A STERILE HOLE AND A MASK OF FECES

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Gnaw Their Tongues’ album title *An Epiphanic Vomiting of Blood* is a concise example of black metal’s theme of ecstatic disintegration made tangible in violent outward expression—a slaughterhouse revelation, exposing what was hidden. This purging recalls both the self-emptying (kenosis) of Gospel theology and G.W.F. Hegel’s telos of self-overcoming (“sublation,” or “Aufhebung”), inverting the deadlock, turning oneself inside-out and thereby becoming transparent, masochistically abandoning oneself to the environment, incorporating it and being incorporated by it. Gilles Deleuze says the masochist does not derive most of his pleasure from pain; rather, his “real pleasure is obtained subsequently, in that which is made possible by the punishment.” This suspended gratification evokes the self-transcending “surplus-enjoyment” represented in the Resurrection, following the self-annihilating degradation in the Incarnation and the Passion. This is the sacrifice that believers are to mirror in order to receive the blessing of divine grace, as set forth by theologians from Paul to St. John of the Cross to St. Ignatius Loyola to Kierkegaard. In black metal, this rebirth for which “creation groans” follows many revivals, from the Renaissance through Romanticism, in its nostalgia for a golden age of occult magic. It appears in lyrics as the return of a latent pagan-barbarian consciousness; Satyricon screams, “In this land where the forest is my throne / I have come to re-hunt,” and Katharsis shrieks: “The sleeper will wake and the world will bleed.”

The self-cannibalizing and subsequent self-expulsion of these linked zeitgeists is not unlike that associated with trauma. “For just as Jonah was three nights and three days in the belly of the sea monster,” Jesus says, “so will be the Son of Man three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” “Panic, hysteria, infernally raging chaos,” screams Funeral Mist, “Salvation through destruction / Cold black sun of hope.” And in her book *Black Sun*, Julia Kristeva quotes the moment of
expulsion in the *Iliad* when “Bellerophon gave offense to the gods and became a lonely wanderer on the Aleian plain, eating out his heart and shunning the paths of men.” The sovereign eater is revealed to be merely a temporarily indigestible hole in the world.

Kristeva explains that “the depressed person has the impression of having been deprived . . . of something unrepresentable, that perhaps only devouring might signify.” But this “unrepresentable” kernel of sublime absence fuels not depression for Arthur Schopenhauer, but rather his deific vision of the subject as that “which knows all things and is known by none.” Jean-Marie Schaeffer speaks for the late eighteenth-century German Romantic poet, philosopher, and Neoplatonist mystic Novalis: “Only poetic creation has access to an ecstatic contemplation in which the poet is at once subject and object, self and world.” Like Schopenhauer and Novalis, Richard Wagner mistook masochistic solipsism for sublime triumph. Nietzsche mocked Wagner thusly: “He who overthrows us is strong, he who elevates us is godly, he who makes us wonder vaguely is profound.” For Nietzsche, the fact of flat, absolute materiality denies all depth, but nonetheless gives rise to fantasies of sovereignty; for him, “the body despairs of the body when it cannot bear its own experience or digest its suffering,” says Melissa Orlie. Nietzsche’s embodied ethics of pleasure, power, and despair is confused with an incoherent mystical oral fixation by Reza Negarestani, for whom “Hegelism and taste is a stupid effort to hide the nihilistic carnage of mouth . . . it is whitewashing our domesticating hunger, jealousy, and racial segregation that we undertake against the mouth.”

Aspasia Stephanou cites Negarestani in order to ascribe in black metal a gluttonous nirvana beyond language “where all abject material is never abjected.”

Stephanou wants to oppose this pandemonium of unspeaking, non-shitting orality to an idea of Hegel that equates his thought with an allegedly capitalistic erasure of difference. But for Hegel there is no ultimate negation of difference, much less a nihilist’s consumerist dream of perpetual enjoyment in undifferentiated chthonic essence, “an openness where everything becomes anonymous.” Instead of Negarestani’s spuriously infinite consumption as an awakening of ancient nature, there is despair. Marginality erupts from empty clamor and expend itself in incompleteness, non-totality. For Hegel, as limned by Slavoj Žižek, the universal Absolute is a continual spiritual self-differentiation, a tearing within that is then externalized, inner contradictions resolving into subjectivity through reconciliation in the shared world. Hegel replaces Kant’s inaccessible things-in-themselves with a relationship in which consciousness and its content can rupture one another, incorporate one another, embracing conflict, canceling and trans-
forming falsity and evil, with gaps not erased or blamed on understanding, but discovered through waste in reality itself."

As Stephanou mentions in a footnote, Žižek pursues Hegel’s motif of digestion, setting up an excremental metaphor in which sublated content is released, abrogated, and yet reiterated, reborn, in what Mladen Dolar calls an “Aufhebung of Aufhebung.” 19 “If I eat an apple,” Hegel says, “I destroy its organic self-identity . . . having in itself a homogeneity with my digestive organs such that I can make it homogeneous with myself.”20 In Hegel’s apple, so in the spirit—what was interior is mangled, disintegrated, and extruded, in order to be externally “healed” into a new non-totality. For Stephanou, this mutual incorporation is neither sufficiently nihilistic (singular eater) nor multicultural (assimilated apple)—and yet, the apple lives on, distributing its seeds through shit (or trash). Inner potential only finds truth in external expression—the universal ideal notion meets objective nature in the specific idea: excrement. “Out of the foaming ferment of finitude,” Hegel muses on the john, “spirit rises up fragrantly.”21

Spinoza’s undivided, universal, uniform “substance” comprising reality becomes for Hegel, with the splitting of self-recognition, an aware “subject,” revealed through free externalization of the contingent, mortal, incomplete individual. Egotistic “positivity,” a la Schopenhauer, is in Hegel a false unity that overwhelsms the subject without the restraint of negativity, the empty opposition from which the subject springs. Negativity is the force driving the dialectic, and thus the movement of freedom in human history. “That which enables the notion to advance itself,” he says in the introduction to the Science of Logic, “is . . . the negative which it possesses within itself.”22 And so this negative is made positive through expression. For Hegel, the image of God is its truth; yet iconoclasm, in the Protestant ethic he embraces, suspends all transient positivity in the name of essence, the as-yet unrevealed and undifferentiated Absolute—which for Hegel is both empty and self-sundering. Two examples may illuminate the complex relationship between contingent positivity and negative essence—one in regard to race and masks, and the other addressing sexuality and shit—before moving on to visceral and visual statements about empire, cruelty, and law.

More than the white corpse paint associated with black metal musicians, the most iconic and incendiary painted face in popular Western culture may be blackface—famously used by European Americans to portray African Americans as buffoons, but, also used early on among blacks to appropriate and caricature white racist depictions of blacks.23 And it should be noted that blacks were also early adopters of “whiteface,” from the portrayals of Europeans among colonized and enslaved Africans up to, in recent history, Michael Jackson. Discussing the pale
suburban animated corpses of George Romero’s zombie movies, Richard Dyer makes explicit these connections between whiteness and death in his book *White.* One could see how the voudou-like makeup still used by bands like Immortal allows a Eurocentric aesthetic to be exported, as with the Indonesian black metal band Kiamat Orchestra, Taiwan’s Chthonic, South Africa’s Soul Devourer, South Korea’s Pyha, Peru’s Anal Vomit, and countless others. There are plenty of ways for white face paint to resonate symbolically in various contexts (just take Johnny Depp’s indigenous-Goth posturing in *The Lone Ranger*—please). Nonetheless, whiteness on whites, like blackness on blacks, and like Hegel’s characterization of philosophy painting “gray on gray,” is a redundant abstraction of flesh illuminating the hole at the heart of identity, via the “minimal difference” of tautology—a gap “that hints at an obscene contingent underside,” perhaps at the other end of the tract.

Despite geographic, cultural, and economic differences, ghostly projected and repressed memories of traumatic colonization are central to modern consciousness. Not much is known about Vikings, but they are remembered as conquerors—much as African diaspora identities are widely perceived within the legacy of subjugation and slavery. But the dominated have become both despised and fetishized, and the black face of buffoonery denotes envy for fierce, mocking, emptied subjects that have to some degree come to identify self-destructively with their enemies, but have also, following the kind of liberation trauma Hegel identified in France’s post-revolutionary Terror, come into a full (though bitter) autonomy, apart from power. Conversely, after the barbarians conquered the conquerors, and northern Europe became the imperial seat, the white face of elitist cruelty has come to belie the repressed perversion of masochist excess. The corpse-paint-blackface pairing calls to mind the Prague Museum of Medieval Torture’s display of historic torture masks, some of which were worn by torturers, and others by victims. When Funeral Mist proclaims, “Cleanse me now, bind the flesh, / So that I can receive thy punishment with dignity, with dignity / Make use of me! Make use of this flame, / So that I can receive thy ineffable splendour with dignity, with dignity,” and “Fetter the flesh, choke the sin... Enslave and use me / I breathe only to take the form thou wish,” the fantasy of the master covets the strength of the slave.

In *Debt: The First 5,000 Years,* a history of civilization as an expanding network of quantified financial obligations and violent bodily subjections, David Graeber traces the foundation of modern Western law to Roman conceptions of property as the relation between a human and a thing—a relationship that is nonsensical (albeit somewhat Kantian) until recognizing the “thing” as a slave. Graeber goes on to
describe the king and the slave, both marginal figures in their own way, as central to the hermetically isolated individual posited by contract law. The master-slave dynamic is central for Hegel, of course, who does not fail to draw out the mutual alienation that Giorgio Agamben later termed “the state of exception,” external to society. The identity of the State hinges on the figure of a necessary term that lies outside itself; this can be a glorified yet ultimately impotent figure like the king, as described by Hegel, or the abject yet essential figure of the slave, prisoner, enemy, etc. The coexistence in one scene of bands respectively called Enthroned and Enslaved starts to make more sense. Both names represent a thoroughly external subject, whose purity consists in exclusion from moral protection and culpability, the curious DuBois-esque “double consciousness” of the modern laborer-consumer, duty-bound hedonism canceled by contractual asceticism, bound and flagellated by a missing, connecting term. “Militant men in peaceful times attack themselves,” Mayhem chants.

To wear one’s cultural identity as a mask is not to borrow from a signifying field (the nation, the market, or the body) but to externalize an ontological position (the spirit, a shared history, or the drives). “For the individuality,” says Hegel, “it is as much its countenance as its mask that it can lay aside.” As pedantic as the distinction of “true” versus “false” Metal may seem, such vigilant fidelity to one’s desire seems sympathetic to a transgender-informed vision of art, despite the persistence of homophobia among some metalheads (certainly not all). Indeed, some qualities of all-male environments, like the military, boarding schools, and prisons, may apply to heavy music scenes, as suggested by the unambiguously out (but nonetheless hate-filled) former Gorgoroth frontman Gaahl. Metal’s expressions of isolation and fantasies of simultaneous mortification and glorification, not to mention the idyllic neoclassical landscapes and narratives of operatic tragedy, are motifs that resonate with the nostalgic character of the gay aesthete. On a more subtle tack, Lee Edelman’s book on queerness and the death drive, No Future, is a collection of perverse readings of discourses around childhood and family that would seem to echo the black metal vision of nature in revolt against pseudo-organic social artifice. This revolt is displayed dramatically in the upsetting of interspecies relations Edelman analyzes in Alfred Hitchcock’s The Birds, in which birds act in legion to isolate and tear humans to pieces.

The human and animal antiheroes that disrupt normative “healthy” relations in No Future are not unlike Christ, an uncanny obstacle to imperial and religious authorities of his time. “Do not think that I came to bring peace on Earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword,” says Jesus, “For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her
mother-in-law; and a man’s enemies will be the members of his household.” 37 Like teeth, the sword divides the flesh of the family into particles, with all roles demolished and innards exposed. Jean-Luc Nancy proposes that “the Hegelian world is the world in which no generality subsists, only infinite singularities.” 38 The brutality required to sustain the patriarchy will be dispersed when the heterosexual order of descent and ownership is chopped into an anarchic storm, civilization torn apart and bodies merged with the landscape. “Since hatred of the Other was already considered ‘older than love,’” Kristeva inquires, “would such a masochistic withdrawal of hatred point to a yet more archaic hatred?” 39 Restating this, evoking both metal and Hegel, Jesus says in reference to himself, “If Satan casts out Satan, how then will his kingdom stand?” 40

Leo Bersani and Adam Phillips’ book Intimacies also takes on the masochistic contempt of the flesh (and the soul), also connecting queer eros and thanatos. The authors analyze the AIDS-era practice of unprotected gay group sex known as “barebacking,” and relate it to the seventeenth-century “pure love” school of (heretical) Catholic theology. In “pure love,” one is to release the absolute adoration of God from all hopes of reward, even presuming that one’s soul will be annihilated at death, or will be condemned to eternal hellfire. “(P)ure love demands . . . a saintly hatred of oneself, a perfect passivity toward God’s will, and . . . total self-divestiture.” 41 This is tied up for Bersani and Phillips with a larger discussion of the despised “féminine” role in gay male sexuality, that of the “bottom,” the penetrator—a role that, as historian John Boswell notes, has received far more censure throughout Western history than that of the penetrator. 42 But this is (literally) nature as civilization’s “obscene underside,” extolled by black metal in hymns for the accursed. The desire to be penetrated and debased is hinted at when 1349 says, “My call is answered / By force am I taken to realms, darker than death,” 43 but its ecstatic necessity is explicit when Watain says, “Step aside for lord Sathanas / His fist so deep within / A servant am I and in flesh am I captured.” 44 Nothing is more “unnatural” than nature itself.

As obsessed as black metal has been with codes of heroic honor, as in the well-known case of white-supremacist murderer and black metal innovator Varg Vikernes, a.k.a. Burzum, it is hard, in the light of “pure love,” not to hear the cacophonous grandeur as a sinister invitation to womblike oceanic bliss, a borderless panoramic pre-anality that recalls the pastoral nostalgia of German Romantic poet Friedrich Hölderlin, or the hazy atmospheric vistas of Ukrainian nationalist black metal band Drudkh. The gap offered by the open, unclenched anus is the aperture of the camera obscura that inverts the image of the land, repeating it but isolating it from the brutal history that parcelled it as territory, allowing origins to be posited
retroactively in community. Hell yields bliss, hate becomes love, ashes bring forth life, filth creates food, individuals are released from the family and from civilization. The primordial inversion may be the advent of the sentient being as a self-conscious orphan of its environment, “an anamorphic distortion of nature.” Excluded by all around her, she is also excluded by the shared abstraction of language that makes her a stranger to nature, and gives her tombstone a name while she remains alive. The “great sorrow of Nature” that Schelling attributed to its muteness, its lack of words, is reversed by Derrida, who says that it is “nature’s sadness or mourning that renders it sad or aphasic, that leaves it without words.”

“Where the howling winds rage” screams Satyricon, “And the mountains are majestic / I can breathe and where there is / Human flesh I feel strangled.” “Life is not the answer / The hands are rotten,” quoth Horna. And Darkthrone: “I was, indeed, a King of the Flesh . . . but asketh thou: Closed are the Gates?” Perhaps they must be; nature as described by Hegel is an idea of total exteriority, even to itself.

The closed anal boundary has everything to do with power. For Freud feces stood in for money and wealth, and David Graeber links money to both the Romantic and Chinese etymology of “symbolism” itself, so there may be no more compelling Biblical image of the anal retentive than the rich man whose path to Heaven is more difficult than the passage of a camel through a needle’s eye. Christ instead describes wisdom as total self-expenditure, returning always to the free use of money. In abandoning grandeur, identifying defilement in the comfort of conscience or circumstance, there is an inversion of filth that informs the judgment of the beatitudes, blessing all the besmirched—the meek, the mournful, the merciful, the insulted, the persecuted, the peacemakers, the pure in heart and poor in spirit, those who want righteousness. Only the partially-digested and shat-upon are saved, only weakness, suffering, and want bring about repentance and release. Similarly, the despairing subject in Hegel’s *Phenomenology*, says Katrin Pahl, “loses its head, its every bone is broken, it self-digests, its spirit is crushed but restless.”

Yet in a typical fantasy of the elite overman, Svarttjern declares, “You pitiful, weak, and poor / Your tears strike every other than I.” To the extent black metal affects solitary supremacy, it represses the despondent masochistic content of its own explosive dissonance, furious yet passive, in which the sounds of self-release into unbounded continuity oppose alienated self-containment and constipated accumulation. The romance of a hermetically insular, organically unified totality is pierced by black metal’s jagged, discontinuous soundscape.

Jesus tauntingly condemns man’s retentive inner darkness when he says, “There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things
that come out of a person are what defile him." There is no magical sublimation within; like Bertha Mason, the hysterical attic-bound captive Creole “with dark, grizzled hair” in Jane Eyre, genocide unrepented continuously haunts the colonizer like a mad ghost. This image of confinement may be opposed to the woman at the house of Simon the leper who breaks open the jar of exceedingly costly perfume and anoints Jesus with it (“the spirit rises up fragrantly”); the disciples criticize this grand expenditure and are rebuked by Jesus, while, at the same time, Judas accepts payment for his betrayal. The broken jar is a body freed of the soul’s putrefying sin in the overpowering incense of love, while, all around, morality is negotiated as lives are bought and sold.

An opposed Messiah of olfactory desire is found in the German author Patrick Susskind’s novel Perfume (beloved by Kurt Cobain), in which Grenouille, a man who is born without odor but has an unusual ability to perceive smells apprentices as a perfume maker and accidentally kills a virgin girl with whose scent he becomes obsessed. In seeking a perfect perfume, he ends up killing a large number of virgins in a village in order to harvest their odors. When Grenouille is caught, he escapes execution with the smell of his perfume, which induces reverent awe and incites a mass orgy. But, weary of both solitude and companionship, he seeks death by dousing himself in his perfume, causing him to be torn apart and eaten by a group of criminals—a Last Supper worthy of Bataille, whose book Eroticism, Žižek notes, features a photograph of a person being torn to pieces.

The hypnotic smell in Perfume is neither love nor rot, but merely a stand-in for the skeptical, speculative faculty of vision, the calculating titillation both of Judas and the scolding apostles. Coercion is a technique of anal control and optical pleasure, of both power and slavery, as when the image of a white or black face functions as a simultaneous assertion and deformation of group identity. Against nature, says Žižek, “the infinite spiritual good . . . is ultimately the mask of evil.” Violence is emphatically not a tool of morality; nor, for that matter, amorality; rather, both are tools of violence. In the figure of Grenouille we see what Lacan identified in Sade as the “symptom of Kant,” a thoroughly abstract, judgmental, retentive obsession with going to the limit of transgression as an internalization and validation of the prohibitive Law of patriarchy (as both a king and a slave). Not a reversal of the Law but a reassertion of it in something shared and nonlinguistic, an authentic existence for which black metal pines (among the pines). Jesus, however, transgresses punishment itself. In God’s blasphemous agony, degrading death, and impossible re-Incarnation, as in the anticipation, repetition, and remembrance in the Eucharist, “the gap between the universal content and its representation was closed.”
Reincarnation through representation also applies thematically to black metal. Immortal says, “As a Norse warrior I rode the dark valleys / With longsword in hand sworn to throne dark lands.” But the pagan ferocity of corpse-painted Scandinavian church burners looks more than anything like an updated Reformation, with the militarized Lutheran-Prussian State revered by Hegel in *The Philosophy of Right*, contemporary with the Wagnerian Viking revival period of the nineteenth century, a more apt setting for the grim protagonists of kvt dirges than the obscure world of the original Norse warriors. The black metal scene is then a distorted revival of a distorted revival, a universal-isolationist voice of post-colonial provincialism—a concrete, located universality, a reborn “traditional” worldview framed by the negativity of traumatic conquest. The negative struggle to resist (or pillage) the Roman imperialist is pure, but the land and invented history being defended are never pure, as concrete truth in Hegel is never pure. Yet, while the vast icy landscapes on Metal album covers and in Romantic poetry are mythic, they provide a ground for a neo-medieval global localism, summarized by Antonio Negri’s Hegelian dismissal of neutral authority: “Reality is not universal but radically unilateral,” he says, “it is praxis that anticipates and risks itself by constructing itself as a particular power.” In this black and white post-colonial moment, there’s no neoliberal straddling of the fence between conqueror and conquered—merely the overthrowing of all domination.

In the imperialist cross of the Holy Roman emperor Constantine, and of all Christian conquerors thereafter (the Marquis de Sade included, I humbly submit), punishment was sanctified, forgiveness forgotten, subject bodies enumerated, and wounds of infinite debt reopened. Christ (and Peter) reverse Rome’s cross, but Rome reasserts its sadistic spectacle, so that it may be eventually destroyed, with death itself devoured and shat out, itself the final inert remainder, what Brecht called “the last piece of dirt with whose removal the room will be clean.” Again: “I behold thousands of claws gripping the golden cross from behind / Soon demons crawl like furious ants all over / the profaned shape / Screaming in unearthly rage and insanity / the symbol of Nazarene is torn asunder / dripping with slime and rot” (note “from behind,” and the echo of queer artist David Wojnarowicz’s infamous video of a crucifixion seething with ants).

As if anticipating Negarestani and Stephanou, Hegel says admiringly of animals that they “do not stand idly in front of sensuous things as if they possessed intrinsic being... but fall to without ceremony and eat them up.” In Hegel’s dialectic passage from being through nothing to becoming, we can recognize “wolves evolving,” the image of a reawakened bestial dynamism provided by Ulver to answer the prompt “sounds like:” on their Myspace page. This conjures in turn
Deleuze’s “becoming-animal” vision of a mutating spirit dispersed and reorganized in communal flux. But it also recalls the Hegelian insight that it takes a transcendental Lawgiver to make a man into a wolf.66 The wolf may evolve by becoming rather than obeying the Law, succumbing erotically to the pure negative contradiction that permits subjectivity. But a human lawgiver, as Graeber points out, can make a man into a thing. The delirious anguish of self-objectification is characterized by Watain as “the enduring of rupturing cold / Brought to life, crushed to dust / By an impenetrable presence of dark.”67 “For those who are depressed,” Kristeva says, “the Thing, like the Self, is a downfall that carries them along into the invisible and unnameable . . . Waste and cadavers all.”68 Two song titles from Gnaw Their Tongues’ An Epiphanic Vomiting of Blood come to mind: “My Body Is Not a Vessel, Nor a Temple. It’s a Repulsive Pile of Sickness,” and “Sawn Asunder and Left for the Beasts.”69

Perhaps the disintegrative force of inversion is not a mystical return to a primal and pure source, not a blank quantified abstraction in an infinite void, not the nihilist “night in which all cows are black” Hegel snarkily attributes to Schelling in The Phenomenology of Spirit, not the faux-heroic Sadean / Satanic / neo-Nordic flaunting of dogma, in slavery to a skeptic’s fantasy of sovereignty. The ecstatic effect may instead be a frozen orgasmic baptism of self-annihilation, an atavistic negation of inward negativity, a cleansing bath of blood, feces, and offal, an asshole made pure by inversion. What Lacan describes as the non-phallic “supplementary jouissance” beyond the Self, accessible only to women, is echoed faintly for all animals in the impossible traversal of the anus by the unclean simulation of birth, the illusion of creation, vomiting or excreting the reeking dark remainder that permits the fantastic restoration of the spirit released into nature. Hidden and decayed, the interior filth of the drives, the unconscious essence, can enter the light and be transmuted, negativity rejoined with contingent external substance. William Desmond characterizes Hegel’s God as “making faces of himself in immanence and seeing himself again in those faces.”70 Or, perhaps, those feces. Regardless, as individuals we both transcend and become ourselves by releasing the captive marginalized Other within, through the mask offered to God and the mask God shows us in return, a terrible non-face that defines and defies the boundaries of reason.

NOTES
1 Gnaw Their Tongues, An Epiphanic Vomiting of Blood (Burning World Records, 2007; Crucial Blast, 2009).
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5 Matthew 12:40, New American Standard Bible.
8 Kristeva, Black Sun, 13.
15 Stephanou, “Black Metal and the Mouth,” 50.
16 Stephanou, “Black Metal and the Mouth,” 60.
20 Slavoj Žižek, “Hegel and Shitting,” in Crockett et al., Hegel & the Infinite, 221.
21 Quoted in Žižek, Less Than Nothing, 402.
22 Quoted in Žižek, Less Than Nothing, 144.
25 Žižek, Less Than Nothing, 320.
26 Žižek, Less Than Nothing, 322.
27 Žižek, Less Than Nothing, 370.
I draw on the excellent survey of this discourse in Christopher Reed’s *Art and Homosexuality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).  
Kristeva, *Black Sun*, 16.  
Graeber, *Debt*, 298.  
“Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God,” Matthew 19:24, *New International Version*.  
Mark 7:15, *English Standard Version*.  
Mark 14:1–9, *English Standard Version*.  
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58 Slavoj Žižek, Violence (Picador, 2008), 66.
60 Žižek, The Parallax View, 97.
62 Antonio Negri, “Rereading Hegel: The Philosopher of Right” in Crockett et al., Hegel & the Infinite, 44.
64 1349, “I Breathe Spears.”
66 Žižek, Less Than Nothing, 313.
68 Kristeva, Black Sun, 15.
69 Gnaw Their Tongues, An Epiphanic Vomiting of Blood.
70 William Desmond, “Between Finitude and Infinity: On Hegel’s Sublationary Infinitism,” in Crockett et al., Hegel & the Infinite, 125.