodies across times and places. That is, kyriarchal systems, across time-spaces depend on the social death of the oppressed, the creation of unlivable lives.[18] Therefore, even though the particularities of local lives vary, kyriarchy is a reliable historical analytic, because domination is a reliable historical reality. This being the case, we can also analyze the underside of kyriarchy. Indeed, I ask at numerous points throughout this project about the alliance formed at the bottom of the kyriarchal pyramid, in which "a radical democratic system" is created, where power is exercised "through the human capacities for respect, responsibility, self-determination, and self-esteem."[19] Not only does kyriarchy as an analytic make room for exploring the vastness of human domination, but also the communities that build knowledge and resistance against it.

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[17] Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Laura Nasrallah, eds., "Introduction: Exploring the Intersections of Race, Gender, Status, and Ethnicity in Early Christian Studies," in *Prejudice and Christian Beginnings: Investigating Race, Gender, and Ethnicity in Early Christian Studies*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 9. For a more detailed introduction to *kyriarchy*, see Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said: Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 103-132.
[18] For more on this phenomenon, which has largely worked on the moniker of "necropolitics," see Mbembe, "Necropolitics;" Jasbir K. Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017); Lisa Marie Cacho, *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected* (New York: New York University Press, 2012).
[19] Schüssler Fiorenza, "Introduction," 14.

Knowledge of Mark's gospel submerged by kyriarchy forms an archive for anyone looking to conscientize privileged, gentrified readers to difference in and around the text.[20] Emancipatory hermeneutics have expanded the possibilities for inquiry into Mark by pursuing studies that populate its story world with a diverse array of marginalized people—characters and historical—and demands for justice—from contemporary readers, ancient audiences, reception history, and the characters themselves. This work builds a coalition of readers of color, wo/men, queer theorists, and activists contesting positivist assertions that the text can only *mean* what its author wanted it to mean.[21] Because ruling powers tend to adapt old strategies for dominance,

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[20] For more on conscientizing, particularly to the "experience of wo/men…critically explored," see Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic*, 47; and Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Seabury Press, 1973), 33.

[21] A womanist reading of Mark, informed by her ministry within African-American congregations, has been produced by St. Clair who writes, "Because African American woman carry a profound legacy of suffering, I maintain that it is important we acknowledge Jesus' suffering as well as our own" (*Call and Consequences*, 5). For other examples of work reading alongside contemporary and historical marginalized communities see Fernando Belo, *A Materialist Reading of the Gospel of Mark*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1981); Myers, *Binding the Strongman*; Brian K. Blount, *Go Preach! Mark's Kingdom Message and the Black Church Today* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1998); Tat-siong Benny Liew, *The Politics of Parousia: Reading Mark Inter(con)textually* (Biblical Interpretation Series 42; Leiden: Brill, 1999); Richard A. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001); Simon Samuel, "The Beginning of Mark: A Colonial/Postcolonial Conundrum," *Biblical Interpretation* 2 (1994): 405-419; Theodore W. Jennings, *The Insurrection of the Crucified: The Gospel of Mark as Theological Manifesto* (Chicago: Exploration Press, 2003); C.I. David Joy, *Mark and Its Subalterns: A Hermeneutical Paradigm for a Postcolonial Context* (London and Oakville: Equinox, 2008); Manuel Villalobos Mendoza, *Abject Bodies in the Gospel of Mark* (The Bible in the Modern World; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2012); Hans Leander, *Discourses of Empire: The Gospel of Mark from a Postcolonial Perspective* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. 2013); Simon Mainwaring, *Mark, Mutuality, and Mental Health: Encounters with Jesus* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014). For examples of work populating and reimagining Christian visions of biblical textual and material worlds for the sake of wo/men, past and present, see Marie Sabin, "Women Transformed: The Ending of Mark Is the Beginning of Wisdom," *Cross Currents* 48, no. 2 (1988): 149-168;

argues Joseph Marchal in an exploration of queer politics across time-spaces, "superior status is justified because members of ruling groups only do the proper erotic things with their own and others' bodies." For this reason, *both* practices of domination *and* of resistance slide into our contexts with a "sticky persistence."[22] The present project tracks this sticky persistence as a coalition that builds over time and haunts any practices that subjugate real people.

Emancipatory hermeneutics permit minoritized voices to interpret and insert actual, marginalized people into Mark's narrative and the world of Mark's production. For instance, drawing stories and subjects from his life on either side of the Mexico-U.S. border, Manuel Villalobos Mendoza's "hermeneutic *del otro lado*" serves as a useful

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Susan Lochrie Graham, "Silent Voices: Women in the Gospel of Mark," *Semeia* 54 (1991): 145-182; Joanna Dewey, "The Gospel of Mark," in *Searching the Scriptures, Vol. 2: A Feminist Commentary*, ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (New York: Crossroad, 1994); Hisako Kinukawa, *Women and Jesus in Mark: A Japanese Feminist Perspective* (Maryknoll: Orbis 1994); Mary Ann Tolbert, "Mark," in *Women's Bible Commentary*, second ed., ed. Carol Newsom and Sharon Ringe (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998); Mary R. D'Angelo, "Power, Knowledge, and the Bodies of Women in Mark 5:21-43," in *Miracles in Ancient Judaism and Christianity: Imagining Truth*, ed. J.C. Cavadini (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1999), 83-109; Victoria Phillips, "Full Disclosure: Toward a Complete Characterization of the Women Who Followed Jesus in the Gospel according to Mark," in *Transformative Encounters: Jesus & Women Reviewed*, ed. Ingrid Rosa Kitzberger (Biblical Interpretation Series 43; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 13-32; Amy-Jill Levine and Marianne Blickenstaff (eds.), *A Feminist Companion to Mark* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001); Joan L. Mitchell, *Beyond Fear and Silence: A Feminist-Literary Reading of Mark* (London: Continuum, 2001); Susan Miller, *Women in Mark's Gospel* (Journal for the Study of New Testament Supplement 259; London: T&T Clark International, 2004); Seong Hee Kim, *Mark, Women, and Empire: A Korean Postcolonial Perspective* (The Bible in the Modern World 20; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010); Jin Young Choi, *Postcolonial Discipleship of Embodiment: An Asian and Asian American Feminist Reading of the Gospel of Mark* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

[22] Joseph A. Marchal, "Bio-necro-*biblio*-politics? Restaging Feminist Intersections and Queer Exceptions." *Culture and Religion* 15, no. 2 (2014), 169. Marchal is riffing on M. Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory and the Sacred* (Durham and London: Duke University Presss, 2005).

example for us here of an emancipatory Markan study. As he draws together Judith Butler's concept of "abjection" and Gloria Anzaldúa's "borderlands," Villalobos Mendoza observes that "there are still some notes missing, still some voices that are not being heard…that need to come out of the shadows of death."[23] In this process, he approaches the text as from a "base ecclesial community" in order to read with his "own experiences, stories, struggles, and hopes."[24] The result is a number of encounters with material bodies from Villalobos Mendoza's own life in the places of the unnamed woman and Simon the Leper (14:3-9), the unnamed man carrying water (vv. 51-52), and the slave girl (vv. 66-72). Villalobos Mendoza inserts himself and those of others from his life, marginalized by racism, poverty, and U.S. border policies, into Mark itself. The second gospel's story, becomes their story and vice versa.

On the other hand, "interpretation," "hermeneutics," and "reading" all work with a notion of an autonomous subject whose act of interpretation both contributes to and is vulnerable to isolating forces of gentrification. As I have noted, my interest here is the problem of the privileged, gentrified interpreter: under neocapitalist globalization, how might biblical scholarship enable interaction between privileged readers and the wo/men to whom emancipatory hermeneutics call our attention? Daniel Patte's call to white, male biblical scholars focuses on the "idolatrous character of our critical exegetical practices" that persist, unconscious of marginalized subjects and privileged participation in Eurocentric, patriarchal interests.[25] In other words, focus on practices like interpretive

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[23] Villalobos Mendoza, *Abject Bodies*, 5-6.
[24] Ibid., 6.
[25] Patte, *Ethics of Biblical Interpretation*, 25-26. See also Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Biblical Interpretation*.

"methodology" can maintain focus on the discipline itself instead of the other encountered. The obsession with an aforementioned search for a pure biblical past, unaware of any Euro-American ideology influencing that search, therefore makes no room for contextual hermeneutics. Despite the fact that readers like Villalobos Mendoza make the Markan story their own, positivist scholarship does not include the tools to make that story visible to the gentrified reader in the biblical past.

We could put this another way: biblical studies is gentrified. Patte recommends making privileged scholars aware of their complicity in patriarchy through an "androcritical" approach to scholarship.[26] Ideally, he argues that scholars should not abandon their "critical" approach to reading, but must permit for many "legitimate" interpretations of single passages to exist simultaneously.[27] But what is the most ethical approach to critical scholarship when privileged scholars are wholly unaware of marginalized readings? Moreover, what does it say about minoritized interpretation if it is merely understood as *their* readings—as opposed to a universalized (read: Eurocentric) interpretation? "Sure," a white, male reader might respond to Patte, "I see a womanist reading of Mark as legitimate, but it is not my lens, so I have no responsibility to its conclusions." As Doreen Massey argues, our neocapitalist world has accelerated the physical division of people on the basis of race and class.[28] The result of this gentrification is a mapping of people that causes one group to suffer, while another grows increasingly wealthy.[29] With people divided into particular, discrete regions, Massey

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[26] Ibid., 26-28.
[27] Ibid., 29-30.
[28] Doreen Massey, *World City* (Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity, 2007), 18-19.
[29] Ibid., 20.

argues that we neocolonial moderns have a difficult time understanding the relationship between places and people within them.[30] How might a gentrified, white biblical scholar read St. Clair's womanist reading of Mark's theology of the cross, which sees the African American image of Jesus as "cosufferer" as crucial to any biblical interpretation?[31] Indeed, the notion that the cross conjures a "profound legacy of suffering," shared with Jesus, a legacy of suffering in which gentrified white men were active participants. To leave such an emancipatory reading to an identarian region" does little to provide an ontology of the text itself which prods the privileged reader to conceive of their complicity in racist traumas. What impetus is there for the privileged, gentrified reader to come into contact with marginalized people, to become conscious of responsibility for their marginalization?

Rather than maintaining the gentrified divide between privileged and marginalized readers of Mark, I suggest the second gospel is a social (re)creation, persistently reproduced by communities gathering around it. Emancipatory hermeneutics are again a resource here, as thinking with and about communities' engagements with biblical texts helps, in Jacqueline Hidalgo's words, shift our focus from a "noun" (scriptures) to a "verb" (scripturalize) emphasizing "how scriptures exist as part of human social imagination and contestation."[32] To begin with, readers, particularly Christians, do not approach the Bible without a predetermined relationship. That is, as James Bielo

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[30] Places, Massey writes, are imagined not as connected, but as having an "internal construction," which fails to conceive of the "relations that run from a place" (ibid., 21). These notions will be covered more fully below.
[31] St. Clair, *Call and Consequences*, 1-10 (8).
[32] Jacqueline M. Hidalgo, *Revelation in Aztlán*: *Scriptures, Utopias, and the Chicano Movement* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 17.

points out, not only are biblical texts understood to be interpreted, but the Bible itself is an artifact, engaged and deployed with a unique rhetoric around it, and with ideologies for its use.[33] An interpretive model might read our Mark 16:1-8 example for the meaning that can be extracted by either historical investigation into its production or its correlation with the reader's personal experience of doubt, uncertainty, fear, or resurrection. However, Bielo argues that because the Bible is always already scripture for Christian communities, the entrance of "text" into "communities of practice" can offer as much information about the values and ideologies of a group as individual interpretations.[34] Because as a scripturalized text, Mark is immediately thrust into the chaotic realm of social existence, it resists the temporal-spatial isolation of authors and audiences.

In other words, individuals' and groups' understandings of sacred texts are never isolated from scripture's social value, built up by diverse practitioners over time. In search of the material difference reading communities make upon sacred texts, Vincent Wimbush has described a process of inquiry he calls "excavation" (as opposed to "analysis" or "interpretation"). Wimbush recognizes scriptures as *phenomena* and not just texts, narratives, or canons:

> This "excavation" project is different from historical criticism in the sense that it regards "text" in more layered and expansive terms and positions the narrowly construed "text" in the complicated middle point or middle layer, so to speak, of the investigation; it does not make the "text"—or explication of it—the endgame.

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[33] James S. Bielo, "Introduction: Encountering Biblicism," in *The Social Life of Scriptures*, ed. James Bielo (Signifying [on] Scriptures; New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009) 5-7.

[34] Ibid., 4. In all this, I do not mean to suggest that "interpretation" is unhelpful. Quite the contrary: interpretation, particularly for marginalized populations, is an act of agency on and with an authoritative set of texts, a set of texts that may even be expanded by their use. However, leaving other aspects of scriptural use unanalyzed leads to the gentrifying practices discussed above.

> In making the endgame of the excavation textures, gestures, power, I seek to turn traditional "historical criticism" into what Pierre Nora called "critical history."[35]

To follow Wimbush means pursuit of the subjects, bodies, communities, and circumstances already making meaning and use of sacred texts. According to Wimbush, the abstracting power of white, colonial ideologies has seeped into the cultural and scholarly imagination of the Bible, shaping it as "culture-neutral in origins, meanings, and import."[36] The clinical precision of mainstream scholarship tends to limit the diversity of biblical texts to a cast of characters or singular authoring communities. But scriptures-as-in-process acknowledges a diversity of communities around them, expanding the power of creating scripture to diverse ranges of underrepresented groups. For instance, in her analysis of Revelation and Chicanx scriptural practices, Hidalgo argues that homing in on the phenomenon of scriptures "is to take interest in what happens in the interaction between readers and texts as a way of thinking about how

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[35] Vincent L. Wimbush, "Introduction," in *Theorizing Scriptures: New Critical Orientations to a Cultural Phenomenon*, ed. idem (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008, 3-4. This desire to "excavate" scriptures in their complexity—their material, their usage, the power dynamics working through them—is a deployment of Foucault's archaeology. Working with Nietzsche's concept of "*wirkliche* history," Foucault, in Antonio Campillo's words, prefers a historical method "which would disregard the alleged identity of the subject in different and irreducible forms of experience, that is, which would negate all claims to universality and transcendental necessity of the 'a priori conditions of experience' and would return them to a contingent historical diversity" (Antonio Campillo, "Foucault and Derrida: The History of a Debate on History," *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 5, No. 2 [2000], 119). For Foucault's thoughts on the work of history, see Michel Foucault "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *The Foucault Reader*, trans. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 76-100. Though not engaged in any sustained manner in this project, I see Foucault's call for effective history as resonating with my argument here: that is, history should populate the past in such a way that challenges the alleged integrity of widely-held historical narratives.

[36] Wimbush, "Introduction," 11.

meaning is created and negotiated."[37] Hidalgo continues to note that adhering to the authority of a scripturalized text also "[opens] oneself up to the ambiguity and ambivalence inherent to all meaning making and power tripping."[38] While sacred texts have been tools of colonial conqueror's and slave owners, they continue to be used, contested and held meaningful by marginalized communities. Biblical texts constantly (re)emerge not only through dominant ecclesial or academic use, but through marginalized groups' subversive and everyday practice.

I argue that when one approaches a sacred text like Mark, they are participating in a social activity already underway. Consciously or not, readers of the second gospel are doing more than negotiating meaning; they are contesting the very ontology of a scripturalized text. This social activity—what Massey calls the "undecidability" of social life—is the "central question of the political."[39] Put differently: while biblical scholarship has gentrified itself, the object of study that it has carved up between privilege and marginalization is in fact far more diverse in its makeup. Biblical texts are not passive; their ontology is, by definition, contentious precisely because they are negotiated by religious communities. However, this framework for a political ontology of Mark's

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[37] Hidalgo, "Reading from No Place: Toward a Hybrid and Ambivalent Study of Scriptures," in *Latino/a Biblical Hermeneutics: Problematics, Objectives, Strategies*, ed. Francisco Lozada Jr. and Fernando F. Segovia (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), 175. Hidalgo here is working directly with Thomas Tweed's observation that "meaning is constructed (not given), multiple (not univocal), contested (not shared), and fluid (not static). And most important, meaning is inscribed by readers, listeners, participants, or viewers" (Thomas Tweed, "Between the Living and the Dead: Fieldwork, History, and the Interpreter's Position," in James V. Spickard, J. Shawn Landres, and Meredith B. McGuire (eds.), *Personal Knowledge and Beyond: Reshaping the Ethnography of Religion* [New York: New York University Press, 2002], 65).
[38] Hidalgo, "Reading from No Place," 175.
[39] Massey, *For Space*, 151. Massey makes this observation in conversation with James Donald, *Imagining the Modern City* (London: Athlone Press, 1999), 168.

Gospel needs to elaborate on the concept of sociality. Indeed, to what degree does entering into the second gospel demand responsibility of privileged interpreters to conceive of and engage with marginalized subjects within their daily lives? Moreover, mainstream biblical scholarship sees the text as a passive object of study, not diverse or contentious. How might a concept of sacred texts similarly prod gentrified readers in northern New Jersey's suburbs to imagine residents of the Ironbound as *agents*? As I shift my conversation to haunting as a response to these questions, I argue that the sociality of the text need not come only from its immediate reading communities, but also from the agencies and trajectories making demands upon those very readers.

**"He is Not Here; See Where They Laid Him": Haunting, Literary and Local**

At the very least, haunting attunes one to the agency of other people not immediately visible. Mark's final scene conjures these very notions. When the women encounter a strange messenger in the tomb sans Jesus' corpse, they are given only a trace of the one they seek: "He is not here; see where they laid him" (16:6b). This phantasmatic "proof" certainly poses questions of Jesus' locale outside the tomb: Is his body stolen? Is he indeed risen and in Galilee, as the young man suggests (v. 7)? Was he *ever* in this tomb? These inquiries arise because the proof of Jesus' resurrection is not airtight—just because someone was once "here" does not necessarily mean they are "raised" elsewhere. Biblical scholars have been spurred to ask further questions of how this trace draws readers outside the tomb. Numerous commentators have noted the young messenger's white garb recalls the recent Transfiguration, when Jesus was dressed in an

impossibly white robe (9:3).[40] Donald Juel has further noted that Matthew (28:2-7) and Luke (24:4) attribute divinity and angelic status to the tomb messenger(s).[41] Ched Myers wonders to what degree the martyrs in Revelation (7:9, 13) reflect this divinely youthful man's outfit.[42] And Robert Gundry takes his reading of Mark 16:5 to the Hebrew Bible and its numerous frightening angelophanies (e.g., Gen. 28:10-17; Dan. 8:16-17; 9:20-27).[43] But all of these questions are the product of gentrified biblical interpretation, because they do not demand the reader inquire outside the Bible. That is, the specter within the tomb demands readers inquire outside the text: If the young man beckons us outside the tomb, does not that outside also include people and places outside the Bible?

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[40] Collins writes, "The young man of 14:51-52 is a character constructed in *contrast* to Jesus. The young man here is portrayed as symbolically *similar* to the risen Jesus. Just as the risen Jesus is enthroned at the right hand of God, as 12:35-37 implies, so this young man is described as 'sitting on the right.' Since this description has little or no realistic significance in the narrative, the audiences are led to reflect on its symbolic import and to recall the citation of Ps. 110:1 earlier in the narrative. The white robe worn by the young man here recalls the clothing of Jesus during his transfiguration: 'and his clothes became very white and they shone.' One way of interpreting the transfiguration is to say that it anticipates Jesus' glorified state after his death" (*Mark*, 795). For more on dazzling clothing playing a starring role in Greco-Roman epiphanies, see F.E. Brenk, "Greek Epiphanies and Paul on the Road to Damascus," in U. Bianchi (ed.), *The Notion of 'Religion' in Comparative Research: Selected Proceedings of the XVIth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions* (R, bome: 'L'Erma' di Bretschneider, 1994), 415-424 (420). See also Morna Dorothy Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 384; Gundry, *Mark*, 990; Myers, *Binding*, 397; Andrew P. Wilson, *Transfigured: A Derridean Rereading of the Markan Transfiguration* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 61-64; Wilson, "Trembling in the Dark: Derrida's *Mysterium Tremendum* and the Gospel of Mark," in *Derrida's Bible: Reading a Page of Scripture with a Little Help from Derrida*, ed. Yvonne Sherwood (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 209; W.L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 587.

[41] Donald H. Juel, *A Master of Surprise: Mark Interpreted* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 113, in fact also critiques the first and third evangelists' removal of "any ambiguity" from the messengers' purpose at the tomb.

[42] Myers, *Binding*, 397-398.

[43] Gundry, *Mark*, 991.

With so much uncertainty conjured into this place, are there any limits to how far that outside might go and who might be included in it? What do those other locales and communities have to say about this mysterious sepulcher or about us readers? Are those other subjects, then, within this tomb or within our contexts?

Ghosts lurk alongside questions like these, drawing people together across boundaries of time, space, and visibility in encounters where one's subjectivity is negotiated. On a basic level, specters operate through time, space, and relationship: they come from a past world, make demands for future action, and force their presence on subjects. The 1990s saw ghosts arise as an analytic device within the academy to account for cultural and social scientific tensions at the edges of, in the words of María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren, "visibility and invisibility, life and death, materiality and immateriality."[44] In other words, as I elaborate below, haunting as a theoretical tool has become a term that covers the physical experience of contacting another body through means that are difficult to prove scientifically: ghosts have bodies, but not visible bodies; hauntings are emotional and alter moods, but they are not measurable. While diverse, hauntologies offer a method for thinking about politics beyond reciprocity to physically and temporally present communities and people; they make the case that those who seem distant or invisible are at least connected to us, and maybe even present with and acting upon us.

Broadly, hauntologies have labored under a tension between ghosts as universal signifiers for the "uncanny" or the "Other," on the one hand, and haunting as a phenomenon arising from particular traumas or demands from local subjectivities, on the

[44] Del Pilar Blanco and Peeren, "Introduction," 1-2.

other. This project attempts to straddle this line, drawing from two trajectories within the field of spectrality studies: a literary-critical interest in haunted time and a social-historical concern for material ghosts.[45] In the former case, haunting has followed Freudian psychoanalytic interest in the *unheimlich* (uncanny) as a terrifying, often faceless, force.[46] Thus, hauntologies taking up Jacques Derrida's classic work, *Specters of Marx*, have engaged categories that attach the present to the past, like nostalgia, with

[45] Additionally, I should note that these hauntologies detailed in this project work with ghosts as conceptual analytical tools, not necessarily "real" things. In fact, whether spectralities *need* actual ghosts to function remains an open question. As I detail below, neither Freud nor Adorno find that ghosts exist, and will argue in their own ways that this belief is found only among backward individuals and communities. But for those who practice what might rightly be called "hauntology," the results are more mixed. Derrida, for example, appears convinced that his argument works without the metaphysical existence of ghosts, as del Pilar Blanco and Peeren observe, with Frederic Jameson: "Thus, even though [Derrida] uses the literal ghost of Hamlet's father as a paradigmatic example and inveighs traditional scholars for not believing in ghosts, when Derrida proposes the possibility of 'another "scholar"' open to spectrality, this is not someone who trusts in the return of the dead; rather, it is someone 'capable, beyond the opposition between presence and non-presence, actuality and in actuality, life and non-life, of thinking the possibility of the specter, the specter as possibility'" (Del Pilar Blanco and Peeren, *Spectralities Reader*, 9; Frederic Jameson, "Marx's Purloined Letter," in *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's Specters of Marx*, ed. Michael Sprinkler [London and New York: Verso, 1999], 39; Derrida, *Specters*, 12). On a different spectrum, and as we explore in the section following the present one, conversations of haunting from the Global South often offer non-figurative presentations of ghosts, as Achille Mbembe does in his understanding postcolonial "death worlds," in which he sees little difference between the living death of everyday existence and the violent play of traditional Nigerian ghost worlds ("Life, Sovereignty, and Terror in the Fiction of Amos Tutuola," *Research in African Literatures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 6; see also Esther Peeren,"Everyday Ghosts and the Ghostly Everyday in Amos Tutuola, Ben Okri, and Achille Mbembe," in *Popular Ghosts: Haunted Spaces of Everyday Culture*, ed. María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren (New York: Continuum, 2010), 106-117). Illumining this difference between literal and figurative ghosts within spectralities, Lincoln and Lincoln write a boundary line between "primary" and "secondary hauntings" (Martha Lincoln and Bruce Lincoln, "Toward a Critical Hauntology: Bare Afterlife and the Ghosts of Ba Chúc," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57, no. 1 (2015): 191–220).

[46] Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny," in *Writings on Art and Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 218; cf. del Pilar Blanco and Peeren, *Spectralities Reader*, 3.

those that have an interest for a better future, like justice or the messianic. They, therefore, declare the troubling of linear time to be an always-ethical practice, an act searching for justice. In addition to Derrida's work, queer theorists have taken up the force of bodies, agencies, and erotic connections, across time, who make themselves known to present subjects in ways that destabilize the present order, in favor of ethical and political responses.[47] While this trajectory has been favored by literary theorists, a social-historical trajectory in spectralities studies has focused on the particularities from whence ghosts come. Scholars following Avery Gordon explore capitalism and colonialism as forces that erase material, marginalized bodies from the past and present, requiring them to exercise agency as ghosts. The shift, as identified by del Pilar Blanco and Peeren, is a recognition that haunting is *more than just time-play*, but also a *spatial* phenomenon: it is not enough to say they make mischief only because they arrive from another time, but that specters bring with them the unique demands of their unique contexts. In either case, spectralities offer methods for thinking about history beyond a linear story.

As I argue below, these two hauntological categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and there are features of both which, when brought into conversation with one another, provide a fruitful starting point for rethinking the function of Mark's gospel as a

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[47] Literature on queer theory's interface with temporality is vast, but those highlighting an approach adjacent to Derridean haunting and its ethical contacts include Carolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern*; Carla Freccero, *Queer/Early/Modern* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005); Dinshaw, Lee Edelman, Roderick A. Ferguson, Freccero, Elizabeth Freeman, Judith Halberstam, Annamarie Jagose, Christopher S. Nealon, and Tan Hoang Nguyen, "Theorizing Queer Temporalities: A Roundtable Discussion," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 13, nos. 2-3 (2007), 177-195; Freeman, *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2010).

sacred text. With this potential in view, I also explore the hauntological work offered to date by biblical scholars and theologians. Indeed, hauntological work has tracked along the same universal/particular partition of the hauntologies they deploy. But it also draws the language of the sacred into the discourse of spectralities, forcing discussions about universal concepts—like God, truth, and justice—as well as local, material realities—such as practice. Thus, while it is true that the particularities of local, material ghosts are important pieces of a haunted imagination, we would be wrong to think that these localities are not related to one another through universal concepts. So, while social historians have honed their message of local ghosts, out of the particularities of certain contexts, Derrida and many of those who follow his work in *Specters of Marx* operate with expanded notions of time itself. The question for the present section, then, is whether those ghosts can be said to have come from some*where* and some*when*. Indeed, I argue here that those things which inform our reality, including Mark's empty tomb, including sacred texts, are always already composed of people from other places, that their stories and demands are the very fibers composing sacred stories.

*Haunting History, Haunting Literature, Haunting Readers*

> I found that even Foucault, the inspiration of social constructionists, connected affectively with the past. I focused on the possibility of touching across time, collapsing time through affective contact between marginalized people now and then, and I suggested that with such queer historical touches we could form communities across time.
>
> —Carolyn Dinshaw, "Theorizing Queer Temporalities: A Roundtable Discussion"[48]

> Number is the specter. But in order to inhabit even there where one is not, to haunt all places at the same time…not only is it necessary to see from behind the visor, to see without being seen by whoever

[48] Dinshaw et al. "Theorizing Queer Temporalities," 178.

> makes himself or herself seen…it is also necessary to speak. And to hear voices. The spectral rumor now resonates, it invades everything: the spirit of the 'sublime' and the spirit of nostalgia crosses all borders.
>
> —Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*[49]

The experience of haunting is both a matter of metaphysics and intersubjective ethics. That bodies can touch across time-spaces or that one could be seen by those who do not make themselves seen challenges the nature of metaphysical concepts of absence and presence, life and death. These touches are also intersubjective, because spectral agencies break through borders and operate through intimate feelings of nostalgia or the sublime. Moreover, the presence of the Other within my emotions comes with their own voices or with their desires to "form communities across time." The spectral activity elaborated in the above epigraphs unfurls a metaphysics where spirits *and* their ethical demands are part and parcel of the fabric of reality. Derrida and others are able to burst open the clinical character of psychoanalysis and speak to the vocabulary of religion: words like "faith," "sin," and "messiahs." Whereas the influential Marxist and psychoanalytic thinkers inspiring hauntologies wrote in explicit opposition to belief in ghosts, demythologizing and reconceptualizing them, those who redeployed ghosts as an analytic fleshed out a metaphysics of a populated, haunted, and intersubjective cosmos. In fact, as I hope to show below, this remains one of Derrida's lasting contributions to spectralities: he maintains focus on the instability of the modern, ordered cosmos in order to argue that being and subjectivity are comprised by ethical responsibility.

Though he ultimately makes metaphysical claims, Derrida begins with psychoanalytic scholarship, feeding later hauntologies by conceptualizing ghosts *in*

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[49] Derrida, *Specters*, 168-169.

*response to* human belief in actual ghosts.[50] Most notable among this psychoanalytic redress to belief in the spiritual is Freud's assertion that obsession with the "gruesome" or "savage" is baked into human consciousness: "The primitive fear of the dead…[is] still so strong within us and always ready to come to the surface of any provocation."[51] Extending Freud's concept of the returning *unheimlich*, Nicolas Abraham writes that "phantoms…merely objectify a metaphor active within the unconscious: a burial of an unspeakable fact within the loved one."[52] Both Freud and Abraham internalize and naturalize the haunted feeling as a way to dematerialize an unknowable force, like mourning, regret, or hope. Given that these thinkers are interested in submerging cosmologies complicated by spectral activity, it is perhaps surprising that Derrida drew from this intellectual well to construct a deconstructive metaphysics. But, as Fredric

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[50] Notably, with *Specters of Marx* Derrida attempts to insert himself into a legacy of Marxist historians. Among these thinkers is Theodor Adorno, who, like Freud, took aim at uncanny rituals and communication with the dead. Focused more on macabre rituals and idols, Theodor Adorno's disenchantment with what he calls the "occult" offers an external critique of haunting, pointing to "the fetish-character of commodities: menacingly objectified labor assails him on all sides from demonically grimacing objects." For Adorno, these obsessions arise in pre-modern societies (*Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott [1951; London and New York: Verso, 2005]). See also del Blanco and Peeren, *Spectralities Reader*, 5. Derrida includes Marx among the doubters: "Marx does not like ghosts any more than his adversaries do" (Derrida, *Specters*, 57).
[51] Freud, *Writings on Art and Literature*, 218. The experience of the *unheimlich*, according to Freud in 1919, is a normal reaction to facing the limits of one's mortality. But what he finds "gruesome" and even "savage," is obsessing on "the primitive fear of the dead…still so strong within us and always ready to come to the surface on any provocation" (ibid., 219).
[52] Nicolas Abraham, "Notes on the Phantom: A Complement to Freud's Metaphsychology," trans. Nicholas Rand, *Critical Inquiry* 13, no. 2 (1987): 287-288. Some of Derrida's early interest in the realm of the spiritual can be found his forward to Abraham's work with Maria Torok: Jacques Derrida, "Forward: *Fors*: The Anglish Words of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok," trans. Barbara Johnson, in *The Wolf Man's Magic Word: A Cryptonomy*, Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), xi-xlviii.

Jameson has noted, for Derrida, "spectrality does not involve the conviction that ghosts exist," but rather that haunting challenges those who seek to preserve "the 'unmixed': what is somehow pure and self-sufficient or autonomous."[53] The Derridean case for haunting is that the *unheimlich*, as Freud would deem it, is not something to be fought against, or a potential destination away from which the educated elite should bend history, but that which molds existence itself.

In this way, the ghost becomes disruptive, even deconstructive. For Derrida, ghosts appear when the living do what they can to *get rid of them*. Writing in the ashes of the Soviet Union, Derrida's affair with Marxism becomes critique from within the halls of the victorious.[54] Awash in triumphal historical narratives like that of Francis Fukuyama's essay-turned-book, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Derrida ponders the stories ignored in this accounting of the Cold War.[55] Fukuyama's triumphant ode, heralding the conquest of the "last man" over history,[56] elicits a challenge from Derrida focused on the stories that continue *after* history and the *other* histories which unfolded as ancillary to the history of the "last man": such histories only recount the past of "a certain determined concept of man" who stands in for "the pure humanity of man,"

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[53] Fredric Jameson, "Marx's Purloined Letter," 39, 44-45.

[54] *Specters* is a collection of Derrida's keynote remarks at a 1993 conference entitled "Whither Marxism?" An intentionally "punny" title, interrogating the state of Marxist politics and whether they had relevance and where they could go from that point.

[55] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London and New York: Free Press, 1992).

[56] The argument Fukuyama gives is also irresistible to Derrida's deconstructive impulses. A major problem he identifies with the argument in *The End of History* is its desire to both declare the arrival of an eschatological moment hoped-for ("Hegel's state of universal recognition" [Fukuyama, *End of History*, 203]) and its failure to account for the fact that pure democracy has still not been picked up and offered by the liberal capitalist West (Derrida, *Specters*,78).

leaving all others to subsist in “an apparently in-human or else a-human fashion.”[57] When Fukuyama declares the end of the Cold War to be the “most remarkable evolution of the last quarter century,”[58] we might rightly wonder what ghosts are conjured adjacent to that conflict. Derrida reminds us that ghosts can be conjured in a number of ways. Yes, one can call on spirits for aid, often doing so through the swearing of oaths.[59] But Fukuyama and his allies undertake another form of engagement with spirits here: exorcism. However, even “effective exorcism,” Derrida says, “pretends to declare the death only in order to put to death,” thereby creating a ghost.[60] In all, Derrida begins his critique of Western historians by noting their incessant drive to put to death all other marginalized histories and tracking the ways this fills their histories with the ghosts of their victims.

Progressive histories are disrupted when linear time is disrupted. One might say that this disruption works through phenomena such as nostalgia, as noted in the epigraph to this section, or the experience of seeing a ghost, as Derrida notes of Hamlet’s evocation of his “father’s spirit.”[61] On a more basic level, Derrida translates his well-traveled concept of *différance* to discussions of time.[62] Taking a sympathetic stance

[57] Derrida, *Specters*, 93.
[58] Fukuyama, *End of History*, xiii-xv. To which Derrida cheekily replied, “[It] obliges one to wonder if the end of history is but the end of a *certain* concept of history. Here is perhaps one of the questions that should be asked of those who are not content just to arrive late to the apocalypse and to the last train of the end…without being out of breath, but who find the means to puff out their chests with the good conscience of capitalism, liberalism, and the virtues of parliamentary democracy…” (Derrida, *Specters*, 17). This points to a religious turn in *Specters*, which we will consider below in more detail.
[59] Derrida terms this phenomenon “conjuration” (*Specters*, 49-58).
[60] This side of the conjuring, he terms “conjurement” (ibid., 58-60, especially 59).
[61] See Derrida, *Specters*, 2-3.
[62] For his delineation of *différance* see Jacques Derrida, “Différance,” in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: Harvester Press, 1982; French ed., 1972), 1-28; *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl’s Theory of Signs*, trans. and ed.

toward the desire for a teleological end to history, he argues that without an actual end to time and history, in the "here-now" that end remains a "promise" or a "pledge" for a justice to come.[63] Thus, the "pledge" becomes an opening for uncertainty, both whether the promised end will come and if the pledge itself is laden with more heterogeneity than previously thought.[64] Linear time—and therefore other constructs that depend on stability and certainty, like being, identity, and subjectivity—is always disturbed by lurking specters that both promise and demand something other than the certain connection between a symbol and its referent. This is haunting:

> To haunt does not mean to be present, and it is necessary to introduce haunting into the very construction of a concept. Of every concept, beginning with the concepts of being and time. That is what we would be calling here a hauntology. Ontology opposes it only in a movement of exorcism. Ontology is a conjuration.[65]

Derrida flips the psychoanalytic and modernist concern for uncontrollable, "savage" forces of the occult from that which should be conquered to the animating force of being. That historians struggle to define eras or *teloi* over against heterogeneous history is not a

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David Allison (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973); *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975).

[63] Derrida, *Specters*, 39. He is particularly interested and concerned with the notion from Blanchot that a revolution—which should be filled with urgency—might also be a "permanent" thing. Joanna Hodge offers a helpful summary of this conversation (*Derrida on Time* [London and New York: Routledge, 2007], 140-142).

[64] Derrida, *Specters*, 39-40, 44.

[65] Ibid., 202.

proof of an empirical account,[66] but rather an indictment of an insufficient method, a method that does not account for the fullness of history.[67]

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[66] Fukuyama distinguishes between the epochal advancement of history toward the reign of liberal democracy and capitalism—the "good news" of the U.S.S.R.'s fall (Fukuyama, *End of History*, xiii)—and the empirical "flow of events," which would include all potential catastrophes, including world wars, genocides, terrorism, and repression (ibid., 70). The *eschaton* of a democratic dawn is therefore separate from the events that flow through historical time to that moment. Ignoring such empirical events of history in this (post) end of history, Fukuyama argues that the United States and the European community "constituted the embodiment of Hegel's state of universal recognition" (ibid., 203).

Derrida's response is largely a reminder that this history is "haunted by what it excludes, combats, or represses." And the same could be said for a vast swathe of Euro-American historiography of the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries. These historians do not necessarily make Fukuyama's stark divide between a theological desire for (and achievement of) a new epoch of European dominance. But Derrida's critique still stands. The object of his critique is a culture within the field of history in the West, broadly following the nineteenth-century German thinker Leopold von Ranke. Von Ranke is perhaps most famous for his dictum that the task of the scholar is to *reconstruct* history *wie es eigentlich gewesen* ("as it actually happened"). He thus argued that an objectivist search for the past must be taken up with the closest attention possible the historical "archive," a thing he once characterized as "virgin," the "princesses in need of rescue" (for the phrase *wie es eigentlich gewesen*, see von Ranke, *Geschichten der romanischen und germanischen Voelker von 1494-1514* [3rd ed.; Leipzig, 1885], vii; *Neue Briefe*, edited by Bernhard Hoeft and Hans Herzfeld [Hamburg, 1949], 230; cf. Elizabeth A. Clark, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004], 9). The impact of Rankean historiography's search for damsels in distress would arrive in the early twentieth-century in the United States as well, situating itself in that jingoistic climate, in which von Ranke's philosophy was extended further to cordon off history from other fields. This intellectual shift among historians left, in George Burton Adams words, "the philosophy of history" to the "poets, philosophers, and theologians" (cf. Clark, 13). Indeed, the impact of Rankean historiography should not be understated, as it set up a narrative of history as a scientifically-researched and objective reality. At work in combination with Fukuyama's "end of history," von Ranke becomes a dangerous interlocutor, insofar as American empire easily becomes an object of objective, historically inevitable fact.

[67] While not taken up in this project, Foucault provides a helpful means by which one might do the work of history. Working with Nietzsche's concept of historian-as-genealogist, Foucault argues that metaphysics is a poor substitute for the work of history. Rather, one should practice "genealogy," and "if the genealogist refuses to extend his faith in metaphysics, if he listens to history, he finds that there is 'something altogether different' behind things: not a timeless and essential secret, but the secret that they have no essence or that their essence was fabricated in a piecemeal fashion from alien forms"

Because subjectivity is constructed through historical narration, and because history is haunted by encounters with the Other, subjectivity's negotiation is an ethical imperative. To account for the experience and force of haunting, Derrida argues for "spectral asymmetry," a phenomenon by which ghosts are said to see as if "through a visor." They are, as Wendy Brown summarizes, "not empirically observable, but [they are] not less tangible for being invisible—we feel the force of the look."[68] In this way, history is not a river along which we float, but rather a force that returns again and again; indeed, it is something we live with. In short, to be haunted by spectral history means to have inherited manifold other stories into our own; it means we are intersubjective beings. With ghosts everywhere, even within us, we are responsible for those who possess us, making the lives of privileged people saturated with—consciously or not—ethical living: "To live otherwise and better. No, not better, but more justly. But with them. No *Being-with* the other, no *socius* without this *with* that makes *being-with* in general more enigmatic than ever for us."[69] Existence is impossible without the Other as part of our own subjectivities, thus making any act of living a social act, one that affects

("Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *The Foucault Reader*, trans. Paul Rabinow [New York: Pantheon, 1984.]), 78). In short, history should not serve to maintain the powers, but that its very practice is an exploration of heteronomous character of the past—a reflection of the present's diversity. Antonio Campillo summarizes the concept thusly: historians can take up one of two perspectives: "either the point of view of a transcendental subject…or the point of view of an 'archaeological' history (which would disregard the alleged identity of the subject in different and irreducible forms of experience, that is, which would negate all claims to universality and transcendental necessity of the 'a priori conditions of experience' and would return them to a contingent historical diversity)" ("Foucault and Derrida: The History of a Debate on History," *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 5, no. 2 (2000), 118).
[68] Wendy Brown, *Politics out of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 147. For more on "spectral asymmetry" and the "visor effect," see Derrida, *Specters*, 4-6.
[69] Derrida, *Specters*, xviii; see also Brown, *Politics out of History*, 146.

or responds to someone else. In short, it is impossible to live without the ethical imperative to live with someone. The question for the reader who isolates Jesus within Mark or the Bible is *how* and *who* the act of interpretation impacts: our cosmos and our selves, filled with ghosts that lead to an ontology of ethical responsibility.

These marginalized agencies haunting history bring with them demands for ethical living, therefore focusing those attuned to ghosts to something in the future. Here Derrida makes his turn to the quasi-religious language of *justice* and a focus on the concept of the "messianic." Referring to Hamlet's desire for relief from his own hauntings, Derrida describes messianicity as something arising from our inheritance from the past of submerged alterity, which throws the present "out of joint":

> If right or law stems from vengeance, as Hamlet seems to complain that it does—before Nietzsche, before Heidegger, before Benjamin—can one not yearn for a justice that one day, a day belonging no longer to history, a quasi-messianic day, would finally be removed from fatality of vengeance? Better than removed: infinitely foreign, heterogeneous at its source? And is this day before us, to come, or more ancient than memory itself? If it is difficult, in truth impossible, *today*, to decide between these two hypotheses, it is precisely because "the time is out of joint"….[70]

In short, to live with ghosts is to yearn for a radical, messianic future in which justice—entirely foreign to human retributive law—is the only possible end. Importantly for Derrida, the justice which arrives heterogeneously, haunted from who-knows-where, is a justice which cannot be boiled down to doctrine, to law, and thus to hegemony. Indeed, for Derrida justice must come as something removed from the vengeful economy of the law—it is "an-economic" and an "incalculability"—because economies cannot conceive of either their own heterogeneity or that of the Other. History, therefore, is an

[70] Derrida, *Specters*, 25.

unpredictable inheritance of the alterity submerged by vengeful laws; it is not something we ask for, but nevertheless claims the being of the cosmos.

Recently, the work of haunting has seeped further into literary criticism through queer theory as a means of ethical encounters with the past. While literary theorists have taken up Derrida's work to varying degrees, queer theorists have introduced to the literary-critical world his desire for spectral work for the purpose of present and future change.[71] For queer theorists, attention to non-linear temporality followed a number of turns within the field away from disrupting sexuality and toward suspicion of any major normative concept.[72] Around the turn of the twenty-first century, queer theorists began to turn a critical gaze to concepts of linear time and their participation in the normativizing power of heterosexuality on bodies. With an eye toward how time regulates human behavior, identity, and belonging Elizabeth Freeman elucidates her concept of *chrononormativity*:

> [Naked] flesh is bound into socially meaningful embodiment through temporal regulation: binding is what turns mere existence into a form of mastery in a process I'll refer to as *chrononormativity*, or the use of time to organize individual human bodies toward maximum productivity.[73]

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[71] A major exception here is the work of Roger Lockhurst, who will reappear briefly below. Lockhurst is known for his critical theory he calls "London gothic." Exploring "gothic" spaces in London, he argues that haunting is valuable as a political strategy insofar as it can make an effort to describe where and when ghosts emerge. See Roger Lockhurst, "The Contemporary London Gothic and the Limits of the 'Spectral Turn'," *Textual Practice* 16, no. 3 (2002), 528, 542.

[72] For a helpful narrative of this move within queer theory, see Stephen D. Moore, Kent L. Brintnall, and Joseph A. Marchal, "Queer Disorientations: Four Turns and a Twist," in *Sexual Disorientations: Queer Temporalities, Affects, Theologies*, ed. Brintnall, Marchal, and Moore (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), 13-18.

[73] Freeman, *Time Binds*, 3. In her exploration of *chrononormativity* and queer time, Freeman extends Judith Halberstam's observation about queered time in the wake of the AIDS crisis in the 1980s: "Queer subcultures produce alternative temporalities by allowing their participants to believe that their futures can be imagined according to logics that lie outside of those paradigmatic markers of life experience—namely, birth,

Like queer theorists before, then, this critique operates by demonstrating the material effects of regulating social constructs on material bodies. While historians have happily tracked European histories into antiquity, queerness has been periodicized as a contemporary phenomenon.[74] Carla Freccero critiques this history of sexuality by demonstrating the problems with periodization, typical of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Rankean-inspired historians.[75] As she puts it, historians have reinscribed the colonizing tendencies of linear temporality onto narratives of sexuality's development to such a degree that they "[smuggle] in historical periodization in the spirit of making 'empirical' claims about gender and sexuality in the European past."[76] Indeed, such periodized history of sexuality raises the question of whether queer bodies have a history at all. Thus, while Derrida's work around temporality may smell of abstract discussion of vague metaphysical concepts, queer theorists more concretely draw material ethical concerns into the metaphysical.

The answer to the challenge from queer theorists is to add specificity to the ghosts with whom they engage: queer bodies, they note, make contact with people from across time, and therefore they destabilize and queer time itself. Even the practice of doing

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marriage, reproduction, and death" (*In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* [New York and London: New York University Press, 2005], 2). Halberstam also makes a foray into queer ghosts to think about the troubled practice of writing biographies about deceased queer teens (ibid., 60-61).

[74] Freeman, *Time Binds*, 3.

[75] For examples of this sort of work in sexual histories, see for example Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume Two: The Use of Pleasure*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1985; French ed. 1984); David M. Halperin, *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality: And Other Essays on Greek Love* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

[76] Carla Freccero, "Queer Times," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 106, no. 3 (Summer 2007): 487.

historical work, as Elizabeth Freeman argues in an explication of her concept of *erotohistoriography*, can be pleasurable, that history can be "felt."[77] Erotohistoriography circumvents notions of time that privilege heteronormative life moments—courtship, marriage, home/work division of labor—and makes room for non-normative stories. Moves like this circumvent the linear, periodicized histories of modernist historians, which create a "preemptively defined category of the present (modern homosexuality)."[78] Freccero's solution to the erasure of queer bodies in the past is a "queer spectrality—ghostly returns suffused with affective materiality that work through the ways trauma, mourning, and events are registered on the level of subjectivity and history."[79] In this way, she creates a point of trans-temporal-spatial contact that does not depend on explicit modern identifiers, like "gay" or "lesbian," but rather the experience of being out of time and out of place. Thus, because chronormativity depends on a linear march from past to present, queer temporality demonstrates that this is manifestly not true of time: it is disjointed and unpredictable. Queer subjects, who otherwise experience time that makes room only for heteronormative subjectivity and erases queer subjectivity, become a fruitful resource for Dinshaw's interest in forming queer "communities across time."[80] As Joseph Marchal puts it, paraphrasing Eve Sedgwick, "Simply highlighting the alterity or

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[77] Freeman, *Time Binds*, 95; for more on *erotohistoriography*, see pages 95-136. Freeman pairs well with Madhavi Menon, who has argued that sexuality is not "governed by dates," but instead all bodies are subject to time ("Afterword: Period Cramps," in *Queer Renaissance Historiography*, ed. Vin Nardizzi, Stephen Guy-Bray, and Will Stockton [Farnham: Ashgate, 2009], 233-234).
[78] Freccero, *Queer/Early/Modern*, 31; see also Valerie Traub, "New Unhistoricism in Queer Studies," in *Thinking Sex with the Early Moderns* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 24.
[79] Freccero, "Queer Times," 489.
[80] Dinshaw et al. "Theorizing Queer Temporalities," 178.

gendered asymmetry of the past…will not be sufficient for disrupting the normative force" of linear historiography.[81] Queer spectralities build affective and effective connections with coalitions of queered allies.

This engagement with queerness across time registers with the Freudian *unheimlich* and Derrida's hauntology, but transforms these ghastly concepts into erotic and political alliances. As such, queer and haunted temporalities challenge the very discipline of history by completely revising the dimension of time. Valerie Traub, in an admittedly critical take on queer histories, characterized this reconceptualization of time as dependent on reckless description of "metonymic [chains]."[82] While this notion is problematic for Traub, who wants to expose the lack of historical disciplinary rigor in queer temporality, metonymy is actually fully part of the deconstructive practice of critics like Freccero, Freeman, and Dinshaw. That is, as Jonathan Goldberg and Madhavi Menon query,

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[81] Joseph A. Marchal, "'Making History' Queerly: Touches across Time through a Biblical Behind," *Biblical Interpretation* 19 (2011): 383; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 10.

[82] Traub, "New Unhistoricism," 30. Traub's critique is helpful for two reasons. One, it opens as one appreciative of the new theorization brought by queer theorists to her field of historical studies from literary studies (29). Second, she usefully lays out concerns that professional historians might levy against someone in her field taking up the methodology espouse throughout various queer temporalities. And yet, this very position, of the professional historian, appears to prevent Traub from fully appreciating the revolution occurring with the queering of time. That is, she focuses so much energy on maintaining the periodization under assault, by emphasizing the academic rigor practiced by her field, that she misses the challenges non-linear historical theory presents to the assumptions propping up modern historical inquiry. Indeed, a critique from Hayden White (*Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973]) or Dominick LaCapra (*History and Criticism* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985]), even R.G. Collingwood (*The Idea of History* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1946]), would probe the question of whether or not all history is metonymic in its explanation, in its attempt to construct a coherent and readable narrative.

> Why has it come to pass that we apprehend the past in the mode of difference? How has "history" come to equal "alterity"?... In opposition to a historicism that proposes to know the definitive difference between the past and the present, we venture that queering requires what we might term "unhistoricism." Far from being ahistorical—or somehow outside history—unhistoricism would acknowledge that history as it is hegemonically understood today is inadequate to housing the project of queering. In opposition to a history based on hetero difference, we propose homohistory.[83]

This method permits an imagination of the past and present as intersubjective. This departs from Derrida's unknowable justice. Instead, one encounters the Other in an embodied meeting. The option of engagement with the past as a political resource in the present, then, is more explicitly hospitable to marginalized subjects. And, more than simply a pleasurable touch across time, haunting permits cognition of a literal community of lurking others. Homohistory creates an alliance of agencies writing stories apart from hegemony.

Queering histories, bodies, and agencies also probes the meaningfulness of the very categories so integral to "interpretation," like author-text and reader-text relationships. In her exploration of Toni Morrison's use of ghosts and haunting throughout her work, Juda Bennett tracks Morrison's ability to deftly interrogate "the

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[83] Jonathan Goldberg and Madhavi Menon, "Queering History," *PMLA* 120, no. 5 (2005), 1609, emphasis added. Certain of the article's ideas are anticipated in Jonathan Goldberg, "The History That Will Be," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 1, no. 4 (1995): 385-403. In the mid-twentieth-century, feminist historians had already begun engaging in histories that built unity across times, as a means of consciousness-raising, in this case unity among women; for a concise discussion of this turn, see Kathleen Canning, "Feminist History after the Linguistic Turn," in *Gender History in Practice: Historical Perspectives on Bodies, Class, and Citizenship* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 72-73; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (ed.), *Feminist Biblical Studies in the Twentieth Century: Scholarship and Movement* (The Bible and Women, vol. 9.1; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), esp. 1-20.

interlocking forces of racism, sexism, and heterosexism."[84] The appearance of haunting in Morrison's novels challenges "categorical lines, such as heterosexual/homosexual, adult/child, and even living/dead," because ghosts, in Bennett's words, have an "ontology," forcing questions of their material, their origin, their difference from us, and how we receive them.[85] While Morrison's fiction is not singular in this regard, it does highlight the uncertainty of living with ghosts, largely because they call into question who or what even has the privilege of materiality and a body. Writes Bennett: "Indeed, bodies matter and they matter even more when they are without matter and 'indicate a world beyond themselves.'"[86] The traumas of the characters in *Beloved* point to the structural racism that denies their bodies full materiality, while also opening space for utopian dreaming and community-building beyond the destructive politics of the material world.

Similarly, the lack of materially resurrected corpse in the Markan tomb both recalls the imperial (in)justice system that crucified an innocent Jesus (15:14-15) *and* points to a world that rejects such exercise of capital power over against marginalized communities. Taking Mark's lack of resurrection appearances seriously—its abiding absence of a risen Messiah—would, arguably, entail turning a skeptical eye back on the

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[84] Juda Bennett, *Toni Morrison and the Queer Pleasure of Ghosts* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2014), 3.
[85] Ibid., 5-8.
[86] Ibid., 10. For Bodies indicating a world beyond themselves, see Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), ix. Morrison herself has discussed living with ghosts thusly: "I think of ghosts and haunting as just being alert. If you are really alert, then you see the life that exists beyond the life that is on top. It's not spooky, necessarily. It might be. But it doesn't have to be. It's something I relish, rather than run from" ("Toni Morrison, interview by Renee Montagne, "Good Ghosts," NPR, Morning Edition, April 25, 1992, accessed November 5, 2018, https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=3912464.

Markan Jesus' predictions in 8:59-9:1, 14:62, and 13:26-27 that he is destined to return as the ultimate emperor after his death to bring history to a spectacular close. The Markan ending implicitly invites us to doubt the Markan apocalypse. As such, the Markan Jesus, even after dying, would *not* imitate Roman power represented in 9:13-45. He remains a ghost, and so his power is of an entirely different order.

Still, the most serious challenge facing minoritized historians is that traditional historiography contributes to the erasure of marginalized people from the past. As helpful as literary-critical approaches to haunting can be for thinking about the ethical-political implications of troubled temporality, they struggle to account for historical specificity. In short, they generally fail to answer the question, *where do these ghosts come from*? What are the conditions of their creation? Indeed, if we are concerned about historical erasure, to discuss the specter as either "the Other" or in terms of readers' experiences of nostalgia can simply perpetuate such erasures.[87] If we are concerned about the ethical consequences of our relationship with and response to ghosts, Roger Luckhurst's charge that historians locate the "symptoms [creating ghosts]…that insist their singular tale be retold" offers a significant challenge.[88] That is, while ghosts can disrupt normative and hegemonic notions of how time and history work, these methods, in Peeren and del Pilar

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[87] While, as Peeren and del Pilar Blanco note, Derrida is interested in haunting as a "singularity," he is also committed to reinserting such events into a "much larger spectrological sequence" (Peeren and del Pilar Blanco, "Introduction," xi; Derrida, *Specters*, 193 n. 21). That is, Derrida looks to temporalize hauntings, without explicitly discussion of generation or location. And it should be stated here that Derrida's hauntology is not completely absent of spatiality: it is necessarily spatial *because it is intersubjective*. It has to do with relationships, emotions, and therefore bodies, which are all things that stand as nodes within the negotiation of space and time.

[88] Roger Luckhurst, "The Contemporary London Gothic and the Limits of the 'Spectral Turn,'" *Textual Practice* 16, no. 3 (2002): 542.

Blanco's words, "may indeed be faulted for ignoring historical, cultural, and geographical specificities," and even ignoring the intricate differences between a "ghost" or a "specter" or even a queer body-out-of-time.[89] While the deconstructive impulse of Derridean hauntings may resist the neocapitalist colonization of history, it offers little in the way of reconstructing those subjects who are colonized and erased by that history.

It is my hope that some synthesis might be reached here, that the ontological conversation in which Derrida is situated, the alliances forged by theorists engaged in queering time, and the demand to locate hauntings might not be mutually exclusive; their convergence might produce and alliance of its own that opens up a messianic futurity. After all, this is where Mark's gospel finds itself. The narratives consumed by its communities are informed by the particular traumas of imperial domination (cf. Mark 5:1-20),[90] but they are also scripturalized and thus melded into alliances with countless political movements, honed into a historical narrative toward ideological ends. Thus, I offer two additional questions: (1) what sort of thing *is* Mark, particularly after it is scripturalized (this question will be tracked throughout this project), and (2) if ghosts are symptoms, and more than the sum of their haunting, where do they come from and how do they act?

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[89] Peeren and del Pilar Blanco summarize Luckhurt's work (*Spectralities Reader*, 35; cf. Luckhurst, "London Gothic," 537, 542).

[90] The question of imperial occupation and its aftermaths will be taken up in the third chapter of this dissertation. For works on Mark and trauma specifically, see Maia Kotrosits and Hal Taussig, *Re-Reading the Gospel of Mark amidst Loss and Trauma* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); David Carr, *Holy Resilience: The Bible's Traumatic Origins* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 225-243; Tat-siong Benny Liew, "Haunting Silence: Trauma, Failed Orality, and Mark's Messianic Secret," in *Psychoanalytic Mediations Between Marxist and Postcolonial Readings of the Bible*, ed. Liew and Erin Runions (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature Press, 2016), 99-128.

*Locating Ghosts*

> All things, it is said, are duly recorded—all things of importance, that is. But not quite, for actually it is only the known, the seen, the heard and only those events that the recorder regards as important that are put down, those lies his keepers keep their power by. But the cop would be Clifton's historian, his judge, his witness, and his executioner, and I was the only brother in the watching crowd.
>
> —Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*[91]

Although the literary hauntings explored above offer useful deconstruction of the periodization of history, even noting that gaps may exist in remembrance of the past, they are hard-pressed to account for the specific situations of or demands from such lack. This project attempts to account for these elisions of actual bodies, in the past and present, by exegeting Markan narratives alongside anecdotes from the Ironbound neighborhood of Newark, New Jersey. Spectral studies, like emancipatory projects, are concerned with the absence of stories like Clifton's from "recorded" history and the present consciousness. However, as we have seen above, ghosts offer phenomenological explanations for the ways the unseen and unknown are intersubjective realities; they have agency. In contrast to literary spectralities, we can make more specific claims for who these ghosts are, where they come from, and what they might do: Clifton, the Ironbound, they are products of American neocapitalist racism and they have something to say about that. In this section I track spectralities interested in exploring the particular places and moments that create ghosts. Beyond linguistics and literature, historians and sociologists in this hauntological vein understand the specific, contextual conditions that marginalize people simultaneously create ideal conditions for ghosts to emerge.

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[91] Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (New York: Random House, 1995; 1st ed. 1952), 439

On the shift to specific pasts haunting the present, Walter Benjamin is instructive. While he does not explicitly discuss ghosts or haunting, Benjamin's 1940 essay "On the Concept of History" takes up the task of history in terms of recovering what is "lost," the "true image of past [which] flits by," remembrance of "the dead" at risk to history's "victorious."[92] As Lincoln and Lincoln summarize, this interest in the past does not see "actual human subjects" as dead and gone, but as agential beings, working "on both sides of the rupture affected by time and mortality."[93] Indeed, Benjamin imagines the living and the dead as both still operating and bearing responsibility for one another, making the "past a political and moral resource" for readers.[94] Specificity in one's object of study is key to this notion of history, because it depends on recognizing that certain spectral people or places are in relationship with present subjects. What follows below, therefore, is an exploration of the ways particular, universal haunting is given its intersubjective character by localized agencies and everyday activity.

Central to hauntologies exploring particular ghosts is discussion of the conditions that give rise to them, that erase vibrant lives from the public vision. Racism serves as a notable example in the neocapitalist American order, and is particularly helpful in the present project's inquiry into stories from Newark's Ironbound. Driving a persistent practice of what Ruth Wilson Gilmore calls "abstraction, a death-dealing displacement of difference into hierarchies," racism divides bodies, places, and acts into various

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[92] Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," in *Walter Benjamin, Selected Writings, Volume 4: 1938-1940*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 2003), 390-391.
[93] Lincoln and Lincoln, "Toward a Critical Hauntology," 193-194.
[94] Ibid., 193.

categories of livability.[95] This death takes place in two ways, both of which spectralities address. First, as pointed to in the epigraph from Ellison, racism puts non-white subjects to death by denying from them the ability to write their history, as a factual, universally-recognized thing. In Ellison's *Invisible Man,* Clifton, who was shot by a police officer, will never have the privilege to have his life and death factually entered—in a Rankean manner—into the annals of history *as it actually happened*. Indeed, history, as it has been passed down, is an orderly account of the victor's spoils. Thus, I identify a second feature of death-dealing racism: our neocapitalist society is accompanied by its own epistemological phenomenon of "hypervisibility." Under this concept, coined by Avery Gordon, "we are led to believe not only that everything can be seen, but also that everything is available and accessible for our consumption."[96] This, of course, is a historical problem for colonized subjects, for those who are not visible to epistemological power-brokers, because the visible objects from the past are those which have histories, and histories make things visible.

With this erasure in view, Gordon proposes a concept of haunting accounting for lost histories and lost subjectivities, a signal effort for this field of social-historical hauntings. She shifts her object of study to the invisible:

> Any people who are not graciously permitted to amend the past, or control barely visible structuring forces of everyday life…[are] bound to develop a sophisticated

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[95] Ruth Wilson Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography," *The Professional Geographer* 54, no. 1 (2002), 16.

[96] Gordon, *Ghostly Hauntings*, 16. By means of contrast with Derridean haunting, other Marxists have readily critiqued Derrida's reading of Marx *on account of* his lack of attention to class struggle and materiality; cf. Michael Sprinkler, ed. *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's Specters of Marx* (London and New York: Verso, 1999); del Pilar Blanco and Peeren, *Spectralities Reader*, 23 n. 26.

> consciousness of ghostly haunts and [are] bound to call for an "official inquiry" into them.[97]

Gordon's interest is in contemporary, North American communities of color apparently without political agency either in the past or the present, largely because their histories have been erased from the record, have become "ghostly haunts." Yet, the "haunt" still makes demands upon those who reside within it. That is, marginalized people develop tactics for survival in any historical contingency. Because that knowledge comes from somewhere and still informs contemporary communities, it is both dependent on a particular context for its existence and useful in present moments as a strategy for resisting kyriarchy. Within this historical arrangement, the historian and society itself are altered, because the object of study exercises agency, not the privileged interpreter. Gordon operates with the "theoretical statement" that "life is complicated," in order to account for the instability of studying a past that is active within the very personhood of any researcher, and that even data fields might be corrupted by overactive or missing stories.[98] Put as a question: how does a descriptive field like history discuss absences? But this complicated-life-as-theory, with all its haunts, also forces a haunted political orientation to the past: we come face-to-face with a "politics of accounting."[99] To tell a linear historical narrative, or especially to deny the historical narratives of colonized subjects, is to write an immoral account of their lives. Haunting in this vein is therefore

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[97] Ibid., 151. For more on this line of inquiry, particularly as it pertains to living as a marginalized subject with "various kinds of doubled consciousness," see Marisa Parham, *Haunting and Displacement in African American Literature and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2008), esp. 3; Grace Cho, *Haunting the Korean Diaspora: Shame, Secrecy, and the Forgotten War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).
[98] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 5.
[99] Ibid., 18.

an *ethical* stance toward "a potent imagination of what has been done and what is to be done otherwise."[100] The untold stories of Mark—of the Gerasenes' own experience of life *outside* the tombs (5:1-20) or of women persistently told that their wellness is secondary to other marginalized people (vv. 21-43)[101]—focus the biblical scholar attuned to haunting to the potential agencies exercised out of absence.

However, the political potential of *actual* ghosts, as opposed to metaphorical ghosts, haunts social-historical spectralities. While Gordon, Derrida, and queer theorists play on the cross-temporal activity of the uncanny or representative ghosts, they rarely take up claims of cosmologies that are inseparable from the spiritual realm.[102] In short, what would it mean to construct a politics of haunting which knows the possibilities of spiritual activity in this world? Indeed, plenty of historians and theorists have taken up just such possibilities. Detailing the ways Indians struggling for independence energized Marxist ideologies with "the presence and agency of gods or spirits," Dipesh Chakrabarty argues that these revolutionaries successfully reopen the "relationship between the possible and the actual."[103] The nineteenth-century, North American Spiritualist movement convened with spirits for their "unearthly power," which supported their

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[100] Ibid. See also Denise K. Buell, "Hauntology Meets Posthumanism: Some Payoffs for Biblical Studies," in *The Bible and Posthumanism*, ed. Jennifer Koosed (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), 36-37.
[101] See chapters two and three, respectively, for further discussion of these questions.
[102] Lincoln and Lincoln, "Toward a Critical Hauntology," 196.
[103] Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Time of History and the Time of Gods," in Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, ed. *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997) 37, 39, 40; *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), 249, also 11-12

political advocacy as abolitionists and suffragists.[104] And though these movements were energized by non-human and non-living entities, the modern academy, in Denise Buell's words, "took for granted that nonhuman agencies are illusory."[105] While just two examples, both the Indian struggle for independence and the Spiritualists engaged politically *because of* spirits—specters as political resources. For the academic interested in haunting, elision of extra-human activity in analysis of social activity runs the risk of reinforcing hypervisibility and the erasure of material bodies, simply because they lack the social, political, and economic capital to be considered worthy of analysis.

Belief in actual ghosts has proven politically valuable precisely because they demand a disruptive fusion of a metaphysical cosmology to everyday activity. Differently than the indescribably spectrality of ghosts, Esther Peeren writes in summary of Michel de Certeau, "Spirits or ghosts stand for the communal memories and histories that create a place's habitability in the face of definition and disciplining by the dominant spatial order."[106] Like other Western philosophers, de Certeau does not give much credence to ghosts beyond their signifying power, but the notion that spectral presences operate in the "everyday" provides a helpful lens for thinking about ghosts as persistent threats to

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[104] Molly McGarry, "*Ghosts of Futures Past: Spiritualism and the Cultural Politics of Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2008), 4.
[105] Buell, "Hauntology Meets Posthumanism," 41. See also Chakrabarty's narrative of Marixst historian, Eric Hobsbaum's argument that the Indian independence movement engaged in "backward" and "prepolitical" revolution (*Provincializing Europe*,11-13, 97-113). Cf. Mary Keller, *The Hammer and the Flute: Women, Power, and Spirit Possession* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).
[106] Esther Peeren, "Everyday Ghosts and the Ghostly Everyday in Amos Tutuola, ben Okri, and Achille Mbembe," in *Popular Ghosts*, ed. Peeren and María del Pilar Blanco (New York: Continuum, 2014), 108. See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. S. Rendell (Berkeley: University of California Press), 106-108.

established hegemonic orders. For instance, Achille Mbembe observes this very phenomenon in Amos Tutuoloa's novel, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, in which "the extraordinary world of spirits and demons" constantly "spills over its assigned time and space" into the material realm.[107] The novel's boy-narrator attempts to escape the traumatic slave wars of colonial Nigeria, but, as Peeren describes, he finds that the Bush of Ghosts is equally beset by "burglar ghosts."[108] This parallel universe, with its own wars and social structures, contrasts its "embodiment of pure anxiety" with the material world's "dull monotony."[109] Because spectral agencies are submerged by dominant ideologies, sustained analysis of their activity in and around texts is also an excavation of alternative knowledges of the world. More than that, hauntings like that from the Bush of Ghosts or the politics of the Spiritualists, treat non-human agencies as useful sources for knowledge and political reflection.

To this point, much of this discussion of hauntings has focused on temporality, but ghosts come from somewhere—as much as somewhen—necessitating questions of haunted space. A shift of this sort moves contrary to Derridean hauntology, insofar as Derrida is not explicitly concerned with the local circumstances of a ghost's production. The places from which ghosts emerge, following del Pilar Blanco and Peeren, ground them "in a particular locale—in a disturbance of space as much as time."[110] If spectral

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[107] Achille Mbembe, "Life, Sovereignty, and Terror in the fiction of Amos Tutuola," *Research in African Literatures* 34, no. 4 (2003), 6. See Amos Tutuola, *The Palm-Wine Drinkard and My Life in the Bush of Ghosts* (New York: Grove Press, 1994). Original publication 1954.

[108] Peeren, "Everyday Ghosts," 111. On one occasion, the narrator is even kidnapped by a ghost masquerading as a cow and sold into slavery, from which he is forced to escape (Tutuola, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, 169).

[109] Peeren, "Everyday Ghosts," 112.

[110] Del Pilar Blanco and Peeren, "Introduction," xvii.

studies are interested in justice, attention to traumas and melancholia necessitates similar attention to the conditions of their production and return. These are spatial inquiries. They proceed to ask: What about ghosts that lurk in our everyday, local haunts? Why is it that the "lateral" ghost world of colonial-era Nigeria was filled with warlords and slave-catcher ghosts? What were the conditions under which Indian freedom fighters were spurred on by ancestral spirits? From where did Spiritualists find their inspiration to work for suffrage? As del Pilar Blanco and Peeren note, "Haunted spaces are therefore not simply describable as Gothic spaces, or informed by the languages of necromancy and melancholia, but as actual living spaces that need to be explored in terms of their present singularity."[111] Each ghost haunts with the uniqueness of its own lived experience, breaking into the present. Within such haunted imaginaries, daily life becomes a risky endeavor, always open to encounter with bodies both other and unique.

These spatial challenges also raise some questions. Are ghosts only encountered in a particular place, or do they pursue practitioners when they are outside that place? Must a living subject perform an act in a certain way to be haunted, or do they have little to no control over how they are haunted? In other words, from where does spectral agency come and how does it operate? These are questions I hope to answer the following sections of this chapter. For now, let it suffice to say that the spatiality of hauntings proposed by del Pilar Blanco and Peeren, and those in their edited volume, while a useful and necessary turn, are under-theorized.[112] As we shall see, more recent

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[111] Ibid., xvii. For some examples of this move, see Luckhurst, *London Gothic*; Judith Richardson, *Possessions: The History and Uses of Haunting in the Hudson Valley* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).
[112] Indeed, their spatial interlocutor is Marxist materialist Raymond Williams, who writes convincingly about the conditions of capitalist urbanization in the United Kingdom (*The*

spatial theorizing has drawn together the local and global so as to complicate a strict division between a cosmological-theological spectrality like Derrida's and located hauntings. In fact, biblical studies and theology offer a way to begin thinking about the intersection of spectral demands for cosmological justice working in everyday beliefs and practices.

*Universalizing Local Calls for Justice: Hauntology in Biblical Studies and Theology*

> History in a certain sense is closed…but only in such a way as to remain open to something post-historical, something indeterminate beyond history's horizons, a pure form of the future beyond any specific content. "It is," Derrida glosses, "what we are nicknaming the messianic without messianism."
> —John D. Caputo, *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida*[113]

Because Western historians grow queasy at the thought that ghosts might act as political resources, I argue that theological language offers a more natural home for spectral politics. Though alien bodies from other planes of existence have little to do with the post-Enlightenment West's pseudo-scientific discourse, biblical texts are hospitable haunts for subjugated people. This is not least because some of the central characters of biblical stories find themselves ignoring the thin veil between life and death: Jesus' body

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*Country and the City* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973]). However, his work is dated, insofar as it has missed the more recent critical-spatial conversation around agencies and encounters in space. The issue of under-theorized space is not improved throughout the anthology edited by del Pilar Blanco and Peeren. The result is a collection of works which seem to have *isolated* hauntings to particular places, cordoning them off from effective political use. This view of space is apolitical in two senses. First, it leaves local concerns apart from the force of a more unified, more universal voice: community concerns fail to gain the authority of larger coalition voices. Second, the building of such coalitions is made difficult by disparate communities' unconsciousness of one another's intersecting needs.

[113] John D. Caputo, *The Prayers Tears of Jacques Derrida: Religion without Religion* (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 1997), 130.

is both absent from and present in the tomb (Mark 16:1-8), the transfiguration blasts readers with dazzling specters (Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36), and the Holy "Ghost" literally haunts Acts.[114] At a basic theoretical level, Derrida's hauntology accompanied a broader shift in his language to what Stephen Moore and Yvonne Sherwood call a return to "big, flabby, old-fashioned words," like "justice, forgiveness, friendship, gift, hospitality, faith, and the messianic."[115] This shift in "later Derrida" inspired an effort to reimagine apophatic theology, signaled largely by John Caputo.[116] Derrida's open apocalyptic language makes an opening for thinking not just of an impending era of justice, but of a cosmological desire for it. This drive to develop ethics in places where time collapses has also animated biblical scholars attuned to spectralities to reimagine the eschatological vision of biblical apocalypses and to think into how ancient power dynamics in biblical texts play out in contemporary politics. More to the point, the social-historical hauntologies emerging from biblical scholars occur within the universalized, theological language akin to the philosophical and literary-critical efforts of Derrida. Here, I argue, living communities are affected by a useful tension between located particularities and universalizing structures, like cosmological time and space. The Bible as haunted becomes less a static text to be interpreted than a place where

[114] Stephen Moore refigures Acts' Holy Ghost as a vehicle for establishing a homosocial historiography (*Gospel Jesuses and Other Nonhumans: Biblical Criticism Post-poststructuralism* [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2017], 85-106).
[115] Stephen Moore and Yvonne Sherwood, *The Invention of the Biblical Scholar: A Critical Manifesto* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 122.
[116] John D. Caputo has written prolifically on Derrida's haunted messianicity, most notably in *Prayers and Tears*; "Proclaiming the Year of the Jubilee: Thoughts on a Spectral Life," in *It Spooks: Living in Response to an Unheard Call*, ed. Erin Nichole Schenzielos (Rapid City, SD: Shelter 50 Publishing Collective, 2015), 10-46.

agencies from within and around it draw practitioners into a universe filled with uncounted numbers of ghosts, making specific, localized demands for justice.

Taken up by theologians, Derridean hauntings have injected biblical interpretation with a conception of a universal messianicity buried within the text. A theological turn of this sort is no small feat, either, for a discipline historically obsessed with maintaining a veneer of secular respectability.[117] Biblical scholarship since the Enlightenment as taken on, in the words of Moore and Sherwood, a "de-theologized mode," in which the pursuit of historical authority was conducted by scholars who "could be both a skeptic and a believer at the same time."[118] In spite of this demystifying practice in biblical scholarship, the Bible has become for some scholars an ideal space for interrogating the types of messianic potential lingering at points where time collapses around the desire for justice-to-come.[119] Biblical scholarship engaged with Derrida's spectrality homes in on the messianic character of much of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament's narrative.[120] For

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[117] Moore and Sherwood, *Invention of the Biblical Scholar*, 58-74.
[118] Ibid., 61.
[119] At base, because the Bible has become scripturalized, the force of its authority gets to live outside the confines of linear time, as Marchal alludes to: "The biblical still persists, if not proliferates, as its own kind of argument: the transparent and untroubled use of the biblical as timeless, eternal, primordial, and thus contemporarily relevant is still quite effective in a range of contexts, religious or 'otherwise'" ("Making History Queerly," 383). Not only is the content of biblical texts theological, but they continue to be deployed toward theological ends, prodding readers to think, dream, imagine, and dread transcendent and supernatural forces at work in the world.
[120] These efforts have taken numerous forms. Theodore Jennings, for example, understands Derrida's call for "responsibility" to ghosts—indeed, to those who have died or are yet to be born—as analogous to Paul's justice outside the law (Romans 3:27; *Reading Derrida/Thinking Paul: On Justice* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006], 19-53). On a more meta level, Stephen Moore and Catherine Keller extol the virtues of a *tout autre* that/who is "as impure, heterogeneous, already taking account of *its* others (of me), *as* it comes" within Revelation ("Derridapocalypse," in Moore, *Untold Tales from the Book of Revelation: Sex and Gender, Empire and Ecology* [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014], 199-200; first appeared in *Derrida and Religion: Other*

instance, Robert Gibbs takes up the repeatedly failed messianicism in the historical books of the Hebrew Bible under “the sign of discontinuity,” showing that the sufferings of the present are not inevitable futures.[121] Rather than picking at the edges of biblical texts, hauntological biblical scholarship submerges biblical stories into Derrida’s universal temporality constituted by demands for justice. Because, as we have seen, the Bible has been scripturalized as a communally authoritative text for many, such demands for justice are part and parcel of devotional religious practice. In other words, scripturalized practice with the Bible haunts its users with an orientation toward messianic justice. As more communities bring their concerns to bear on the haunted places of biblical story, the more calls for justice coalesce within its pages.

This messianic justice, Denise Buell reminds us, is populated by particular ghosts created by the Judeo-Christian scriptures’ history. She prefers Gordon’s work’s potential for historical rigor, arguing for the importance of “[reckoning] with ghosts to identify

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*Testaments*, ed. Yvonne Sherwood and Kevin Hart [New York: Routledge, 2005], 189-207). For more on biblical studies and Derridean concepts of haunting, presence and absence, and messiancity see also Timothy K. Beal, “Specters of Moses: Overtures to Biblical Theology,” in *“Imagining” Biblical Worlds: Studies in Spatial, Social, and Historical Constructs in Honor of James W. Flannigan*, ed. David M. Gunn and Paula M. McNutt (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 171-188; David Jobling, “Jerusalem and Memory: On a Long Parenthesis” in *Derrida’s Bible: Reading a Page of Scripture with a Little Help from Derrida*, ed. Yvonne Sherwood (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 99-115; George Aichele, *Phantom Messiah: Postmodern Fantasy and the Gospel of Mark* (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), esp. 131-155; Andrew P. Wilson, *Transfigured: A Derridean Rereading of the Markan Transfiguration* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007); Peter N. McLellan, “Specters of Mark: The Second Gospel’s Ending and Derrida’s Messianicity,” *Biblical Interpretation* 24 (2016), 357-381. Not unrelated to my argument here is the observation that many of the people seen in this list are not professional biblical scholars. Indeed, by definition, hauntology does not restrict itself to the bounds of a particular discipline.

[121] Robert Gibbs, “Messianic Epistemology,” in *Derrida and Religion: Other Testaments,* ed. Yvonne Sherwood and Kevin Hart (New York and London: Routledge, 2005), 126-127.

these real alternatives and forge new futures."[122] Aligning oneself with material pasts, therefore, she imagines biblical engagement as "a mode of relation that already has been developed, a form of subjugated knowing and contingent being."[123] The starting point for this conversation is a tendency for scholars and laypeople to distinguish between Judaism as a religious-ethnic hybrid and Christianity as raceless and universal.[124] Buell contends that scholars have insufficient tools for accounting for the differences between what was a fluid boundary between second-century Christians and Jews.[125] Because modern

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[122] Denise Kimber Buell, "Hauntology Meets Posthumanism: Some Payoffs for Biblical Studies," in *The Bible and Posthumanism*, ed. Jennifer Koosed (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), 36. This is a young, but growing hermeneutic for biblical scholars. Buell turns toward haunting in her work; from Buell, see also "God's Own People: Specters of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in Early Christian Studies" in *Prejudice and Christian Beginnings: Investigating Race, Gender, and Ethnicity in Early Christian Studies*, ed. Laura Nasrallah and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 159-190; "Cyborg Memories: An Impure History of Jesus," *Biblical Interpretation* 18 (2010), 313-341; "Challenges and Strategies for Speaking about Ethnicity in the New Testament and New Testament Studies," *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* 49 (2014), 33-51; also among more focused haunting studies, see Matthew James Ketchum, "Specters of Jesus: Ghosts, Gospels, and Resurrection in Early Christianity" (PhD diss., Drew University, 2015). For some other examples of work deploying haunting see Benjamin Dunning, *Specters of Paul: Sexual Difference in Early Christian Thought* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Cavan Concannon, "*When You Were Gentiles": Specters of Ethnicity in Roman Corinth and Paul's Corinthian Correspondence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).

[123] Ibid., 37.

[124] For this discussion, see Denise K. Buell, *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 10-21, 166-169.

[125] Contrary to conceptions of Christian origins as the founding of a "religion" without race, Buell notes that early Christian texts frequently described their followers in terms of "peoplehood" (e.g., γένος, λαός, or ἔθνος). Buell engages primarily with Justin Martyr for this investigation. For more on Buell's discussion of "fixity and fluidity," particularly as they pertain to Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, see *Why This New Race*, 94-115. For more on these themes from Justin see, *Dialogue* 11.5; 45.1-2; 44.1-4; 47.4; 119.2-5; 123.4-8; 125.5; 135.3-5; 138.2-5. On Paul's opening of the covenant to non-Jews through Christ and Abraham's parentage, see Romans 4:1-25; 9:7; 11:1. This notion has an opening of covenantal relation has received some attention from biblical scholars, mainly, Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), especially 99, 107, 227, 239, 249; Caroline Johnson

readers approach biblical texts with the modern formulas of "religion" and "race" to describe ancient Christian and Jewish belonging, they inevitably enlist ancient persons in contemporary prejudice.[126] Sacred texts also permit contemporary marginalized people to take up narratives of universal salvation into their own persons, as Toni Morrison does in her use of Romans 9:25 to introduce *Beloved*: "I will call them my people, who were not my people and her beloved, who was not beloved." [127] For Buell, there are particular subjects who gather around biblical narratives precisely because it is a scripturalized text. Underrepresented and minoritized communities bring ghosts to the text that reject dominant social narratives, precisely because they exist within the pages of the Bible. They populate the pages of scripturalized texts as an alliance, whose very presence rejects the notion that there is only one way to read.

A haunted Bible is a volatile and dangerous place for those who deploy the Bible to protect their own privilege, filled with memories, communities, and bodies that resist the hegemonic goals of its authors and users, past and present. Rather than an enigmatic encounter with the Other, the Bible and all its pasts and presents are entangled in webs of "material injustices" to be addressed.[128] Laura Donaldson argues as much when she

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Hodge, *If Sons, Then Heirs: A Study of Kinship and Ethnicity in the Letters of Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[126] Buell's example is white supremacist preacher Jarah Crawford, who claims that whites are the only people who are the true "seed of Abraham" (Buell, "God's Own People," 164; Crawford, *Last Battle Cry* [Middlebury, VT: 1984], 67).

[127] Ibid., 160-163. Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (New York: Random House, 2004), first printed 1987. See Vincent Wimbush, "'We Will Make Our Own Future Text': An Alternate Orientation to Interpretations," in *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary*, ed. Brian K. Blount (Minneapolis: Fortress Press: 2007), 49-51.

[128] Here Buell fuses Gordon's notion that "life is complicated is a theoretical statement" (cf. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 5) and Derrida's notion of inheritance (Derrida, *Specters*,

dwells with the Syrophoenician woman's daughter's possession (Mark 7:24-30), stories of "indigenous women," and the value "demon possession" might have for thinking into suppressed memories. A haunted postcolonial critique like this seeks to provide a material past for the purpose of a "'countermemory' for the future."[129] Thus, the Bible is part of an identifiable, if complicated, legacy from which to gather political resources and discover marginalized agencies.

These particular countermemories of the biblical world have the potential to be supercharged by Derridean interest in cosmological time, providing localized ghosts a vehicle for addressing a universe of people. Because haunting structures the very concept of being, ghosts are universally present.[130] If we maintain the particularity of social-historical hauntings, then, theological visions can constitute being itself with particular ghosts, countermemories, and alliances. As the present study assumes, Mark's gospel is ostensibly a memory for an audience—"let the reader understand" (13:14)—but as Donaldson reminds us, the stories than emanate from particular places, tropes, characters, and readers elude the objectives of an author.[131] They instead create an innumerable number of spirits acting upon even the most socially removed, gentrified reader: they call for an alliance or resistance—the remaining question is how the reader responds. In other words, while the second gospel strives to narrate the "good news of Jesus Christ the son

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4) in order to account for untold numbers of injustices at work in the legacy of Christianity ("God's Own People," 166-171).

[129] Laura E. Donaldson, "Gospel Hauntings: The Postcolonial Demons of New Testament Criticism," in *Postcolonial Biblical Criticism: Interdisciplinary Intersections* (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 110.

[130] Derrida, *Specters*, 202.

[131] Donaldson cites both the daughter's disability and the tradition of conquest in Canaan as examples of moments where this story, laden with meaning, raises questions far beyond the purpose of Jesus' mission (Donaldson, "Gospel Hauntings," 99-109).

of God" (1:1), its submerged subjectivities bake their deviant and resisting demands into a scripturalized, globally-practiced Christian narrative. For instance, the possession of the Syrophoenician daughter (7:24-30) resists the narrative's focus on Jesus, Donaldson argues, by recalling a legacy of anti-indigenous imperialism in Canaan.[132] Still, this narrative that returns again and again to an apology for messiah-ship (8:29; 12:35; 13:21-22; 14:61; 15:32) offers a contentious, universal-cosmological call for a messiah attuned to the material conditions of marginalized people gathered around the text.

Mark is scripturalized because it is social; Mark is haunted, and so that social use includes the ghosts creating the social reality of its readers. I argue that the social activity that scripturalizes Mark is both that of its readers and the ghosts that haunt them. Because, as I discussed above, ghosts both create reality and bring into that reality their own particularities, they are also a persistent force molding the social activity of scriptural readers. They shape the engagement with the world of all people, whether those individuals are conscious of it or not. And if they are not conscious of spectral presences within their sacred texts, then they are complicit in the ignorance of materially suffering communities. Contemporary, gentrified readers of Mark are not only haunted by the more ghastly moments in the story, but by those people who are not obviously part of their lived experience. These silenced others may be invisible, but haunting demonstrates that those who have been relegated to death worlds—like Newark's East Ward, who drink water and breathe air unacceptable to the suburbs, who live among unauthorized immigrants—in fact create the gentrified reality. Though their situations look different,

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[132] Ibid., 106-109.

Mark's marginalized and those who live in the wastes of neocapitalism are all victims of kyriarchy.

To put it another way, readers bring to the text numerous other presences haunting *them*, creating a communion of submerged subjects haunting readers and authors of texts. Their social practices with the text draw together submerged subjectivities, haunting the living. My argument, then, is that these haunts are created by kyriarchal hegemony that persists across time-spaces, but also by an innumerable number of specters subsisting under such regimes, who emerge at undetermined moments, with uncontrollable force. Sacred texts must, therefore, be one of those places where alliances of the dead following the most privileged reader form across time-spaces.

**"Jesus of Nazareth, the Crucified One": Scripturalizing Spaces of the Dead**

> Places pose in particular form the question of our living together. And this question…is the central question of the political.
>
> —Doreen Massey, *For Space*[133]

> Gentrification carves out literal geographic spaces of exceptionality, wherein the management of sovereignty and sovereign bodies does not sit within the nation-state but rather is co-managed by the nation-state and capital investors. It is this relationship between the nation-state and the land developers that creates these "death worlds" where destruction, erasure and death become acceptable. The way necropolitics articulates with bodies in space in gentrifying spaces represents the expression of "necrocapitalism."
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> —Elijah Adiv Edelman, "Walking while Transgender"[134]

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[133] Massey, *For Space*, 151.

[134] Elijah Adiv Edelman, "'Walking While Transgender': Necropolitical Regulations of Trans Feminine Bodies of Colour in the Nation's Capital," in *Queer Necropolitics*, ed. Jin Haritaworn, Adi Kuntsman, and Silvia Posocco (New York and London: Routledge, 2014), 177.

Though the Marys and Salome do not find either a living or a dead body in Jesus' tomb, this does not mean life and death do not mark this place. Countless trajectories—of death, life, hope, terror, and even the mundane—are conjured into the sepulcher. Some trajectories arrive as memories: of a teacher and messiah, of brutal death and an imperial rule of terror, of a home in Nazareth. Other trajectories emerge as questions: Where is Jesus? Is he truly resurrected? Or, relevant for this project, what does Jesus' absence say about the certitude of life and death? Who might I, as a reader, meet in this place? All that can be said for certain is that all of these conjured moments, bodies, and possibilities challenge the notion that a tomb is a place expressly *for* the dead. The tomb may have walls, but its boundaries do not stake a definitive, essential, teleological claim on its purpose or its ontology. This place, rather than bearing an inherent meaning and purpose, is negotiated; like all places, it is political.

My observation is not unique to Jesus' tomb, because space in general is political: it is both constituted by politics and declares the terms for politics. As Massey observes above, the "question of the political" is the "question of our living together"; the political is social.[135] I contend that this arena for politics expands drastically if we consider engagement with scriptures social activity with spectral forces across time-spaces. No doubt, some places are utterly devoid of the possibility for life. As Edelman alludes to above, neocapitalist power demands management of unacceptably different bodies, and does so by carving out zones for their existence. Because undesirability is determined socially and people are marginalized out of places of privilege, this gentrified deployment of space to marginalize people is itself political. Quite literally, it makes space out of

[135] Massey, *For Space*, 151.

social activity and out of political desires. In this vein, space is social and political, insofar as its territories, boundaries, meaning, and use are determined by those who work in and through it.[136] For places in which the possibilities for flourishing life are determined by its denizens' identities, *necropolitics* determine the boundaries for the territories. Through practices like creating boundaries between life and death, abstracting bodies based on physical and social characteristics, and affixing these bodies to places, spatiality is created as a material vehicle for sustaining life and maintaining death.

However, if space is social, the establishment of death worlds is but one contestation of space, hardly universal, and persistently resisted by manifold other social practices co-creating spatiality. So, before proceeding to discuss the spatiality of haunted scriptures, I want to offer my thesis for this section by way of a return to hauntings. Previously, I explored the usefulness of located hauntings, that particular places and people are haunted in particular ways. While the contingency of hauntings is a helpful way to think about the universal structure of time as populated by unique, agential subjectivities, Esther Peeren's located ghosts do not haunt beyond their haunts.[137] That is, they remain imagined as situated in a place, far from haunting those who may be

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[136] Helpfully elaborated by Henri Lefebvre in his 1976 book, *The Production of Space*, space can be understood as a thing dynamically constituted in the interplay between three processes: (1) the official mapping and design of space by officials and experts, often for governing or profit; (2) the experience and conceptualization of space by its "inhabitants and users," which create an "overlay" of meaning; (3) "spatial practices," which give places "some degree of cohesion." Lefebvre calls this a "spatial triad," respectively labeling each of these three process *representations of space*, *spatial representations*, and *spatial practices* (*Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith [Oxford: Blackwell, 1991]; French edn. 1976, 33, 42). For a succinct summary of Lefebvre's spatial triad, see Andy Merrifield, "Henri Lefebvre: A Socialist in Space," in *Thinking Space*, eds. Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift (London: Routledge, 2002), 173.
[137] Peeren, "Everyday Ghosts," 106-117.

complicit in their death. But because space is social, it must also be as uncertain and vibrant as the encounters creating it. In this vein, I follow Massey's concept of spatial "throwntogetherness," through which she envisions space to be a living, shifting, and risky thing, in which we are brought face to face with many obligations.[138] Everything we meet in our lives-in-space is a trajectory, with a complex history and story, including people, structures, maps, and even those boundaries which maintain deaths. In this way, a question presses on me as a reader in a gentrified community: is the second gospel as gentrified as my neighborhood, or are the victims of kyriarchy within Mark haunting trajectories, opening suburban New Jersey to consciousness of its participation in uneven development? Haunted scriptures are meeting places, constituted by those we cannot see, those who traverse across borders, of inside and outside, of visible and invisible, of textual and non-textual.

*Abstracted Bodies, Racism, and Deadly Places*

Ideologies of space—what it *is*, what it *does*, *how* it operates—are intimately tied up in the question of what lives are treated as livable. Much of this project's conversation with material space vis-à-vis the Ironbound plays out with this phenomenon in mind, interrogating issues such as why an immigrant landing point has also been built up as a location for dirty industry and industrial dumping. The postcolonial, neocapitalist West is problematically invested in and established by a particular concept of space that perpetuates the abstraction of marginalized bodies in ways that puts them to death, both literally and metaphorically. Across her work, Massey offers two broad critiques of modern ideologies of space: (1) it is a dimension opposed to time, and thus discrete and

[138] Massey, *For Space*, 149-162. This concept is discussed in much greater detail below.

static; and (2) it is divided up into essentialized places, each marked with meaning and further marking communities within them.[139] Following Ruth Wilson Gilmore's aforementioned definition of racism as the abstraction of bodies into hierarchies, this modern spatial phenomenon bakes racism into the neocapitalist practices of gentrification and exploitation. That is, this effective removal of vitality and difference (for Massey, read: time) from space undergirds the notion that certain places are for certain types of people: some get to live where rights and sovereignty are abundant, while others are marked by their locale for death. In this section, I interrogate the deployment of racial representation as a tactical attempt by those with privilege to remove the potential for radical politics from space, thus protecting their privilege.

Conceptions of space as an apolitical, measurable dimension are both problematic epistemological phenomena and foundational to the spatial marginalization of people. As Massey has noted, Newtonian physics have given language to think about space as "stasis, and as utterly opposed to time."[140] In this way, space does not make a difference on its own; space is passive, existing only to be acted in and upon. Within this formula, space is defined by "absence, by lack," because it is thought to be worthless without time, which works through dynamic forces, like history and change.[141] That story has begun to change, however, as the 1970s saw Marxist geographers critique this bland, apolitical spatial imagination.[142] Radical geographers began defining a socially productive

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[139] Space in the modern mode, Massey argues, is "understood as fixing things, taking the time out of them. The equation of spatialization with the production of 'space' thus lends to space not only the character of a discrete multiplicity but also the characteristic of stasis" (Massey, *For Space*, 81).
[140] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, 260, 251.
[141] Ibid., 257.
[142] Ibid., 254.

spatiality, constructed by social activity and constitutive of epistemology. Emblematic of this turn, David Harvey asserts that space *and* identity are co-created through "uneven capital investment," that "new networks of places…arise, around which new territorial divisions of labor and concentrations of people and labor power, new resource extraction activities and markets form."[143] But we need not stop with the notion that space is socially produced;[144] it also performs work of its own on real subjects. As Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift argue, epistemologies always already formed by a "messy entanglement" of spatial realities and "a history that is bound up in ways of knowing…[creating] different objects of knowledge."[145] In other words, space-time is an

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[143] David Harvey, "From Space to Place and Back Again: Reflections on the Condition of Postmodernity," in *Mapping the Futures: Local Cultures, Global Change*, Jon Bird, Barry Curis, Tim Putnam, George Robertson, and Lisa Tucker, eds. (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 6.

[144] Doreen Massey includes this as a critical hinge in her narrative over the shifting concept of the spatial among radical geographers: "And so, to the aphorism of the 1970s—that space is socially constructed—was added in the 1980s the other side of the coin: that the social is spatially constructed too, and that makes a difference. In other words, and in its broadest formulation, society is necessarily constructed spatially, and that fact—the spatial organization of society—makes a difference to how it works" (*Space*, 254).

[145] Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift, "Introduction," in *Thinking Space*, idem. (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), 3. Edward Soja also offers a critical space theory explicitly attuned to epistemology, deploying the work of both Lefebvre and Foucault. Rather than attempting an accurate reading *The Production of Space*, however, Soja's effort represents something of a riff on Lefebvre's spatial triad (for more, see the remainder of this section), in which what he calls "Thirdspace"—effectively analogical to Lefebvre's *spatial representations*—accounts for the "lifeworlds" of subjects-in-space (*Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* [Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 1996], 15-16). Consider, too, bell hooks' call to claim "marginality" as a "central location" for resistance, "not just found in words but in habits of being and the way one lives" (*Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* [Boston: South End Press, 1990], 149-153). Dipesh Chakrabarty offers a third example of spatially-informed epistemologies through engagement with productive European philosophical and political schools such as Marxism and poststructuralism. He notes that subjects on the margins of Western empire can engage critically with philosophies and construct new political possibilities because they have a different starting point, they have

interwoven force through which people come to know themselves and, subsequently, alter through their social activity.

But dimensional conceptions of space are characterized by a division between universal space and localized, bounded place that essentializes the people who live within. This paradigm imagines a universal dimension that escapes value judgments, one that, while measurable, does not hold any discrete meaning.[146] Global space becomes something that people move *through* at varying speeds or communicate *across*, connecting two places (i.e., one drives from Chicago to Milwaukee, one texts a friend in a different country). However, with the acceleration of telecommunication and transportation innovation in the past century, Massey observes, the "compression" of temporal-spatial distance has belonged only to those with the capital, national, and racial-ethnic resources to navigate it.[147] Access to tools like airports, train stations, and high-speed internet increase connectivity to different locales. In short, universal, abstract space becomes a navigable dimension only to those with access to capital, to colonizers. While these mobile populations travel across familiar, capitalized space, they increase a separation between privilege and those subsisting in under-developed places. While the vision of global space looks toward the future, unconnected places have, in Massey's words, "single, essential identities," and a "sense of place…is constructed out of an introverted, inward-looking history based on delving into the past for internalized

never done any "preparatory work" necessary of the educated European "bourgeois citizen" (*Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000], 11, see also 37-40).

[146] Massey, *For Space*, 183.

[147] Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, 150.

origins."[148] The neocapitalist global expressways escape analysis, but the allegedly backward existence in "places" is identified by a problematic, essentialized concept of static peoples and places.

The practice of identifying both certain places and certain peoples as recognizable only together is a common way colonial authority authorizes itself. Extending Michel Foucault's concept of biopolitics, Achille Mbembe argues that neocolonial powers determine whose life should be fostered and at whose expense this life can be pursued.[149] Mbembe argues that those without the sovereignty afforded by state or capital power are subject to "the generalized instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations."[150] With the example of Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory through the construction of connected settlements, Mbembe creates an image of places where a "politics of vertical sovereignty" is exercised against populations who have no right to life or agency: boundaries are given to their living

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[148] Ibid., 152.

[149] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 3.

[150] Ibid., 14. Elaborating the Foucauldian application of biopolitics, this time on the subject of race, Michael Dillon writes that "race is but one of many factors which "biopolitics adjudicates," a marker through which "'life'…has to be secured against life" ("Security, Race, and War," in *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*, edited by idem. and Andrew Neal [New York: Palgrave, 2008], 169). Michel Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended": Lectures as the College de France, 1975-1976* (New York: Picador, 2003), 241; for a succinct summary of biopolitics, see Francois Debrix and Alexander D. Barder, *Beyond Biopolitics: Theory, Violence, and Horror in World Politics* (New York and London: Routledge, 2012), 8-10. Elsewhere, Mbembe further recounts the social violence the colonial reorganization of space affected: dynastic and kinship lines were broken and reformed under colonial authority, new relationships of patrons and benefactors were drawn, all in the name of territorialized colonial power (*On the Postcolony* [Studies on the History of Society and Culture 41; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001], 69-71).

space, highways are built over them, military might is exercised against them.[151] Communities understood as worthy of life can pass over death, while necropolitics ensures colonized populations must subsist below and out of view of privilege. That is, while state actors often maintain their power by creating the conditions for life to flourish, that pursuit is always accompanied by conditions of death for others.

The marginalization of placed communities reinforces an understanding of which differences are acceptable and which are deadly. This, in Rey Chow's words, "management of differences" creates the conditions of an "ascendancy to whiteness," in which non-white populations attempt to become more acceptable through the performance of socially acceptable behavior.[152] Still, necropolitics establish this phenomenon as a competition to escape abject existence. Leaving only limited room for a limited number of legitimate subjectivities, necropolitics assures marginalized people that the privilege of whiteness is a status to be fought for and maintained over against others. Citing the example of undocumented migrants, Lisa Marie Cacho argues that the United States' legal system's language around migration deems certain people "illegal" by virtue of their lack of citizenship, who are only then "subjected to laws based on their illegal status"; in short, criminalized through "instituting laws that cannot be followed."[153] Thus, relegating certain subjects to a condition of "social death" without consideration for

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[151] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 29. Mbembe takes the term from Eyal Weizman, "The Politics of Verticality," *openDemocracy* (Web publication at www.openDemocracy.net), 25 April, 2002.

[152] Rey Chow, *The Protestant Ethnic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 2-3. For a useful deployment of this concept for my current discussion of necropolitics, see Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 25.

[153] Lisa Marie Cacho, *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2012), 6.

anything other than their nation of origin becomes part of a pattern by which complex persons are rendered abstract.

Part and parcel of racialized legibility of bodies—for life or death—is their proximity to places essentialized by borders. Identifying the colonial practices of carving up land for conquest, Mbembe writes that "territorialization" produced "boundaries and hierarchies, zones and enclaves; the subversion of existing property arrangements; the classification of people according to different categories."[154] In other words, colonialism remapped the world, gave it space, and spatialized race. Mbembe continues, noting that these "death worlds" are where "men of evil repute" are stacked upon one another.[155] Indeed, this practice of abstraction permits dehumanizing assumptions about and practices around those who subsist in death worlds. Racist abstraction, argues Ruth Wilson Gilmore, operates as a "death-dealing displacement of difference into hierarchies that organize relations within and between the planet's sovereign political territories."[156] Space and race are intimately intertwined, and this relationship comprises the very boundaries between life and death experienced by actual people: place is raced. Whether space is carved up by state actors or real estate developers and city councils, the possibility persists that abstracted lives become acceptable casualties to the pursuit of profit.[157] The politics of death are spatial insofar as they literally make places where the thought of their residents exercising political agency seems absurd.

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[154] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 26.
[155] Ibid., 26-27. Here Mbembe works with Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. C. Farrington (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991), 37-39.
[156] Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings," 16.
[157] For additional discussion of the instrumentalization of life for profit, from an explicitly Marxist position, which takes into account an historical trajectory of capitalist

While the material effects of territorialization are deadly, the figuration of people and their haunts as dead also attempts to remove their political agency. First, as alluded to above, Mbembe's "death worlds" are marked by their lack of sovereignty—indeed, there the sovereign entities of the world can exercise their agential power to inflict death. If one cannot rightly speak to power, how can they engage in politics? More fundamentally, though, people marginalized by colonized space are forced apart from those with access to privilege, those with whom they might otherwise engage politically. That is, places marked by a homogeneous group or for a particular purpose are sanitized from social tension. When a place like "the home" is meant for "family" and "the office" for "work," the potential for resistance to either is unwelcome and out of place.[158]

In death worlds, tension may exist in the form of warlords, to follow Mbembe's example, but when weapons are the only tool for expression, those with the biggest guns extinguish opposition.[159] The territorialization of space into regions meant to homogenize those within prevents what Ernesto Laclau deems "resolution through power relations," or "the field of the 'political.'"[160] Politics require diversity, discontent, and tension, all of

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exploitation of territorialized populations, see David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2000), 21-40.

[158] This notion fits roughly into Lefebvre's understanding of "representations of space," in which customs, planning, and power create an understood or official use for a particular place (*Production of Space*, 33).

[159] This Mbembe calls the "right to kill," which is a legally sanctioned means of expressing sovereignty in the colonies ("Necropolitics," 23).

[160] Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time* (London: Verso, 1990), 35; cited in Massey, *For Space*, 151. Here Massey also works with Derrida, who additionally argues, "If there were continual stability, there would be no need for politics, and it is to the extent that stability is not natural, essential or substantial, that politics exists and ethics is possible Chaos is at once a risk and a chance" ("Remarks on Deconstruction and Pragmatism," in *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, ed. Chantal Mouffe [London: Routledge, 1996], 84). I take as my rough definition of politics the negotiation of identity through social engagement between people.

which are disguised by abstracted and increasingly sub-divided space, which keeps the needs and desires of those who are different distant from each other. Thus, Massey argues that "[territorialized] space of bounded places provides little in the way of avenues for a developing radical politics."[161] For instance, the Ironbound, a largely poor and Latinx neighborhood, certainly has material needs to be addressed, but is isolated from gentrified communities with money and political capital. Under such circumstances, the drive to simply survive and the lack of access to political power and influence isolate its residents from the potential for improving their lives.

Problematically, establishing localities as bounded pieces of global space limit the potential for politics by abstracting the diversity of populations within. Certainly, my goal here has not been to argue that places are, in fact, homogenous, but that through space's neocapitalist places can be locations where one can encounter communities wholly different from themselves. This conception of space has limited politics because it has quashed consciousness of intersubjective relationship with those who are not physically present. When Palestinians are given no physical recourse for the violence committed against them, or unauthorized migrant day laborers are forced to Home Depot parking lots for work, at risk of deportation, essentialized place forces their marginalization.

We can push further: this spatial politics is at work in biblical interpretation, too. As we shall see later, the "other side" of the Sea of Galilee becomes a "gentile" space, and urban centers become "elite space."[162] Each example is partitioned from the rest of

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[161] Massey, *For Space*, 183.

[162] Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986), 27, 42; Eric C. Stewart, *Gathered around Jesus: An Alternative Spatial Practice in the Gospel of Mark* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2009), 184-189. I take up this question in more detail in chapters three and four.

the narrative, limiting the political potential of understanding such places as vibrant, connected locations. These examples are posed as descriptive statements, rather than questions of whether or how urban centers are contested: are they always elite spaces? Does the "other side" only belong to gentiles? These are open questions posed when the inherent multiplicity of any place is posed. Moreover, the multiplicity of the "biblical space" is quashed if we think of interpreters as operating only in their capacity as autonomous individuals.[163] Indeed, isolation from another is a word steeped in the language of *distance*, a part of dimensional space's vocabulary. Autonomy, lack of responsibility, unconsciousness of difference—the tools and effects of gentrification—are all reinforced by dimensional space and necessarily play into modern notions of interpretation. The politics of isolation, of gentrification, therefore isolate readers from other communities and responsibility to them. The question for us, then, is whether a different spatial epistemology might draw readers into contact with more subjects otherwise made invisible in the neocapitalist West.

*The Politics of Spatial Throwntogetherness*

Thus far, my discussion has focused on modern spatiality's problematic division between space/place, global/local. While a notion that space can be scientifically mapped out as regions presents itself apolitically, and while it may attempt to limit political

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[163] As explored above, relative to Markan interpretation, see Blount, *Go Preach*; Villalobos Mendoza, *Abject Bodies in the Gospel of Mark*. Chapter Four of this project works extensively with Musa W. Dube's characterization of the continent of Africa as the woman with the flow of blood ("Fifty Years of Bleeding: A Storytelling Feminist Reading of Mark 5:24-43." *The Ecumenical Review* 51, no. 1 [1999]: 11-17). I cite these examples, because, by explicitly arguing that people other than the solitary religious or academic interpreter have a place *within the Bible*, they disrupt the image of the autonomous reader of sacred texts. They expand the range of who the Bible belongs to and who belongs in it.

access to marginalized communities, it still does political work. If space is social, it is intimately related to, shapes, and is shaped by time and history. Constituted by and working at the intersection of manifold stories, subjects, values, and desires, space is more than a dimension; it is an *event*. Massey coins the neologism "throwntogetherness" to account for "the practicing of place, the negotiation of intersecting trajectories," that inject place with vibrant multiplicity.[164] Even when *representations of space*, like maps or urban plans,[165] declare a place to be dead and treat it thus, social practices in particular places show territorialization to be but one trajectory among many within that place. Indeed, if places are constituted by those who engage them, they are subject to all the experiences of those who stake a claim on those places, even those spectral others we cannot readily see. To engage with place, as Massey contends above, is to take an ethical and political stance, to learn to "[live] together."

Applying this notion to scripturalized texts, we need not think of them as objects of interpretation alone, but spaces where ethical responsibility for untold subjects is integral to their hauntology. Here I contend that the lived riskiness of space is both given to it by its participants *and* therefore woven into its fabric: living spatially—as we all do—means living in contact with the Other. It is unavoidable. Even in gentrified locales, space's haunted character means marginalized subjects constitute space, if invisibly; their presence is integral to the everyday experiences of spatiality. Throwntogetherness rejects homogeneity, because it recognizes misuse of space and the diversity of people and stories that move through it. That is, the largely white, wealthy community might do all it

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[164] Massey, *For Space*, 154.
[165] Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33.

can to policy its culture and boundaries, but poorer people, people of color, and the mentally ill still move through it every day and even live within the neighborhood. Moreover, the gentrified neighborhood depends on marginalized places for its very existence: to hold its trash, house its service workers, and hold its prisons. Places depend on other places, on other people.

Although ideologies of modern, measured space insist on the essential boundedness of places, the lived construction of place contends boundaries are something else entirely. For instance, Elizabeth Struthers Malbon's aforementioned description of the "other side" of the Sea of Galilee (5:1) as a "gentile space" essentializes a physical location by the ethnicity of an entire population for the purposes of a literary-critical investigations of the second gospel. The vibrancy of this place—its towns, people, travelers, nonhuman animals, and geography—is subsumed to an interpreter's desire for a particular meaning from Mark's gospel.[166] Most notably problematic about such a conception of place is its erasure of the impact social interaction from outside has on the integrity of a location. As I discuss in chapter three, the "otherside" of the Sea of Galilee is, in fact, a place characterized by a vast network of Jewish and non-Jewish, Roman, Greek, and Arab residents—hardly essentially attached to any ethnicity. Certainly, our globalizing world makes this point near-obvious, but even Jesus' travels away from his home to the Decapolis present the reality that "the other side's" particularly is always in process.

[166] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 6-7.

Indeed, that places are always "in process" is Massey's first of three ways places should be conceived.[167] Second, she observes, while places may have boundaries—though, they do not always—and while those boundaries may communicate an absolute barrier to multiplicity from without, borders are, in fact, points of connection. Borders are "the particularity of linkage *to* that 'outside.'"[168] Third, places are characterized by "internalized conflicts."[169] If we return to Jesus' adventures in the wild lands east of Galilee, he would already contest the notion that the Decapolis is a "gentile" place; it is also a place where people are chained among the tombs (vv. 3-5), where demons are exorcised (v. 13), and where people raise pigs (v. 14). Even with narrative clues, the "other side" is a location more complex than its religious-ethnic makeup. This not to say that these notions inherently conflict, but that for a reader like Malbon to declare this location as essentially gentile conflicts with the literary character provided by Mark, which conflicts with the lived reality of the narrative setting, the Decapolis.[170] Massey, in contrast, contends that a place is more accurately conceived of as a "meeting place," demanding characterizations that home in on the social processes that shape it.[171]

This turn toward place as meeting place forces the question of who might be encountered within particular places and what claims they might stake on those places. If the local is the realm of the quotidian, Massey argues, then it is also where one meets

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[167] Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, 155.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid.
[170] I take this up in chapter three.
[171] Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33, 42; Massey, *For Space*, 10-11. Massey further clarifies that her usage of the term "trajectory" is not congruous with "story" and is meant to connote "the history, change, movement, of things themselves" (ibid., 12).

"multiplicity," and therefore "the social and the political."[172] Because spaces are connected as bodies, ideas, and objects move in and out of them, the local is constantly reconstituted by the many "trajectories" working through it. That is, as Lefebvre has noted, space is constituted by its social use. Massey goes further, arguing that the spatiality of space is assigned through a long history of trajectories converging in and around it.[173] Thus, place is not just a particular piece of a broader spatial paradigm, but is a temporal phenomenon, an *event*.[174] Places are persistently reproduced by the particular social interactions moving in and through them. Under such a rubric, even the global—itself a modern idea—is a trajectory which works to constitute place. Social practice, then, becomes integral to a politics in and between places. Writes Massey, "In political practice, much of this constitution is articulated through the negotiation of places in the widest sense. Imaginations of space and place are both an element of and at stake in those negotiations."[175] Places are multiple, on their own and amongst themselves; they shift and change as they are participated in. Engaged through numerous social processes, places maintain residue of these very practices across time. *This* contestation, then, is what a global politics looks like: it is not a force of capitalist advancement—this is but one trajectory—but a global multiplicity formed by countless other trajectories.

In what follows, I think about scriptures as constituted spatially precisely because they are throwntogether by the countless trajectories tugging at them. This

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[172] Massey, *For Space*, 155.

[173] Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33, 42; Massey, *For Space*, 10-11. Massey further clarifies that her usage of the term "trajectory" is not congruous with "story" and is meant to connote "the history, change, movement, of things themselves" (ibid., 12).

[174] Massey, *For Space*, 149-155.

[175] Ibid., 155.

reconceptualization of space strikes a chord with theories of haunting because all social activity—even of the living dead—constitutes place. Massey is aware of the ethical demands at work in throwntogether places, noting that with so many trajectories operating on us in our everyday lives, we are vulnerable to "chance encounters" with the Other to whom we are responsible.[176] But to conceive of scriptures as already constructed through social activity from elsewhere and elsewhen necessarily recognizes scripturalized texts as bundled trajectories and therefore places. The agential specters that stake claims on sacred texts are often unsensed, but also an indispensable part of the subjects to whom readers are responsible—as they are responsible to all those they engage in their meeting places. That scriptures are haunted, as I explore in the next section, requires attention to voices bursting up from kyriarchy's underside; that scriptures are throwntogether by these specters requires readers to understand the very fibers of their Bible are composed of that underside.

A scripturalized place conceived of as in-process like this disrupts the divisions between reader and text, between readers, and between some readers' interpretations and other readers' interpretations; instead, they all populate and contest Mark as trajectories. Engagement with scripturalized places is fraught with intersubjective meetings demanding responses. Some of these encounters are anonymous: just as passing over Newark's East Ward on Highway 1-9 is a masked interaction with the people below, reading Mark 5:1-20 can be a masked encounter with an imprisoned convict in New Jersey's suburbs, which is to say, an inmate of Newark's Northern State Prison. But these

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[176] Ibid., 180. See also Andrew Benjamin, *Architectural Philosophy* (London: Athlone Press, 1999).

boundaries, as Massey contends, are not boundaries but "linkages," establishing a connection between the subjects on either side. Through these connections—whether the racist desires of urban development policies or the acceleration of transportation technology that permits bypassing marginalized communities—the undesirable Other makes their way into the sacred stories of reading communities.

*Mark as a Scripturalized Haunted Place*

Shot through with trajectories from its narrative and social life as a sacred text, Mark is infused with throwntogether spatiality. The privilege maintained by the gentrified Christian interpreter is at issue here. While it may be true that biblical scholars have largely come to imagine a reader alone in a room with Mark and his gospel,[177] as a scripturalized text, this reconstruction of the second gospel's audience does not account for the diversity of it users. We can say that Mark is haunted and throwntogether precisely because it is scripturalized; it is constituted by its users and their ghosts. That is, because it is textured by social activity across time, it becomes a dynamic, vital place; because the very being of anything is constituted by the specters that haunt its everyday life, Mark is haunted. Indeed, these points—that Mark is a scripturalized place and that Mark is haunted—are not mutually exclusive; instead, they inform one another, making room for manifold submerged subjectivities from *any number of places*. Thus, my argument that Mark is haunted by the underside of kyriarchy, which haunts all subjects, means readers not only "read with" the marginalized, but also confront demands not

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[177] Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore helpfully track the movement in Markan scholarship from an interest to the Gospels formation and authorship to its readership in the form of narrative-critical, reader-response, and contextual approaches (*Mark and Method*: *New Approaches in Biblical Studies* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992], 11-16).

immediately related to the text. Conceiving the text as a scripturalized place means it is not constrained by the apparently concrete borders of Christian and non-Christian readers, or of readers and non-readers at all. To be sure, this project requires critiquing previous scholarly readings of Markan space in order to open up conceptualizations of space that permit cross-temporal-spatial encounters. Therefore, I eschew the social isolation of personal biblical interpretation for the politics of an encounter which acknowledges and responds to multiplicity in a haunted gospel.

While space is not an unfamiliar aspect of analysis for biblical studies, scholars' prior dimensional imagination of Markan space limits the possibilities for prodding readers to political consciousness and responsibility. This project's affinity with emancipatory hermeneutics explains the value I place on "intentionally local" biblical interpretations. However, these readings concerned with "social justice" are also indebted, write Moore and Sherwood, to a twentieth-century pattern of "opinions, belief, and practice…cast not as matters of conscience, education, or revelation but as the material of the person of which certain attributes…are an index."[178] In short, emancipatory readings are fixed by the biblical studies field to particular communities; identity politics constrain justice work. Thus when Villalobos Mendoza proposes a hermeneutic "*del otro lado*," it remains a "reading" on the "borderlands";[179] or Raquel St. Clair's womanist reading of Mark's cross becomes a text *for* womanists, but bounded by the borders of racial identity.[180] My contention here is not with contextual hermeneutics,

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[178] Moore and Sherwood, *Inventing the Biblical Scholar*, 73, 121; on this second quote, Moore and Sherwood cite Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 43.
[179] See Villalobos Mendoza, *Abject Bodies*, 5-6.
[180] See St. Clair, *Call and Consequences*, 71-83.

but with the prevalent authority of the localized "I" in biblical interpretation, and how this isolated subject operates differently as a gentrified interpreter than a marginalized reader. As observed above, the *localized*, Western, gentrified subject has become a *universal* arbiter of power and privilege through globalized neocapitalism. With wealth and privilege coalescing at an accelerating rate, in part through gentrification, the social activity around the local, gentrified Christian "I" loses diversity. Indeed, the spatial paradigm of late capitalism discussed earlier only allows privilege to abstract differences. Western, developed space is the space of wealth and the local, marginalized space is that of poverty and death. Problematically, this phenomenon works through biblical imaginaries: privileged interpreters, localized, as individuals, project their knowledge from their locations onto the textual space: they abstract without any perceived consequences. The problem, therefore, is not with localized readings of Mark at all, but rather with the lack of political responsibility imagined by gentrified biblical interpretations, responsibility that might arise through multiplicity.

My task with Mark, in part, is to offer spatial studies of the gospel a conceptual resource to move beyond analysis of narrative or history, to consider social lives of the text. While the studies are not numerous, the Gospel of Mark has been explored by space-critical work. Malbon's *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark* is an initial effort. Her structuralist approach to the second gospel examines individual spaces and then categorizes them into separate orders based on their function within the narrative.[181] With Levi-Strauss as a guide, Malbon argues that the Markan spatial structure works together

[181] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 6-14. The "orders" she identifies are geopolitical, topographical, and architectural.

neatly to compose a narrative "like a symphony."[182] Though she engages structural anthropology, her analysis of space remains on the level of structural narratology, and does not seem to escape the reader-as-interpreter dynamic. That is, Malbon's analysis appears divorced from the effects of social realities on both text and reader; the call to ethical responsibility for the submerged other is far from its thesis.

Closer to the type of spatial engagement I envision with Mark, Eric Stewart delivers a social-historical approach to space infused with concern for material culture.[183] Stewart is comfortable with a less structural, more disruptive role for space, "always subject to change and negotiation."[184] With space as part of a larger social negotiation, he argues that the world envisioned by Mark becomes a requisite piece of a broader social discourse.[185]While an injection of social practice into spatial analysis can disrupt the abstraction of measurable place, Stewart's construction of the past remains an inactive

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[182] Ibid., 6-10. Malbon's primary sources from Levi-Strauss are "The Structural Study of Myth," *Journal of American Folklore* 68 (1955), 428-444; "The Story of Aswidal," trans. Nicholas Mann, in *The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism* (NY: Routledge, 1967).
[183] Stewart, *Gathered around Jesus,* 32-39.
[184] Ibid., 61. Illustrative of this difference with Malbon's "symphony" of Markan space is Stewart's description of space as "webs of significance."
[185] Ibid., 60. In addition to Lefebvre, Stewart deals largely with different landscape theories—a spatial theory I do not take up in this project—chiefly, Brian Harley, "Maps, Knowledge, and Power," in *Iconography of Landscape: Essays on Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*, eds. Denis E. Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography 9; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 277-312; Blake Leyerle, "Landscape as Cartography in Early Christian Pilgrimage Narratives," *JAAR* 64 (1996), 119-41. This also leads Stewart to follow some spatial discussions of historical spaces that might appear in Mark's narrative (i.e. Galilee and Jerusalem), including, Ernst Loymeyer, *Galiläa und Jerusalem* (Forschungen zur Religion and Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 34; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupreckt, 1936); Dean W. Chapman, "Locating the Gospel of Mark: A Model of Agrarian Biography," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 25 (1995), 24-36; Halvor Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003).

force for contemporary readers. His exploration of socially-constituted space from which Mark emerged is vibrant, but that social activity remains *back then*. The extent to which the interpreter is forced to become ethically responsible to those he or she cannot see is negligible; the social life he describes is in the past and remains there.

Indeed, conceptualizing Mark as a haunted, scripturalized text means, first of all, recognizing the "alien" voices of contextual hermeneutics already constituting the second gospel. As already discussed, readings like those of Villalobos Mendoza and St. Clair populate the Markan scriptural world with diverse marginalized subjectivities.[186] Emancipatory hermeneutics, particularly that of Villalobos Mendoza, situate bodies within the narrative that are contemporary and material, but not *necessarily* confessionally committed to interpreting Mark. Importantly for contextual approaches to biblical interpretation, reading by self-consciously situated readers of Mark make a necessary difference for Mark's meaning.[187] Still other contextual readings stake a claim on a proper interpretive "strategy" or "hermeneutic." Paradigmatic of this effort, Tat-siong Benny Liew critically approaches Markan efforts of resistance to Roman imperial domination with a postcolonial approach to reading the text: "Presenting an all-authoritative Jesus who will eventually annihilate all opponents and all other authorities, Mark's utopian, or dystopian, vision, in effect, duplicates the colonial (non)choice of 'serve-or-be destroyed.'"[188] Works of this sort, near-universally critical of empire, stake a

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[186] See also Dube, "Fifty Years of Bleeding"; Marcella Althaus-Reid, "Mark," in *The Queer Bible Commentary*, ed. Deryn Guest (London: SCM Press, 2006), 517-525; Kim, *Mark, Women, and Empire*.
[187] St. Clair, *Call and Consequences*, 165-167.
[188] Liew, *The Politics of Parousia*, 104. For more works that provide a postcolonial hermeneutic for Mark, see Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*; Horsley, *Hearing the Whole*

claim from the margins on the white male Markan scholarly establishment. They both perform and contest authority over Mark's meaning by locating non-white, non-male, and impoverished stories, demands, and knowledge in a scripturalized text.

Although contextual projects help establish Mark as a political place, Euro-American biblical scholarship has been so thoroughly gentrified that privileged scholars have not been conscientized to the presence of minoritized communities within the text. I contend that verbs like "reading" are never innocent verbs, but declare a particular relationship to a text and to the Other. Certainly, these reading strategies increase representation of minoritized subjects in and around the Bible and within biblical scholarship, but if we take Patte's call for androcritical work seriously, a reconceptualization of scripturalized texts and *how they work* is needed. Following Massey's notion that populations imagine themselves as increasingly separated in what is, in fact, a rapidly connecting world, I argue with Patte that privileged readership reinforces an unconsciousness of other bodies in the material world.[189] Therefore, I propose a reevaluation of what the Gospel of Mark is in a way that rethinks the relationship of readers to the text. Is there a way, I ask, for gentrified readers, whose physical encounters with different bodies in their daily lives are mediated by concentrated wealth, to engage Mark conscious of marginalized communities and their agencies? Can those victimized by kyriarchy be known within biblical texts? Furthermore, is it possible to think about their obligation to marginalized bodies apart from Christian communities? In short, the Bible is created as a meeting place by *any* subject affected by kyriarchy, and,

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*Story*; Samuel, "The Beginning of Mark"; Joy, *Mark and Its Subalterns*; Leander, *Discourses of Empire*; Choi, *Postcolonial Discipleship of Embodiment*.

[189] For more on Patte's notion, see *Ethics of Biblical Interpretation*, 25-26.

therefore, the privileged subject's proper orientation to Mark is not *just* as a reader, but as someone haunted.

The Gospel of Mark is not only a text to be interpreted, but a space constituted by social activity from across time-spaces, even those submerged by kyriarchy. Scriptures are not spatial because they are dimensional, but because they are social. As I have argued above, this sociality arrives not only from communities who exist contemporaneously with readers, but from haunting agencies. But haunting does not account for all unseen subjects; haunting, in Gordon's words, accounts for "any people who are not graciously permitted to amend the past, or control barely visible structuring forces of everyday life."[190] From this general phenomenon, manifold ghosts materialize. Thus, to account for the creation of ghosts from social death means to reckon with kyriarchy as a trans-temporal-spatial force, one that looks different in each society, but whose persistence and predictability creates a pyramidal hierarchy. Indeed, kyriarchy cuts across time-spaces so totally that it creates massive collections of specters. As this project explores, kyriarchal forces have made themselves present in Mark's narrative, in the contexts of Mark's production and early reception, and of Mark's contemporary reading communities. Because I am interested in challenging borders of places, especially scripturalized places, this project explores kyriarchal forces as a trajectory dissolving borders between readers and text, between readers themselves, and between readers and their own non-Markan contexts. With this effort, I argue, even readers in gentrified places are confronted by the ghosts of those in whose deaths, social or otherwise, they are

[190] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 151.

complicit. When those ghosts haunt, whether consciously experienced or not, they establish a trajectory in Mark, a trajectory of complicity, of responsibility.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I have made a threefold argument elaborating Mark as a place constituted by the ghosts of marginalized subjects that haunt it. If interpreters argue that the Markan tomb is filled only with references to other biblical narratives or inspires thoughts only of first-century contemporaneous figures, they have missed the vibrant and challenging contestations staking claim to “Jesus Christ, the son of God” (1:1). Mark’s gospel is persistently recreated by haunting presences. No doubt, many of these ghosts are intertextual, but a vast, incalculable majority lurk because readers have brought them to the text. I thus first made the case that engaging with the second gospel is best understood as participation in scripturalization, because this method accounts for contested conceptions of what biblical texts are and mean. Second, my argument explored haunted time and place in order to expand social activity—including scriptural practices—to interaction between past, present, and future. Here I made the claim that sacred texts are themselves haunted by their users’ participation in kyriarchal oppression of people they cannot see. Third, I used the spatial language of Doreen Massey to contend that Mark is itself a place created by the haunting activity of marginalized subjects. Under this reimagination, the Gospel of Mark is not best engaged as a text from which interpreters might glean wisdom, but as a volatile, dangerous place that shapes the very subjectivity of the reader.

With neocapitalism gentrifying biblical interpretation, a new methodology for encountering Mark’s gospel, among others, is necessary for disrupting kyriarchy.

Because gentrification and neocapitalism depend on the division of people from one another and access to privilege, the separation between different communities' interpretations of scripture similarly maintains their oppression. This phenomenon is in large part a problem of conceptions of space: space is seen as a force of concrete dimensional distance, and not a relational thing. Hauntologies force the issue: space itself is *comprised* of ghosts; it is necessarily relational. As such, even though neocolonial spatiality seeks to keep marginalized people at arm's length from privilege and from one another, spectrality demonstrates that the dead persistently make their presences and demands known in the very fabric of gentrified neighborhoods. More specifically, when privileged Christian practitioners read the Gospel of Mark, a trajectory—a relationship, a haunting, whatever we call it—runs through their neighborhood, the text, and those subjects made invisible by privileged participation in neocapitalist practices. Reading Mark, therefore, makes clear that encounters within its pages are sacred encounters within one's own world. The tomb of Jesus, the Decapolis (5:1-20), the House of Simon the Leper (14:3-9), the cross (15:21-41): these are the Ironbound, the Native American reservation, the border, and they are already active in the suburban congregation.

# CHAPTER TWO

# "YOU ALWAYS HAVE THE POOR WITH YOU": MARK'S PASSION NARRATIVE AS A PERSISTENTLY DECENTERING PLACE

Gentrified biblical interpretation participates in the isolated social death of marginalized people through its territorialization of space. This chapter converses with the degrading material effects capitalist development has had on the living environment of the Ironbound. Gentrification assures residents of northern New Jersey that they can receive a plethora of affordable and luxury goods through Newark's port, while that same port poisons the residents living around it. Those wealthier communities who benefit from global capital have few relational tools for understanding their complicity in the death of immigrants of color around Port Newark. Such are the capitalist logics of space, that particular places are *for* those without the right of movement, property, or life, while those with privilege are able to move freely and choose the communities with whom they engage.[1] They are also the logics of traditional biblical interpretation, made manifest in readings of Mark's passion narrative. Despite the presence of extreme oppression in this account, this chapter notes, traditional interpretation of the passion has remained strictly Christological, a place in which Jesus' divinely-conferred identity, as opposed to his socially-conferred identity, can be fleshed out. Throughout the concluding chapters of the second gospel, readers are constantly confronted with marginalized and socially dead

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[1] This notion tracks with Massey's observation that the developing world has been territorialized into "places" with "an introverted, inward-looking history based on delving into the past for internalized origins" (*Space, Place, and Gender*, 153).

people: opening with his so-called "anointing" for burial by an unnamed woman in the house of Simon the Leper (14:3-9), Jesus slowly fades into physical and social death: anointed by a woman, he calls forth omnipresent poverty (14:3-9); he is sentenced to death beside an accused insurrectionist (15:6-15); and he is emasculated, executed as an outlaw (14:8; 15:7). Read wholly Christologically, however, the passion narrative becomes gentrified, because tools for conscientizing audiences to their complicity in capitalist violence are subsumed by a drive for ascertaining Jesus' spiritual identity.

Contrary to the conclusions of traditional scholarly interpretation, Mark's passion narrative makes space for dead bodies from within the gospel and without. My entry point for this discussion is a meditation on Jesus' declaration, "You always (πάντοτε) have the poor with you, but you do not always have me" (v. 7). As I explore below, this passage has traditionally been interpreted as the initiation of Mark's passion, through which Jesus again reveals his true identity (cf. 8:31-38). However, I argue that Mark's deployment of πάντοτε "conjures," to use a term from Derridean hauntology, the ghosts of the poor into Simon the Leper's home.[2] Furthermore, the choice of the word *always* forces questions of time and space, drawing the poor not only into the narrative moment, but *across time-spaces* and *at the expense of* Jesus' own presence. As Jesus fades into the masses of socially-dead subjectivities, from his arrest to his crucifixion, submerged communities "always" force entry into this narrative. For gentrified interpreters, like those in northern New Jersey, this means the residents of the Ironbound are in the Markan passion and in their communities. In short, the πάντοτε creates consciousness of the abject Other's agency within privileged contexts.

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[2] Derrida, *Specters*, 49-58.

The particular, material realities of poverty wherever hegemonies reign, now invoked in Mark 14:7, help establish this text as a political contestation, decentering the crucifixion and empty tomb as necessary ends. As Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza argued in the introduction to her signal work, *In Memory of Her*, this passage is contested. To read the anointing pericope (vv. 3-9), she observed, as nestled in between but distinct from an announcement of Jesus' betrayal (vv. 1-2, 10-11) as a narrative device, "depoliticizes the story of Jesus." Such an interpretation shifts focus from the Roman empire—which crucified Jesus—to "the Jewish establishment," choosing to focus on the amorphous category of "religion."[3] Her 1983 critique is indicative of a turn in biblical studies toward "the process of rediscovering that the Christian gospel cannot be proclaimed if the women disciples and what they have done are not remembered."[4] This chapter, written decades later than Schussler Fiorenza's monograph, both follows the spirit of her work and expands this political question to the consequences for *all* who are not remembered contemporarily. Here I seek to both remember marginalized people and inquire about what they are doing. *How* do they politicize this narrative? *How* do they contest the confessional centering of Jesus' identity? *What* is it that the poor are doing to this passion narrative?

Mark 14:8's πάντοτε decenters privileged readers with a temporal-spatial invitation for particular, material bodies to enter into Simon's house: it is a historical move, which does not bear a benign ambiguity of generic poverty, but the particulars that always occupy stories of systemic marginalization. In this way, Jesus' apparent

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[3] Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, xiv.
[4] Ibid.

declaration to the audience, where and whenever they might gather, that "you always have the poor, but you do not always have me," necessarily brings together the social dynamics of all particular reading communities as forces pulling apart a universal singularity of a "Christ." Mark's Jesus shows his true character that exceeds Christology, as another "poor" Galilean.[5] Jesus-as-hero exists only as an unremarkable member of the oppressed masses. Instead of engaging debates over whether Jesus' declaration is an invitation to help the poor or a dismissal of their condition in favor of sacred practice, I follow Johnson-DeBaufre and Nasrallah's decentering work with Paul in application to Jesus' character: I interrogate the material realities left in the wake of Jesus' heroic figure, "their silenced or elided counter-arguments."[6] Decentering Jesus from our reading of this passage means viewing the text, in Johnson-DeBaufre and Nasrallah's words, as a space "contested" by "ancient communities" and multiplicitious communities across time-spaces.[7] Jesus' fade into the social death makes room for particularities contesting this entire passion narrative to stake their unique claims on its meaning.

This chapter therefore makes two simultaneous moves. On the one hand, it follows the passion narrative beyond 14:9, and observes two additional instances where Jesus' body fades further into death, becoming indistinguishable from other marginalized subjects: his death between two bandits on the cross (15:21-32) and his complete absence in his own tomb (16:1-8). In either case, Jesus fades away from being a centralized figure through his association with and eventual occupation of death, while the "poor" do

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[5] C.I. David Joy's discussion of poverty in Mark is excellent, particularly his note that Jesus himself is presented as a poor carpenter (6:3; *Mark and Its Subalterns*, 126) and thus a member of the very class he now claims eternal membership within.
[6] Johnson-DeBaufre and Nasrallah, "Beyond the Heroic Paul," 168.
[7] Ibid., 173.

indeed occupy the foretold "always." On the other hand, this chapter tracks the deadly spatial conditions created by gentrification in the Ironbound, elaborating environmental degradation's collusion with racism to force immigrants of color to live in toxic conditions. The dead establish in Mark a place haunted by victims of hegemony across time and space, always making their agencies known. With the text constituted as a haunted place, where actual people can be found, the act of interpretation becomes one of materialization, in which marginalized subjects force their way into the world of the reader, make themselves known, with demands for life.

**"Always" Decentered by the Persistence of the Margins**

With a word—πάντοτε—Jesus conjures the spectral "poor" into the house of Simon the Leper and, thus, into the experiences of readers. This section observes the pattern of biblical scholarship to explore the famous "anointing" of Jesus by an unnamed woman (14:1-11) as an exposition of his tragic messiahship. However, I argue that such a focus on Jesus' identity loses sight of his observation that the "poor" to be "always" present, even when he is not (v. 7). Using Derrida's notion of conjuring as a guide, I argue that Jesus' statement does not dismiss the poor, nor does it call people to action, but instead calls forth the material conditions of poor from "always" into the narrative setting and the experience of the reader. As an example of the material experiences that haunt contemporary, gentrified readers this section explores the environmental degradation of Ironbound communities and that pollution's connection to the neighborhood's residents of color. Such marginalization is necessarily connected to manipulation of space, I argue, particularly insofar as otherness is spatialized away from desirable living places. I then observe an alliance gathering in the abstracted character of the "poor"—that is, a category

without description, but diverse throughout history—by exploring the marginalization of material subjects within Mark's *Sitz im Leben*. With Johnson-DeBaufre and Nasrallah's decentering effort in view, I observe that any confessional reading of Jesus' prediction is persistently "contested" by the material presence of otherwise invisible impoverished communities, regardless of their relationship to Christian scriptures. By taking seriously Jesus' invitation for the "poor" to flood into the narrative moment, this section contends that they are "always" materially active in the lives of readers.[8] Their presence within the story world and within our own, in Johnson-DeBaufre's words, can "ground particularlity" of poverty in this persistently opened chasm.[9] I therefore argue that the sanitary character of gentrified, Western space is broken down by the activity of haunting, impoverished subjects.

*An Insistent "Always"*

Mark is haunted by πάντοτε (14:7). This "always" establishes the house of Simon the Leper as a breech through which poor people from across time-spaces enter the Markan narrative. It opens readers up to voices of resistance to oppression, in the broadest sense, at their most diverse and most particular by ambiguously describing them only by their economic conditions. This scene stars Jesus, as he becomes the focal point of what is apparently a burial ritual: a woman approaches him with an expensive, fragrant

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[8] Ibid. For this reason, I do not want to dwell too on Jesus' poverty in my exegesis. His impoverished condition is not the point; it is already explicit in the Markan narrative. The ghosts of the "poor" across time-spaces haunt in an unmediated manner—as ghosts are want to do—free from the mask off Mark' protagonist. If these specters choose to ally with Jesus, that is their right. My concern is that persistently returning to Jesus' as some sort of paragon of righteous poverty simply valorizes that condition instead of addressing poverty's real impact on everyday lives.

[9] Johson-DeBaufre, "Narrative, Multiplicity, and the Letters of Paul," 369-372.

jar of nard and anoints him (vv. 3-4, 7-9) before he ventures to Jerusalem, to his death (Mark 14-15). As I explore below, commentators largely agree that this narrative move either foreshadows Jesus' impending death or ironically declares the type of messiah he will become: not one who conquers, but one who must die (cf. 8:27-38).[10] But as Jesus fades into death, his response to his disciples' indignation at the woman's expense (14:4-9) calls forth a mass of new protagonists into the second gospel through both the use of the adverb πάντοτε and the verb ἔχω (v. 7). I argue that Jesus' heroic cosmological presence is limited, while the presences of countless marginalized subjects are manifest. Πάντοτε exposes Mark's story and Christology, like Derrida's out-of-joint time, as non-linear and disrupted by the agencies of unseen powers.[11] Moreover, the ambiguity of each character's identity in this passage (excepting Jesus), the prevalence of physical and social death throughout, and the historic stubbornness of diverse hegemonies across human history point to Schüssler Fiorenza's term *kyriarchy* as a useful tool for analysis here. In short, I argue that this passage's narration of oppression in the broadest sense, through its use of abstraction, opens it to voices of resistance at their most diverse and most particular.

Many interpreters of Mark 14:1-11 have near-successfully erased concern for marginalized bodies by focusing only on an apology for Jesus' death. They focus on Jesus' heroic power, sometimes at the expense of readers' potential encounters with minoritized agencies. Many interpretations take Jesus at his word—noting that this pericope is a celebration of his ironic messianic expectations. The woman's use of

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[10] See the discussion in the following paragraph.
[11] Derrida, *Specters*, 1-3, 23-27.

"aromatic oil" (v.3) has been interpreted as a symbolic act, anointing Jesus for various potential futures: kingship, death, or both.[12] With the assumption that kingship and inglorious death are not mutually exclusive, Schüssler Fiorenza argues that the woman performs the "prophetic sign-action" of anointing the head of a king (1 Sam. 10; 16).[13] For Schüssler Fiorenza, this passage's reflection of Israelite-coronations-past imbues the narrative with a political edge.[14] However, other scholars refuse explicitly political interpretations of this pericope. Collins objects, because the type of oil presented here (μύρον; "aromatic oil") is not the "olive oil" (ἔλαιον; cf. 1 Sam. 10:1a) that would have graced the heads of Israelite kings.[15] Other scholars have argued against the kingship

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[12] J.K. Elliott, "The Anointing of Jesus," *Expository Times* 88 (1974), 105-107; Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, xiii-xiv; Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 358-359; Burton L. Mack, *Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 199-204; Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 813; Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20* (Word Biblical Commentary 34B; Nashville: Nelson, 2001), 359-360; John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark* (Sacra Pagina Series 2; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2001), 388; James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Pillar New Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 416; Robert H. Stein, *Mark* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 635; Collins, *Mark*, 641-642; Villalobos Mendoza, *Abject Bodies in the Gospel of Mark*, 38. Collins also extends the possibility that this pericope reflects an allusion to the LXX Song of Songs, in which μύρον appears frequently (Song 1:3-4; 2:5; 4:10). In this way, the oils in Mark 14:3-9 could potentially work to prepare "for a joyous feast," as for a wedding. In any event, the matter is one of the character's intention—certainly, a hard thing to ascertain—which Jesus finally clarifies in v. 8 (Collins, *Mark*, 642). For an argument over the woman's knowledge of the necessity of Jesus' death, see Dennis R. MacDonald, "Renowned Far and Wide: The Women Who Anointed Odysseus and Jesus," in *Feminist Companion to Mark*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine (Feminist Companion to the New Testament and Early Christian Writings; London: Bloomsbury, 2001), 128-135.

[13] Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, xiv; see also Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 358-359.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Collins, *Mark*, 641-642. Along these lines, Donald Juel warns against reading too much into the kingship allusion, because the "wordplay" with anointing only works in

reading, preferring to approach this passage as a preparation for burial. Morna Hooker observes that alabaster jars were used for anointing the dead of antiquity were "often broken and left in the tomb."[16] David Daube—also suspicious of a kingly anointing—more emphatically rejects the notion that Jesus could be both a king and executed as a criminal, that he might not be "buried unanointed, like a common criminal, 'dishonorably, by night.'"[17] But Markan irony raises these very questions: *what if* Jesus is an anointed king, killed like a common criminal and other victims of kyriarchy (e.g. Mark 15:6-15, 27)? Is not this a political death, whether Jesus is a king or not?

The exegetical foundation for Christocentric reading of 14:1-11 is a form-critical argument for an original unity of Mark's passion narrative (14-16). While mid-twentieth-century scholarly investigations of the book's final chapters can be characterized by an interest in its arrangement of disparate earlier material, the 1970s saw a rise in arguments for chapters 14-16's narrative integrity.[18] Paradigmatic of the shift, Werner Kelber argued that the passion makes sense as a narrative whole within the broader Markan story and that, in particular, the list of Jesus' various Christological titles—Son of God, Christ, and

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English (*Mark* [Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990], 189).

[16] Morna D. Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (Black's New Testament Commentary; Black: London, 1991), 329.

[17] David Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (New York: Arno Press, 1973), 314; see also Gundry, *Mark*, 804.

[18] For a summary of the form-critical arguments for the arrangement of pre-Markan material, see Collins, *Mark*, 620-627; Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, 249-268. For a summary on the general shift in Markan scholarship from redaction to narrative criticism and interests in biblical theology, see Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore, "Introduction: The Lives of Mark," in *Mark & Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, 2$^{nd}$ ed., eds. idem. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 1-23.

Son of Man—are all clarified at his trial (14:62).[19] In sum, this effort imagined Mark, in John Donahue's words, as "Author and Theologian."[20] Under this rubric, the second gospel is imagined as a text composed by a theologian and primarily interested in the identity of Jesus, rather than God's role in the life of a traumatized community.[21] As the apex of the story, the passion becomes a thesis statement for a Markan theology. Narratively, Mark 14:1-11 functions as a short, foreshadowing summary of the trauma to come: Verses 1-2 introduce "the chief priests and scribes" plot to kill Jesus, summoning the specter of death. As Jesus is anointed for death by a nameless woman in the house of a leper (v. 3), his trial and death as and alongside other social refuse is foretold. And the final two verses of the pericope complete the deathly pale hanging over the house, announcing Judas' intent to betray Jesus (vv. 10-11). This narrative theology imagined by

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[19] Werner Kelber, "From Passion Narrative to Gospel," in *The Passion in Mark: Studies on Mark 14-16*, ed. idem. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 157; cf. Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, 263.

[20] John R. Donahue, "From Passion Traditions to Passion Narrative," in *The Passion in Mark: Studies on Mark 14-16*, ed. Werner H. Kelber (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 1-20. This effort to understand Mark as a coherent narrative did not begin with the Kelber volume and still continues. It has been exemplified by David Rhoads and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982). See also Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?" in *Mark and Method*: *New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, ed. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 29-58.

[21] Kotrosits and Taussig helpfully collect the "frightening" elements of Mark's ending and lift them above the more triumphal elements of the other three canonical gospels: "This last scene coheres with the other frightening and haunting dimensions of Mark's ending. There is a disturbing consistency in the story. Jesus dies with a desperate cry. A triumphant executioner either mocks or complicates the possibility that Jesus is the son of God. The only people present at Jesus' demise are the marginal and the unknown. There is confusion about how the young man and his linen cloth relate to Jesus. The women's response is completely disappointing. The story hints that this devastating response is actually just what had been commanded" (*Re-Reading the Gospel of Mark*, 16). For more on understanding Mark as a communal product, see Burton Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, 1-24.

Christologically-focused interpretation reads the events within Simon's home as a prelude to Mark's concluding revelation of Jesus-as-Christ (cf. 1:1; 14:61-62).

According to its critics, the form-critical argument for narrative unity in the passion lacks attention to the socio-political dynamics in which Mark participates. Nicole Wilkinson Duran argues that Mark's use of parables, apocalypse, violence, and silence points to "tolerance for that which he does not fully understand," understanding that could be filled in by community life, memory, or ritual.[22] Mark, this means, is not a theologian, but a writer.[23] Even if we accept Mark's passion is a discrete unit, we miss the role community life must have played in its creation. Indeed, Richard Horsley calls attention to the fact that, though the Gospel of Mark may be theological, we cannot adequately imagine the author as a solitary theologian, but instead "ominous power-relations, with the chief priests and Pilate wielding death-dealing political-economic power and the hemorrhaging woman and the poor widow in desperate economic circumstances."[24] Markan scholarship has struggled to imagine the text as equally productive as a sacred text and wrapped up in the power dynamics of its historical moment.

How, then, might we imagine the politics of Mark's passion? The problem Burton Mack identifies in the above arguments for Mark 14-16's unity is that interpretation's

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[22] Nicole Wilkinson Duran, *The Power of Disorder: Ritual Elements in Mark's Passion Narrative* (Library of New Testament Studies 378; London: T&T Clark, 2008), 12; see also John Keats, "Letter to George and Thomas Keats, Dec. 21, 1817," in *The Norton Introduction to Literature*, eds. Carl E. Bain, Jerome Beaty, and J. Paul Hunter, 3rd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1981), 753.
[23] Duran, *Power of Disorder*, 12.
[24] Richard A. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000), x.

tendency to treat the passion "as if in a bubble."[25] Attendance only to the passage's Christological intent fails to account for "the messy history of Second Temple Judaism."[26] Mack argues that such studies of Mark's passion have treated modern Christian faith as the interpretive benchmark for understanding the narrative, rather than the language of its context.[27] Indeed, every aspect of Mark's narrative, as Horsely puts it, cannot be appreciated apart from "its 'politics.'"[28] In short, the scholarly concept of the passion narrative has homed in on the author, while neglecting to fully describe the community of origin. Attention alone to the narrative as it stands, Schüssler Fiorenza points out, "depoliticizes the story of Jesus' passion," by privileging Christian piety over the role of the Romans in Jesus' suffering and death.[29] Instead, she suggests that the passage itself draws in a politics of a community contested by women: while the narrator may try to paper over the role of women as disciples, the declaration of Jesus persists: "Wherever the good news is proclaimed in the cosmos, what she did will be told in memory of her" (14:9). The gospel and politics of gender are therefore always already wrapped up in the composition of this passage. Mark's narration of Jesus' death says something about women to his community, and his community says something about women. Lived politics are at play, even as a Christology is explored.

Focus on Jesus' death elides the politics of poverty negotiated here, an erasure in which the Markan narrator may also be complicit. As I have acknowledged, Jesus' impending execution hovers over this scene, which focuses the woman's symbolic

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[25] Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, 265.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 264.
[28] Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 10.
[29] Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, xiv.

anointing on that coming event: she prepares his body for burial (v. 8). Considering she is blessed for acknowledging Jesus' messianic purpose (vv. 7-8), we can follow the work of most scholars and observe that Mark wants to say something about Jesus' Christological identity. This notion is challenged by some followers present who reject the woman's memorial as waste of 300 denarii: could it not have been given to the poor (v. 5)? After all, did not Jesus set this precedent earlier in his mission (10:17-22)? The sudden prevalence of poverty stands in contrast to the ostensible purpose of this narrative moment. Having expended so much effort establishing Jesus' doomed future, Jesus assures readers that the poor are of secondary importance here: "You always have the poor with you…but you do not always have me" (πάντοτε γὰρ τοὺς πτωχοὺς ἔχετε μεθ' ἑαυτῶν…ἐμὲ δὲ οὐ πάντοτε ἔχετε; 14:7).

However, any assurance that the poor might be relegated to secondary importance in this moment is disturbed by Jesus' use of linguistic tenses, which remove him from the future and invite the poor into an eternal future. Jesus' address to the followers in the room is in the second-person plural (ἔχετε; v. 7), indicating a large audience. At first blush, we might assume that the narrator intends for his character to speak only to those present in the room. However, the use of the present tense in Jesus' declaration, "You do not always have me" (ἐμὲ δὲ οὐ πάντοτε ἔχετε; v. 7b), makes little sense if delivered only to those in Simon's house, because in the present *they do have Jesus*.[30] If instead we

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[30] Donnahue and Harrington contend that this statement constitutes yet another "passion prediction" (Donnahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 387). Narratively, this is indeed the case, but the deployment of the present tense, as well as the social-temporal location of the audience makes a theological point—perhaps one acknowledging a non-transcendent Jesus—to the Markan community. Both can be true: in the narrative Jesus would not be with the disciples forever and now, Mark contends, Jesus is not (always) with them.

consider Jesus' reinforcement of the woman's actions to target an audience living after the second gospel's plot, then the present active indicative verb seems reasonable, because he is now dead. Considering the audience's temporal distance permits us to both read Jesus' address as meaningful to readers after the fact and as a memorial of Jesus' death before it occurs in the narrative.

Additionally, while Jesus is no longer present, the poor are conjured "always." Although the poor seem to be buried in favor of a violent, tragic Christology, Jesus ironically conjures the realities of poverty into the forefront of the scene. While I hope to take up more "particulars" from "silenced or elided" communities, as Johnson-DeBaufre and Nasrallah recommend,[31] the at times universal and ambiguous use of identity, language, and time here enacts what Derrida terms a conjuration. Conjurations have the dual function of both (a) banishing a spirit from a place through an "oath" and (b) evoking a ghost through an incantation.[32] Speaking about the poor, Jesus dismisses them in favor of his own recognition. But Derrida writes that an exorcism merely "pretends to declare the death only in order to put to death."[33] That is, in a Derridean vein, Jesus forces the poor further to the margins, so that he might be centered: he appears to exorcise, but instead conjures. His language achieves this end more clearly: while Mark's Jesus banishes the poor from the room, the present-tense declaration of their presence "always" (πάντοτε ) and Jesus' presence "not always" pushes poverty into the realm of the reading community, those whom we now know "do not have" Jesus. The use of

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[31] Johnson-DeBaufre and Nasrallah, "Beyond the Heroic Paul," 168. See also Schussler Fiorenza's call for biblical scholars to take up a "history from below" (*In Memory of Her*, xv).
[32] Derrida, *Specters* 49.
[33] Ibid., 59.

πάντοτε refers to a fullness of time—*always*—and fills this with the poor, while acknowledging Jesus' absence. The two are presented as oppositional, insofar as Jesus can only be recognized in this moment, because *the poor will take his place in perpetuity*. His death and his exorcism of the ghastly poor make room for them eternally.

Even as Jesus becomes recognized, perhaps even in his true form as a crucified messiah, memory of him is always already replaced, pursued, and haunted by faceless others. Jesus, the only named character in this scene, has been followed by the theme of death since 8:31 into this place that anoints him for burial and is bracketed by his future execution. In a moment of funerary remembrance, Elaine Wainwright argues, the "an-economic" gift economy supersedes a "commodity-exchange" economy.[34] In short, the woman's gift should not be judged on its material value, and must be read instead as founded in an incalculable mourning beyond the precision of exchange economies. The anointing μύρον, in its excess, defies the logics of commodities, because it evokes webs of relationships instead of cold value: from the Indian spice plant from which the nard comes to the poor who, she reads as the *basileia* of God come near" (1:15), are released from their dependence on an economy of exchange.[35] In other words, the outrageous gift demonstrates a way to relate to invisible others, beyond exploitation of resources; the sheer excessiveness of the gift signals the immense needs of the poor for whom Jesus is merely a temporary substitute. It takes a performance of Jesus' burial, a recognition of his

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[34] Elaine Wainwright, "Healing Ointment/Healing Bodies: Gift and Identification in an Ecofeminist Reading of Mark 14:3-9," in *Exploring Ecological Hermeneutics*, ed. Peter L. Trudinger (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 131-139. The term "an-economic" comes from Derrida's concept of messianic justice which arrives as a gift (*Specters*, 26). Wainwright does not explicitly engage with Derrida here, but her usage of "gift" economy aligns with his.
[35] Wainwright, "Healing Ointment/Healing Bodies," 134-138.

absence, to re-center into the narrative the web of relations we might otherwise miss in the Markan account. Now we can ask, what happens when, in the wake of Jesus' death, any number of unnamed subjects flood into the space left in his absence? More, if Jesus is "not always" with his followers, is this the place where an alliance amidst death can break in? The blessing of an unnamed woman's act *as nameless*, creates a suitable blessing of the unnamed beings within abstracted places.[36] It is the ambiguity and anonymity here that announces a possibility for *anyone* attached to these characters to insert their demands. That death brackets this place where nameless subjects begin to exercise presence and agency is no coincidence: as we have seen, Jesus' presence in the scene consistently sees interpreters point to his identity as the purpose for the passage. With knowledge that his future absence is inevitable, the particularities of poverty—of any marginalized group—will always be told where abstraction reigns.

A cross-temporal alliance forms in this passage, because kyriarchy puts people to death-by-abstraction across time-spaces. Coining the neologism *kyriarchy*, Schüssler

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[36] To this end, Ryan Patrick McLaughlin writes that this moment "creates an open space of the outsider" to "add to" the gospel ("The Interruption of Patriarchal Calculation by the Unnamed Female Other in Mark 14:3-9, *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 45, no. 2 [2015], 99-107). cf. Collins, *Mark*, 641. Adele Reinhartz also makes this point (*Why Ask My Name? Anonymity and Identity in the Biblical Narrative* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1998], 186; cf. Teresa J. Hornsby, "The Annoying Woman: Biblical Scholarship after Judith Butler," in *Bodily Citations: Religion and Judith Butler*, eds. Ellen T. Armour and Susan M. St. Ville [New York: Columbia University Press, 2006], 81). The anointing woman and her Synoptic counterpart (Luke 7:36-50) have drawn persistent negative allusions, particularly to the erroneous claim that she is a prostitute. Evelyn Thibeaux argues that the anonymity and silence of the woman is precisely the impetus for this phenomenon ("The Narrative Rhetoric of Luke 7:36-50: A Study of Context, Text, and Interpretation" [PhD diss. Graduate Theological Union, 1990], 475), but Hornsby helpfully points out that this reading privileges the power of speech over silence, rather than analyzing the work of performativity in any narrative or personal interactions (Hornsby, "Annoying Woman," 81).

Fiorenza addresses the domination of marginalized people historically, a form of domination that looks different across societies, but still manages to maintain a hegemony of one group over others.[37] Oppression is never a simple performance of patriarchy, imperialism, or racism, but a constantly shifting set of relations that subjugates people across times and places. The faceless Other(s) conjured into the house of Simon the Leper form a powerful alliance. Kyriarchal systems, across time-spaces depend on the social death of the oppressed, and the creation of unlivable, nameless, abstracted lives.[38] Not only is Jesus' death simulated in this place, but relief for the poor is presented as merely a less preferential option to his anointing, a point highlighted by Wainwright's observation of the limits of a commodity-exchange economy: a woman enters into a masculine place and is treated as a disruption.[39] Kyriarchy is at work here, too—not least because we meet our characters on the frontiers of Roman conquest. Where kyriarchy operates, it creates an underside that haunts those who benefit from hegemony; it is haunted by its necessary subjects, the vast foundation for its pyramidal structure. Here we find an alliance represented by, in Schüssler Fiorenza's words, "a radical democratic system" where power is exercised "through the human capacities for respect, responsibility, self-determination, and self-esteem."[40] Where kyriarchy reigns, a

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[37] Schüssler Fiorenza, "Introduction," 9.
[38] For more on this phenomenon, which has largely worked under the moniker of "necropolitics," see Mbembe, "Necropolitics;" Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*; Cacho, *Social Death*.
[39] Wainwright, "Healing Ointment/Healing Bodies," 134. Here Wainwright engages with Jonathan Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire: The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 8.
[40] Schüssler Fiorenza, "Introduction," 14.

demand for democracy haunts from those who enter into an alliance across time-spaces. When Jesus' conjures the poor "always," they enter into that alliance.

Simon's house becomes a democratic gathering place for particular, anonymous subjects to resist hegemony wherever it appears: their abstraction is an opening for an expended alliance. "Disaggregated" territories, created by colonial powers, were a necessary first step for "the massacre" of conquered people, argues Mbembe.[41] Abstraction makes death possible by eliminating the uniqueness of those within. Just as space has been deployed by contemporary regimes as a tool for ordering populations, so too has history sucked democratic impulses out of the post-Cold War world order. Here in Simon's home, the same abstraction runs rampant: we never meet Simon the Leper, the "poor" are merely offered as a contrast to Jesus' remembrance, and the other prominent character in the scene is an unnamed, muted woman. The room, the oil, the woman, and the future all focus on Jesus' death. Specificity is not explicitly offered by the text. When it is, as with the name of the homeowner, Simon, the extra detail given is with the qualifier, "Leper" (14:3): a moment bracketed narratively by a moment of betrayal to the executioner and physically by the walls of a diseased outcast. Within such contexts, multiplicity of people and events haunt. Derrida argues as much when he critiques Francis Fukuyama's triumphant ode for the apparent rise of a capitalist hegemony—we have reached "the end of history and the last man"—arguing that "where man, a certain concept of man, is finished, there the pure humanity of…the other man *as other*

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[41] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 34. This phenomenon is part of what Mbembe terms the "state of siege" under which colonized bodies subsist in the neoliberal order. Here, territorialized places are carved up and understood as lawless frontiers where life has no chance to flourish and where any means necessary can be used to defend civilization ("Necropolitics," 30).

begins."[42] In other words, hegemonies smooth out differences inherent within time and place. Like with territorialized space, colonizing powers eliminate the inconvenience and potential resistance inherent within haunting diversities.

When a group of people is described away, sucked of unique particularities, a larger group of people is called into presence. The particularities of the "poor" in Mark's world are certainly elided, but it is also true that the "poor" is an innumerable collection of people. To invoke impoverished communities is to also call to account the manifold circumstances they live in and those complicit in their poverty. More than that, this largely abstracted group of people is drawn in "always"—that is, across time. Even when hegemonic powers struggle to abstract large populations, their lived particularities exceed such descriptions. When hegemonies ignore the uniqueness of those whose lives have been rendered forfeit by those very centers of control, victims of the powers resist with specificity.[43] With Mark's Gospel at issue, the question for the present project is whether Jesus can be sidelined so that the spectral bodies of the poor and their contexts, past and present, might be recognized "always."

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[42] Derrida, *Specters*, 93.

[43] Much of what I argue here may seem fertile ground for affect theory and the notion of "assemblage," as Jasbir Puar seeks to "[enable] attention to ontology in tandem with epistemology, affect in conjunction with representational economies, within which bodies interpenetrate, swirl together, and transmit affects and effects to each other" (*Terrorist Assemblages*, 205). Her turn to "assemblage" as a tool for description of bodies understood as threatening to the neoliberal order is guided by discontent with "intersectionality," which is "indebted in one sense to the taken-for-granted presence of the subject and its permutations of content and form, rather than an investigation of the predominance of subjecthood itself" (ibid., 206). While I find much of this volume from Puar helpful and do not disagree with some of the salient points she makes about identity's construction out-of-time (cf. ibid., xxii), my focus on subjects who are not given the right to personhood, whose subjectivity is persistently abstracted, to my mind, demands description and "excavation." Thus, I deploy the term "alliance" more freely than I do "assemblage," so as to highlight the agency at work in death worlds.

*Some Particulars of "Always"*

Many kyriarchal regimes depend on the same type of abstraction at work in the description of the "poor," or of leaving women unnamed. Under the neoliberal capitalist order of the post-Cold War United States, these practices are taken up as a process of covering up the stench of death with a fragrance of life. In the shadow of the Covanta Energy garbage incinerator in the Ironbound, scent marks the boundary lines of the living and the dead.[44] While local residents face an acrid smell, they also face the reality that certain places are aggregated and marked as proper locations for substandard living, that others might have privilege. Though those who live in the detritus of gentrification face kyriarchy's broad assault on their unique lives, the particulars of their everyday life resist such abstracting power. Newark's Ironbound has resisted this practice by establishing movements to combat persistent degradation of its local environment. While state, municipal, national, and commercial interests have so long understood all of Newark in general and its East Ward in particular to be open, stagnant, and calculable, its everyday resistance to the elimination of diversity shows it to be a dynamic, vital thing.

Industrial and environmental trajectories, however, cannot be separated from social and ideological problems of racism and gentrification. A majority of the Ironbound's residents are either people of color, non-English speaking, or migrants.[45] It is

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[44] Nestled among low-income houses, the Covanta garbage incinerator violated its emissions agreement 900 times between 2005 and 2009 (Brian T. Murray, "Newark Residents Say Garbage Incinerator Poses Health Risks," *Newark Star-Ledger* [December 5, 2009]; cf. Robin Schulman, "Newark Incinerator's Neighbors Want Less Trash to Burn," *New York Times* [June 10, 2005]).

[45] Matthew B. Immergut and Laurel D. Kearns, "When Nature is Rats and Roaches: Religious Eco-Justice Activism in Newark, NJ," *Journal of for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 6, no. 2 (July 2012): 6.

no coincidence that this demographic makeup is reflected in a community near such a concentration of superfund sites. Two studies commissioned by the United Church of Christ, one in 1987 and another in 2007, concluded that non-white race and low income were statistically significant indicators of whether one might live closer to a toxic site.[46] The toxicity of the ground and air in the Ironbound finds a direct correlation with the skin color and ethnicity of its residents. Furthermore, these problems are compounded by the unique struggles of migrant communities in the United States. While other communities in similar situations to the Ironbound might see residents energized for activism on behalf of their neighborhoods, leaders here have found this work more challenging. As Immergut and Kearns summarize their conversation with Reverend Moacir Weirich of St. Stephan's Grace Church on Ferry Street:

> Energy spent on survival leaves little time for attending to non-immediate issues such as proposals for the construction of new incinerators or supporting hazardous waste clean-up. For many, the fear of deportation for themselves or family members, as well as historically inscribed fears of political retaliation or suppression of political activism, also contributes to their wariness in taking part in even the simplest political acts such as signing a petition or attending a rally.[47]

Indeed, the broader ideological assumptions of American exceptionalism, nationalism, and empire compound barriers for any agential ability of Ironbound residents to advocate for their very environment. Quite literally, a quest for American "life," which declares its

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[46] Bullard et al. "Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty: 1987-2007," *United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries, Cleveland* (2007). The authors of the 2007 study, who coined the term "environmental racism," in fact, noted that twenty years on, the "racial disparities in the distribution of hazardous wastes are greater than previously reported" (x).

[47] Immergut and Kearns, "When Nature is Rats and Roaches," 16.

insiders and outsiders, creates a persistent poor as a constitutive other.[48] While the "poor" of Mark 14:1-11 are abstract, the reality of poverty in the Ironbound portrays their marginalization as a kyriarchal struggle: against capitalism, against racism, against xenophobia. Indeed, the "poor" always, πάντοτε, persist within the conditions of intersecting oppressions.

*A Polluted "Always"*

If Jesus' statement is a conjuration of poverty across contexts into this passage, the particular agencies, bodies, and struggles emerging out of local contexts like the toxic Ironbound become "trajectories," to which Massey attributes "history, change, and movement of things."[49] Mark 14:8's πάντοτε invites particular, material stories into Simon's house, who do not bear a benign ambiguity of generic poverty, but the particulars that always occupy victimization of systemic oppression. Jesus' apparent declaration to the audience, where and whenever they might gather, that "you always have the poor, but you do not always have me," necessarily brings together the social dynamics of all particular reading communities as forces pulling apart a universal singularity of a "Christ." As Jesus draws them in at the precise moment his future begins to fade, the particulars of poverty become the very stuff that constitutes 14:1-11 as a dynamic time-space. Here localities interpret one another: marginalized bodies in the Ironbound, now particularized, offer not just a hermeneutic for thinking about the interpreter's responsibility for the poor, but a hermeneutic for historical excavation of

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[48] Here I follow Puar's discussion of Rey Chow's notion of the "ascendancy to whiteness" (Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, 24-32; Rey Chow, *The Protestant Ethnic and the Spirit of Capitalism* [New York: Columbia University Press, 2002]).
[49] Massey, *For Space*, 12.

oppressed subjectivities of the Markan context. Abstraction in any form rubs up against the agency of insistent particularity. Under this rubric, oppressed communities of past time should not be seen as only inspiration for contemporary contextual hermeneutics, but investigable precisely because of their common relationship to kyriarchy. The "poor" emerge with the force of everyday life from wherever kyriarchy reigns to contest its control over any context. When hegemonies anywhere attempt to construct a pure history—like the history of Mark's Christology—the "poor" "always" pollute that story, their multiplicity calling attention to the kyriarchal foundation of the privilege.

In much the same way commentators tend to ignore marginalized agencies in favor of Jesus' Christological identity, they also scrub Simon's house of the gritty particularities of first-century poverty. Ultimately, the problem I name here is born out of the practice of interpretation, particularly as it is applied to this passage. That is, even if we were to accede to the goal of reading this passage for its Christological implications, excavating the material of first-century poverty in the Roman empire would be necessary to any resulting theology.[50] Without such data we have no idea if Jesus' comparative declaration, which is apparently predicated on his identity's relationship to the poor, is alarming, profound, or even somewhat mundane. Rather, readers are left to consider this crucial theological moment observationally, with the resources they have at their

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[50] As Johnson-DeBaufre and Nasrallah propose, relative to Paul, "By shifting the lens from Paul alone to Paul among others, we gain a better understanding of differences of opinion and perspective, thereby opening debates and productive collaborations both ancient and contemporary, rather than limiting our understanding of the political vision and practices of the Christ assemblies to whatever Paul alone meant or means" ("Beyond the Heroic Paul," 162). Jesus is one among many impoverished subjects; to subsume those others material conditions to Jesus' spiritual identity misses out on the political situation within which he exists and the diverse political potentials of this passage.

disposal.[51] This gets to the broader problem addressed in this project, discussed in preceding chapters: privileged Christian readers of Mark's gospel have ever-decreasing face-to-face contact with impoverished people. Commentators have followed two general patterns in their turn toward a Markan theology of the cross sans the poor: (1) nearly ignoring the statement that seems to put theology before action on behalf of the poor or (2) briefly explaining the priority of the Markan Jesus' continually relevant commandments to serve the poor. In the first instance, by far the least common, Gundry's argument offers an arch-example, as he contends that the syntactical structure of verse seven deploys the "always" of the "poor's" presence as an intensifier for the "not always" of Jesus' presence.[52] This notion subsumes actual material poverty to Jesus' identity. Regarding the second pattern, Stein highlights Markan or Jewish almsgiving in an apology for Jesus' dismissal: "This [statement by Jesus in v. 7] by no way minimizes the importance of ministering to the poor, which was clearly a vital concern of Jesus and Mark (10:21; cf. Luke 4:18; 7:22; 14:13, 21: 19:8; etc.)."[53] Whether the "poor" operate as a rhetorical tool or remain an important object for sacred giving practices, interpreters' focus has largely lingered on the relationship of particular characters to Jesus' burgeoning confessional identity.

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[51] For a discussion of first-century poverty in the Roman empire, see my discussion below.
[52] Gundry, *Mark*, 802. A massive issue with this lack of concern for how the "poor" operate in this reading is Gundry's failure to account for the reason why the "poor," in *particular*, intensify Jesus' impending absence.
[53] Stein, *Mark*, 634. Note Stein's usage of non-Markan allusions to care for the poor. For other arguments similar to this, see Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 359; Hooker, *Saint Mark*, 329; John Painter, *Mark's Gospel: Worlds in Conflict* (London: Routledge, 1997), 182; Boring, *Mark* 383-384; Collins, *Mark*, 642.

Some commentators, however, have followed the opening created by Jesus' conjuration and introduced examples of particular hauntings in Mark 14. Broadly, the anonymous characters draw on the needs, experiences, and desires of contemporary minoritized communities and elucidate new meaning alongside Mark's *Sitz im Leben*.[54] They make space within Mark's gospel for a gathering alliance of ghosts. Manuel Villalobos Mendoza, for example, remembers a woman named Pola from his childhood village in Mexico. Pola, he writes, was an unmarried woman who, as Villalobos Mendoza's mother put it, "behaved not like a woman but like a man."[55] Eventually, because her gender performance exposed the masculinity of local men to be so unstable, Pola's land was taken away from her by her own neighbors. "By the way in which she used her body, she could be classified as a *marimacha y hocicona*," writes Villalobos Mendoza, "These *marimachas*…have little to do with their sexual orientation. Their struggles were against discrimination, the gender division of labor, violence, injustice, and having their voices silenced."[56] This is the sort of move which makes the anointing

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[54] Villalobos Mendoza refers passingly to the anointing woman's transgression of "juridical, political, and religious systems" (*Abject Bodies*, 36). Myers, uncited, assumes poverty among the Jesus community, a notion which does not hold in this particular instance, insofar as the woman's gift of nard is plainly extravagant (*Binding the Strongman*, 359). Seong Hee Kim provides more focused attention to the imperial context of Mark, noting the ways the woman's anointing is a direct response to Roman occupation and an "eschatological action to bring forth the kingdom of God with the coronation of the new emperor, Jesus" (*Mark, Women, and Empire*, 108-110; cf. Liew, *Politics of Parousia*, 46-62). These readings, as I indicate above, make rigorous work of theory and deploy complex relations to the past. My argument is simply that the intellectual and imaginative tools biblical scholars have in relating to the past force them to participate in the marginalizing practices that abstract bodies invisible to those with privilege.

[55] Villalobos Mendoza, *Abject Bodies*, 33.

[56] Ibid., 34-35. Here, and throughout this discussion, Villalobos Mendoza converses with Judith Butler on gender performativity and the fragility and instability of gender (*Undoing Gender* [New York: Routledge, 2004], 10).

woman, now indistinguishable from Pola, so dangerous in Mark 14:1-11: her assertive performance in male space has exposed Jesus' "enigmatic identity" to be one which "acknowledges defeat," Jesus as *descarado*.[57] Occupying this position, then, Mark recognizes both the necessity of understanding poverty and sexual violence as intersecting and the need for a subversive messianic figure to occupy this social location. In this way, the turn toward death here for Villalobos Mendoza is one in which discipleship is defined as becoming *descarados*.[58]

Unfortunately, the central goal of elucidating Jesus' identity, no matter how subversive, continues to force the "poor" into abstraction, because they remain a comparative against which Jesus' identity might be formed. Contextual readings, like that from Villalobos Mendoza are helpful in part because they offer a particular trajectory in the void left by the anointing woman's namelessness; the "poor" here become a political and liberatory resource for particular abject bodies and are identified as such with the very agency of contemporary, marginalized readers.[59] However, readings of this sort often do not pose the question to privileged readers, how have you participated in the abject of and what responsibility do you bear to Pola? These exegetical turns limit their own political potential insofar as they maintain the ambiguity of the "poor." While

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[57] Villalobos Mendoza, *Abject Bodies*, 37.

[58] Ibid., 44-46. Another exceptional project along these lines is Kim's vision of the anointing woman as Korean Christian women, who, in her words, risked death to raise "women's consciousness and social position" and led the *Sam Il* independence movement under Japanese rule during World War II (*Mark, Women, and Empire*, 106-108).

[59] Villalobos Mendoza's volume concludes with a "First Letter of Manuel Villalobos Mendoza to the Markan Community." This chapter offers a contextually-situated effort to populate the Markan community, at the very least, as a material community able to receive, read, and comprehend letters formed around the interpretation of the second gospel. The stated goal of this exercise, which seems to occur within liberation theology-infused base communities, is for liberation (*Abject Bodies*, 166).

interpretation as a tactic allows for disenfranchised readers to exercise agency relative to scriptures, it depends on the notion of textual space belonging uniquely to particular reading groups and individuals, who might potentially view their various readings as always divorced from the needs of other communities. But if we acknowledge the "poor" conjured into Simon's house as "trajectories" with "stories," to use Massey's terminology, poverty and its subjectivities can be acknowledge as agents with "history, change, movement, of things themselves."[60] Alongside the poor of Villalobos Mendoza's community on the south side of Chicago as well as those suffering the toxicity of the Ironbound, the conjured trajectory of the "poor" draws a multiplicity of experiences into a present space. The opportunity I identify here, rather, is a chance for gentrified readers to encounter the poor in materiality and in agency.

The alliance of impoverished communities building in Mark 14:1-11, given specificity by contemporary communities haunting readers or themselves interpreting the passage, also gains members across time as readers encounter real early imperial Roman poverty. Some particularities of the "poor" who were "always" with the Markan community are impossible to come by, because the evangelist's immediate context has proven elusive.[61] But data on poverty in the first-century Roman empire at least draws

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[60] Massey, *For Space*, 12.

[61] Arguments for the location of Markan authorship are not only speculative, but highly imprecise. The two sides to the debate traditionally place authorship in Rome or the eastern provinces. The imprecision on behalf of scholars arguing for a Roman location comes from their use of patristic sources, who assume that Mark was Peter's companion (cf. W.H.C. Frend, *The Early Church* [Knowing Christianity; Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1966], 77; for early Christian references, see, Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 3.1.1; Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies*, 7.30; for a summary of the early Christian sources and conversation, see, C. Clifton Black, *Mark: Images of an Apostolic Interpreter* [Studies on Personalities of the New Testament; Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994], 115-120; Collins, *Mark*, 7-10). Of course, even if one can prove

Mark 14's abstracted impoverished people into a materially conceivable subsistence. Working within Pauline studies, Steven Friesen offers a "poverty scale" (fig. 1) in an attempt to more fully flesh out the persistence and omnipresence of subsistence and sub-subsistence living within the empire in the first-century cities.[62] The spectrum of urban

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Mark was present with Peter in Rome, a central tenet of this argument, this claim still requires proof that someone named Mark wrote the second gospel. Another argument for Roman authorship is the narrator's use of Latin loanwords such as "Syro-Phoenician" (7:26) and *quadrons* (12:42) points, at least, to a Roman audience (Collins, *Mark*, 9). But as the linguistic effects of empire dictate, words and phrases often accompany conquest, and thus these terms could just as easily be used among Greek or Aramaic speakers exposed to certain Roman words.

Regarding the argument that Mark was written in the eastern provinces, we run into the problems (a) that "eastern provinces" still tells us very little about a precise location and (b) that much of this argument depends on Mark's geographic familiarity with the region of the Decapolis. On the latter point, as Collins summarizes, scholars proposing an eastern provincial origin are interested in Mark's imagination of the arrangement of cities in the Decapolis (for this conversation see Collins, *Mark*, 9; cf. Gerd Theissen, *The Gospels in Context: Social and Political History in the Synoptic Tradition* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991], 243-244). Many have noted Mark's apparently jumbled geography in the narration of the seafaring adventures of chapters 4-6 (see the following chapter for a discussion of this problem), and therefore raising the specter that the author had very little knowledge of the neighboring region to Galilee and must have lived elsewhere. Collins argues, contrarily, that the narrator's description of the Decapolis in fact mirrors that of Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History* (5.16-17). But this argument fails to account for a biographical note on Pliny: that he lived his life in Roman Italy. That is, Mark's author and Pliny may very well have an identical mental map of the region around Galilee, but that notion merely makes it more likely that they have a similar source for that knowledge, not necessarily a local experience with the Decapolis.

Given such lack of evidence, I assume throughout the present project that the Markan author's location cannot be known, but that we can at least acknowledge an attachment of some sort to the region around Judea.

[62] Suspicious that twentieth-century Pauline scholarship's description of "social status" elided the role poverty played in determining where one fit within a society, Friesen set out to break through what he saw as reconstructions of Pauline *ekklēsiai* indirectly participating in capitalist-Marxist conflicts ("Poverty in Pauline Studies: Beyond the So-Called New Consensus," *JSNT* 26, no. 3 [2004], esp. 323-339). Building on the work of Moses Finley, Friesen argues that the largely agrarian economy of the Roman empire would have no means for "the commercial exploitation of the empire nor the middle class to undertake such activities" (Friesen, "Poverty," 338; cf. Moses I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy* [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973]). His break

wealth during the early-imperial period, Friesen argues, can be broken down into seven general gradients. The top three represent wealthy senatorial and equestrian classes, comprising roughly 3% of a given city's population.[63] The next two segments of entrepreneurs, veterans, or artisans lived with either "moderate surplus" or stably above subsistence, but are stubbornly difficult to measure within themselves. These groups account for roughly 29% of all residents of the empire.[64] The bottom three rungs of the Roman poverty ladder cover 68% of the early empire's population. Contributing to this reality would have been the near-impossibility of gaining ownership of land, the prohibitive cost of slave labor for the working poor, and the cost of living in cities where entrepreneurism may be more possible. As a result, most freedpersons, farmer laborers, hired artisans, widows, orphans, and beggars lived at or below subsistence-level poverty.[65] The value of this scale, as Friesen writes, is that it is "preferable to the covert models" which have been used to elaborate first-century Roman poverty.[66]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| PS1 | Imperial elites | imperial dynasty, Roman senatorial families, a few retainers, local royalty, a few freedpersons |
| PS2 | Regional or provincial elites | equestrian families, provincial officials, some retainers, some decurial families, some freedpersons, some retired military officers |

with Finley, as elaborated here, is an elaboration on Finley's binary division of ultra-wealth and extreme poverty to a seven-layered scale. For examples of the so-called "new-consensus" on Pauline poverty, whose hypothesis Friesen rejects, see, for example, Adolf Deissmann, *Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957 [2nd edn, 1925]); Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982); Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983).

[63] Friesen, "Poverty," 343-345.

[64] Friesen attributes this challenge to the difficulty to gain wealth within the empire, as I note in my next point (ibid., 346-347).

[65] Ibid., 341, 343-435.

[66] Ibid., 347.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| PS3 | Municipal elites | most decurial families, wealthy men, and women who do not hold office, some freedperson, some retainers, some veterans, some merchants |
| PS4 | Moderate surplus resources | some merchants, some traders, some freedpersons, some artisans, and military veterans |
| PS5 | Stable near subsistence level | many merchants and traders, regular wage earners, artisans, large shop owners, freedpersons, some farm families |
| PS6 | At subsistence level | small farm families, laborers, artisans, wage earners, most merchants and traders, small shop/tavern owners |
| PS7 | Below subsistence level | some farm families, unattached widows, orphans, beggars, disabled unskilled day laborers, prisoners[67] |

*Figure 1*

While the presence of the “poor” tells us little of the Markan community, consideration of both the poverty scale and contemporary materiality of the Ironbound establishes a framework for seeing the persistence of poverty across contexts. The poverty scale above establishes a “trajectory” within the house of Simon the Leper that opens it *universally* to *particular* subjects who can count themselves among the growing alliance staking a claim on this place. Kyriarchy exists across time-spaces; the poverty it creates is similarly universal. As spare as it is, the Roman poverty scale gives us particular examples of that universal poverty, as do accounts of polluted ground water and air in the Ironbound. These particulars haunt the “poor” “always,” gathering together around this scripturalized house. The poor-as-trajectory includes *both* the Ironbound migrants, seeking life at the expense of advocating for their own environment, *and* the first-century poor for whom the grand, prohibitively-expensive gesture of the anointing

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[67] Ibid., 341.

woman would have been impossible.[68] The needs that arise from the material conditions of poverty prevent the poor from advocating for themselves: immigrants in Newark cannot afford to fight for environmental justice and the provincial poor of the Roman empire are apparent excess in the face of Christological confession. Consideration of impoverished communities within a single trajectory reveal unique particularities, as well as lacunas in available knowledge, but they also offer counternarratives across time-spaces. As Massey argues, contesting trajectories constitute "the spatial…[as] the sphere of multiplicity, and the mutual opacity which that necessarily entails, which requires constitution of the social and the political."[69] Space is necessarily multiple in its expression and therefore also political. The poor-as-trajectory draw in histories of poverty from across time-spaces to engage socially and politically with the Markan Jesus. Thus conceived, this place is haunted by the "poor," so that the reader is confronted with the Roman-era day laborer and orphan, as well as the interpreter's participation in the poisoning of the Ironbound migrant.

Finally, Jesus and his disciples themselves flesh out some particularities of poverty by their very presence. C.I. David Joy puts it succinctly:

> Many Markan scholars advocated a sociopolitical understanding of the issue as the poor were victims of sociopolitical oppression. Many characters in Mark belong to this category: fishermen from Galilee (1:16-20); a minor customs employee (2:13-14); a Zealot (3:18).[70]

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[68] The 300 denarii cost of the nard is as much or more than an urban day laborer would make in a year, according to Friesen's scale (ibid., 344).
[69] Massey, *For Space*, 155.
[70] Joy, *Mark and Its Subalterns*, 125. See also Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 120; Wolfgang Stegeman, *The Gospel and the Poor* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 23.

Jesus spends his time in and around the impoverished. Even as a rural carpenter, in a colonized territory, there is little reason to believe Jesus did live above the subsistence level.[71] When Jesus declares his impending fade into social death, it may not, therefore, be much of a journey; indeed, he may simply be returning to where he came from: far from a hero, but one of the masses.

The particular, material realities of poverty across time-spaces, now invoked into the Markan passion narrative by a πάντοτε, contest this passage, rejecting a confessional reading as its only possibility. To conjure the poor into a place set up in memoriam of a crucified messiah means inviting particular stories into that confession. While this does not preclude that Mark 14:1-11 is a narrative moment where Jesus' identity as a messiah is fleshed out, it does mean that this identity is never separate from the political and material realities of those crushed by kyriarchy. Because their condition is invited in the widest, most abstract terms—the "poor," in general, invited to and from "always"—an overwhelming possibility for those present within Jesus' exposition of his identity is invoked. The actual particularities of those who are unable to advocate for their wellbeing in the Ironbound or those barely subsisting in Roman colonies are called forth into the fading identity of this condemned savior.

**Polluting the Suburbs, Polluting Mark's Passion**

Jesus' πάντοτε invitation of particular impoverished bodies and its application to the Markan audience and characters follows him and his companions out of Simon the Leper's home and into the rest of the passion. So too, then, does the decentering alliance that gathered in that place: even though Jesus will fade, the denizens of kyriarchal

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[71] Joy, *Mark and Its Subalterns*, 126. Friesen, "Poverty," 341.

regimes will persist. As kyriachy ignores the restrictions of territories, so too do ghosts, who ignore boundaries to make their demands. This chapter identifies two gentrified places whose boundaries are disrupted by such polluting denizens and in which an alliance of the "poor" musters. Ultimately, the boundary transgressions of spectralities make room to imagine the victims of neocapitalist regimes physically present in Mark's passion. The first disruption of gentrified place I engage here is the movement of the Ironbound's "poor" into the suburbs of northern New Jersey. I explore the deadly health effects of polluting drayage trucks on residents of the Ironbound and the vehicles by which demands for health break into surrounding suburban counties. Alongside this exploration, I note that the conjuration of the poor within Simon's home further breaks them into the coming passion narrative. Now that the poor, as those marginalized by kyriarchy, have aligned with all others oppressed by hegemonies and have attached themselves to Jesus' tragic future, the entire passion narrative is open to their haunting activity. As Jesus encounters more socially dead people in these concluding chapters—in particular the bandits bracketing him on the cross (15:21-32)—the "poor" threaten collectively to become the protagonist of "his" narrative, shunting him from its center. Moreover, the universality of his πάντοτε and ghosts' disobedience of boundaries further threatens to flood the narrative with contemporary social death, populating this passage with subjectivities from an immense array of locations. Finally, I turn to the presence of the socially dead in Jesus tomb (16:1-8), probing the ways this entire place is haunted by the marginalized subjects encountered by readers—within the narrative and within their lives—and arguing that they stake a claim on Mark's gospel.

*Shipping Death*

On a rainy April morning, a collection of volunteers, community organizers, and urban farmers gather over a cold breakfast in a permanent trailer office in the Ironbound's East Ferry neighborhood. While the concerns of those gathered linger on logistical issues regarding the regular seasonal fresh food distribution undertaken by the Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC), the intensity of the conversation is reserved for ICC's upcoming "Truck Count." With East Ferry's proximity to the primary route for container trucks out of Port Newark, US Highway 1-9, exhaust from outdated rigs has contributed to a rate of childhood asthma in the Ironbound of one-in-four.[72] These troubled residents know that healthier trucking is possible, healthier trucking was promised, and the promise for healthier trucking was broken. In 2009 the Port Authority of New York/New Jersey (PANYNJ) announced a program to replace or retrofit all drayage trucks to cleaner-emitting, 2007-and-later engines. But in 2016, the PANYNJ reneged on that deal and offered instead to replace any post-1996 rigs.[73] The result, according to a study by the Coalition for Healthy Ports (CHP), will be a negligible reduction in the polluting particulate matter, and a higher risk for deadly cancer and respiratory illness. With surrounding municipalities not facing these challenges, this problem ultimately forces the question: How are people in this community made invisible to citizens with privilege? What do particular economic practices—like the transportation of goods—have to do with the death of some and the lives of others? For us, the question lingers: what happens to those who have been made unconscious of other places, people, and conditions

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[72] Max Rivlin-Nadler, "Hell on Wheels: Port Authority's Broken Promise is Choking Newark's Kids," *Village Voice*, May 3, 2016, accessed May 4, 2016.
[73] Coalition for Healthy Ports (CHP), *Evaluation of the Port of New York & New Jersey Clean Trucks Rollback Program* (June 2017), 2.

through gentrification when they engage Mark? Indeed, just as Mark 14:1-11 has been isolated by scholars for Christological revelation, I argue, so too have particular places been allocated for unlivable subjectivities, where death is acceptable. More precisely: just as Jesus' "always" conjures the poor into biblical interpretation, the economic demand of gentrified Christians also conjures the poor into their homes.

The PANYNJ policy forces continued hardship for the district's residents and the truckers themselves, exchanging corporate profits for human life. The CHP study focused on common drayage truck particulate matter (PM 2.5) emissions that are small enough (2.5 micrometers) to be inhaled and enter the bloodstream.[74] Due to government regulation, 2007 engines cut emission of these particulate matter by 90%.[75] But because the rolled back plan would only remove 5% of trucks (pre-1996) rather than 68% under the original plan, the difference in emissions was seven-times greater in 2016 than it would have been in 2017 under the original program.[76] As a result, Ironbound residents are estimated to have a ten-times higher risk for ischemic heart disease and lung cancer, because of their proximity to these deadly trucks (fig. 2).[77] Even though contracted

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[74] The study's limited scope does not necessarily take into account other, larger inhaled pollutants which may also "increase local health risks" under the rolled back program, including "nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons, and coarse particulate matter" (CHP, 5).
[75] Ibid., 3.
[76] Ibid., 16, 23.
[77] The particulate matter emitted from the trucks makes air in the most polluted areas is 1,000-times the healthy level established by the Environmental Protection Agency; ibid., 4. This is a solvable problem, as the port of Los Angelas proved earlier in 2017: taking an EPA grant—money that was also available to the PANYNJ—they reduced PM2.5 emissions by 88% (The Port of Long Beach, *Air Emissions Inventory – 2016* [July 2017]; Shwanika Narayan, "Port of Long Beach Sets Emissions Reduction Record," *Los Angeles Business Journal* [August 25, 2017]). It should be noted that a major difference between the two ports is that, while both contract with independent truckers, Los Angeles/Long Beach drayage truckers are unionized.

drivers move $100 billion annually through Port Newark, shipping companies have insisted that the truckers themselves shoulder the cost of upgrading their rigs. With new trucks costing upwards of $100,00, such a demand is unthinkable for a driver making $28,000 annually, on average.[78] Moreover, this proposal from the shipping companies is a direct refutation of the PANYNJ's initial promise to diffuse spending on the truck upgrades between the Authority itself, an EPA grant, and the shipping companies. In short, because logistics firms balked at this opportunity, they have spread complicity in death-dealing activities to the low-income, largely-non-white truckers. The deadly conditions foisted upon the Ironbound are created for that place by those who control drayage companies and by government policymakers; they are a creation of privilege in a neocapitalist context. But those who physically perpetrate the pollution are marginalized at the intersection of race and class, harming those whose migrant status, lack of wealth, English-speaking ability, and skin color keep them in a state of death. This is kyriarchy in action.

Though the local particulars are unique to the Ironbound, its struggle with the Port stands as an arch-example of kyriarchal structures' creation of places that put marginalized subjects to death. Both the conjured "poor" in the house of Simon the Leper and the assemblage of marginalized people affected by port trucking in Newark offer local examples of a broader kyriarchal phenomenon: regardless of historical context, hegemonic powers' use of subdivided space prevents life for marginalized people. As in the Port Newark case above, both state and commercial entities conspire in kyriarchal

[78] Rivlin-Nadler, "Hell on Wheels." As an example, the largest shipping company doing business out of Port Newark, XPO Logistics, made $15 billion in revenue in 2016 (XPO Logistics, *2016 Annual Report* [April 2017]).

alliances across the contemporary U.S.: postwar segregation was accelerated by real estate "redlining," which created maps of development desirability based on racial demographics, and aided by official, nationwide segregation of public housing.[79] While redlining points to collusion between government and commercial players, David Ansell argues that tracking life expectancy across neighborhoods reveals that "health outcomes [between wealthier and poorer neighborhoods]…are different as well, even after controlling for income and education."[80] For instance, Ansell writes, the difference between wealthy and poor neighborhoods in Cleveland is twenty four years, twenty five between residents in New Orleans' Navarre community and the French quarter, and fourteen between Chicago's Washington Park and Hyde Park."[81] While, as I intimated above, race and poverty contribute to the abuse of undesirable places, Ansell's work notes that disparities in funding policies for hospitals in poor neighborhoods as well as environmental policies cannot be ignored.[82] Complex, interrelated dynamics of race, class, and capital ensure therefore that life and death are themselves gentrified, limited to particular places.

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[79] On the practice of redlining, see D. Bradford Hunt, "Redlining,' in *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*, ed. James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating, and Janice L. Reiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). For more on state-sponsored segregation, see Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York and London: Liveright, 2017), esp. 36-37.
[80] David A. Ansell, *The Death Gap: How Inequality Kills* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 35; cf. Patrick Sharkley, *Stuck in Place: Urban Neighborhoods and the End of Progress toward Racial Equality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
[81] Ansell, *Death Gap*, 35-36.
[82] See above for discussions of poverty and racism, as well as Rothstein, *Color of Law*, 54-56. Ansell notes that U.S. policies for funding medical operations contributes to unequal resource distribution across the hospital system (*Death Gap*, 36, 130).

Reading Mark 14:1-11 imagined as only confessional and not saturated with the social death of the "poor" thus contributes to ignorance of kyriarchy's destruction of material life, in that place. Treating Simon the Leper's home as a confessional space and not a residence for the "poor," helps remove for the interpreter its potential for political action. Furthermore, if we think about places like the Ironbound as *only* deadly and the anointing woman pericope as *only* memorial we miss the potential dynamic interplay between places: What happens when two or more places interact with one another? What happens with a place purportedly *for* a specific purpose is treated in a different way? For instance, Simon's house becomes a Christological place, through the ritual anointing of the woman, but the "poor" contest that moment, making the place both Christological and socially dead. More than that, the social death we see throughout Jesus' passion is further altered by the liveliness of socially dead subjects, such as the "poor," whose everyday lives contest the notion that bounded place must dictate the course of their existence.

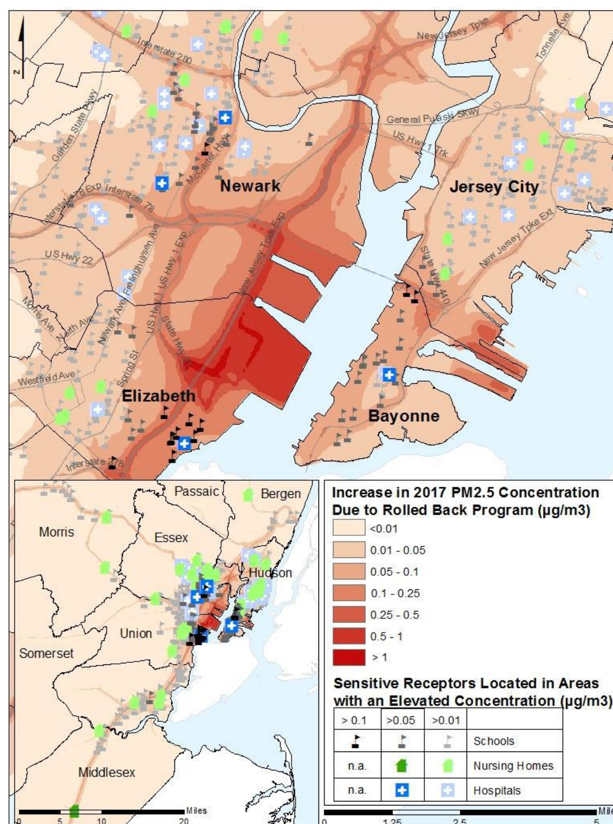


*Figure 2*[83]

Those living in gentrified locales are haunted by those from death worlds, whose social and economic practices prove territorialized space—though deadly—to be illusory. As the CHP study indicates, the health impact of Port Newark trucking is born entirely by Newark, Elizabeth, and Bayonne. This is despite the fact that almost all of the goods shipped into this port do not remain within the communities choked by its traffic.[84] In fact, according to a report commissioned by the Brookings Institute and JPMorgan Chase,

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[83] CHP, 37; used with permission.

[84] Comparatively, the Ports of New York and New Jersey maintain a higher percentage of goods locally, at 9.7%, greater than the 5% national average (Global Cities Initiative, *The Great Port Mismatch: U.S. Goods and International Trade* [June 2015]; a report commissioned jointly by the Brookings Institution and JPMorgan Chase). One can imagine that this reflects the sheer purchasing power of New York's comparatively large consumer base. If this is the case, we again see how "local" does not include the impoverished communities of Newark and Elizabeth, where most of the PANYNJ's facilities reside.

the average distance materials from Port Newark travel domestically after landing is 190 miles.[85] Therefore, the presence of international goods on shelves, on average, 190 miles away from the port sickening the Ironbound, is dependent precisely on the shortened lifespan of Ironbound residents. Ulrich Beck has described this economic phenomenon thus:

> Certain countries, sectors, and enterprises profit from the production of risk, whereas others suffer public health problems and at the same time their economic existence is threatened…. Destruction of nature and the destruction of markets coincide. It is not what one has or can do that determines one's social position and future but rather where and from what one lives and to what extent others are permitted, with a prearranged impunity, to pollute one's possessions and abilities as an "environment."[86]

Market economies are both deadly *and* relational: some are harmed more than others. The specter conjured here, then, arrives in the opening created by this parasitic relationship: not through pollution, but profit, price tags, and employment in gentrified communities. If, as Avery Godron argues, ghosts "[cajole] us to reconsider" the "shape" of a given "absence," the very question of how goods reach gentrified store shelves should point to transportation practices.[87] It also forces questions endemic to kyriarchy: why is it that *certain* bodies are affected by economic practices? Why are those bodies made invisible? Do they ever make themselves visible and how? Indeed, as I argue below, one way they appear is in moments out of space and out of time. That is, while a haunting figure is often abstracted, this means its particularities can be made manifest in surprising places, even allegedly Christological spaces.

*Kyriarchy Haunting the Cross*

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[85] Ibid.
[86] Ulrich Beck, *The World at Risk*, trans. Ciaran Cronin (Cambridge: Polity, 2009), 37.
[87] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 6.

I have already begun to discuss the decentering work done by the conjuring of marginalized subjects in Mark 14:1-11. But, as the discussion of Port Newark's environmental oppression and its violent spatial relations indicates, kyriarchy creates an underside as diverse as all those hegemonies have subsumed throughout history. Kyriarchy's denizens are numerous and include those who live around Port Newark and the impoverished of the first-century Roman empire. While, as I argue here, the excess of crucifixion is one tactic by which Roman imperial domination extends its reach, its overarching strategy resembles the neocolonial and neocapitalist practices that ensure the Ironbound remains a death world. The challenge ghosts pose is their ability to enter into places not, allegedly, *for* them—into vital places, public places, capitalist places, or religious places—and transform them into political space. As we have seen, this transformation can occur in as mundane a manner as the trucking distribution of goods from urban ports to suburban store shelves; the marginalized people from the Ironbound are connected by employment or by health problems to the privileged purchasers of Bergen, Morris, and Essex Counties. The ghosts of the "poor" similarly do not remain within Mark 14:1-11, Jesus' "always" conjures the socially dead into the passion as his body fades into death. The availability of goods in a neocapitalist context depends on the social death of others, as is the case on Golgotha: Jesus is killed alongside two bandits (15:21-40). As Mark's protagonist fades off into the uncertainty of death, he does so bracketed by those whose very lives have been abstracted by the kyriarchal structures of their world. While the anointing of Jesus may point to his death, even make a Christological statement, the fulfillment of that promise is contested by other people

criminalized by Roman hegemonic tactics; these subjects, too, stake a claim on this scripturalized place.

Here I am most interested in the flattening of the characters of the two bandits crucified on either side of Jesus (15:27). Perhaps the most troubling trend among scholarly readings of the crucifixion is a tendency to focus interpretations of secondary characters as only present to flesh out the meaning of Jesus' death or his identity. Jesus' arrest points to the type of death he will die: "Have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit?" (ληστῆς; 14:48)[88] The statement foreshadows his death in between two bandits, answering his question, with a "yes." Jesus' death as a criminal has continued to trouble interpreters.[89] Certainly, commentators have recognized the political implications of construing Jesus' arrest *as* ληστῆς within the context of the Jewish Revolt, noting that this may mark him a potential "revolutionary" against Roman rule.[90] To this end, Myers further argues that Barabbas, a "rebel" charged with "murder," is an example of the λησταί with whom Jesus fears identification.[91] Standing before the

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[88] Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah,* vol. 2, *From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 969; Donnahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 416; Stein, *Mark*, 672.

[89] Recall my earlier quote of David Daube who fretted that Jesus might be read as dying like "a common criminal, 'dishonorably' by night" (*New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism*, 314).

[90] Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 368; Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1.284; Donnahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 416; Collins, *Mark*, 686; Stein, *Mark*, 672.

[91] Myers is highly reliant on Hanson and Horsley's description of first-century Galilee as a place overrun with revolutionary bandits at the outbreak of the Jewish Revolt (cf. John S. Hanson and Richard A. Horsley, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus* [Minneapolis: Winston, 1985]; *Binding the Strongman*, 58, 380-381). Here Myers notes that Barabbas and other λησταί could easily be read as what Horsley and Hanson describe as Sicarii, or "dagger men," violent brigands operating in the unruly frontier of rural Judea (*Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 205; Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 58).

crowds, Pilate offers a fateful choice between the crucifixion of Barabbas and Jesus (15:6-15), confirming that Jesus is indeed to die a criminal (14:48). Myers reads the scene before Pilate as a contrast between violent and nonviolent revolutionary movements.[92] Other commentators see a similar comparison to the crucifixion scene (v. 27), contrasting Jesus' innocence with the assumed guilt of his fellow convicts, as Collins does: "[Mark] implicitly contrasts Jesus' efforts to restore and preserve the purity and holiness of the temple [cf. 11:15-20] with the sacrilegious occupation of the temple by the rebels during the Jewish war."[93] In short, the scholarly tendency is to ignore Jesus' persistent characterization *as a criminal*, in favor of reading his identity *against* criminality. The result is an interpretation of Jesus on his cross as purified of criminal activity: Jesus is the one character who matters, and the bandits only make a difference insofar as they contrast against his identity and mission. The abstracted characters of λῃσταί are not understood to make a difference on this place. They are, like the Ironbound residents who live around and work in the Port, both an undesirable presence and an inseparable piece of the location's meaning.

While the materiality of crucified bandits is unrecoverable from abstract rhetorical tropes, haunting probes these absences to assure that particular realities not only once existed but are "always" active. Lisa Marie Cacho argues that "criminalization" subjects people to laws based on their race and previously assumed guilt: "'Illegal aliens,' 'gang members,' 'terrorist suspects'—are unable to comply with the 'rule of law' because U.S. law targets their being and their bodies, not their behavior."[94] Their unique, material,

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[92] Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 381.
[93] Collins, *Mark*, 748. See also Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 2.969.
[94] Cacho, *Social Death*, 6-7.

particular stories, therefore, do not match the description given by the kyriarchy, but are instead conjured by the material conditions empire creates. Rather, they are doomed to live without the legal status that affords citizens life. Such is the reality of the λῃσταί conjured into Mark's passion: the kyriarchy abstracts and illegalizes certain bodies, bodies created by the poverty Roman domination enabled in the first place.[95] The Ironbound provides a similar condemnation: neocapitalist domination depends on the deadly space it creates, necessary excess for the cheap distribution of goods. Similarly, Golgotha abstracts the bandits, on account of their illegalized status: they are not known by their lives, passions, or everyday activities, but their labels under the law. Their existence is but an "outline," because we are not given a view of real life, nor can we hear their stories as they would tell them.[96] Haunting looks to these absences created by hegemonies, these invisible traces of people who were crushed by empire, and demands inquiry into their existences.[97] Abstraction of place and those within it is a convenient tool for empire, because it does not permit the activity of people or their alliances with one another to carry any political capital. However, spectralities offer the possibility that ghosts are always active, and always condemning the imperializing practices that make actual life look like illegal, criminalized, social death.

The Roman empire was not exceptional in its construction of certain communities as worthy of death or of a servility amounting to death-in-life. For example, Cicero declared Jews, along with Syrians, to be "peoples born to be slaves" (*nationibus natis*

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[95] Eric Thurman, "Writing the Nation/Reading the Men: Postcolonial Masculinities in Mark's Gospel and the Ancient Novel" (PhD diss. Drew University, 2010), 101.
[96] The term "outline" is used by Gordon to describe people made invisible by hegemonic domination (Gordon, *Ghostly*, 6).
[97] Ibid.

*servituti*; *On the Consular Provinces* 5.10). And again: “[The Jewish] nation has shown by armed resistance what it thinks of our rule; how dear it was to the immortal gods is shown by its having been…made a slave” (*For Flaccus* 28.69). Since Jesus conjured the “poor” into his prefigured tomb, we have seen that his existence fades into social death, as the marginalized begin to take over his identity. The poor make this narrative a place of the dead. Mark’s Jesus is *supposed* to stand in contrast to Barabbas and the two bandits, because they are in a place of death; they already do not matter and should thus be arrested, charged, and crucified as bandits. The pattern of hegemonies—whether Roman or neocapitalist—creating places where death is acceptable is on display here: on Golgotha Jesus dies between bandits, cordoning off a particular location where bodies worthy of death are criminalized and racialized. As Collins notes, this death between two λῃσταί “evokes a passage from Isaiah” in which the suffering servant is to be “handed over to death” among “the lawless” (Isaiah 53:12).[98] Within the context of Markan authorship, the label of “lawlessness” casts Jesus into a broader discourse of Roman authority. Bandits were imagined in Roman legal discourse as a threat to established order, largely because they occupied a liminal space, as a criminal “within the scope of the law…and enemies of the state.”[99] The bandit is the ultimate Other, someone viewed by the law as a threat. As that threat, their presence on the cross makes this moment a place where imperial power is on full display against criminals.

Beyond a reference to Isaiah, Golgotha’s combination of three criminals on crosses transform the passion into a death world, in which lawlessness and imperial

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[98] Collins, *Mark*, 748.
[99] Brent Shaw, “Bandits in the Roman Empire,” *Past and Present* 105, no. 1 (1984), 22; cf. Thurman, “Writing the Nation/Reading the Men,” 100-101.

power are persistently meted out against certain subjects. Bandits are worthy of death, because, in Eric Thurman's words, they are "inclined to undisciplined and luxurious 'soft'…living and unkempt appearance; prone to excessive drinking, insatiable lust, and despair from unrequited same-sex love; practitioners of human sacrifice and cannibalism; and likely to meet ignoble death."[100] Outlaws of this sort in the Roman imagination were emasculated, completely other, because they were criminalized. Criminalization proved them worthy of death precisely because they were sexually deviant, cannibalistic like the worst provincial barbarian. Rather than particular individuals, members of a community, and worthy of life, the λῃσταί functioned socially as someone sacrificial for the sake of Roman law, the paragon of lawlessness. When Jesus is placed among these parties at the end of his life, we have little evidence to think he is contrasted with them—recall that he has already conjured masses of socially dead communities to his person. At both his trial and his death, Jesus is placed directly next to λῃσταί and punished as they would be punished, before a Roman governor and on a Roman cross, as an enemy of the Roman state. The characters in these are not shown to be guilty: Barabbas is merely "with" those who committed murder (15:7) and the bandits on the cross are only labeled as such (v. 27). Indeed, the narrator draws the audience into a place where the law kills, not necessarily on account of guilt, but because of one's very identity.

We cannot, therefore, understand Mark's crucifixion apart from the work of empire which both perpetuates the bodies that belong in death worlds and constructs death worlds as properly belonging to those bodies. For Jesus to be arrested and crucified

[100] Eric Thurman, "Looking for a Few Good Men: Mark and Masculinity," in *New Testament Masculinities*, eds. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 141.

"as though [he] were a bandit" (14:48), demands participation in the social death perpetuated by Roman hegemony. Part of this practice, as we have seen throughout this project, is abstraction, like the "poor," like residents living near Port Newark, like λῃσταί. The bandits are presented here as illegal subjects and abstracted insofar as the fullness of their existence is erased by their presence on Golgotha. Jesus is also forced into this position. Viewed in light of Jesus' prophesy of his own fading life (14:7), his trial and crucifixion bear out as a fulfillment of this vision: not only is the opposite of a heroic king, but one put to death shamefully. As was envisioned in Simon's home, Jesus is in fact joining the social death determined by kyriarchy, becoming a bandit.

In this way, the universality of the Markan πάντοτε expands its alliance of particulars to include more people consigned to death in the name of a hegemonic Christology. This haunting responds to the participation of space in kyriarchal death-dealing practices. That is, Mark makes a bounded space *for* dead bodies: the passion narrative. From chapter fourteen onward the narrator permits us to focus on Jesus' death, not just physically but socially:[101] he is anointed by a woman and conjures the ghosts of omnipresent poverty (14:3-9), he is tried alongside an accused insurrectionist (15:6-15), and he dies like an emasculated outlaw (14:8; 15:7).[102] Jesus' declares his own remembrance will be overtaken by the "poor" into perpetuity and that death is quite literally surrounded by socially dead bandits. Kyriarchy's persistent domination of the Other is here like it is in the Ironbound. There is a spectral alliance forming on the

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[101] While Jesus' foretells his death in 8:31, the passion narrative becomes the place where that death is wrapped up in the underside of kyriarchal regimes.
[102] For a unique take on this death for contemporary readers, see Villalobos Mendoza, *Abject Bodies*, 109. See also, Althaus-Read, "Mark."

underside of kyriarchy, across space and time. The movement of trucks from drayage transit hubs into gentrified areas haunts privilege communities with their complicity in environmental degradation; the λῃσταί continue raising the alarm over hegemonic emasculation and criminalization; and the poor call into question whether a Jesus who dies among the socially dead can ever inhabit a Christology free of the marginalized. All that remains for the haunting of Mark is an answer to the question of whether the narrative's conclusion similarly infuses the entire gospel with lurking specters. Social death haunts the entire narrative, establishing a social spatiality of haunting within the second gospel.

*An Open, Empty Tomb/An Open, Populated Gospel*

Thus far, I have approached the passion narrative, from chapter fourteen onward, as a space of the dead. The haunting trajectories of ancient, material communities abstracted by social death, like the "poor" and the "bandit," joined together with the contemporary victims of port shipping through Newark's East Ward. Their alliance was conjured by Jesus, explicitly in the case of the "poor," as one that insists on turning the view of readers to the underside of kyriarchal regimes operating across times and spaces. Still, this investigation has remained contained within the final chapters of the second gospel. But if Mark's Gospel is haunted narrative, its temporality is necessarily "out of joint." With little concern for linear temporality, the empty tomb of 16:1-8 plays with time-spaces in two distinct ways: (1) the characters draw past and future into the sepulcher and (2) the narrative establishes Jesus' body as spectral and beckons the audience follow him again through a repeating story. Having faded into the abstracted masses of the socially dead, Jesus and ideally the Markan reader are returned to the

beginning of the narrative with marginalized subjectivities now intensified. The haunted character of the tomb demonstrates that specters haunt all those who come into contact with spaces of the dead, whether that contact comes through Mark's gospel or participation in neocapitalist consumerism. I then argue that this challenge breaks into the rest of Mark's narrative, establishing the entire Gospel as a space haunted by the agencies of the disenfranchised.

With Jesus' body now securely interred (15:42-47), Mary Magdalene, Mary the Mother of Jesus, and Salome approach the tomb (16:1) to memorialize and thus materialize their teacher's death. Their ritual means of commemoration belie an understandable desire to control the memory of their deceased teacher. Offering materials fit for the anointing of a king, the women enact what Derrida calls a conjuration: because they seek to ensure Jesus will be remembered *in the past* and *in a particular way*, they fend off the threat that he may either be alive or that his body may be desecrated.[103] We are met with the notion that, while the woman in 14:1-11 was doing something improper by treating the living as dead, the women at the tomb are performing a proper, social expectation: to provide all of your excessive wealth to keep the dead at bay. Conjuring is not always a conscious process, but any practice that offers comfort or surety to the living certainly seeks to call forth protection from the dead. Through a conjuration of this kind, the living seek to "reassure" themselves, argues Derrida, that "what one would like to see dead is indeed dead":

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[103] For more on the anointing of Jesus' body as that of a king, see Hooker, *Saint Mark*, 384; Gundry, *Mark*, 989. For Hebrew literature deploying aromatics as a royal honorific, see 1 Chron. 9:29; 2 Chron. 9:29–30; 32:27; Esth. 2:12; Song 1:3; 4:10; Sir. 24:15. On Derrida's conjuration, see *Specters of Marx*, 49-58.

> It speaks in the name of life; it claims to know what that is. Who knows better than someone who is alive? It seems to say with a straight face. It seeks to convince (itself) there where it makes (itself) afraid: now, it says (to itself), what used to be living is no longer alive, it does not remain effective in death itself, don't worry….[104]

Jesus is therefore relegated to the silent comfort of the grave—mourned, yes; kingly, perhaps—but acceptably remembered as living and effective only in the past. Yet also belonging else*where*. The large stone blocking the tomb, too heavy to move (vv. 3-4), assures us that the location of the body is safely secured by the limits of the possible. This corpse is spatially located where it can no longer threaten or pollute, placed in a bounded location where death can safely reside and far from realms of the living.[105] Like the subjectivities of the "poor" across history, bandits marginalized by kyriarchy, and contemporary subjects choked by exhaust, Jesus' corpse remains located properly among the dead.

This space of the dead becomes knowable as such because the practices around it depend on concepts of linear temporality, which maintain the life of the dead in the past, and the activity of the other elsewhere. Tombs are purposed for particular use, in this case for both the resting place and memorialization of Jesus. For Jesus' sepulcher to be made explicitly for such use, linear time must be observed: the tomb is meant for a dead body, and when that body is placed within, its purpose is fulfilled. In order to maintain the notion that space is representative of bodies and things, Doreen Massey argues, it must be

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[104] Ibid., 59-60.

[105] The corpse, Derrida writes, has been "localized," and we now know "*who* and *where*…, whose body it really is and what place it occupies—for it must stay in its place. In a safe place" (ibid., 9). Here I am more interested in the developing this chapter's metaphor between pollution from the environmentally-degraded Ironbound and places where life is encouraged. For a conversation on ancient Roman beliefs around purity and death, see the following chapter.

both divided up into local places—like tombs—and wrapped up in a forward-moving, linear temporality as a closed system. In short, both time and space are static entities.[106] This notion limits the possibilities for what can happen in the interaction of time and space. Divergence from prescribed use, or misuse of places, territorializes places. The possibility that users of particular places might misuse or change the definition of those locations is therefore limited, because they are perceived to be deviant: they are doing what they are not supposed to do. At the Markan tomb, too, a missing Jesus—perhaps even resurrected (v. 6)—shows a misuse of the place, expanding the possibility for what might happen in places of the dead.

The experiences of the women at the tomb (16:1-8), therefore, disrupt linear and dimensional time-space through the shocking (vv. 5, 8) manifestation of the impossible (vv. 2-4), the past in the present (v. 5), the absent presence of Jesus' body (v. 6), and the ethical injunction which establishes past bodies as future imperatives (v. 7). While the stone to the entrance of the tomb seemed impossibly large for the three women to move, knowledge perhaps gleaned from past experience of their own bodily limitations, that impossibility is shattered as they approach the tomb: with just a "look," they see that "the stone had been rolled away, which was exceedingly great" (v. 4). As this boundary of the (im)possible melts away, possibilities flood into the moment, mourning out of the tomb, but also hopes that mourning may either not be necessary or is politically volatile. Thinking with the messianism of Hebrew Bible prophets and history, Robert Gibbs offers a means for thinking through this type of hope in the failure of inevitability:

> And what do we see? Not the happy story of a fabled golden age of just society and love of God. On the contrary, we see the past under the sign of discontinuity,

[106] Massey, *For Space*, 23, 31-32, 33.

> of suffering, indeed, disappointment. The failures of the past are a sign that the present and our expectable outcomes are in fact neither obvious nor unavoidable.[107]

That is, when the women approach the tomb in 16:3, dubious in the face of their own inevitable inability, the open tomb raises the specter of inevitability's own failure. And so, with the certainty of failure called into question, the tomb bears at least some uncertainty, the necessary precondition for even the possibility of hope. But without boundaries, people also move back and forth. The now vaporized boundary of (im)possibility, like the transit of goods from ports to suburban shopping malls, forces the question of where and how bodies move across, mark, and shape places.

Two bodies in the tomb pose this very question, one by its excessive presence(s) and the other by its absence. The appearance and speech of the young man (νεανίσκος), "clothed in a robe of white," terrifies the women (v. 5), and no doubt raises a number of haunting questions: was this the one who rolled away the impossibly large stone? Is this man an angel? Which white-robed biblical man is this? Which νεανίσκος is this? Might he be a ghost? The narrator provides none of this information, heightening the possibility for numerous answers to these questions. Resulting are a number of possibilities, if only as potentialities, in this place previously wrapped in impossibility and inevitability. Some commentators point to this youth's bleached outfit as characteristic of New Testament, Hebrew Bible, and apocryphal divine angelophanies.[108] Others look to the νεανίσκος as a

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[107] Robert Gibbs, "Messianic Epistemology,"126-127.

[108] Joel Marcus argues that in "the OT, ancient Jewish sources, and the NT, angels have the appearance of human beings and can be mistaken for them" (e.g. Gen. 18:2, 16; 10:11 2 Macc. 10:29-31; 11:8-12; Marcus, *Mark 8-16: A New Translation and Commentary* [The Anchor Yale Bible; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009], 1080; cf. Gundry, *Mark*, 991). Moreover, as Dale Allison notes, νεανίσκοι appear as angelic messengers (Dan. 10:2-14; Matt. 1:18-25; *Apoc. Abr.* 10:1-17; *2 En.* 1:3-10; Allison, *Testament of*

representative body of an early Christian, like Myers who argues that his similar appearance to Revelation's martyrs (Rev. 7:9, 13) marks him as a first-century exemplar.[109] These varied readings of the νεανίσκος serve as examples for the ways in which multiple bodies always already occupy the tomb. Indeed, as a scripturalized figure, the νεανίσκος, to borrow a term of Derrida, "inherits" manifold presences from *outside* the tomb.[110] When the open tomb exposes the failure of bounded space for the two Marys, and Salome, the reader discovers that the tomb is also open for a vast diversity of others. In this way, the luminously enigmatic messenger poses yet another question: what is this tomb's real purpose?

The absence of Jesus' body offers the possibility that this messianic figure who had been fading into the anonymity of social death for much of the narrative is finally nothing but a trace among manifold other traces in a place for the dead. The messenger provides proof of this even through Jesus' absence: "See the place where they laid him" (v. 6). Finding in the tomb nothing but a trace of Mark's protagonist Derrida and

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*Abraham: Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature* [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003], 95). Donald Juel notes the attribution of divinity to the tomb messengers in Matthew (28:2-7) and Luke (24:4; Juel, *Master of Surprise*, 113). Adela Collins observes that other Greco-Roman sources feature dazzling clothing to highlight important moments and people (*Mark*, 795; cf. Ugo Bianchi, *The Notion of 'Religion' in Comparative Research: Selected Proceedings of the XVIth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions* [Rome: 'L'Erma' di Bretschneider, 1994], 420). Collins also draws our attention to the use of νεανίσκος in 14:51-52.

[109] Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 397-398. Other interpretations point to this man as a newly-baptized follower of Jesus, including Albert Vanhoye, "La fuite du jeune homme nu (Mc 14,51-52)," *Biblica* 52 (1972), 401-406; Robin Scroggs and Kent I. Groff, "Baptism in Mark: Dying and Rising with Christ," *JBL* 92 (1973), 531-548; John Dominic Crossan, "Empty Tomb and Absent Lord (Mark 16:1-8)," in *The Passion in Mark: Studies in Mark 14-16*, ed. Werner H. Kelber (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 135-152.

[110] Derrida, *Specters*, 32.

Gordon's hauntologies offer resources for exploring the passage's theological and political potential. In his Derridean analysis of Mark 16:1-8, Andrew Wilson writes, "The Empty Tomb is revealed to be an eternal *differánce*, a resistance to meaning whereby the body of Jesus becomes but a trace. It emerges at various points…but is never yet truly present."[111] That is, the living, material body of the ghost is absent save for a "trace," but trace enough to recall the memory and agency of a specter. Gordon notes that ghosts make their mark at the intersections of "there and not there, past and present, force and shape" in a call to action.[112] In either case, the material thing, no matter how scant, prods the living to occupy the past *and* the future: whose trace is this and when might I meet them? In this tomb, where Jesus is *supposed* to reside, he is both "not here" (v. 6) and present in absence.

In a tomb filled with such overdetermined uncertainties of a νεανίσκος and the body of Jesus' present-in-absence another question might be posed to those exploring this sepulcher: Who else might we find? As Jesus has, over the course of Mark's passion narrative, slowly faded into the excess of socially- and physically-dead bodies, he finally joined a swirling mass of specters disobeying the bounded regulations of dimensional space. Though chapters fourteen through sixteen conjured the dead, both abstract and particular (as we have seen), Jesus still remained a fixed presence. But now we are faced with a new situation: in a place filled with at least the ghosts conjured by the messenger, Jesus seems to be one of the few characters not physically present. Yes, "he is raised" (v. 6), but he is nevertheless "not here." Such a reality returns us to Jesus' conjuration in the

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[111] Wilson, "Trembling," 209.
[112] Gordon, *Ghostly*, 6.

house of Simon the leper: "You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me." The absence of Jesus' body in the tomb confirms his clairvoyance: he is not here, raising the specter of his earlier πάντοτε. Moreover, because the women came to the tomb to memorialize their teacher, they draw the past into this tomb, including Jesus' execution among the poor and criminals. No doubt, these necrotic others also find their way into this place for the mourned dead. In short, this tomb is more than Jesus' and far from empty; the women encounter traces of death, contested place, and challenges to the certitude of dimensional space: this tomb is πάντοτε for the marginalized other, the "poor" conjured up as Jesus fades into death.

This encounter with excessive otherness is also energized by a time-space infused with an ethical imperative, a demand to act. Not only does the νεανίσκος proclaim with the voices of an amalgamation of diverse bodies and desires that Jesus is both raised and gone, but that the women are to "go! Tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee" (v. 7a). We may call this a third inheritance, an ethical-political inheritance in this tomb, for the command to go to Galilee is more than a future event, it is a *return*: we have been there before, nearly the entire Markan narrative. A haunted epistemology knows that any promise is deferred, that an impending future event—in this case, meeting Jesus in Galilee—will always be disrupted by unforeseen hauntings. So, while it may seem that the messenger invites the women and readers into discipleship with Jesus, our return to Galilee and the beginning of the narrative will also be haunted by the lurking "poor" who now always accompany Jesus' body.[113] As Derrida reminds

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[113] Myers makes this case, that the narrative is circular, writing, "Mark is not pointing 'beyond' his narrative world at all. This 'future' point of reference is the same as the 'past' one: Galilee. And where is that? It is where the 'disciples and Peter' were first

us, though, the future that comes "*as* justice" must not arrive "pre-determined, prefigured, or even pre-named."[114] It is just as well, because Jesus has both faded into the uncertainty of a question—*will* he be found in Galilee?—and into the indiscriminate abstraction of death. The injunction to return to Galilee, to the beginning of Mark's gospel, demands the reader reorient themselves to the text. Jesus is no longer a reliable focus; rather, the physically- and socially-dead subjects contained within the kyriarchal underside—the "poor"—haunt the return to the beginning of the second gospel. The call to return to Galilee, issued by the νεανίσκος draws the dead out of the past and into the time-space of the reader, establishing this place as pure *action*. The future becomes both located and political.

As the reader engages the text, therefore, the alliances that form among the dead are neither constrained to places of the dead nor to the past and present. As Mark's open tomb vaporizes a barrier between possible and impossible, past and present, here and there, living and dead, so too does it draw in an alliance of others. These other subjects haunt readers as much as they do the characters. I not only refer to the haunting biblical

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called, named, sent on mission, and taught by Jesus." Thus while, for Myers, the narrator brings the reader back to the beginning, the young man's command moves the reader to reread Mark as a disciple: "Will we 'flee' or will we 'follow? This cannot be resolved in the narrative moment, only in the historical moment of the reader. Whether or not we actually 'see' Jesus again depends upon whether the disciple/readers renew their commitment to the journey" (Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 399-401). Marcus makes a similar move, but with a less overtly political motive: "Mark does not wrap up all the loose ends, we have no alternative but to return to the inception of his narrative, 'the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ' (1:1), and to start to read it again as *our* story…we take it up where Mark leaves off" (*Mark 8-16*, 1096). These narrative-critical notions are similar to what I do here, but with a difference: my Derridean work with Mark necessitates (a) the notion that Galilee is an inheritance and thus follows us wherever we go, regardless of if we read or not, and (b) that a possibility always exists that we, as readers, forge our own path and never quite make it back to the beginning.

[114] Derrida, *Specters*, 210-211.

presences drawn in through the νεανίσκος, but the presences lurking among the gentrified Christian practicing community. Who is inherited in this tomb and in the passion narrative when the gentrified Christian reader enters it? The subjects affected by neocapitalist forces like gentrification force themselves into Mark, polluting what scholars have come to read as a sanitary, Christocentric narrative. Indeed, if those contemporary ghosts break into the readers' everyday lives through the very neocapitalist practices that obscure and kill, then they must also join in the aforementioned alliance forming in kyriarchy's underside.

The tomb sets the agenda for the inheritance of the Markan Gospel: not a resurrected Jesus, but death in which the privileged reader is complicit. To respond to the empty tomb with "alarm" (v. 5) at the presence of a body other than Jesus' or to understand this unreal situation as "miraculous" because it is a disruption of the norm, follows the same logics of deadly, gentrified space. The absence of Jesus' cadaver and the presence of the messenger perform a misuse of place. Thinking of the passage as an exceptional moment of Christological revelation, deploys a similarly static notion of space, rather than understanding oneself as complicit in the conception of space as an empty dimension. A gentrified Markan tomb and a gentrified neighborhood share in common the trait that certain others are not to appear: in the tomb, the living should not appear; in the gentrified community, people of color, the "poor," the queer, the sick are deviant. The same can be said of the Ironbound, where healthy life—where life itself—is nowhere to be seen. The gentrified conception of space carves up space in a way that does material damage to marginalized people. But the absent presence of Jesus' body and the lurking threat of the "poor" demonstrate that gentrification's territorialization always

already fails, its materially significant borders cannot keep out that which it professes to reject.

**Conclusion**

To imagine Mark's passion narrative as a place constituted by the haunting presences of kyriarchy's denizens is to lift up those things and people that lurk in its crevices and would otherwise escape notice, to lift up its denizens along with its residents. Traversing the Markan narrative is in part a matter of inquiring about the different trajectories one meets within it. At first blush many of these trajectories are ambiguous and abstracted: Jesus' πάντοτε conjuration invites *any* victim of kyriarchy, the λῃσταί throughout the passion could easily be confused for any person rendered socially dead by imperial legal discourses, and the messenger in the tomb seems so laden with meaning that he could well symbolize anything. But the mere trace, the shape, the outline, all recall specific agencies. Thus, Mark's gospel gains a specific, particular, material population through the specters which flood into it through its universalized imagery. These are not necessarily only the specific imaginaries of the author, but an excess of conjured presences, like the material poor of the first-century and the demanding agencies of bodies living in the Ironbound. In any case, particular marginalized bodies are called into this space. While the passion and tomb may initially establish themselves as places for the representation and performance of death, apart from the rest of the narrative, the tomb's openness to uncertainty and disjointed time calls such borders into question. The revelation of Jesus' true identity can only ever come with a foregrounding of the "poor" in the very experience of the reader. Because they are

"always" present in Jesus' absence, they necessarily insist on flooding into the empty tomb and make their demands known.

More than that, the passion narrative and the empty tomb establish engagement with the Gospel of Mark as a political intersubjective exercise. As a haunted space, with bodies flooding into it from the first-century Roman world and from along Ferry Street, among many other places, any engagement with the text is a relational practice. The absence of a now-decentered Jesus in the tomb adds an ethical-political element to the entombed encounter. With a demand from the dazzling messenger, the intersubjectivity of a future encounter comes with a demand to act. The act will come with future meetings of ghosts—some perhaps from the past, others breaking in from the reader's contemporary reality. In other words, Mark is a place where those who are normally unseen always occupy the location of future political action: as we read through this passion account, the "poor" are "always" conjured into our midst, and we are promised that we will encounter them into the future. The question of meeting Jesus still lingers, but the potential of this messiah is only unveiled with the recognition of his decentering among the particularities of marginalized bodies. Indeed, those subjects, who subsist among smog, poisoned ground water, and criminality, occupy prime messianic real estate. The ending, what better place is there to start?

# CHAPTER THREE

# "OUT OF THE TOMBS" (5:1-20):

# AN ILLEGITIMATE ALLIANCE OUT OF PLACE AND OUT OF TIME

The value gentrified, progressive U.S. citizens place on policing has established places where unauthorized, non-citizens live in social death. In communities like Newark, the language of liberation and sanctuary for unauthorized immigrants is belied by policing practices that subject migrants of color to deportation and constant fear. When an unauthorized immigrant was charged in the 2007 murders of three people in Newark, then-Mayor Cory Booker maintained that, as a sanctuary city, crime-prevention was the job of Newark police, not harming "the most marginalized…people in our community."[1] But what happens when the same city's policing strategies put "the most marginalized" residents at risk of deportation? Newark's so-called "broken windows" policing strategies target neighborhoods of color, where many migrant residents live, which subjects these same communities to overregulation and greater possibilities for arrest.[2] Though sanctuary cities refuse to cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.), any arrest data is automatically entered into a federal database.[3] This means that Newark's declaration of safety for people of color is betrayed by this fast-gentrifying

[1] Kareem Fahim, "Newark Triple Murder Fuels Debate on Treatment of Illegal Immigrants," *New York Times*, August 19, 2007, accessed August 15, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/19/nyregion/19newark.html.
[2] Sarah Childress, "The Problem with 'Broken Windows' Policing," *Frontline*, June 28, 2016, accessed August 8, 2018, https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/the-problem-with-broken-windows-policing/.
[3] Immigrant Legal Resource Center, *The Promise of Sanctuary Cities and the Need for Criminal Justice Reforms in an Era of Mass Deportation* (2017).

city's practice of cracking down on neighborhoods of color. Like other public discourses in neocapitalist cities of what a society should look like, this one is caught between concern for life and the presence of illegitimate bodies in the community. Tracking the tension represented by ostensibly progressive, but gentrifying sanctuary cities, this chapter follows that trajectory to the Decapolis of Mark 5:1-20. Although Jesus appears to expel the occupying Roman forces, embodied by a demon named Legion, his entrance into the territory mirrors that of a conquering hero. This ambivalent view toward colonial liberation is buttressed by a colonized portrayal of the Gerasenes themselves as an ethnic group in need of regulation. The narrative reveals care for conquered people, while also suggesting that they still need outside policing because they lack any ability to legitimize their existence on their own. The discourse of life that celebrates the liberation of a man from bondage to demonic forces is also that which says demonic possession is an illegitimate existence: illegitimacy of subjectivities in death worlds is foundational to the flourishing of life in neocapitalist cities.

This chapter questions whether the delegitimizing heroics performed by Jesus in the Decapolis might also serve as a starting point for disrupting the delegitimizing life of progressive, gentrifying cities. The tension of "broken windows" policing in sanctuary cities is my vehicle for this conversation, because it draws out a professed value of neoliberal city halls—care for the most vulnerable among us—that is dependent on an understanding of what is not legitimately part of those communities—criminals and people of color. The result of this conflict of values is the creation of entire groups of people who are given welcome by gentrified residents, but forced into hiding by the same policing practices that maintain privilege. This problem is illustrated by Mark's narrative

portrayal of the Gerasenes as both desperate to force the deadly forces of an imperial hegemony out of their region and their need for an outsider to conquer their conquerors (vv. 3-5). Mark's imagination of the residents of the Decapolis as a place filled with people who cannot tame their own demoniacs justifies Jesus' dramatic entrance (vv. 1-2) and precipitous exit from the area (vv. 19-20), while the Gerasenes are left behind in a city given no description outside of its tombs. In the end, both Gerasa and neighborhoods where unauthorized immigrants are over-policed are delegitimized by a reciprocal relationship between the exercise of power by those who police normativity and those who are always already perceived as illegal. Similarly, in the places where they are told to feel safe, sanctuary cities, "quality of life" policing exposes immigrants to the exactly opposite. In this respect, interpretation of this passage offers gentrified readers few resources for thinking beyond the tactics that help maintain their oppression.

Policing, whether by Jesus or those protecting gentrified norms, delegitimizes certain others so that the privilege of a few can be projected. The broken windows tactic demonizes the residents of majority-immigrant of color communities by marking their living space as a particular location where crime resides. The product of gentrification, neighborhoods with largely wealthy, white residents are spared this invasive tactic, described in greater detail below, while those who have been declared "illegal" by national immigration policies are treated as such. Indeed, Jesus' interaction with the demoniac and his fellow townspeople occurs only within a necropolis within the "region of the Gerasenes" (vv. 1, 5). In places abstracted by the racial-ethnic makeup of their residents, violent policing tactics often marginalize those within by declaring their very existence illegitimate. Such is the moment here, as the possessed man—who I argue is a

synecdoche for Mark’s view of the Gerasenes—engages in self-harm and shows freakish strength (vv. 3-5). At the same time, Jesus’ own privilege is accentuated, as he becomes the ideal representative of God on earth (v. 7), a powerful, masculine force, contrasted with the offensive performance of the demoniac and his fearful neighbors (vv. 15-16). I elaborate this pattern with the term *discourse of illegitimacy*, a tactic by which hegemonic forces determine a priori which lives count as legal. This pattern establishes the authority of a normative community while it materializes non-normative subjects to a single place, a single death world created by policing.

The challenge to contemporary, privileged readers arrives from this delegitimizing discourse that courses across time-spaces, because it also conjures up alliances against it. I envision the discourse of illegitimacy materializing a haunting constituency within this passage that refuses deadly borders: of text and reader, past and present, gentrified and impoverished. From this alliance, Legion enacts resistance to those who participate in the practices that create death worlds. Haunting resistance from the Decapolis death world operates in at least two ways. First, Legion’s challenge to Jesus—“What have you to do with me?” (v. 7)—forces the question of privileged subjects’ complicity in the policed death of those put to social death by his actions among the tombs. Second, the demon’s ability to burst through boundaries demonstrated through its transition from human to animal and from land to sea refuses spatial boundaries and enacts agency in the face of conquest. Ultimately, Legion provides an opportunity to think about political alliances lurking within the very structures of our neocapitalist world.

**Liberation as Policing the Other**

Mark's account of Jesus' exorcism in the Gerasene tombs is fraught with ambivalent tension injected by policing illegitimate subjects and their behavior. Here I discuss the liberating desire engendered by Mark's attempt to exorcise the demonic presence of occupying Roman forces and its problematic relationship to Jesus' mimicry of conquering Roman future-emperor Vespasian. Scholarly takes on the potential liberating politics of this passage have shown an affinity for the story's poke in the eye of the Roman empire or an identification with the denizens of the empire's margins. But these readings do not disrupt the cycle of imperial conquests performed here by Jesus himself. There should be no doubt that the Markan narrator opens fertile ground for resistance to foreign occupation of the Decapolis, but whether this ground is generative for liberation from delegitimizing discourses is doubtful. The discourse in which this narrative participates, one that polices communities understood as unworthy of life, establishes a common place in which over-policed communities meet. Policing sanctuary cities is established by the exact same desire to regulate people unwanted by those with power and privilege, and so their homes become places where power and privilege demonstrate their dominance.

Narratively, the exorcism of Legion effectively establishes an allegorical dispelling of a violent Roman occupation of the Decapolis. The mood is set "immediately" upon Jesus' arrival in the Decapolis: not only do he and his companions land among the tombs, but a possessed man greets them (v. 2). This demoniac has been "shackled" and "chained" repeatedly, and has engaged in self-mutilation (vv. 3-5). His declaration that he is named "Legion, for we are many (v. 9), immediately recalls the

nearby first-century presence of the Roman X Legion.[4] Given the uniquely Roman moniker, λεγιών, the Latin loanword is not an innocent choice. Hans Leander points out that the tenth Roman legion, "stationed in the Decapolis at the time of Mark's composition, had a boar as their ensign, thus matching the herd of swine."[5] As Duncan Derrett notes, acknowledgment of the military trappings of the terminology here unearths further martial language, an argument summarized by Leander:

> ἀποστείλῃ means *dispatch*, as of an officer sending a troop (5:10); ἀγέλη means *herd* but was also a local term for a band of trainees (5:11); ἐπέτρεψεν, *permitted*, could denote an issuing of a military command (5:13); and ὥρμησεν, *rushed*, a troop rushing into battle (5:13).[6]

This language establishes Gerasa as under Roman military occupation. Thus, when Jesus expels the demon named Legion he also performs an anti-imperial act. This falls in line with the Markan Jesus' response to Rome throughout the second gospel, who, in Tat-siong Benny Liew's words, repeatedly shows contempt for occupying authorities

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[4] This claim has been made numerous times over the past half-century. Some of the more prominent postcolonial and empire-critical readings to follow this notion include J. Duncan M. Derrett, "Contributions to the Study of the Gerasene Demoniac," *JNST* 3 (1979), 2-17; Paul W. Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities: A Socio-Historical Study," *JAAR* 49 (1981), 567-88, Walter Wink, *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces That Determine Human Existence* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 43–48; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 190–94; Franz Annen, "λεγιών," in *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, eds. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 345-346; John D. Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco and New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995), 91; Horsley*, Hearing the Whole Story,* 140–48; Stephen D. Moore, *Empire and Apocalypse: Postcolonialism and the New Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006), 24–44; Joshua Garroway, "The Invasion of a Mustard Seed: A Reading of Mark 5:1-20," *JSNT* 32, no. 1 (2009), 57-75, Leander, *Discourses*, 201–19; Warren Carter, "Cross-Gendered Romans and Mark's Jesus: Legion Enters the Pigs (Mark 5:1–20)," *JBL* 134, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 139-155. For a salient critique of the more tendentious tendencies of many of the above accounts, see Donaldson, "Gospel Hauntings," 102-106.
[5] Leander, *Discourses*, 206. See also Annen, "λεγιών," 345-346.
[6] Leander, *Discourses*, 206. See also Derrett, "Contributions," 2-17.

(10:42b-43a; 12:17), celebrates those in weaker social positions (9:33-37; 10:13-16), is unjustly executed at the hands of the Romans (14:1-15:47), and predicts the apocalyptic fall of their empire (13:1-37).[7] On the Gerasene shore, Mark narrates his contempt for his imperial overlords.

The belonging created by sanctuary cities offers a hermeneutical tool for understanding the liberation the Markan Jesus offers to the Gerasenes. The narrator declares that the denizens of the Decapolis are held hopelessly captive by the Romans: not only is the demoniac repeatedly chained among the dead (vv. 3-5), but when the spirit is exorcised, the townspeople are *afraid* (vv. 16-17). The demoniac represents their desperation, because he is the thing they cannot live with or live without. Jesus' offer of something new—freedom from possession and the "mercy" of the Lord (v. 19)—demonstrates a different way of life, into which the demoniac is invited. The invitation to belong to a community other than one's oppressors can come from a call to wholeness, like Jesus' exorcism of Legion, but it can also come more officially. Sanctuary cities refuse the violence of citizenship. They do not cooperate with I.C.E., for one, but they also create opportunities—like basic welfare benefits or identification cards—for unauthorized immigrants to receive some form of, in Rose Cuison Villazor's words, "local citizenship."[8] Villazor continues, arguing that that the sanctuary movement is reshaping how people think of themselves as citizens, from a birthright or naturalizing process to one of political participation, self-identification, and a priori possession of

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[7] Tat-siong Benny Liew, *The Politics of Parousia: Reading Mark Inter(con)textually* (Biblical Interpretation Series 42; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 81-86.
[8] Rose Cuison Villazor, "'Sanctuary Cities' and Local Citizenship," *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 37, no. 2 (2010), 574-576.

rights.[9] In short, citizenship in communities often runs up against the belongings of a larger entity. Sanctuary policies acknowledge the fear experienced by those under the thumb of imperial powers and therefore communicate a city's desire, returning to then-Mayor Booker's words from the outset, to look out for the most marginalized members of the community. At a first glance, Jesus seems to reach out to the Gerasenes with just such an offer: a form of belonging that does not subjugate its subjects with demonic possession.

However, a more skeptical look at policing practices in the name of life, demonstrates a deeper tendency to further regulate vulnerable communities. The racial-ethnic demographic makeup of sanctuary cities like Newark, for example, means that broken windows policing in those places magnifies the impact of xenophobic federal immigration practices. Broken windows policing is founded on the belief that targeting "quality of life" offenses, like loitering or turn-style-jumping, with arrests will reduce violent crime in those same neighborhoods.[10] But challengers argue that "disorder" is poorly defined and that the boundaries of what is acceptable in particular communities is

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[9] Villazor, "'Sanctuary Cities' and Local Citizenship," 580-581. This type of belonging, which Villazor calls "local citizenship," is based on a four-part definition of "citizenship" by Linda Bosniak. This includes: (1) "formal" membership in a community, (2) "entitlement to, and enjoyment of, rights," (3) "one's ability to participate in the political process," and (4) "emotional ties" to a particular community (*The Citizen and the Alien: Dilemmas of Contemporary Membership* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006], 18-20).

[10] The most comprehensive argument for broken windows policing comes from George L. Kelling and William H. Sousa, Jr., who argue that there is a direct correlation between a high number of misdemeanor arrests in a given prescient and a decrease in violent crime (*Do Police Matter? An Analysis of the Impact of New York City's Police Reforms*, Manhattan Institute Center for Civic Innovation, Civic Report 22 [2001]).

determined not by residents, but by municipal and police officials.[11] Argues Bruce Harcourt, police citations are often “racially loaded, culturally loaded, politically loaded,” targeting, for example, street performers who are overwhelmingly non-white.[12] Moreover, officer prejudice plays into arrests, admits James Stewart, president of Newark’s Fraternal Order of Police: “In order to get more numbers, the cops go after [people who are black or Latino].”[13] When people are arrested or cited, their data is entered into the F.B.I.’s criminal database, which I.C.E. uses to round up unauthorized immigrants, according to a study by Immigrant Legal Resource Center (I.L.R.C.).[14] Knowledge of this pattern, combined with aggressive policing policies, has created fear in neighborhoods like the Ironbound, where unauthorized migrants are scared to leave their homes.[15] In short, the policing of community boundaries, whether intentionally or not, calls forth authorities from outside who restore “order.” Local authorities, resistant to the values and policies of the imperial head do more than discursively participate in imperial values; they in fact cooperate with them through policing.

The Gospel of Mark also replaces one authority over the Decapolis with another, in this case, Jesus. For all the challenges the Markan protagonist levels at the Romans, Stephen Moore argues, the narrative “cannot plausibly be construed as one of unambiguous opposition.”[16] Moore observes where the second gospel is less committed

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[11] Bernard E. Harcourt and Jens Ludwig, “Broken Windows: New Evidence from New York City and a Five-City Social Experiment,” in *University of Chicago Law Review* 73, 2006), 12-14.
[12] Quoted for an interview in Childress, “Broken Windows.”
[13] Ibid.
[14] ILRC, *The Promise of Sanctuary Cities*, 10-12.
[15] Barry Carter, “Business in the Ironbound is Suffering as Newark’s Fearful Immigrant Community Hides,” *Newark Star-Ledger* (March 7, 2017).
[16] Moore, *Empire and Apocalypse,* 33.

to the complete abolition of imperial structures: Jesus' execution is shown to be a matter of confused complicity between Pilate and local authorities (5:1-39); a centurion at the cross—whether sarcastically or not—pronounces the truth of Jesus' identity (15:39); and his declaration on taxation only enigmatically offers a hierarchy for cosmological control ("Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's"; 12:17).[17] These moments in Mark demonstrate the author's "simultaneous attraction and repulsion—in a world, ambivalence—to which Homi Bhabha, in particular, has taught us to be attuned" in colonial discourse.[18] Jesus' voyage "to the other side" of the sea (5:1) positions Jesus as a conqueror himself. Hans Leander references Josephus' narration of Vespasian's conquest of Judea during the Jewish revolt, in which the future-emperor is said to have unleashed a cavalry detachment to pillage Gerasa (Josephus, *Jewish War* 4.488).[19] More than two conquering military heroes, Jesus and Vaspasian are both healers. According to Suetonius' biography of Vespasian, the emperor, like Jesus, was followed by crowds as he healed the blind (Suetonius, *Vespasian* 7.2-3). Jesus and Vespasian both even appear to fulfill Jewish messianic expectations (Mark 8:29; *J.W.* 6.312-313). In the Markan restoration of "order" in the Decapolis, Jesus' tactics mirror Roman domination. The kyriarchal structure remains intact.

Finally, it is worth noting that even empire-critical readings of this passage have been hesitant to relinquish control of the most out-of-control aspect of the story. While the Markan narrator envisions the Gerasenes as demonically possessed, white Western

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[17] Ibid., 32-33.
[18] Ibid., 33; Homi K. Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," in *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 85-92.
[19] Leander, *Discourses of Empire*, 214.

readers have moved to exorcise literal demons from the story. As an arch-example of this psychoanalyzing of the passage, Paul Hollenbach argued that "It is likely that the tension between [the demoniac's] hatred for his oppressors and the necessity to repress this hatred to avoid dire recrimination drove him mad."[20] This reading of the demoniac's condition is noteworthy for its concern for the material effects of colonization on material people. But it also notably ignores the possibility that spiritual entities might exercise their power on people's cosmologies. Nicole Wilkinson Duran hypothesizes that demonic possession strikes at the heart of Western spatial ideologies, because it violates the most sacred of barriers: the autonomous self.[21] Unable to conceive of a world where spirits rule the roost, Duran observes, influential empire-critical interpretations of this passage have seen "demon possession as both an expression of the damage done by the colonial presence and an allowable, largely unconscious protest against that presence."[22] And while it can be argued that colonial occupation can do irreparable psychic damage to the conquered, it is also true that denying the factuality of demon possession from those who claim it again reinscribes hegemonic ideologies: that the colonized are a "backward"

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[20] Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities," 581. For other examples see Harry C. Kiely, "The Demon of Addiction: Jesus Answers Our Cry for Spiritual Deliverance: A Bible Study on Mark 5:1-20," *Sojourners* 25 (1996), 26-29; Richard Dromandy, "The Expulsion of Legion: A Political Reading of Mark 5:1-20," *Expository Times* 111, no. 10 (2000), 335-337. Cf. Duran, "Other People's Demons," 38-41. Simon Mainwaring takes this text to a Bible study who reads the Demoniac as one in need of human contact in the midst of his expulsion from society. He focuses explicitly on the individual as some in a socially isolated position, like someone in recovery (*Mark, Mutuality, and Mental Health: Encounters with Jesus* [Semeia 79; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014], 174-179).
[21] Nicole Wilkinson Duran, "Other People's Demons," 38.
[22] Ibid., 39. Her examples are two of the earliest texts to claim Legion as representative of Roman imperial presence, Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities;" and Horsley, "'My Name is Legion.'"

population. Moreover, as Mary Keller posits, the phenomena of spirit possession conflicts with the “self-contained” western subject by offering “a kind of vulnerable, brute intelligence, in contrast to the scholar’s critical, formal consciousness,” raising consciousness to a world of others who are entirely more powerful than ourselves.[23] I therefore want to add this as one additional level of ambivalence: that Western, white scholars know of the problematic power of empire, including imperial condescension toward supposedly “primitive” peoples, but also lose sight of its prevalence within their own work.

Postcolonial ambivalence courses through both the Decapolis and sanctuary cities engaged in quality-of-life policing. Gentrified residents of these municipalities only engage in the liberation of unauthorized immigrants to the extent they can understand policing poorer communities as a violent act. Similarly, Jesus’ reconquest of the Decapolis does little to demonstrate a new value system apart from Roman imperial discourse. As Duran points out, the concerns of the privileged Westerner routinely sublimate those readers of Mark 5:1-20 from the developing world. In this vein, conventional demystification of this passage ignores spirits challenging the neat tautologies of neocapitalist division of people and materials. Eliding the possibility for engagement with the spirit realm in this passage, therefore, further separates subjects from one another. Having imagined the Gerasenes in their own, territorialized death world, demystification of the demoniac leaves responsibility for his condition within that very territory by limiting the possibility that haunting spirits might escape this place. In other words, liberation of death worlds’ denizens—be they unauthorized immigrants or

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[23] Keller, *The Hammer and the Flute*, 96; Duran, “Other People’s Demons,” 39.

Gerasenes—is acceptable only if they live in over-policed environs. As noted above, this tension operates by establishing boundaries between privileged communities and those with lack of resources.

**Necro(deca)polis**

Forcing people oppressed by kyriarchy into places detrimental to their lives demands a partitioned, dimensional concept of space that limits the potential for relationship between diverse communities. This section details the process by which what I call the *discourse of illegitimacy* creates death worlds for people declared undesirable by forces that police normativity. Policing communities of "broken windows" within sanctuary cities declares concern for the residents within, while also over identifying their neighborhoods—as spatial designation—as criminal by virtue of the people living within them. Yet, the practice of creating place through the practice of policing is also a connection point for these places. Henri Lefebvre's concept of "spatial practice" is instructive here:

> What is spatial practice under neocapitalism? It embodies a close association, within perceived space, between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routes and networks which link up the places set aside for work, 'private life,' and leisure)…. A spatial practice must have a certain cohesiveness, but this does not imply that it is coherent (in the sense of intellectually worked out or logically conceived).[24]

Movement to and from places and use of space are certainly spatial practices, but so too is policing; it is a daily routine that "secretes" space.[25] My interest is policing's creation of a coherent place that is over-policed, despite the dimensional distances of time and space. Unauthorized immigrants of color and the denizens of the Decapolis certainly have

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[24] Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 38.
[25] Ibid.

their own unique stories, but they are drawn into a common locale through the discursive regulation of undesirable life.

Policing undesirable people in any context depends on a discourse that legitimizes the policing practice by delegitimizing those it seeks to regulate. This practice, which I here term the *discourse of illegitimacy*, plays out through the policing of normative behavior and people, determining who belongs to a place and how their lives will be treated. Neither Jesus' exorcism of the Gerasene demon nor the Gerasenes' desire to chain the demoniac (vv. 3-4, 14-15) demonstrate a belief that this man should participate in community life in his possessed state. That is, Jesus attempts to return him to normal, to reform him, and the townsfolk demonstrate a desire to keep him outside everyday life in Gerasa. Policing behavior like this takes advantage of ostensibly illegitimate communities, as illustrated by broken-windows tactics. Here unauthorized immigrants of color, as we have seen, are subject to the criminal justice system in a way that puts them at risk for deportation, not because of their migration status, but because of their ethnicity. When put in municipal jails, unauthorized immigrants are subject to the Criminal Alien Program (C.A.P.), and entered into a federal database. Funding for this program expanded from $6.6 million in 2004 to $322 million in 2015, demonstrating an intense national desire to police immigrant behavior in the nation.[26] Federal priorities are carried out by police, both organizations whose policies reflect a priority for regulating undesirable behavior. Whether or not local residents of sanctuary cities think

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[26] Guillermo Cantor et al., *American Immigration Council, Enforcement Overdrive: A Comprehensive Assessment of ICE's Criminal Alien Program* 7 (Nov. 1, 2015), 2, 7-8. See also Virgil Wiebe, "Immigration Federalism in Minnesota: What Does Sanctuary Mean in Practice?" *University of St. Thomas Law Journal* 13, no. 3 (2017), 603.

unauthorized immigrants should be allowed to stay, whether or not Mark thinks it is wrong for anyone to be possessed, the very use of policing to regulate behavior and identity of places creates boundaries.

This policing practice falls within Lefebvre's definition of spatial practice by making coherent boundaries around and assigning people relative to normative identity and behavior. This discourse of illegitimacy coursing through over-policed locales prioritizes the value of normativity over liberation of the destitute. Demonstrated above, broken windows policing focuses its efforts on neighborhoods of color, defining the behaviors within as criminal; they define what is normal *before* deploying officers. After regulating the chaotic territory of the Decapolis, Jesus leaves Gerasa with the people still "terrified" and the demoniac is still known as a "demoniac," even after the exorcism (5:15). Little effort is spent on exploring life within the Decapolis, outside the spreading of Mark's good news of Jesus' power (vv. 18-20). This discourse presents those within these places as *legitimate* denizens regardless of their immediate historical context. That is, they become "coherent," to follow Lefebvre, as a place of discontent where the socially dead deservedly subsist.

**Making Room for Death**

Sanctuary cities' neighborhoods of color, home to many unauthorized immigrants, have been targeted for broken-windows law enforcement because their physical location has intimately tied to the undesirable residents within. Quality-of-life policing, write Bruce Harcourt and Jens Ludwig, extends an early-twentieth-century theory of "neighborhood effects" on human behavior:

> This research tradition traces importantly to the early Chicago School of sociology—especially the monographs on neighborhoods and spatial settings, the

> Jewish ghetto, the Italian "slum," the Near North side of Chicago, taxi-dance halls, and brothels—and to the later social interactionist research of Erving Goffman, especially his study *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings*....[27]

Broken-windows policing is mutually constitutive with the spatial practice of ascribing morality to people and fixing them into particular places. These neighborhoods are fertile ground for regulation because those within them are understood to be illegitimate, and because those within them are viewed as essentially illegitimate, further policing is justified. This is the infrastructure common to all deadly places—prominently for this project, their investment in kyriarchy—but more basically, in Massey's words, are their "interrelations," prior to which no place exists.[28] A glaring interrelation between death worlds like Gerasa and Newark's immigrant neighborhoods is the discourse of illegitimacy, which traverses distance and linear time. As a narrative creation, the setting for Mark 5:1-20 faces questions of its role in delegitimizing its residents: How does the narrator describe the space? Does the description of the Decapolis leave room for other descriptions from readers? Does it invite other descriptions? I argue here that the narrator offers readers enough selective specificity of the region, while otherwise eschewing

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[27] Harcourt and Ludwig, "Broken Windows," 8. For examples of the "neighborhood effects" theory on social research, see L. Wirth, *The Ghetto* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928); William F. Whyte, *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943); Harvey Warren Zorbaugh, *The Gold Coast and the Slum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929); Paul Gaolby Cressey, *The Taxi-Dance Hall* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932); Walter Reckless, *Vice in Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933); Erving Goffman, *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings* (New York: Free Press, 1963).
[28] A more dynamic reformulation of Lefebvre's spatial triad, Massey contends that space has a threefold character: that it is the *product* of "interrelations," it is "the sphere of possibility of the existence of multiplicity," and it is "open" and "always under construction" (*For Space*, 9-11).

accurate geographical or cultural description, thereby establishing an indistinguishable people and place of death. Mark's treatment of the χώρα "of the Gerasenes" (v. 1b) grimly matches Mbembe's characterization of death worlds' "state of pain."[29] As I demonstrate below, the Markan narrator re-members a people and a place, necessarily linked, residing together in the tombs, a place marked by death, which marks the Gerasenes for death.

The neocapitalist order spatially separates people whose lives and agency should be protected from those whose lives are forfeit. Sunera Thobani defines these "necropolitics" as a discursive exercises of power that celebrate the "citizen-subjects" of "liberal democracy," while making life impossible for those who, on account of their very identities, are declared a threat.[30] This discourse plays out materially in the partition of space, explains Thobani, "[giving] rise to the 'Indian' reserve, the slave plantation, the native quarter, the Bantustan, the Nazi camp, as well as the slums, prisons and refugee camps proliferating around the world."[31] While neoliberal powers will declare all humans deserve life, extoling the value of human rights, their restriction of life among those who do not conform to Western values demonstrates the limits of such "rights," the limits of "life." This process of "colonial occupation," writes Mbembe, does not completely ignore specifics of the occupied territory, but "[writes] on the ground a new set of social and

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[29] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 38.
[30] Sunera Thobani, "Prologue," in *Queer Necropolitics*, eds. Haritaworn, Kuntsman, and Posocco (New York: Routledge, 2014), xv. See also Thobani, "Empire, Bare Life, and the Constitution of Whiteness: Sovereignty in the Age of Terror," *Borderlands* 11, no. 1 (2012), 1-30; Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*.
[31] Thobani, "Prologue," xv.

spatial relations" (of course, as I note in this project, social and spatial relations are indistinguishable):

> [Territorialization] was, ultimately, tantamount to the production of boundaries and hierarchies, zones and enclaves; the subversion of existing property arrangements; the classification of people according to different categories; resource extraction; and, finally, the manufacturing of a large reservoir of cultural imaginaries. *These imaginaries gave meaning to the enactment of differential rights to differing categories of people for different purposes within the same space*….[32]

Territorialization, as a spatial practice, creates particular locales where people are defined both for themselves and for those on the outside.[33] Places and populations marked together, the death world hardly reflects the daily lives of its residents, but requires ideological work by those who determine the value of particular social relations and write its spatial rules accordingly. These rules are followed when one determines the value of a place both by its political bounds—"the Decapolis" (5:20)—and the people who ostensibly belong within those borders—"the Gerasenes" (v. 1).

Mark territorializes the Decapolis by creating a tension between specific description of its more death-like features and vague generalities that permit the reader's own contextual prejudices to fill the narrative world. The narrator's factually inaccurate and unspecific descriptions of the mythohistorical setting of Mark 5:1-20 circumvent the possibility of material life "on the ground." First, the narrative presentation of the "sea" (θάλασσα; cf. 2:13; 3:7; 4:1, 39, 41; 5:1, 13, 21; 6:47-49) creates a tension between a hyper-local reference to a well-known body of water and an abstracted reference, calling

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[32] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 26 (italics added for emphasis).

[33] Lefebvre argues that spatial practices interact with mapped concepts of space to create "spatial representations." Spatial representations create and "overlay" of meaning within places that make it coherently meaningful for those of us who interact with them, even if we only think of them from afar (Lefebvre, 33).

forth a reader's particular or general experiences of water. On the one hand, we know that much of Mark's narrative occurs in Galilee (1:9, 14, 28, 39; 9:30; 14:28; 15:41; 16:7) and that at times "the sea" is explicitly named the θάλασσα τῆς Γαλιλαίας (1:16; 7:31). Therefore, when Jesus arrives in the χώρα "of the Gerasenes" on "the other side of the sea" (5:1), one could easily assume that he has merely ferried himself across the Sea of Galilee.[34] Moreover, general names for specific landmarks can also signal familiarity and importance to that place. New Jersey, for instance, is filled with "turnpikes," but "*The* Turnpike" is known locally as the New Jersey Turnpike. That is, New Jersians share common local knowledge the precludes the need for specificity when discussing "The Turnpike." If the Markan narrator assumes his audience has some basic knowledge of the Galilean countryside, the Sea of Galilee is not an unlikely antecedent for "the sea." In short, Jesus potentially crosses over a body of water laden with local meaning.[35]

On the other hand, "the sea" can also operate as an abstract allusion that draws readers from beyond the reach of the Galilee and recalls any additional number of seas. This body of water is persistently referenced on its own, with its potential Galilean antecedent literally chapters away, at times. Beyond use of "the sea" without a clear

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[34] Stein warns against reading any "theological significance" to Jesus' activity around "the sea" (*Mark*, 195). Others have read this passage as Jesus' imitation of the Romans' invasion of the region from the Mediterranean Sea or a return to drive the Romans back from whence they came (5:13; see, for example, Moore, *Empire and Apocalypse*, 26-30; Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 192-194; Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 146-148). In these cases, as I also note below, the "sea" is an allegorical object, not necessarily the Sea of Galilee specifically.

[35] For a strong summary of the argument for Mark as a Galilean document, particularly a rural one, written with local knowledge, see Richard A. Horsley, "Oral Performance and Mark: Some Implications of the Oral and the Written Gospel, Twenty Years Later," in *Jesus, the Voice, and the Text: Beyond the Oral and Written Gospel*, ed. Tom Thatcher (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 57-60; Myers, *Binding*, 41.

antecedent, historical contextual clues offer explanation for the citation as a socially-significant narrative device. Contrary to scholars who see a strong local, rural knowledge of the Sea of Galilee, Hans Leander points instead to the vagueness of Mark's description of "the sea" as evidence of an urban audience, dissatisfied with and resisting the pressures of urban, Roman-era life.[36] He thus observes that audiences, equally material, but dimensionally distant from an historical Jesus, might insert their urban, cosmopolitan experience into a story of a rural adventure. A different lived knowledge of "the sea"—wherever a sea may be—becomes possible. Indeed, Roy Kotansky argues that Jesus' travels "to the other side" of "the sea" (4:35; 5:1) in fact takes the θάλασσα of 3:7 as its antecedent, which is narratively distant from the Sea of Galilee. Such vagueness, opens up other maritime possibilities in the imaginations of first-century readers, including the Mediterranean Sea.[37] Jettisoning the notion that Mark desires to present a geographically precise map of his narrative world, Kotansky offers the sea voyages of chapters four and five as mythical accounts. He notes that the narrative tracks with Greek mythological travel: sailing long distances to Hades, threats of "shipwreck and death" (4:37-38), and "uncivilized" natives (5:1-20).[38] Both Leander and Kotansky take the openness of Mark's

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[36] Leander suggests that this "sea" calls out to and intensifies the urban sensibilities of "dissonance and resistance to the imperial city culture" (*Discourse of Empire*, 174).
[37] Roy D. Kotansky, "Jesus and Heracles in Cádiz: Death, Myth, and Monsters at the 'Straits of Gibraltar' (Mark 4:35-5:43)," in *Ancient and Modern Perspectives on the Bible and Culture: Essays in Honor of Hans Dieter Betz*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 165, 168-170; cf. Stewart, *Gathered around Jesus*, 181-182.
[38] Kotansky, "Jesus and Heracles in Cádiz," 185-192. Stewart helpfully points out that Kotansky over-relies on textual variants to make his case, but that this fact does not detract from both the unclarity of 3:7's θάλασσα and the general fact that the excitement of chapter four's sea travel points to a mythical moment (Stewart, *Gathered around Jesus*, 180-184). From a different angle David E. Aune critiques Kotansky for ignoring lack of evidence for Jesus' itinerant activity along the Mediterranean coast and "[attempting] to historicize an embarrassing mythical geography" ("Jesus and the

use of θάλασσα as an opportunity to demonstrate the potential for audiences beyond Galilee to identify with the narrative. That is, "the sea" need not only call out to a Galilean audience, but could also expand itself to a broader range of audiences.

If we take Massey's definition of radically open place, both possibilities can be true:[39] Mark's θάλασσα can both invite local particularities and other, distant, and mythic trajectories. For Massey, space is constituted by its multiplicity, through the many "interrelations" characteristic of life itself.[40] As Leander notes, the narrator creates a "city/rural tension" through Jesus' avoidance of cities and a noticeable "scribal city culture…opposing Jesus (3:22; 7:1; 8:31; 10:33; 11:18, 27; 12:38-40; 14:1-2, 43, 53; 15:1-5, 31)." Exploring Mark as a haunted meeting place offers the possibility that trajectories of urban and rural life are variously conjured by "the sea." Locally, Galileans would surely be able to fill in any narrative gaps with their own life experience of the lake. This is an interrelation we can find by living as spatial beings; it is a contestation of the region's meaning that comes only from lived knowledge of its contours. Those from the region may have personal experience of the sea's impact on their livelihoods; those from elsewhere may read the passage as a distant, mythical location or perhaps as a stand-in for sea more proximate to them. Different readers therefore contest the singular meaning of the Markan "sea."

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Romans in Galilee: Jews and Gentiles in the Decapolis," in *Ancient and Modern Perspectives*, ed. Collins, 239, 245). To my mind, Aune's argument talks past the more significant elements of Kotansky's article, but nevertheless strengthens the aforementioned divide between scholars advocating a rural Galilean community and those more comfortable with an urban audience. Collins has also claimed that the sea represents the "abyss" or "Sheol" (*Mark*, 270).

[39] Massey, *For Space*, 10-12.

[40] Ibid., 10.

My point here is not to claim definitively that Jesus' audience was urban or rural, but rather than any readership, local or global, has an opening through Mark's setting to establish their own story within this Palestinian setting. Readers might understand Galilee as either the symbolic headquarters of resistance or a conceivable rural experience, contraposed to urban, imperial life.[41] Audiences can and do make this place. Material subjects write and read this text, all the while crafting an already-existing place in a particular way. Moreover, the narrator enables their audience in this place-making activity, providing resources to consider such locations in particular ways. In the case of the Markan sailing voyages, a situated place is abstracted in such a way that it can enter the realm of myth, be recast by an audience as an entire different body of water, and be reshaped into a meaning-laden locale by both author and audience.

Into this tension between specificity and vagueness, Mark injects an actual people, equally confused in their description and similarly pulled between material reality and stand-ins for *other* local knowledge. Jesus' journey "to the other side" lands he and his disciples in the χώρα "of the Gerasenes" (5:1). The specifics of this setting are factually challenging, because Jesus' encounter with the Gerasenes seems to occur immediately after landing (v. 2), while Gerasa lays roughly thirty miles inland from the sea.[42] The debate over such a choice has largely played out through questions of redaction. Most scholars prefer the term Γερασηνῶν, traditionally associating the demoniac with the ancient city of Gerasa, contemporary Jerash.[43] Still other possibilities

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[41] Leander concerns himself more with the latter, but on the former notion of a Galilean headquarters, see Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, 397-398.
[42] Collins, *Mark*, 263.
[43] Γερασηνῶν is attested by א* B D 2427$^{vid}$ latt sa.

have made mischief in alternate Greek manuscripts, including Γαδαρηνῶν (Gadarenes, of Gadara)[44] and Γεργεσηνῶν (Gergesenes, of Gergesa).[45] While "Gerasenes" seems the most likely choice, it becomes so only as *lectio difficilior*. That is, it is more likely for an original, unredacted for of the text to include a difficult to believe setting than a perfectly conceivable one. But whether we decide on Gerasa and its inhabitants or any of the other respective locations, the lack of detail given to the region or its people, leaves readers either to presume a hyper-specific, unspoken local knowledge or a stereotyped mapping of a particular people, in a particular way, to a particular place. The narrative writes onto the shores of the Sea of Galilee or the Mediterranean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico or the Atlantic Ocean a mapped mythology. Even though Mark offers little precision in his description of place, he still provides readers a particular, fixed population, under negotiation in this passage. The lack of geographical precision in the Decapolis' and the sea's description, coupled with the potential for local specificity, opens the door to a remapping of *both* a place and a people by readers.

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[44] This option is popular, because unlike Gerasa, Gadara was an actual city on the coast of the Sea of Galilee. Support for this moniker can be found in A C. The Nestle-Aland prefers Matthew's use of the term "Gadarenes" in 8:28, perhaps already pointing to a trajectory of scribal skepticism over Mark's shaky geography. However, Luke seems to favor "Gerasenes" (Luke 8:26).

[45] This reading is attested to in א$^2$ L Δ. For Origen's account, see his *Commentary in John* 6.24. For discussion of this conversation, see especially T. Baarda, "Gadarenes, Gerasenes, Gergesenes and the 'Diatessaron' Traditions," in *Neotestamentica et Semitica: Studies in Honor of Matthew Black*, eds., E. Earle Ellis and Max Wilcox, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1969), 181-197; John McRay, "Gerasenes," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary, Volume 2* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 991-992; Bruce Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2nd edn, 1994), 18-19; John T. Fitzgerald, "Gadara: Philodemus' Native City," in Fitzgerald, Dirk Obbink, and Glenn S. Holland (eds.), *Philodemus and the New Testament World* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 343-397; Collins, *Mark*, 263-264, esp. note b.

The Gerasenes are a located, particular people, abstracted by a spatialized presentation. The narrator delimits this Decapolis as a territory indistinct from its residents. Whether *this* Decapolis resides east of Judea or on another plane of existence, it is bounded, delimited as a territory indistinctly from its residents. Like Mbembe's notion that colonially occupied territories are bounded by and to apparently-essentialized subjectivities, Mark's χώρα "of the Gerasenes" (v. 1b) acts as a discrete region, even marked with a "border" (ὅριον, v. 20) and by the people within. In short, this is a *political* boundary.[46] A spatially-specific belonging, established by the bodies within the region, this representation of space functions ideologically. According to Warren Carter, in a citation of Maud Gleason, the narrative deployment of bodies declared *as* ethnic beings was a common antique rhetorical tactic for depicting an "entire society."[47] Carter is certainly more interested in the characterization of Romans as a demonic force in Mark's narrative, but if this "legion" inhabits a Gerasene man, these people are as metonymic as the demonic colonizers.[48] Mark deploys individual characters to attach stories of a larger group of people—the Gerasenes—to a particular place—the Decapolis tombs.

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[46] Leander is aware of the complexity of a conversation to delineate the boundaries of a country for the Gerasenes. The notion that a people might occupy some discrete and identifiable territory near the seashore is something of a controversial topic, Leander argues, as the city was instead located some "80 kilometers from Jerusalem" (Leander, *Discourses of Empire*, 214). The term, "political space" is partially indebted to Malbon's argument that such spaces, named properly with a people, should be understood as "geopolitical" spaces (*Narrative*, 15-49).
[47] Carter argues that the Legion represents the possessed character of all occupied peoples ("Cross-Gendered," 144-145). His primary interlocutor here is Maud Gleason, whose studies of Greco-Roman rhetoric point to the notion that "images of the body" work as "synechdohe for an entire society" ("Mutilated Messengers: Body Language in Josephus," in S. Goldhill [ed.], *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001], 52).
[48] Leander, *Discourses*, 216-219.

The necrotic image of the Gerasenes provided in Mark 5:1-20 removes the demoniac from acceptable life and melds him and his people into the necropolis outside the city. The pericope is introduced as a journey "to the other side" (v. 1), which, as alluded to earlier, would draw the first-century reader to imagine Hades,[49] and certainly recalls a modern expression for the spiritual plane. From the moment Jesus lands, death quite literally enters: "Immediately (εὐθὺς), out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit met them" (v. 2b). Without adequately precise geography, the εὐθὺς supplants distance as an important identifier of spatial meaning, closing the distance from the sea to Gerasa with a possessed man and images of tombs. That this place is the χώρα "of the Gerasenes" only solidifies the notion that *this* man is our expected metonym for the residents who live here. The region is further marked by the social death of demonic possession by its name; writes Moore, "The Hebrew root *grš* means 'banish,' 'drive out,' 'cast out,' as more than one commentator has observed, and so, by extension, commonly signifies exorcism."[50] Although a single character is introduced as physically possessed, the very name of this people and place indicates that they are all under demonic influence. Even the other residents appear unable handle life without a possessed man among their tombs, as though demon possession were essential to their collective identity. After the exorcism, the other Gerasenes are "terrified" at the sight of their healthy neighbor (vv. 14-16), a result different than the other exorcisms in Mark (1:21-28; 9:14-28). Unclean spirits and the realm of the dead are collapsed into the immanence

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[49] Kotansky, "Jesus and Heracles in Cádiz," 185-192.

[50] Moore, *Empire and Apocalypse*, 28. On the naming of the Gerasenes, see also Derrett, "Spirit-Possession," 287; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 342; Gundry, *Mark*, 256; Leander, *Discourses*, 214.

of an instant encounter: Gerasa, its people, its necropolis, and its demon constitute the χώρα.

Use of χώρα to set the scene further darkens the abstraction of the Gerasenes, by literally inscribing them into the land. While tombs (v. 2), shackles and chains (v. 4), swineherds and cities (v. 14) are all potentially transient objects, they are some of the few visceral descriptors of the region. In Malbon's spatial exploration of the second Gospel, this setting receives a double meaning: political and topographical meanings. That is, while the χώρα "of the Gerasenes" is political because it deals with an ethnic identifier and has a "border" (ὅριον; v. 20), its designation as a χώρα deals with the physical features of a landscape.[51] Like the "tombs" and "mountains" (v. 5) of the χώρα, the Gerasenes are part of this topography. This country is *for* them. Not only are they bordered, but they are naturalized into the geography, naturalized as shackles and shacklers, tomb constructors and tomb denizens, and possessed.

Mark's dark depiction is not an innovation, as Josephus offers a similarly violent memory of Gerasa. According to Josephus, during Vespasian's siege of Jerusalem, even after he had successfully fortified his position, the Roman general dispatched a cavalry detachment to the Decapolis. Recounted in *Jewish War*, these mounted soldiers indiscriminately slaughtered or enslaved thousands in the city (4.9.1). But Josephus' narrative is confusing: "Since the city was located some 80 kilometers from Jerusalem, it is difficult to understand why Vespasian would send troops there just when he was about to secure Jerusalem on all sides."[52] This fact, Leander argues, does not necessarily point

[51] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 51, 61-62.
[52] Leander, *Discourses*, 214. Leander is not alone in his suspicion that Josephus misses the mark on his historical account. Both Emil Schürer (*The History of the Jewish People*

to a lack of concern for the particularities of the Jewish Revolt, but rather similar efforts for both Mark and Josephus: the "brutal and pitiless invasion of Gerasa" during the 60s traffics in "the painful poetics of Gerasa."[53] No doubt, with only Mark and Josephus as our sources, it is difficult to say whether this poetic past of Gerasa was widely known. However, taking the two sources together offers a template for thinking about the location as a place where violence and death are at home.

More proof that Mark boils life within first-century Gerasa into painful memory comes from a mismatch between its memory in both the second Gospel and Josephus and the archaeological record. By most archaeological accounts, Gerasa was a thriving, cosmopolitan space in the first-century CE. Calling it the "epitome of the Roman city in the east," Mark Chancey argues that the century following the Jewish revolt characterized a period of relative prosperity and influence in the region for the city.[54] While Mark and Josephus seem to remember Gerasa as a tragic, death-ridden memorial, and perhaps the evidence of presence of Roman troops bears this out,[55] material remains paint a lively

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*in the Age of Jesus Christ*, vol. 2 [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979], 150) and Mary E. Smallwood (*The Jews under Roman Rule* [Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity; Leiden: Brill, 1976], 311) find the historicity of his narrative dubious. For more on the overall troubling tradition of approaching Josephus as a historian at all, see Jonathan Klawans, *Josephus and the Theologies of Ancient Judaism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

[53] Leander, *Discourses*, 214-215.

[54] Mark A. Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 134-137; see also Jacques Seigne, "Jerash romaine et byzantine: developpement urbain d'une ville provincial orientale," in Adnan Hadidi, ed., *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan IV* (Amman: Department of Antiquities; Lyon: Maison de l'Orient Mediterraneen, Universite Lumiere, 1992), 331-341; Carl H. Kraeling, ed., *Gerasa: City of the Decapolis* (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1938).

[55] Apparently, during the Jewish Revolt Roman legionnaires were stationed at Gerasa, as indicated by funerary inscriptions (C.B. Welles, "Inscriptions," in Kraeling, #211-213).

picture of the city. In the first-century alone—a period in which Josephus would have us believe the city was sacked—construction was completed on two temples to Zeus and Hera,[56] a city gate was built (perhaps pointing to the completion of a city wall),[57] and workers finished a 3,000-seat theater.[58] Religious life, too, was diverse; beyond the temples to Zeus and Hera, the non-Olympian god Tyche Agathe was worshiped, as well as an "Arabian God."[59] Mark's material imagination clashes with a material residue of the society he attempts to characterize.

The "painful poetics of Gerasa" do not take into account the lived existence of its residents, but rather establish an alternative contestation of its meaning—one marked by tombs, possession, and foreign occupation. Mark engages in the necropolitical practice of territorialization by describing the region by borders, undesirable behavior, and reducing its residents to those descriptions. Mark's abstraction of this place, except in description of its death-like characteristics, makes room for readers to fill these gaps with specificity from the distant, deadly places of their experience: those locations where the discourse of illegitimacy subjects people to social death. As I argue below, the specters that haunt this passage need not be explicitly mentioned by the narrator, but can be conjured by the narrator's storytelling. Though they do not live in gentrified neighborhoods, the unauthorized immigrants affected by broken windows policing are forced to live in places

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[56] Jacques Seigne, "Le sanctuair de Zeus a Jerash: Elements de chronologie," *Syria* 62 (1985), 287-295; Welles, "Inscriptions," #17.
[57] Asem N. Barghouti, "Urbanization of Palestine and Jordan in Hellenistic and Roman Times," in Adnan Hadidi, ed., *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* (Amman: Department of Antiquities, 1982), 209-230; Chancey, *Gentile Galilee*, 135.
[58] Shimon Applebaum and Arthur Segal, "Gerasa," in Ephraim Stern, ed., *The New Encyclopedia of Archeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society and Carta; New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 473.
[59] Chancey, *Gentile Galilee*, 136; Welles, "Inscriptions," #17-20.

that facilitate their ostracism. The discourse of illegitimacy erases the vitality of everyday life within particular communities—it places national immigration law above unauthorized immigrant communities; it homes in on Roman occupation over the vitality of Gerasa. Mark's selective specificity conjures specters of those oppressed by the discourse of illegitimacy.

**Policing Death Worlds, Creating Criminals**

Attempts to police populations by targeting particular locations and with an understanding of non-normative behavior depends on a discourse of illegitimacy. This tactic of control justifies over-policing of othered communities by declaring their homes outside legality because they live there. The practice of delimiting who belongs in which place as one common to both the Decapolis and over-policed sanctuary cities establishes such locations as a common place precisely because it is conceivable in both locations. This death world takes shape by limiting entire peoples as undesirable. Though the particular people and offenses differ between contemporary urban neighborhoods and the tombs of Mark's Gerasa, the discourse of illegitimacy materializes people into the Markan narrative, precisely because it is the same place as an over-policed community. The discourse of illegitimacy is a material method for chaining up the residents of the Decapolis and justifying their social death. This discourse, because it follows kyriarchies across time-spaces, is a common historical thread that binds peoples together. I argue that policing normativity is a spatial practice that draws otherwise invisible, socially dead people into gentrified communities through the Markan narrative.

*Sanctuary Cities and the Creation of Illegitimacy*

Does Mark intend to engage in the painful poetics of Gerasa? The ostensibly empathetic institution of sanctuary city policies offers a suggestion. The earlier discussion of then-Mayor Booker's desire to avoid policing federal immigration laws points to, on the one hand, a desire among neoliberal progressives to expand the franchise of American society. On the other hand, the good will these policies demonstrate is betrayed by simultaneous policing practices that target the most vulnerable populations in a given city. The broken windows policing Newark performs shows that there is still behavior that is considered illegitimate. Thus, unauthorized immigrants of color face demands from U.S. hegemonies on two fronts in cities like Newark: a federal strategy to police the types of communities allowed to exist in the United States and a local desire to normativize the populations who live in that city. Because sanctuary city policies often obscure their complicity in discriminatory immigration policy of local police, federal police, and federal immigration practices, progressive cities often participate in the social death of unauthorized immigrants of color. I do not necessarily want to suggest that we interpret Mark 5:1-20 as a neat comparison between Gerasa and Newark, the demoniac and immigrants of color, the Gerasenes and a city council, and Jesus and an I.C.E. agent. Instead I suggest that the discourse of policing presumably undesirable communities creates and reinforces territorial boundaries around those who are other. Instead a focus on the discourse of illegitimacy policing marginalized subjects in both biblical and contemporary places expands our inquiry beyond interpreting ancient characters and contemporary people together; it gives us a vehicle to understand over-policed neighborhoods anywhere as the same location.

With the term "discourse of illegitimacy" I seek to draw together many scholars' theories for governance of societies' detritus, all of which follow a similar pattern despite temporal-spatial distance. Most notably, I follow Judith Butler's notion that the power of the late-modern nation state is a kind of "governmentality." Butler writes in the aftermath of the 2001 declaration of the War on Terror, concerned about the U.S. policy of extra-legal "indefinite detention" of suspected enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay prison:

> But as sovereignty in that traditional sense has lost its credibility and function, governmentality has emerged as a form of power not only distinct from sovereignty, but characteristically late modern. Governmentality is broadly understood as a mode of power concerned with the maintenance and control of bodies and persons, the production and regulation of persons and populations, and the circulation of goods insofar as they maintain and restrict the life of the population.[60]

Because these combatants were not participants in a formally-declared war and because they are imprisoned outside the United States, they fall within a legal limbo, outside the limits U.S. sovereignty. However, governmentality, as Butler deploys the term, invests authority to limit the political lives of others in low-level government bureaucrats. Thus, the "law" is less a symbol or tool of the sovereign state, but a "tactic" for the exercise of power.[61] Writes Butler of detention at Guantanamo that the act of "deeming someone

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[60] Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (New York and London: Verso, 2004), 52. In her analysis of the difference between "governmentality" and "sovereignty," Butler argues that the old-style medieval and early-modern sovereign gave way to state governmentality, in which power is diffused across many different offices. However, sovereignty has not died away and is now *authorized by* governmentality. That is, while previous it may have been authorized by race, God, or birth, now it arises because the discourse of government permits it. Here she synthesizes, largely, Wendy Brown's reading of Foucault on governmentality ("The Governmentality of Tolerance" in *Regulating Aversion: A Critique of Tolerance in the Age of Identity* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006]) and Giorgio Agamben's exploration of the "state of exception" (*Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998], 136-143).

[61] Butler, *Precarious Life*, 61-62.

dangerous" is enough to determine whether "criminal acts occurred."[62] Looking for behavior in racialized groups of people, then, permits those imbued with authority from the government to "[reduce]…these human beings to animal status, where the animal is figured as out of control, in need of total restraint."[63] Such authority has material effects on the ground: unauthorized immigrants are in the U.S. without papers, without a vote, and therefore with little ability to protect their rights. Police are afforded the authority to exercise upon others their idea of what a society should look like, creating entire classes of illegitimate people. Policing tactics do more than enforce laws, they create the discursive structure for how people do or do not participate in political and social life, and how society understands them.

Racist policing practices create a discourse of illegitimacy by attaching undesirable, non-normative behaviors to particular groups of people. While it targets populations of color, "broken-windows" policing works ostensibly in service of "community." Language used in defense of such policing policy insists on the need protect "orderly residents" from "disorderly people."[64] That is, members of the same community, police the boundaries of their community by declaring which behavior is undesirable: those who are possessed, "rowdy teenagers, prostitutes, loiterers, the mentally disturbed."[65] With these behaviors policed in communities of color, people of color and unauthorized immigrants from the global south are thus marked as undesirable,

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[62] Ibid., 76.
[63] Ibid., 77-78.
[64] George L. Kelling and James Q. Wilson, "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety," *Atlantic Monthly* (March 1982), 29-38. See also, ILRC, *Sanctuary Cities*, 11.
[65] Kelling and Wilson, "Broken Windows."

illegitimate, illegal.[66] Even though the United States and sanctuary cities invested in broken windows policing both have boundaries that apparently limit their authority, identity within and attached to those borders is constantly policed. Likewise, the repeated attempts by his neighbors to chain the Gerasene Demoniac among the tombs (5:3-4) show a persistent regulation of undesirable behavior. This discourse of illegitimacy fuses place and identity together to declare who belongs and what must happen to reject subjects from such a belonging. I argue below that this discourse uses material means to create material bodies who are always already illegitimate within material locations. That is, we can see the discourse of illegitimacy as an actual practice of social death that shoots through any number of places, informing people of who belongs or not, yes, but also bonding locations and their residents together.

*Materializing the Dead*

Mark's creation of a place worthy of death in Gerasa illustrate such an event, in which the Gerasenes repeatedly chain their neighbor; a threatening subject made illegal. The narrator materializes the Gerasenes in at least three ways: (1) through narrative technique (2) with recognizable, material details; and (3) by expanding the boundaries of Gerasa to include all places by boundary-policing. The challenge for this project is that gentrification persistently keeps those affected by, for instance, broken windows policing out of view of privileged subjects. Thus, Mark narratively imagines the Gerasenes as a party criminalized, people who *belong* in chains. Moreover, the use of tombs to house the most prominent character of this scene draws in ancient Greco-Roman legal discourse, as we shall see. Finally, the practice of boundary policing draws in all other locales

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[66] Harcourt and Ludwig, "Broken Windows, 272.

regulated by discourses of illegitimacy. In so doing, the Gerasenes and any who are delegitimized by over-policing are conjured as haunting—but no less material—presences within the experiences of gentrified readers.

To maintain the Gerasenes as a people abstracted by their location takes the work of policing, an effort in which the narrator enlists the Decapolis residents themselves. Not only does Mark abstract the territory to which he ties the Gerasenes, but he combines this move by imagining them persistently chaining up their ostensibly undesirable residents. No doubt, this tactic is highlighted by the undesirable subject himself: The man approaching Jesus from the tombs had been chained there and broken free; he howled, "day and night," so wild that he gashed himself with stones and "no one was able to bind him, not even with a chain" (5:3-5). At this point, the striking image of a Gerasene man, roaming the tombs and the mountains of the whole region, and screaming from his possession serves to transform the entire region into a lawless location.[67] As Lisa Marie Cacho has noted, the law commits marginalized subjects to death, not because they have broken laws, but because aspects of their identity are marked as illegal a priori.[68] Indeed, she argues that laws that target people of color, particularly immigration enforcement, "grossly [overrepresent] all-too-recognizable figures with lives of their own," therefore

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[67] Carter notes that the wildness of this space, typified by the emasculated demoniac, allows Jesus to look the part of the most powerful being in the arena: "In these terms, the man as metaphor for society subdued and dominated by militarily based Roman dominance communicates in vv. 2–5 the experience of that power in terms of death (among the tombs), social alienation, overwhelming power, lack of control, self-destruction, demonic control, and antithesis to God's empire/rule manifested by the manly man Jesus (1:15)" ("Cross-Gendered," p. 145). Indeed, to be fair Carter's argument has more to do with a Jesus versus the empire conflict at work. My argument, therefore, extends his claim to mark the whole of the territory in which this conflict is meted out.

[68] Cacho, *Social Death*, 6.

criminalizing "*real world referents*" who have not even committed crimes.[69] The Gerasene demoniac, we could extrapolate, has its real world referents in those conquered by Roman "Legions," those possessed in general, those who live among tombs, and Gerasenes themselves. The law criminalizes and marginalizes these actual people by both defining what is illegitimate and baking that illegitimacy into their identities. We cannot separate the aforementioned conditions from one another as they are presented in Mark. Mark seems to assume the Decapolis residents do not want to exist in a state of social death but he also does not recognize in them any ability to control or police themselves.

One way the Markan narrator imagines the Gerasenes as outside legality is by constructing a demoniac outside the bounds of normative gender. Nothing from Mark's description of this demoniac would lead us to believe he is a desirable member of normative Greco-Roman society: he howled "day and night," so wild that he gashed himself with stones and "no one was able to bind him, not even with a chain" (5:3-5). As Laura Donaldson notes, in citation of Frank Kermode, that this "uncivilized" native is presented as a gendered deviant, "displaying 'a [demonic] excess of male strength,'" who is healed of "'an excess of maleness.'"[70] Indeed, Colleen Conway argues, the inability of a man in the ancient Mediterranean world to control his body relinquished his privilege within the hegemonic Roman masculine matrix, "sliding down the scale from man to unman."[71] In a social location valuing self-control as an identity-making ability, the

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[69] Ibid., 9. Emphasis original.
[70] Ibid., 103; cf. Frank Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1979), 135.
[71] Colleen Conway*, Behold the Man: Jesus and Greco-Roman Masculinity* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 21-25. See also Craig A. Williams, *Roman Homosexuality*, 2$^{nd}$ ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 151-156; Stephen D. Moore, *God's Beauty Parlor: And Other Queer Spaces in and around the Bible*

demoniac occupies a recognizably failed masculinity. Even more so when compared to Jesus, who, in the words of Tat-siong Benny Liew, moves through the second gospel as the ultimate Roman man: in control, domineering, and virile.[72] Liew observes Jesus' control over spirits through exorcism (Mark 1:18-28; 3:11; 7:21-30; 9:14-22), his ability to dominate intellectually over his opponents (1:21-22, 27-28; 2:1-12, 13-3:6; 7:1-13; 11:27-12:12, 13-37), and his mastery over the body (3:19b-20; 3:9; 4:1; 6:30-31 14:65; 15:16-20, 26-32).[73] In stark contrast to the virile Markan Jesus, the demoniac demonstrates a lack of control over his body—possessed instead by a demon (5:2)—unable to live normative life in society (vv. 3-5), and swiftly bested by Jesus (vv. 6-13). So, while we are not necessarily given the intent of those who chained this man in the tombs, the conventions of legality, which force troublesome people into social death, are given a natural target in this non-normative masculinity.

The demoniac, furthermore, is a threat because he embodies the danger of the Roman military, again a problem for Jesus to solve. When Jesus confronts the demoniac and asks for the spirit's name, the demon famously answers, "Legion, for we are many" (5:9b; λεγιών). I have already discussed this name's reference to the Roman occupation of Gerasa, but Jesus is the solution for Mark. Jesus functions as a general as powerful and successful a military leader as Vespasian himself; practically, however, the narrator

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(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 136; John J. Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire: The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990). For a reading of this passage explicitly in light of Greco-Roman masculinity, see Carter, "Cross-Gendered," 145.

[72] See Tat-siong Benny Liew, "Re-Mark-able Masculinities: Jesus, the Son of Man, and the (Sad) Sum of Manhood," in *New Testament Masculinities*, eds. Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 93-135.

[73] Ibid., 104-113.

simultaneously sets up Jesus as a conqueror and the Gerasenes as conquerable. The re-memory of the Roman conquest of Gerasa Jewish War plays out again in this scene.[74] And while this account does not perfectly mirror Josephus' memory of a massacre, it still occurs entirely within the tombs and results in a terrified populace (v. 15). This repeated terrorism gives no indication that the Gerasenes will ever escape this tragic existence, much less be worthy of any more of Jesus' healings (1:40-45; 2:1-12; 3:1-6; 5:21-43; 6:53-56; 7:24-37; 8:22-26; 9:14-29; 10:46-52).[75] The one who comes out of the Gerasene encounter looking more impressive is Jesus. For the problem of colonial occupation, the Gerasenes become a vehicle by which the narrator can develop the reputation of their protagonist. While they remain behind, terrified, as Jesus continues on his mission, the Gerasenes are left among the tombs.

Bearing all of this in mind, I want to specify that I do not read "Legion" as *only* an occupying Roman army, but as the *condition of being conquered*. Jesus liberates the Gerasenes not from the overlords—it is implicit that, by the end of this story, the Romans still control day-to-day life of this territory (see, for example, 15:1-32)—but ostensibly heals them of their conquered condition. We would make a mistake to understand Legion as the problem here, even if Mark does, because colonial possession is but a byproduct of the colonial impulse itself. Legion is a symbol not for a person-possessing, land-occupying force—not a symbol for Rome, in other words—but for the multiple, marginalized subjects who have been marked for death by the Roman legions, and as such will forever be haunted by those legions, will forever be marked by that name of

[74] Leander, *Discourses of Empire*, 214; cf. *JW* 4.488.
[75] No doubt, the Gerasene is himself cured of an "unclean spirit," but the Decapolis remains a tomb, thus maintaining the space's and people's necrotic identifier.

horror: *Legion*. But imagined as a possession, this byproduct is still part and parcel of the Gerasenes themselves. In this way, the narrator is still able to present the locals as conquerable and policeable.

More than that, the narrator enlists the Gerasenes in a job for which they are apparently overmatched: policing their own communal identity. The limited descriptive specificity for the Decapolis given to readers by Mark creates a region possessed by demonic foreign occupation, embodied by an emasculated resident in the tombs. This portrayal adds a final level of failure, beyond empire and gender: the Gerasenes are unable to police their own undesirables. They restrict the demoniac among the tombs, showing that they cannot cope with him as part of their society (v. 3). The demoniac represents a realized threat to normativity and sovereignty and, so "he had frequently (πολλάκις) been restrained by shackles and chains" (5:4a). That is, his fellow Gerasene residents were involved in banishing him from everyday life. Still they failed: for "as often as he had been restrained" he broke free and "no one could restrain him" (vv. 3-4). Like sanctuary cities that engage in policing the borders of normal "community" life, Mark imagines the Decapolis as a location where the establishment of boundaries is also an establishment of normativity. Those who fail must be forced into social death of the tombs (v. 2). Even then, the Gerasenes fail: "but he tore apart the chains and shattered the shackles, and no one had the power (ἴσχυεν) to bind him" (v. 4b). This person, who has defied social norms, cannot be contained by the "frequent" efforts of his neighbors, who do not have the power to police their community norms. The forces that this society finds so objectionable—foreign occupation and deviant masculinities—seem to point to the failed subjectivity of the Gerasenes. Their inability to control this metonym for their

people, a demoniac possessed by an imperial power, betrays their attempts to police themselves. They fall into the same emasculated situation as the demoniac, as good as dead, belonging to the tombs.

To simply say that marking the Gerasenes with a space of the dead puts them to death is not enough. If space is socially productive, it behooves interpreters to consider precisely what sort of work cemeteries do to the subject forced within them, particularly their unwelcome guests. Tombs across the Roman world were hardly static creations of stone, but places in which subjectivities were constantly negotiated. Philip Harland, in examination of Hierapolis' northern necropolis, has noted the ways in which "graves of those who had passed on can also further our understanding of cultural interactions among the living."[76] Harland's main object of interest is the tomb of Publius Aelius Glykon Zeuxianos Aelianus, the tomb of a Jewish family, who left behind funds for the associations of the purple-dyers to celebrate the festival of Unleavened bread, and the carpet-weavers to celebrate the festivals of Pentecost and Kalends.[77] The participation in both Jewish and non-Jewish celebrations, argues Harland, posits a question of whether the Glykon family, who clearly identified as Jewish,[78] were "(born) Jews or whether they were gentiles who adopted important Jewish practices (judaizers) and then arranged that other (guilds) also engaged in these practices after their deaths."[79] More important to

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[76] Philip Harland, "Acculturation and Identity in the Diaspora: A Jewish Family and 'Pagan' Guilds at Hierapolis," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 57, no. 2 (2006), 222.
[77] Walter Ameling (ed.), *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis, Band II* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 196; cf. Harland, "Acculturation," 228.
[78] Harland will note elsewhere in this piece that the northern necropolis, which houses a majority of Hierapolis' Jewish tombs, is marked with a large number of menorahs (Harland, "Acculturation," 227). The Glykon tomb, however, does not feature the symbol and is found in the southeast necropolis, apart from most of the Jewish tombs.
[79] Ibid., 229.

Harland than this family's racial-ethnic identity is the notion that their tomb becomes part of the acculturation process of a relatively recent Jewish community in Hierapolis.[80] The necropolis was also a space by which the dead might continue performing and shaping their identity, even after life.

Individual and group identity-formation through epitaphs operates as an explicit means by which the dead might belong to—or be set apart from—a given society. Such places also trade in an alternative, more implicit discourse of identity-formation: legality. In western necropoleis, burial plots could be marked by legally-binding "boundary stones," writes Virginia Campbell, marking the spaces in which a body might be interred.[81] Boundaries construct a binary between inside and out. If a legitimate party resides within the boundaries, the threat of an outside intruding ever lurks. Greco-Roman tombs were frequently inscribed with the names of the buried and buried-to-be, prescriptions for memorial of the deceased party, and penalty for violation of the space (e.g. anyone who might otherwise be buried in said tomb).[82] Diasporic Jews would

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[80] Ibid., 239-242.

[81] Virginia Campbell, *The Tombs of Pompeii: Organization, Space, and Society* (New York and London: Routledge, 2015), 99-100. See also, Jocelyn Toynbee, *Death and Burial in the Roman World* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), 73-100; Maureen Carroll, *Spirits of the Dead: Roman Funerary Commemoration in Western Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 99. The plot might even be dedicated by a particular entity. In Pompeii, for example, Virginia Campbell has noted that numerous tombs include a *decretum decurionum*, given by the municipality for use of public land (Campbell, *Tombs*, 84-98). Harland makes a similar case in the east, but focusing rather in particular associations as the maintaining bodies of certain tombs (Harland, "Acculturation," 232-235).

[82] For more on tombs in the Roman world, particularly as regulated places, see Campbell (*Tombs*, 84-109 See also Johan H.M. Strubbe, "'Cursed Be He That Moves My Bones,'" in *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*, edited by Christopher A. Faraone and Dirk Obbink (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 33-59; Strubbe, "Curses against Violation of the Grave in Jewish Epitaphs of Asia Minor," in

protect their family tombs from illicit use with curses against future generations (against their "children's children;" εἰς τέκνα τέκνων), curses that threaten punishment from the Jewish God (which also appear on Christian tombs), and curses that take on the voice and power of Hebrew Bible prophets and law.[83] As Johann Strubbe argues, violation was a practice committed by the poor: those who could not afford a tomb, would bury their loved ones in the "eternal homes" of those who could. Legal language, including prescriptions for behavior vis-à-vis burial spaces and punishment for violation,[84] created criminal bodies. More than that, they created criminal bodies out of the poor, those who could never afford to participate legitimately in local society. In short, the violator of the law was not a hypothetical would-be criminal, but someone who wanted, but could not afford, their loved ones to experience an honorable eternity.

If we understand tombs as material features of a place that create meaning for that location, the sepulcher is shows the criminalized poor to always be a lurking threat to social order. In conversation with Georges Bataille, Mbembe notes that sovereignty is the ability violate all of the restrictions placed on them, living "as if death were not," more afraid of the limits of identity and the limits of life and death.[85] The criminal, becomes a threat because of their ability to act as a citizen, as one who respects the law over death. Without the privilege of an epigraphical naming on an antique, Greco-Roman grave, the

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*Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy*, Jan Willem van Henten and Pieter Willem van der Horst, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 70-128.

[83] Strubbe, "Curses," 73-100.

[84] Campbell notes that in and around Pompeii the town council readily granted the use of public land for burial, but also argues that once a body was buried in a tomb, legal recourse was made not to municipal law, but divine law (*Tombs*, 10-11, 90-93).

[85] Fred Botting and Scott Wilson (eds.), *The Bataille Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 318-319; Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 16.

would-be criminal is marked by death in the tombs, not because they have been laid to rest, but because their sovereignty as a living subject is always already subject to rightlessness. We could say that the restrictions of law on individuals—whether in U.S. sanctuary cities, Hierapolis' necropoleis, or Mark's Decapolis—necessarily imagine certain bodies as a threat to a society's identity. With Greco-Roman tombs creating necropoleis that trade in the discourse of illegitimacy, the Gerasene demoniac is persistently chained within a place that is known to stake claims on normative members of society and punish its deviants. The demoniac and the Gerasenes, by virtue of their lack of control and marginalization, are materialized in a place that communicates their illegality.

The Gerasenes are materialized as socially dead narratively and contextually—through their narrative environment and its built corollary—but I also argue that the discourse of illegitimacy materializes them in sanctuary cities, among unauthorized immigrants. In Massey's words, places in the modern imagination require "administrative or political boundaries."[86] Separated by distance and time, material tombs are different from the narrative world of the Decapolis, which itself is distant from the contemporary situations of American cities and the stories of their unauthorized immigrants. In locations like the Decapolis, necropoleis, and contemporary sanctuary cities, boundaries are established by policing and the shape of normativity—be that normalcy by gender performance, obedience to laws, or citizenship. At the same time, boundaries do not necessarily close off, writes Massey, and they can even serve as entrances, insofar as

[86] Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, 152.

borders are also a gate that links an inside and an outside.[87] In the present example, Jesus' travels "to the other side of the sea" (5:1), across the "borders" of the Decapolis (v. 20), is in part what gives a mythical sense to this particular place. In the contested politics of space, boundaries are but one trajectory cutting across time-spaces, bounding places together, and even making place. Here in the Decapolis, sanctuary cities offer a different boundary of a different place: discourses of illegitimacy establish trajectories that draw together various moments into a single place-as-event.

Even when espousing liberatory, anti-imperial values, those who engage in any policing of the norm establish a cross-temporal place through the discourse of illegitimacy. The demand for policing community boundaries makes a common border between death worlds and gentrifying communities, where the socially dead are otherwise invisible. Because, as I argued above, death worlds depend on the abstraction of actual subjects—but actual subjects nonetheless—the Gerasenes and unauthorized immigrants materialize in these over-policed locales. These people and policing practices make a place by engaging in precisely the same discourse of illegitimacy. This discourse cuts across times and distance, all while manipulating space by bringing subjects into relation to one another. Such policing practices draw together both those marginalized by them and those who marginalize. That is, the spatial trajectory of policing communities' normativities does not belong to a particular demographic, like gentrification does, but it binds all subjects together in a web of complicity and victimization so as to materialize the Other *here and now*. Even though broken windows policing forces people of color out of gentrified neighborhoods, betraying the message of welcome communicated by

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[87] Ibid., 155.

sanctuary cities, any calls for quality-of-life policing draw privileged and marginalized subjects into the same space. Indeed, this social activity—this discourse—haunts readers as they approach sacred texts, their responsibility or their pain, their privilege or their fear, found in the Decapolis.

**A Haunting Alliance**

Though the character is not a sympathetic one in Mark's depiction, Legion gives residents of this over-policed region a resource for agential resistance to occupiers. As Jesus enters the Gerasene tombs, the demon-possessed man poses the salient question: "What do you have to do with me?" (5:7) This cry (κράζω) resists Jesus' mimicry of Roman authority in at least three ways: (1) it exercises agency in the face of conquest; (2) it wraps up Jesus in the politics of the death world, by forcing him to answer what he has to do with the demon; and (3) the subject who issues the challenge—simultaneously one and many—is a haunting spirit, who is able to draw beings together across time-spaces. Critical to this reading, as I discuss above, is the notion that Legion raises the specter of Roman armies marching across the Judean countryside, but is embodied within the demoniac as a spiritual residue of the traumatic memories of their occupation. It is from within this trauma that Legion resists another conquest.

Laying out these three aspects of Legion's resistance to a conquering Jesus, this section envisions a resistance to the over-policed place from within that locale. As I argue below, the unclean spirit's agency, performed through speech and action demonstrates the possibility of action for a population necropolitics declare have no ability to advocate for themselves. The very exercise of agency within places where activism is believed unthinkable by those who abhor those within builds an alliance of all those subjugated by

the discourse of illegitimacy. This alliance of subjectivities submerged by and through history, which is precisely what haunts through the figure of Legion, are made present in over-policed death worlds, insisting the living become conscious of their own complicity in and dependence on the death of living beings. Acting as both a singular body and a vast army, Legion populates the Decapolis death world with a unified alliance of illegitimate ghosts.

*Agency in the Face of Conquest*

Faced with another Roman-esque conquest, this time from Jesus, Legion responds with a challenge: “What do you have to do with me?” (5:7) Because the demoniac has been removed from society for his non-normative behavior, we can see Jesus’ exorcism here as an attempt to return the man to society. It is, as Laura Donaldson notes, an enforced “hegemony.”[88] While the demoniac is returned to some sort of normalcy, colonial domination of the Decapolis continues. Yet conquered communities have ways of resisting, submerged knowledges are “layered” onto places, societies, Donaldson writes, as “suppressed voices in plain sight.”[89] And here we are not only hearing hidden knowledge, but witnessing spiritual agencies: silenced subjects who continue to act with agency apart from normal concepts of power and activism. Legion’s response to Jesus, entering into a herd of pigs, demonstrates an ability to both act with agency and think creatively in moments when its survival is at risk (vv. 10-13). As Avery Gordon notes, populations not given room to control their present environment explore the power of the past and future, playing with time-spaces and the agencies of ancestors and ghosts.[90] And

[88] Donaldson, “Gospel Hauntings,” 102-106.
[89] Ibid., 108.
[90] See Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 151.

indeed in the Decapolis, Legion, unwelcome in this death world, negotiates a settlement with this conqueror only a spirit would be able to fulfill through time and space play. The result of Legion's negotiation, is not that the demon is eliminated, but that its entrance into a herd of pigs multiplies its power. This move shows the alliance of those subjugated by over-policing to be an active alliance, only ever expanding their resisting alliance as they engage their oppressors.

Conquered societies often turn to spiritual agents to engage a cosmos where they lack control. The painful poetics of Gerasa make Jesus' encounter with a spirit are thus unsurprising. In her analysis of postcolonial African novels, particularly Olatubosun Ogunsanwo's *Bush of Ghosts*, Esther Peeren argues that subjugated people operate with an understanding of spiritual worlds just as violent as the material.[91] Any presumed certainty of existence in the mundane realm is subject to disruption and mischief from gods, demons, specters, and angels. In the present instance, we can observe both the author of Mark and the Gerasenes are subject to this phenomenon. Indeed, the Markan Jesus is wrapped up in a constant battle with Satanic forces, from his initial contact with the devil in the wilderness (1:12-13), to his exorcisms (1:21-28; 7:24-30; 9:17-29), to the declaration of his opposition to the "strong man" (3:19b-30).[92] In this same vein, Myers offers this miracle as another instance of Jesus' "struggle to 'bind the strong man.'"[93] While Mark's Jesus may intend to die on a cross (cf. 8:27-38), his ultimate mission is

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[91] Peeren, "Everyday Ghosts," 111.
[92] Collins, *Mark*, 269-270. Collins argues that this narrative theme of cosmic warfare is a reason one should not read this passage as resistance to the Romans. To my mind, however, cosmic warfare and material warfare need not be mutually exclusive, as the scholars engaged below note.
[93] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 194.

accomplished by subduing demonic, spiritual forces. This Jesus is to defeat demons in battle. Under this formulation, the exorcism miracle both represents control over the spiritual realm and the power to do what Rome cannot: the ability to control the chaos caused by spirits.

The cosmology of the encounter at Gerasa appeals to an alternative power through the agency spirits inject into the structures of worldly, imperial domination. In a haunted cosmos, Buell argues in citation of Gordon, "the often unnoticed but real effects of 'wordly power' and the 'shared structure of feeling, a shared possession'" connects people to specific contexts through an inheritance of otherwise silenced moments.[94] Always a subtext in the aforementioned painful poetics of Gerasa, Roman domination of the region is at issue—the occupation is only ever taken up through innuendo. But we could go further: the stories of abstracted Gerasenes remain, stories that resist the Romans, but also the Markan Jesus' attempts to dominate their history and future. What room does the particularity of everyday experience have in the face of imperial power that abstracts? Though not explicitly interest in "everyday experience," Buell offers a potential answer in her haunting infused with historical particularities. She argues that a haunted cosmology "also leaves room for agencies that exceed human dimensions."[95] Haunted cosmologies insert the agencies of those to whom people are connected across time-spaces into an ethical inheritance. For instance, in analysis of white Christian complicity in racist use of the Bible, Buell contends that "the living may have to reckon with that which is literally unspeakable and not of their own experience."[96] Just like

[94] Buell, "God's Own People," 170; Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 193-208.
[95] Buell, "God's Own People," 170.
[96] Ibid.

ghosts, "unclean spirits" and "demons" point to people, moments, and traumas from another time-space. Here in the Decapolis the Roman X Legion and its traumatic memory is recalled, but that memory need not become a puppet of the one who tries to banish it. Haunted cosmologies importantly show that agency can be exercised apart from conquest, masculinity, or discipline.

With Jesus approaching Gerasa as Vespasian did, Legion cannot hope to defeat Jesus on the field of battle, but the unclean spirit instead resists with supernatural tactics. First, the demoniac announces himself as a spiritual force. Of course, the narrator describes the crazed man as such ("a man…with an unclean spirit"; 5:2). But it is the demon's speech, his own self-description, that makes it clear that his power comes from elsewhere, is not authorized by the Romans or by Jesus: "What do you have to do with me (τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί), Jesus, son of the most high God?" (v. 7)[97] This Greek statement matches demonic speech elsewhere in Mark, in vocabulary, speech pattern, and its "out crying" (κράξας) delivery (1:24). As in 1:24, those from the spiritual realm have knowledge of Jesus' identity before the rest of the characters in the narrative can grasp it (cf. 8:27-33). Moreover, argues Collins, this naming of Jesus prior to the exorcist's naming of the demon is an unusual ancient formulation, in which the demon attempts to establish control over the shamanic figure *first*.[98] Legion declares itself as an agent in a challenge to Jesus, a resistance that simultaneously marks it as a spirit. That is, the

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[97] Gundry makes clear that this is a common phrase in Greek literature (*Mark*, 75; Mark 1:24; Matt. 8:29; Luke 4:34; 8:28; John 2:4). On this conversation see M. Reiser, *Syntax und Stil des Markusevangeliums* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/11; Tübingen: Mohr, 1984), 20-21; E. C. Maloney, *Semitic Interference in the Marcan Syntax* (SBLDS 51; Chico: Scholars Press, 1981), 183-185.
[98] Collins, *Mark*, 169-170. Collins uses the examples of exorcisms in *Testament of Solomon* 2:1; 3:5-6; 5:2-3.

audience is called to recognize the possessing power of the Decapolis as one with spiritual agency with powers of its own.

Second, Legion resists power-through-conquest through a negotiated settlement only a specter could fulfill: the passing between and drowning of actual bodies. Rather than engaging in pitched battle with the conquering Jesus, Legion demonstrates the power of spiritual entities by quantitatively multiplying its possession by 2,000. Rather than Jesus' "banishing" (ἀποστείλῃ) the spirits from the "country" (χώρας; 5:10), the spirit "implored" (παρεκάλεσαν) Jesus to "enter" (εἰσέλθωμεν) a herd of nearby pigs (v. 12). Though the verb παρακαλέω points to an urgent request—even begging—it also demonstrates a desire for and tactic to achieve an alternative resolution to the "torment" of imperial conquest (μή με βασανίσῃς; v. 7). The spirit sees an additional opportunity in this moment and seizes the initiative to survive. Moreover, the "great voice" (φωνῇ μεγάλῃ; v. 7) with which Legion challenges conquering authorities denotes a spiritual or divine force in Mark's Gospel: this is the same "great voice" emitted by the first demon encountered in the narrative (1:26), twice by Jesus as he dies on the cross (15:34, 37), and from the heavens at Jesus' baptism (1:11) and transfiguration (9:7).[99] Not only does the spirit propose an alternative future option, but does so with the authority of the divine. The solution proposed and carried out by the demon—to possess a herd of pigs and run into the sea—is suicidal only to those with material bodies. Legion's response may seem obscene and uncanny to mere mortals, but the demon is able to expand its influence from one being to 2,000 and back to one again. The herd is driven off into the sea (5:13), but Legion cares little for the mortal bodies of its hosts to such a degree that it mutilated the

[99] On this conversation, see Duran, "Other People's Demons," 48.

demoniac (v. 5). Indeed, these are terms set within the matrix of necropolitics: both Jesus and the unclean spirit show their power over the Decapolis through the destruction of material bodies.

The Gospel of Mark's Gerasene time-space abstracts the Decapolis and its residents as violent, all while its denizens resist material dominion in spirit. Unable to exercise agency under the second Gospel's necropolitics or its narrative, the Gerasenes force the narrative to confront the very practices that have relegated their existence to the tombs. That is, to return to the above challenge from Buell, specters and spirits draw into present moments questions of histories, futures, complicity, and responsibility for their creation. Where did Legion come from? What does this narrative, its characters, readers, or composers have to do with that history? What responsibility do these others have for the painful poetics of Gerasa? In short, when the Markan storytelling marginalized an entire region by extracting their agency, the Gerasenes offered an entire cosmology in response, a cosmology filled with resistance.[100] While the exorcism of the demon implicates both Jesus and Legion in the destruction of a human body and 2,000 animals, the spirit's relationship to both the past and the present, points to reasons why Gerasa is a death world, posing them as challenges to those who would be rulers. It shows the over-policing of this region to be as destructive as those conquerors who came before.

*Complicity in Necropolitics*

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[100] The Gerasenes of Mark 5:1-20 are certainly a creation of Markan storytelling, but they also exceed the boundaries of the narrative in a couple ways. First, the painful poetics of Gerasa are also a feature of Josephus' historical narrative, which means they do not solely belong to Mark. Second, readers, as I have discussed throughout, are involved in ascribing their own contextual understandings to features of this narrative, which establishes itself as an over-policed place. The Gerasenes definitely gain meaning from this story, but they also draw from and contest other understandings of their identity.

With Jesus' entrance to the Decapolis mirroring that of Vespasian, the demon's question serves as a critical challenge: What, indeed, "do you have to do with me?" (v. 7) If Jesus' voyage to the Decapolis is a matter of the Son of Man asserting his dominance over demonic forces, he participates in necropolitics. The narrator creates a location so utterly devoid of life that a tomb becomes a believable home of a self-mutilating demoniac. Necropolitics operate thus, ensuring that the power of one party is highlighted by the deaths of others. In this case, Jesus' messianic power is highlighted by his ability to police-through-exorcism a people unable to police themselves. Here we examine the phenomenon of policing normativity in light of Legion's question, observing that the discourse of illegitimacy connects those who benefit from policing to those who do not. In this particular instance, "everyone was amazed" at Jesus' miracle (v. 20), while the man who was formerly possessed is still referred to as the "demoniac" (v. 15). Jesus' policing act does not, for the Markan narrator, make Gerasa any less threatening of place, because the demoniac is still there: his threat has nothing to do with his actual possession, but the fact that he is, no matter what, a demoniac. Yet Jesus' legend continues to grow with the help of this man: the demoniac is unable to leave the region and is instead enlisted to spread word of Jesus' deeds (vv. 18-20). The extent to which any resolution can be found in this passage is in the audience's understanding that the demoniac does Jesus' wishes. As he does, we never see the Gerasenes conquer their fear, the demoniac still keeps the moniker, and the Decapolis has yet only been described by tombs. Mark's necropolitics demand that Jesus' glory be wrapped up in the social death of the Gerasenes.

The social death of people who come to represent territorialized places for the purposes of benefiting those who behave like and look like those in privileged neighborhoods authorizes practices like broken windows policing. Central to the imperative for quality-of-life policing is an understanding that the behavior of residents must be watched. With an eye toward the *behavior* of residents, according to Wilson and Kelling, the primary tenet of broken-windows policing is an understanding that “disorder and crime are linked in a kind of developmental sequence.”[101] Disorderly conduct, largely including “littering, loitering, public drinking, panhandling, and prostitution,” does not take into account systemic factors, but instead places the onus for social degradation on alleged deviants.[102] Of course, because a vast majority of residents living in precincts targeted for these measures are majority minority, whether intended or not, policymakers are engaged in the racist treatment of their most vulnerable residents. Mark conjures up this familiar tactic, marking an entire region both by its people—“country of the Gerasenes”—and that people’s behavior—breaking shackles and chains (v. 4), howling, self-mutilation (v. 5). Jesus, then, arrives to this particular location to police the particular behavior of particular people by removing the non-normative, threat: a demon that induces self-mutilation. Gerasa, the neighborhood that cannot afford to repair its broken windows, apparently benefits from an outside officer arriving to cuff the criminals its own residents cannot (vv. 3-4). Indeed, the resulting identification of the demoniac as a demoniac even after the exorcism highlights this fact: Mark imagines the Gerasenes

[101] Kelling and Sousa, “Do Police Matter?”
[102] Ibid.

themselves as in need of policing, it matters little if they are still possessed, because their weakness always puts them at risk

Necropolitics' discourse of illegitimacy suggests Mark's protagonist take his talents for dominating demons to Gerasene shores (1:34). Again, Legion's question: What does Jesus have to do with this neighborhood? What stake does he have in its normalization? Jesus' intent is obscured, but if we take Mark at his word, that this entire narrative is the "good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (1:1), then it is clear that the narrator desires his protagonist to increase his reputation from this spiritual combat. This is how necropolitics function: a people or individuals establish their sovereignty, according to Mbembe, by committing violence against entire races thought to exist in a "state of exception."[103] A notion from Foucault on which Mbembe elaborates, sovereignty necessitates a "right to kill" those whose state of exception designates them an "emergency."[104] The power of hegemonic regimes rests entirely on their ability to master those marked unworthy of life; it *needs* undesirable, non-normative subjects to establish itself. What I have called a discourse of illegitimacy is thus a common feature of attempts to create order out of exceptionally chaotic moments and places, a necessary first step to policing. Another way to approach the question of Jesus' purpose, then, is to not look at the precise content of the "good news of Jesus Christ," but to examine the particular locales and individuals this "Son of God" seeks to regulate as an integral part

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[103] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 12-25.
[104] Ibid., 17. And while he notes the Nazi regime serves as an arch-example of late modern exercise of totalitarian sovereignty, the deployment of terror through public execution in ancien régime France as a deterrent for political resistance demonstrates a pre- or early-modern use of the power of death, crucifixion servicing a corresponding function in the Roman regime. Indeed, there is precedence for thinking about consistent trajectories for necropolitics across time-spaces.

of his identity. Doing so demonstrates that Mark's *evangelion*, apart from its identifiable message, is invested in empowering its protagonist at the expense of others.

Markan necropolitics necessitate Jesus' complicity in the social death of and, therefore, intimate relationship with the Gerasenes. Though the connection is negative, Jesus has much "to do with [the Gerasenes]." With the exorcism resolved, the legend of the Markan Jesus is spread doubly: both as the troubled swineherds go into "the city and the country" to report these happenings (5:14) and as the former demoniac tells his story "in the Decapolis" (v. 20). Furthermore, Collins has observed, because the exorcism casts out an exceedingly powerful demon the action provides Jesus an opportunity to demonstrate "divine power."[105] In order to achieve this end, the narrator needs to set up an entire people as identifiable by a self-mutiliating and worthy of a spiritual assault that destroys a herd of pigs. As a trajectory materialized in any location where policing seeks to reinforce the power of kyriarchal powers, the discourse of illegitimacy manifest here buttresses the legend of Jesus, while assuming the Gerasenes can be abstracted as socially dead. But this trajectory is therefore also another vehicle to create place. The power of Jesus, who resides all the way "on the other side" of the sea from the Gerasenes, needs them to exist, albeit in a state of terror and death. Let us further extend this trajectory to all "other sides," then. The vagueness of the narrative's settings—"the sea," "the other side," "the tombs"—are created by the stories of seas and other sides that readers bring to the text. As a socially constituted place, the Decapolis is necessarily a product of such stories. This particular pericope's abstractions simply open it to an excessive number of violent material. The story already binds people on other sides of the sea within Mark, so

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[105] Collins, *Mark*, 272-273.

how might it traverse boundaries of text and reader, gentrified neighborhoods and death world? What does it do to gentrification and colonialism, which both depend on precisely the same kyriarchal logics? As spirits make clear, it has everything to do with "you" and "with me."

*A Spectral Alliance*

Just as the discourse of illegitimacy creates a death world, it also produces haunting specters. As a kyriarchal strategy—that is, an effort that maintains the hegemonic pyramid elaborated by Schüssler Fiorenza—the discourse of illegitimacy's policing of non-normative subjectivities silences those voices, submerging them from collective consciousness. The present section tracks this submersion, not as a finality, but as a *gathering place for an alliance*. In her engagement with Mark's spirits, Donaldson observes that the second gospel exposes "layers" of New Testament demons, both within the text in question and from other texts. She notes that the specters created by imperial domination resist that hegemony by "[moving] one beyond mastery into a deeply moving relationship."[106] The very detritus of colonial policing always remains and presents an alternative means of being: relationship beyond violence. Haunted relationship demands attentiveness to disruption of the boundaries policed by kyriarchal regimes. Here I follow these specters to this point where norms are violated, to the limits of what policing considers illegitimate, in short, to the *queer*. Below, I argue alongside queer theorists who reassess time that those whose agency was submerged in life exercise transgressive agency in death, that these ghosts make contact with the living, unrestricted by normative borders—those of life and death, queer or straight, race, class. Legion therefore does not

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[106] Donaldson, "Gospel Hauntings," 110.

treat the discourse of illegitimacy as a boundary, but a pathway to make common cause with other over-policed communities. Its spiritual agency exposes the fiction of restrictive borders that claim their inevitability. As a haunted place Mark 5:1-20 becomes a node for a gathering alliance of spectral beings, perhaps invited by Legion, but certainly containing marginalized people haunting gentrified readers.

One phenomenon that gathers spectral presences into the Decapolis is intertextuality. Donaldson connects both the exorcism of the Gerasene demoniac and the healing of the Syrophoenician woman's daughter (7:24-30) on the level of the respective provinces' colonial status: both the Decapolis and Tyre "suffered greatly" under Roman occupation.[107] Moreover, much like the Gerasene demoniac, the Syrophoenician daughter represents yet another character who must be healed before returning to normative social life.[108] These two spirits, Donaldson contends, offer examples of people harmed by imperial domination, but also people whose "disorderly mind-spirit" offers an alternative view of resistance to such conquest.[109] But the inheritance from this Palestinian region does not end there. As Donaldson notes, in 1 Samuel, King Saul consults a medium to raise the prophet Samuel from the dead to consult ahead of a battle against the Philistines (1 Samuel 28:3-25). This attempt to make contact with the dead through a shaman, comes *after* Saul officially bans "mediums and wizards" from Israel (v. 3). Despite Israelite conquest, then, "the medium indicates that some established circuits of Canaanite

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[107] Ibid., 99. Donaldson deploys Gerd Theissen's notion that the Syrophoenician woman's ability to speak Greek points to her higher social status, perhaps playing with the audience's understanding of a rivalry between Galileans and wealthy Gentile neighbors (*The Gospels in Context: Social and Political History in the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. L.M. Maloney [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991], 61-80).
[108] Donaldson, "Gospel Hauntings," 101-102.
[109] Ibid.

religious knowledge" have persisted.[110] As an indigenous voice for spiritual entities, the medium of Endor is part of a larger Canaanite legacy across time, that includes the Syrophoenician woman and the Gerasene demoniac. Despite attempts by conquerors, like the Romans, Israelite kings, or Mark's Jesus, to either banish spiritually-attuned people or exorcise spirits, these ghosts remain. That this legacy persists despite various hegemonic dominations, always unsanctioned by those forces, demonstrates a cross-temporal resistance.

While belief in or talk of ghosts may signal highly a populated cosmos, like those of indigenous religion, the instability and queerness of the specter also ensures that it operates in ways unfamiliar to popular imaginations. Engaging Toni Morrison's deployment of ghosts throughout her works, Juda Bennett argues that the desire of Morrison's ghosts push normativity to its limits: they are "at turns fascinating presences, disturbing absences, but mostly provocative embodiments of both and therefore prime figures to trouble the binaries that queer theory seeks to deconstruct."[111] These ghosts, therefore, embody disturbances to, in Kathleen Brogan's words, "dominant history."[112] Troubling the boundaries of time, place, and sex, they are key actors in the shift within queer theory toward anti-normativity. In short, spirits are queer and they queer time-

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[110] Ibid., 107. To this end, Donaldson engages James C. Scott's notion that the "infrapolitics of the powerless" deploy "hidden transcripts" to subtly and secretly resist imperial power (*Domination and the Arts of Resistance* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990], xii-xiii).
[111] Bennett, *Toni Morrison*, 2.
[112] Kathleen Brogan, *Cultural Haunting: Ghosts and Ethnicity in Recent American Literature* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 17; Bennett, *Toni Morrison*, 2.

space.[113] Transgressive to their core, ghosts in Morrison even inhabit structures, such as the haunted house, named “124,” in *Beloved*—a structure that “was spiteful.”[114] Indeed, that even places and things can haunt points to the creation of place filled with ethical demands for the living. No doubt, ghosts take up the cause of subjugated communities, as the demoniac rages against an imposing invader and, as Bennett notes, 124 shudders when a man tries to enter the all-women world of Sethe’s household. These various specters offer surreal, supernatural responses to a “real” and “natural” that do not otherwise seek to hear them. We can therefore ask, what ghosts haunt and how do they haunt when hegemonic tactics like the discourse of illegitimacy force real people into hiding?

Legion’s exercise of agency and its ability to burst forth from a demoniac into the pigs and into the sea does not demonstrate its failure or demise, but instead a building alliance on the underside of kyriarchy. Carla Freccero calls the work of queer spectralities an attending to those whose “intelligibility”—here she cites de Certeau—has been fixed into categories that keep them silent: “the Indian, the past, the people, the mad, the child, the Third World,”[115] and we continue: the “Gerasenes,” a demoniac who “lived among the tombs,” a “herd of pigs.” The actual subjects who these markers attempt to explain and contain, however, find ways to return to the living in the present, often through trauma or mourning, but also through joy and play.[116] All of these signifiers that have

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[113] For more on this turn, see my theory and method chapter. Also, Jonathan Goldberg (ed.), *After Sex? On Writing since Queer Theory* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).
[114] Morrison, *Beloved*, 3.
[115] Freccero, *Queer/Early/Modern*, 72; Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Conly (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 3.
[116] Freccero, *Queer/Early/Modern*, 85; Brown, *Politics out of History*, 149-150.

material effects—racism, sexism, uneven development, broken windows policing—are never sufficient for containing the fullness of the subjects they claim to represent. Those people who are abstracted by these tools of policing resist by always exceeding the boundaries meant to restrain them. Through their common resistance to ontologies that maintain kyriarchy, specters maintain a ghastly alliance against borders that attempt to restrict them.

The spectral alliance rejects hegemonic attempts territorialize people apart from one another. The struggle here has been elaborated by Audre Lorde: "As a tool of social control, women have been encouraged to recognize only one area of human difference as legitimate, those differences which exist between women and men."[117] Indeed, when, for Lorde, straight white women declare the terms for liberation movements, other divisions are ignored and therefore reinforced.[118] Her approach to these challenges, which are mirrored in the gentrified liberal's desire for both immigrant sanctuary and all-white neighborhoods, is a call for "new patterns of relating across difference." The Gerasene demon presents such a relation—a relation that uses the very boundary that polices such difference as the point of contact to build coalition. Legion's habitation of both human bodies and animal bodies is an excessive performance of existence, that one may inhabit more than a single body, even 2,000 at one time. While colonial necropolitics demand racial categories bind people to their countries, this spirit defies these hegemonic logics by plunging into a place no reasonable person would go, the sea. Legion moves to enlist the dead, the submerged, into its community. When the discourse of illegitimacy deploys

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[117] Audre Lorde, The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press, 2007), 122.
[118] Ibid., 111.

gentrification as a method of separating unauthorized immigrants from their potential allies in wealthy communities, the Gerasene demon resists with a plunge to the sea. Indeed, Legion's excessive gender performance, bodily harm, residence among the dead, and desire to enter into pigs show a being completely opposed to the regulations of kyriarchal society. The demon shows an alternative knowledge, literally submerged in the sea or found in the tombs. That is, it finds an alliance where imperium refuses to go, what it fights against: death.

Legion's alliance resisting through excess is, finally, an effective alliance: it makes change. Derrida's hauntology makes clear that the agency of ghosts works materially on the living: when a ghost "returns," its "effectivity" is it creates a "repetition *and* last time, since the singularity of any *first time*, makes of it also a *last time*…. [Hauntology] would harbor within itself…eschatology and teleology themselves."[119] Haunting is an event, always making new in contemporary places, always making new contemporary places. In short, haunting is creative; it sets up new social relations and new terms for politics, that is, engagement with others. The demands for such politics come from the agencies of submerged subjects, who persistently call into question the limits of hegemonic systems. As we have seen, Legion's cry challenges Jesus' complicity in colonial necropolitics. Legion's haunting action indicates the failure of those same necropolitics by ignoring the established boundaries of the Decapolis. This spiritual action declares an eschatological end to boundaries produced by the discourse of illegitimacy, boundaries between over-policed communities and gentrified

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[119] Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 10.

neighborhoods. The demon's spiritual effort draws forth a real resistance to kyriarchal dominion.

**Conclusion**

Mark's attempt to affix the Gerasenes to the territory of the Decapolis does more than bound them, it looks to suck agency from their subjectivity, agency required for flourishing life. Legion lashes out in many ways that one might expect of one trapped in a death world: it harms actual bodies (5:5), it destroys property (v. 4), it "lives" only where the dead reside (v. 3). These are not things that the living do. But the demon exercises agency in one way familiar to those of us subsisting under conditions favorable to life; Legion cries (v. 7). This cry, a challenge to the conquering protagonist, calls into question the very logics of his approach by exposing Jesus' complicity, by permeating the boundaries of self and place, and by simply *acting* when the demon was supposed to be bound. Most of all, this resistance stands in the face of the discourse of illegitimacy, which polices the very existence of this demon of non-normativity. Resisting a tactic at work across time-spaces, therefore, Legion's cry becomes a rallying cry to all others made illegitimate by violent policing.

In other words, Legion bursts through the established dividing lines of demographics, of space, and of time, uniting the cries of all necrotically-bound peoples. When western NGOs cry foul at two-thirds world treatment of LGBTQ bodies while constructing marginalizing critiques of Islamic subjects, Legion takes up their cry. And what might Legion cry when "broken windows" policing is given the veneer of compassion because it is authorized by mayors and police chiefs of sanctuary cities? No doubt, the demon might channel Audre Lorde, demanding "new definitions of power and

new patterns of relating across difference," because "the old definitions have not served us, nor the earth that supports us."[120] Legion cries foul at the notion that those who subsist in such death worlds are a threat that must choose between self-policing or occupation by a foreigner. Legion rejects policing strategies that pit the lower-middle class against the poor, and knows that tension must be held between #BlackLivesMatter and #SayHerName; and even then, Legion says the name of those unauthorized migrants rendered criminal-before-crime because their brown bodies are the antithesis of American gentrification. In all this, Legion lives into the threat, knowing only that unity in discontent, a unity which celebrates the Other's unique subjectivity, can respond effectively to the lies of neocapitalist space, neocapitalist time, and neocapitalist identities.

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[120] Lorde, "Master's Tools," 123.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# "I WILL BE MADE WELL":

# SOCIAL DEATH AND THE CONTESTATIONS OF THE DEAD (5:21-43)

> Not only history but also space is open. In this open interactional space there are always connections yet to be made, juxtapositions yet to flower into interaction, relations which may or may not be accomplished. Here, then, space is indeed a product of relations and for that to be so there must be multiplicity. However, these are not the relations of a coherent, closed system within which, as they say, everything is (already) related to everything else…. A space, then, which is neither a container for always-already constituted identities nor a completed closure of holism.
>
> —Doreen Massey[1]

Jairus was clamoring for Jesus to heal his dying daughter (Mark 5:21-24a); Newark was clamoring for real estate developers to revitalize its stagnant neighborhoods. When a woman with a twelve-year flow of blood interrupted Jesus on his way to Jairus' house, the girl died (vv. 24b-35); to entice developers into Newark, the city felt compelled to show they were committed to attracting new, wealthier, and white residents, and now residents in the Ironbound cannot afford their homes.

Both the Ironbound and Jairus' daughter find themselves in desperate situations, where resources are scarce, and outsiders come to take what vitality is available. And while the difference between young professionals and the bleeding woman is the woman's actual need for healing, both instances here feature someone else staking claims on their stories. As this chapter explores, Mark 5:21-43 is exhaustingly stretched by

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[1] Massey, *For Space*, 11.

misogyny, racism, Christian supersessionism, and postcolonial power dynamics within biblical scholarship. Residents of the Ironbound also find themselves overextended between the needs of their immigrant residents and the demands of American neocapitalism. Indeed, what the Ironbound needs, argues Arnold Cohen, Senior Policy Coordinator for Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey (HCDNNJ), is capital investment to continue organic "development without displacement." The struggle faced by lower income urban communities is a push by cash-strapped municipalities like Newark to zone areas around commuter hubs, Penn Station in this case, for pedestrian-friendly, high-density residential and commercial structures. More pressingly, landlords have taken advantage of the move to attract wealthier tenants, raising rent rates in the surrounding community.[2] Tellingly, the party line for developing such properties in the Ironbound is focused not on the needs of the current residents, but potential, wealthy, professional buyers.[3]

I want to ask some probing questions at the intersections of these two events—the healings of two socially or physical dead bodies in Mark 5 and the development of the Ironbound: what political potential might emerge if, instead of asking what a place *needs* or what it *means*, we think about Jairus' daughter, the bleeding woman, and the low-income residents of the Ironbound, as subjects with agency? How might considering agency in places where residents are so often imagined as transitory and powerless open a space for a different sort of politics?

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[2] Arnold Cohen, interview by author, July 17, 2017.

[3] Says East Ward Councilman Augusto Amador: "We're slowly losing against towns like Harrison, Jersey City, Hoboken to develop…so we can create the conditions to attract new people" (Dan Ivers, "Sale of Ironbound Lot Could Pave Way for New Era in Iconic Newark Neighborhood," *Star-Ledger* [December 14, 2015]).

The shift required by these questions should move both biblical interpreters and urban planners toward a new spatial ideology in which space is contested. Developers pursuing real estate in the Ironbound share a common spatial ideology with biblical scholars: space can be abstract. As this project has demonstrated, abstracted space is bound together into territories and affixes meaning to both them and the people who live within. The Ironbound has been designated by enterprising developers as a place with bodies so diminished in value that any gentrification is an apparent boon to the area. This chapter observes that Mark 5:21-43 has also been abstracted by biblical interpreters, as a healing text, as a religious text, and as a colonized text.

Both developers and biblical scholars have identified these locations as in need of life and provided alternatives to their dire situations—capital injections and Jesus, respectively. But when these solutions are brought into conversation with other lived experiences of those places, these so-called life-giving solutions run up against other contestations of that place, making those very solutions contentious, too. In this instance, I apply Johnson-DeBaufre's hermeneutic for early Christ assemblies presented in Paul's letters to Mark 5:21-43:

> Thinking about them as a space where storied worlds…meet, interact, mingle, and contest comes closer to the way texts and contexts together produce and revise meaning. It opens the Pauline assembly, as well as the communities of readers of Paul, as productive spaces where a multiplicity of people gather and deliberate over communal ideals and ways of life—not always with equal power or voice, but with equally storied worlds.[4]

To think of these textual locations *as locations* means thinking about the activity of those who engage them. Readers and other forces haunting those readers exercise their

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[4] Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, "Narrative, Multiplicity, and the Letters of Paul," 372.

agencies on texts and on therefore on others impacted by those scripturalized places. As Massey writes in the above epigraph, space is ultimately diverse and relational in its composition. Here I propose that the scriptural place that is Mark 5:21-43 is formed by contestations *as social relations*. Between the bleeding woman and Jairus' daughter, between Jews and Christians, between colonizers and colonized, between the perpetrators of gentrification and its victims.

However, when already scarce resources are contested, life is choked and death flourishes. I argue that this is the very situation we encounter in Mark 5:21-43. Here we meet two sick females: a woman with a twelve-year "flow of blood" (vv. 25-26) and the dying daughter of a synagogue leader named Jairus (v. 23). Jairus' first approaches Jesus on behalf of his daughter, but on their way the bleeding woman forces her way through the attending crowd to take advantage of Jesus' healing powers (vv. 27-29). While contact with Jesus (and his cloak) does cure the woman (vv. 30-34), the narrative makes plain that this delay caused Jairus' daughter to die (vv. 35-43). Whether death presents itself through the woman's social ostracism caused by her condition or through the literal death of the girl, this passage operates with a notion of scarcity that limits the healing potential of Jesus' body: limited by dimensional space, he cannot share life with both characters. Indeed, in much the same way that gentrifying development often fails to improve the lives of current residents and thus forces them to leave their homes, so too does the promised life-giving ability of a messiah (1:29-24, 40-45; 2:1-12; 3:1-6; 5:21-43; 7:24-30, 31-37; 8:22-26; 9:14-29; 10:46-52) find itself constrained by the sheer volume of death in the narrative. If space is imagined as dimensional, and the source of life from a singular location—either wealth or a peripatetic healer—death will persist.

Thus, this chapter first explores the practice of contesting *the lives that count*, and how that maintains a place's relationship to death.

Because I understand this passage as a contested space of the dead, I follow the potential politics offered by subjects that haunt across time-spaces. As a scripturalized text, Mark 5:21-43 is subject to many contested uses and interpretations throughout time; as a place it is characterized by "throwntogetherness" and, therefore, irrevocably open to numerous bodies, practices, and desires.[5] I evaluate this passage, not for its interpretive meaning, but for, in Johnson-DeBaufre's words, its "multiplicity and its attendant contestation and complexity."[6] Because the passage is complex, contested, and multiple through its use in different time-spaces, we can look to it as a "productive [space] where multiplicity of people" make their demands heard.[7] While interpretation, as a reading strategy, seeks isolated meaning for a passage, conceiving a passage as a meeting space necessarily leaves the reader open to the possibilities engendered in meeting manifold others within that place. The contestations edging their way into the narrowness of the

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[5] Massey, *For Space*, 149-193. Elsewhere in this project, I have pointed to scriptures as formed by social practices, over time, through *scripturalization*. However, Jacqueline Hidalgo details the way a particular space, the utopian land of Aztlán operates as a real place on U.S. soil and a scripturalized places for many Chicanx subjects. It therefore contests the bordered, scripturalized place of the United States (*Revelation in Aztlán*, 17).

[6] Johnson-DeBaufre makes this case in the context of the growing tendency by New Testament scholars to narrate Paul, telling stories of his life and psyche, generally filling in the "gaps" found in New Testament texts ("Narrative, Multiplicity, and the Letters of Paul," 365; see also Johnson-DeBaufre and Nasrallah, "Beyond the Heroic Paul," 161-174).

[7] Johnson-DeBaufre, "Narrative, Multiplicity, and the Letters of Paul," 372. Here Johnson-DeBaufre is referring to the ἐκκλησία with whom Paul was but one engaged party. No doubt, I do not work with the Pauline assembly here, but do expand this notion that the biblical scripturalized text is a space through which parties can meet to perform many of the same political functions of the ἐκκλησία. In the instance above, the word "demand" is one I use particularly in hauntological discourse.

space of the dead, reach across time-spaces: they haunt. Thus, the historical turn here, is open to the arrival of specters not just from zones proximal to this passage, but from elsewhere, from places perhaps unrelated to interpretations of this passage, but certainly related to death. Insofar as this passage brings Christian practitioners into contact with the lurking dead in this passage, it attunes them to their demands. While this passage may not be life-giving, it is still a resource for politics on behalf of marginalized communities.

I therefore move to explore three particular contestations—initially without explicit reference to space—at work in the creation of a space of the dead here in order to both elucidate the ways it has already engaged politically and its haunting political potential. First, I undertake something akin to traditional exegetical work, engaging primary texts and commentators to determine some of the competition to claim the passage's life-giving resources. Issues pertaining to the tension between Jairus' daughter and the woman with the flow of blood as well as ancient gynecological medicine are explored here. In either case, the desperate search for life amidst scarcity is heightened here. Second, I explore modern New Testament scholars' morphing of questions of life and death into an investigation of Christian origins. My line of inquiry follows after the attachment of death to one race, Jews, and life to the establishment of Christianity. The effective result is persistent reapplication of death to the suffering parties in the passage so that Jesus can continue his march toward resurrection and eternal life. Third, I observe the ways postcolonial interpreters both claim this space on account of its death-draped affect and transform it into their very contexts, thus also transforming Mark 5:21-43 into an infinitely more haunted space. Finally, this chapter returns to the bleeding woman's agency as a moment through which this space is constantly claimed and reclaimed by

those searching for life. The consequences for those who lead gentrified lives, I argue, are that any attempts to claim this passage as life-giving always wind up mired among the demands that life be distributed to all.

**Put to Death out of Time: Contestations and Scarcity**

> Gentrification carves out literal geographic spaces of exceptionality, wherein the management of sovereignty and sovereign bodies does not sit within the nation-state but rather is co-managed by the nation-state and capital investors. It is this relationship between the nation-state and the land developers that creates these "death worlds" where destruction, erasure and death become acceptable. The way necropolitics articulates with bodies in space in gentrifying spaces represents the expression of "necrocapitalism."
>
> —Elijah Adiv Edelman[8]

> The universal, the abstract, and the theological are problematic because they purport to address ALL without attention to the endless particularities of ALL. When the universal is countered with the particular, particularity often becomes the site of multiplicity and embodiment. How might thinking the multiplicity of stories…connect and infuse particularities *within* the universal and translocal rather than opposing them?
>
> —Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre[9]

> …and he begged him repeatedly, "My daughter is near death." (Mark 5:23)

Our introduction to the scene in Mark 5:21, on the one hand, is a clear continuation of Jesus' travels that kicked off in 4:35, with each venture taking readers and characters to "the other side" of the Sea of Galilee (4:35; 5:1; 5:21).[10] On the other

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[8] Elijah Adiv Edelman, "'Walking While Transgender': Necropolitical Regulations of Trans Feminine Bodies of Colour in the Nation's Capital," in *Queer Necropolitics*, Jin Haritaworn, Adi Kuntsman, and Silvia Posocco, eds., (New York and London: Routledge, 2014), 177.

[9] Johnson-DeBaufre, Narrative, Multiplicity, and the Letters of Paul," 364.

[10] Collins links this further to any additional scene where Mark places Jesus anywhere near the "sea" and crowds are also present (cf. also 1:16; 2:13; 3:7; 4:1; *Mark*, 276).

hand, this spatial designation casts each of these stories in liminality: how many times can we travel to an "other side?"[11] Why the lack of specificity? Much like the previous stories set on "other sides," we, as an audience, are left with the narrative performance to provide clues. In this instance, much like the preceding passage (5:1-20), Jesus is confronted with demands from other characters. First, a synagogue leader, named Jairus, beseeches Jesus that he might heal his nearly-dead daughter (v. 23). Then, a woman with a twelve-year "flow of blood" halts the party on their way, demanding her own illness be cured by the peripatetic healer (vv. 24b-34). And while these are specific grievances, they stand out against a setting that lacks specificity; it is merely a lakeshore. To attend to space here almost necessitates a look beyond analysis of the *specifically* spatial operation of a narrative (its "setting") to space's creation through social relations. In particular, the social relations I concern myself with here are *contestations amidst scarcity*. How is it, this chapter inquires, that different interests come to create scripturalized space within a struggle over resources? Then, to follow Johnson-DeBaufre's argument above, how is it that these strained, tried places, marked by struggle, also become a vital source of multiplicity? This section dwells in the interruptions of this passage, not only from the bleeding woman, but also from interjections from the Ironbound's struggle over its own development.

Death is not constrained only to places like cemeteries or battlefields, but is found in any place where a lack of or competition over resources constrains life. In places where resources are scarce, like Newark's East Ward or the "other side" of the Sea of

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[11] Brenda Deen Schildgen, *Crisis and Continuity: Time in the Gospel of Mark* (JSNT Supplement Series 159; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 103. This observation with a discussion of the creation of liminality is taken up in detail below.

Galilee, the stakes of political debate are the very limits of life and death. As we have seen elsewhere in this project, space has been enlisted as a (post)colonial tool of relegating populations to death, through an assemblage of power dynamics, including race, class, sex, and wealth.[12] These "necropolitics," Edelman argues from the epigraph above, justify practices of domination and killing by presenting certain bodies as worthy of life and other bodies to be eliminated as unworthy of life.[13] Often taking the form of gentrification, these politics, Jasbir Puar reminds us, often take a subtle approach: death worlds and the subjects marked by them operate necrotically because competition is incited over the scarce resources on the postcolonial periphery. This process, which she calls an "ascendancy to whiteness," rewards those few postcolonial subjects who can perform whiteness better than their counterparts, accepting them into the normative life of the global capitalist order.[14] That is, power does not operate in a strictly linear fashion, but creates the conditions for scarcity and then forces the numerous subjugated peoples to fight over those resources. And so Jairus and the woman with the flow of blood need to fight over the Jesus-resource, which, represents merely the hope and possibility of healing. Thus, places, particularly those scripturalized, are not marked for death by their nature, but because they have been drained of life.

An investigation of Mark 5:21-34 reveals that scriptures also include such locales. Here I pursue the creation of scriptures through, in Hidalgo's words, a process of "making, contesting, and reshaping place," and the agencies involved in these practices

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[12] For more, see Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 25-26; Cacho, *Social Death*, 6; Holland, *Raising the Dead*, 17-18; Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference," 16.
[13] Edelman, "Walking While Transgender," 177.
[14] Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*, 35.

with sacred texts.[15] But to reiterate from elsewhere in this project, I am less interested in the ways contemporary communities use scriptures than I am with ways marginalized subjects contest and, therefore, create scriptures through haunting. For the present passage, this entails a look at numerous different contestations flooding the "other side" of the lake, marking it with their demands, turning it in to a space of the dead, and a space for politics. Social death is infused into this passage by contestations over its potential from outside the narrative and its contemporary historical authorial context. The bodies and demands lurking around this space are shown not simply to float within but actually compose it. In this vein, I explore three trajectories contesting Mark 5:21-43, imbuing the passage both with death and spectral agencies. The flow of my argument, from trajectory-to-trajectory, is interrupted by three vignettes from Newark, making plain the demands persistently placed on biblical audiences when engaging scripture.[16] I first explore the ways in which the story itself tells of a contestation over life when resources are scarce. The second trajectory, deals with the ways racism puts people to death, here tracing how contestation over Christian origins has figured Jews as unworthy of life. Finally, with Musa Dube, I ponder what sort of agency the dead might exercise in contestation over their spaces, and what sort of scriptural politics might emerge from this reimagination of the space.

*An Interruption: The Past*

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[15] Hidalgo, *Revelation in Aztlán*, 18. See also, Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 104.

[16] As with my other engagement with the Ironbound and Newark in this project, these vignettes do not represent ethnographic research. Instead, my goal is to collect a tapestry of stories, demands, and desires from within this city—even across time. In this way, I attempt to pursue my goal of attending not to an abstraction of the space, but honor its vibrancy as a community of diverse subjects with diverse agencies.

Newark has a history of destructive development. Accounts of redevelopment in the city are often punctuated by the 1967 rebellion. Post-war red-lining of the city's largely African-American Central Ward created conditions of stagnation which led to the rebellion; after the unrest stagnation in the South Ward came to characterize the image of Newark as a slum-filled hellscape. Few residents, activists, or historians would deny the need for redevelopment in either case. However, responses to demands for affordable, safe neighborhoods have been uneven. In 1949, the director of the Newark Housing Authority (NHA) and a zealous advocate of new public housing construction, Louis Danzig, targeted sixteen areas throughout the city and assessed their level of urban blight.[17] Danzig's next move was not to redevelop sites most affected by blight, but, writes Howard Kaplan, "The key question about any redevelopment site was whether a private firm could make a profit on middle-income housing in the area."[18] To justify this move, Brad Tuttle says, Danzig targeted the low-income, largely-Italian First Ward for redevelopment, rather than its blighted, African-American Central Ward.[19] The First Ward was assessed by the NHA to be "rundown" with "unnecessary streets" in a 1952 report.[20] In short, this Italian-American community was determined "unnecessary" and a black community undeveloped because it was unprofitable.

With an eye toward a profit-generating venture, the city of Newark was prepared disrupt the life of a vital community. The NHA's assessment was rejected outright by the

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[17] Brad R. Tuttle, *How Newark Became Newark: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of an American City* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 129.
[18] Howard Kaplan, *Urban Renewal Politics: Slum Clearance in Newark* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 15-16. See also Tuttle, *How Newark Became Newark*, 129.
[19] Tuttle, *How Newark Became Newark*. 131.
[20] "Rebuilding Newark," (NHA Pamphlet, 1952), 3.

residents who knew their neighborhood as home.[21] Central to the NHA's redevelopment plan was the First Ward's Eighth Avenue, which exemplified life of the community, as Tuttle explains:

> Eighth Avenue had proved elegant enough to attract visits from the likes of Jackie Gleason, Jayne Mansfield, Jack Dempsey, George Raft, Marilyn Monroe, and Joe DiMaggio, as well as countless politicians, businessmen, and members of the underworld. The street was also chock-a-block with bocce courts, political meeting halls, and social clubs like the Giuseppe Verde Society, which in 1927 donated the statue of Christopher Columbus that was proudly placed in Washington Park.[22]

Again, public housing is not inherently problematic, nor is development necessarily harmful; rather, this was a community that, for all its problems, still functioned self-consciously *as a community*. Danzig and the NHA knew that Newark needed redevelopment, they saw public housing as a boon, but they also understood their mandate to be fragile and thus felt the need for an early "win" to sell their program. All the while, a community that needed public housing redevelopment, the Central Ward, was ignored.

And now, even after the Newark Rebellion, the Ironbound faces a nearly analogous situation. The same disregard for community and belonging which fostered that violence is on the march: profit. The type of development for which the area has been zoned is not low-income (quite the opposite), but it is very clearly occurring in a

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[21] Tuttle, *How Newark Became Newark*, 131.

[22] Ibid., 131; Michael Immerso, *Newark's Little Italy: The Vanished First Ward* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997); *Newark Evening News*, November 26, 1954. For a project so concerned with the problem of colonization in the present, I recognize the irony of including a quotation which demonstrates a community's veneration of Christopher Columbus. At the same time, this phenomenon illustrates one of my primary arguments throughout this project: places are engaged and contested by subjects across time and even from far away.

part of town with a reputation for a vibrant, "ethnic" community. That is, to those on the outside, the neighborhood has been exoticized as exciting and ethnic, but to those who call the East Ward home, it is more complex than that. It is still home. Their everyday livelihood depends on the infrastructure already in-place, it depends on the current cost-of-living. This neighborhood is hardly "unnecessary," even though the inexhaustible march to profit declares it so.

*Contestations in Narrative Time*

There are cross-currents between the NHA post-war development strategy, which enacted violence on two communities—the largely Italian residents of the First Ward and the red-lined African-American neighborhoods in need of public housing—and the Mark 5:21-43 narrative: here a dying girl and a long-suffering woman beg for healing at the other's expense. More specifically, an opportunity for the girl's healing is ultimately deferred by an interruption from the woman. While, as I argue, this particular storytelling move participates in death-dealing activity of subjects in and out of the Markan narrative, it is used commonly across the second gospel. The narrator deploys the literary device "intercalation," which generally combines two discrete narratives by situating one within the other.[23] Brenda Deen Schildgen argues that these techniques must also be read with

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[23] M. Eugene Boring lists the countless terms dreamed up by biblical scholars: "[Intercalation], insertion, interpolation, dovetailing, sandwich, interweaving, interlocking, framing of one story by another, interlude of one story within another, or, in the jargon of narratology, 'heterodiegetic analepsis'" (*Mark*, 157). For a more in depth exploration of this tactic within Markan literature, see Tom Shepherd, *Markan Sandwich Stories: Narration, Definition, and Function* (Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 18; Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1993); Shepherd, "The Narrative Function of Markan Intercalation," *NTS* 41 (1995), 522-540; Christopher D. Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative* (SNTSMS 64; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 91.

the reader's experience of the narrative in view. Intercalations, in Schildgen's words, are "narrative techniques that suspend time, interrupt the reader and force him or her to stop the story instead to construct the Gospel's hidden meaning and relationship of the narrative parts to the whole."[24] Such methods for arresting the audience's attention therefore play on their expectations, their investments in the narrative, and their past experiences—within the narrative and without—so as to create a new understanding. With the woman with the flow of blood exercising agency to compete for Jesus' limited healing power. This competition for wellness where there is little interrupts the narrative flow, not just with a sick woman, but with material experiences for those who live in our contemporary, capitalist environment. For those attuned to necropolitics, the competition for life in Mark 5:21-43 ensures that neither the "other side" nor Newark's neighborhoods targeted for development will ever subsist without death.

In the first place, this intercalation imbues the passage with a common desperation between the bleeding woman and the girl. As we shall see below, death is meted out in this passage across times, but it also makes an appearance within the narrative itself. Most notably, this intercalation lifts up the marginalizing conditions of these two characters at the edge of life. The two are bonded in seemingly innocuous ways: they are connected on the level of description, both identified by the title θυγάτηρ (vv. 23, 34, 35), both are linked by πίστις (vv. 34, 36),[25] and both are marked by the use

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[24] Schildgen, *Crisis*, 96.
[25] While I do not traverse the nuances of Markan πίστις in this project, its effects in this passage and throughout the second gospel have been widely noted. For a helpful discussion of the term's usage, see James M. Robinson, who notes that Mark fails to note a singular object of faith—such as God, Hebrew scriptures, or even Jesus. Instead, Robinson argues, πίστις in Mark more often points to what he calls "knowledge" or

of "twelve years" (for the woman's time in suffering, v. 25; and the girl's age, v. 42).[26] But bleeding woman and Jairus' daughter are lashed together in ever constricting ways. The girl's illness, announced as potential fatal (v. 23) before we meet the woman, raises the specter that the flow of blood may itself be deadly.[27] Desperation flows through this passage, with the father "repeatedly" begging Jesus' aid (v. 23), and, as Collins observes, the depletion of the woman's assets through her visits to phony physicians (v. 26).[28] With tensions rising between the two characters in a situation of limited resources, what are the stakes?

At a basic level, the bleeding woman and Jairus' daughter's conditions point toward undesirable conditions at the beginning and end of life. Not only does Jairus himself introduce the sense that his daughter's life is in danger, but, D'Angelo argues, the conjoined presentation of these two dire situations may be explained by ancient medical analysis of gynecological ailments. While ancient physicians arrived at various theories regarding vaginal "[flows] of blood"[29] similar to that of Mark 5:25, nearly all would have

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"understanding" of the events "recorded in Marcan history" (*The Problem of History in Mark: And Other Marcan Studies* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982], 122-124).

[26] Schildgen, *Crisis*, 104; Boring, *Mark*, 158. Horsley lashes the bleeding woman and Jairus' daughter together through the common number twelve. This, along with the occurrences of the number twelve among Jesus' disciples and the leftover baskets following the feeding of the 5,000 show a symbolic restoration of the tribes of Israel, argues Horsley (*Hearing the Whole Story*, 211-212).

[27] Boring describes the condition of illness in the biblical world as "the leading edge of death" (*Mark*, 157). See also, Antoinette Clark Wire, "Gospel Miracle Stories," *Semeia* 11 (1978), 100-102; D'Angelo, "Power," 99. This notion differs from the concept of "social death" that I work with throughout this project. Here I simply wish to highlight the woman's desperation.

[28] Collins, *Mark*, 280-281.

[29] Care has been taken throughout this project to translate the Greek term for the woman's bleeding (ῥύσις αἵματος; 5:25b) as "flow of blood" rather than hemorrhage. D'Angelo recommends a distinction be made based largely on Soranus' careful effort to define both the hemorrhage, which he considers a violent and sudden attack (*Gynecology*

understood the uterus as an upside-down, "jar-shaped object."[30] Paramount to gynecological health was maintaining the seal of the womb and preventing "hemorrhage and discharge and to hold in semen or the growing child."[31] In this way, the openness of the woman's womb leaves her socially unacceptable.[32] Following ancient medical writers along these lines, D'Angelo further notes that the age of Jairus' twelve-year-old daughter puts her at the youngest limit for marriage under Roman law.[33] At this point when she would have been expected to begin bearing children, it seems that she could have fallen

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3.40-42), and the type of discharge described by Mark, which might be better translated as a more irregular flow of vaginal bleeding (3.43-44). Taking a more ambiguous, literal translation of the term also further contrasts Mark's description of the woman's condition with αἱμαρροοῦσα Matthew 9:20, where Amy-Jill Levine argues that it might be translated simply "bleeding" (D'Angelo, "Power," 93; Amy-Jill Levine, "Discharging Responsibility: Matthean Jesus, Biblical Law, and Hemorrhaging Woman," in *Treasures Old and New: Contributions to Matthean Studies*, D. Bauer and Mark Allen Powell, eds. [SBL Symposium Series 1; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996], 379-397).

[30] D'Angelo, "Power," 96

[31] Ibid., 96. See also Jean-Jacques Aubert, "Threatened Wombs: Aspects of Ancient Uterine Magic," in *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 30 (1990), 443-446.

[32] While it is clear that ancient physicians were "far more concerned with women who do not menstruate" than the disease "flow of blood" (D'Angelo, "Power," 93; Collins, *Mark*, 280), the presence of intense medical treatment for such an ailment betray a social anxiety over the condition. Soranus, writes D'Angelo, "recommends a variety of douches or vaginal suppositories, measures to relieve pain where pain occurs, and for times of remission in the chronic form, a regiment of health-giving and strengthening measures like diet and exercise," treatments which were "probably pretty expensive" (see Soranus, *Gynecology*, 1.6; D'Angelo, "Power," 94; Lesley Dean-Jones, *Woman's Bodies in Classical Greek Science* [Oxford: Claredon, 1996], 134). Demotic papyri prescribe potion recipes for curing such ailments as well, offering soaked tampons and special baths for affected persons (see *Papyri Demotici Magici (PDM)* XIV, in Hans Dieter Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986], 242, 953-955, 970-977, 978-980, 981-984). *B. Shabbat* 110 a/b has additional recommendations for women suffering discharge (as well as men in need of laxatives). Hippocrates also describes concerns over women's bodies, particularly as they pertain to their "moistness," with a healthy balance needed between extreme moistness and extreme dryness (*De Natura Muliebri I*). I thank Dong Hyeon Jeong for his feedback.

[33] D'Angelo, "Power," 96.

victim to "hysterical suffocation," a condition Galen likens to a closed uterus, and which Soranus understood to be a "death-like state."[34] The intercalation we find here is not simply about a crossing of a boundary of purity or gender, but of the very specific extremes of "danger to the female body."[35]

Even if such conditions are healed, this poisoned sandwich still infuses death throughout the story, still carrying memory of dead loved ones, stigma of illness, and significance as it is retold. This, Kotrosits and Taussig argue, is a moment we find subjects in a state of "social death."[36] The two sick characters have become the detritus of

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[34] Aline Rouselle, *Porneia: On Desire and the Body in Antiquity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1983), 69-72; D'Angelo, "Power," 95-97. Soranus' analysis of the condition is of a disease: "When an attack occurs, sufferers from the disease collapse, show aphonia, labored breathing, a seizure of the senses, clenching of the teeth, stridor, convulsive contraction of the extremities (but sometimes only weakness), upper abdominal distention, retraction of the uterus, swelling of the thorax, bulging of the network of the vessels of the face. The whole body is cool, covered with perspiration, the pulse stops or is very small" (*Gynecology* 3.26; trans. Owsei Temkin [Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1956], 149).

[35] Boring makes the claim that this passage follows the pattern of the previous pericope (5:1-20), in which "the Jew/Gentile gap is bridged, in 5:21-43 the male/female barrier is overcome. Both cases reflect the newness of the Christian community generated by the Christ event" (*Mark*, 158). Much of this claim seems to depend upon the claim that Markan Christology has a special relationship to Pauline Christology, here no doubt mirroring the so-called "Baptismal Formula" of Galatians 3:28. James D.G. Dunn, for example, has made the case that certain Pauline theology has made its way into the debates with the Pharisees in Mark 2:1-3:6. Dunn's conclusion highlights the Jewish milieu from which the Gospel of Mark, no doubt, emerged (*Jesus, Paul, and the Law* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1990], 10-36). While this argument may be plausible and though it arises from the skeptical historical stew of the "New Perspective on Paul," the notion that a liberating "Christ event" has broken some sort of Jewish shackles is far too dependent upon the problematic claims taken up below: that a liberating, universalized, and living Christianity has arrived to overpower and supplant a legalistic, localized, and dead Judaism. For more on the notion that this passage dwells on the "extremes" of conditions threatening the female body see D'Angelo, "Power," 96.

[36] Kotrosits and Taussig, *Mark amidst Loss and Trauma*, 48; for more on their use of the term "social death" here, see John Dominic Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus: Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of the Death of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperSanfrancisco, 1995), 101. It should be noted that Crossan's use of "social death" is

the social system, its unwanted and unassimilable others. Even if their immediate ailments are relieved, the female body, epitomized by the womb, remains an object of fear, a site of threat, and a sign of danger in the text and many of its social worlds. Jesus' power to heal does not erase misogyny; development does not end racialized gentrification.[37] Instead, this passage trusts that these notions persist, so as to highlight the extraordinary power of Mark's protagonist: even a woman so far gone can be restored to her normative, childbearing role. While some interpreters have followed this failure to remove systemic marginalization and stigmas, most prefer to understand this intercalation as a closed loop, communicating a discrete point about Jesus' theology or identity.[38] But on the other hand, this is a scripturalized narrative, the trauma of such suffering is retold

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not akin to the deployment of the term in this project; he appears more concerned with the fact that the intercalation in Mark 5:21-43 is shot through with the feeling or fear of death, thus a literary critical term and less specific than my interest here.

[37] Kotrosits and Taussig point to the fact that real social effects follow bodily conditions (*Mark amidst Loss and Trauma*, 49.

[38] I discuss some instances of this tendency below. For some additional examples of the interpretive conclusions drawn from this passage, see Myers notion that Mark points to Jesus' crucifixion as a privileging of faith over life (*Binding*, 203); Witherington argues, problematically, that Jesus becomes a savior for women from a legalistic Judaism (*Women*, 74-75); Herman Waetjen focuses on Jesus as the "New Human Being," as a salvific force (*A Reordering of Power: A Sociopolitical Reading of Mark's Gospel* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989], 122). Of course, the point here is not to provide an exhaustive list, but rather to demonstrate the tendency of readers to pretend that these moments, whether factual or not, operate as historical events that have wrapped up and now operate as vehicles for meaning. Such interpretations, first, tend to ignore, in Simon Mainwaring's words, the problematic pattern of ancient texts relegating women to roles as "theological conduits for Jesus' identity and mission" (*Mark, Mutuality, and Mental Health: Encounters with Jesus* [Semeia 79; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014], 135; for an example of this tendency see, Vernon K. Robbins, *New Boundaries in Old Territory: Form and Social Rhetoric in Mark* [New York: Peter Lang, 1994], 196). Second, and more to the purposes of this project, this tendency to read-scripture-as-meaning-making often ignores the effects of reading sacred texts in the present as effective and affective. That is, texts have the power to change social and political situations, to liberate, to amuse, or to traumatize.

again and again. Indeed, inasmuch as the woman is healed and Jairus' daughter is raised, they are consistently returned to their conditions in each retelling of this story. Illustrated by gentrification, each time an invitation to "improve" the neighborhood comes from a real estate developer, a cycle starts again: local investment comes, but only for a moment, and usually for communities that need it. Insofar as Jairus' daughter and the bleeding woman are unacceptable to the normative values of their social contexts, they are forced to fight over meager resources for their health. They are limited by linear time and dimensional space: as we have seen, Jesus' delay with the woman with the flow of blood appears to lead to the death of the girl. Similarly, the presumably good news of redevelopment communicated to residents of Newark that capital was more important than their life and dignity.

No doubt, necropower persistently defers the arrival of wellness to marginalized bodies, but this deferral also creates the conditions for a new politics, created by the growing alliances gathering within spaces of the dead. Though separated by linear time and dimensional space, the scripturalized space of Mark 5:21-43 draws the woman and the girl together, because their needs are similar; it also folds the displaced victims of Newark redevelopment into this alliance, again, not because their stories are identical, but because their hope for wholeness and home contest the demands of capital. The text in question is haunted by subjects whose needs converge within it. The woman's demand is strung out and her suffering drawn out, the need of Jairus' daughter is perpetually deferred, and Newark continues to disrupt the desires and needs of its communities. But in each instance, in many others not named, and in all displacements to come, the alliance within death worlds grows.

*An Interruption: The Present*

In a city with a story of constant urban destruction and construction, the Ironbound is the latest point of urban "renewal," a distinction contested by developers, city government, and the neighborhood's very residents. Some of *this* redevelopment story is similar to that of the city's First Ward in the 1950's: an immigrant community with a vibrant main drag, Ferry Street, is an attractive enough location to excite real estate interest in investment. But this moment also bears some differences. The latest battleground for Ironbound residents is the site of the Iberia restaurant and parking lot, which is now up for sale. Newark officials are not couching their advocacy for demolition of the Iberia restaurant and parking lot, for example, in terms affordable living space or better living conditions for current residents; no, this development exists for the sake of a new type of commuter. Following the blueprint laid by other nearby cities, such as Hoboken and Jersey City, Newark has designated the area around Penn Station for MX-3 Development.[39] MX-3 zoning—which, in short, provides for structures up to fifteen stories, zoned for mixed residential and commercial use—targets young, professional commuters, attracting them to a convenient, pedestrian-friendly location. As it declines in use, the Iberia lot's proximity to Newark Penn Station makes it an attractive target for gentrification by young, wealthy commuters.

The public justification for the development has abstracted the daily lives of the local community and the project, therefore, continues to move forward undaunted by challenges from residents. Developers and city officials have discussed the Penn Station and Iberia developments only in terms of *value* and *markets*, ensuring that the discourse

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[39] Ivers, "Sale of Ironbound Lot."

remains abstract. In an op-ed piece opposing inclusionary zoning, which would set aside twenty-percent of newly developed zones for affordable housing,[40] Newark City Councilwoman Gayle Chaneyfield Jenkins writes of the need to avoid disrupting the "free market" and "[disincentivizing] developers from building…at this critical time in the business and development cycle."[41] The agents in the sale for the Iberia property have highlighted its attractiveness for *new* residents.[42] But for all the lip-service paid to "community," by developers, community organizer Arnold Cohen told me, two patterns have emerged from development in Newark. First, developments are designed "defensively," clearly separating them from the surrounding neighborhood. Second, developers have refused to lease new space to prospective tenants below a desired price, which has resulted in new structures throughout the city standing vacant.[43] Real estate firms treat the locations of their developments as vital only insofar as the new-and-the-next can attract investment, while the material structures themselves slowly snuff out the lived character of these neighborhoods.

Gentrification is a disrupting and displacing force for the life of a community. "Everything is driven by capitalism," HCDNNJ's housing grant coordinator, activist

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[40] Like many municipalities across New Jersey, Newark is required to adhere to the so-called "Council on Affordable Housing Obligations," demanding at least twenty-percent of development include affordable housing ("List of Towns Under COAH," New Jersey Department of State [April 13, 2011], accessed July 25, 2018, https://www.state.nj.us/dca/affiliates/coah/index.html).
[41] Gayle Chaneyfield Jenkins, "The Truth about Inclusionary Zoning and Its Likely Impact on Newark," *TapIntoNewark* (July 21, 2017), accessed August 1, 2017, https://www.tapinto.net/towns/newark/articles/the-truth-about-inclusionary-zoning-and-its-likel.
[42] Ivers, "Sale of Ironbound Lot."
[43] Cohen, interview by author, July 17, 2017. An already-developed example of this pattern is the so-called Hahne Building in downtown Newark. The Iberia Lot is a similar example, but the asking price for the lot appears to be one of the barriers to its sale.

Janelle Greene, said, and developers are not necessarily always "invested in who remain and those coming in [to the neighborhood]."[44] Because developers continue to hold out for higher rent rates from commercial and residential tenants, the Ironbound faces a real threat that current residents will not be able to afford to live there anymore. This, according to Greene, disrupts the neighborhood sense of the present community.[45] The Ironbound, with its tradition of welcoming wave after wave of immigrants, with a history of environmental activism around the port, faces the declaration that current trends in real estate development have no "demand" for their brand of life.

*Contestations in Religious Time*

Another point at which alliances are strengthened within this relational space of the dead, formed between the Ironbound and the Gospel of Mark, is at the intersection of Christian supersessionism and race-based gentrification practices. For their part, New Testament scholars have often trumpeted Mark 5:21-43's potential for informing scholarly understanding of early Christian-Jewish polemics. And yet, tragically, such polemics are injected into this passage only as a result of modern scholarly interpretation. The good-as-dead woman and the good-as-dead girl become graphic embodiments of Judaism in this particular interpretive tradition. This academic discourse obsesses over the liberating potential of a Christianity which takes as its oppressive object an overly-legalistic Judaism, which must be defeated by Jesus' open welcome to the stranger. This exegetical tendency applied to Mark 5:21-43 takes up the woman's persistent condition as primarily a problem because Jewish law would have figured her as a perpetual outcast

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[44] Janelle Greene, interview by author, July 17, 2017.
[45] Ibid.

from her society; Jesus becomes the boundary-breaking Christian hero.[46] The body in need of healing shifts from the bleeding woman to an entire people, put to death by the biblical scholar. With the above interruption in view, I want to proceed circumspectly, because a desire to devalue the old in favor of the new is a familiar tale, operating here, too, in both the case of Christian reapproriation of Jesus' healing and in the gentrification of the Ironbound. This scripturalized space is contested by intersecting hauntings, which reveal the same racisms at work in in contemporary, Christian-Jewish polemical politics and gentrifying practices, both of which put to death marginalized bodies in favor of cleanliness and novelty.

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[46] This phenomenon runs deep and wide across scholarly commentary on this passage. For more on the argument for this passage as a condemnation of Jewish purity practices, see Ben Witherington III, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus* (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 51; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 71-75; J. Duncan M. Derrett, "Mark's Technique: The Haemorrhaging Woman and Jairus' Daughter," *Biblica* 63 (1982), 474-505; Vernon K. Robbins, *New Boundaries in Old Territory: Form and Social Rhetoric in Mark* (Emory Studies in Christianity 3; New York and Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1994), 196. Commentaries following this pattern include, Myers, *Binding*, 201; Boring, *Mark*, 155-163; Sharyn Echols Dowd, *Reading Mark: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Second Gospel* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), 56. However, as D'Angelo points out, it also appears with a different flavor among feminist scholars reacting against contemporary religious conservatism through a construction of Second Temple Judaism. For this pattern, see Marla J. Selvidge, *Woman, Cult, and Miracle Recital: A Redactional Critical Investigation on Mark 5:24-34* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1990); Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 201; Joanna Dewey, "Jesus' Healings of Women: Conformity and Non-Conformity to Dominant Cultural Values as Clues for Historical Reconstruction," in *SBL Seminar Papers*, *1993*, ed. E. Levering (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1993), 187-188; Hisako Kinukawa, *Women and Jesus in Mark: A Japanese Feminist Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994), 34; Mary Ann Tolbert, "Mark," in *The Women's Bible Commentary*, Carol Newsom, ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 257-258. For additional critiques of Christo-centric biblical scholarship on Jewish purity laws, see, for example, Paula Fredricksen "Did Jesus oppose the Purity Laws?" *Bible Review* (June 1995), 19-25; Amy-Jill Levine, *Jesus the Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper, 2006), 172-177.

The construction of Christian origins has implications, both useful and problematic, for contemporary politics. Imagination of the Christian past, writes Johnson-DeBaufre, "is never only about reconstructing Christian origins." Rather than projecting contemporary desires in the guise of "scientific methodology" back onto ancient Jewish texts, Johnson-DeBaufre reframes the historical investigation toward "ethically" responsible reconstructions of "Christian identity in a diverse world."[47] As the upcoming discussion with traditional readings of the woman with the flow of blood's purity demonstrate, New Testament scholars deploy contemporary theologies to think about the emerging division between a nascent orthodox Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism.[48]

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[47] Johnson-DeBaufre, *Jesus among Her Children: Q, Eschatology, and the Construction of Christian Origins* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 29-30, 41. Johnson-DeBaufre's critique of such methodologies echo Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza's influential argument that if biblical scholars and theologians continue to construct Christian origins "scientifically" and without women, they will continue to perpetuate and reinforce the kyriarchal structures responsible for enabling a "patriarchal church." Schüssler-Fiorenza therefore advocates a feminist reconstruction of Christian origins "for the sake of empowering women in the struggle for liberation" (Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, xiii-xxv).

[48] Responding to common understandings of Christian origins, as a religion that arose out of an ossified Judaism (not unlike the tendencies unearthed in our exegesis of this passage), James Parkes, a British clergyman, and Jewish scholar Marcel Simon separately argued that the two faiths emerged together at a single point at which they "parted ways." Broadly, the narrative tracks a growing conflict between two Jewish sects following the death of Jesus, one a Christ-following group and the other Pharisaic in origins, which would eventually emerge as Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism, respectively. As the narrative goes, following the Bar Kokhba revolt, Christians gathered in Pella and Jews in Yavneh. Christians maintained a more gentile-friendly flavor to their religion, while Jews issued *birkhat ha-minim*, expelling all Christians from synagogues (see, for example, Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and Synagogue: A Study in the Origins of Anti-Semitism* [London: Soncino Press, 1934]; Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire, 135-425* [Oxford: Littman Library, 1986; 1st edn 1948]; for a more contemporary rehashing of this argument, see James D.G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity*, 2nd ed. [London: SCM Press, 2011]). Within the past two decades the historical methodology of this account has come under suspicion, leading to a bevy of new approaches to the study of Christian origins. While

However, efforts to privilege the emergence of an "orthodox" Christianity, particularly relative to a constitutive other, Averil Cameron argues, risk a supersessionist vision of Christian history through "demarcation and condemnation" of diversity.[49] For Cameron reinforcing negative boundaries between self and other have material results, such as persecution, bodily harm, and death in the *present*.[50]

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attempting to challenge anti-Semitism in the study of Judaeo-Christian origins, the parting of the ways narrative, broadly-speaking, has tended to erase diversity among late-ancient Jewish movements, insofar as they investigate pre-split sects as "proto-orthodox" or not. In this way, critics argue, the account over-emphasizes orthodox versions of each religion, at the expense of their diverse heterodoxies (for an overview of the early critique of the parting of the ways, see Adam Becker and Annette Reed, eds., *The Ways That Never Parted* [Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003]). Perhaps the most influential critique of the parting of the ways narrative arrived from Daniel Boyarin, who examined heresiological discourses in both early Christianity and Judaism as a point of division between them. In fact, he will argue, the two faiths converged and diverged many times before the fourth century, at which point orthodox Christianity began to declare Judaism a "religion," and its proximate other, a moniker Jews subsequently denied, thus setting themselves up as something opposite of Christianity (*Borderlines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004]; see also his *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999]). Boyarin's work stands as emblematic of a much larger shift in early Christian and Jewish studies for Virginia Burrus (see e.g. *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subject* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008]), and as influential for work from Shelly Matthews, *Perfect Martyr: The Stoning of Stephen and the Construction of Christian Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Susanna Drake, *Slandering the Jew: Sexuality and Difference in Early Christian Texts* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013); and Andrew Jacobs, *Christ Circumcised: A Study of Early Christian History and Difference* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012). To my mind, the most significant extension of and challenge to Boyarin's innovation is from Maia Kotrosits' work, in which she both deploys affect theory to trouble both the supposed stability of "Christian identity" (*Rethinking Christian Identity: Affect, Violence, and Belonging* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015]) and scholars' loyalty to the category of "religion" over other sources of belonging, like "nation" ("Devising Collectives: Losing the Nation in the Story of Judaism and Christianity," a paper presented at the Westar Institute Fall Meeting, San Antonio, TX [November 2016]).

[49] Cameron, "Violence of Orthodoxy," 111.

[50] Cameron argues that when reappropriated under violent, fundamentalist regimes, orthodox rhetoric becomes a tool by those in power to violently suppress what they see as threats to the regime's legitimacy (ibid., 113-114).

The theological differences in Mark 5:21-43 have traditionally been explored by fixing contemporary racial differences and questions of orthodoxy onto the ancient Jewish bodies. Denise Buell contends that scholars have perpetuated oft-uncited, but oft-reproduced phenomenon of identifying certain "racializing" practices with Christianity, through uncritical examination of early Christian use of terms for "peoplehood" (e.g. γένος, λαός, or ἔθνος).[51] For instance, in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, Justin Martyr delineates differences between Christians and Jews in ethnic terms, not just with theological markers:

> But even as the prophet says, "And now, you house of Israel, come and let us walk in the light of the Lord. For he dismissed his people (λαός), the house of Jacob; because their place was filled, as at the first, with soothsayings and divinations" (Isaiah 2:5). So also here we must perceive two seeds of Judah, and two races (γένη), as two houses of Jacob, the one born of flesh and blood, and the other of faith and spirit.[52]

This ethnic delineation between Christians and Jews seen here, not only extends the Pauline invitation in Romans of non-Jews into the Abrahamic covenant (making Justin's division somewhat ironic), but points to, in Buell's words, a "fixing" of an at-times "fluid" boundary between Christians and Jews in the second-century C.E.[53] The stakes

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[51] Denise Kimber Buell, "God's Own People: Specters of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in Early Christian Studies," in *Prejudice and Christian Beginnings: Investigating Race, Gender, and Ethnicity in Early Christian Studies*, Laura Nasrallah and Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, eds. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 159-160.

[52] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 135.5-6. Translation from Buell, *Why This New Race*, 102.

[53] For more on Buell's discussion of "fixity and fluidity," particularly as they pertain to Justin's *Dialogue*, see *Why This New Race*, 94-115. For more on these themes from Justin see, *Dialogue* 11.5; 45.1-2; 44.1-4; 47.4; 119.2-5; 123.4-8; 125.5; 135.3-5; 138.2-5. On Paul's opening of the covenant to non-Jews through Christ and Abraham's parentage, see Romans 4:1-25; 9:7; 11:1. This notion has an opening of covenantal relation has received some attention from biblical scholars, mainly, Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), especially 99, 107, 227, 239, 249; Caroline Johnson Hodge, " 'If Sons, Then

for violent orthodoxy language, then, are raised if considered in contexts where race is a primary power-brokering dynamic. Indeed, the very practice of red-lining assigns value to particular places on account of an apparently "fixed" value for the fluid ethnic identities of neighborhood residents: Second Temple Jews and the Latinos of the Ironbound both assigned a fixed value and targeted for gentrified erasure.

The practice of early Christian textual self-identification is complicated when taken up in modern discourse, where fixed characteristics of belonging are frequently swept up in the construct of "race." No doubt, Buell argues, identification with a new "race" has been used to challenge hegemonic power structures, notable in Toni Morrison's use of Romans 9:25 in *Beloved*: "I will call them my people, who were not my people and her beloved, who was not beloved." [54] However, when the language of peoplehood is coopted by modern authors without regard for the contingency of "race" as a category and diversity among early Christianities, racialized language can become dangerous. Writes Buell,

> Some modern encounters, especially liberal "secular" and Christian encounters, with these early texts have too often produced interpretations of early Christian history that efface, ignore, or deem 'heterodox' early Christian rhetoric of peoplehood. This tendency may arise from a laudable goal—to define and produce Christianity as a nonracist formation—but one that has paradoxically reinforced white, Eurocentric privilege and anti-Judaism.[55]

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Heirs': *If Sons, Then Heirs: A Study of Kinship and Ethnicity in the Letters of Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[54] Ibid., 160-163. See Vincent Wimbush, "'We Will Make Our Own Future Text': An Alternate Orientation to Interpretations," in *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary*, ed. Brian K. Blount (Minneapolis: Fortress Press: 2007), 49-51.

[55] Buell, "God's Own People," 164. Buell offers as an example white supremacist Jarah Crawford's use of Galatians 3:28-29, in which he argues that non-white Christians can never become fully Christian, as whites are the only people who are the true "seed of Abraham" (Crawford, *Last Battle Cry* [Middlebury, VT: 1984], 67). In this case, a modern sense of "fixed" race is maintained and grafted back onto "hierarchies of

When Christians read their foundational texts too uncritically, the identities that form around them are often as excusive and violent as the rhetoric espoused within those very texts. In discourse around Christianity, Judaism, and peoplehood becomes problematic when Jews are understood as a particular, located, and backward religious-ethnic hybrid, while Christians are envisioned as race-less and thus could "claim to represent the future reunification or perfection of the entire human race."[56]

We find ourselves, therefore, at the nexus of largely white, Euro-American biblical interpreters reading the bleeding woman's situation in Mark 5 (shown below) *and* developers' desire to appeal to a universal, wealthy, white, commuter resident. My aforementioned claim that Christocentric scholarship reads an exceptionally legalistic Judaism into this passage is on full display in Ben Witherington III's exploration of women in the Gospel accounts. As an illustration of the woman's dire need, Witherington connects this passage with an earlier Markan healing to inject Levitical purity law (cf. Leviticus 15:19-30) into a place where such laws are not explicit:[57]

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differences" constructed in an ancient letter (Buell, "God's Own People," 161). For more on this reading of race and Christian categories of belonging, see Buell, *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 10-21, 166-169; for more on power in and through difference, potentially as race, see Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004). For more on ethnic negotiations in a New Testament text, see Eric D. Barreto, *Ethnic Negotiations: The Function of Race and Ethnicity in Acts 16* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament 2; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

[56] Buell, *Why This New Race*, 84.

[57] Witherington also reads this passage's parallels as an account of a single meeting (Matt. 9:18-26; Luke 8:40-56). It should be noted, however, that this reference to this passage—or any potential Hebrew Bible reference to uncleanliness associated with vaginal discharges—is commonly missing from commentator's discussion of the woman with the flow of blood's impurity (including Witherington, *Women*; Myers, *Binding*; and

> Bearing in mind *Jesus' operative principle* that it is only what comes out of a man's heart that defiles him (Mark 7:15, 21 – and thus the view that Jesus simply allowed Himself to be defiled on behalf of others seems unlikely), *we have evidence* here that Jesus treats neither the touch of the woman with the twelve-year blood flow, nor the contact of a dead girl as defiling. Neither woman is viewed as unclean or as a source of uncleanness by Jesus, but rather is treated as a person in need of help…. If a woman with a blood flow is not defiled or defiling, then the *rabbinic reason for not requiring a woman to fulfil all of the Law's positive commandments*, and not permitting her to be counted on for all the periodic feasts and functions of the faith is by implication rejected by Jesus' deeds in the first of these two stories. Thus, the way is paved for women to participate more fully in *Jesus' own community*.[58]

Insofar as Witherington's analysis can be extended to the broader scholarly pattern of accusing Judaism of responsibility for the woman's persistent outsider status,[59] I find three aspects of this excerpt salient to the present discussion: (1) purity is inserted into this passage, not as its explicitly negotiated topic (as it might be in Mark 7:1-23), but as "Jesus' operative principle;" (2) a rabbinic Judaism is *read back onto* the contested religious, political, and social world within which the Markan text was produced; and (3) then brought into conversation with "*Jesus own community*," a group presumably

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Boring, *Mark*). The practical effect of this imprecision is the creation of a commonsensical understanding of Jews as naturally legalistic.

[58] Witherington, *Women*, 74-75. Italics are my own.

[59] Indeed, Myers diagnoses the woman's social condition as being "perpetually segregated" (*Binding the Strong Man*, 201). Myers accusation carries with it a more disturbing elision: he leaves any statements around the cause of the woman's ostracism uncited. In this case, the Jewish body is assumed to be overly- and violently-legalistic a priori, without evidence. Another version of these arguments from Witherington, Myers, or the list cited above comes from Mary Ann Tolbert's comment on vv. 24b-43. Here, Tolbert notes, as I have in the present argument, that both the woman with the flow of blood and Jairus' daughter are both victims of social death, *and* that their healing, which in the woman's case she attributes to the woman herself (as I will go over in detail below), returns them to the social life of their communities. In short, both were living, Tolbert writes, in a state of "social death" ("Mark," 355). However, two salient issues remain with this reading. First, Tolbert attributes the woman's ostracism to "religious law" (ibid.); second, the woman's healing as a return to social norms is not critiqued as a return to a misogynistic order.

superseding Judaism (as fighting Jewish legalism is, after all, Jesus' operative principle). When read back on to Jews as a race, a tendency highlighted by Buell, early Christianity embodied by Jesus is imagined as a force which saves Judaism from its own, ingrained, racial demons. Judaism has grown stagnant, and Christian openness is precisely the development necessary in the neighborhood.

Levitical-focused interpretations of this passage are further troubling largely because they do not take into account the complexity of social life in the antique Mediterranean world. In the first place, we lack sufficient evidence that the Levitical purity laws were ever practiced by Second Temple Jews before the third century, which of course, post-dates the consensus on Markan authorship in 70 C.E.[60] This should already call into question any wholesale application of legalism onto Rabbinic Judaism. Second, as argued by D'Angelo and alluded to above, the conditions seen in both the bleeding woman and Jairus' daughter should not be read here as impure as menstruation, but as *disease*, thereby challenging a popular scholarly tactic for engaging this passage.[61] Third, even if we could say this passage is necessarily pointing to the extension of Christian liberal values over ritual purity, and even if we accepted that Mark's community rejected Rabbinic Judaism, we run into the problem of early *Christian* purity practices around menstruation. Shaye Cohen writes that some Christian communities, like

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[60] Ross Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings: Women's Religions among Pagans, Jews and Christians in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 99-104. Indeed, Shaye Cohen argues, the very problem appears to be that application of purity laws was, pre-70 C.E., attached almost entirely to practice around the temple; when it was destroyed, menstruation regulation became a fraught legal category ("Menstruants and the Sacred," in *Women's History and Ancient History*, ed. S. Pomeroy [Chapel Hill, NC: North Carolina University Press, 1991], 277-285).
[61] D'Angelo, "Power," 92-94.

that of the *Didascalia*, were interested in opening up sacred worship space to menstruating women,[62] but others apparently read Leviticus' prescriptions into their community rule.[63] For instance, Dionysius of Alexandria expresses anxiety over the corruption of worship space:

> Concerning women in their menstrual separation, whether it is right for them in such a condition to enter the house of God, I think it unnecessary even to inquiry…. For even the woman who had the twelve-year discharge and was eager for a cure touched not him but only his fringe. It is unobjectionable to pray in any state and to remember the Lord in any condition and to beseech him and obtain aid, but he who is not completely pure in both soul and body shall be prevented form approaching the holy and the holy of holies.[64]

By the third-century, *Christians* were using this text as a guide for restrictive purity practices. The point here is not that early Christians were in fact more conservative and

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[62] From the *Didascalia*: "On this account then…you shall not separate those [women] who have their period. For she also who have the discharge of blood, when she touched the border of our Savior's cloak, was not censured but was even esteemed worthy for the forgiveness of all her sins" (Cohen, "Menstruants," 289). For my part, this passage, though it expressly denies the validity of reading the woman's condition as grounds for communal exclusion, still points to a discursive setting where such boundaries have been set.

[63] Cohen makes clear that menstruants in Christianity were excluded from public worship space centuries before their Jewish counterparts. In addition to the quote from Dionysius of Alexandria below, see also *Didascalia* 12; Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 1.53.1; *Testamentum Domini* 2.4; Gregory of Nazianus, *Palma de Seipso* 16.19-20; John Chrysostom, 73rd Homily on Matthew, *Patrologia Graeca* 58.677; Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition*, 20; see Cohen, "Menstruants," 287-288. Contrary to Cohen's case, D'Angelo notes that Josephus makes the case to a Roman audience that Jews do, indeed, practice strict purity laws in *Against Apion*: "For the sacrifcies, the law has prescribed purifications from funerals, from childbirth, from union with a woman, and from many other things…." (2.198; D'Angelo's translation ["Power," 85]). Of course, as she notes, this confirms her point, detailed more fully below, that Josephus is participating in a broader discourse around purity *outside of Judaism*.

[64] Dionysius of Alexandria, *Patrologia Graeca* 10.1281; trans. Charles L. Feltoe, *The Letters and Other Remains of Dionysius of Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904), 102-103; Cohen, "Menstruants," 288,

legalistic than their Jewish counterparts, but rather that the ascription of tolerance or intolerance to a religio-historical anachronism is an impossible task.

The prejudice of interpreters fixes the woman into the narrative as a corruption influence because of a historical-contextual Jewishness, to which an ostensibly Christian Jesus is the solution. As we have seen, scholarly interpretations of this passage problematically elide the complexities of first-century Jewish belief and purity practice, so as to lift up Jesus—a representative of Christianity—as a solution to Judaism as a *problem*. Similarly, the Ironbound's proximity to Newark Penn Station and low land values make it a desirable location for redevelopment, but in order to do this the identified problem must be erased: the ethnically other current residents. The result, then, for this scripturalized passage is a woman who is a perpetually corrupting influence on the passage. Instead of a woman exercising healing agency (which I take up below), Jesus is understood to take control of the narrative's life-giving act:[65] "Daughter, your faith as made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease" (Mark 5:24). To follow traditional New Testament scholarship, the resulting interpretation of this passage takes any life-giving or life-claiming ability away from marginalized subjects, attaches it to Jesus, and moves on past verse forty-three.[66]

The historical narrative of Jewish-Christian relations imagined in this passage deploys race to put Jews to death with the bleeding woman and Jairus' daughter. D'Angelo notes that ascription of sexual legalism as unique to Jews within Mediterranean

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[65] I thank Minenhle Nomalugelo Khumalo and Dong Hyeon Jeong for this observation (conversation).
[66] For more on this passage as a potentially life-giving resource, see Surekha Nelavala, "Liberation beyond Borders: Dalit Feminist Hermeneutics and Four Gospel Women" (PhD diss. Drew University, 2008).

social discourse, ignorant of the aforementioned Christian prudishness, fixes Jews with restrictive conservatism.[67] Writes D'Angelo,

> The [Levitical] purity laws are used to provide an oppressive "Jewish" contrast with the supposedly more open attitudes of Mark and/or Jesus, so that Jesus is presented as the liberator of women at the cost of injecting into Mark an invidious picture of early Judaism, often on the basis of readings and misreading of sources that are sectarian like the Dead Sea Scrolls, or substantially later… materials.[68]

By following this pattern, traditional biblical scholarship has abstracted and caricatured early Judaism in order to inject sectarianism into histories of Christian origins. Such tactics are increasingly harmful within the rubric of racialized imaginations of these origins, as summarized by Buell. White supremacist Jarah Crawford, for example, applies the Galatians 3:28-29 seed metaphor to hierarchize and separate Christians and Jews *essentially*, constructing a vehicle for violent imagination of early Christian-Jewish relations.[69] Following the racialized logics of this passage's histories of interpretation

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[67] D'Angelo, "Power," 86; Dean-Jones, *Women's Bodies*, 248; S. G. Cole, "*Gynaiki ou Themis*: Gender Difference in Greek *Leges Sacrae*," *Helios* 19 (1992), 106-110.

[68] D'Angelo, "Power," 82. Adela Collins disagrees with D'Angelo on this point, as she apparently does not understand the Dead Sea Scrolls to represent a sufficiently "later" text. However, though Collins does argue that Jesus perhaps would have understood the bleeding woman as ritually impure, she understands his "religious-social context" as a rural Palestinian resident to supersede *any* potential cultic or cultural assumptions regarding insiders or outsiders based on cleanliness (*Mark*, 284, esp. n. 163; see also Thomas Kazen, *Jesus and Purity* Halakhah*: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?* [Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series 38; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002], 127-164). To my mind, this argument, in fact, offers a subtly transgressive understanding of ritual purity as exclusive conservatism, insofar as it presents a jarring contrast with contemporary Western politics, in which rural spaces are often understood as essentially more conservative than cosmopolitan centers. In this way, if a transformation of cultic practice is narrated here, it is one that does not necessarily arrive from Christianity to Judaism, but from rural outskirts to urban centers.

[69] Galatians 3:28-29: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise." Buell, "God's Own People," 161. For a stinging critique of the Western academy's inability and unwillingness to engage critically with race and ethnicity in their own scholarship, with

does not yield a life-giving result, as scholars like Witherington might contend, but instead reveals it to be another point of contestation within a polemical tradition. And, as we have seen, group identities formed within contestation are forged with amidst scarcity, not life. That is, this passage is not problematic only because Jews are once again imagined as backwardly legalistic, but also because their racial identity is tied to a complete *lack* of life.

If life is known through the conscious experience of daily life, gentrification traffics in death, because it erases any knowledge of people who were there before. As mentioned above, the Newark City Council has justified development of mixed residential-commercial space in the Ironbound with a concern for markets—one must not stand in the way of the "free market"![70] But the residents never factor into this formulation: they are already erased when the case for new development is made. This, argues Schulman, is the "supremacy ideology" baked into gentrification: the "history and experience" of "those people"—those who live there now—"is replaced with a false story in which the gentrifiers have no structure to impose their privilege."[71] Developers cannot afford to think about current residents, because their own profit depends on the mythology of capitalism's ability to provide a full life. Ironically, the Ironbound becomes a corpse.

When an entire people is historically imagined as backward and lifeless, Jewish or Latinx, their corpse consumed by rigor mortis, a haunting orientation toward the text

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its tragic consequences in view, see Shawn Kelley, *Racializing Jesus: Race, Ideology and the Formation of Biblical Scholarship* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002).
[70] Jenkins, "The Truth about Inclusionary Zoning."
[71] Schulman, *The Gentrification of the Mind*, 27.

demands a scholar's return to double check for signs of life. Despite developers' treatment of the neighborhood as a corpse, the Ironbound remains a vital place. Similarly, rabbinic Judaism has been considered outmoded and oppressive, socially dead. But it continues to persist and evolve with vitality. These are both examples of abstractions of entire peoples by another group in a competing ascendancy to life.[72] No doubt, purity politics are *not* at play for the narrator here on "the other side"; Mark would have explicitly mentioned purity, as he does in 7:1-24.[73] With identity at issue, not purity, this passage's afterlife is a legacy of death-dealing wielded by its Christian interpreters and a perpetual punishment of Jews for a perceived embodying of a perceived religious of death. Interpretations that treat other groups, on account of their racial-ethnic or religious identities, are abstractions of actual, living, changing people. These reading practices, therefore, require the same epistemological foundations—the notion that the Other can be abstracted—as racist gentrification. Dealing in the deadly politics of racism, interpreters thus become complicit in any number of other abstract practices, including gentrification. Indeed, this passage is but one space contested by racism and its abstractions.

This sin of racism, of abstracting real people to such a degree that their material existence is far from life and closer to death, is the iniquity to which haunting demands response. Buell returns to Toni Morrison here and her concept of "rememory" as a way to delineate the notion of an "inheritance" for those privileged to not need a bevy of fraudulent physicians: "[The] inheritance may not be consciously willed but rather passed on despite the best efforts not to transmit habits, patterns, traumas; and the living may

[72] On racism as a death-dealing abstraction, see Holland, *Raising the Dead*, 17-18. For a discussion of the ascendancy to life, see Puar, *Terrorist*, 35.
[73] Schildgen, *Crisis*, 105-107.

have to reckon with that which is literary unspeakable and not of their own experience."[74] Inheritance, in this Derridean vein, is therefore both a question of what continues to lurk within our contemporary situations and those legacies the modern Christian interpreter continues to inherit but *ignore*. It is this latter point which prevents contemporary interpreters from making a connection between the practices which force black and brown people to relocate when neighborhoods gentrify and those practices which persistently relegate Jews to a race of death. Here we move beyond the narrative, to sins perhaps only peripherally related to the narrative at hand: here the capitalist practices that permit the gentrification of someone's *home* are the same abstractions that permit readers to interpret the marginalization of two female bodies as a Jewish problem. Haunting and inheritance, Buell argues, begin to address the phenomenon through which life has been denied a priori to others on account of their racial-ethnic definitions. In short: "not all humans have been able to be heirs…and in some contexts…status and race have been defined so as to classify certain kinds of humans as inheritance."[75] In all this, the contestation which continues to mark this space for death, is also the contestation which makes this space one for political engagement, a space where marginalized bodies make demands otherwise not permitted and the privileged must listen.

*An Interruption: Everyday Life*

The park is a jarring respite. Not moments ago, I was picking my way around container trucks on U.S. Highway 1, then struggling through construction-worsened

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[74] Buell, "God's Own People," 170; Morrison, *Beloved*, 35-36. For more on this concept, as Buell uses it, see Derrida, who argues of inheritance that it involves conscious and unconscious sifting through of received legacies (*Specters*, 18).
[75] Buell, "God's Own People," 1

traffic, amid the industrial blight along Raymond Avenue. But here, on a bench in Riverfront Park, the hard concrete heat gives way to a green humidity. The noise of traffic is not gone, but now mingles with the staccato of Portugese from nearby soccer players, the muttering of a clearly exhausted elderly man on a bench, the exasperated profanities of the jogger making his way past me, and birdsongs I had not heard since the suburbs. This green space is integral to life here; it is part of the life that has come to use it.

Making my way by foot, past the Aspen River apartments, the sound of schoolchildren playing in another nearby green space, Riverbank Park, mingles with the hum of unit air conditioners and car traffic. Indeed, bumping up against these parks on almost all sides is Section 8 housing. Moreover, these parks have a life-giving history arising out of this community: within the decade, this shoreline along the Passaic river has gone from container-ridden dumping ground, to an urban oasis through neighborhood action.[76] Development may be coming, but in this moment, the open areas for which East Ward residents have fought are living, embodied reminders to the Newark City Council that their fellow residents demand life. The participation in everyday life contests developers' claims that the Ironbound is worthless but for real estate development.

*Contestations in Postcolonial Time*

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[76] This final observation comes from a conversation with a local organizer, Melissa Miles of the Ironbound Community Corporation, who was integral in the creation of Riverfront Park (conversation, [June 14, 2017]). For an excellent exposé on life in the public housing in this part of the East Ward before its clean-up see Elizabeth Dwoskin, "Containers Wall Off a Newark Housing Project," *New York Times*, November 13, 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/13/nyregion/13depot.html.

As social creations, both scriptures and death worlds are contested.[77] Because people are social and because they use scriptures, social problems—like the aforementioned struggle over racism and supersessionism in Mark 5:21-43—are baked into the Gospel of Mark.[78] Moreover, as I have argued, contemporary discourses of power around scriptures always seem to occur out-of-time. As practitioners wrestle with the legacy of their scripturalized texts within contested contemporary contexts, the past is drawn back into political discourse. To say that Mark is a haunted social space, therefore, is to claim that something more than the reader-text relationship imbues the text with sociality.[79] Practitioners and communities bring their haunting inheritances, too, thereby *expanding* the social relationships at work within scriptural space to include all subjects to whom Christian practitioners are responsible and for whose deaths they are complicit. Scriptures are dynamic time-spaces, contested always by the use of the faithful, but also by the ghosts that haunt these users. When gentrifiers ratchet up rents in the East Ward, because the parks create an appealing place to live, they are condemned by the very families forced to leave their life-giving communities. In the same way that Mark has become a space for the contestation of Christian origins, so too does the Christian legacy

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[77] For an introductory conversation on the Bible in particular as a socially-negotiated artifact, see Bielo, "Introduction," 1-7; Coleman, "Social Life of the Bible," 204-212; and the first chapter of this dissertation.
[78] Wimbush, "TEXTureS, Gestures, Power," 4.
[79] Coleman makes a compelling case for the ways Christian cultures imbue the Bible with authority, and that authority is therefore not something which issues forth from the text itself. According to Coleman, biblical authority arises out of a dialectical relationship between "texts and contexts" ("Social Life of the Bible," 208-210). To biblical scholars this notion that meaning form a text is informed by contextual factors, but anthropologists acknowledge that scriptures bear authority in communities beyond interpretation, but work as "artifacts," through "rhetoric," and as "ideologies." This part of a socialization of scriptures, Bielo calls "Biblicism" ("Introduction," 5-7).

of colonization come to bear on the text, contesting Western Christian imaginations not just of the colonizer's Bible, but of the centrality of the colonizer's world.

Contesting the pericope in question can mean more than a debate over redaction, origins, or meaning; in the case of Musa Dube's reconceptualization of this passage, contesting Mark 5:21-43 means a complete reimagining of the setting.[80] Rather than assuming the spatiality of the pericope is analogous to its setting, Dube melds a mapped, locatable space with a physical body. The woman with the flow of blood finds common ground on the African continent, as Dube makes an analogy of the woman's demands for healing and those of Africa itself. Her point of entry is Mark's declaration that the woman's bleeding continued, even under the supervision of numerous "physicians" (v. 26). In her retelling of the Markan story, a personified "Africa" continues to bleed—albeit in different ways—over "fifty years," as she meets with and is prescribed treatment from five different physicians.[81] "Dr. Colonial Master" (1939-49) cut up her body, creating bleeding, and then prescribed a remedy which put her to sleep for a decade;[82] under "Dr. Struggle for Independence" (1949-1959) "Mama Africa" is abandoned by her children, who go to war, to expel the "Colonial Master," perpetuating the flow of blood;[83] "Dr. Independence" (1959-1969) prescribed a new treatment that led to fighting between Africa's children; hawking the wares of peace, "Dr. Neocolonialism/Dr. Global Village"

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[80] Musa W. Dube, "Fifty Years of Bleeding: A Storytelling Feminist Reading of Mark 5:24-43," *The Ecumenical Review* 51, no. 1 (1999), 11-17; "'*Talitha Cum!*' A Postcolonial Feminist & HIV/AIDS Reading of Mark 5:21-43," in *Grant Me Justice! HIV/AIDS & Gender Readings of the Bible*, ed. Dube and Musimbi R.A. Kanyoro (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004), 115-140.
[81] Dube, "Fifty Years of Bleeding," 11-17.
[82] Ibid., 11-12.
[83] Ibid., 12-14.

(1969-179) brought jobs and investment, but left with a bloodflow of debt; and finally, she raises the AIDS crisis, declaring that "Mama Africa is Coming Up Behind Jesus! (1989-1998)." The narrative setting becomes a historical setting, becomes a body; the pericope becomes a postcolonial allegory. Indeed, grafting Africa onto Mark 5:21-43's setting creates more than an opportunity to think about who is invested in interpretation or even what other readings might be possible; transforming this character into Mama Africa reformulates the types of demands and agencies brought on by the Markan text.

Elsewhere Dube has claimed an ambivalent relationship between postcolonial subjects and Christian scriptures.[84] And yet this has not meant that colonized people have avoided relations with colonizers or their texts; rather, our postcolonial context points to a radical appropriation of and recreation of meaning with colonizers' texts.[85] Thinking into this ambivalence, Dipesh Chakrabarty has argued:

> European thought is at once both indispensable and inadequate in helping us to think through the experiences of political modernity in non-Western nations, and provincializing Europe becomes the task of exploring how this thought…may be renewed from and for the margins.[86]

He notes that numerous postcolonial movements for independence and liberation took up the mantle of self-governance under the influence of Marxist or liberal ideals of justice and freedom.[87] Such ideas also ring out with dissonance in chorus with non-Western

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[84] See, e.g., Musa W. Dube, "Reading for Decolonization (John 4:1-42)," *Semeia* 75 (1996), 37-59. For more on the ambivalent relationship between postcolonial populations and the "English book," see Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2nd edn 2004, 1st edn 1994), 145-174.

[85] "And what is the significance of the Bible? Who knows?" (Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 173).

[86] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History; Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), 16.

[87] Ibid., 3-23, 27-96.

cosmologies. Marxism and the liberal West both conceive of history with little room for those who do not maintain Western narratives. Such mythologies cleave to a concept of time that is “Godless, continuous, empty, and homogenous.”[88] This clashes with the world outside the West, though, and especially in India, where time opens up to “the presence and agency of gods or spirits,” and therefore divine and other lived time streams.[89] Chakrabarty goes further: these ghosts from elsewhere are politically effective: he credits them as the impetus between Indian independence movements, working within a populated divine universe inconceivable to European colonizers.[90] Consequently, history becomes a possible encounter with a different world. The postcolonial encounter, or in the language of the present project, the *contestation* of history itself, is generative of a new politics that emerges out of haunted meetings.

This returns us to Dube’s spatialization and personification of Mark 5:21-43 and Mama Africa. The continent does not operate as a politically neutral location, but arrives with demands for healing—“I will be made well” (v. 28b). To follow Chakrabarty’s logic, the hopes and fears of Africa are drawn onto this passage, *whether they are Christian or not*. That is, the reason “Mama Africa is coming up behind Jesus!” is not

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[88] Dipesh Chakrabarty, “The Time of History and the Time of Gods,” in Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd (eds.) *The Politics of Cutlure in the Shadow of Capital* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997) 37. Along similar lines, Dinshaw summarizes Bruno Latour’s observation that the “modernist settlement,” as he calls it, conceives of a world that is “segmented…into discrete realms—philosophical, psychological, political, and moral” (Carolyn Dinshaw, *How Soon is Now? How Soon is Now? Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time* [Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012], 18; Bruno Latour, *Pandora’s Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999],1-23, esp. 4, 14).
[89] Ibid., 39-40.
[90] Thus permitting a rethinking of “the problem of historical time and [reviewing] the relationship between the possible and the actual” is opened up (Chakrabarty, *Provincializing*, 249).

because everyone in the continent faithfully upholds the authority of the Bible, or even because they will in the future; the continent comes for healing because much of Africa is infused with death. It is infused with death both because the Bible was deployed as a tool of colonization and because the Bible is a site of resistance to colonization.[91]

The erasure of entire vibrant communities has a history of drawing subjugated populations into the biblical world. Gentrified Euro-American biblical scholars have been exposed by interpretations like Dube's to have elided the stories of the African continent in their sacred texts. Dube shows their complicity. Similarly, uneven development both seeks to eliminate diverse subjectivities and wraps up gentrifiers in social death. Postcolonial contestation of this passage transforms it because the gentrified reader is forced to reckon with complicity in the social death of marginalized communities, from imperialist territorialization of the global south to gentrifying destruction of low-income neighborhoods in the global north. Dube's reading makes clear that the bleeding woman is Mama Africa and that this passage is intimately tied up with the continent's story because of their common condition. The two cannot be separated, because they are allied through a common, trans-temporal haunting: the condition of colonized social death.

We cannot say that this passage is merely one contested by different images of Christian origins, but a myriad of different demands from within and without. All of this comes to matter, then, because it starts to flesh out a space into which the scriptural practitioner enters when they begin to engage with their sacred text. More, that space is

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[91] Elsewhere Dube quotes an African proverb to underscore this very point: "When the white man came to our country he had the Bible and we had the land. The white man said to us, 'Let us pray.' After the prayer, the white man had the land and we had the Bible" ("Reading for Decolonization [John 4:1-42]," *Semeia* 75 [1996], 37).

populated not just by the familiar conversations of Jesus' healing miracles or Christianity's relationship to Judaism, but the space is haunted by unfamiliar, spectral presences from outside the tradition.

**Specters Making Contested Space**

> [The] real socio-political question concerns less, perhaps, the *degree* of openness/closure…, than the *terms* on which that openness/closure is established. Against what are boundaries erected? What are the relations within which the attempt to deny…entry is carried out? What are the power-geometries here; and do they demand a political response?
>
> —Doreen Massey[92]

> While he was speaking some came from the leader's house to say, "Your Daughter has died." (Mark 5:35)

To think relationally, as I have above, is to think spatially. If we understand space as Massey recommends, in its "throwntogetherness," investigation of its crevices should lead us to a new politics: "that which looks outwards to address the wider spatialities of the relations of their construction. It raises the question of a politics of connectivity."[93] First, this politics directly addresses the problematic obsession within biblical studies over temporality: between historicist and presentist readings of biblical texts. Second, this politics of throwntogether space demonstrates an openness to the creation of social space beyond interaction between bodies in concurrent time. Ghosts are also social. The specters of racism and anti-Judaism are not separate from the specters of colonialism are not separate from the specters of neocolonialism are not separate from the specters of the woman with the flow of blood. Here, in the midst of relations under the conditions of

[92] Massey, *For Space*, 179.
[93] Massey, *For Space*, 181.

social death, the contestation of Mark 5:21-43 draws in manifold spectral presences, each with their own demands. And because space develops through spatial practices, the question for the present project is precisely what kind of and how they create this space? More precisely, how are they active *as agents* and what does this mean for readers of these texts? Here we follow these agents of death worlds, wondering to what extent they are actually dead, or whether their activity in (un)death points to a different kind of space under construction in this pericope.

*Agency and Responsibility in Haunted Space*

The agency of the dead makes space out of ethical demands. Markan space, while belonging to the many parties who have gathered around it for centuries, also belongs to the ghosts those parties have conjured.[94] Thinking with Chakrabarty, for instance, reminds us that India is not just a mapped territory filled with Indians, but a dynamic location, relating to the past on a daily basis through ghosts and spirits of a colonial past—and even beyond that.[95] Indeed, specters carry with them the particularities of their contexts, very specific petitions for the those who are haunted must respond. But more

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[94] Maia Kotrosits has helpfully laid out the ways in which Christians have persistently identified with and around subjects with whom they can never fully identify, ultimately making this category of "Christian" a queer assemblage (*Rethinking Early Christian Identity: Affect, Violence, and Belonging* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015], 47-84).
[95] Chakrabarty, *Provincializing*, 16, 39-40. Indian ghosts advocating independence are but one example. Molly McGarry has also lifted up the political advocacy of nineteenth-century American spiritualists, a group who, from their inception, looked for ghosts who might "[signal]…unearthly power," also grew as a politically-active religious movement. They were, in McGarry's words, informed by their 'spiritual life for their political beliefs and …were deeply involved in reforming the world" (*Ghosts of Futures Past: Spiritualism and the Cultural Politics of Nineteenth-Century America* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008], 4; see also Ann Braude, "Introduction to the Second Edition," Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women's Rights in Nineteenth-Century America [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2nd edn 2001]).

than filling space, these agential specters *make* space. I argue, therefore, that the reader attuned to spectral activity in Mark must attune him or herself to the very agencies of specters that constitute that space. And, in so doing, the text opens up as one literally created by demands from the bleeding woman and Jairus' daughter, from the Ironbound, from an alliance of socially dead subjects flooding into the space made in this pericope.

Acknowledging the agency of the ghastly Other ensures that responding to hauntings is an ethical act. Hauntings, while often vague and steeped in feelings of nostalgia or trauma, carry with them some specificity.[96] Argues Avery Gordon, "Any people who are not graciously permitted to amend the past, or control barely visible structuring forces of everyday life…[are] bound to develop a sophisticated consciousness of ghostly haunts and [are] bound to call for an 'official inquiry' into them."[97] These "official inquiries" necessitate a formal look to the past, a rigorous investigation that may find specific material relevant to a given study. To put it another way, haunting comes from some*where* and some*when*. Listen to the other's call for an inquiry also materializes their story and being in the present of pure agency. In this vein, Freccero contends, spectrality responds to history's traumas and oppressions with "ghostly returns…registered on the level of subjectivity and history."[98] Haunting as both a theory and a phenomenon is a form of address for those who are unable to write their own, widely accepted history. This "ethical stance," argues Buell, is oriented toward "an agency other than that of the self-willing modernist subject; rather, haunting is a mode of

[96] Carolyn Dinshaw, for example, seeks "affective contact between marginalized people now and then" ("Theorizing Queer Temporalities," 178).
[97] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 151.
[98] Freccero, "Queer Times," 489.

relation that already has been developed, a form of subjugated knowing and contingent being."[99] To say that Mark 5:21-43 or its readers are haunted by the ghosts emerging out of the violence of colonialism and anti-Jewish biblical scholarship is to say that we acknowledge those pasts as both real and acting in the present. It is also to say that these hauntings have not yet been resolved and moreover, under the agency of these subjugated pasts, we, as readers of the Bible, are under an obligation to act.

Mark's Gospel as a haunted meeting place is one whose sociality is made up of more than just those people we might imagine to engage with the text, but those whose very existence, knowledge, and ethical demands comprise the place. This reality makes Mark a dangerous location, where the gentrified interpreter always arrives vulnerable to uncontrollable spirits with their own agendas.

*Agency in Mark 5:21-43*

Who or what, then, opens this contested space, and *how* is it opened? There can be little doubt that the narrator plays a role; in some ways, narrative space is created by explicitly spatial strategies, like dimension and movement. I cover this tactic here, but with a caveat: I am not simply interested in the opening or creation of space through the act of literary description, but, as this project has endeavored to perform, I am interested in the opening of space through the social life of the text. This necessitates an understanding of sociality as performed through contestations, yes, but also through the manifest haunting of invisible specters. Therefore, we return to exegesis of the pericope in question with an eye toward invisible, but affective and effective forces making a difference in Mark 5:21-43. In short, we move into this opened place attuned to manifold

[99] Buell, "Hauntology Meets Posthumanism," 37.

agencies. A hauntological understanding of space allies itself with Massey's argument that space necessary be explored in its "throwntogetherness," as filled with "chance [encounters]" and thus "open to the future" as a "[construction] which [is] our ongoing responsibility."[100] Notions of encounter and responsibility force readers to account for agency and its role in making space. No differently here, I argue that a shift away from a scholarly preoccupation of time in analysis of the bleeding woman to the numerous contestations at work in this passage through the woman's agency.

Space is marked by the narrator in Mark 5:21-43 in some unsurprising ways. The narrative establishes its placed-ness from the outset, as Jesus travels—ambiguously—to the "other side of the lake" (v. 21a).[101] In the same breath, an orbit is established with an

[100] Massey, *For Space*, 180. Interestingly, Mark is haunted by bodies from other time-spaces in ways other than the narrative. That is, well before Mark became the choice gospel for narrative critics, it was a playground for form critics, who understood the book to be a compilation of stories, not a composite narrative. Summarizing this era in Markan studies, typified famously by Martin Dibelius, Stephen Moore and Janice Capel Anderson write, "Its aims were twofold: first, to classify the units of tradition of which the Gospels were thought to be composed into appropriate categories or 'forms,' such as parables, legends, myths, exhortations, proverbs, or controversy stories; and second, to assign each of these units a *Sitz im Leben*, a setting and function in the life of the early Christian communities, such as preaching, teaching, or baptismal ceremony. With the rise of form criticism, Mark became a scissors-and-paste man" (*Mark and Method*, 7-8). For an interpreter following the basic premise of Mark as "scissors-and-paste man," a legitimate case could be made with my present argument that Mark's very composition always already draws in many others from disparate and diverse time-spaces. Of course the further contention would be that these lurking individuals and communities continue to exercise agency on the gospel. In this way, even though Mark arranges each feature into a narrative, those narratives are filled with excess agencies as each community continues to practice rituals around these discrete units.

[101] The use of "other side" here is an interesting literary move, insofar as it fails to give no more detail of the region that that. Whereas 5:1 sees Jesus similarly traveling to "the other side," it is additionally marked as "the country (χώρα) of the Gerasenes." Rather than understanding this shift in setting than a non-Jewish space, then, I find Jean Starobinski's option helpful: the other side is "the other, in its quality is not just an opposing side, but an opposing power. Beyond the shore is an anti-shore; beyond the day is an anti-day; the tombs, sojourn of the dead, are an anti-life; the devils are rebels" ("Le

inside and an outside, the crowd surrounding (v. 21b) and "pressing in" on Jesus (v. 24v). The woman is forced to the outside of this orbit, as we read that she "heard about" Jesus (v. 25)—presumably not from the midst of the crowd but from afar. Pertinent to our above conversation is that we need not establish her outsider status vis-à-vis Levitical law; she is an outsider according to the narrative simply because she is literally on the outside. Spatiality is additionally created around the woman through direction. Jesus changes face from his boat journey following Jairus' request for his daughter's healing, and moves inland (vv. 21-24a). But with a direction established, the woman interrupts, ripping open the flow of the passage and stopping the previously established movement: she moves from the outside to the inside, where she suddenly makes her demand. Mark writes that her touch halts Jesus, causing him to "turn around" (v. 30) later, apparently dwelling on the problem, "He looked all around in the crowd to see who had done it" (v. 32). The direct, linear movement of Jesus and the crowd is interrupted when the woman injects herself into the account, carving out her space.

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démoniaque de Gérasa," in Roland Barthes et al., *Analyse Structurale et Exégèse Biblique* [Neuchatel: Delachaux et Niestle, 1972], 69-70; translation by Schildgen, *Crisis*, 102). This move continues to mark the space with ambiguity, insofar as it has no geopolitical specificity and does not seem to refer to Jesus travel *back* to the previous side he was on following the Gerasene exorcism. Malbon helpfully notes that the "other side" in v. 21 is met with a synagogue leader in v. 22, ostensibly marking *this* "other side" as a Jewish side of the lake (contrasted with the non-Jewish, Gerasene side; *Narrative Space*, 42). Within Malbon's structuralist framework for delineating Markan space, this lakeshore operates as "geopolitical" space, because it receives its identity from the people who live there and has meaningful boundaries. And yet, we cannot be so certain that Mark or his audiences would divide the lake into two shores. Tellingly, the adverb used to describe Jesus' travels in v. 21 is πάλιν, which communicates more about the action as a repeated one (i.e. Jesus *keeps traveling* to "other sides") and more about the travels than it does a destination.

In addition to these spatial markers, readers have often staked their interpretive claims on the temporal aspects of the intercalation here. In her summary of the intercalation technique writ large, Schildgen considers Markan sandwiches to be operating with "duration," a temporal definition, and do narrative work on readers because they [interrupt] the main narrative and [suspend] time while another story is told."[102] Schildgen's analysis cedes intercalation to the realm of the temporal alone, leaving spatial markers to questions of "foregrounding" for the broader narrative.[103] While the present argument is interested in interruptions, ignoring space permits linear time, no matter how halting, to progress in service of a grand narrative. But to what extent can we say that intercalation is not, in fact, also a spatial technique? If we take into account our earlier discussion of contestation over resources, the bleeding woman's interruption operates socially and, therefore, spatially.

I see two potential options here for spatial conceptions of this intercalation. The first has to do with material already provided by the narrative and the narrator's desire, to the extent we can even conceive of such a thing. That is, we might take *more seriously* the notion that Schildgen puts forth regarding focalization, not as a backdrop for the narrative, but rather as part of the intercalation's spatiality: intercalation is not disruptive simply because it plays with time, but because it *takes us* to the other side. When the woman injects herself into Jesus' mission, because we are there, we see her need and the

[102] Schildgen, *Crisis*, 100. Schildgen is not alone here. In fact, Shepherd definitively argues for a tripartite temporal function for intercalation—movement of the story through two different narratives, dramatized irony, and an "ellipsis" from an outer story to the inside. This still maintains space as "setting" only (Shepherd, *Markan Sandwich Stories*, 313-317, 323-325).
[103] Schildgen, *Crisis*, 100.

girl's need as a contest against time and over Jesus' power. Scott Elliott intensifies this sort of literary strategy, noting that focalization is so dynamic, that when 5:30-32 bounces between the woman, Jesus, Jesus' power, his disciples, the crowd, and back to Jesus, the focus of the reader becomes more than an individual, but a *dialogue*.[104] Of course, we could add Jairus' desperation, as a mood, to this discussion. It seems clear to me that this dialogue, insofar as it still occurs in the "other side" must also include narrative setting as a relational partner in that very conversation. Thus, the vv. 21-43 intercalation creates space through relationships between characters and other characters, certainly, but also between the setting and those characters.

A second spatial conception for the Mark 5 sandwich is created cross-temporally and is drawn into the text from without through the agency of the woman with the flow of blood. From the midst of the crowded, dialogical, and liminal space, a desperate woman approaches Jesus and takes the situation, and his cloak, into her own hands (v. 27b): "…for she said, 'If I touch his garment I will be made well" (v. 28). The woman takes control of the situation and her body, perhaps for the first time in twelve years (v. 25), and is "immediately" healed of her ailment (v. 29). She inserts herself into the dialogical focus of the scene[105] and disrupts the movement to heal Jairus' daughter.[106] This disruption is more than just narrative; it is historical. In an examination of Luke's usage of "nevertheless" (δε, Luke 5:4-5; πλεν, 13:38, 22:42), for instance, Wesley Kort notes

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[104] Scott S. Elliott, *Reconfiguring Mark's Jesus: Narrative Criticism after Poststructuralism* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2011), 119; cf.
[105] Ibid., 119.
[106] Schildgen, *Crisis*, 105.

that narrative disjunction opens space *as scripture* for practicing communities.[107] Disruptions, like a well-placed "nevertheless" or of a diseased character breaking into the flow of a narrative, create a jarring disjuncture for practitioners to identify with people, places, and conditions within sacred texts. In these places the unexpected, even the impossible, becomes possible by the individual as an agent. Citing bell hooks, Kort writes, "'Homeplace,' is the kind of place where people can become 'subjects' instead of 'objects.'"[108] The woman's agency injects her story into this passage under own agency. But as we have seen above, this story is more than an account of the woman's suffering. Instead, this is the bleeding woman's agency drawing into scripture demands of women her contemporary and women before her who suffer any sort of rejection because gynecological ailments are ever more desperate because their bodies are objectified. The woman with the flow of blood demands healing not just for herself, but for all bodies conceived of as social ills.

*Making Haunted Space*

Not only does the woman with the flow of blood herself open up a space, but because her character is shown to be haunted—by other marginalized women, by anti-Judaism, by the African continent, and by Ironbound residents fearing a loss of home—her demand also breaks open the potential for the persistent creation of new space in this pericope. The space opened here is more than dimensional, as we have seen of space, and it is most certainly social. But to say that a space is opened up by haunted presences is

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[107] Wesley A. Kort, "Reading Places/Reading Scriptures," in *Theorizing Scriptures: New Critical Orientations to a Cultural Phenomenon* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 222-223.

[108] Ibid., 225; bell hooks, "Homeplace: A Site of Resistance," in *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (Boston: South End Press, 1990), 42.

not to say that the sociality comprising space need be harmonious nor come from the present moment. The demands from spectral presences persistently create space as new voices are drawn into the conversation and they need not collaborate with one another. In this way, whenever someone enters a place they enter into a contested relationship over it, contested by demands they may never have known or expected. Such is the reality at work in Mark 5:21-43: readers are always already subject to the contested demands of those whose voices cry out for justice. This hauntology of the "other side" stands in direct opposition to gentrified ideologies of supremacy that make no room for difference or change.

In some ways this is an historical claim: the bleeding woman as a literary figure opens up a space for manifold pasts to enter simply through her very creation and reclamation of space. Particular instances and injustices are remembered and dredged up so that they might be reckoned with. We have seen such instances here: from particular ancient gynecological misogyny, to historical treatment of race in the imagination of a Jewish milieu, to the potential for this passage to become a postcolonial site of liberation. We have heard of Newark's Italian community, forced out because their neighborhood was deemed more valuable than they were, a situation now haunting the Ironbound. The place opened here is one of access to otherwise absent presences for the purpose of political action.

The woman's haunted tear in the narrative fabric is also more than that, because like other haunts, this place draws in many diverse agencies from unexpected locales. On the one hand, spaces like those opened by the woman's agency typify throwntogetherness, insofar as they are open to presences that lurk and the demands they

carry.[109] Of course, throwntogether places are also unpredictable. When Euro-American Christian scholars claim this passage as an original moment of a Christian monopoly over life-giving faith against Jews, they also stake a claim on a space that subverts European power, insofar as this scripturalized space is Africa itself. When those same scholars erase difference of any sort from the passage, their actions are called into question by communities gentrified out of collected memory. Throwntogether space is never stable, never owned, always contested.

Throwntogether space is also surprising. When dead places, against all reasonable odds, show themselves to be vital and vibrant, they surprise. Additionally, the dead surprise when they arrive in spaces properly belonging to the living. Returning to the attempt by Christian scholars to make Mark 5 into a place of emerging Christocentric vitality, consider Witherington's understanding of the story's finitude: "Thus, the way is paved for women to participate more fully in Jesus' own community."[110] An interpretation that concludes the passage like this maintains the values of a linear temporality and dimensional space: the narrative moves smoothly from beginning to end, thus filling and closing the passage's narrative space. The ideological assumption of such a move is to perpetuate the notion that Jesus's activity on earth progressed for the sake of progress past Judaism. Except, this move fails to achieve its intended ends: narratively, it is arrested by the imperative to attune oneself to historical bodies through the woman's touch (v. 27). At this moment, the shoddy, patchwork dam constructed by such Euro-American scholarship fails, and the ghosts flood in with their own questions for the

[109] Massey, *For Space*, 180.
[110] Witherington, *Women*, 75.

traditional biblical critic: What are the actual discursive structures that force the bleeding woman and Jairus' daughter into such dire straits? Who participates in these structures? What does "Jesus' own community" look like? Who loses out and who wins when this bounded group is created? Is this community even the same once claimed by any number of colonized subjects?

No matter how one might respond to these questions, no matter which additional questions are posed, any further engagement with the spectral bodies summoned forth by the woman's agency perpetuate the contested space-making activity engendered by this opening. The only stability for identities forged among the dead is a constant contestation of their very meaning: death worlds are characterized by a lack of power, privilege, and access to life.[111] This contestation arrives from the margins as a haunting of the privileged—the wealthy, the gentrifier, the white Christian—exposing complicity and connection to the very structures that prevent life elsewhere. We need look no further than the ultimate cause of death of Jairus' daughter: Jesus tarried and the girl died (v. 35). This is an exercise of agency within a place of scarcity. I do not mean to suggest that ghastly exercises of power are without tension. Even in this narrative, the woman's agency gives way to Jesus' re-usurpation of control: "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be healed of your disease" (v. 34). As soon as the power and knowledge of the woman give life, Jesus' claims his own role in the process. These are the very struggles that play out in a place of death.

In these situations, specters like the daughter, like those victimized by the Ironbound's impending gentrification, call attention to the problematic dynamics that

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[111] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 16.

enlist the marginalized in their own suffering. The bleeding woman's act on her own behalf cannot be blamed on her own illnesses, as we have seen, but her social location as a woman. Colonized moments and places create the conditions for death and force this competition among the dead. Within such ascendancy to life, however, are a gathering coalition of subjects with something in common: battles for agency, power, and life where only death prevails.

**Conclusion**

There are types of knowledge that make space. I am not referring to the knowledge that abstracts and carves up neighborhoods for development, but knowledges that arise from invisibility and so also know they must fight. Sometimes they take up the racist logics of capitalist gentrification. Ana Ramos-Zayas notes this knowledge, among Latino teenagers in the Ironbound, who have learned to decry black "aggressiveness" as a way to perform neoliberal subjectivity successfully. They have developed a unique consciousness in order to navigate the scarcity of resources in Newark's racially-segregated neighborhoods.[112] This knowledge that there is never enough life to go around here is precisely that which forms in death worlds. But another knowledge is at work in these places: that life is possible for marginalized communities if alliances can be forged. I have seen this manifest in my conversation with Newark resident Myles Zhang, who reflected on "the paradox of gentrification" that "tends to target immigrant communities."[113] Life-creating knowledge, nestled in located experience contests the logics of capitalism when community groups advocate for parks where there once was

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[112] Ana Y. Ramos-Zayas, *Street Therapists: Race, Affect, and Neoliberal Personhood in Latino Newark* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 1-13.
[113] Myles Zhang, conversation (July 29, 2017).

industrial blight, and then fights to maintain affordable rents. Nothing about this activism is new to residents of the Ironbound, but its persistent presence both in everyday urban life and in the pages of Mark's Gospel make it a vital form of resistance the very practices that have made it invisible.

This knowledge, haunting Mark 5:21-43, creates a space where countless contesting demands are met, forging alliances for a new politics. Because this place has been shown to be haunted, where the Other has made themselves manifest, it is their knowledge of what it means to navigate death worlds I am after.[114] And because isolation from prosperity is what limits the knowledge of the privileged from entering political discourse, haunted epistemologies from haunted spaces demand that alliances be formed. In throwntogether space, Massey argues, encounter with the other "does not simply establish 'an alliance' between given interests, but modifies the very identity of the forces engaging in the alliance."[115] Subjects from within death worlds know that alliances that utterly change those who relate to them are a necessary political outcome from engagement with dead space. For those who maintain the authority of Christian scriptures, this means engaging the Bible not just for a personal or confessional interpretation, but leaving oneself open to both the Other one might meet and the knowledge they might bear.

Given the necessary invisibility and incalculability of hauntings, I cannot pretend to approach a specific future of the politics made possible in this necrotic place, but the

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[114] Thrift and Amin, *Seeing Like a City*, 27-28.
[115] Massey, *For Space*, 182; Massey is here working closely with Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (London: Verso, 2nd edn 2001; 1st edn 1985), 184.

potential of a radically democratic alliance of the living and the (un)dead offers a utopian horizon. Formed in the contested space of the margins, any politics encountered among the dead do *not* search for resolution, silver-linings, or even for liberation, but know the necessity for struggle. In this way, the contested death worlds of sacred texts offer openings for the reflexive rigor of utopian politics. In her exposition of utopian features of the "kin-dom of God" in the Synoptic tradition, Johnson-DeBaufre describes the discontent—which she deems the "something is missing"—features in all "utopian dreaming," as a necessary practice to keep utopias open enough to remain productive across "social divides."[116] Engaging sacred texts as contested spaces, therefore, is not only a matter of interpretation, but of taking up the grievances of the ghosts one encounters.

These encounters open up a politics where the bleeding woman's "I will be made well" does not rest as a final call to liberation; rather, it stands as an entry point for any contestation that rejects the attempt to bury the reality belying sacred texts as books of life. Instead, the agencies of those who have not been "graciously permitted to amend the past,"[117] in Gordon's words, persistently *create* the space with countless "[somethings are] missing." Thus, the bleeding woman creates a space *persistently* which demands engaging scriptures not as vehicles for meaning but as spaces that enlist their practitioners in a new practice of *dis*content. Indeed, she demands that those who ally

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[116] Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, "Dreaming of the Common Good: The Kin-dom of God as a Space of Utopian Politics," in *Common Goods: Economy, Ecology, and Political Theology*, eds. Johnson-DeBaufre, Catherine Keller, and Elias Ortega-Aponte (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 103-123, esp. 113-118. The "Something is missing" comes from Bloch and Adorno, "Something's Missing," 1-17.
[117] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 151.

with her reject death-dealing devotion to a heroic savior in favor of a rigorous,

democratic hope born of hearing voices.

## CONCLUSION

This project, at base, is theological. It traffics in questions of belief, the supernatural, universals and particulars, and justice. The theological character of my dissertation has, at numerous points in the writing process, caused me to doubt whether or not my audience would need to *believe* in ghosts to accede to my argument. This problem is intensified because of the pseudo-scientific methodologies of Euro-American biblical scholars (discussed in chapter one). The object of my critique is, shall we say, disenchanted. To use a term from feminist discourse, my challenge was—and is—to raise consciousness among an entrenched group of privileged intellectuals: the gentrified biblical scholar. I have found this obstacle a perfect target for the theological language opened up by spectralities in at least two ways: (1) ghosts force the question of *belief* and (2) haunting in a neocapitalist, globalizing context raises the specter of *sin*. Each of these theological trajectories makes real world encounters—ever decreasing, but still frequent—between heterogeneous populations, like those with resources and subjugated communities, volatile, dangerous, and filled with the potential for messianic justice.

Ghosts do not need people to *believe* in them to be active; the residents of the Ironbound do not need gentrified residents to be conscious of their presence to live lives with agency. Belief—in gods, in ghosts, in governments, in oneself—has proven a useful assumption for me as this project unfolded, because one need not believe in something for another to theologize about it. We need look no further than Jesus' empty tomb (16:1-8): we have no idea whether the women believed the young man's declaration that Jesus was alive, but the ghosts of countless marginalized ghosts, out of time and out of place (see chapter 2), induced fear all the same. Ghosts have *agency*; they are *effective*. And, as

I have argued throughout, the ghosts of neocapitalist gentrification are in this tomb, whether readers are conscious of their presence or not. Every response we as readers make to our engagement with Mark's text is a response we make to the specters haunting within. These specters have very particular demands, as particular as their unique, material needs and desires.

If engaging Mark's gospel is always a response to the pressing needs of subjugated voices, ignorance of the pressing demands from those who suffer raises the question of *sin*. That is, readers are confronted by desperate calls for aid—even for a messiah—from within the text, but as we have seen above, the response from the biblical scholar has far too often been a search for Jesus' identity. Certainly, one could read this failure to act with and for victims of kyriarchy immediately before us as a callous rejection of the other. The denial of another in need seems to the present author a sinful act.

This point requires at least two pieces of nuance: (1) that gentrification makes suffering nearly invisible and (2) that it also makes privileged subjects complicit in the erasure of real people's existence, history, and agency. As Sarah Schulman makes clear, gentrification is first and foremost the elision of vibrant communities from the memories of a particular place: declared outdated or unprofitable, they are removed from a place by developers for the good of a new, more profitable people. Critically, for Schulman, gentrified residents are not given the conceptual tools to imagine their residencies as anything other than the "natural order" of things.[1] And yet, living within a presupposed natural order makes that experience more real, more material. To this end, everyday life

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[1] Schulman, *Gentrification of the Mind*, 27.

among the gentrified is indistinguishable from the killing of entire communities, of declaring their existence valueless and building a case for your place within the world.

This is the reality of gentrified biblical interpretation: that Jesus treats the woman with the flow of blood (5:21-43) better than the Jews could, that the rule of the norm in the Decapolis (vv. 1-20) is preferable to the democratic freedom of the different, that the confession of Jesus' identity is more critical than the eternally pressing needs of the poor (14:1-11). These are just some of the erasures of the contemporary Euro-American academy. But they point to a broader pattern, a pattern of kyriarchal domination across time-places: those without recognizably material presence have no agency to make change.

But because ghosts do not depend on human belief for their agency and because their agency has made sinners out of the neocapitalist West, their activity in and around the Gospel of Mark raises a third and final theological trajectory: *justice*. Ghosts always demand something be done to make amends for the past, for those events which forced them into silence. To do right by those who were wronged: what could be more just? Mark may present its readers with a message and a goal, but it is haunted by manifold spectral presences who have propositions for the reader. They propose an end to the zoning practices that make life for the immigrant residents of the Ironbound unaffordable and terrifying; these ghosts have a proposition for a Jesus whose absence in his tomb does not choke out the presence of brown communities gentrified out of existence; they propose healing for children with asthma for port traffic as visible as the healing of demoniacs in undesirable locales. If Mark's ghosts know one thing, it is that this book

does not belong to the gentrified reader. Because, in the end, the reader blinded by privilege will always run, “for they were very afraid.”

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