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Anton Wilhelm Amo's Philosophy and Reception: from the Origins through the *Encyclopédie*

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Anton Wilhelm Amo's Philosophy and Reception:
from the Origins through the *Encyclopédie*

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
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DEDICATION

For my Dad and the Culture.

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I would like to start by thanking my undergrad mentor, Tom Schwanda. While I was at Wheaton College, Tom would not allow me to accept mediocrity; he pushed me to do my best and introduced me to the academic world. He will always hold a special place in my heart. His care and direction helped me pick the unbelievable committee members that I have. Roger, my chair, teaches by taking you along with him. He models the way an academic should do research while not compromising on integrity, and Amo scholarship would not be where it is today without Roger pushing me to pursue whatever project I wanted. I would not want any other chair. Justin, I flew across to world to meet you because I believed in your scholarship. In return, you've taught me more than you could know about academia, life, and Amo. We have worked together to bring attention to Amo and are at this moment changing the landscape of philosophical history. You have become more than my mentor; you are my friend. From Doug, I learned that you cannot just say things; you have to live them out. He is active in his community the way that I desire to be. Colin made be a better teacher and writer. Alex has taught me how to be a better mentor; he has always been willing to give me his opinion, and it has always been transformative.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AT Descartes, R., Adam, C., & Tannery, P. (1910). *Oeuvres de Descartes*. Paris: J. Vrin.
- DAB Amo, A. W., Brentjes, B., & Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg. (1968). *Antonius Guilielmus Amo Afer aus Axim in Ghana: Student, Doktor der Philosophie, Magister Legens an den Universitäten Halle, Wittenberg, Jena, 1727-1747 : Dokumente, Autographe, Belege*. Halle Saale: Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg.
- CSM Descartes, R., Cottingham, J., Stoothoff, R. (1984-5). *The philosophical writings of Descartes: Volume 2*. Cambridge University Press.
- CSMK Descartes, R., Cottingham, J., Stoothoff, R., Kenny, A. (1991). *The philosophical writings of Descartes: Volume 3*. Cambridge University Press.
- JSM Menn, S., Smith, J.E.H. (2019?) *Introduction and Translation of Anton Wilhelm Amo*. Unpublished Book.

ABSTRACT

Diversity and the concept of race are, or should be, central concerns both for the history of philosophy and for our current political reality. Within academic philosophy, these concerns are expressed in the growing demand for minority representation within the canon, which is overwhelmingly white and male, especially in early modern philosophy. Furthermore, until now, historians of philosophy have not spent the time necessary to uncover various designations such as “Negro”, “Moor”, “Ethiopian”, etc., in early modern Europe, and from there to understand how these shaped philosophical reflections on human diversity. In my research, I relate Anton Wilhelm Amo (c. 1700 – c. 1750), Europe’s first African Ph.D. in philosophy (c. 1734), to philosophy and religion together with the treatment of human difference in the work of Robert Boyle and his contemporaries. My project aids in addressing (A) the lack of diversity in the philosophical canon and (B) the insufficient historical analysis of various designations of human difference. Human difference, i.e., the early modern interpretation of race, and Amo scholarship are interrelated subjects, as Amo is both a philosopher in Europe and an African native. The one cannot be researched without the other. Thus, my research attempts to elucidate Amo’s philosophical significance and its relation to race and human difference.

I begin by give a biographical sketch of Amo, which addresses goals (A) and (B), where I discuss Amo in relation to religious ideologies, philosophical positions, and the surrounding early modern context. In the following chapter, which also address goals (A) and (B), I untangle Amo’s critique of Descartes. For Amo, there is an impasse between the mind and sensation

because the mind is immaterial (active), and sensations necessarily need to occur upon something passive and material (body), which means sensations could only ever be cognized by the mind and through the body. The final chapter, which addresses goal (B), investigates how the Royal Society, driven by financial incentives and England's economy, as well as the burgeoning slave trade, played a large role in advancing "scientific" theories of human difference, especially in relation to Africa. That is, the Royal Society essentially propelled natural philosophy into the proto-racist landscape experienced in the early 18th Century, culminating in the application of the *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* racist claims given by 18th Century philosophers, e.g., Immanuel Kant and David Hume, and the ousting of Anton Wilhelm Amo.

My project contributes to philosophy and the academic community in three ways: (1) philosophical inclusion and diversity, (2) Black history, and (3) the historical ontology of race. It is this intersectional approach to philosophy that, I believe, allows me to contribute to my field in new and interesting ways. Many people believe that philosophy is dying. I believe diverse individuals, like Amo, and diverse ideologies offer breath and life to philosophy. This is because, as Michel de Montaigne explains in the *Essays*, we learn from the unfamiliar.

INTRODUCTION

In *I Write What I Like* Bantu Stephen Biko, who was killed by the police for anti-apartheid activist in 1977, writes,

The call for Black Consciousness is the most positive call to come from any group in the black world for a long time. It is more than just a reactionary rejection of whites by blacks. The quintessence of it is the realisation by the blacks that, in order to feature well in this game of power politics, they have to use the concept of group power and to build a strong foundation for this. Being an historically, politically, socially and economically disinherited and dispossessed group, they have the strongest foundation from which to operate. The philosophy of Black Consciousness, therefore, expresses group pride and the determination by the blacks to rise and attain the envisaged self. (2009, 68)

Africana Philosophy expressed its pride and determination at its inception during the 1980s with scholars like Kwasi Wiredu, Steven Biko, Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò, Nkiru Nzegwu, Angela Davis, Cheikh Anta Diop, Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, Lewis Gordon, Paulin Hountondji, Valentin-Yves Mudimbe, D. A. Masolo, Anita L. Allen, Kwame Anthony Appiah, and Claude Sumner. While Africana Philosophy's origins are intertwined with the history of western philosophy, it also defines itself by working on an aspect of philosophy that has been devalued in the west. Africana Philosophy is lucidly defined as the intellectual work of the African diaspora and work that is concerned with the issues facing the African diaspora. It may not be monolithic, but its solidity centers around Blackness and problems associated to and with Blackness.

One such problem is the way that philosophy, especially western, has white-washed itself, not engaging peoples outside of the western tradition and even missing people that could have aided in bridging cultural gaps. This inept perspective of philosophy produced gaps in the history of philosophy and forces Blacks either to create their own consciousness or accept a type

of non-existence. My project, like Africana Philosophy in general, is meant to be an expression of pride and determination of and for Black Consciousness. It helps to reveal the gaps of philosophy in general, which wasn't defined as "western" until the previous century.

Amo, an African who obtained a doctoral degree in philosophy and taught in Germany through the early 18th Century, is a source, a spring, of the pride and determination of and for Black Consciousness. His narrative and intellectual ability exist as a beautiful black mark on a plain white page: one that demonstrates that the impossible is possible, that fantasies can be actualized. I've dreamed about someone like Amo since childhood, and I'm very excited to be a part of his rediscovery.

I. Brief Methodology

My advisor, Roger Ariew, has impressed on me a methodology that principally calls attention to context. One cannot interpret a historical text without its context, since texts are born out of a particular context. My goal was to produce a text that remained true to the source materials and the surrounding context, and to give future English-speaking researchers a starting point. That being the case, the base of every chapter is soaked in source materials from the early modern period, and the scaffolding is amassed from reputable secondary sources. For there I produced three limitations.

As just explained, I begin by limiting myself textually. I decided to work only with texts that were (1) available throughout Europe and (2) cited in Germany, where Amo lived. (3) I used secondary sources to enhance this project where (1) and (2) could not be found or were unavailable. Secondly, I recognized and implemented a limitation on interpretation. I can't know exactly what Amo was thinking, which means I had to extrapolate from source materials and the

historical contextual to create Amo's narrative, philosophy, and racial reactions. In developing my extrapolations, I tied myself to the context and allowed the context to speak for itself. Lastly, as I investigated the racial designations throughout early modern Europe, I noticed how much the present concepts of race were being read back into history. So, I attempted to limit my own historical ontology of race and relied only on the racial designators of early modern natural philosophers. It was extremely difficult to do this, as each country and province had different degrees of access to information about Africa and Africans, but I attempted to use influential texts, peoples, and academic societies as my foundation.

II. Why Amo?

Amo should be celebrated in philosophy because (1) he was the first African, particularly West African, Ph.D. and teacher of philosophy at a European university in the modern era and (2) the next person of the African diaspora to follow in Amo's footsteps came in the 19th century, almost 150 years after Amo. In 1865, Patrick Francis Healy received his Ph.D. in Philosophy from University of Leuven and become the second Black Ph.D. in Philosophy. Joyce Mitchell Cook was the first Black woman; she earned her Ph.D. from Yale in 1965. Yale actually graduated the first Black woman and the third Black man, Thomas Nelson Baker Sr. (Yancy 1998, 254 & 286) (3) Amo's philosophical thought is unique and intriguing, especially his critique of Descartes. (4) The fact that Amo was able to accomplish such a task at this junction in history in mind blowing.

(5) Theoretically he reveals how philosophy throughout modern western history defined Blacks in philosophy as meaningless. Blackness could not be verified as intellectual; therefore it was only sensible to define Blacks as intellectually meaningless. Once this precedent is set,

changing that paradigm becomes very difficult. (See Thomas Kuhn) As seen in Biko, Blacks have and are attempting to define themselves as intellectual meaningful in a world that often rejects that premise. Amo and others could have proven the scientific racism of the 18th Century to the present as invalid, but that has not happen, and this intellectual meaninglessness is still being combatted by Blacks and woke people of other races today. Amo reveals a history of intellectual meaningfulness, which connects with the African philosophers of past and the Black philosophers of today. We continue to push against this paradigm.

(6) He forces us to engage a different early modern narrative, which will ultimately broaden our perspectives and epistemic import. He forces us the ask questions like, what is Africana Philosophy? Does the way it is defined take away from Africans? Should there be a distinction between African and Africana Philosophy? How African was Amo? Is his philosophy Africana philosophy? In what ways is his philosophy Africana philosophy? How did race play into Amo's philosophy? Did race play into Amo's philosophy? Can you have Africana philosophy that has been completely informed by the western world? *Does western philosophy have to be at the foundation of Africana philosophy for it to be accepted and acceptable in western philosophy? How has western philosophy shaped the perspective of Africana philosophy? Can Africana philosophy exist without western philosophy?* What can we learn about race from Amo? What does Amo's return to Africa tell us about the west, western philosophers, and western philosophy?

(7) Amo is a visible instantiation of that which appears invisible: Black philosophers and intellectuals of past, especially in the 17th and 18th Centuries. (8) Thus he becomes an exemplar for peoples whom the western world defines as meaningless and devalued. (9) Furthermore, he stands at the juxtaposition of diverging interpretations of race: race as inherently tethered to

physical difference and race as inherited essential difference. The former interpretation of race is present before and during the majority of Amo's life. On this theory physical differences (i.e., deviations) occur a few ways: through geography by change in climate and environment (as we see in *A Natural History, General and Particular, containing the History and Theory of the Earth, &c.*, 8 vols. by Buffon), through culture by way of morals and practices (as in *Anthropometamorphosis: Man Transform'd, or, The Artificial Changeling* by John Bulwer), and through hybridism (e.g., *Orang-outang* by Edward Tyson and *apish-language* by Thomas Herbert). The latter interpretation of race is present towards the end of Amo's time in Europe and soon thereafter. Here, human difference and the absence of reason became intertwined, whether through logical fallacies or scientific racism. Race and racism acquire scientific substructure, ultimately revealing how human difference, i.e., the early modern interpretation of race, and Amo scholarship are interrelated.

(10) An exciting aspect of Amo scholarship is the information that we will learn about human difference from studying Amo and the racial landscape surrounding him. We will hopefully be able to focus and pinpoint the shift away from biological classifications in relation to Africa and Europeans' impressions of Africans. With someone like Amo, you cannot help but ask the questions that philosophers have been skipping over in early modern philosophy. Like, how could race change one's theoretical framework for mind-body causation? What happened during the 1730s and 1740s in Europe in relation to race, especially the concept of "Negroes"? How did Amo's colleagues treat him?

III. Overview and Chapter Summaries

In my research, I show that Anton Wilhelm Amo (c. 1700 – c. 1750), Europe’s first African Ph.D. in philosophy (c. 1734), aids in addressing (A) the lack of diversity in the philosophical canon and (B) the insufficient historical analysis of various designations of human difference. Human difference, i.e., the early modern interpretation of race, and Amo scholarship are interrelated subjects, as Amo is both a philosopher in Europe and an African native. The one cannot be researched without the other. Thus, my research attempts to elucidate Amo’s philosophical significance and its relation to race and human difference. The case of Amo is intriguing because he was clearly educated and socialized in and/or into the European world, yet he foundationally and phenomenologically existed in that world in a way that was defined by his Blackness.

III. A. Chapter I

In my first chapter, I present an intellectual biography of Amo because there are few in English, few since the 1960s, and none that focus on Amo’s proprietors, baptism, and race. That being the case, I aimed to use the few sources available to produce a comprehensive sketch of Amo’s life within the surrounding context, paying special attention to his proprietors as well as philosophical divisions created by religion, baptism, and race.

Additionally, I introduce the Wolfenbüttel family and their power throughout Europe, which affected Amo’s life both positively and negatively. Positively, Amo acquired position because of Wolfenbüttel’s position; and negatively, his position diminished after the death of the three Dukes. With this loss of position Amo began feeling the weight of his race within the shifting racial environment and moved toward *Aufklärung* ideals, as seen in his biography after

1739, where we see a conflating of West African with Negro from scholars when talking about Amo. I also discuss the role in early modern Europe of the Pietists, who defined philosophers as absolute fatalists and non-Christian based on their philosophy. Furthermore, I discuss the complexity of the term Ethiopian and engage the early distinction of Moor and Negro from Leo Africanus, which led me to reveal the importance of baptism for a Moor in early modern Europe.

Lastly, I aimed to update Amo scholarship by bringing together almost all of Amo's source materials, by transcribing and translating Amo's source materials for future English-speaking researchers, and by broadening our understanding of the surrounding context from Amo's Black perspective, which I argue is lacking in early modern scholarship. Ultimately, Amo's biography forces philosophy to ask new and intriguing questions that force us to reevaluate the early modern context.

III. B. Chapter II

In chapter two, I do a thorough analysis of Amo's critique of René Descartes [1596 – 1650]. In Amo's *DE HUMANA MENTIS APATHEIA* [On the Impassivity of the Human Mind] he investigates the logical inconsistencies in Descartes' real distinction [*res cogitans* (mind) and *res extensa* (body)] and interaction by maintaining that (1) the mind does not sense material things, nor does it (2) contain the faculty of sensing. For Amo, there is an impasse between the mind and sensation because the mind is immaterial (active), and sensations necessarily need to occur upon something passive and material (body), which means that sensations could only ever be cognized by the mind and through the body. These are delicate distinctions, which will be unpacked in chapter two. I begin with a synopsis of the mind/body distinction in Descartes and Amo. I then investigate Amo's "State of Controversy," where he establishes his critique of

Descartes' union of the mind and body. I continue with an application of Amo's distinction and "State of Controversy" to his arguments for the *impassivity* of sensations to the mind. Then I juxtapose both of their theories for the mind's interaction with sensible things. In conclusion I will investigate how Amo's arguments amend the immortality of Descartes' soul and combat the effects of the essentialist conception of race on the notion the soul.

For Descartes, the distinct substances of the mind and body interact and commingle at the pineal gland producing the passions of the soul. Amo responds, "No." For Amo, ontologically distinct substances are necessarily *really* distinct. Thus, sensing necessarily belongs to the body because without a body one cannot sense. There is an *impassivity* between the mind and sensation because the mind is immaterial, and sensations necessarily need to occur upon something passive and material (the body), which means sensations could only ever be *cognized* by the mind and occur *on* the body. The mind only cognizes bodily sensations, but why?

I propose two reasons to explain why Amo had this particular critique: the first based on the historical context of Descartes' *Meditationes* and the surrounding philosophical dialogue, and the second based on human difference and the surrounding dialogue about race. For the first, Amo strengthens the immortality of Descartes' soul by widening the real distinction and not allowing the mind to be divisible or able to sense. If the soul engages and receives external passions (senses), then it is alive and divisible, and thus can be killed. Amo's *impassivity* of sensations and the faculty of sensing thwarts this concern. For the second, Amo's widening of the real distinction necessarily concludes that material things can have no real effect on immaterial things. If we take the early modern concepts of human difference to be based on external conditions affecting the body (which is nonessential), then with Amo's *impassivity*,

external conditions would only affect the body, while the mind (which is essential) would never be perceived as inferior based on being affected by external conditions.

III. C. Chapter III

In the final chapter, I argue that the Royal Society, driven by financial incentives and England's economy, as well as the burgeoning slave trade, played a large role in advancing "scientific" theories of human difference, especially in relation to Africa. The Royal Society essentially propelled natural philosophy into the proto-racist landscape experienced in the early 18th Century, culminating in the application of the *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* racist claims given by 18th Century philosophers, e.g., Immanuel Kant and David Hume, and the ousting of Anton Wilhelm Amo.

This project on the Royal Society and its influence on the early modern racial landscape began with Anton Wilhelm Amo. Why was he moderately accepted in early modern Europe? What was the racial landscape prior to and affecting Amo's context? Why did Johann Ernst Philippi, Professor der Beredsamkeit (Halle), write a satirical poem (c.1747) about Amo's love for a German woman? I begin with a brief history of slaving in England and the major early modern theories of human difference, followed by an investigation into the means by which the Society enlarged and slowed scientific racism (i.e., empirical evidence that justifies racism). Then I inspect the legality of African slavery in England through *Butt v. Penny* (c.1677), which will lead to an examination of the Royal Society's reaction and the cultural response to the slave trade after this legalization. Lastly, I'll consider the application of the *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* racist claims made by a few 18th Century philosophers, which constituted a rejection of Bacon's "new science".

Ultimately, the Royal Society, led by Oldenburg and his inquiries, used the economy of slavery to acquire scientific information of remote peoples, giving way to (1) Robert Boyle's rejection of the major theories of human difference with Bacon's "new science", which slowed the movement toward scientific racism, and (2) the information and conversations necessary to expand the racial landscape, which was later used to justify the slavery in which the Society invested and distance Africans, especially Negroes, from humanity. The movement from (1) to (2) is predicated on the formal legalization of Negroes as property in the *trover* cases of the late 17th Century. This movement exposes the reason philosophers similar to Amo were barred from philosophy for almost the next 150 years, making myself one of fourteen Black men working on a doctoral degree in philosophy in the United States. (Botts et al 2014, 238) Science uses trade to correct science with Oldenburgian inquiries and Boyle's *Experiments and Considerations Touching Colours* (1664), but the economics of trade, especially the slave trade, became too lucrative because even science needs financing. Economics changed the Society, which set the precedent for the West's thinking in relation to human difference, making way for the *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* racist claims made by 18th Century philosophers and the ousting of Anton Wilhelm Amo.

IV. Conclusion

The goal of this project is to address (A) the lack of diversity in the philosophical canon and (B) the insufficient historical analysis of various designations of human difference. (A) is accomplished in chapters 1 and 2, and (B) is accomplished in all three chapters. Amo propels us towards a new perspective on the early modern world and aids in untangling the historical ontology of race by forcing us to ask questions about race. Kwasi Wiredu, one of the fathers of

African Philosophy, in *Amo's Critique of Descartes' Philosophy of Mind*, concludes, "It is impossible not to perceive in Amo a relentless quest for knowledge and excellence. There is an anecdote that as a child he overheard his patron arguing with a visitor who questioned the mental capacity of black people. Perhaps he consciously offered his own life and work as one answer." (2008, 200) This project is meant to further illuminate Amo's answer.

TIMELINE OF ANTON WILHELM AMO'S LIFE

c.1700	Amo's Birth
~1707	Amo arrived at the Court of Duke Anton Ulrich of Braunschweig - Wolfenbüttel
07.29.1708	Amo is baptized at Wolfenbüttel in the Salzthal Chapel
1708 – 10	The Leibniz-Stahl Controversy
03.27.1714	Duke Anton Ulrich dies
1716 – 21	Amo's involvement with Wolfenbüttel's finances
05.10.1723	The University of Halle expels Christian Wolff
06.09.1727	Amo matriculated into the University of Halle
11.28.1729	Amo defends his Disputation [i.e., <i>DE IURE MAURORUM IN EUROPA</i>]
09.02.1730	Amo transferred to the University of Wittenberg
10.17.1730	Amo receives <i>Magister</i> of Philosophy from the University of Wittenberg
1731	In Ferdinandus Neoburgus <i>Curieuser Hofmeister, zu allen herrschenden Staaten in der bekannten Welt, Part 2</i> , he mentions Amo
03.23.1731	Duke August Wilhelm of Braunschweig -Wolfenbüttel, the second son of Duke Anton Ulrich, dies
05.10.1733	Amo leads parade at the University of Wittenberg
04.1734	Amo defends his Inaugural Dissertation [i.e., <i>DE HUMANA MENTIS APATHEIA</i>]

04.16.1734	Amo is admitted as <i>Magister Legens</i> at the University of Wittenberg
05.29.1734	Meiner-Amo Dissertation [i.e., <i>IDEARUM DISTINCTAM EORUM QUAE COMPETUNT VEL MENTI VEL CORPORI NOSTRO VIVO ET ORGANICO</i>]
1735	Duke Louis Rudolph of Braunschweig -Wolfenbüttel, the third and last son of Duke Anton Ulrich, dies
03.24.1736	Letter written by Amo to unknown recipient talking about the lost of his patrons
1736	Nicolaus Hieronymus Gundling acknowledgement of Amo's dissertation defense
07.21.1736	The University of Halle admits Amo as <i>Dozent</i>
11.05.1736	Amo critiques of Johann Zacharias Petsche's Dissertation: <i>Dissertatio inauguralis medica, qua Sylloge anatomicarum selectarum observationum continentur</i>
04.04.1737	Amo's nostrification at the University of Halle
10.05.1737	Amo composes poem for Moses Abraham Wolff's <i>Dissertatio inauguralis medica de morborum inconsulta ratione suppressorum revocatione</i>
1738	Amo publishes his only book [i.e., <i>TRACTATUS DE ARTE SOBRIE ET ACCURATE PHILOSOPHANDI</i>]
1738	Amo in Ludovici's <i>Entwurf einer vollständigen Historie der wolffischen Philosophie</i> (An Extensive Outline of a Complete History of the Wolffian Philosophy)
06.27.1739	Amo applied for nostrification at the University of Jena
06.29.1739	Friedrich Andreas Hallbauer addresses faculty on Amo's behalf
06.29 – 07.07.1739	Faculty's response to Amo's nostrification
Late 1739	Amo is nostrified at the University of Jena
07.17.1739	Amo's Lecture Announcement at the University of Jena

- 11.24.1739 Excerpt on Amo in the *Hamburgische Berichte*
- 05.05.1740 Amo's signature in Gottfried Achenwalls' Album
- 03.10.1742 Dissertation of Jacobus Elisa Johannes Capitein, Ghanaian slave, [i.e. *DE SERVITUDE, LIBERTATI CHRISTIANAE NON CONTRARIA*].
- 08.07.1743 Johann Peter von Ludewig dies [i.e., Amo's mentor]
- 03.02.1746 Amo published a painting of a woman sniffing tobacco
- 12.1746 Amo's request to the Dutch West India Company to board a ship returning to Africa
- 10.23.1747 Advertisement of Johann Ernst Philippi's poem about Amo in the *Wöchentliche Hallische*
- Late 1747 Johann Ernst Philippi's Poem about Amo [i.e., Sections 3 & 4]
- ~1747 Amo returns to Axim in Africa
- 1750 Summary about Amo in *Pagus Neletici et Nudzici* by Johann Christoph von Dreyhaupt
- 1752 David-Henri Gallandat meets Amo in Africa, which is known from his report published in the journal of the Dutch Scientific Society [c. 1782]
- c. 1753 Amo dies

LITERATURE ON AMO from 1750 to 1899

- 1751 Johann Heinrich Zedler, *Nöthige Supplemente zu dem grossen vollständigen Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste, welche bishero durch menschlichen Verstand und Witz erfunden und verbessert worden*, Erster Band: A-An, Leipzig, 1751, 1369. DAB 295
- 1755 Johann Christoph von Dreyhaupt, *Pagus Neletici et Nudzici oder Ausführliche diplomatisch-historische Beschreibung, II. Teil*, Halle, 1755, 28; DAB 296. DAB 296

- 1787 Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, "Abschnitt von den Negern," in *Magazin für das Neueste aus Physik und Naturgeschichte, Band 4, Teil 3*, Gotha, 1787, 9-11. DAB 299-301
- 1808 Abbé Henri Grégoire, *De la littérature des Nègres, ou, recherches sur leurs facultés intellectuelles, leurs qualités morales et leur littérature: suivies des notices sur la vie et les ouvrages des Nègres qui se sont distingués dans les sciences, les lettres et les arts*, Paris, 1808, 198-202, 201. DAB 301a-305
- 1837 Friedrich Tiedemann, *Das Gehirn des Negers mit dem des Europäers und Orang-Outangs verglichen*, Heidelberg 1837. P80
- 1842 Friedrich August Eckstein, *Chronik der Friedrichs-Universität, Halle* 1842. P113
- 1867 Shore, Thomas Teignmouth, and Petter Cassell. *Cassell's biographical dictionary: Containing original memoirs of the most eminent men and women of all ages and countries*. Cassell, Petter and Galpin, 1867. P77
- 1884 Haffner, Paul. *Frankfurter Zeitmaesse Broschuren Volume 5 - 6*, Frankfurt 1884. V6. P204-5.
- 1885 Wilhelm Schneider, *Die Naturvölker: Missverständnisse, Missdeutungen und Misshandlungen*, Volumes 1-2, Paderborn und Münster, 1885. P239-240.

CHAPTER ONE

AN INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY OF ANTON WILHELM AMO

I. Introduction

Anton Wilhelm Amo, a baptized Moor from the Gold Coast of Guinea, lectured on philosophy at three German universities and was supported by one of the most influential families in 18th Century Europe. Today engaging with his philosophical work stands as paramount to engaging with him; but philosophy breathes out of a lived experience: it is foundationally phenomenal. Hence philosophical responses gain value and proximity to “truth” when tied to one’s narrative and the surrounding philosophical context, which reveals the value of an intellectual biography.

Other intellectual biographies on Amo exist but few in English, few since the 1960s, and none that focus on Amo’s proprietors, baptism, and race. That being the case, I aim to use the few sources available to produce a comprehensive sketch of Amo’s life within the surrounding context, paying special attention to his proprietors as well as philosophical divisions created by religion, baptism, and race. In addition, this chapter updates Amo scholarship by bringing together almost all of Amo’s source materials, by transcribing and translating Amo’s source materials for future English researchers, and by broadening our understanding of the surrounding early modern context with Amo’s Black perspective, which is lacking in early modern scholarship.

II. Amo's Early Life

From the Modern Period until the end of the Nineteenth Century, two-thirds of the slaves that left Africa were taken from West Africa, Amo's home. (Lovejoy 2011, 78) Amo was born *circa* 1700 in Guinea, present-day Ghana, and arrived at Wolfenbüttel's court, presently ruled by Anton Ulrich [1633-1714], in the early 1700s. In 1708, at the Salzthal Chapel in Wolfenbüttel the Dukes and the Lutheran faith embraced Amo with baptism.¹ The Salzthal Chapel register, Amo's first source material, reads, "29. Den 29. Juli ist ein kleiner mohr in der Salzthal-Schloss Cappell getauft u. Anthon Wilhelm genannt worden. Die Gevatern waren die hiesige sämbl. Hochfürstl. Herrschaft."² At Amo's baptism, the Dukes of Wolfenbüttel assumed the role of godparents (i.e. sponsors). In their role as godparents, the responsibility to contribute to Amo's education and development fell on the Dukes, Amo's proprietor and new naturalized parents. (Fahlbusch et al 1999, 443) Anton Ulrich, the reigning duke, secured full control of Wolfenbüttel after the death of his older brother in 1704. His oldest son, Augustus Friedrich [1657-76] died at nineteen years old during the Siege of Philippsburg; his betrothed wife, Sophia Dorothea of Celle [1666-1726], married King George the I of Great Britain [1660-1727] after Augustus Friedrich's death. (Anderson 1732, 523) Even now we detect the power and influence of the Wolfenbüttel house, Amo's proprietors. Anton Ulrich maintained a Lutheran household and received a doctoral degree in theology from the Helmstedt University under the training of Georg Calixtus

¹ There are no sources that date Amo's birth, but there is a consensus in the literature that Amo was born between 1700 and 1703 because David-Henri's Gallandat's reported meeting with Amo in the early 1750s, where he describes Amo as being around 50 year old. Also check here: "Trotz umfangreicher Quellem über das Leben des Philosophen vermögen wir das Geburtsjahr und demzufolge auch sein genaues Alter nicht zu bestimme." (Brentjes 1976, 29); "In all probability Amo was born in or about 1703 at an inland place near Axim on the Gold Coast. When he was still very young - it is assumed in 1707 - he was brought to Amsterdam." (Lochner 1958, 169); "Anton Wilhelm Amo was probably born in 1700 in Gold Coast (today's Ghana)." (Mabe 2014, 9); "He was born sometime around 1703, taken to Holland four years later, served at the court of Duke Anton Ulric in Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel..." (Abraham 1964, 169)

² "On the 29th of July in the Salzthal Chapel a little moor was baptized as Anthon Wilhelm. The godfathers were the local illustrious ruling family." (NSW 1 Kb. Alt 1222, Nr. 742; DAB, 1)

[1586-1656], a Lutheran with ecumenical convictions. (Haile 1958, 614) This “liberal” training allowed Anton Ulrich to convert to Catholicism soon after Amo arrived. He and his granddaughter, Elisabeth Christine [1691-1750], converted because of her marriage to Charles the IV [1685-1740], who became the Holy Roman Emperor on August 1st, 1708. (Anderson 1732, 523)

II. A. The Duke of Wolfenbüttel: Power, Africans, and Baptism

Anton Ulrich, Amo’s first proprietor, fathered two sons in addition to Augustus Friedrich. August Wilhelm [1662-1731], the eldest, and Louis Rudolph [1671-1735] fathered no male heirs, which had ramifications for Amo after their deaths.³ With the inevitable end of his line, Anton Ulrich arranged marriages for all of Louis Rudolph’s daughters. The eldest, Elisabeth Christine, married Charles the IV [1708], Holy Roman Emperor. Their daughter, Maria Theresa [1717-1780], married Francis the I [1708-1765], who died early, leaving Maria to rule the Holy Roman Empire. Charlotte Christine [1694-1715], Louis Rudolph’s second daughter, married Alexi Petrovich [1690-1718], Peter the Great’s [1672-1725] only surviving son, in 1711. Here we see the connection between Abram Petrovich Gannibal [1696-1781] and Anton Wilhelm Amo, both acquired at nearly the same time. Abram Petrovich Gannibal was Peter the Great’s Moor who became a Russian General and the great-grandfather of Alexander Pushkin, the great Russian author. (Binyon 2007, 4-6) Louis Rudolph’s youngest daughter, Antoinette Amalie [1696-1762], married Duke Ferdinand Albert the II [1680-1735], who procured the Wolfenbüttel

³ Princess Elisabeth Christine of Orleans [1652-1722]; cousin to the dukes of Wolfenbüttel, wife of Philippe I [1640-1701] and sister to Charles II [1651-85]; wrote to Sophia of Hanover [1630-1714]; the aunt of Charles II, August Wilhelm and Louis Rudolph; in July of 1700 explaining that August Wilhelm enjoyed homosexual love and loved her brother, Charles II, elector to Palatine. Charles, also, married and not had any children. (Derks 1990, 34-5)

province and title after the death of Louis Rudolph in 1735.⁴ In Amo's dissertation from 1734, both the rector and the president express sympathetic prayers for Louis' health and preservation from his present sickness; his preservation would have been vital to Amo, as the Dukes were clearly his main patrons. The Wolfenbüttel House was known throughout Europe for their political power based on noble marriages. In England Robert Harley [1661-1724], the Earl of Oxford and a member of the Royal Society, received news in 1710, saying, "Duke Antonie of Wolfinbutle had given one of his [grand]daughters to a Papist, the other he was to give to a Barbarian, and if the Devil wo[ul]d ask the third, he believed he wo[ul]d give him her." (Luebke et al 2012, 101) Ultimately the powerful political connections of Wolfenbüttel afforded Amo many advantages that most Europeans lacked.

It is unclear how Amo fell into the hands of the Dukes of Wolfenbüttel. One of earliest Amo scholars, William Abraham, produces three reasons, which the majority of scholars work within: "(1) he was kidnapped by sea-farers and taken to Europe; (2) he was bought as a child-slave and taken to Europe; (3) he was sent to Europe originally to be brought up as a predikant of the Dutch Reformed Church." (Abraham 1964, 62) No source materials exist to confirm any of these theses, but we know that Duke Anton Ulrich was open to enlightened ideas based on his education, political associations, Catholic conversion, and pro-French stance. He even joined Louis the XIV against the Grand Alliance in 1702, but Anton Ulrich's cousins at Hanover and Celle impeded his military support of Louis XIV. (Atkinson 1969, 25-28) The rest of the ruling families barely gave Anton Ulrich a slap on the wrist for his treason, again displaying Wolfenbüttel's power.

⁴ In addition Antoinette's daughter Elisabeth Christine [1715-1797] married Fredrick the Great [1712-1786], and her younger daughter, Juliana Maria [1729-1796], married King Fredrick the V [1723-1766].

Louis the XIV [1638-1715], like Anton Ulrich, also invited Africans to court; Prince Aniaba from Côte d'Ivoire, which is 75 miles from Amo's home, visited Louis' court and acquired a post in Louis' cavalry unit.⁵ His brother's wife, Elisabeth Christine of Orleans, even sat for a portrait with an African in 1680 by François de Troy [1645-1730]. Louis the XIV with his enlightened standpoint established the *Code Noir*, The Black Code, in 1685, which appears more liberal than most in relation to Black slavery throughout the 18th Century. (Jourdan 1821, 494 – 504) As George Breathett puts it in *Catholicism and the Code Noir in Haiti*,

The promulgation of the Code Noir represented, legally at least, a triumph of Christian justice and humanitarianism. Its major provisions depicted the attitude of the Church and its missionaries toward slavery and paved the way for continued elevation of the status of the slave through the works of the Church in its Christianization efforts. (10)

The *Code Noir* worked to produce a status change for Blacks, and Duke Anton Ulrich aligned himself to these enlightened ideals by allying with Louis XIV and Peter the Great, which partially explains his interest in acquiring someone like Amo.

Amo, Gannibal, and Aniaba endured as “tokens of wealth and power by the courts, the gentry, and rich merchants”. (Honeck et al 2013, 96) Throughout Europe the upper classes, especially in Germany, secured Moors to display their power and glory, which was elevated based on the accomplishments of their Moors. Baptism prevailed as the first and forefront accomplishment of a Moor's proprietors because it produced a change in status. Mischa Honeck explains in *Germany and the Black Diaspora*,

The ceremonial of baptism was central to such changes [a change status], with conversion a precondition for any kind of social acknowledgment, marriage, and becoming a godparent, as well as being essential to acquiring a town's citizenship and entrance to the guilds and other institutions. Until well into the eighteenth century, conversion was seen as a matter of public concern, and the baptism of “heathens” remained an event of missionary significance, even prompting the sending of presents from faraway courts. In 1721, for example, an East Frisian princess being raised at the south German court of an aunt sent twelve guldens home on the occasion of the baptism of a black boy. (60)

⁵ “An African Prince at the Court of the Sun King”: Philippe Halbert (unpublished article)

Baptism, which required godparents (the Dukes for Amo), offered a Moor (1) a change in status and (2) a relationship with his or her godparents (i.e. proprietors) that made the proprietors naturalized parents and required them to contribute to the Moor's education and development. This relationship became symbiotic in some ways and complicated in others, with the Moor still serving his or her proprietors. Anton Ulrich actually procured multiple Moors for Wolfenbüttel's court, which indicates that the Duke and his sons realized something different in Amo. Whether Amo excelled in his education while at court or in his duties we cannot be sure; but ultimately, the Duke and his sons gave Amo chances that none of the other Moors in their service were given.

Sadly, Duke Anton Ulrich died in 1714, leaving Augustus Wilhelm to take over as the Duke of Wolfenbüttel and assume Amo's proprietorship. In *Geschichte des Braunschweigischen Landeskirche von der Reformation bis auf unsere Tage*, Johannes Beste tells us,

Wenige Monate nach seinem Regierungsantritt verordnete der Herzog, welcher kürzlich in der lutherischen Kirche zu Amsterdam Predigten über die Glaubensartikel mit Interesse gehört hatte, daß alle Prediger des Landes nach einander an jedem Mittwoch in seiner Gegenwart über das Augsburger Bekenntnis, „den evangelischen Augapfel“, predigen sollten, und zwar an dem Orte, wo er sich gerade aufhielt, entweder in Wolfenbüttel, oder zu Salzdahlum oder auch zu Langeleben. (359)

Augustus Wilhelm tried hard to correct his father's "begünstigte katholisierende Strömung" and "Luthertum wieder herzustellen" to Wolfenbüttel. (Beste 1889, 360) Anton Ulrich strayed too far from the Orthodox Lutheran faith, and Augustus determined to correct this abandonment. During Amo's formative years (1714-27), Augustus directed Wolfenbüttel's religious tone and raised Amo as a Lutheran Orthodox. Though helpful in some ways, this reversion to Lutheran Orthodoxy presented Amo as uncongenial to the Pietist foundation of the University of Halle, where Amo initiated his university education in 1727.

II. B. Religious Controversy and Amo

Four years before Amo arrived on Halle's campus, the University of Halle expelled Christian Wolff [1679-1754]. Wolff, professor of philosophy at Halle, aligned himself with enlightened ideals. As David Sorkin explains in *Reclaiming Theology for the Enlightenment*,

Halle was a house divided against itself: Pietists and Enlighteners were allies in their opposition to Orthodoxy, but rivals for students' hearts and minds. A clash was inevitable. The Pietists had Thomasius barred from teaching philosophy (1696), restricting him to law, because they thought his views on decorum and ethics were inimical to true belief. The Pietists secured Wolff's ouster in 1723: they alleged that he had constrained the idea of God's omnipotence with the laws of nature; espoused a determinism in conflict with their own emphasis on the will; and advocated a temperate enjoyment of the world at odds with their asceticism. (2003, 508)

German Protestants divided into three sects: Orthodox, Pietist, and Enlighteners [*Aufklärer*]. In Halle, however, they primarily divided themselves into the *Aufklärer* and the Pietists, who estranged Christian Thomasius [1655-1728] from the department of philosophy and Christian Wolff from the university.

Orthodox Lutheranism with its bastion in Wittenberg and Leipzig was "a polemical theology of elaborately formulated dogma expressed in scholastic terminology that gave pride of place to speculation, had emerged from the controversies with Catholics and Calvinists and was fundamentally intolerant." (Sorkin 2003, 506) In 1675, Philipp Spener [1635-1705], the father of Pietism, wrote *Pia desideria* [Pious Desires] against Orthodox Lutheranism.⁶ Agreeing with Nicholas Selnecker's [1530-1592], professor of theology at Jena and Leipzig, Spener saying, "one constantly finds more and more books that are full of quarreling, disputing, scolding, and reviling, and full of debatable materials which serve no purpose except that of scholastic

⁶ For more on Spener's acknowledge of his Orthodoxy opponents at Wittenberg's check Auffrichtige Übereinstimmung (Zunner 1695, 223-5)

wrangling.” (Spener 1676, 27; trans. Tappert 1964, 53) Spener continues by explaining that, “When men’s minds are stuffed with such a theology which, while preserves the foundation of faith from the Scriptures builds on it much wood, hay, and stubble of the human inquisitiveness that the gold can no longer be seen, it becomes exceedingly difficult to grasp and find pleasure in the real simplicity of Christ and his teaching.” (Spener 1676, 32-33; trans. Tappert 1964, 56) Spener believed that the scholastic tradition, which was intertwined with Orthodox Lutheranism, relied too much on human intellect--to such an extent that the true beauty of the faith could not be seen nor practiced. He concludes *Pia desideria* by asking for the text to reform “the wretched condition of our church [Orthodox Lutheranism] which we deplored so heartily above.” (Spener 1676, 161-2; trans. Tappert 1964, 122) In 1730 Amo transferred to the University of Wittenberg from Halle before being awarded his degrees, which Wittenberg awarded to Amo just one month after his arrival on campus. Most Amo scholars attempt to say that Amo left Halle because his alignment with the *Aufklärung*, which appears contingent. Amo with his Orthodox foundations, and Halle’s growing hostility, would have been safer and philosophically freer at the Orthodox Wittenberg.

In 1724 Joachim Lange [1698-1765], one of the leaders of the Pietist Movement and professor of theology at Halle, published *Bescheidene und Ausführliche Entdeckung der falschen und schädlichen Philosophie in dem Wolffianischen Systemate Metaphysico* [A Modest and Detailed Discovery of the False and Harmful Philosophy in the Wolffian Metaphysical System], in which he critiques Wolff and the *Aufklärer* for their “absolute fatalism”.⁷ In Principle 7 of this text, Lange ties Wolff’s system of preestablished harmony to Spinozism and proclaims that they both ascribe confused effects to God and nature. In Principle 15, he delineates the difference

⁷ I want to thank Corey Dyck for letting me read his unpublished translation of *Early Modern German Philosophy (1690-1750)*.

between total Spinozism and partial Spinozism, placing Wolff in the latter group. Total Spinozism maintains (1) one substance, denying the body-mind distinction; (2) an infinite regress of causation; and (3) the necessity of that infinite regress; partial Spinozism accepts (2) and (3). Simon Grote in *The Emergence of Modern Aesthetic Theory* adds that,

The question of whether fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, or whether wisdom begins instead with the exercise of the human intellect independent of such fear, corresponds directly to the question of whether regarding oneself as a sinful creature and undertaking a penitential struggle is the necessary condition of moral improvement. Put another way, the question at issue for Wolff and his critics was whether fear of God and the kind of knowledge that produces such fear – namely, knowledge of God’s will and of the dangers of disobeying his will – are the only adequate foundation of morality. Wolff’s apparently negative answer to this question seemed to his critics to be false and therefore dangerous. (18)

The Pietist held a twofold rejection of *Aufklärung*: (1) absolute fatalism and (2) the use of human reason to prove things that only God could know or define as moral. One can see that (2) is associated with Spener’s critique of Orthodox Lutheranism’s connection to Scholasticism.

What type of Spinozism did Amo subscribe to? Did he subscribe to Spinozism? First, Amo affirmed the body-mind distinction, particularly in his dissertation (1734). Second, Amo believed that things are necessarily connected by causality, but that there is only one efficient cause, God, although human intention allows humans to rationally deliberate in accordance with their own ends, which can affirm or oppose God’s divine intention. He added that the mind’s intention is not completely free because the mind acts in commerce with the body; one’s mind cannot have true freedom while in commerce with the body. In response to (2) and (3), Amo accepted the causal chain of events but explains that human intentions can direct themselves towards an end that opposes God as long as one’s body allows it. He held causation, or the order of things according to causation, as the object of philosophy, and he believed in human freedom. Ultimately he thought that with the correct training a mind could acquiesce soberly or beyond

doubt. If anything, he sounds like a Scholastic Cartesian, which the Pietists disliked, but Wittenberg held sympathy for such scholars.

III. Amo and Halle

III. A. Amo's Registration at Halle: His Name & Racial Designations

We first see the name Amo added to Anton Wilhelm on a receipt from Wolfenbüttel dated the 23rd of April 1720, which reveals its first use and Wolfenbüttel's willingness to disburse funds to Amo.⁸ (Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel3 [NSW] Alt. Fb. 2, Nr. 1; DAB 3) In June of 1727 Amo registered at the University of Halle; he writes, "*Antonius Guilielmus Cognominatus Amo. Aethiops. Ab Aximo in Guinea Africana. Phil. Sdut*".⁹ There are three focal points to this registrar: *Cognominatus* Amo, Ethiopian from Axim in Guinea, and Philosophy Student. *Cognominatus*, the perfect passive participle of *cognomen* or *cognomino*, means surname or nickname and occurs only next to Amo's name, who never uses *cognominatus* again (Holyoake et al 1677, no pg numbers). With this use of *cognominatus*, it is reasonable to believe that the *cognominatus* here is actually (1) a nickname because none of the other students wrote *cognominatus* next to their surnames or (2) Amo's given name, which he remembered.¹⁰ If not (1) or (2), then why write *cognominatus*? To add to the second thesis, we ask: did the name Amo exist in Guinea during the 17th Century?

⁸ There is another receipt from as early as 1716 that does not have Amo, only Anthon Wilhelm. This does not seem to be Amo because the Duke had another Moor named Anthon Wilhelm. (NSW 17 III Alt. 120, 123; DAB 2) There is also another receipt, which I haven't been able to acquire from the archives in the Netherlands that is dated the 19th of December 1719, which Justin EH Smith found. (NSW 4 Alt 19, Nr. 465.) Lastly, there is one more receipt from 1721. (NSW 17 III Alt. 120, 123; DAB 2)

⁹ (Universitätsarchiv Halle: Matrikel der Universität, Rep. 4 Sektion XVII Nr. 5 Bd. 3 Lfd. Nr. 488; DAB 4) "Anton Wilhelm Amo. Ethiopian. From Axim in Guinea African. Philosophy Student."

¹⁰ My advisor, Roger Ariew, pointed out that the excerpt is probably just, "Anthony William, named Amo." He is right, but I wanted to give a full explanation as to why. I also wanted to investigate its use in Africa.

At the onset we run into another problem. Amo defines himself as an Ethiopian but from Aximo in Guinea Africa. Paulin Hountondji in *Un philosophe africain dans l'Allemagne du XVIIIe siècle: Antoine-Guillaume Amo* speculates that Europeans often confused Axim with Axum in Ethiopia. He uses as an example the appendix that Johann Gottfried Kraus [1680-1739], the rector at the University of Wittenberg, wrote to Amo's dissertation. The rector explains that Amo, "first saw the light of day in the furthest part of Africa, looking toward the East." Hountondji explains that Axum resides to the East; his thesis solidifies when engaging with Leo Africanus's *Della descrizione dell'Africa* [Description of Africa - 1550].

Francis Moore [1708-1756] in his 1738 work *Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa* explains the importance of Leo's¹¹ *Description of Africa* to Europeans' familiarity with Africa from the 16th through the mid-18th Century. He says:

Since Leo, the Europeans have had very little Knowledge of these Parts of Africa, nor do they know what is become of so mighty an Empire: It is highly probable that it broke to pieces, and that the Natives again resumed their Customs; and indeed, in Gambia, as far as the Author of the Journal has been, we find a Mixture of the Moorish and Mahometan Customs with the original Simplicity of the Negroes. One important reason for his persistent popularity was that no rivalling sources were available, save the description of Africa written by his Christian countryman, Luis del Mármol Carvajal (c.1520–1600), who was unjustly labelled by the seventeenth-century scholars a mere copyist of Leo Africanus. (vi)

Leo's *Description of Africa* defined Africa and Africans throughout early modernity; he was "a household name amidst European geographers for almost three centuries." (Masonen 2002, 116)

¹¹ More on Leo Africanus from Francis Moore's *Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa*: "The next we meet with, of any Note, is Leo the African, by Birth a Moor, of noble Parentage, bred up in the Mahometan Religion and Nephew to the Ambassador sent by the King of Fez to the King Tombuto, whom he accompanied in that Journey. This Leo was taken by Italian Corsairs, near the Isle of Gerby, as he sailed between the Towns of Tripolis and Tunis in Bargery. He was a Man of Learning, and had with him several Arabian Books, besides his own Manuscripts. At the time Leo the Xth was Pope, whose Love to Learning was universally known: To him therefore the Corsairs presented the Moor and his Books. This was grateful Present, as it gave him knowledge of much of the Inland Parts of Africa, unknown to the Antients. The Pope encouraged him, and he embraced the Romish Religion, and his Description of Africa was published in Italian. He gives an Account of all the Negro Nations in his Time, from the Mouths of the Niger Eastward to the Red Sea." (viii)

If one desires to understand the overarching European perspective of Africa during the early modern period, then one must look first at, and continue to revisit, Leo's *Description of Africa*. In this work he demonstrates that Europe is separated from Africa by the Mediterranean Sea and from Asia by the Nile River. Axum in Ethiopia resides on the Red Sea, east of the Nile River; thus Axum lies in Asia. Additionally, Herodotus [484-425 BC] talks about the "Ethiopians of Asia". (Godley 1938, Bk7.70) It seems plausible that those who studied history, such as the rector and Dukes of Wolfenbüttel, might have confused Axim with the well-known Axum, which was to the east and considered Ethiopia. Amo never uses *Aethiops* again; presumably, he figured out the difference because he returned to Axim in Guinea. Before returning to Amo's name, let's investigate the concepts of Moor and Negro in Leo Africanus following our discussion of *Aethiops*.

Leo Africanus' *Description of Africa*, available throughout Europe, delineated between two types of Moor: Tawnie Moores, from North Africa, and Negroes (or Blacke Moores), from sub-Saharan Africa. He adds that Negroes "live a beastly kind of life, being utterly destitute of the use of reason, of dexterity of wit, and of all arts. They behave as if they had continually lived in the forest among wild beasts", and he defines the people of Guinea, Amo's homeland, as Negroes. (Pory and Africanus 1600, 42) Furthermore, Leo introduces us to the narrative of Africa as a Roman province, which gains importance when talking about Amo's master's disputation, *De jure maurorum in Europa* [On the Rights of Moors in Europe]. He explains that Africans used to speak the Roman tongue because "they had been subjects unto the Romans" and adduces that the Romans built many African cities. (Pory and Africanus 1600, 10) He confirms Africa as a Roman Province, and he reveals a distinction between Moor and Negro, which is both geographical and related to skin color.

Returning to my initial question, can the name Amo be found among Africans in 17th Century Ghana? William Bosman's [1672-1703] *Nauwkeurige beschryving van de Guinese Goud- Tand- en Slavekust* [An Accurate Description of Guinea's Gold and Slave Coast], published in 1704 (after his death) informs us about life on the Gold Coast, Amo's home, at the end of the 17th Century. Bosman lived and traded on the Gold Coast during the Komenda Wars, which took place from 1694 to 1700 between the British, Dutch, and Eguafu Kingdom. The British wanted to keep the Dutch from acquiring a monopoly over trade, while the Eguafu simply attempted to acquire fair trade agreements. In 1696 the Dutch secured peace with the King of Commany, which angered the English; two year later during a peaceful visit the English killed the Commany King. This, of course, angered his people, who immediately declared war on the English. The English, then, attempted to coerce the Dutch to join them, but the Dutch would not jeopardizes their own commerce. As Bosman tells us, Amo-Tekki, the Negro general of the Commany army, attacked and defeated the English because of their offense. Later in Bosman's text he gives some geographical notes on the "Commanian Country". According to his explanation, the Commanian land expanded (on the coast) just south of St. George's Castle, surrounded both the Dutch Fort Vredenburg and the English Fort Kemanda, and set north of the Dutch Fort San Sebastian, where Amo is buried today. (Bosman 1704, Derde Brief)

Carl Christian in *History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, which presents a history of Ghana from the Middle Ages, introduces us to Amo Taw, the powerful king of the Takiman people; the chiefs of Akra, Amo Nakawa I, and Amā Safo; and various figures named Amo in 17th Century Ghana.¹² (1895, 76 & 79) Amo, a popular name in Ghana today, has been a staple

¹² Amo Yaw, Kpakpo Amo – aforo (chief of Amanfa), Amā Wusu Ahyia (chief of Gbese), Amo Nakawa I, Amā Safo, Amoa Kobo Adu, Amoaako Ata, Amō Panyin, Amō Kuma, Amon, Amoa, Amā Kuma, Amā Kotope, etc. (Christian 1895)

in Ghana for a very long time. With this information about *cognominatus* and the availability of Amo's name, it is reasonable to think that Amo was actually Amo's given name, which he remembered from his childhood.

Let's return to the Halle register again, which reads, "Anton Wilhelm Amo. Ethiopian. From Axim in Guinea Africa. Philosophy Student." Since the register shows that Amo matriculated into the University of Halle as a Philosophy Student¹³, it is then surprising that he completes a legal disputation but that Wittenberg awards him a master's in philosophy. One might ask, for future inquiry, why is Amo defined as a philosophy student but not doing a philosophical disputation or thesis?

III. B. Amo's *De jure maurorum in Europa*

In 1729 on the 28th of November in the *Wöchentliche Hallischen Frage- und Anzeigungs-Nachrichten*, Johann Peter von Ludewig, professor of law and history at Halle and the creator of the *Wöchentliche Hallischen*, published a short article about Amo and his disputation at Halle. Amo's original disputation is either lost to time or was never published.¹⁴ With the loss of this disputation, all that exists is what was written in the *Wöchentliche Hallischen*. It reads:

¹³ There are other students listed as "Juris. St.", "Med. St.", etc.

¹⁴ In general disputations were, "the hallmark of scholastic education and a central element of the academic training in all subjects", especially in medicine and law, and this hallmark existed as the central means of teaching, training, and/or academic grade at German universities from the 16th to the 18th Century. (Ranieri 2013, 63) As early as the 16th Century we see written disputations in Germany; they became the rule in the 17th Century and until the mid-18th Century. But during the first half of the 18th Century because of the number of students, especially in the law and medical, many disputations were never published. Many scholars are of the opinion that Amo's disputation was also unpublished. Some scholars used Christoph Weidlich's *Vollständiges Verzeichnis aller auf der Königl. Preuss. Friedrichs-Universität zu Halle... herausgekommener juristischen Disputationen und Programmen* from 1789 to show that Amo's disputation was not published, but I have found other published disputation that did not make Weidlich's list from around Amo's time. I understand why many believe that Amo's disputation was not published, which might be the case, but the university would have obtained favor with the Hanover Line and the Duke of Wolfenbüttel by publishing Amo's disputation, which leaves me to question even more so as to whether this disputation was written or not. Having an African with a published disputation would've put the Wolfenbüttel house into an elite group. Contrarily in the *Tractatus*, Amo's book published in 1738, he refers to the *Meiner* thesis, Amo's

Hierselbst hat sich ein in Diensten Sr. Hochfürstl. Durchl. des regierenden Hertzogs von Wolfenbüttel stehender getaufter Mohr Namens Herr Antonius Wilhelmus Amo, einige Jahre Studirens halber aufgehalten. Und nachdem er vorher die Lateinische Sprache zum Grund geleyet hat er hier die collegis iuris priuati und publici mit solchem Fleiß und succeß getrieben, daß er in solchem studio ziemlich geübet. Solchem nach er sich mit Vorbewußt seiner gnädigsten Herrschaft welche ihn bisher allhier unterhalten bey dem Herrn Cantzler von Ludewig angegeben unter deßen praesidio sich mit einer disputation öffentlich hören zu lassen. Damit nun das argument der disputation seinem Stande gemäß seyn möchte; so ist das thema *de iure mavorum in Europa* oder vom Mohrenrecht beliebt worden. Darinnen daß nicht allein ex LL [ex Libris; aus Büchern] und der Historie gezeuget; daß der Mohren ihr König bey dem Römischen Kayser ehemals zu Lehen gegangen und jeder von denselben ein Königs-Patent welches auch Justinianus augetheilet hohlen müssen; sondern auch vornehmlich dieses untersucht wie weit den von Christen erkaufften Mohren in Europa ihre Freyheit oder Dienstbarkeit denen üblichen Rechten nach sich erstrecke.¹⁵

From this excerpt we learn quite a bit about Amo and what an 18th Century German academic defined as important to know about Amo, an African. The writer makes it known that Amo received his baptism, that the Duke of Wolfenbüttel supported him, that Amo attained the skills to be doing academic work, that the Chancellor of Halle supported and permitted his disputation, and that the theme of his disputation aligned with his own situation.¹⁶ The second half of Amo's disputation investigated the freedom of baptized Moors in Europe according to the usual laws;

third major work, as a disputation throughout the *Tractatus*, but Amo never cites his legal disputation, which is really the only reason I can substantially say that it may not have been published.

¹⁵ "In this very place a baptized Moor by the name of Mister Anton Wilhelm Amo, in the service of His Highness the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, spent some years for the purpose of studying. And after he had attained a proficiency in the Latin language, he showed such dedication and success in the lessons of private and public law that he became very well versed in this field. After this, with the consent of his most merciful Highness, who had supported him until now (so far), he was permitted by the Chancellor von Ludwig to hold a public disputation under his [the Chancellor's] presidency. So that the argument of the disputation should be appropriate to his situation, the topic *De iure Maurorum in Europa*, or the law of Moors, was chosen. Therein it was not only shown from books and from history, that the kings of the Moors were enfeoffed by the Roman Emperor, and that every one of them had to obtain a royal patent from him, which Justinian also issued, but it was also investigated how far the freedom or servitude of Moors bought by Christians in Europe extends, according to the usual laws." I want to thank Justin EH Smith for this translation.

¹⁶ So a couple thoughts that I will not be addressing here: (1) his professors understood and knew about the complications of African freedom and slavery; (2) they seemed to understand to some extent about Africa and Africans/Moors; (3) Amo's professors saw him as different from them by Amo's thesis question needing to relate to his situation; (4) they had some type of common knowledge about Africa's relation to Roman, which is easily seen in Leo Africanus; (5) these questions were of interest to his professors; (6) there were books that talked about African history and its relation to Europe and the legal standing of Africans in Early Modern Europe; (7) Christianity played a large role in the freedom and slavery of Africans.

and the first half, showed that Africa was a Roman province, as we heard from Leo Africanus, and that Moors acquired all the rights that followed from being a Roman province. We will see how the latter claim is shown and leave the former investigation, Moor's freedom according to the usual laws, for future research projects.¹⁷

During the early modern period, law curriculum centered around the *Justinian Corpus* (i.e. the *codex*, *institutions*, *digest*, and *novels*). (Bellomo and Cochrane 1995, P123-5) Multiple editions of the *Justinian Corpus* were used, but I use Denis Godefroy's [1549-1622], *Corpus juris civilis* [Body of Civil Law], published in 1583. Godefroy taught law in Strasburg and was invited by Emperor Fredrick the IV [1671-1730] to work for him in Heidelberg. Godefroy's *Corpus juris civilis* was considered one the greatest Justinian texts and included the entire *Justinian Corpus*. (Hoeflich 1982, 516) Many European scholars cite the *Justinian Corpus*, which was available throughout Europe; even Amo cites the *Digest* and *Institutes* in his *Tractatus*.¹⁸

Ludewig begins by reminding us of Amo's baptism, his status change. As *Germany and the Black Diaspora* explains, "these [B]lack as gifts did not remain mere passive gifts but often changed roles and status over time. The ceremonial of baptism was central to such changes". (60) Baptism's ability to change one's status makes the second argument in Amo's disputation extremely intriguing. Baptism and conversation served as "a precondition for any kind of social acknowledgment, marriage, and becoming a godparent, as well as being essential to acquiring a town's citizenship and entrance to the guilds and other institutions." (60) As explained earlier, Africans' visibility increased in Europe throughout the early modern period because nobles

¹⁷ Chapter three begins this next project.

¹⁸ Amo also cites Christian Thomasius, professor at Halle, multiple times, and Thomasius cites Denis Godefroy *Corpus juris civilis*. (Hunter 2007, 175 FT.10) Thomasius' death could be the reason Ludewig preceded over Amo's disputation at Halle and why Amo completed a legal disputation because Thomasius was forced to focus on law, not philosophy, and with his death it would have been hard for Amo to find another philosopher willing to work with him.

gained prestige through the aesthetics of having a Moor in their court or possession. Some nobles went as far as to pay for their Moors to be baptized to obtain this prestige and status change. (Honeck et al 2013, 67-9) In the Protestant faith, especially Lutheranism, baptism persisted as an act of symbolic integration into the society and a spiritual rebirth or regeneration (i.e. a new being), which allowed a status change. Pietists dislodged this connection between baptism and rebirth by making the conversion experience equivalent with rebirth. (Luebke et al 2012, 134-7) One of Louis XIV's key motives for initiating the *Black Code* was to complicate rebirth and the status change of Africans in Christianity. (Chatman 2000) The changing force that baptism conferred reveals itself in the Justinian *Corpus*, which Amo used to show his initial argument.

Justinian's *Digest* begins by declaring that the Emperor of the Roman Empire finds pride in the African part of his empire. Both the *Digest* and the *Codex*, two of the four major parts of Justinian's *Corpus* and essential to the Law curriculum in early modern Europe, related the story of the Romans' triumph over the Vandals and the restoration of Roman Law to the province of Africa. In addition, by decree of Emperor Antonius, "everyone in the Roman world has been made a Roman citizen", which gave Africans all the privileges of a Roman citizen.¹⁹ (Watson 1985, 16) Justinian's *Corpus* references Africa and Africans multiple times; most notably, the section in the *Codex* entitled "Concerning the office of Praetorian Prefect of Africa". Here, again, as in Leo Africanus, the *Codex* presents a history of how Africa became part of the Roman Empire in which baptism was essential. It explains that through a rebaptism Africans were converted to the false beliefs of the Vandals, and in bringing Africa under the Imperial seal of Rome, Rome restored Africa to its roots and true baptism. The *Codex* continues by informing us

¹⁹ Digest BK1.5

that the Vandals captured Rome and predicates Africa's deliverance on Rome's deliverance from the Vandals. This deliverance allowed Rome to do God's work. The *Digest* reads:

Therefore, after the great favors which the Deity has showered on Us, We ask this of the mercy of Our Lord God: that He keep the provinces which He has deigned to restore to Us strong and unharmed and cause Us to govern them as His will and pleasure; and that all Africa feel the mercy of Almighty God, and its inhabitants recognize from what most cruel captivity and barbarian yoke they have been freed and in what great liberty, under our felicitous reign, they have been found worthy to live."²⁰ (Blume 2016, 317)

As a free province of the Roman Empire, Africa enjoyed the perfect order of the Roman Empire with its own prefecture. Justinus decreed,

by this divine law for the happiness of Our empire that all Africa, which God has granted Us, shall receive, through His mercy, the best organization and shall have its own prefecture, so that, just as Oriens and Illyricum, so too shall Africa through Our Clemency be adorned specially by the supreme Praetorian Magistracy. We order Carthage to be its seat and its name to be added to other prefectures in the preface of public documents; which prefecture We now decree Your Excellency shall govern.²¹ (Blume 2016, 317)

With this decree Africa and Africans *enfeoffed* into the Roman Empire with all the rights and governance of any other Roman province. This part of Amo's argument seems apparent from Justinian's *Corpus*; thus, I suspect that almost any law student could have showed the first half of Amo's disputation. After defending his disputation, Amo left Halle for Wittenberg, where he received his doctorate and lectured, but returned in 1737 because of the death of Duke Louis Rudolph and his close relationship with Rector Ludewig.

²⁰ Codes BK1.27

²¹ Codex BK1.27

IV. Wittenberg to Halle

IV. A. At Wittenberg

In 1730 on the second of September, Amo transferred into the University of Wittenberg.²² Less than two months later, Samuel Christian Hollmann [1696-1787], dean and professor of philosophy at Wittenberg, officially promoted Amo to the rank of *Magister*²³; the dean's log reads: "IX. Antonius Wilhelmus Amo, Aximo-Guineensis ex Africa, Maurus."²⁴ (Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Halle: Dekanatsbuch Philosophische Fakultät Wittenberg Bd. 4, 74; DAB 8) Later we hear that Amo obtained a master's in liberal arts at this same time, which does not appear on any dean's log from 1730.

The following year Ferdinandus Neoburgus' 1731 work *Curieuse Hofmeister, zu allen herrschenden Staaten in der bekannten Welt* mentions Amo, saying, "Jetzo ist zu rühmen: Anton Wilh. Amo, ein getauffter Mohr, welcher Anno 1729. auf der Universität Halle de Jure Maurorum in Europa unter Joh. Petr. von Ludewig disputiret hat."²⁵ (1226-7) I use this source to reveal again the importance of Amo's baptism, which I do not see when Europeans are talking about other Europeans. Sadly, the following year the second Duke of Wolfenbüttel, Augustus Wilhelm, died; his brother Louis Rudolph took over as Duke of Wolfenbüttel. Louis, Duke Anton Ulrich's third son, was made a Prince of the Empire by Emperor Joseph the I [1678-1711] in 1707 because of his daughter, Elisabeth Christine [1691-1750]; she married Charles the IV [1685-1740], who succeeded his brother as Emperor in 1711. (Anderson 1732, 523) These connections gave the Wolfenbüttel house a particularly high level of power and prestige, and

²² The registrar reads: "Anton Wilhelm Amo, von Guinea in Africa". (Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt: Wittenberger Matrikel. Bd. 8 Bl. 139; DAB 7)

²³ "XIX Philosophie Magistri publice renunciati sunt" "21 Masters of Philosophy are publicly announced" (Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt: Wittenberger Matrikel. Bd. 8 Bl. 139; DAB 7)

²⁴ "9. Anton Wihelm Amo, Axim-Guinean from Africa, Moor"

²⁵ "At this moment is praised: Anton Wilhelm Amo, a baptized Morr, who in the year 1729, at the University of Halle disputed On the Rights of Moors in Europe under Johann Peter von Ludewig."

Amo appears to have functioned as an extension of the duke's power and prestige, which allowed him to have experiences that were irregular for Africans, like we see in the *Hamburgische Berichte von neuen gelehrten Sachen* from 1733.

IV. B. August III's Visit to Wittenberg

In the *Hamburgische Berichte von neuen gelehrten Sachen* from the 2nd of June we observe the recapitulation of a "Festival" at Wittenberg held on the 10th of May, 1733.²⁶ Here Augustus the III [1696-1763], new elector of Saxony under the direction of Emperor Charles the IV, embarked on a tour of his new provinces. The tour took him to the University of Wittenberg, who arranged a parade in his honor; Amo was chosen by the university to lead the parade. He appears to have led well, but why did they choose Amo? Augustus the III was elector to Emperor

²⁶ It reads: "In the most gracious and royal presence of our Most Gracious Elector and Prince and Lord, the following solemn ceremonies of reverence and allegiance occurred: 1. There assembled any and all corporations, fraternities and societies of students in the houses of their senior officials, and, under the presidency of their marshals, they marched to the Grand Collegium and from thence to the place of the general Assembly. After they had arrayed themselves there for the parade, they marched in beautiful order from the Collegium and lined the College street on both sides. The marshals arrayed themselves in the middle, and in front of them all, as their commandant officer, in front of the students' corporations, stood Magister Amo, an African, right in the middle of the road as the commander of the entire corps ; he was attired all in black, and over his waistcoat he wore a white ribbon of an order, on which the Electoral Saxonian coat of arms had been beautifully embroidered with gold intermingled with black silk. The two marshals, however, who accompanied him into the Collegium wore black order ribbons over their coats, so that the difference between them could be seen from the very uniform in which they were attired. Hereupon His Royal Highness with his numerous suite and corps entered by the Elster gate of the City. In front there rode fifty students, most of them of high nobility, clad in red, while other students followed. His Royal Highness was so kind as to inspect this guard rather carefully, and to do it the honour of lifting his hat to it . . . After this event the students again formed a marching column and marched up to the market square, again led by Magister Amo; afterwards they all dispersed for the day. 2. On Monday all the students assembled again under their marshals in the houses of their senior officers, and then the corporations again marched to the Grand Collegium, where Magister Amo, again accompanied by both marshals as on the first day, had also appeared. From thence they all marched through the city to the palace in order to submit to His Royal Highness their Carmen of Respectful Congratulation, viz. in the following order: (a) Magister Amo in the same uniform others being also dressed as on the (b) The corps of twelve marshals; (c) Several marshals surrounding After the entire corps in fine order arrayed themselves in two rows in behind whom all students stood. with the kind order to present the Royal Highness, standing, had listened Count Flemming, and with his own were dismissed in Royal Grace by His their quittance, another order was around the banqueting table. The Amo, followed by the marshals and stairs of the palace and around the Finally Magister Amo was accompanied way this solemn act of reverence to fine order and silence, so pleasing buckets full of Rhine Wine." Translation from (Lochner 1958, 174-5)

Charles the VI; Charles was married to Elisabeth Christine, the daughter of Duke Louis Rudolph.

The following month:

At the beginning of June, 1733, Frederick, accompanied by the king, the queen, and the whole court of Berlin, repaired to Salzdahlum, near Wolfenbüttel, to receive the hand of his bride. The nuptial ceremony was performed on the 12th of June, by abbot Mosheim, in the ducal chapel. The grandfather of the princess, duke Louis Rudolph, of Wolfenbüttel, neglected nothing that lay in his power for the entertainment of his illustrious guests; and Frederick William gave the bride a costly set of jewels which, with other presents, were valued at 200,000 dollars. (Shoberl 1842, 416)

Frederick the Great, the future king of Prussia, visited Wolfenbüttel and married Louis

Rudolph's granddaughter, Elisabeth Christine. Additionally, in *Leben und Thaten Friedrich*

Augusti III, which Mittag Johann Gottfried published in 1737, Amo's presence seems vital to

Augustus the III, who deliberately added Amo to his biography.²⁷ The marriage links created by

Anton Ulrich and Louis Rudolph placed Amo in an extremely privileged position, but also a

position of use, which is seen here. Wittenberg knew about Amo's connections to the Emperor of

the Holy Roman Empire and to the King of Prussia. His presence at the front of the parade

displayed the wealth, power, and glory of Augustus the III's new province and allowed Augustus

and Wittenberg to gain favor with the emperor and king. Similar events disappear from Amo's

life after the death of the three Dukes of Wolfenbüttel; and thereafter, the little aid he receives

still seems predicated on his relation to the Dukes.

²⁷ "Marschälle, in der Mitten 6. und an Eidem Ende wieder 4. welche allerseits Marschalls-Stäbe trugen. Der Anführer war M. Anton Wilhelm, Amo, aus Assine von der Küste Guinea in Afrika gebürtig, ein Mohr, trug quer über die Brust ein breites weißes Band, worauf das Churfürstl. Sächsische Wappen gestickt war, die übrigen Marschälle hatten ihre Stäbe mit schwarzen und weißen Bändern behangen, und mit schwarzen Creppon bezogen." (118) This source hasn't been referred in any other Amo literature.

IV. C. Amo's *De humanae mentis APATHEIA*

In 1734 while at Wittenberg, Amo defended his dissertation *De humanae mentis APATHEIA* [On the Impassivity of the Human Mind], in which he investigates the logical inconsistencies in René Descartes' [1596 – 1650] real distinction [*res cogitans* (mind) and *res extensa* (body)] and interaction by maintaining that (1) the mind does not sense material things nor does it (2) contain the faculty of sensing. For Amo, there is an impasse between the mind and sensations because the mind is immaterial (active) and sensations necessarily need to occur upon something passive and material (body), which means sensations could only ever be cognized by the mind and through the body. This will be unpacked in the following chapter. The title page reads,

*Dissertatio inauguralis philosophica de humanae mentis APATHEIA seu sensionis ac facultatis sentiendi in mente humana absentia et earum in corpore nostro organico ac vivo praesentia, quam praeside D. Mart. Gotthelf Loescheri med. et phys. Prof. publ. nec non sereniss. ducis saxo. vinariensis phys. provincial. publice defendit auctor Antonius Guilielmus Amo Guinea-Afer, Phil, et AA. LL. Magister et I.U.C. in auditorio maiori MDCCXXXIV. Mense April. Wittebergae ex officina Schlomachiana.*²⁸ (Amo 1734a)

Here we learn about three of Amo's degrees: Master's in philosophy (Phil Magister), Master's in Liberal Arts (AA.LL. Magister which is an *atrium liberalium magister*), and a Candidacy of Both Laws, Canon and Civil (J.V.C. which is a *juris utriusque candidatus*).²⁹ Martin Gotthelf Löscher [1680-1735], professor of philosophy and medicine at Wittenberg, presided over Amo's dissertation; Martin, raised Orthodox Lutheran, emerged as a great fit for Amo. Martin's father,

²⁸ "Inaugural philosophical dissertation on the APATHY of the human mind, or the absence of feeling and the faculty of feeling in the human mind and the presence of them in our organic living body. Under the chairmanship of D(r.) Mart(in) Gotthelf Löscher, Public Professor of Medicine and Physic, and Provincial Physician of the Most Serene Duke of Saxony, this dissertation was defended in public by the author, Anton Wilhelm Amo, Guinea African, Master of Philosophy and the Liberal Arts and Candidate of Civil Laws, in the larger auditorium, April 1734. The Schlomachian Press, Wittenberg." Translation from (Lochner 1958, 174-5)

²⁹ Amo's first mention of the last two degree is here in his inaugural dissertation.

Caspar Löscher [1636-1718], wrote multiple pro-Orthodox texts and his brother³⁰, Valentin Ernst Löscher [1673-1749], was “the leading mouthpiece of Germany’s Lutheran orthodoxy”.³¹ (Sheehan 2005, 54) In addition, Martin’s knowledge of physics and medicine would have been extremely helpful to Amo’s Cartesian dissertation. Martin’s religion and academic background explains why Amo would have studied with Martin. Martin adds an appendix to the end of Amo’s dissertation; it reads:

Africam & ejusdem longissime a nobis diffitam regionem Guineam, olim ora aurea, ob copio fissimum auri proventum ab Europaeis appellatam, quam Patriam a nobis, & in qua primum aspexisti lucem, Matrem non tantum multorum bonorum et Thesaurorum Naturae, verum etiam ingeniorum felicissimorum non immerito depraedicamus. Inter quae Tuum potissimum umniet, VIR Nobilissime atque clarissime, ut pote qui istius felicitatem atque praestantiam, eruditionis ac doctrinae soliditatem et elegantiam, multis Speciminibus hactenus in nostra etiam Academia magno cum applausu omnibus bonis, et in praesenti Dissertatione egregie comprobasti. Reddo Tibi illam proprio Marte eleganter et erudite elaboratam, integram ad huc et plane immutatam, ut vis ingenii Tui eo magis exinde elecescat. Quod relquam est, ego Tibi de egregio hoc elegantioris eruditionis Tuae Specimine ex animo gratulor atque Fausta cuncta, prolixiori cordis affectu, quam verbis ap[24]precor, & Gratiae Divinae ac Celsissimi et Optimi Principis. LUDOVICI RVDOLPHI pro cujus salute ac incolumitate, Majestatem Divinam adorare nunquam defatigabor, Te Devotissime pariter ac humillime commendo, Dabam Vitembergae in Saxonibus, Mense Aprilis, A. O. R. MDCCXXXIV.³² (Amo 1734a)

³⁰ *Conserve Orthodox in loco de Christo Disp. I.*, Wittenberg 1694; *De consensu orthodoxo in loco de Christo, Disp. III.*, Wittenberg 1698; *Succinctam orthodoxae doctrinae de visionibus et revelationibus repetitionem*, Wittenberg 1692. Also read *Valentin Ernst Löscher: nach seinem Leben und Wirken* by Möritz von Engelhardt particularly pages 56 to 60.

³¹ Valentin frequently visited the Dukes. (Engelhardt 1853, P56-8) (Beutel 2009, 192-8)

³² “We rightly describe Africa, and Guinea, its region on the far side from us, which the Europeans have long called the Gold Coast in view of its most plentiful yield of gold, the country in which you first saw the light, as the mother not only of many goods and treasures of nature, but also of men of most fertile aptitude. Among which [sc. aptitudes] yours, most noble and eminent man, shines forth most brightly, you who have previously proved its fertility and excellence, its solidity and elegance of education and learning, in our Academy with many specimens to the applause of all good men, and who have outstandingly proved it again with the present dissertation. I return it to you complete and entirely unchanged, elegantly and learnedly composed by your own forces, so that the power of your natural aptitude will shine forth from it all the more. It remains for me to congratulate you with all my soul for this outstanding specimen of your yet more elegant learning; to pray for all auspicious things with an affection of the heart more elevated than these words; and to commend you most humbly and devotedly to the grace of God and of the best and most exalted prince LUDWIG RUDOLPH, for whose health and preservation I shall never tire of praying to the divine Majesty. Composed at Wittenberg in Saxony, April, the year of the redemption of the world 1734.” (Translation from Justin EH Smith)

Löscher praises Amo, explaining that his dissertation passed without any corrections; he defines Africa as good and the mother of a people with “the most fertile aptitude”, defining Africans as intellectually astute. Lastly, he prays for the health of Ludwig Rudolph, the reigning duke of Wolfenbüttel and Amo’s last living proprietor. It is important to notice that Amo is not viewed as separate from the Duke of Wolfenbüttel; his life and their power exist intertwined.

The rector of Wittenberg, Johann Gottfried Kraus, also attached an appendix to Amo’s dissertation; he too prays for the duke’s health.³³ From Kraus’s letter, we learn quite a bit about

³³ Kraus’ letter says: “Magna quondam Africae dignitas fuit, sive ingenia, sive literarum studia, sive ipsum Religionis tuendae institutum, spectentur. Nam complures tulit viros praestantissimos, quorum ingeniis ac studiis nihilo magis humana sapientia, quam diuina est instituta. D. Terentio, Carthaginensi, nihil olim, nihil nostra memoria, vel prudentius, in vita civili, vel elegantius, iudicatum est. Plato autem in Socraticis Apuleii, Madaurensis, sermonibus, reui viscere visus, tanto quidem superiorum saeculorum studio, ut, eruditis in partes distractis, Apuleiani existerent, qui cum Ciceronianis de principatu eloquentiae, contendere auderent. At e christiana Disciplina, quanti in Africa viri prodierunt. E potioribus, satis est, referri, Tertulianum, Cyprianum, Arnobium, Optatum Milevitanum, Augustinum, quorum sanctitas animi cum omnis generis scientia certat. Quanta denique fide, atque [20] Constantia pro sacrorum integritate propagaverint Afri Doctores, horum monimenta, acta, Martria, Concilia, loquuntur. Ecclesiae enim Africanae iniuriam faciunt, qui eam semper consensisse, tradunt. Etsi vero magnis Arabum viribus in Africam, effusis, magna rerum commutatio facta est, multum tamen abfuit, ut eorum Dominatu, omne vel ingeniorum, vel literarum, lumen extingueretur. Huius enim gentis, ad quam literae commigrasse videbantur, instituto, liberalis scientia colebatur, et, Mauris ex Africa in Hispaniam transgressis, veteres scriptores, simul apportati, literarum cultui, e tenebris erui caepto, multum adiumenti attulerunt. Sic habuerunt literae, quod tam antiquioris aevi, Africae acceptum referrent. Nostra quidem memoria haec terrarum pars aliarum rerum, quam studiorum, feracior narratur, eam tamen ingeniorum haud effoetam esse, vel hic sua doceat exemplo, sapientiae ac liberalium artium Magister clarissimus. ANTONIVS GVILIELMVS AMO. Gvinea-Afer. Natus in ultimo Africae, qua spectat in Orientem, recessu, perparvulus venit in Europam, sacris initiatus est Halis Juliis, tantaque serenissimorum principum, ac Ducum, Brunsvigo-Guelfer bytanorum, AVGUSTI VILHELMI ac LVDOVI[22]CI RVDOLPHI, clementia Usus, ut, in sui educandi cura, nullum paternae caritatis munus desideraret. Probata ingenii docilitate, commeavit Halas Saxonicas, et, varia aruditus doctrina, ad nos adiit, conti nuatoque diligentiae Curriculo, adeo sibi Ordinem sapientum conciliavit, ut, cunctis patrum suffragiis, Philosophiae laurea ornaretur. Honorem, meritis ingenii partum, insigni Probitatis, industriae, eruditionis, quam publicis, privatisque exercitationibus declaravit, laude auxit. Sic se gerendo, apud optimum quemque ac doctissimum, multum gratiae iniit, inter aequales facile eluxit. Horum igitur studiis cultus atque excitatus, compluribus philosophiam domi tradidit, excussis tam veterum, quam novorum, placitis, optima quaeque selegit, selecta enucleate, ac dilucide interpretatus est. Ea vero res tantam ingenii, quantam docendi, facultatem demonstravit, nec ineptam se praebuit ad docendi munus quo, naturali quodam instinctu, trahitur, aliquando in Academia administrandum. Itaque, cum expectationem sustinuerit nostram, nihil causae fuit, quare eum publico, quod periit, iudicio nostri testimonio de fraudaremus. Nos vero de illo optima quaeque speramus, eumque Principali gratia, quam pie veneratur, quam omni sermone praedicat, dignum putamus. Qua quidem fortuna, ut diu frui possit, suaeque spei fructum consequatur amplissimum, pro salute optimi maximeque Principis, LVDOVICI RVDOLPHI [22] pro incolumitate totius Domus Brunsvigo-Guelferbytanae, tot tantisque in omnem Germaniam meritis inclutae, Deum comprecamur. Publice scriptum, et impresso Academiae sigillo, munitum IX. Calendas Junias MDCCXXXIII. L.S. JOHANNES GODOFREDVS KRAVS D. h. t. Acad. Rector.” (Amo 1734a)

“Africa in the past had great honor, whether with regard to its [fertility in human] aptitude, devotion to letters, or religious teaching. For it brought forth a great many very eminent men, by whose natural aptitude and devotion divinity as much as human wisdom has been taught. Nothing either in former times or in our own memory has been

Amo and Europeans' knowledge of African intellectual history. Kraus respects the rich philosophical history of Africa and places Amo alongside philosophers like Plato, Tertullian, and Augustine. He claims that the "Arab's invasion" perverted Africa's rich intellectual history and ability, but this claim might be based more on religion than on intellectual ability. Kraus continues by explaining that Africans aided Europe's rediscovery of lost wisdom, probably the recovery of Aristotle and other Greek texts; furthermore, he believed that because of this aid Europeans owed Africa a debt. He then turns to Amo and the Dukes of Wolfenbüttel,

judged more sage in matters of social life, nor more refined in manners, than [the sayings of] Terence of Carthage. Plato himself seems to have lived again in the Socratic discourses of Apuleius of Madaura, in centuries past so well regarded that the learned were divided into factions, and there were Apuleians, who dared to contend with the Ciceronians for primacy in eloquence. And in Christian teaching, how many men came forth in Africa! It is enough to mention the greatest of them, Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, Optatus of Milevis, Augustine, in [all of] whom sanctity of mind vies with learning of every kind. Their memorials, records, martyrdoms, councils, all proclaim the fidelity and constancy with which the African doctors labored to preserve the integrity of the religion. For those who say that the African church was always in collusion do it an injustice. And even though the Arabs' invasion of Africa brought great change, it is far from true that their dominion extinguished all the light either of natural aptitude or of letters. For in the teaching of this people, to whom letters seem to have been transferred, liberal learning was cultivated, and when the Moors crossed from Africa into Spain, the ancient writers who they brought over with them gave much assistance to the cultivation of letters, which was then beginning to emerge from the darkness. Thus from such ancient times letters have owed a debt to Africa. In our own memory, indeed, this part of the earth has been reputed more fertile in other things than in learning, but that it is by no means depleted in natural aptitude let the most eminent Master of wisdom [i.e. of philosophy] and of the liberal arts, Anton Wilhelm AMO, African from Guinea, attest by his example. He first saw the light of day in the furthest part of Africa, looking toward the East,⁵⁹ and came to Europe as a small boy. He was baptized at Wolfenbüttel, and received so much kindness from the most serene princes, dukes of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, August Wilhelm and Ludwig Rudolph, as not to fall short, in his education, of the benefit of a father's care. After having demonstrated his aptitude for learning, he was brought to Halle in Saxony, from whence, having been educated in diverse disciplines, he came to us, where by ceaseless diligence in his studies he so won over the whole order of the wise that by the votes of all the senators he was adorned with the laurel in Philosophy. This honour [i.e. the degree], born of the merits of his natural aptitude, of his outstanding integrity, industry, and the erudition which he displayed in both public and private exercises, he augmented with praise. Conducting himself in this way, he found favor among the best and most learned, and easily shone out from among his peers. Wherefore, cultivated and summoned by their studies, he taught philosophy at home to many of them, and having examined the views of the ancients as well as of the moderns, he selected the best among [these views], and plainly and lucidly interpreted those that he had selected. In so doing, he showed as much aptitude for learning as for teaching, nor did he show himself unsuited for exercising at some time the office of teaching in the [or an] Academy, toward which he is carried by a kind of natural impulse. Thus, since he has fulfilled our hopes, there was no reason why we should deprive him of the public testimony of our judgment which he has requested. We have the best of hopes for him, and we deem him worthy of the Princely Grace whom he piously venerates, and whom he praises with every word. In order that he may long continue to enjoy this fortune, and that most ample fruit may follow upon his hope, we pray to God for the health of the best and greatest Prince, LUDWIG RUDOLPH, and for the preservation of the whole House of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, famed in all of Germany for merits so many and so great. Written publicly and protected with the stamped seal of the University, May 24, 1733 Johann Gottfried Kraus, current Rector of the University (Translation from Justin EH Smith)

commending them for their kindness to Amo, and makes sure to remind us about Amo's baptism. Kraus concludes by explaining that Amo found favor with the faculty, his peers, and the students that he taught; therefore, he and the faculty could not prevent Amo from defending his dissertation. The faculty appears to hesitate about allowing Amo to defend his dissertation, and race or difference appears to be the reason, because Kraus clearly places Amo's intellectual ability next to the greatest African scholars. Outside of Amo, these letters add crucial information to the European perspective of Africans and Africa during the early modern period.

That same year Wittenberg's Dean Johann Wilhelm von Berger [1672-1751] admitted Amo as *Magister Legens* at Wittenberg.³⁴ The notice reads, "*Magistrorum Legentium ascripti sunt [:] II. M. Antonius Guilielmus Amo, Guinea-Afer. d. 16 April*".³⁵ (Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Halle: Dekanatsbuch Philosophische Fakultät Wittenberg, Bd. 4, 606; DAB 35) Less than two months later Amo presided over and participated in a dissertation with Joannes Theodosius Meiner, entitled *Disputatio philosophica continens ideam distinctam eorum, quae competunt vel menti vel corpori nostro vivo et organico* [A Philosophical Disputation concerning a Distinct Idea of those Things occurring either in the Mind or in our Living and Organic Body].³⁶ (Amo 1734b) Through the entirety of the disputation, the writer defines the thesis as "our" disputation and theoretically connects it to *De humanae mentis APATHEIA*, which means

³⁴ Different from Johann Wilhelm von Berger from Amo's Dissertation

³⁵ "Awarded *Magister Legens* are: Mister Anton Wilhelm Amo, Guinea-Africa. Date April 16th."

³⁶ Title Page: "Disputatio philosophica continens ideam distinctam eorum, quae competunt vel menti vel corpori nostro vivo et organico quam consentiente amplissimorum philosophorum ordine praeside M. Antonio Guilielmo Amo Guinea-Afro, in auditorio philosophico die XXIX Maii MDCCXXXIV defendit Joannes Theodosius Meiner, Rochliz Misnic. philos. et. I. U. cultor. Witembergae, Literis Viduae Kobersteinianae." (Amo 1734b) "Philosophical disputation containing a classification of those things which belong to our mind and those which belong to our living organic body. With the approval of the philosophers of highest rank, under the chairmanship of M. Anton Wilhelm Amo, Guinea African, this disputation was defended in the philosophic auditorium on May 29th, 1734, by Johann Theodosius Meiner, of Rochliz, Meissen, student of Philosophy and Civil Laws at Wittenberg. At the press of Koberstein's widow." Translation from (Lochner 1958, 173)

Amo not only presided over this disputation but helped write it.³⁷ In the disputation Amo and Meiner argue that intentions are part of the human mind by the fact that they arise from consciousness and from the mind's intended end, but intentions are not the effects of sensations because the body contains the faculty of sensation. He then goes on to explain how memory, freedom, imagination, and will work.

IV. D. Amo's Transition to Halle

Sadly, the following year, Amo's last proprietor and benefactor, Duke Louis Rudolph, died. *The London Magazine, Or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer* of 1735 reads:

From Hanover. Duke Lewis Rudolph of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttele died the 1st instant at Wolfenbüttele, aged 63 Years, seven Months, and seven Days, being born July 22, 1671. He succeeded his Brother Duke Augustus William. The 22d of April, 1690, he married Christina Louisa Princess of Oettingen, by which Marriage he had the present Empress Regnant, the late Great Princess of Tuscany, and the present Spouse of Ferdinand Albert, Duke of Brunswick Luneburg Beveren, who now succeeds Duke Lewis Rudolph. (162)

Once more we encounter the global prestige of the Dukes of Wolfenbüttele. With the death of Louis Rudolph, Amo had to start fending for himself and live based on the connections he made while in service to the Dukes of Wolfenbüttele. He begins this process in a letter dated the 24th of March 1736, in which he explains his new circumstances. While it is unclear to whom the letter is written, we experience Amo speaking about his loss of position in the letter. It reads:

Hochedelgebohrner, Hochachtbarer, Hochgelahrter, Hochgeehrtester Herr Professor, Hochverehrtester Patron! Ihre hochedelgebohrne Excellenz erlauben ihnen gehorsamst vorzufragen, dass nachdem durch Abstreben beyder durchlächtigsten Hertzogen von Braunschweig-Wolfombütel, der durchlächtigsten Hertzogen Herren August Wilhelms, und Herren Ludwig Rudolphs, durch deren Gnade und Mildigkeit, auf verschiedenen Academien meine Studia fortgesetzt, aller Mittel braucht: Vermoch aber gerne Gott und einer Republicque durch das was ich geben sol, dienen müste; so ersuche Ihre Hochedelgebohrne Excellenz, unbekannter Weise, doch mit gebührendem Respect, Mein Patron zu seyn, damit, durch Dero gütigstes Patrocinium, ich einen fleissigen Mit-Genossen der dortigen Hochlöblichen Academie abgeben könne. Anbey gehorsamst

³⁷ This was a normative practice for theses in early modern Europe.

bittend, mich und inliegendes gütigst zu recommendiren. Ich werde nach meiner Wenigkeit alle mögliche gelegenheit suchen, wircklich zu zeigen wie ich sey. Ihro Hochedelgeborner Excellenz, Meines Hochgeehrtesten Herren Professoris und Hochwerthesten Herren Patroni Danck- und diensteschuldigster Diener, Anton Wilhelm Amo geborner Africaner von Guinea in Africa Philosoph. Magister legens et J. V. Cand. Wildenhayn bey Torgau. 1736. d.24. Martii.³⁸ (Friedrich Ludwig Schardiuse autograafide kollektsoon, No. 3115, University of Tartu Library)³⁹

Here Amo explains that his godfathers, Duke Anton Ulrich and his sons, passed away; thus, he had no means to continue pursuing academia. In the letter, which was probably written to Amo's disputation supervisor at Halle, Johann Peter von Ludewig, Amo requests a recommendation and encloses something along with the letter to help procure this recommendation. Four months later Amo received this recommendation from Johann Heinrich Schulze [1687-1744], dean at Halle; Schulze's note reads:

*Decano Jo. Henrico. Schulze a. d. XV. Julii 1736 ad XV. Januarū 1737... A. d. XXI. Julii exhibebat Antonis Wilhelmust Amo, philosophiæ liberalium artium Magister, ex Africa provincia litorali Guinea ortus, libellum quo rogabat eandem Fibi apud nos tribui facultatem, qua in virima Wittendergensi usur fuerat, aliquas philosophia pastes prælegendi. Re cum Singulis communicata placuit viro docto et pauperi, quippe serenissimo partono Suo nuper orbato, hare gratiam facere*⁴⁰ (Universitätsarchiv Halle: Rep. 21 Abt. III Nr. 261, 79; DAB 52)

³⁸ "Most Nobly Born, Most Honorable, Most Learned, Most Revered Professor, Most Esteemed Patron! Your most nobly born Excellence, permit me most faithfully to venture upon asking, that, following the departure of both of the most illustrious dukes of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, the most illustrious Duke August Wilhelm, and Ludwig Rudolph, through their grace and kindness advancing my studies at various academies, [I now] have no means: but should what I am able to produce please God and the république, I request of your most noble excellence, without personal knowledge, though with due respect, to be my Patron, so that, by your most generous patronage, I may show myself to be a diligent collaborator at the most praiseworthy academy there. I am thus most faithfully asking you to most generously recommend me and what I have enclosed. In my small way I will seek out every possible occasion to truly show that I am, Your most noble Excellence's, my most revered Professor's, and most worthy Patron's Thankful and beholden servant, Anton Wilhelm Amo, native-born African, from Guinea in Africa, Philosoph. Magister legens et J. V. Cand. Wildenhain near Torgau. March 24, 1736." (Translation from Justin EH Smith and Stephen Menn)

³⁹ Online Access: <http://dspace.ut.ee/bitstream/handle/10062/13441/Amo.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>

⁴⁰ Simon Dutton helped transcribe this excerpt. "Dean Johann Heinrich Schulze of the 15 of July 1736 to the 25 of January 1737" ... "Antony William Amo, Master of Philosophy and the Liberal Arts, born in Guinea in a coastal province of Africa, has put forward a petition in which he asks that that same right of delivering public lectures in certain parts of philosophy be given to him among us, as he used to enjoy in the area of Wittenberg. When this request had been communicated to each person, it was with great pleasure that this facility was granted to this learned but poor man who had indeed only recently lost his most serene benefactor." (Second Translation from Williams 1964, 77)

The petition that Schulze mentions is probably Amo's aforementioned letter, which Ludewig received then shared with Schulze. Schulze even talks about the loss of Amo's benefactors, the Duke of Wolfenbüttel; ultimately, he permits Amo to give public lectures in philosophy.

Secondly, the enclosed text might have been Amo's *Tractatus*, which he submitted to the Dean of philosophy, Daniel Stræcher, in April of the following year.⁴¹ Whether the *Tractatus* was enclosed or not, Amo ended up at Halle and published his *Tractatus* in 1738. While at Halle Amo thoroughly engaged with the academic community; he opposed the dissertation of Johann Zacharias Petsche entitled *Dissertatio inauguralis medica, qua Sylloge anatomicarum selectarum observationum continentur* [Inaugural Medical Dissertation, containing a Compilation of Selected Anatomical Observations] and composed a poem, published with the dissertation, for Moses Abraham Wolff's *Dissertatio inauguralis medica de morborum inconsulta ratione suppressorum revocatione* [Inaugural Medical Dissertation on the Remission of Diseases Suppressed by an Unknown Cause].⁴²

⁴¹ The minutes read, "Acts in Collegio Philosophorum 1737 a die XV. Januarii ad diem XV. Julii Decano Daniele Stræchero ... V. Die 4 Martii M. Amo scriptū logicū cenaurae submisit."⁴¹ (Universitätsarchiv Halle: Rep. 21 Abt. III Nr. 261, 83; DAB 59)

⁴² "Dein aufgeweckter Geist im klugen mediti[e]ren (misspelled in Amo)/ und unermüdeten Geist im gründlichen Studieren/ Hoch Edler, macht, daß Du in der Gelehrten Orden/ Ein Stern, ein Heller Stern, der ersten Große worden./ Der immer heller wird in neuer Ehren Schein./ So einen großen Lohn giebt Weisheit ihren Söhnen./ Genung. Vom Himmel muß die Lust dis ungemeyn/ Dich und die Deinigen in Lauter Segen kröhnen!/ Dieses sezet seinem Hochgelehrtesten Freunde/ Glückwünschend hinzu/ Anton Wilhelm Amo/ von Guinea in Africa, der Philosophie und Freyen künste Magister legens."

"Thy mind so quick in meditation/ And endless Industry in the Profundity/ Of study. Thou Noble Soul; the Scholars' Province/ Calls thee a Star, so bright, of finest magnitude./ Thy Fame increases in the Glow of Honour./ 'Tis the Reward which Wisdom will bestow upon her Sons./ Enough of Praise. From the Heavens above must Joy enwrap/ Thee and all those that are now thine, with loudest praise!/ This has been added for his Honoured Friend with Congratulations by Anton Wilhelm Amo From Guinea in Africa, Master and Lecturer of Philosophy and the Liberal Arts." Translation from (Lochner 1958, 176)

"Your nimble mind moving so fast in contemplation/ And in profound study with unceasing toil./ Has, noble soul, made you in the scholar's world/ A star of such dimensions that, shining/ Ever brighter, your fame is thus enlarged/ As honours multiply. It's wisdom's gift/ To those who are her sons. But enough!/ From heaven let there fall upon yourself and yours/ Deep joy and purest blessings./ This has with congratulations been added By Anton Wilhelm Amo, from Guinea In Africa, Magister and University Lecturer In Philosophy and the Liberal Arts." (Williams 1964, 77)

In 1738 Amo published his only book, *Tractatus de arte sobrie et accurate philosophandi*

[Treatise on the Art of Soberly and Accurately Philosophizing]. The title page reads:

“Antonii Guilielmi Amo, Guinea-Afri, Philosophiae et Artium Liberalium Magistri, Tractatus de arte sobrie et accurate philosophandi, academicis suis praelectionibus accommodatus; addita tractatione succincta et diligenti de critica, interpretatione, methodo, arte disputandi, aliisque, quae in logicis traduntur, rebus. Halae Magdeb. ex officina Kitleriana MDCCXXXVIII.”⁴³ (Amo 1738)

The *Tractatus*' title page confirms that Amo gave lectures on critical interpretation, method, argumentation, and logic at Halle; this is very different from Amo's course announcement at Jena the following year, which included philosophy, physiognomy, astronomy, geomancy, deciphering, and much more. Similar to logic texts of his time, Amo's *Tractatus* cites both Scholastic and Early Modern authors and attempts to develop rules or a method of directing one's mind towards thinking accurately, which he actually believed possible. There are five sections in the *Tractatus*: its general part, which focuses on philosophizing accurately, then four “special parts” (1) the intellective act of the mind before reflection, (2) the mind's reflective act, (3) the effects of reflection and the act of the mind after reflection, and (4) confutation and disputation.⁴⁴

This same year, in 1738, Carl Günther Ludovici [1707-1778] mentions Amo in *Entwurf einer vollständigen Historie der wolffischen Philosophie* [An Extensive Outline of a Complete History of the Wolffian Philosophy] alongside scholars that Ludovici demarcates as prominent Wolffians; Ludovici clearly does not really know Amo or his work because he either misspells Amo's name or doesn't know Latin.⁴⁵ In addition, Ludovici only cites the disputation that Amo

⁴³ “Treatise on the art of studying Philosophy with sobriety and exactitude, by Anton Wilhelm Amo, Guinea African, Master of Philosophy and the Liberal Arts, adapted from his university lectures; with the addition of a concise and careful discussion on the critical interpretation, method, and art of argument, and the other things which are taught in Logic. From the Kitlerian Press, Halle, Magdeburg, 1738.” Translation from (Lochner 1958, 175)

⁴⁴ I have attached an appendix that gives a section outline of this work.

⁴⁵ “Amus, Anton Wilhem, §. 448.” (Ludovici 1738, 232)

held with Joannes Theodosius Meiner, which cites Amo's dissertation. Amo's dissertation rejects Wolffianism philosophically. Wolff attributes the faculty of sensation to the soul; Amo's entire philosophy hinges on the fact that the body (1) senses and (2) contains the faculty of sensation. For Amo, if the mind senses then his philosophy falls apart. Ludovici may be right to identify Amo's text as representing Wolffian philosophy, but if he looked at Amo's dissertation, which Amo cites several times in the Meiner Thesis, then he never would have identified Amo's text as Wolffian. If anything, Amo appears like a Scholastic Cartesian with a modern logic; it is factually incorrect to define Amo as a Wolffian.

V. Jena and Amo's return to Africa

V. A. Jena & Race

In 1739 on the 27th of June Amo introduced himself to the dean and faculty members of the University of Jena.⁴⁶ In the letter Amo explains that he lectured and engaged in public disputations at the universities of Wittenberg and Halle, ultimately asking Jena's faculty members to allow him to do the same there. Dean Friedrich Andreas Hallbauer [1692-1750], professor of philosophy, liberal arts, and theology, initiated Amo's move by addressing the philosophy faculty at Jena. (Günter 1858, 194) The address reads:

“Magnifice Academiae Prorektor/ Ordinis Philosophici venerande/ Senior, Ceterique Professores Excellentissimi/ Patroni et Collegae plurimum honorandi./ H. Antonius Wilhelmus Amo Afer, philos. et artium magister, et iur. candid. bittet, man möge Ihm, wie in Halle und Wittenberg geschehen, erlauben im philosophicis zu lesen und zu

⁴⁶ My image of this letter is too blurry; therefore, I do not have a transcription. I am going to have to go to the archive and retake pictures.

“Following a practice of doing good service for the state, pricked on by the sharp dart of poverty (for I have a poor home), I have, to the best of my ability, been teaching philosophy at home in both the universities of Wittenberg and Halle, and have quite often engaged in public disputation, and have performed these tasks with diligence. Therefore, you, gentlemen of outstanding reputation in the world of letters, I hope that you will pay the same attention to me in this, your famous seat of the Muses. Once you have kindly shown me this indulgence, I shall thank you for your action, and shall never grow tired of praying to heaven that you, my excellent patron, may enjoy forever a most desirable happiness.” Translation from (Williams 1964, 78)

disputieren. Er ist nicht noster, und sollte also zuvor sich nostrificiren lassen: allein er hat dazu die Mittel nicht. Sollte nun seinem petitio gratificirt werden, so müste man Ihn entweder gratis nostrificiren, oder sich den Abtrag, auf dem Fall er hier sich was erwerben solte, vorbehalten; oder man müste Ihm connivendo das lesen zu Probe erlauben, bis man sähe, ob er einen beständigen applausum bekomme, in welchem Fall er denn sich ordentl. nostrificiren laßen müste. Ich werde mir alles gefallen laßen, was Dieselben zu schlüßen geliehen werden, und beharre mit stete/ Hochachtung/ Meiner Hochgeehrtesten Herren Patronen/ und Collegen/ Friedr. Andr. Hallbauer/ h. t. Decanus/ Jena, den 29. Jun. 1.739⁴⁷ (Universitätsarchiv Jena: Bestand M 97 Dekanatsakten III Bl. 63r; DAB 277)

Hallbauer conveys to the faculty that Amo asked for nostrification, to be allowed to teach and engage in university disputations and events at Jena; he explains that Amo does not have the funds for his nostrification. With this being the case, the faculty could accept Amo's nostrification without charge, with incremental payments, or allow Amo to give lectures on a probationary basis to see whether he receives steady applause. All five members of the faculty respond.

We first come to Johann Bernhard Wiedeburg [1687-1766], professor of philosophy and mathematics at Jena; he wrote the longest response. (Günter 1858, 193) It reads:

Spectabilis Domine Decane/ H. M. Arno hat verschiedenes vor sich dadurch Er commiseration verdienet, daß man Ihm vor andern ein beneficium erweise: 1.) ist Er aus einem andern theile der Welt in seiner zarten jugend entführet, 2) von den heydenthum zu christl. Religion bekehret worden, 3) ist er von seinen Eltern und angehörigen gänzlich abgesondert und verlaßen, hat also 4tens nichts als was er durch seinen vleis erwürbet; da er nun nicht betteln wil sondern sich ehrlig zu riehren suchet, mus man ihm dazu billig nach möglichkeit beförderlig seyn; und also bin ich wol zufrieden, daß ihm mit der zahlung pro nostrificatione nachsicht gegeben werden, bis er siehet, ob Er alhie applausum findet; welches sich bald eusern wird; daher ihm 2 termine könnten gesetzet werden, der erste auf Ostern der andere auf Michaely 1740 daß wen er solange hier

⁴⁷ *Magnificent University Pro-Rector/ Respectable Order of Philosophy/ Senior, and the other Excellent Professors / Patron and honored colleagues. /Herr Antonius Wilhelmus Amo Afer, Master of Philosophy, Master of Art and candidate in Law, ask that he be allowed, as he was in Halle and Wittenberg, to lecture and hold disputations in Philosophy. He is not nostrified, and therefore, should first undergo nostrification. However he does not possess the means to do so. Now, should his petition be granted, then we must either recognize his nostrification without charge, or require incremental payments, in the event that he should obtain an income; otherwise we will have to overlook the matter and permit him to lecture on a probationary basis, until we see whether he receives steady applause, in which event he will have to nostrified properly. I will consent to everything that you all are inclined to determine and will forever remain faithfully yours. My most honorable Herr Patrons and Colleagues. Dean Friedrich Andreas Hallbauer. From Jena the 29th of June 1739. (My Translation)*

bleiben und weiter solt zu lesen wilens seyn würde , Er alßden auf jeden termin die helffte zahle; doch mus Er 1) sein diploma daß er würdig in Magistrum promoviret vorzeigen, 2) nicht eher öffentlich anschlagen, bis Er sich durch eine alhie gehaltene disputation, sie sey so kurz alß sie wolle, dazu habitiret, wie solches unsere Ordnungen mit sich bringen. Er tätte auch noch gut, daß Er die disputationes die er seinen Angaben nach bereits gehalten beygelegt hätte./ Wideburg/ Stolle⁴⁸ (Universitätsarchiv Jena: Bestand M 97 Dekanatsakten III Bl. 63v; DAB 277)

Wiedeburg fights for Amo; he explains that the other faculty members should show compassion to Amo because he (1) was taken at a young age from a foreign land, (2) converted to Christianity, (3) was separated from his family and kin, and (4) only has what he has accomplished by his own efforts. Therefore, Amo should be accepted with incremental payments, paying half on Easter and the other on Michaelmas. Wiedeburg adds that if Amo agrees then to continue lecturing and to begin engaging in public disputations, he'll need to show his diploma from Wittenberg.

Next, we read a short response from Johann Jacob Lehmann [1683-1740], professor of morality in philosophy at Jena (Günter 1858, 193); he wrote the only slightly negative letter:

Wenn einer nur das geringste will erlaßen haben, so muß er zu allen Mitgliedern unserer Facultät herumb gehen, damit man ihn kennen lerne und sehe, ob er des beneficii würdig sey. Dieser Amo praetendirt nun gar viel umbsonst; daß ich mich seiner Umstände wegen erkundigen können; so bin ich auch nicht im Stande zu votiren/ Lehmann⁴⁹ (Universitätsarchiv Jena: Bestand M 97 Dekanatsakten III Bl. 63v; DAB 277)

⁴⁸ *Splendid Master Dean!* As a result of various occurrences, H. M. Arno is worthy of compassion, and, before others, of favor: Firstly, he was taken, in his youth, from another part of the world; secondly, he has become baptized into the Christian religion, from heathenism; thirdly, he was utterly separated from and abandoned by his parents and kin, and therefore has, fourthly, nothing other than that which he has secured by means of his own efforts. Now then, as he has no wish to beg, but rather seeks honorably to take action, one must, in fairness to him, be as expeditious as possible [in their decision]; and therefore I am more than content to accept a delay in the payment for his nostrification, until such time as he learns whether he receives steady applause, which shall be shown quickly. Hence, two dates may be set for him, the first *Easter* [end of April] and the other *Michaelmas* [end of September] 1740, such that, if he consents to remain here for that time and, further, to lecture, he should pay half the sum upon each date. Additionally, he must 1) produce his diploma, that he may rightly proceed to *magister*, and 2) not engage in public events, until he has qualified as a professor by means of a disputation performed here, be it as brief as it will, in accordance with our regulations. He would also do well to include the disputations that, according to his statements, he has already given. /Wideburg/ Stolle (My Translation)

⁴⁹ If one should request even the least significant waiver, he should meet with all members of our faculty, in order that we may get to know him and perceive whether he is creditable. Now then, this Amo claims in vain that I am capable of making inquiries regarding his circumstances; thus, am I unable even to vote./ Lehmann (My Translation)

Lehmann, unable to meet with Amo, abstained from voting. The following two responses from Georg Erhard Hamberger [1697-1755], professor of physics, medicine, and mathematics at Jena (Günter 1858, 126), and Christin Gottlieb Buder [1711-1740], professor of philosophy at Jena (Günter 1858, 198) simply reads, “Wie H. Kirchen Rath Wiedeberg Homberger Wie der Herr Kirchen Rath Wiedburg Lg. Budert?”. They both agree with Wiedeberg.

The final response, written by Johann Peter Reusch [1691-1758], professor of metaphysics and logic in philosophy and Rector at Jena (Günter 1858, 195-6), reads:

ich will ihm gern in meiner profession und disciplinen zu lesen erlauben, wenn ein Hochlöbl. Facultät kein Bedencken dabey hatt. Daß er negligirt zu einigen membris der Facultät zugehen, glaube es aus unwißenheit geschehen. Es ist diese licentia legendi eine erlaubte anomalie, denn dergleichen casus wird wohl die Hochlöbl. Facultät bekommen./ J. P. Reusch.⁵⁰ (Universitätsarchiv Jena: Bestand M 97 Dekanatsakten III Bl. 63v; DAB 277)

Rector Reusch defends Amo, explaining that he would enjoy having Amo on the faculty; he then responds to Lehmann, saying that Amo probably did not know that he needed to meet all the faculty. He concludes by explaining that anyone on the faculty, if they were in Amo’s situation, would expect a *licentia legendi*, a license to teach as a *magister*, and begs the question as to why not Amo. Here again, it seems clear that Amo’s race has come into play and Reusch appears to identify this abnormality.

Rector Reusch word must have held a lot a weight because less than a fortnight after Hallbauer’s address on the 8th of July, Hallbauer writes in the Book of Faculty:

d. 8. iul. wurde H. M. Antonio Wilhelmo Amo, Afro, einem von dem höchsteel. Hertzoge in Braunschweig auferzogenen Mohren, der Besheid auf sein schon den 29 verwichenen Monats communicirten Schreiben ertheilet, daß man ihme zwar die Nostrification zu gestehen wolle, jedoch so, daß er auf nächst kommendas Jahr 1740 die gehörigen Gelder, neml. 10 tl. Auf Ostern, und ebenso viel auf Michaelis zahle, wenn er anders mit lessen

⁵⁰ I would be pleased to allow him to teach in my profession and discipline, should the honorable faculty have no hesitations. That he has been negligent in visiting a few members of the faculty is, I believe, attributable to ignorance. This *licentia legendi* [license to teach as a *magister*] is a permissible abnormality, since in similar cases the honorable faculty would likely obtain it./ J. P. Reusch (My Translation)

was verdienen könne, und applausum finden würde. Er ist damit wohl zu frieden.⁵¹
(Universitätsarchiv Jena, Bestand M Nr. 739, 192; DAB 279)

Amo received his nostrification with the requirement to pay the nostrification funds, half at Easter and the other at Michaelmas of the following year. Hallbauer concludes by saying, “He [Amo] is surely happy with this”, and Amo seems to have been. He began teaching less than 10 days later *per* his lecture announcement. He writes:

Privatissime Commilitonibus omnium ordinum ornatissimis, nobilissimis et doctissimis crastina luce, die 17. Julii ante meridiem hora octavo a meridie vero hora secunda itemque tertia : Partes philosophiae elegantioris et curiosae physiognomiam, chiromantiam, geomantiam, vulgo Punctir-Kunst, astrologiam mere naturalem et quae opponitur cryptographiae, artem dechiffratoriam, quam Dechiffrirkunst vocant, succisis, et reiectis omnibus et vulgi, et antiquorum superstitionibus, eisque, quae sua ambiguitate se minus commendant, trimestri temporis spatio, cum applicatione diligenti, ad vitam in statu politico prudenter instituendam, perspicue solide et sufficienter tradam. Aedibus Fabricianis in contignatione tertia num. VII. In via quae vulgo diejenergasse. Anton. Guil. Amo Afer, Mag. ph. Legens. (Universitätsarchiv Jena: Bestand M 97 Bl. 95; DAB 280)⁵²

Amo lectured at 8am, 2pm, and 3pm on Philosophy and related topics (i.e. physiognomy, chiromancy, geomancy, natural astronomy, and decipherment against superstitions). In addition, he identifies that his lectures will be held on the third floor of the Fabrician House off of Die Jenergasse Street. In *Anton Wilhelm Amo (Nzema, heute Republik Ghana). Kammermohr - Privatdozent für Philosophie – Wahrsager*, Monika Firla, an independent researcher and Amo

⁵¹ On the 8th of July Herr Mister Anton Wilhelm Amo, the African, a Moor raised by the eminent Dukes of Braunschweig, was given a decision to his letter on the 29th of the previous month, that we grant his nostrification, but that he pays the required money in the coming year of 1740, that is, 10 taler at Easter and the same amount at Michaelmas, if he can earn it by teaching and steady applause. He is surely happy with this. (My Translation)

⁵² “Most privately to my comrades of all ranks, most distinguished, most noble, and most learned, from tomorrow, July 17th, at the eighth hour before midday and at the second and third hours after midday, for a period of three months, with careful application, in order that you may order your lives wisely in the state, I will teach clearly, soundly, and adequately, the subdivisions of refined and excellent Philosophy, namely Physiognomy, Palmistry, Geomancy (called Punctir-Kunst in the vernacular), the astronomy which is purely natural, and the art of decipherment (called Dechiffrir-Kunst) which is used against cipher-writing, cutting out and rejecting all the superstitions of the common people and the ancients, and those things which through their ambiguity do not commend themselves. In the Fabrician House, on the third floor, no. 7, in the street commonly called Die Jenergasse. Anton Wilhelm Amo, African, Lecturer and Master of Philosophy.” Translation from (Lochner 1958, 177)

scholar from Germany, reasonably argues that the Fabrician House was owned by Johann Andreas Fabricius, who taught Liberal Arts at Jena. Amo signs the announcement, “Anton Wilhelm Amo, African, Lecturer and Master of Philosophy”. It is here in 1739 that Amo stops describing himself as a Guinean, only using African from 1739 onward. Why? What has changed?

At this point, I believe that the concept of West Africans as American slaves and therefore Negro started becoming pervasive throughout Europe. By no longer using Guinea, which is where Negroes come from according to Leo Africanus, Amo is attempting to negotiate his way through the world without the Dukes of Wolfenbüttel’s protection and a world with major shifts in the racial environment. This becomes more apparent in the *Hamburgische Berichte* of 1739, where Amo is identified as “a native-born American”.⁵³ The concept of Moor as West African, meaning Black African according to Leo Africanus, had intertwined with the concept of American slave and Negro, leading the *Hamburgische Berichte* to define Amo as a native-born American.⁵⁴

⁵³“... hr. M. Amo, ein gebohrner Americaner, aus Halle bei uns ein. Und suchte die Frenheit hieselbst dssentlich zu lessen. Im vorigen Jahr stellate er den Traktet ans Licht: Anton. Guil. Amo, Guinea Afri, Phil & art. Lib Magistri *Tractatus de arte, sobrie & accurate philosophandi, academicis suis praelectionibus accomodatus, addita tractatione succincta & diligenti, de critica, interpretatione, methodo, arte disputandi aliisque, quae in logicis traduntur, rebus...*” (*Hamburgische Berichte von den neuesten gelehrten Sachen* 1739, 781; DAB 282)

⁵⁴ Read *Butts v. Penny* (1677) and *Lowe v. Elton* (1677), *Noel v. Robinson* (1687), *Chambers v. Warkhouse* (1693), and *Gelly v. Cleve* (1694). This is also seen in Bosman’s *Nauwkeurige beschryving van de Guinese Goud- Tand- en Slavekust* (1704). This negotiation mentality can be seen in Amo’s signature in Gottfried Achenwall’s, the famous German statistician, album where Amo writes, “*Necessitati qui se accommodat sapit, estque rerum Divinarum conscius. Epictetus. Jenae A. S. R. MDCCXL. Die 5. Maii. Haec in perpetuam sui memoriam adjecit Antonius Guilielmus Amo Afer, Philos. et Art. Liberal. Magister Legens.*”⁵⁴ (Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen: Cod. Ms. hist. lit. 48f. Bl. 78; DAB 281) “He that adapts himself to necessity is wise, and is conscious of divine things.” - Epictetus. Jena. May 5th, 1740. This he adds to the perpetual memory of Anton Wilhelm Amo, African, Lecturer and Master of Philosophy and the Liberal Arts.” (My translation) Amo cites Epictetus saying, “He that adapts himself to necessity is wise, and is conscious of divine things”; he is saying that wisdom is find in adapting one’s self to necessity. Adaption or negotiating is essential to being wise and aware of the divine. It is negotiating that allows one to have a perpetual memory as he adds. Amo sources are then silent for the longest period since Amo entered Halle in 1727.

V. B. Amo's Return to Africa

Seven years later, in 1746 on the 2nd of March, we again experience another one of Amo's many talents. In *Ein Jenaer Stammbucheintrag des schwarzen Philosophen Anton Wilhelm Amo aus dem Jahr 1756*, Monika Firla reveals that Amo painted an image of a woman sniffing tobacco with some related text, which Amo wrote. Under the woman's left arm on a piece of paper is written, "Amo Afer fecit".⁵⁵ Amo quotes Epictetus in the related text saying, "Τῆς περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐσεβείας τὸ κυριώτατον ἐκεῖνό ἐστιν, ὀρθὰς ὑπολήψεις περὶ αὐτοῦ ἔχειν."⁵⁶ Even here Amo seems to be saying that people have been and are forming incorrect opinions about people, and this time a woman sniffing tobacco became his muse for identifying that. Amo clearly perceived a distinction between how women and people like him are perceived in the world and here appears to have made it known.

That same year Amo sent an inquiry to the Dutch West India Company seeking passage back to Africa, and Justin E.H. Smith tells us that he received passage in 1747.⁵⁷ This return to Africa is extremely important; even though Europe was almost all Amo truly knew, something called him back to Africa. He was an outsider without position, without backing, and fighting against the rising abrasively racial environment. The environment that we perceive throughout the second half of the 18th Century, where Blacks become identified as inherently lesser.

This attitude can be seen in Johann Ernst Philippi's [1700-1758] 1747 poem; he titles the last two sections, " III. Herrn M. Amo zu Jena, Eines gelehrten Mohrens, Galanter Liebes-Antrag An Die Mademoiselle Astrine, eine schöne Brünette. IV. Der Mademoiselle Astrine Parodische

⁵⁵ Made by Amo the African. (My Translation)

⁵⁶ "The essence of piety towards God lies in this, to form right opinions concerning them." (Translation from Justin EH Smith)

⁵⁷ I attempted to get this from the *Het Nationaal Archief* without success, which means that I can only go by what I have read in Justin EH Smith's unpublished introduction. (Het Nationaal Archief, archive inventory 1.05.01.02, inventory number 401)

Antwort Auf vorstehendes Gedichte Eines verliebten Mohrens.”⁵⁸ (Philippi 1747, 10-19) Philippi seems to be ridiculing something that was becoming normative in German culture: that someone like Amo should not be with a German woman because he is inferior.

The final source material on Amo, David-Henri Gallandat’s travel report from his meeting with Amo in Africa, was published in *Verhandelingen uitgegeven door het Zeeuwsch Genootschap der Wetenschappen te Vlissingen, Negende Deel 9*. It reads:

Terwyl hy op deeze reis te Axim op de Goudkust in Africa was, ging hy den beroemden Heer Anthonius Guilielmus Amo Guinea Afer, Philosophiae Dr. et Artium Liberalium Magister bezoeken. Hy was een Neger, die ruim 30 Jaaren in Europa verkeerd had. Hy was in den Jaaren 1707 in Amsterdam, en werd vereerd aan den Hertog van Brunswyk, Anthoni Ulrich, die hem aan zyn zoon Augustus Wilhelmus gaf. Deeze liet hem studeeren te Hall, en in Wittenberg, waar hy in den Jaare 1727 tot Doctor in de Philosophie en Meester in de Vrye konsten Gepromoveerd werd. Eenigen tyd daarna overleed zyn Meester: dit maakte hem zeer droefgeestig, en deed hem besluiten naar zyn Vaderland te rug te keeren; hy leefde daar toen als een Heremiet, en had den naam van een Gelukzegger te zyn; hy sprak verscheiden taalen, Hebreeuws, Grieks, Latyn, Fransch, Hoog- en Nederduitsch, was zeer kundig in de Astrologie en Astronomie, en een groot Wysgeer ; zynde toen omtrent 50 Jaaren oud. Zyn Vader en eene Zuster leefden noch, en woonden vier dagreizen landwaard in ; hy had een Broeder, die Slaaf was in de Colonie van Suriname; naderhand is hy van Axim verhuist en gaan wonen in de Fortres der West-Ind. Comp. St. Sebastiaan, te Chama.⁵⁹ (Zillesen 1782, 19-20)

Here, we learn that Amo is back in Africa and searching for his family. He continued to teach and was known to his people as a hermit and soothsayer, an *Aufklärer*. If only the German

⁵⁸ “3. Mister Amo at Jena, A learned Moor, Gallant Love Proposal. 4. To Miss Astrine, A beautiful brunette. Miss Astrine’s Parodistic Answer to the above poem of a Love-stricken Moor.” (My Translation)

⁵⁹ “While he [Gallandat] was on this trip to Axim on the Gold Coast of Africa, he went to visit the famous Herr Anton Wilhelm Amo of Guinea in Africa, Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Liberal Arts. He was a Negro and had been living in Europe for over 30 Years. He was in Amsterdam in 1707 where he was honored by the Duke of Braunschweig, Anton Ulrich, who gave him to his son Augustus Wilhelm. Augustus Wilhelm sent him to study in Halle, and in Wittenberg, where he was promoted to Doctor in Philosophy and Master of Liberal Arts in the year 1727. After some time, his Master died: this broke his heart and he decided to return to his homeland; he then lived there as a Hermit and had the reputation of a good soothsayer; he spoke several languages: Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, High and Low German; was very skilled in astrology and astronomy; and was a great philosopher. At that time, he was around 50 years old. His father and sister alive, lived four days inland. His brother who was a slave in the Colony of Suriname; afterward, moved from Axim and went to live in the Fortress of the West Indian Company at St. Sebastian in Shama.” (My Translation)

Aufklärer would have allowed Amo to do what the Ghanaians allowed, then he might have been more than just a name that people have passed over throughout history.

VI. Conclusion

I started this project attempting to produce a comprehensive sketch of Amo's life within his surrounding context, paying special attention to his proprietors and philosophical divisions created by religion, baptism, and race. We were introduced to the power of the Wolfenbüttel family, which affected Amo's life both positively and negatively. Positively, Amo acquired position because of Wolfenbüttel's position; and negatively, his position diminished after the death of the three Dukes. With this loss of position Amo began feeling the weight of his race within the shifting racial environment and moved toward *Aufklärung* ideals, as seen in his biography after 1739, where we see a conflating of West African with Negro. In addition, we discussed the role in early modern philosophy of the Pietists, who defined philosophers as absolute fatalists and non-Christian based on their philosophy. Furthermore, after discussing the complexity of the term Ethiopian, we learned about the early modern distinction of Moor and Negro from Leo Africanus; and through Amo's biography, we saw the importance of baptism for a Moor in early modern Europe, which I'd like to write more about in the future.

Secondly, I wanted to update Amo scholarship by bringing together almost all of Amo's source materials, by transcribing and translating Amo's source materials for future English-speaking researchers, and by broadening our understanding of the surrounding context from Amo's Black perspective, which I argued is lacking. In this work I have cited, transcribed, and given an English translation for almost every Amo source; hopefully, future English-speaking researchers will find this valuable. Ultimately, Amo's biography forces philosophy to ask new

and different questions that then force us to reevaluate the early modern context. By reevaluating the context, Amo propels us towards a new perspective on the early modern world and aided in untangling the historical ontology of race by forcing us to ask questions about race like no other figure in early modern philosophy.

CHAPTER TWO
THE HOWS AND WHYS OF ANTON WILHLM AMO'S
CRITIQUE OF RENÉ DESCARTES

I. Introduction

On the 16th of April 1734 Anton Wilhelm Amo [c. 1700 – c. 1750] defended his dissertation, *De Humanae Mentis APATHEIA* [On the Impassivity of the Human Mind]. In this work, Amo investigates the logical inconsistencies in René Descartes' [1596 – 1650] real distinction [*res cogitans* (mind) and *res extensa* (body)] and interaction by maintaining that (1) the mind does not sense material things nor does it (2) contain the faculty of sensing. For Amo, there is an impasse between the mind and sensation because the mind is immaterial (active), and sensations necessarily need to occur upon something passive and material (body), which means sensations could only ever be cognized by the mind and through the body. These are delicate distinctions; to unpack Amo's various arguments, I begin with a synopsis of the mind/body distinction in Descartes and Amo. I then investigate Amo's "State of Controversy," where he establishes his critique of Descartes' union of the mind and body. I continue with an application of Amo's distinction and "State of Controversy" to his arguments for the *impassivity* of sensations to the mind. Then I juxtapose both of their theories for the mind's interaction with sensible things. In conclusion I will investigate how Amo's arguments amend the immortality of Descartes' soul and combat the effects of the essentialist conception of race on the notion the soul.

II. Mind/Body Distinction in Descartes and Amo

Descartes begins the 1641 edition of the *Meditationes de prima philosophia* with his *Epistola dedicatoria* to the faculty of theology at the Sorbonne. In this dedication he elucidates his purpose for writing the *Meditationes*. It reads:

Semper existimavi duas quaestiones, de Deo et de Anima, praecipuas esse ex iis quae Philosophiae potius quam Theologiae ope sunt demonstrandae: nam quamvis nobis fidelibus animam humanam cum corpore non interire, Deumque existere, fide credere sufficiat, certe infidelibus nulla religio, nec fere etiam ulla moralis virtus, videtur posse persuaderi, nisi prius illis ista duo ratione naturali probentur.⁶⁰ (AT VII, 1-2)

Descartes aims to give demonstrative proofs for God and the immortality of the soul, which is predicated on the real distinction of mind and body. He continues:

Atque quantum ad animam, etsi multi ejus naturam non facile investigari posse judicant, et nonnulli etiam dicere ausi sint rationes humanas persuadere illam simul cum corpore interire, solaque fide contrarium teneri, quia tamen hos condemnat Concilium Lateranense sub Leone 10 habitum, sessione 8, et expresse mandat Christianis Philosophis ut eorum argumenta dissolvant, et veritatem pro viribus probent, hoc etiam aggredi non dubitavi.⁶¹ (AT VII, 2-3)

Here Descartes explains that he acquired his intentions for the *Meditationes* from the Fifth Lateran Council [1513-17]. The council, directed by Pope Leo X [1475-1521], implored Christian philosophers to demonstrate the truths of God and the immortality of the human soul because of scholars like Pietro Pomponazzi [1462-1525]. In 1515 during the Fifth Lateran

⁶⁰ “I have always thought that two topics — namely God and the soul — are prime examples of subjects where demonstrative proofs ought to be given with the aid of philosophy rather than theology. For us who are believers, it is enough to accept on faith that the human soul does not die with the body, and that God exists; but in the case of unbelievers, it seems that there is no religion, and practically no moral virtue, that they can be persuaded to adopt until these two truths are proved to them by natural reason.” (CSM II: 3)

⁶¹ “As regards the soul, many people have considered that it is not easy to discover its nature, and some have even had the audacity to assert that, as far as human reasoning goes, there are persuasive grounds for holding that the soul dies along with the body and that the opposite view is based on faith alone. But in its eighth session the Lateran Council held under Leo X condemned those who take this position, and expressly enjoined Christian philosophers to refute their arguments and use all their powers to establish the truth; so I have not hesitated to attempt this task as well.” (CSM II: 4)

Council Pietro Pomponazzi, professor of philosophy at Padua and Bologna, published *Tractatus de immortalitate animae* [Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul]; he concluded by natural reason, i.e., Scholastic philosophy, that the soul dies with the body. In response Descartes concludes the *Epistola dedicatoria* by exclaiming,

Ac denique caeteri omnes tot testimoniis facile credent, nemoque amplius erit in mundo, qui vel Dei existentiam, vel realem humanae animae a corpore distinctionem ausit in dubium revocare.⁶² (AT VII, 6)

The *Meditationes*, which endeavor to prove the immortality of the soul, strengthen the *realem distinctionem* between the mind (soul), which exists (*cogito ergo sum*⁶³) without the body⁶⁴, and the body, which does not “in any way depend on the soul”⁶⁵. Descartes’ distinction divides human beings into two ontologically distinct substances: body (*res extensa*) and mind (*res cogitans*). The mind is a “thinking thing” consisting of an immaterial substance, which is active and indivisible; the body, which contains the faculty of sensation, is an “extended thing” consisting of a material substance that is passive and divisible. Since Descartes’ mind is an active and self-subsisting substance, allowing it to exist without the body, there is no reason to believe that the mind dies with the body like Pomponazzi argued. (AT VII, 153; CSM II, 109)

Two years after the publication of the *Meditationes* on the 6th of May Descartes received a letter from Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia (1618 - 1680).⁶⁶ Elisabeth’s letter reads:

⁶² “And finally, everyone else will confidently go along with so many declarations of assent, and there will be no one left in the world who will dare to call into doubt either the existence of God or the real distinction between the human soul and body.” (CSM II, 6)

⁶³ “So after considering everything very thoroughly, I must finally conclude that this proposition, I am, I exist, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind.” (CSM II, 17)

⁶⁴ “But nevertheless, on the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in so far as I am simply a thinking, non-extended thing; and on the other hand I have a distinct idea of body, in so far as this is simply an extended, non-thinking thing. And accordingly, it is certain that I am really distinct from my body, and can exist without it.” (CSM II, 54)

⁶⁵ “In the same way, I might consider the body of a man as a kind of machine equipped with and made up of bones, nerves, muscles, veins, blood and skin in such a way that, even if there were no mind in it, it would still perform all the same movements as it now does in those cases where movement is not under the control of the will or, consequently, of the mind.” (CSM II, 58)

⁶⁶ Duke Augustus Wilhelm of Wolfenbüttel, one of Amo’s proprietors, fell in love with her brother’s son, Charles II.

Comment l'âme de l'homme peut déterminer les esprits du corps, pour faire les actions volontaires (n'estant qu'une substance pensante). Car il semble que toute détermination de mouvement se fait par la pulsion de la chose mue à manière dont elle est poussée par celle qui la meut ou bien, de la qualification et figure de la superficie de cette dernière. L'attouchement est requis aux deux premières conditions, et l'extension à la troisième. Vous excluez entièrement celle-cy de la notion que vous avez de l'âme, et celuy-là me paraît incompatible avec une chose immatérielle. (AT III: 661)⁶⁷

Elisabeth questions how distinct substances interact, or how an unextended soul determines motion in an extended body. Her critique embodies one of the main inquiries of early modern philosophy, especially in early 18th Century Germany; and Amo's critique of Descartes begins with Elisabeth's inquiry from her correspondence with Descartes. Surprisingly, Amo never read Elisabeth's letters because they remained unpublished, *per* Elisabeth's request, until 1879 when Louis-Alexandre Foucher de Careil acquired and unpublished them in *Descartes, la princesse Elisabeth et la reine Christine: d'après des lettres inédites*. In her later letters Elisabeth provided the impetus⁶⁸ for Descartes' *Les passions de l'âme* in which he attempts to address her and, in futurity, Amo's concerns.

In the *Passions*, Descartes explains that the mind, while located throughout the body, has a particular presence in the small (pineal) gland, and through its presence the mind unites and interacts with the body, allowing the mind to sense and experience sensible objects. He says,

Article XXXI. *Qu'il y a une petite glande dans le cerveau en laquelle l'âme exerce ses fonctions plus particulièrement que dans les autres parties. Qu'il y a une petite glande dans le cerveau en laquelle l'âme exerce ses fonctions plus particulièrement que dans les*

⁶⁷ "So I ask you please to tell me how the soul of a human being (it being only a thinking substance) can determine the bodily spirits, in order to bring about voluntary actions. For it seems that all determination of movement happens through the impulsion of the thing moved, by the manner in which it is pushed by that which moves it, or else by the particular qualities and shape of the surface of the latter. Physical contact is required for the first two conditions, extension for the third. You entirely exclude the one [extension] from the notion you have of the soul, and the other [physical contact] appears to me incompatible with an immaterial thing." (Shapiro 2007, 62)

⁶⁸ "I would also like to see you define the passions, in order to know them better." Elisabeth to Descartes on the 13 of September 1645 (Shapiro 2007, 110; AT IV, 289) "This has prevented me up to now from exercising the permission you gave me to lay out for you the obscurities my own stupidity leads me to find in your *Traité des passions*. These are few in number, since one would have to be senseless not to understand that the order, definition, and distinctions you give to the passions, and indeed all the moral part of this treatise, surpass all that anyone has ever said on this subject." Elisabeth to Descartes on the 25th of April 1646 (Shapiro 2007, 133; AT IV, 404)

autres parties. Il est besoin aussi de savoir que bien que l'âme soit jointe à tout le corps, il y a néanmoins en lui quelque partie en laquelle elle exerce ses fonctions plus particulièrement qu'en toutes les autres. Et on croit communément que cette partie est le cerveau, ou peut-être le cur: Le cerveau, à cause que c'est à lui que se rapportent les organes des sens; et le cur, à cause que c'est comme en lui qu'on sent les passions. Mais, en examinant la chose avec soin, il me semble avoir évidemment reconnu que la partie du corps en laquelle l'âme exerce immédiatement ses fonctions n'est nullement le cur, ni aussi tout le cerveau, mais seulement la plus intérieure de ses parties, qui est une certaine glande fort petite, située dans le milieu de sa substance, et tellement suspendue au-dessus du conduit par lequel les esprits de ses cavités antérieures ont communication avec ceux de la postérieure, que les moindres mouvements qui sont en elle peuvent beaucoup pour changer le cours de ces esprits, et réciproquement que les moindres changements qui arrivent au cours des esprits peuvent beaucoup pour changer les mouvements de cette glande.⁶⁹ (AT XI, 351-2)

The seat of soul is situated within the small (pineal) gland; and through its presence, the mind commingles with the body. This commingling allows the mind to sense and experience bodily things, and those things that happen to the mind radiate from “the body by means of the animal spirits, the nerves, and even the blood, which can take on the impressions of the spirits and carry them through the arteries to all the limbs.” (CSM I, 341; AT XI, 354) According to Descartes, those things that attend to the mind radiate from the body to the pineal gland, within which the mind is suspended, and those radiations produce movement on the pineal gland, allowing the mind to experience sensations. Sensations, as explained in the *Sixth Meditation*, are confused modes of thinking that arise “from the union and, as it were, intermingling of the mind with the body.” (CSM II, 56; AT VII, 81) In part four of the *Principles*, Descartes explains confused

⁶⁹ “31. *There is a little gland [pineal gland] in the brain where the soul exercises its functions more particularly than in the other parts of the body.* We need to recognize also that although the soul is joined to the whole body, nevertheless there is a certain part of the body where it exercises its functions more particularly than in all the others. It is commonly held that this part is the brain, or perhaps the heart - the brain because the sense organs are related to it, and the heart because we feel the passions as if they were in it. But on carefully examining the matter I think I have clearly established that the part of the body in which the soul directly exercises its Functions is not the heart at all, or the whole of the brain. It is rather the innermost part of the brain, which is a certain very small gland situated in the middle of the brain's substance and suspended above the passage through which the spirits in the brain's anterior cavities communicate with those in its posterior cavities. The slightest movements on the part of this gland may alter very greatly the course of these spirits, and conversely any change, however slight, taking place in the course of the spirits may do much to change the movements of the gland.” (CSM I, 340)

thoughts as that “which the mind does not derive from itself alone but *experiences* as a result of something happening to the body with which it is closely conjoined.” (CSM I, 281; AT IV, 190. italics added) Thus for Descartes, the mind reveals the *realem distinctionem*, the body displays its union with the mind, and sensations arise and are *experienced* by the mind because of the mind-body union. That being the case, human beings appear to bridge the gap between the material and immaterial, where the immaterial is *really* affected by the material and vice versa.

Turning to Amo, the mind, which belongs to the “genus” of spirit⁷⁰, is a purely active immaterial substance. Amo explains:

Mens humana in genere est Spirituum, ergo declaratio ne quadam opus est, quidnam per uocabulum seu denominationem *Spiritus* intelligamus; est autem nobis Spiritus. Quaeuis substantia mere actiua, immaterialis, per se semper intelligens, suaque sponte ex intentione operans, propter destinatum et sibi conscium finem.⁷¹ (Amo 1734a)

This immaterial substance is always, in itself, understanding and operating spontaneously and intentionally to its end, an intended end of which it is conscious. Upon gaining its intended end the mind allows itself to rest. Being a purely active substance, the mind cannot receive any passions into itself because passions occur on that which is passive, like the body, through sense

⁷⁰ A further explanation of Spirit in Amo. Amo stresses that God has no representation because he cognizes all things as present; ergo, God and other spirits understand themselves, their operations, without ideas and repeated sensations. Spirits understand themselves, their operatives and other things without repeated sensations. Additionally, Amo insists that every spirit intrinsically determines its operations toward achieving an end (i.e. operates spontaneously). For Amo, if a spirit is compelled from outside then it would be compelled by another spirit or matter, but if it was compelled by another spirit then the spontaneity would remain in both. Spirit when compelled by matter loses spontaneity because matter is always passive, and spirit is always active. Thus spirits never receive the action of an agent in itself. Lastly, Amo needs to explain how the spirit operates from intention. He contends that an intention is established in the precognition of a thing, which should come about, and the end, which it intends to pursue through the operation of that intention. An efficient cause knows its operation, which allows the spirit to intrinsically determine its operations toward achieving its end. Hence, every active entity - in which there is an efficient cause - is spirit. A spirit, which the human mind belongs to, is a purely active immaterial substance, which is always in itself understanding and operating spontaneously and intentionally to its end. [ΑΠΙΛΘΕΙΑ - CH.1, Applications]

⁷¹ “The human mind belongs to the genus of spirits. Thus we need a clarification of what we understand by the term or denomination 'spirit'. So: for us, a spirit is any purely active, immaterial substance which is always in itself understanding and operating spontaneously and intentionally on account of a determinate end of which it is conscious.” (Amo 1734a, translation from JSM - Justin EH Smith and Stephen Menn unpublished translation; hereafter cited as JSM)

impingements (i.e., the way in which sensible properties are immediately presented to material things), such as through “communication”⁷², “penetration”⁷³, or “contact”⁷⁴. Consequently, the mediation of some act cannot make material parts present in the mind, which is immaterial, because then the mind, which is opposite to sensible things, would contain another substance.⁷⁵ In Amo’s own words, “Nullus spiritus per se et per accidens, recipit Partes, proprietates et effectus materiales et sensibiles, contrarie enim opponitur enti sensibili; sed inter contrarie opposita, nulla datur communicatio.”⁷⁶ (Amo 1734a) That contrary substance, the body—one’s sensory organ—is a purely passive material substance that acquires knowledge through the experience of sensible things (i.e., sense impingements). To give an example, Amo explains that fire communicates heat to a glowing iron even if one cannot observe the fire communicating with the iron. The iron does not only have ideas of the heat like one’s mind. The mind only has ideas of the heat; the iron has the heat itself.

Sensing, according to Amo, is identified as being “really” affected through the sensory organs by the sensible properties of purely passive, and immediately present, material things.⁷⁷

⁷² For Amo, there is no communication between contrary opposite. If something is immaterial, then it follows that it cannot be material. *Therefore*, that which is spiritually present is materially absent (and vice versa). (see Amo 1734a, CH.I, EXP.I, Note.I)

⁷³ For Amo, penetration is the passage of one entity through the parts of another entity. Identical to Descartes, the mind doesn’t have constitutive parts (or it would be divisible). *Therefore*, no spirit senses or undergoes passion by means of penetration or it would have to be divisible. *Therefore*, spirit is above every passion. Because, passions occur by means of penetration. (see Amo 1734a, CH.I, EXP.I, Note.II)

⁷⁴ Amo agrees with Descartes that “whatever touches and is touched is a body.” Amo adds that surfaces touch at a physical point. The mind cannot ground a sensible or physical point. *Therefore*, spirit does not sense or undergo passion through contact. (see Amo 1734a, CH.I, EXP.I, Note.III)

⁷⁵ “Contrary opposites are things so related that the absence of one entails the presence of the other and the presence of the other entails the absence of the first, e.g., if something is immaterial it follows that it cannot be material, for they are contrary opposites, since the predicate of immateriality excludes the predicate of materiality, because the presence of immateriality is the absence of materiality. Again, wherever spirituality is present, materiality is absent, and vice versa.” (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁷⁶ “No spirit *per se* and *per accidens* receives material and sensible parts, properties, and effects, for it is the contrary opposite of sensible being, but between contrary opposites there is no communication.” (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁷⁷ “...matter is always something passive, and receiving any action of an agent in itself.” “Sensation is, in general: to be really affected, through the sensory organs, by the sensible properties of immediately present and material things.” (Amo 1734a, JSM)

Amo cites Descartes' *Passions* and agrees with Descartes' claim that internal senses are passions or affections of the mind, but Amo maintains that only the living and organic body senses sensible things.⁷⁸ Thus for Amo, the faculty of sensing is a disposition of our living and organic body, which is affected by material and sensible things, and those affections are only immediately present to the body rather than to the mind. Amo's notion of *impassivity*, though predicated on sensing and the faculty of sensation, relates only to the mind, where there is no sensation. This is because an immaterial substance is non-sentient; sensations can only be perceived through a body that is sentient.⁷⁹ The mind cannot be affected by sensations because material things engage or receive other material things into or on themselves.⁸⁰ Therefore, what Amo means by the *impassivity* of the human mind is that the mind can never have the faculty of sensing nor immediate sensations.

Thus far, Descartes and Amo agree (1) on the substantial divide between the mind and body and (2) that the faculty of sensation is not a fundamental part of the "thinking thing". Additionally, Descartes believes that sensations arise at the union of mind and body as confused modes of thinking because distinct substances do not necessitate a prevention of interaction and experience. Amo defines this premise as logically inconsistent with Descartes' ontological distinction because contrary substances cannot contain, engage, and/or receive one another. Thus Amo, by holding fast to Descartes' ontological distinction, could be defined as more Cartesian than Descartes.

⁷⁸ "Internal sensations are the passions or affections of the soul, about which see Descartes in his *Passions of the Soul*." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁷⁹ "It follows in order what impassivity with respect to sensation is: the absence of any sensation in a subject that is not suited to having it (i.e. non-sentient), e.g. a spirit, a stone, etc." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁸⁰ "To receive the sensible species is to sense, and this belongs to an organ, and consequently to a body, for organs belong not to the mind but to the body." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

III. Amo's *Status controversiae*

Amo begins the second chapter of his dissertation with a *Status controversiae* in which his argument is situated as an antithesis to Descartes⁸¹, Daniel Sennert⁸² (1572 - 1637), Jean Le Clerc⁸³ (1657 - 1736), Georg Daniel Coschwitz⁸⁴ (1679-1729), and others. As stated earlier, Amo's critique begins *via* Descartes' correspondence with Princess Elisabeth from Part One of Pieter Blaeu's⁸⁵ 1682 Latin edition of Descartes' correspondence.⁸⁶

Descartes' reply to Elisabeth dated the 21st of May, 1643, which Amo quotes in his dissertation, asserts: "Nam cum duo sint in anima humana, ex quibus pendet tota cognitio, quam de ejus natura habere possumus, quorum unum est quod cogitet, alterum quod unita corpori possit cum illo agere et Pati."⁸⁷ Amo interprets Descartes as saying that his real distinction and union depends upon the fact that the mind, i.e., the soul, acts (meaning it is activity) and suffers (meaning it is acted upon or passive). Thus Amo concludes that Descartes' ontological distinction, by which immaterial minds are purely active and material bodies are purely passive, seems, by definition, to mean something entirely different.⁸⁸ Amo then defines Descartes' system

⁸¹ "Human beings sense material things not with respect to their mind but with respect to their living and organic body. These things are said and defended against Descartes, and against his view in the Letters, Part I, Letter 29..." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁸² "Against Sennert, in his *Epitome scientiae naturalis*, Book 8, Chapter 1, on the rational soul, where [he writes]: "but even if the human soul, with all of the faculties we have thus far attributed to the vegetative and sensitive soul, exerts power, nevertheless [there are] two" etc. See also Book 7, Chapter 1, p.562, on the sensitive soul: "For to sense is the work of the soul". (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁸³ "Likewise, against Jean Le Clerc, Book IV of the *Physica*, on plants and animals, Chapter 10, on the senses and motions of animals, §2." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁸⁴ "Likewise against Georg Daniel Coschwitz, in *Organismus et mechanismus in homine vivo obvius et stabilitus*, Section 1, Chapter 8, Thesis 3,39 and against many others." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁸⁵ The Blaeu family publishing firm of Amsterdam was one of the most famous printing, publishing, and cartography firms of the seventeenth century. (Gerhardt 2015)

⁸⁶ From Blaeu's text: "Nam cum duo sint in anima humana, ex quibus pendet tota cognitio, quam de ejus natura habere possumus, quorum unum est quod cogitet, alterum quod unita corpori possit cum illo agere et Pati" Part 1, Letter 29 (Descartes 1682, 59)

⁸⁷ "Letters, Part I, Letter 29, where he says: "For as there are two things in the human soul on which all the knowledge that we are able to have of its nature depends, one of which is that it thinks, the other that, united to a body, it is able to act and to suffer together with it."" (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁸⁸ "In reply to these words we caution and dissent as follows: we concede that the mind acts together with the body by means of a mutual union. But we deny that it suffers together with the body." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

as logically inconsistent and attempts to mend the problem.⁸⁹ In doing so, he maintains the *realem distinctionem*, even at the union/interaction of activity (for the mind) and passivity (for the body), in contrast to Descartes. In the next section, I will apply Amo's distinction and *State of Controversy* to his arguments for the *impassivity* of sensations to the mind.

IV. Explanation of Amo's *Controversiae*, the *Impassivity*

Amo's *Impassivity* is grounded in three theses:⁹⁰

(1) The human mind *does not* sense material things.⁹¹

His first proof asserts that things determined from first principles have constitutive parts, meaning they are divisible, and divisible things receive passions. The body (material) has constitutive parts, making it divisible and necessitating its reception of passions. Spirit things, like the mind, cannot be divided, and thus do not have constitutive parts. Therefore, sensing cannot be a part of the mind because it is not divisible; but, based on the body's divisibility, the reception of sensation is a necessary condition of the living and organic body.

(2) The faculty of sensing *does not* belong to the mind.

Secondly Amo explains that "*omne quod vivit necessario sentit, et omne sentiens necessario vivit*".⁹² Therefore, to live and to sense endure as "inseparable predicates".

⁸⁹ "But Descartes manifestly states the contrary to his own view, *loc. cit.* Part I, Letter 99, in the examination of the preceding program, where he places the nature of the soul in the faculty of thinking alone, although thinking is an action of the mind, not a passion." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁹⁰ "I. Negative thesis: the human mind does not sense material things, with the requisite proofs II. Second negative thesis: nor does the faculty of sensing belong to the mind III. Third, affirmative thesis: but rather to our organic and living body, with its proofs" (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁹¹ "; whatever is resolved into its first principles, is derived from principles; everything derived from principles has its constitutive parts; whatever is of this sort, is a divisible body; therefore if the human mind senses, it follows that it is a divisible body. *Second Proof of the Thesis.* No spirit senses material things; but the human mind is a spirit; therefore, it does not sense material things." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁹² "To live and to sense are two inseparable predicates. The reason is this conversion: everything that lives necessarily senses, and everything that senses necessarily lives, so that the presence of the one implies the necessary presence of the other." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

Furthermore, “*Omne quod vivit existit, sed non omne existens vivit*”; thus living is not a predicate for existence, exempting the faculty of sensation from being a predicate for existence.⁹³ He offers the example of a spirit and a stone, explaining that neither lives but both exist. The stone, while existing, does not gain knowledge through sense impingements, meaning it doesn’t have the faculty of sensing. The mind, being a spirit thing, “*per se semper intelligens, suaque sponte ex intentione operans, propter destinatum et sibi conscium finem*”, so it does not gain knowledge through sense impingements but through the understanding.⁹⁴ Thus, spirits exist like the stone but operate in/on themselves with understanding, and material things can exist and not live (i.e., not have the faculty of sensation) like a stone, or can exist and live like a body. Therefore, it is only the living body with which humans and animals live and *necessarily* sense, and if the body necessarily senses, then it must contain the faculty of sensation.

In an effort to support his claim that the mind doesn’t have a faculty of sensing, Amo invokes a circulation of the blood proof similar to Descartes’ in the *Passions* and the *Discours de la Méthode*.⁹⁵ Amo maintains that the body, through the circulation of the blood, necessarily

⁹³ “To live and to exist are not synonyms. Everything that lives exists, but not everything that exists lives, for a spirit and a stone exist, but are less rightly said to live. For a spirit exists, and operates with understanding; matter exists, and receives the action of the agent. (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁹⁴ “So: for us, a spirit is any purely active, immaterial substance which is always in itself understanding and operating spontaneously and intentionally on account of a determinate end [i.e., an end it has determined for itself] of which it is conscious.” (Amo 1734a, JSM)

⁹⁵ “Whatever admits of the circulation of blood admits of the principle of life; whatever admits of this, admits of the faculty of sensing. But the body admits of the circulation of blood and of the principle of life (see the illustrious von Berger, *ibid.* at the end of Chapter 5, p.112, also p.56;51 see also my most excellent President, *loc. cit.* Chapter 5 Question 12;52 Christian Vater in *Physiologia* Section 4, Chapter 2, on life and nutrition, at the end of Thesis 1).⁵³ Likewise the Holy Book clearly distinguishes the soul [ψυχή] from the spirit [πνεῦμα]; see Job 12:10, where the Septuagint translates “In whose hand is the soul [ψυχή] of every living thing, and the spirit [πνεῦμα] of all mankind,” and so Dr. Luther translates “in seiner Hand ist die Seele alles des, das da lebet, und der Geist alles Fleisches eines ieglichen.” Likewise this term ψυχή indicates the principle of life of animals in Genesis 1:24, and Genesis 9:4 says “But flesh with the life [literally ‘soul’] thereof, which is the blood thereof, you shall not eat,” “allein esset das Fleisch nicht so noch lebet in seinem Blute.” And Dr. Luther rendered ἡ ψυχη τοῦ ἀνθρώπου as “des Menschen Leben.” See also Proverbs 4:23, “Keep your heart with all diligence; for life goes forth from it”; but the heart with its circulation of blood belongs to the body. Further, in Leviticus 17, “all life is in the blood;” but the blood belongs to the body. See also [Edme Didier] *Essais de physique*, Part 1, Chapter 8, on sensations, pp. 102-103.⁵⁴ As these things are so, it follows that the principle of life along with the faculty of sensing belong not to the mind, but to the body.” (Amo 1734a, JSM)

receives the principle of life. In other words, life and the circulation of the blood are “inseparable predicates”. The mind, being immaterial, could never intertwine, like the body, with the principle of life. Furthermore, since the circulation of the blood and life/sensing are “inseparable predicates,” then the mind could not have the faculty of sensing. This is because of the mind's activity, which makes it unable to receive passions—except through the understanding. Thus, the mind cannot contain the faculty of sensing.

(3) Sensing and the faculty of sensation belong to the human body, which is organic and living.

Amo substantiates his arguments by necessarily placing “to live” and “to sense” in the same, divisible and material, subject. He asserts:

Non timeatis, ait Salvator noster, ab occidentibus corpus, qui tamen animam occidere non possunt Math. X, 28. exinde ita: Quidquid occiditur et occidi potest, illud vivere necesse est. (Nam occidi est; aliunde per violentiam vita privari) si igitur corpus occiditur et occidi potest, sequitur quod vivat, si vivit sentit, si sentit, sequitur quod facultate sentiendi gaudeat. vivere enim et sentire sunt per perpetuo in eod[e]m subiecto et principio coniuncta.⁹⁶

Living bodies sense and possess the faculty of sensing because the human body is organically living, and thus can be killed, unlike the mind. Here, Amo's final thesis begs the question of whether the mind or the body receives sensations and the faculty of sensing. Amo, through the verification of his first two theses, would reply: not the mind. Therefore, the living and organic body must receive sensations and have the faculty of sensing.

Ultimately, Amo maintains that there is an impasse between the mind and sensation because the mind is immaterial (indivisible and existing) and sensations necessarily need to

⁹⁶ “Our Savior says, “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul” (Matthew 10:28); from which we proceed as follows: whatever is killed and can be killed, necessarily lives. (For to be killed is to be deprived of life by another through violence.) If therefore the body is killed and can be killed, it follows that it lives; if it lives, it senses; it follows that it enjoys the faculty of sensing; for to live and to sense are perpetually conjoined in the same subject and principle.” (Amo 1734a, JSM)

occur upon something passive and materially living (divisible). Consequently, sensations could only ever be cognized through the body (divisible, passive, and living). Descartes, in the *Sixth Meditation*, explains that the mind, which is immaterial, can exist without the existence of the body and that sensations are related through the body to the mind by way of nerves and pineal movement. For Amo, it is through the act of understanding that the mind forms ideas of all sensible things. There is no experiential or gland movement episteme on the mind. Thus, sensations cannot be part of the mind; they can only ever be cognized by the mind. The mind's understanding creates representable ideas of those things experienced by the body. The reason for this is that, if sensation is part of the mind, then sensing and existing would be inseparable predicates, and one might not be able to have an immortal soul, a point which we will return to in the final section. Amo holds the *realem distinctionem* between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*, in contrast to Descartes, who creates something anew at the union.

V. Amo & Descartes

In Descartes' sailor-in-the-ship example from the *Sixth Meditation*, he explains that the mind does not just understand or perceive pain but actually feels the pain because of its union with the body. Descartes says,

Docet etiam natura, per istos sensus doloris, famis, sitis etc., me non tantum adesse meo corpori ut nauta adest navigio, sed illi arctissime esse conjunctum et quasi permixtum, adeo ut unum quid cum illo componam. Alioqui enim, cum corpus laeditur, ego, qui nihil aliud sum quam res cogitans, non sentirem idcirco dolorem, sed puro intellectu laesionem istam perciperem, ut nauta visu percipit si quid in nave frangatur.⁹⁷ (AT VII, 81)

⁹⁷ "Nature also teaches me, by these sensations of pain, hunger, thirst and so on, that I am not merely present in my body as a sailor is present in a ship,' but that I am very closely joined and, as it were, intermingled with it, so that I and the body form a unit. If this were not so, I, who am nothing but a thinking thing, would not feel pain when the body was hurt, but would perceive the damage purely by the intellect, just as a sailor perceives by sight if anything in his ship is broken." (CSM II, 56)

For Descartes, if at the union the mind isn't active and passive, then one's mind could never *know* pain but only ever be aware of it. Thus, for one to *know* pain, the relation of one's mind to one's body necessitates something more intimate than causal manipulation.

Amo accepts that the mind acts together with the body through the mediation of a mutual union, but he denies that the mind suffers together with the body. This *commercium*, not commingling, between the mind and body does not allow the mind to *really* feel any sensations or suffering, which only occur to/on living entities (body). The mind perceives sensation by way of the body, which it cognizes, and applies those perceived ideas in its operations. The body does not substantially interact with the mind, even though it is essential to the mind's representation of ideas, and thus to the mind's effect on itself and its intentions. Amo is making a strong distinction between the material parts of the body, which sense and are alive, and the soul. The soul is an immaterial, spirit thing; by definition, it cannot receive any sensations and is not *alive*. So yes, the soul is only aware of what happens to Descartes' ship whereas the brain and body, being alive, have experiential knowledge of the ship. Descartes' commingling of the mind and body allows humans to *think* the soul is more than aware of its pain and suffering; when truly, for Amo, the soul only has ideas of bodily pains. Noticing Descartes' equivocations, Amo can be characterized as saying, "Descartes, you talk about distinction; but then, you want to express that at the union of the distinction something new arises – the passions. Your view entails that distinct substances can commingle and that the soul can experience sensations, both of which are ontologically problematic."⁹⁸

⁹⁸ "Human beings sense material things not with respect to their mind but with respect to their living and organic body. These things are said and defended against Descartes, and against his view in the Letters, Part I, Letter 29, where he says: "For as there are two things in the human soul on which all the knowledge that we are able to have of its nature depends, one of which is that it thinks, the other that, united to a body, it is able to act and to suffer together with it." In reply to these words we caution and dissent as follows: we concede that the mind acts together with the body by means of a mutual union. But we deny that it suffers together with the body." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

VI. WHY?

Why did Amo find this distinction so important? Why does he not want the mind to be able to suffer with the body? For me, being a historian of philosophy, this question appears more vital than Amo's critique because philosophical arguments gain value when we untangle them in their context, in response to a particular problem. I propose two reasons to help explain why Amo held such concerns: (1) to amend Descartes' soul because Amo does not believe that Descartes' soul is immortal, and (2), in agreement with Justin E.H. Smith, to combat the idea that race could affect one's soul.

VI. A. Immortal Soul

As explained earlier, Descartes' *Meditationes* begins with his *Epistola dedicatoria* to the faculty of theology at the Sorbonne in which he elucidates his purpose for writing the *Meditationes*. He aims to give demonstrative proofs for God and the immortality of the soul, which is predicated on the real distinction of mind and body. He acquired these intentions from the Eighth Session of the Fifth Lateran Council held on the 19th of December in 1513 under the direction of Pope Leo X. It reads:

And since truth cannot contradict truth, we define that every statement contrary to the enlightened truth of the faith is totally false and we strictly forbid teaching otherwise to be permitted. We decree that all those who cling to erroneous statements of this kind, thus sowing heresies which are wholly condemned, should be avoided in every way and punished as detestable and odious heretics and infidels who are undermining the catholic faith. Moreover we strictly enjoin on each and every philosopher who teaches publicly in the universities or elsewhere, that when they explain or address to their audience the principles or conclusions of philosophers, where these are known to deviate from the true faith — as in the assertion of the soul's mortality or of there being only one soul or of the eternity of the world and other topics of this kind — they are obliged to devote their every effort to clarify for their listeners the truth of the Christian religion, to teach it by convincing arguments, so far as this is possible, and to apply themselves to the full extent

of their energies to refuting and disposing of the philosophers' opposing arguments, since all the solutions are available. (Tanner 2017)

The Fifth Lateran Council implored Christian philosophers to demonstrate the truths of God and the immortality of the human soul against those sowing heresy. In the *Epistola dedicatoria* Descartes explains that he will prove these two truths of Christianity by natural reason, similar to the method but against the conclusions of Pietro Pomponazzi. After discussing the existence of God in the *Epistola dedicatoria*, Descartes turns his attention to the immortality of the soul. In his own words, Descartes says:

Atque quantum ad animam, etsi multi ejus naturam non facile investigari posse judicant, et nonnulli etiam dicere ausi sint rationes humanas persuadere illam simul cum corpore interire, solaque fide contrarium teneri, quia tamen hos condemnat Concilium Lateranense sub Leone 10 habitum, sessione 8, et expresse mandat Christianis Philosophis ut eorum argumenta dissolvant, et veritatem pro viribus probent, hoc etiam aggredi non dubitavi.⁹⁹ (AT VII, 2-3)

Descartes makes it clearly that he is responding to the Eighth Session of the Fifth Lateran Council and that he will be using natural reason to present a counterexample to the soul dying with the body. Surprisingly, it is only in Descartes' *Synopsis sex sequentium Meditationum* that he actually uses the term *immortalitās*. He says,

Sed corpus humanum, quatenus a reliquis differt corporibus, non nisi ex certa membrorum configuratione aliisque ejusmodi accidentibus esse conflatum; mentem vero humanam non ita ex ullis accidentibus constare, sed puram esse substantiam: etsi enim omnia ejus accidentia mutantur, ut quod alias res intelligat, alias velit, alias sentiat, etc., non idcirco ipsa mens alia evadit; humanum autem corpus aliud fit ex hoc solo quod figura quarumdam ejus partium mutetur: ex quibus sequitur corpus quidem perfacile interire, *mentem autem ex natura sua esse immortalem*.¹⁰⁰ (AT VII, 14 my italics)

⁹⁹ "As regards the soul, many people have considered that it is not easy to discover its nature, and some have even had the audacity to assert that, as far as human reasoning goes, there are persuasive grounds for holding that the soul dies along with the body and that the opposite view is based on faith alone. But in its eighth session the Lateran Council held under Leo X condemned those who take this position,' and expressly enjoined Christian philosophers to refute their arguments and use all their powers to establish the truth; so I have not hesitated to attempt this task as well." (CSM II, 4)

¹⁰⁰ "But the human body, in so far as it differs from other bodies, is simply made up of a certain configuration of limbs and other accidents of this sort; whereas the human mind is not made up of any accidents in this way, but is a pure substance. For even if all the accidents of the mind change, so that it has different objects of the understanding and different desires and sensations, it does not on that account become a different mind; whereas a human body

Descartes explains that the body changes based on accidents, while accidents do not cause the nature of the mind to change because of the mind's nature. The mind's nature is foundationally indivisible. Descartes explains,

Nempe imprimis hic adverto magnam esse differentiam inter mentem et corpus, in eo quod corpus ex natura sua sit semper divisibile, mens autem plane indivisibilis; nam sane cum hanc considero, sive meipsum quatenus sum tantum res cogitans, nullas in me partes possum distinguere, sed rem plane unam et integram me esse intelligo; et quamvis toti corpori tota mens unita esse videatur, abscisso tamen pede, vel brachio, vel quavis alia corporis parte, nihil ideo de mente subductum esse cognosco; neque etiam facultates volendi, sentiendi, intelligendi etc. ejus partes dici possunt, quia una et eadem mens est quae vult, quae sentit, quae intelligit.¹⁰¹ (AT VII, 85-6)

For Descartes, indivisibility is foundational to the mind's nature, but the mind also has the faculties of willing, understanding, and sensory perception. It is here at Descartes' conversation of the soul's indivisibility and sensibility that Amo's *Status controversiae* becomes vital in relation to the immortality of the soul. So does Descartes actually accomplish this task? Did Amo think Descartes accomplished this task?

Let's return to Amo's first two theses. He tells us that (1) the human mind does not sense material things because only things with constitutive parts are divisible, and divisible things receive passions. Spirit things, like the mind, cannot be divided, and thus do not have constitutive parts. Therefore, sensing cannot be a part of the mind because it is not divisible; but based on the body's divisibility, the reception of sensation is a necessary condition of the living

loses its identity merely as a result of a change in the shape of some of its parts. And it follows from this that while the body can very easily perish, the mind is immortal by its very nature." (CSM II, 10)

¹⁰¹ "The first observation I make at this point is that there is a great difference between the mind and the body, inasmuch as the body is by its very nature always divisible, while the mind is utterly indivisible. For when I consider the mind, or myself in so far as I am merely a thinking thing, I am unable to distinguish any parts within myself; I understand myself to be something quite single and complete. Although the whole mind seems to be united to the whole body, I recognize that if a foot or arm or any other part of the body is cut off, nothing has thereby been taken away from the mind. As for the faculties of willing, of understanding, of sensory perception and so on, these cannot be termed parts of the mind, since it is one and the same mind that wills, and understands and has sensory perceptions." (CSM II, 59)

and organic body. His second thesis explains that (2) the faculty of sensing does not belong to the mind. He explains that to live and to sense endure as “inseparable predicates” but that living is not a predicate for existence. He offers the example of a spirit and a stone, explaining that neither lives but both exist. The stone, while existing, does not gain knowledge through sense impingements, meaning it doesn’t have the faculty of sensing. The mind, being a spirit thing, “per se semper intelligens, suaque sponte ex intentione operans, propter destinatum et sibi conscium finem”, so it does not gain knowledge through sense impingements, but through the understanding. Thus, spirits exist like the stone but operate in/on themselves with understanding, and material things can exist and not live (i.e., not have the faculty of sensation) like a stone, or they can exist and live like a body. Therefore, it is only the living body with which humans and animals live and necessarily sense, and if the body necessarily senses, then it must contain the faculty of sensation. So, here, Amo creates three categories: things that exist without understanding and do not gain knowledge from sense impingements (e.g., a stone), things that exist with only understanding and do not gain knowledge from sense impingements (e.g., souls), and things that exist, live, and sense because they gain knowledge from sense impingements and circulate the principles of life (e.g., bodies).

Thus, for Amo, souls do not have constitutive parts and exist with only understanding because they do not gain knowledge from sense impingements. To have an immortal soul means that the soul cannot sense or be divisible because things that sense are divisible and divisible things can die. So, we have to ask two questions of Descartes: Is Descartes’ soul divisible? Can Descartes’ soul sense?

In his *Status controversiae* Amo saying, “Nam cum duo sint in anima humana, ex quibus pendet tota cognitio, quam de ejus natura habere possumus, quorum unum est quod cogitet,

alterum quod unita corpori possit cum illo agere et Pati.”¹⁰² Amo sees that Descartes’ real distinction relies on a union where the mind, i.e., the soul, acts (meaning it is activity) and suffers (meaning it is acted upon or passive) along with the body. In the *Meditationes* and the *Passions* Descartes makes it clear that the mind is active and that the body is passive. In Part One of the *Passions* Descartes tells us that “the soul always receives them [Passions] from the things that are represented by them.” (AT XI, 342; CSM III, 325) Descartes and Amo both perceive Descartes’ soul receiving passions; but if the soul is active and passive, then is it also divisible and indivisible?

For Amo, if something receives passions then it is passive, something that is passive has constitutive parts, and something with constitutive parts can die. For Amo, Descartes’ soul at the union becomes both active and passive; and thus, it can be killed. To clarify:

- (1) Sensing things have constitutive parts (Amo’s First Thesis) and can die (Amo’s Second Thesis).
- (2) At the union Descartes’ soul can sense.
- (3) If Descartes’ soul can sense; then because of (1): it can die.
- (∴) Descartes’ soul is not immortal.

If Amo is right, then Descartes’ soul is not immortal. On the other hand, Descartes makes it clear that he is combating people like Pietro Pomponazzi who believe that it is impossible to prove by natural reason that the soul lives after the death of the body. If this is the case, then the only reason the mind does not die with the body is that the soul somehow retains its nature, meaning once the body dies and the mind is no longer in unity with it, then the mind becomes indivisible

¹⁰² Letters, Part I, Letter 29, where he says: "For as there are two things in the human soul on which all the knowledge that we are able to have of its nature depends, one of which is that it thinks, the other that, united to a body, it is able to act and to suffer together with it." (Amo 1734a, JSM)

and purely active once again. Amo would say once corrupted always corrupt, but if we choose to give the best reading of Descartes, then he accomplished his goal of allowing the mind to persist after the death of the body by the soul sustaining its nature. According to his division of nature from Thesis Two, Amo doesn't think that this works. For Amo,

(1) Sensing things have constitutive parts (Amo's First Thesis) and can die (Amo's Second Thesis).

(2) There is an "impasse" between sensing and the soul. (Thesis 3)

(∴) Amo's soul can be immortal because it does not have constitutive parts, is not *really* affected by senses, and does not have the faculty of sensing.

(∴) Amo enhances Descartes' overarching project of responding to the Pope.

By creating an impasse between sensing and the soul, Amo makes the soul immortal, meaning indivisible (or without constitutive parts, sensing, and the faculty of sensation). I do not believe that Descartes' project failed, but it is clear that Amo amplifies Descartes' real distinction in an attempt to enhance Descartes' overarching project. Ultimately, Amo accomplishes his task of making the soul immortal, but he does not give us enough to know how this solution works in relation to causation and the mind-body union. Thus Amo fails where Descartes failed.

VI. B. Race

Human difference, i.e., the early modern interpretation of race, and Amo scholarship are interrelated subjects, as Amo is both a philosopher in 18th Century Germany and an African native. The one cannot be researched without the other, which is part of what makes him and his scholarship so valuable today, as it should have been in the past. We are forced to ask questions like: Did Amo's race play a role in his philosophy? If not, why and how not? If yes, then why

and how? Where do we see it? Since we cannot be definitive, I presuppose that race mattered for an 18th Century Black, which the early modern context and Amo's biography confirms. Thus, I attempt here to elucidate Amo's philosophical significance and its relation to race and human difference.

Isaac de la Peyrère's (1596-1676) in his 1655 work, *Prae-Adamitae* [Man Before Adam], argues that Adam and Eve were not the first or only humans. If they were, then how could one explain Cain's descendants and the earth's population? For that reason, Peyrère explains that God created at least two groups: those outside the Garden of Eden (i.e., Gentiles) and Adam's descendants (i.e., the Jews); uniquely, Peyrère believed that both groups were essentially the same in being ensouled, which becomes scientifically crucial when talking about Amo.

Justin E.H. Smith in *Nature, Human Nature, and Human Difference: Race in Early Modern Philosophy* explains,

The first is that, whatever its philosophical shortcomings and whatever ill consequences its corollary theses had, metaphysical dualism in fact served as an important bulwark against the rise of essentialist thinking about human racial diversity, against the possibility of taking, as Philippi did in the case of Amo, the physical body for the "nature." That is— and this will be shown through a number of historical case studies— *so long as the human soul was thought to be something fundamentally independent of the body, physical differences between human beings could not be taken as markers of essential difference.* (Smith 2015, 17-8, my italics)

Smith explains, and I agree, that there was a distinction in early modern Europe between physical and essential difference: physical difference being difference acquired from skin, climate, origin, humors, and/or the difference attested to in the Bible; essential difference being difference inherent in one's soul or mental capabilities. Smith continues:

To cite one of many examples we have seen, in the eighteenth century Montesquieu argues not that there is an essential difference between Europeans and Africans, but only that Europeans are innately disposed to see the difference of skin color as marking out an essential difference. This is not, to be sure, what the current cognitive literature on race says, since no serious scientist claims today that the perception of salient difference

between Europeans and Africans is fixed and insurmountable. We know from comparative and historical data that there are cases of the perception of what might seem to be less significant phenotypic differences than those that often obtain between Europeans and Africans as being no less salient, or revealing of supposed essential differences, for that reason. (Smith 2015, 264-5)

He demonstrates that during early modernity physical differences were often defined as essential differences; he claims that our current historical ontology of race has usually accepted this conflation, meaning we have read these physical differences as essential differences. To distinguish if this is the case, let's quickly investigate the prevalent concepts of racial difference in the early modern period.

There are four essential theories presented here in order of social dominance. Climate Theory held that climate and geography work together to establish physical and temperamental characteristics; Blacks are black with a particular temperament because of the climate. Tied to Climate Theory, Humoralism held that the body has four humors, and pain occurs when any of those humors are excessive and/or lacking, which effects one physically and mentally. Humoralism says that, based on environmental circumstances, certain humors become deficient or excessive, which determine complexion, health, and attitude. For example, Africans have an excess of Black Bile, which produces black skin, a melancholy attitude, etc. Third, the Curse of Ham Theory held that the children of Ham (i.e., Africans) were cursed with their complexion and subjugation; this blackness and the subjugation of Blacks is predicated on a Biblical curse, not souls or intellect. Lastly, Polygenesis held that there were different origins for different peoples; it was used to understand the Genesis creation story. As previously explained, Peyrère believed that all peoples (Jews and Gentiles) had souls that needed to be saved. So are these theories based on physical difference or essential difference?

Climate Theory and Humoralism both clearly focused on environmental circumstances, meaning the effects are not inherent in Blacks. The effects are based on a person's environment and not inherent to them. The Curse of Ham has nothing to do with souls or mental capabilities; its focus is on blackness and subjugation, which is not inherent to Blacks. The Curse of Ham was inherited by particular peoples, but the curse doesn't make Blacks inherently inferior. Polygenesis, while seeming to establish essential difference, holds that Gentiles and Jews both have the rational part of the soul. All four theories, while ultimately propagating essential difference, were not originally developed or used during most of the early modern period to delineate essential difference. However, this shift started taking place while Amo was in Europe, and ultimately precipitated in his exodus from Europe. Why does this matter?

If nonessential difference can be applied to essential difference, then those nonessential differences become essential. That is, when physical effects can affect the mind (the immaterial soul), then one can make the craft or folk scientific shift of claiming that certain people are essentially different, which is based on the idea that material things (nonessential) can affect the immaterial (essential). The last step, then, is to apply the "theoretical" science of the late 18th and early 19th Century to establish "scientific" authority. Following from this, one obtains the modern understanding of biological racism. So how could Amo's theory of impassivity thwart this movement?

Once again, let's return to Amo's theses.

- (1) The human mind *does not* sense material things.
- (2) The faculty of sensing *does not* belong to the mind.
- (3) Dualism
 - (3a) The human being has two distinct parts: the mind and body.

(3b) The mind does not sense or contain the faculty of sensing. (From 1 and 2)

(∴) Sensing and the faculty of sensation belong to the human body, which is organic and living.

For Amo, Descartes' real distinction necessitates an ontological distinction and an impassivity of mind and body across that real distinction, but if the mind senses then the real distinction collapses. Descartes allows for a commingling of the mind and body at the union through the pineal gland; he explains that those things that happen to the mind radiate from "the body by means of the animal spirits, the nerves, and even the blood, which can take on the impressions of the spirits and carry them through the arteries to all the limbs." (CSM I, 341; AT XI, 354) If this is the case, then external conditions can have a *real* effect on the mind, meaning a material substance can affect an immaterial substance. With Amo's impassivity external conditions cannot affect the immaterial, souls, because the real distinction holds true. Thus essential things cannot be affected by nonessential conditions. That is, the environment has no real effect on the mind, as it does in Descartes. If bodily sensations do not affect the mind, then there can be no essential modifications in the mind. For Amo, no essential difference (i.e., soul difference) equals no difference. All external conditions would only affect the body, and the mind, which is essential, would never be perceived as inferior based on being affected by external conditions. Bodies and experiences can be different, but they do not *really* affect the mind because of the Amo's *impassivity*. Thus concluding that the mind is immortal.

VII. Conclusion

For Descartes, the distinct substance of the mind and body interact and commingle at the pineal gland producing the passions of the soul. Amo responds, "No." For Amo, ontologically

distinct substances are necessarily really distinct. Thus, sensing necessarily belongs to the body because without a body one cannot sense. There is an *impassivity* between the mind and sensation because the mind is immaterial and sensations necessarily need to occur upon something passive and material (the body), which means sensations could only ever be *cognized* by the mind and occur *on* the body. The mind only cognizes bodily sensations, but why?

I proposed two reasons to explain why Amo made this particular critique: the first, based on the historical context of Descartes' *Meditationes* and the surrounding philosophical dialogue, and the second, based on human difference and the surrounding dialogue about race. For the first, Amo strengthened the immortality of Descartes' soul by widening the real distinction and not allowing the mind to be divisible nor sense. If the soul engages and receives external passions (senses), then it is alive and divisible, and thus can be killed. Amo's impassivity of sensations and the faculty of sensing thwarts this concern. For the second, Amo's widening of the real distinction necessarily concludes that material things can have no real effect on immaterial things. If we take the early modern concepts of human difference to be based on external conditions affecting the body, which is nonessential, then according to Amo's impassivity, external conditions would only affect the body. The mind, which is essential, would never be perceived as inferior based on being affected by external conditions.

Here one experiences the success of Amo's critique and a unique enhancement of Descartes' mind/body interaction, yet the history of philosophy has seemingly neglected Amo, and he is almost non-existent in the works of his contemporaries, who must have known about him—the African with a doctoral degree in philosophy in early 18th Century Europe. Today's philosophical community has the power to amend these and future contextual lapses by widening the definition of the canonical and philosophical. What will *we* do?

An Argumentative Outline of Amo's *De humanae mentis APATHEIA*

Negative Theses:

- (1) The Human Mind does not sense material things.
- (2) The Faculty of Sensing does not belong to the Mind.

Affirmative Thesis:

- (1) Sensing and the Faculty of Sensing belong to our [Man's] organic and living body.
 - a. Man is a rational animal.¹⁰³
 - i. Rational to the extent of his intellectual mind.
 - ii. Animal to the extent of the living and organic body.

Chapter 1

What is a spirit in general?

- (1) The Human mind belongs to the genus¹⁰⁴ of 'spirits'.
 - a. A 'spirit' is a purely active immaterial substance, which is always in itself understanding and operating spontaneously and intentionally - it proceeds to its end - on account of an intended end of which it is conscious. And when the end is accomplished then the mind is allowed to rest from its former operation.

¹⁰³ This distinction is also found in Amo's third thesis: *IDEARUM DISTINCTAM EORUM QUAE COMPETUNT VEL MENTI VEL CORPORI NOSTRO VIVO ET ORGANICO* (1734).

¹⁰⁴ Amo probably uses genus here to mean classification according to Joseph Pitton de Tournefort and his book, *ELEMENS DE BOTANIQUE OU METHODE POUR CONNOÎTRE LES PLANTES* (1694) - which was republished and renamed *INSTITUTIONES REI HERBARIAE* (1700), on botany and genera, which Amo would have learned about.

- b. Spirit is a purely active substance
 - i. Meaning the spirit does not admit any passion in itself.
 - ii. If a spirit did admit any passion in itself it would occur by sense impingements: like, through ‘communication’, ‘penetration’, or ‘contact’.

Spirit Proof

(2) Every spirit is above every passion.

- a. Materials parts cannot be present in a spirit by the mediation of some act; because then, a spirit would contain a substance other than immaterial.
- b. Spirit is a contrary opposite of sensible being.
- c. If a spirit did admit any passion in itself it would occur by sense impingements: like, through ‘communication’, ‘penetration’, or ‘contact’.¹⁰⁵
- d. Communication
 - 1) There is no communication between contrary opposite.
 - 2) Therefore, if something is immaterial, then it follows that it cannot be material.

Therefore, that which is spiritually present is materially absence (and vice versa).
- e. Penetration
 - 1) Penetration is the passage of one entity through the parts of another entity.
 - 2) Spirit don’t have constitutive parts (or it would be divisible).

¹⁰⁵ Previously stated in the section ‘What is a spirit in general’ under 1.A.b.ii.

3) Therefore, no spirit senses or undergoes passion by means of penetration or it would have to be divisible. (Furthermore, always from an axiom.)

Therefore, spirit is above every passion. Because, passions occur by means of penetration.

f. Contact

1) Descartes¹⁰⁶: Whatever touches and is touched is a body.

2) Surfaces touch at a physical point.

3) Spirit cannot predicate a sensible or physical point.

Therefore, spirit does not sense or undergo passion through contract.

(3) Every Spirit understands through itself and is conscious to itself of itself, of its operation, and of other things.

1) God has no representation; because he cognizes all things as present.

2) Representation supposes the absence of the thing to be represented.

3) Therefore, God and other spirits understand themselves, their operatives, and other things without ideas and repeated sensations.

4) Descartes¹⁰⁷: But, our minds both understand and operate through ideas on account of its very tight bond and commerce with the body.

Therefore, Spirits understand themselves, their operatives, and other things on account of its commerce with the body.

(4) Every spirit intrinsically determines its operations toward achieving an end (i.e. operates spontaneously) and it is not compelled from some other source into acting.

¹⁰⁶ First time Descartes in mentioned.

¹⁰⁷ Second time Descartes in mentioned.

- 1) If a spirit were compelled from outside, then it would come about by another spirit or matter compelling it.
- 2) If by another spirit, then the spontaneity would remain in both.
- 3) If the spirit is compelled by matter, then the spontaneity would not remain because matter is always passive.
- 4) Spirit is always active.¹⁰⁸

Therefore, Spirit operations from its own active intention and it not compelled from outside.

(5) Spirit operates from intention.

- 1) Intention is from a precognition of a thing that should come about and an end that it intends to pursue through its operation.
- 2) Every efficient cause must know itself, its operations, and that which it comes by.
- 3) Every spirit intrinsically determines its operations toward achieving an end.¹⁰⁹

Therefore, every active entity (in which there is an efficient cause) is spirit.

(6) Spirit is immaterial.

- 1) Contrary opposites cannot contain and possess the other.

Therefore, spirit cannot be material.

What is the human mind in particular?

(1) The human mind is a purely active and immaterial substance.

- a. The mind through bodily experience understands and operates from intentional conscious ends.
- b. The commerce of the body and mine.

¹⁰⁸ Previously stated in the section 'What is a spirit in general' under 1.A&B.

¹⁰⁹ Previously stated in the section 'Spirit Proof' under 4.

- i. The mind uses the body as: Container, Instrument, Median.
- c. Minds are the *spirits of human being* still in their bodies or surviving and separate from the body.

What is sensation?

- (1) Sensation is to be *really* affected through the sensory organs by the sensible properties of immediately present and material things.
 - a. Logically, every sensation is either mediate (idea) or immediate.
 - b. Physically, every sensation is either agreeable, internally or externally, or disagreeable internally and externally.
 - c. Internal senses are passions (passively comes over you) or affections of the soul (Descartes¹¹⁰, like hunger and thirst).

What is the faculty of sensing?

- (1) Faculty of Sensing is a disposition of our organic and living body by whose meditation the animal, living and organic body, is affected by material and sensible things that are immediately present to it.
 - a. The ancients called the faculty of sensing the “Sensitive Soul” – distinguishing it from the rational and vegetative soul.
 - 1) Animals are composed of a body and a sensitive soul, which is their form.
 - 2) In human being, the sensitive soul is subordinate to the immortal soul. *Therefore*, the faculty of sensing is the middle substance, which unites the body and the soul perfectly.

¹¹⁰ Third time Descartes is mentioned.

(2) The (A) absence of the faculty of sensing and of (B) sensation in a subject that is not suited to having them.

a. Absence of the faculty of sensing

- 1) The absence of a disposition by whose mediation the animal, living and organic body, would be affected by sensible, immediately present and material things.
- 2) The disposition is absent in a subject that is not-suited to having such a disposition.
- 3) Non-capable (or a non-suited subject) has an entity that does not admit the parts, properties, and effects of another entity into itself, and cannot come to partake in.
- 4) Those subjects who do not admit parts and etc are non-suited subject.
- 5) Spirit does not admit part, properties, etc.

Therefore, spirit is absent of the faculty of sensing.

b. A living body is affected by sensation by the mediation of its disposition.

c. A dead body is not affected by sensation by the mediation of its disposition.

d. Absence of Sensation

- 1) The absence of sensation in a subject is the absence of any sensation in a subject that is not suited to having perception.
- 2) The absence/presence of sensation is found in a living or dead body.
- 3) Therefore, the absence of sensation is established in a dead body.

(3) Impassivity with respect to sensation (2A) is the absence of any sensation in a subject that is not suited to perceive (sense).

- (4) The impassivity of the human mind (2B) is the absence of the faculty of sensing (and or immediate sensations in the human mind).

Chapter 2

Human beings sense material thing with their living and organic body.

- (1) Descartes¹¹¹ – Human Soul cognitions depends on (1) that it thinks and (2) that united to a body and it is able *to act (active)* and *to suffer with it (passive)*.
- a. Amo Accepts: The mind acts together with the body by the mediation of a mutual union.
 - b. Amo Denies: That the mind suffers together with the body.
 - i. To suffer and to sense are synonymous from Amo.
- (2) Here, Amo cites people who oppose him. Though he says they are just contradicting themselves.
- a. Descartes¹¹², Sennert, Jean Le Clerc, Georg Coschwiz, and many others.
- (3) Here, Amo cites people that he believes agree with him.
- a. Aristotle, Teichmeyer and Sturm.

Proof of THESESES

Thesis 1: The human mind is not affected by sensible things

- (1) The Human mind is not affected by sensible things but understands the sensation that arise in the body and applies them in its operations.
- (2) The mind and its operations are immaterial because for as a substance is so are the property of the substance.

¹¹¹ Fourth time Descartes in mentioned.

¹¹² Fifth and finally, time Descartes in mentioned.

(3) An idea as a composite entity (divisible), which exists when the mind is established as present in a sensation that preexisted in the body, which is a represented sensation.

1st Proof:

- (1) Whatever senses, then lives.
- (2) Whatever lives then is nourished,
- (3) Whatever lives and is nourished, then grows.
- (4) Whatever is of this sort (1-3), is in the end resolved into its first principle (axioms).
- (5) Whatever is resolved into first principles was derived from principles.
- (6) Everything derived from principles has constitutive parts.
- (7) Something has constitutive parts, if it is a divisible body.
- (8) Therefore, if the human mind senses, then it is a divisible body.
- (9) The human mind cannot be divisible.

Therefore, the human mind does not sense.

2nd Proof

- (1) No spirit senses material things.
- (2) The human mind is a spirit.

Therefore, the human mind does not sense material things.

Everything that lives necessarily senses; everything that senses necessarily lives.

To live and to exist are not synonymous.

- (1) Everything that lives exists, but not everything that exists lives.
- (2) For a spirit and a stone exist but are less likely said to live.
- (3) Spirits exist and operate with understanding.
- (4) Matter exists and receives the action of the agent.

(5) Humans and animals exist, act, live, and sense with their bodies, which are live and necessarily sense.

(6) Therefore, through this living humans and animals live and necessarily sense.

Therefore, the living and organic body is necessarily for sensing.

3rd Proof

(1) Whatever is killed can be killed, necessarily lives.

(2) To be killed is to be deprived of life.

(3) Therefore, if the body is killed and can be killed, then it lives

(4) If the body lives, then it senses.

(5) If the body senses, then it possesses the faculty of sensing,

Therefore, to live and to sense perpetually exist in the same subject and principle.

Thesis 2: The faculty of sensing are not inherent (inhere/intrinsic) in the mind.

Circulation of the Blood Proof

(1) Whatever admits of the circulation of the blood admits of the principle of life

(2) Whatever admits of (1), then admits of the faculty of sensing

(3) The body admits the circulation of the blood and of the principle of life

(4) The heart with the circulation of blood belongs to the body

(5) The blood belongs to the body

(6) 1-6 are not the mind (substance) – [immaterial]

Therefore, the body [material]through the circulation of the blood admits of the principles of life together with the faculty of sensing.

Thesis 3: Therefore, the body admits of sensation and the faculty of sensing.

(1) Either the mind or the body admits of sensation and the faculty of sensing.

(2) Not the mind (as has already been shown in the Proofs of Theses 1 & 2).

(3) *Therefore*, the body.

Final Note/Conclusion

Whatever consists in a mere operation of the mind is to be attributed to the mind alone.

Whatever presupposes sensations and the faculty of sensing and involves a material concept is to be attributed entirely to the body.

CHAPTER THREE

RACIAL EVOLUTION VIA THE ROYAL SOCIETY

I. Introduction

Diversity and the concept of race are, or should be, central concerns both for the history of philosophy and for our current political reality. Within academic philosophy, these concerns are expressed in the growing demand for minority representation within the canon, which is overwhelmingly white and male, especially in early modern philosophy. Furthermore, until now, historians of philosophy have not spent the time necessary to uncover various theories of human difference—particularly race—in early modern Europe, and from there to understand how these theories shaped philosophical reflections on human diversity. The foundation of these theories as well as their impact on philosophical reflections of human difference are explicitly seen in early modern England. I begin with England because of the major European powers England had the most contact with Africa and appears to be the first to delineate a distinction between Europeans and West Africans (i.e., Negroes). It is most helpful for my own research and to scholarship more broadly to start here.

I argue that the Royal Society, driven by financial incentives and England's economy, as well as the burgeoning slave trade, played a large role in advancing “scientific” theories of human difference, especially in relation to Africa. The Royal Society essentially propelled natural philosophy into the proto-racist landscape experienced in the early 18th Century, culminating in the application of the *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* racist claims given by 18th Century

philosophers, e.g., Immanuel Kant and David Hume, and the ousting of Anton Wilhelm Amo—the first African to obtain a doctoral degree in philosophy and teach at a university in modern Europe (c.1734).

This project on the Royal Society and its influence on the early modern racial environment begins with Anton Wilhelm Amo. Why was he moderately accepted in early modern Europe? What was the racial landscape prior to and affecting Amo's context? Why did Johann Ernst Philippi, Professor der Beredsamkeit (Halle), write a satirical poem (c.1747) about Amo's love for a German woman?¹¹³

I begin with a brief history of slaving in England and the major early modern theories of human difference, followed by an investigation into the means by which the Society both slowed and enlarged scientific racism (i.e., empirical evidence that justifies racism). Then I inspect the legality of African slavery in England through *Butts v. Penny* (c.1677). This legal investigation will lead to an examination of the Royal Society's reaction and the cultural response to the slave trade after this legalization. Lastly, I'll consider the application of the *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* racist claims made by a few 18th Century philosophers, claims which constituted a rejection of Bacon's "new science". That is, a reject of toiling and existing in theoretical aporia with sensible experience until the empirical and rational run parallel to one another.

¹¹³ Johann Ernst Philippi's [1700-1758] titles the last two sections, "III. Herrn M. Amo zu Jena, Eines gelehrten Mohrens, Galanter Liebes-Antrag An Die Mademoiselle Astrine, eine schöne Brünette. IV. Der Mademoiselle Astrine Parodische Antwort Auf vorstehendes Gedichte Eines verliebten Mohrens. [3. Mister Amo at Jena, A learned Moor, Gallant Love Proposal. 4. To Miss Astrine, A beautiful brunette. Miss Astrine's Parodistic Answer to the above poem of a Love-stricken Moor. (My Translation)]" Philippi seems to be ridiculing something that was becoming normative in German culture: that someone like Amo should not be with a German woman because he is inferior.

II. A History of Slaving in England

As Europe exited the Middle Ages its limited population lacked “the free laborers necessary to cultivate the staple crops of sugar, tobacco, and cotton in the New World” and could not supply enough “quantities adequate to permit large-scale production.” (Williams 1994, 6) Europe, especially England—after the Black Death, Hundred Years War, and Great Slump—needed a way to steady the ship, and slave labor became a vital method until its abolishment throughout the 19th Century. In *Capitalism and Slavery* Eric Williams famously proclaims, “Slavery was not born of racism: rather racism was the consequence of slavery.”¹¹⁴ (7) Human difference did not birth scientific racism; rather society and culture with the authority of science produced scientific racism as a means to justify the use of chattel slavery for economic advancement. In the chapter “From Humanity to Commodity” from his study *Black and White*, James Walvin seconds Williams’ claim:

The transmutation of the African from humanity to chattel was thus complete and Parliament no less than economic practice had, to use the words of a West India planter, “set the mark and stamp of property upon Negroes”. To concede humanity to the African would be to destroy the economic role created for him in the plantations. (43)

¹¹⁴ “It is not improbable that they were connected with a complete reversal of mercantilist thought on the question of emigration, as a result of the internal development of Britain herself. By the end of the seventeenth century the stress had shifted from the accumulation of the precious metals as the aim of national economic policy to the development of industry within the country, the promotion of employment and the encouragement of exports. The mercantilists argued that the best way to reduce costs, and thereby compete with other countries, was to pay low wages, which a large population tended to ensure. The fear of overpopulation at the beginning of the seventeenth century gave way to a fear of underpopulation in the middle of the same century. The essential condition of colonization emigration from the home country now ran counter to the principle that national interest demanded a large population at home. Sir Josiah Child denied that emigration to America had weakened England, but he was forced to admit that in this view he was in a minority of possibly one in a thousand, while he endorsed the general opinion that “whatever tends to the depopulating of a kingdom tends to the impoverishment of it.” Jeffrey’s unusual humanitarianism appears less strange and may be attributed rather to economic than to spirituous considerations. His patrons, the Royal Family, had already given their patronage to the Royal African Company and the Negro slave trade. For the surplus population needed to people the colonies in the New World the British had turned to Africa, and by 1680 they already had positive evidence, in Barbados, that the African was satisfying the necessities of production better than the European.” (Williams 1944, 16) For more information read chapter one: *The Origin of Negro Slavery*.

Walvin named England in particular, and not other European countries, in his conclusion, saying, “England slowly came to view him [the Negro] as a non-human.” (43) Great Britain chose to differentiate itself from the “the Negro” as a means to reestablish its economic dominance.

Led by Sir John Hawkins, England joined the Atlantic Slave trade in 1562; Queen Elizabeth the First granted Hawkins a coat of arms with a bounded African slave for his trade efforts and profits, in which she herself invested.¹¹⁵ (Kelsey 2003, 32-34) Prior to Queen Elizabeth, King Henry the Seventh’s court had a “black trumpet” player, John Blanke; he was given a salary and listed as a court musician. (Spicer et al. 2012, 29 & 94) John Blanke’s presence as a free Black at court in 1511 displays the fact that there were non-royal free Blacks at court in 16th Century English. In 1605, Queen Anne and her ladies performed a *Masque of Blackness* where they became the “daughters of Niger”; this was followed by the sequel *Masque of Beauty*, in which the King whitens the ladies. (Spicer et al. 2012, 40) Here, Queen Anne, the King, and her ladies define whiteness as beauty. At this point, Blacks while having some freedoms still lacked the beauty of whiteness.

During the early 1600s, England, especially its rulers, realized that slaving could release them from their economic worries, and a division of beauty in relation to skin color manifested itself, as seen in Queen Anne and her ladies’ performance. From 1600 to 1614, 79 percent of England’s parliament invested in African commerce. (Habib 2007, 124) In 1618, King James the First granted The Guinea Company trade rights in Africa. The “objective of the Guinea company [was] gold”, but it also instructed its captains “to buy as many good lusty negers as shee can well carry”. (Habib 2007, 125) The Royal African Company would also take up this objective of buy Blacks in 1672. Charles the First, the son of James the First, in an effort to maintain

¹¹⁵ Hawkins actually tried to raid Africa for slaves, which did not work; eventually, he purchased African slaves from Portuguese merchants. (Hair 1998, 246)

governmental control over this booming business in Africa, went one step further, giving “exclusive” trade rights to The Guinea Company in 1630. (Habib 2007, 150 & 125) From the late 1640s to the late 1650s, there was a 300 percent increase in English ships purchasing slaves on the Gold Coast, Amo’s home. (Habib 2007, 125) Before 1640, the English weren’t focused on the African slave trade because they did not have clear knowledge of the lucrative production of raw materials in the Americas, which the Dutch began in 1619 by taking 20 African slaves to Virginia. (Postma 1992, 12)

On the 8th of May 1660, England restored Charles the Second, the second son of Charles of First, as king; four months later the House of Commons resolved to increase navigation and trade in Africa, Asia, and America. In the winter of 1660, three organizations were formed with linked membership: the Royal Society (November 28), committed to the pursuit of scientific knowledge; the Council for Foreign Plantations (December 1), devoted to trade in the Americas; and the Royal Adventures—later the Royal African Company—(December 18), dedicated to trade in Africa. (Malcolmson 2013, 42-3) Here scientific knowledge and economic advantage display their interwoven relationship; that same year Henry Oldenburg, the founding editor of the *Philosophical Transactions*, wrote about these membership links in a letter (16 December 1660) to Adam Boreel. (Oldenburg 1966, Bd.1: 406)¹¹⁶ Thomas Sprat, Society fellow and the author of

¹¹⁶ The letter says, “For the rest, Dr. Wilkins lingers in this city; he has been made Dean of York and elected President of the new English Academy very recently founded here under the patronage of the king for the advancement of the sciences [i.e. the Royal Society]. It is composed of extremely learned men, remarkably well versed in mathematics and experimental science; eminent among them are Viscount Brouncker, our very noble Boyle, two knights—Moray and Neale—Wilkins, Ward and Wallis; two mathematical professors in Gresham College, Wren and Rooke, and another eleven besides whose names escape me at the moment. Whether foreigners will be admitted I doubt very much, though some say so. Our king has also constituted a particular council [ie. the Council for Foreign Plantations] which will be responsible for the civil and spiritual welfare of the English colonists who fix their abodes in the East or West Indies, and which will explore means by which the Gospel of Christ may be introduced to pagan and barbarous foreigners. (Oldenburg 1966, Bd.1: 405-6)

History of the Royal Society, defines the Royal African Company as the “twin sister of the Royal Society.”¹¹⁷ (Sprat 1722, 407)

III. Human Difference in Early Modern England

Before we continue discussing the Society we must, first, discuss the theories of human difference familiar to academics during the mid-17th Century. Let’s begin with Thomas Browne’s *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* [Vulgar Errors], which was originally published in 1646. In book sixth, chapters 10 through 12, Browne attempts to inquire into the vulgar errors of Blackness; these chapters are entitled “On the Blackness of Negroes”¹¹⁸, “Of the same”¹¹⁹, and “A Digression concerning Blackness”¹²⁰. (397 - 414) Second and foremost, we’ll engage Robert Boyle, one of the leading natural philosophers of the Royal Society during the 17th Century, and his *Experiments and Considerations Touching Colours* from 1664, which rejects the major theories of human difference using Bacon’s “new science”. Both Browne and Boyle cite Leo

¹¹⁷ “The First of these since the *King’s* return, has bin carry’d on with great vigour, by the *Foundation* of the *Royal Company*: to which as to the *Twin-Sister* of the *Royal Society*, we have reason as we go along, to with all *Prosperity*. In both these *Institutions* begun together, our *Kings* has imitated the two most famous *Works* of the wisest of ancient *Kings*: who at the same time sent to *Ophir* for Gold, and compos’d a *Natural History*, from the Cedar to the Shrub.” (Sprat 1772, 407-8)

¹¹⁸ He concludes, “And thus may it also be in the generation and sperm of Negroes, that being first and in its naturals white, but upon separation of parts, accidents before invisible become, apparent; there arising a shadow or dark efflorescence in the out-fide; whereby not only their legitimate and timely births, but their abortions are also dusky, before they have felt the scorch and fervour of the Sun.” (Browne 1658, 405) Before this conclusion he works through multiple explanations of climate theory.

¹¹⁹ In this section he talks about the curse of ham, which Browne rejects. He says: “Lastly, it is a very injurious method unto Philosophy, and a perpetual promotion of ignorance, in points of obscurity, nor open unto easy considerations, to fall upon a present refuge unto Miracles; or recur unto immediate contrivance from the unsearchable hands of God. Thus in the conceit of the evil odor of the Jews, Christians without a farther research into the verity of the thing, or enquiry into the cause, draw up a judgement upon them from the passion of their Saviour.” (Browne 1658, 409)

¹²⁰ Here, Browne revisits the previous theories and attempts to add to the literature. He concludes: “Thus have we at last drawn our conjectures unto a period; wherein if our contemplations afford no satisfaction unto others, I hope our attempts will bring no condemnation on our selves, (for besides that adventures in knowledge are laudable, and the assayes of weaker heads afford oftentimes improveable hints unto better) although in this long journey we miss the intended end; yet are there many things of truth disclosed by the way; and the collateral verity, may unto reaonnable speculations, requite the capital indiscovery.” (Browne 1658, 413-4)

Africanus, the author of *Descrittione dell’Africa* [Description of Africa] published in 1550, and various articles from Samuel Purchas’ *Hakluytus Posthumus* [Purchas his Pilgrimes], published from 1613 to 1626.

Browne defines Climate Theory and the Curse of Ham as the major theories of human difference in Early Modern Europe; he says,

Which whoever strictly enquires, shall find no lese of darkness in the cause, then blackness in the effect it self; there arising unto examination no such satisfactory and unquarrellable reasons, as may confirm the causes generally received; which are but two in number; The heat and scorch of the Sun; or the curse of God on Cham [Ham] and his Posterity. (Browne 1658, 398)

Boyle cites the same two theories as Browne but adds Polygenesis, which he derives from Isaac de la Peyrère’s (1596-1676) 1655 work *Prae-Adamitae* [Man Before Adam]. Once published, Peyrère’s work had an instant impact on natural philosophy, especially human difference.¹²¹ In relation to Polygenesis, Boyle says, “For I see not why it should not be at least as possible, that White Parents may sometimes have Black Children, as that African Negroes should sometimes have lastingly White ones”.¹²² (Boyle 1999, 92) Boyle is inquiring into whether Whites and

¹²¹In relation to Climate Theory, Boyle says, “There is another Opinion concerning the Complexion of Negroes, that is not only embrac’d by many of the more Vulgar Writers, but likewise by that ingenious Traveller Mr. Sandys, and by a late most learned Critick, besides other men of Note, and these would have the Blackness of Negroes an effect of Noah’s Curse ratify’d by God’s, upon Cham” (Boyle 1999, 159); and on the Curse of Ham, Boyle explains, “It is commonly presum’d that the Heat of the Climates wherein they live, is the reason, why so many Inhabitants of the Scorching Regions of Africa are Black; and there is this familiar Observation to Countenance this Conjecture, That we plainly see that Mowers, Reapers, and other Countreypeople, / who spend the most part of the Hot Summer dayes expos’d to the Sun, have the skin of their Hands and Faces, which are the parts immediately Expos’d to the Sun and Air, made of a Darker Colour than before, and consequently tending to Blackness; And Contrarywise we observe that the Danes and some other people that Inhabit Cold Climates, and even the English who feel not so Rigorous a Cold, have usually Whiter faces than the Spaniards, Portugalls and other European Inhabitants of Hotter Climates.” (Boyle 1999, 85)

¹²² Boyle continues: “And I remember on the occasion of what he delivers, that of the White Raven formerly mention’d, the Possessor affirm’d to me, that in the Nest out of which he was taken White, they found with him but one other Young one, and that he was of as Jetty a Black as any common Raven. But let us hear our Author himself: *Here are* (says he, speaking of the formerly mention’d Regions) *Born in this Countrey White Children, which is very rare among them, for their Parents are Negroes; And when any of them are Born, they are presented to the King, and are call’ d Dondos; These are as White as any I White Men. These are the Kings Witches, and are brought up in Witchcraft, and always wait on the King; There is no man that dare meddle with these Dondos, if they go to the Market they may take what they list, for all Men stand in awe of them. The King of Longo hath four of them.*” (Boyle 1999, 92)

Blacks are distinct races of man, which polygenesis claims. Staying true to the context, we'll focus on these three theories: Polygenesis, the Curse of Ham, and Climate Theory.

The notion of Polygenesis acquired scientific strength from Isaac de la Peyrère's (1596-1676) *Prae-Adamitae*, where he argues that Adam and Eve were not the first or only humans. If they were, then how could one explain Cain's descendants and the earth's population? Therefore, God created at least two groups: those outside the Garden of Eden (i.e., Gentiles) and Adam's descendants (i.e., the Jews). Uniquely, Peyrère believed that both groups were essentially the same (i.e., ensouled¹²³), which becomes scientifically crucial after Descartes. During the 18th Century Polygenists like Voltaire, David Hume, Edward Long, Georg Forster, and Christoph Meiners concluded that essential human difference runs parallel to origin difference, thereby making certain sects of humanity subhuman in particular ways (e.g., character and physique). A majority of natural philosophy accomplished this "essential" differentiation with the theory of degeneration.

Degeneration is the view that racial difference materializes when "a certain part of the species [takes] a wrong turn, or [is] knocked off of the established course set out for humanity at the beginning". (Smith 2015, 117-8) Degeneration presupposes a human "norm", which when diverted produces deviations. Just one year after Peyrère's publication Henry Oldenburg,

¹²³ God chose those Jews and Gentiles by an eternal Election, into whom, without any distinction of Nation; he from eternity infus'd that Spirit which is of God, a Spirit proceeding, stable, incorruptible, eternal; by the *verne* [Latin for spring] of which they might be regenerate, and adorn'd with the glory of immortality. The Spirit of Christ is infus'd into the souls of the Elect, as the vegetative faculty grows up with Trees and Plants: and as the rational faculty, being joynd to vegetative and sensitive is added to the faculties of men. That soul, again, is more spiritly, which consists of most faculties. As for example, The soul of a brute is more sprightly than the soul of a Plant; because a Brute surpasses a Plant in its sensitive faculty. The soul of a Man is more sprightly than the soul of a Brute, because he surpasses it by his reasonable faculty. Therefore the souls of the Elect are most spiritly, above the souls of all other men; because the Elect surpasses all other men, by the Spirit of Christ, by the Spirit of Regeneration, and that Spirit which proceeds from God: Which for that cause the Kingly Prophet called *the principal Spirit*, Psalm 51. By virtue of which, the Elect are called *Spiritual*; yea, spiritual in their bodies; by a resurrection to a spiritual and eternal life. (Peyrère 1656, BK.1:52)

arguably the most important Society member in the 17th Century, wrote a letter to John Milton praising Samuel Maresius's rejection of Pre-Adamism.¹²⁴ (Oldenburg 1966, Bd.1: 101). Sadly, 30 years later, we'll observe the Society's identification of Negroes as a distinct race of men. (Malcolmson 2013, 215) But, at least, still humans.

Secondly, the argument for the Curse of Ham is taken from Genesis. It reads:

The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the people of the whole earth were dispersed. Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard. He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, he said, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers." He also said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his *servant*. May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant. (Gen 9.18-27 ESV)

In summary, it teaches that God cursed Ham, the son of Noah, and his descendants (i.e., people of African descent—Canaanites, Moabites, and Hittites) with their complexion and subjugation because Ham intentionally saw and ridiculed his father's nakedness. *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, one of the most widely read travel narratives of the late medieval and modern periods, explains that Ham's descendants "took Africa".¹²⁵ (Mandeville 1900, 145) *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, the second most read travel narrative of Africa, which Boyle and Oldenburg read,

¹²⁴ "I believe that you have already read the reply that Maresius has made to the champion of the pre-Adamites.1 The former will be supported by a fellow countryman of mine, a certain Martinius, recently sent to Rome by the Chinese society as its agent.2 For he relates in the preface to the book that he has published on the Tartar War,3 that he has broughtwith him very ancient originals of the Chinese history and calendars compiled with singular diligence from the very flood of Noah; and hence he promises to match the Chinese chronology with that which our Holy Scriptures hand down to us; there could be no better proof of the antiquity of the Adamite and Mosaic age, than this. But I must lay down the pen." (Oldenburg 1966, Bd.1: 101)

¹²⁵ "These three brethren had seisin in all the land. And this Cham, for his cruelty, took the greater and the best part, toward the east, that is clept Asia, and Shem took Africa, and Japhet took Europe. And therefore is all the earth parted in these three parts by these three brethren. Cham was the greatest and the most mighty, and of him came more generations than of the other." (Mandeville 1900, 145)

explains that the sons of Ham (i.e., Africans) are cursed, as is everyone of that complexion.¹²⁶ In November of 1657, Oldenburg inquires in a letter to Boreel about the Curse of Ham and Jesus' lineage in Matthew because four Hamitic-African women are named in Jesus' family tree. (Oldenburg 1966, Bd.1: 144)¹²⁷ This is a question worth asking: *How does one justify the Curse of Ham when there are several Hamitic-Africans in Jesus' family tree?*¹²⁸

Lastly, Climate Theory, developed during Antiquity, concluded that climate and geography work together to establish inherent physical characteristics, which can only be artificially changed with reforms.¹²⁹ (Hippocrates 1923, 65-138) As Boyle says,

It is commonly presum'd that the Heat of the Climates wherein they live, is the reason, why so many Inhabitants of the Scorching Regions of *Africa* are Black; and there is this familiar Observation to Countenance this Conjecture, That we plainly see that Mowers,

¹²⁶ "The Merchants brought with them many Negroes; not the worst of their Merchandizes. These they buy of their Parents, some thirty dayes journey above, and on the West side of the River. As the wealth of others consists in multitudes of cattell, so theirs in the multitude of their children, whom they part from with as little passion; never after to be seene or heard of: [II. vi. 913.] regarding more the price then condition of their slavery. These are descended of Chus, the Sonne of cursed Cham; as are all of that complexion. Not so by reason of their Seed, nor heat of the Climate: Nor of the Soyle, as some have supposed; for neither haply, will other Races in that Soyle proove black, nor that Race in other Soyles grow to better complexion : but rather from the Curse of Noe upon Cham in the Posteritie of Chus." (Purchas 1905, 213)

¹²⁷ Oldenburg says, "In occasional hours when I have the chance I ponder upon the genealogy of Christ from reading the New Testament; but in what they regard as the heart of the matter I find not a little of interest. Writers have given various ways of reconciling Matthew and Luke: especially that of the African, which has been the mother of so many inquiries, that the one had described the natural genealogy of Christ, the other his genealogy in law. Then there is that opinion which has many exponents, that is to say, that Matthew traced the descent of Joseph from David through Solomon, while Luke traced the descent of Mary from the same David through Nathan, David's other son. Finally there is that which I find to belong to Antonio de Dominis, Archbishop of Split, which is, that because Jesus could not be included in any one tribe on his mother's side and had no natural father, he was ascribed to the tribe of Judah and the race of David only in citizenship through his legal father." (Oldenburg 1966, Bd.1: 144)

¹²⁸ "Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by *Tamar*, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by *Rahab*, and Boaz the father of Obed by *Ruth*, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the *wife of Uriah [Bathsheba]* ..." (Matthew 1.2-6 ESV) Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bethsheba.

¹²⁹ "Such, in outline and in general, is the character of Europe and of Asia. In Europe too there are tribes differing one from another in stature, in shape and in courage. The differences are due to the same causes as I mentioned above, which I will now describe more clearly. Inhabitants of a region which is mountainous, rugged, high, and watered, where the changes of the seasons exhibit sharp contrasts, are likely to be of big physique, with a nature well adapted for endurance and courage, and such possess not a little wildness and ferocity. The inhabitants of hollow regions, that are meadowy, stifling, with more hot than cool winds, and where the water used is hot, will be neither tall nor wellmade, but inclined to be broad, fleshy, and darkhaired; they themselves are dark rather than fair, less subject to phlegm than to bile. Similar bravery and endurance are not by nature part of their character, but the imposition of law can produce them artificially." (Hippocrates 1923, 131 & 133)

Reapers, and other Countrey people, / who spend the most part of the Hot Summer dayes expos'd to the Sun, have the skin of their Hands and Faces, which are the parts immediatly Expos'd to the Sun and Air, made of a Darker Colour than before, and consequently tending to Blackness. (Boyle 1999, 85)

Essentially, Negroes (i.e., West Africans/Blackamoors) are black because of the climate in which they live. In *Experiments and Considerations Touching Colours* (1664) Boyle cites *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, saying, “*The Children in this Countrey are Born White, and change their Colour in two dayes to a Perfect Black.*”¹³⁰ (Boyle 1999, 92) This observation was used to prove climate theory; it became volatile when intertwined with degeneration. Imtiaz Habib in *Black Lives in the English Archives, 1500-1777* exposes this curiosity: “...he [Browne] concludes ... that the causes of African blackness are ‘great obscurities’ that cannot be ‘reduce[d] unto a resolution’”. (160) Blackness was a scientific mystery, which stumped the early modernists, making it manipulable. That is, natural philosophers could use natural philosophy to express whatever they want about Blacks and Blackness whether their “findings” or presuppositions aligned with Bacon’s “new science” or not.

IV. The Royal Society against Human Difference

We continue from the introduction, after the formation of the Royal Society and the House of Commons’ renewed interest in Africa. The Society aimed to bridge the gap between experience/observation and theory: “Their meetings were as frequent, as their affairs permitted: their proceedings rather by action, then discourse; chiefly attending some particular Trails in Chymistry or Mechanicks:”. (Sprat, 1722 56) In February of 1661, “A committee for considering

¹³⁰ “The children in this Countrey are borne white, and change their colour in two dayes to a perfect blacke. As for example, the Portugals which dwell in the Kingdome of Congo, have sometimes children by the Negro Women, and many times the Fathers are deceived, thinking when the child is borne that it is theirs, and within two dayes it proveth the sonne or daughter of a Negro ; which the Portugals doe greatly grieve at : for they rejoyce when they have a Mulato child, though it be a bastard.” (Purchas 1905, 395)

of proper questions to be inquired of in the remotest parts of the world” was established by the Society, which included Boyle, Oldenburg, Sir William Coventry (the navy commissioner who gave Sir Robert Holmes orders to travel to the Gambia River in West Africa), and Thomas Povey (the only fellow of all three 1660 councils), and several others. (Malcolmson 2013, 42-69) Later that year Thomas Povey impelled the Society “to procure a correspondency in Africa”.

(Malcolmson, 2013 49) Holmes’ surveyor and engineer, John Vermuyden, became that person for Boyle. (Malcolmson, 2013 49)¹³¹ During the formation of these three councils, but after Charles II’s restoration, Holmes pointed the *Henrietta* and four other ships towards the Gambia River to promote English trade along its coast. (Ollard 1969, 52-107) Furthermore, in 1662 the Royal Adventures decided “to supply 3,000 [African] slaves annually to the West Indian colonies.” (Hair 1998, 256) Here, we experience a substantial shift in England’s African slave trade, even though slaving was still not the company’s major focus because only 25 percent of its annual revenue came from the African slave trade in 1665. (Hair 1998, 256)

In 1663, after the return of the *Henrietta*, Boyle met with John Vermuyden, Holmes’ surveyor and engineer. In his 1664 work *Experiments* Boyle used his meeting with Vermuyden and his research from travel narratives about Africa, together with Bacon’s “new science”. Prior to Boyle’s publication, Holmes boarded the *Jersey* (with a test pendulum watch from the Royal Society) in hopes of secure trade routes in Guinea for a second time. (Ollard 1969, 83 - 94)¹³² In

¹³¹ Also, (Ollard 1969, P63).

¹³² As William Coventry says, “For this, under the name of convoy, some of the King's ships were demanded and granted by the Councill. Upon this designe Captain Holmes (now Sr. Robert) was sent in the Jersey, man of an understanding fitt to make a warre, and a courage to make it good; in the latter few goe beyond him; in the former few come short. This Captaine, being sent with instructions drawne according to the dictates of the R, Company, my selfe having drawne them by notes received from Sr. Richard Ford (being soe commanded), though the instructions were pretty bold, yett they served not the Captain's turne, whoe not having patience to stay till he came to the Gold Coast (where it was intended by the Company the game should begin) meeting some Dutch ships outward bound at or near Cape de Verde, hee seized them and fell to shooting at the fort (on w[hich] wee had noe claimmance) and by the Cowardice of those within it, it was surrendered to him...” (Ollard 1969, 85-6)

doing so, Holmes started the Second Anglo-Dutch War over African Trade, which eventually involved American trade.¹³³ This conflict revealed England's thrust for dominance in African Trade.

In 1664, the *Society* asked, "Mr. Boyle and Mr. Hill bring in their inquiries for Guinea against the next meeting", inquiries which were later consolidated by Abraham Hill and published in the *Philosophical Transactions* in 1667 entitled "Inquiries on Guiny". (Malcolmson 2013, 50 & 56) In August of 1664, Povey, Oldenburg, and other Royal Society fellows formed another committee for "some General inquiries to be sent into all the parts of the world." (Malcolmson 2013, 50) The Society, through the Royal Adventures, placed themselves at the forefront of knowledge about human difference with these inquiries, which *would not have existed without the economy of the African slave trade.*

In 1665 the Second Anglo-Dutch War, won by the Dutch in 1667, gathered steam through Charles II's attempt to end Dutch domination in African trade. That same year, Boyle published "General Heads" in the *Philosophical Transactions*, which explained the importance of observing all of Earth's people. Boyle writes:

The things, to be observ'd in such a History, may be variously (and almost at pleasure divided): As, into *Supraterraneous, Terrestrial, Subterraneous*; and otherwise: but we will at present distinguish them into those things, that respect the Heavens, or concern the *Air, the Water, or the Earth.* (Boyle 1665, 186)

Here Boyle even uses the same name or method for observing people as previously seen in Hippocrates' section (*Airs, Waters, Places*) on Climate Theory. In the Earth section, Boyle writes:

Secondly, above the ignobler Productions of the Earth, there must be a careful account given of the Inhabitants themselves, both Native and Strangers, that have been settled there: And in particular, their Stature, Shape, Colour, Features, Strength, Agility, Beauty

¹³³ I, also, find it curious that the Second Anglo-Dutch War was start with scientific advancement, i.e., the Society's pendulum, on board.

(or the want of it) Complexions, Hairs, Diet, Inclinations, and Customs that seem not due to Education. As to their Women (besides the other things) may be observed their Fruitfulness or Barrenness; their hard to ease Labour, & etc. And both in Women and Man must be taken notice of what disease they are subject to, and in these whether there are any symptome, or any other Circumstance, that is unusual and remarkable. (Boyle 1665, 188)

Boyle explains the way natural philosophers pursued research of other peoples, and how the “Inquiries on Guiny” and others were actually developed. I find this list surprising because in race literature we focus on intellectual ability, which does not appear on this list. In the same edition, the Society published a list of inquiries, entitled “Directions for Sea-men, Bound for Far Voyages”. It begins,

It being the Design of the *R.Society*, for the better attaining the End of their Institution, to study *Nature* rather than *Books*, and from the Observations, made of the *Phænomena* and Effects the presents, to compose such a History of Her, as may hereafter serve to build a Solid and Useful Philofophy upon; They have from time to time given order to several of their members to draw up both *Inquiries* of things Observable in forrain Countries, and *Directions* for the Particulars, they desire chiefly to be informed about. And considering with themselves, how much they may increase their *Philosophical* stock by the advantage, which *England* injoyes of making Voyages into all parts of the World... (Rooke 1665, 140-1)

Here, the Society proclaims its use of the economy of slavery to acquire “scientific” knowledge, which at first appears to slow the movement toward scientific racism. This slowing was accomplished through Boyle’s devotion to scientific accuracy, which he thought only existed when theories run parallel to observation, and he believed there was no theory of human difference that ran parallel to observation.

IV. A. Boyle’s Rejection of Human Difference

In his *Experiments*, Boyle begins by explaining his use of “Books of Voyages” and “Travellers” he has met with “to satisfie [him] self in matters of Fact”. (Boyle 1999, 85)

Regarding Climate Theory, which Boyle proclaims is the commonest¹³⁴ understanding, he explains, "...yet Experience doth not Evince, that I remember, That that [the Sun's] Heat alone can produce a Discolouring that shall amount to a true Blackness, like that of the Negroes".¹³⁵ (85) Moreover, Negroes do not lose their color in Asia or Europe and vice versa, and, "As on the other side, the White people removing into very Hot Climates, have their Skins by the Heat of the Sun scorch'd into Dark Colours; yet neither they, nor their Children have been observ'd, even in the Countreys of Negroes, to descend to a Colour amounting to that of the Natives". (89) The sun cannot produce discoloration to the extremes experienced in Negroes; thus, climate could not have produced Negroes.

Concerning the Curse of Ham, Boyle says,

And not only we do not find expressed in the Scripture, that the Curse meant by Noah to Cham, was the Blackness of his Posterity, but we do find plainly enough there that the Curse was quite another thing, namely, that he should be a Servant of servants, that is by an Ebraism, a very Abject Servant to his Brethren, which accordingly did in part come to pass, when the Israelites of the posterity of Shem, subdued the Canaanites, that descended from Cham, and kept them in great Subjection. Nor is it evident that Blackness is a Curse, for Navigators tell us of Black Nations, who think so much otherwise of their own condition, that they paint the Devil White. Nor is Blackness inconsistent with Beauty, which even to our European Eyes consists not so much in Colour, as an Advantageous Stature, a Comely Symmetry of the parts of the Body, and Good Features in the Face. (89)

¹³⁴ "It is commonly presum'd that the Heat of the Climates wherein they live, is the reason, why so many Inhabitants of the Scorching Regions of *Africa* are Black; and there is this familiar Observation to Countenance this Conjecture, That we plainly see that Mowers, Reapers, and other Countreypeople, / who spend the most part of the Hot Summer dayes expos'd to the Sun, have the skin of their Hands and Faces, which are the parts immediately Expos'd to the Sun and Air, made of a Darker Colour than before, and consequently tending to Blackness; And Contrarywise we observe that the *Danes* and some other people that Inhabit Cold Climates, and even the *English* who feel not so Rigorous a Cold, have usually Whiter faces than the *Spaniards*, *Portugalls* and other European Inhabitants of Hotter Climates." (Boyle 1999, 85)

¹³⁵ Continued: "and we shall see by and by that even the Children of some Negroes not yet IO. dayes Old (perhaps not so much by three quarters of that time) will notwithstanding their Infancy be of the same Hue with their Parents." (Boyle 1999, 85)

Boyle rejects the Curse of Ham by displaying its impotence: (1) the curse of Blackness for Ham's descendants is not found in the Bible, (2) blackness is not inconsistent with Beauty, and (3) the subjugation of Canaan (i.e., Ham's descendants) by Israel already took place long ago.

Lastly, in Boyle's rejection of Polygenesis, he says,

The Children in this Countrey are Born White, and change their Colour in two dayes to a Perfect Black. As for Example, The Portugalls which dwell in the Kingdome of Longo have sometimes Children by the Negroe-women, and many times the Fathers are deceived, thinking, when the Child is Born, that it is theirs, and within two dayes it proves the Son or Daughter of a Negroe, which the Portugalls greatly grieve at; And the same person has elsewhere a Relation, which, if he have made no use at all of the / liberty of a Traveller, is very well worth our Notice, since this, together with that we have formerly mention'd of Seminal Impressions, shews a possibility, that a Race of Negroes might be begun, though none of the Sons of Adam for many Precedent Generations were of that Complexion. For I see not why it should not be at least as possible, that White Parents may sometimes have Black Children, as that African Negroes should sometimes have lastingly White ones, especially since concurrent causes may easily more befriend the Productions of the Former kind, than under the scorching Heat of Africa those of the Latter. (92)

Boyle rejects Polygenesis because (1) black babies are born white, and (2) there is no reason to believe that whites cannot have black babies; thus with (1) and (2) Boyle concludes that blackness is only a "Seminal Impression".¹³⁶ Blackness is then inherently tethered to physical difference through the imprint of the semen, but the African is not essentially different from the European. Boyle rejects all the major theories of human difference with experimental knowledge that runs parallel to philosophical reason. (Malcolmson 2013, 61) With the rejection of these theories, the academic war over human difference stumbles into England and abroad.

¹³⁶ Boyle writing on Seminal Impression: "Greater probability there is, That the Principal Cause (for I would not exclude I all concurrent ones) of the Blackness of Negroes is some Peculiar and Seminal Impression, for not onely we see that Blackmore boyes brought over into these Colder Climates lose not their Colour; But good Authors inform us, That the Off-spring of Negroes Transplanted out of Africa, above a hundrec(years ago, retain still the Complexion of their Progenitors, though possibly in Tract of time it will decay; As on the other side, the White people removing into very Hot Climates, have their Skins by the Heat of the Sun scorch'd into Dark Colours; yet neither they, nor their Children have been observ'd, even in the Countreys of Negroes, to descend to a Colour amounting to that of the Natives;". (Boyle 1999, 89)

IV. B. Explosion of Interest in Human Difference

From 1667 until Oldenburg's death in 1677, the Society attempted to thwart theories of human difference that were based on philosophical speculation. Toward the end of the 1670s and Oldenburg's tenure, we see a surge of works on human difference, including Oldenburg's own letters, especially inquiring about Pre-Adamism and the cause of blackness. In 1673 Wilhelm Muller wrote *Description of the Fetu Countty*, which Oldenburg used to form questions; and later that year, the *Philosophical Transactions* published "Inquires for Gliny". This was followed by John Josselyn's *An Account of Two Voyages* in 1674, which affirmed the curse of Ham. In 1675 the *Philosophical Transactions* published a report by Thomas Townes and Martin Lister who claimed that "the blackness of Negroes is likely to be inhaerent in them". (400) That same year Edward Stillingfleet wrote *Origines Sacrae* [Sacred Origins] refuting Pre-Adamism. In 1677 Johann Pechlin published *The Skin and Color of the Ethiopian [that is commonly Nigritians]*, which explained that blackness was only in the skin. Matthew Hale's *The Primitive Origination Of Mankind* published in 1677 refuted Pre-Adamism and claimed that climate theory only physically determines difference, not soul difference.

In the year of his death, Oldenburg, continuing his search for truth, asked Antonie van Leeuwenhoek, "why negroes are black"; Leeuwenhoek replied to a posthumous Oldenburg explaining it as the result of scales in the skin, similarly to Malpighi and Pechlin. (Malcolmson 2013, 67) Out of the Society's inquiries about human difference from the mid-17th Century to the early 18th Century, Oldenburg's name disappears from the final 10 out of 99. (Malcolmson 2013, 64 Ft.148) This fact reveals Oldenburg's importance to the Society, the Society's desire for scientific accuracy in relation to human difference, and the explosion of interest in works on

human difference. Furthermore, human difference could have been dispelled by Boyle's use of Oldenburg's inquiries and the Society's connections, thus undercutting scientific racism.

V. Legality of African Slaves in 17th Century England

Prior to the 17th Century, English law recognized the *villeinage* system, a type of feudal system. *Villani*, serfs, were granted some rights and there existed particular laws that differentiated them landholders. Mark Bailey, a villeinage historian at the University of Leeds, explains,

Villeins were legally unfree, theoretically subject to the will of the lord, and constrained by a wide range of rents and exactions, all of which are usually assumed to have impacted negatively upon their economic well-being, and, by extension, the efficiency of the agrarian economy at large. (Bailey 2009, 430)

Bailey believes that after the Black Death land prices declined because of a shortage of tenants; furthermore, the phrase "in villeninage" (in bondage) disappears from court records. Thus the modern period in England began by toppling the feudal system, but with an air of arrogance.

(Bailey 2014, 307-338) As the John Lilburne trial of 1637 said, "England was too pure an Air for Slaves to breathe [sic] in." (Martone 2009, 201)

The 1677 case *Butts v. Penny* reads,

Trover for 100 Negroes, and upon *Non Culp* it was found by special Verdict, that the Negroes were Infidels, and the Subjects of an Infidel Prince. and are usually bought and sold in America as Merchandise. by the Custom of Merchants, and that the Plaintiff bought these. and was in possession of them until the Defendant took them. And Thompson argued, there could be no Property in the Person of a Man sufficient to maintain Trover. and cited Co. Lit. 116. That no Property could be in Villains but by Compact or Conquest. But the Court held, that Negroes being usually bought and sold among Merchants, and so Merchandise, and also being Infidels, there might be a Property in them sufficient to maintain Trover, and gave Judgment for the Plaintiff, *nisi Causa*, this Term. (Habib 2007, 184)

Butts v. Penny is a *trover* case that was trialed in the Court of the Queen's/King's Bench, which had exclusive jurisdiction. A *trover* is "an action at law to recover the value of property that has been taken from its legal owner." (Martone 2009, 201) *Butts v. Penny* was a property case whose outcome had the legal standing to adjudicate without the opposition of any other courts.

There are three important aspects of this case: (1) Negroes are infidels, and (2) Negroes are usually treated like merchandise in the Americas. (3) Conclusion: since Negroes are infidels and usually treated like merchandise, then they can be treated like property, which explains the *trover*. The key component of this case resides in the relation of Negroes to infidels. Here, the prosecution invokes Papal Law, in which infidel runs parallel to non-Christian. This law allowed for the "territorial dispossession and enslavement of those non-Christian peoples whose supposedly primitive living practices are in violation of natural law, typically including 'cannibalism, sodomy, incest, bestiality,' that is, people who live 'like beasts in ignorance of European customs.'" (Habib 2007, 184) Negroes were infidels by religious law, which gave Europeans legal precedence over the possession of African slaves. Here, Negroes by law are things that can be possessed and sold; they are objects, which this case formally legalized through legal precedence. Similar verdicts from cases throughout the late 17th Century, particularly *Lowe v. Elton* (1677), *Noel v. Robinson* (1687), *Chambers v. Warkhouse* (1693), and *Gelly v. Cleve* (1694), ruled that Blacks can be legally possessed. As Habib explains, "The real effect of the 1677 court ruling, in other words, was that for the English boom in African ownership it acted instantly as a legal precedent..." (Habib 2007, 187) Ultimately *Butts v. Penny* and *Lowe v. Elton* changed the landscape of African trade, allowing organizations to invest in the African slave trade without fear of legal ramifications.

VI. Around and After *Butt v. Penny*

VI. A. English Involvement in the Slave Trade

The Society, through the Royal Adventures, placed themselves at the forefront of knowledge about human difference with these inquiries, which *would not have existed without the economy of the African slave trade*. Slave trafficking became an official objective of the Royal Adventures in its new charter when it was recast as the Royal African Company in 1672. Its 1672 charter says, “the buying and selling, bartering and exchanging of for or with any negroes, slaves, goods...”. (Habib 2007, 125) I find it curious that “negroes” are the first “*object*” listed for “selling, bartering and exchanging”. Even more intriguing is this view of Negroes, in particular, as objects for economic advancement. The focal point, here, is that the buying and selling of Negroes becomes foundational to the economic advancement of England’s trade in Africa. In 1674 the recast Royal African Company decided to supply 5,600 [African] slaves annually to West India and the Americas, which led to the English domination of trade in Guinea, Amo’s home, by 1680. (Hair 1998, 257-9) By the late 1680s, it is clear that the African slave trade existed to supply the Americas with laborers for the production of raw materials because England dealt less in gold and more in Black bodies. (Hair 1998, 260) These Black bodies were sold and transported from one of the many forts, more than six, built by Britain in Africa from 1670 to 1700. (Hair 1998, 261) In 1698, African trade was open to all English merchants through the Act of 1698, which ended the Royal African Company’s monopoly over African trade; but added a 10 percent tax on goods exported to Africa. (Hair 1998, 259)

Historian Paul Lovejoy estimates that between 1701 and 1800 around 40 percent (2,845,000) of African slaves were transported on British vessels to the Americas. (Lovejoy 2011, 6), and The National Archives estimates that between 1640 and 1807 around 3.1 million

African slaves were transported by the British to the Americas. If we do not consider the last 7 years, then 255,000 slaves were transported by the British from 1640 to 1700. The increase from the 17th to 18th Centuries is 1100% or a 669% per year.¹³⁷ England went from barely slaving in Africa, prior to 1640, to being forerunners in the slave market by the early 18th Century. The same religious justifications that were allowed throughout the 17th Century would not work. They needed more, and the Royal Society became that more.

VI. B. The Royal Society

In 1682, after Oldenburg's death, the Society began investing in the slave trade through the Royal African Company. On the 22nd of October 1682, in the Society's minutes, it reads, "Upon consideration of laying out part of the stock of the Royal Society to best advantage it was concluded that 200 pounds of original stock in the Royal African Company should be bought at the rate which it then went for, 260%, that is in all 520 pounds." (Govier 1999, 208) The Royal Society purchased 200 pounds of stock in the Royal African Company at the cost of 520 pounds.¹³⁸ Around the early 1680s, slaving began to engulf all other means of trade in Africa, especially for the English.

Prior to this investment, a large number of present and future fellows of the Society were already investing in the Royal African Company, including future Society president, John Lord Vaughan, who is listed purchasing African slaves (6 males). (Govier 1999, 210) In 1672 when the Royal Adventures were recast into the Royal African Company; of the names listed, in the first tier of members, over 20 percent were Society fellows. Names like George Lord Berkeley,

¹³⁷ My statistics created from these numbers: 1640 to 1700 = 255,000 or 4,250 per year / 1701 to 1800 = 2,845,000 or 28,450 per year.

¹³⁸ This is equivalent to ~100,000 dollars today.

Sir Richard Ford, John Locke, and others are included on this list. Vaughan was governor of Jamaica, an English slaving colony, which began in 1675; he was preceded in Jamaica by another Society fellow, Charles Howard, First Earl of Carlisle. The Royal Society was so intertwined with the slave trade that they were thoroughly connected to one of its major slaving colonies, Jamaica, through most of the 1670 and 80s, which is how the Society was able to get answers to their “scientific” inquiries about Blacks.

In 1682, with its investment in the slave trade through the Royal African Company, the Society began losing its interest in Oldenburgian inquiries in favor of the economic profits of slavery. Morgan Godwyn, a minister to Virginia and Barbados cited in the *Boyle's Papers* in 1675, stated, “They [slave-owners] strain hard to derive our Negro’s from a stock different from Adam’s”; this view of human difference begins to take precedence over scientific inquiry. (Malcolmson 2013, 104) On April 12, 1682, a turning back to Climate Theory is seen in the Society’s minutes: “It was likewise urged ... that Europeans by continuing to inhabit in Africa have been found to turn black, and that blacks in England after a few generations become white”. (Grovier 1999, 215) Here, there is a push, an urge, to advocate for theories of difference.

From 1660 until (at the least) 1677, Oldenburg sent out 89 inquiries on human difference, and from 1678 to 1709 the Society only sent out 10. These statistics reveal Oldenburg’s importance to the Society's desire for scientific accuracy, which Boyle used to dispel scientific racism with Bacon’s new science. By no longer inquiring into human difference, the Society is effectively proclaiming that they know enough about Negroes and don’t need more. As Malcolmson explains after Oldenburg’s death—and, I add, with the legal precedence of Blacks as property in 1677—blackness becomes “a marker of race difference”, singling out West Africans. (Malcolmson 2013, 64)

In 1684 Francois Bernier published his infamous work *A New Division of the Earth*. It begins:

Geographers up to this time have only divided the earth according to its different countries or regions. The remarks which I have made upon men during all my long and numerous travels, have given me the idea of dividing it in a different way. Although in the exterior form of their bodies, and especially in their faces, men are almost all different one from the other, according to the different districts of the earth which they inhabit, so that those who have been great travellers are often never mistaken in distinguishing each nation in that way; still I have remarked that there are four or five species or races of men in particular whose difference is so remarkable that it may be properly made use of as the foundation for a new division of the earth. (Bernasconi and Lott 2000, 1-2)

It was the first major early modern work to divide the world into different races and is cited by the majority of contemporary race scholars as the starting point of proto-conceptions of race¹³⁹.

Bernier was invited to visit the Society on the 29th of April 1685. (Malcolmson 2013, 69-70)

That same year Hans Sloane, a proto-Christoph Meiners—who used science to claim that skulls could be used to delineate races¹⁴⁰—and a huge plantation owner, was elected to the Society; he served as secretary for 20 years, president for 15 years, and edited the *Philosophical*

Transactions for 20 years. (Malcolmson 2013, 75 - 90) Throughout Sloane's 56-year career with the Society, we see the advocacy of proto-scientific racist ideology. From 1685 to 1690 Richard Waller, the Society's secretary, included in the Society's minutes the phrase "Negroes a distinct race of men". (Malcolmson 2013, 215) In 1699 Edward Tyson, fellow of the Society, published *Orang-outang*¹⁴¹, which was dedicated to the Society's president, discussing the hybridism of apes and men in Africa.

¹³⁹ The four or five racial divisions are Europe and North Africa, Africa except North Africa, China, Lapps, and Americans.

¹⁴⁰ Sloan talked about and displayed these skulls different to the Society on the 10 of December 1690. The minutes read, "Dr Sloan shewed severall skulls of different Nations, that of the West Indian had no Sutures, and the os Frontis was exceedingly depressed, but t'was supposed accidental. That of the Irish Man had all the sutures visible. Dr Tyson said, he had seen the Lambdoides suture double. The skull of the French Man was so contrived, as to be every bone taken to peeces, and were fastened together by wire hasps." (Malcolmson 79)

¹⁴¹ This work by Edward Tyson inquiries into whether the Ancients Pygmy are monkeys, apes or humans. He says, "That the Pygmies of the Ancients were a fort of Apes, and not of Humane Race, I shall endeavour to prove in the

Thomas Sprat, Society fellow and author of *History of the Royal Society*, says,

This alteration has bin caus'd in our memory... And still we have reason to expect that this change [English class structure] will proceed further, for the better: if our gentlemen shall more condescend to engage in commerce, and to regard the Philosophy of Nature. The first of these since the King's return, has bin carry'd on with great vigour, by the foundation of the Royal Company: to which as twin sister of the Royal Society, we have reason as we go along to wish all prosperity. In both these institutions begun together, our King has intimated the two most famous works of the wisest of the antient Kings: who at the same time sent to Ophir for gold, and compos'd a Natural History, from the cedar to the shrub... (Sprat 1722, 407-8)

Here, Sprat clearly reveals the interwoven nature of science, the Royal Society, and African trade, the Royal African Company. He names the Royal African Company, which made slaving a central aspect of its charter, the “twin sister” of the Royal Society. He explains that neither will be successful without them both being successful; and most importantly, he explains that the members of the Royal Society need to, “condescend to engage in commerce, and [then] to regard the Philosophy of Nature.” Sprat saw the African slave trade as a degrading of the English nature; but also, he saw this degradation as essential to acquiring knowledge of Philosophy of Nature. Accordingly, the Royal Society, twin sister to the Royal African Company, degraded themselves to acquire “scientific” information about nature through the African slave trade, in which it invested and which it backed with governorships.

VII. Hume, Diderot, and Kant on Blacks

It is here from 1680 to 1700 that the conversation that created scientific racism began to develop in the Society; during this time, the Society and key fellows began investing in the slave

following Essay. And if the Pygmies were only Apes, then in all probability our Ape may be a Pygmies; a sort of Animal so much resembling Man, that both the Ancients and the Moderns have reputed it to be a Puny Race of Mankind, call'd to this day, Homo Sylvestris. The Wild Man; Orang-Outang, or a Man of the Woods; by the Africans Qaias Morron, by others Baris, or Barris, and by the Portugese, the Salvage. But observing that under these Names, they describe different Animals; for Distinction-sake, and to avoid Equivocation, I shall call the Subject, of which I am about to give the Anatomy, a Pygmie from its Stature; which I find to be just the fame with the Stature of the Pygmies of the Ancients.” (Tyson 1699, 1)

trade, allowing Godwyn's statement to be recast, "Some key fellows strain hard to derive our Negro's from a stock different from Adam's." This tainting of scientific inquiry opened the door for the proto-racist landscape experienced during the early 18th Century, which culminated in the application of the *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* racist claims given by 18th Century philosophers.

David Hume (1711-76) in volume three, essay twenty-one, of *The Philosophical Works of David Hume* (1753) describes Blacks in this way:

I am apt to suspect *the Negroes to be naturally inferior to the Whites*. There scarcely ever was a civilized nation of that complexion, nor even any individual, eminent either in action or speculation. *No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences*. On the other hand, the most rude and barbarous of the Whites, such as the ancient Germans, the present Tartars, have still something eminent about them, in their valour, form of government, or some other particular. Such a uniform and constant difference could not happen, in so many countries and ages, if nature had not made an original distinction between these breeds of men. Not to mention our colonies, there are Negro slaves dispersed all over Europe, of whom *none ever discovered any symptoms of ingenuity*; though low people, without education, will start up amongst us, and distinguish themselves in every profession. In Jamaica, indeed, they talk of one Negro as a man of parts and learning; *but it is likely he is admired for slender accomplishments, like a parrot who speaks a few words plainly*. (Hume 1826, 236)

Hume, here, demarcates Blacks (1) as naturally inferior to the Whites; (2) as having no ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences; (3) as not having the ability to distinguish themselves professionally/intellectually; and (4) as only being able to recite or imitate intelligence, not as actually having intelligence. Hume clearly does not make an argument here; he simply and without reasoning defines Blacks in particular ways, as if these things are inherent to Blackness.

Denis Diderot (1713-84) in the *Encyclopédie* (1765) clearly generates a distinction between "moors" and "negroes". Moors are "small, thin, of poor appearance, with spirit and finesse", but ultimately, "belong to the white race." No such thing is said about Negroes. Negroes are "large, stout, well made, but simple and without genius" and are "a result of corrupt

morals.”¹⁴² (Diderot 1763, 344) Diderot, then, defines Moors as Africans from north of the Sahara Desert and Negroes as Africans from sub-Saharan Africa. He, too, gives no reason for his distinction of Moors and Negroes. In 1764, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* writes,

The Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the ridiculous. ... So essential is the difference between these two human kinds, and it seems to be just as great with regard to the capacities of mind as it is with respect to color. (2:253) ... There might be something here worth considering, except for the fact that this scoundrel was completely black from head to foot, a distinct proof that what he said was stupid. (2:255)

Kant sees Negroes as having *by nature* (1) ridiculous feelings and (2) less mental capacities with respect to their skin color, which proves that Blacks are stupid. Kant’s reasoning is simply that Blackness is equivalent to stupidity; he, like the others, does not have scientific or philosophical reasons.¹⁴³

Hume, Diderot, and Kant all employ a type of Liberal Racism. Richard Popkin defines Liberal Racism as the “making the best of the European experience the model for everyone, and the eventual perfection of mankind consisting in everyone becoming creative Europeans”

¹⁴² “The inhabitants of the Canary islands are not Negroes, they have nothing in common with them except the flattened nose. Those who live on the African continent at the level of these islands are quite tanned Moors, but belong to the white race. The inhabitants of Cap Blanc are again Moors. These Moors extend to the Senegal river, which separates them from the Negroes. The Negroes are to the south, and are absolutely black. Moors are small, thin, of poor appearance, with spirit and finesse. Negroes are large, stout, well made, but simple and without genius. To the north and to the south of the river there are men called Fula, who seem to be a variation on the Moors and the Negroes. The Fula are not entirely black like Negroes, but they are much more brown than the Moors. The Cape Verde Islands are entirely peopled with Mulattos, come from the first Portuguese and the Negroes they found there; they are called copper colored Negroes.” (Diderot 1765, 344)

¹⁴³ The later Kant in *Of the Different Human Races* writes, “Air, sun, and diet can modify the growth of the body of an animal. Factors such as these cannot, however, produce this change together with a reproductive power capable of producing such change without these causes. Any possible change with the potential for replicating itself must instead have already been present in the reproductive power so that chance development appropriate to the circumstances might take place according to a previously determined plan. Such development makes it possible for things to turn out well for the creature and for it to preserve itself continually. For nothing can become a part of an animal’s reproductive power that is foreign to it, since this would make it possible for the creature to distance itself gradually from its original and essential determination and produce true degenerate forms that might perpetuate themselves.” (Bernasconi and Lott 2000, 12) Looking here, we observe Kant’s use of degeneration, but he includes the notion that this is only with respect to one’s genetic code (i.e. “in the reproductive power”). Thus, if a race (i.e. human group) is inferior in Kant’s system then that inferiority is not created by the environment or humors, but by one’s genetic code.

(Popkins 2012, 89), while Justin E. H. Smith defines it as “a sort of color-coded value judgment” (Smith 2015, 54) that is soaked in Christian universalism, which we saw in *Butts v. Penny* and *Lowe v. Elton*. They are both right, but Smith’s religious addition is more accurate. Hume, Diderot, and Kant seem to have no real reasons behind their belief that Black people are foundationally different, which is why Smith ascribes their seemingly racial claims to *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* fallacies stemming from human differences.

Ultimately, they are saying that Black skin equals fundamental difference or ethnic difference equals biological difference, which can be seen at the end of the 17th Century and throughout 18th Centuries in England and Germany—causing Amo to return to Africa in 1747. Furthermore, Hume, Diderot, and Kant appear to reject Bacon’s “new science” of theory running parallel to experience/observation. Amo had already acquired a doctoral degree and taught at three German universities before any of these three philosophers had published the previous texts. That skin could accomplish this amount of difference doesn’t appear very scientific, and Robert Boyle’s *Experiments* reveals the fact that the “new science” actually could and did provide evidence of the opposite.

VIII. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Royal Society, led by Oldenburg and his inquiries, used the economy of slavery to acquire scientific information of remote peoples, giving way to (1) Robert Boyle’s rejection of the major theories of human difference with Bacon’s “new science”, which slowed the movement toward scientific racism, and (2) the information and conversations necessary to inflate the racial landscape, which was later used to justify the slavery that the Society invested in and distance Africans, especially Negroes, from humanity. The movement from (1) to (2) is

predicated on the formal legalization of Negroes as property in the *trover* cases of the late 17th Century. Furthermore, it is highly plausible that (1) Robert Boyle's rejection of the major theories of human difference allowed Anton Amo and others in a similar position a moderate acceptance from the mid-17th Century to the beginning of the 18th Century, and (2) the Society's interest in human difference helped produce information and conversations necessary to inflate the racial landscape, which were later used to justify slavery and distance Africans from humanity—thus exposing the reason philosophers similar to Amo were barred from philosophy for almost the next 150 years.

Ultimately, science uses trade to correct science with Oldenburgian inquiries and Boyle's *Experiments and Considerations Touching Colours* (1664), but the economy from trade, especially the slave trade, became too lucrative because even science needs financing. The change that economics effected in the Society set the precedent for the West in relation to human difference, making way for the *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* racist claims made by 18th Century philosophers and the ousting of Anton Wilhelm Amo.

CONCLUSION

In writing my dissertation I had two aims: to address (A) the lack of diversity in the philosophical canon and (B) the insufficient historical analysis of various designations of human difference. I explained that Amo was both a philosopher in Europe and an African native, which forces Amo scholarship to be interrelated with race. Thus, my research attempted to elucidate Amo's philosophical significance and his relation to race and human difference.

My first chapter addresses (A) and (B). In this chapter I wanted to produce a biography about Amo within the early modern context that called special attention to the baptism of Moors, racial designations, and religious divisions that had philosophical, social, and political influence. The biographical sketch that I produced did just that; we engaged Amo's life within the surrounding context, paying special attention to his proprietors and philosophical divisions created by religion, baptism, and race.

We were introduced to the power of the Wolfenbüttel family, which affected Amo's life both positively and negatively. Positively, Amo acquired position because of Wolfenbüttel's position; and negatively, his position diminished after the death of the three Dukes. With this loss of position Amo began feeling the weight of his race within the shifting racial environment and moved toward *Aufklärung* ideals, as seen in his biography after 1739, where we see a conflating of West African with Negro from scholars when talking about Amo. Leo Africanus' *Description of Africa*, available throughout Europe, delineated between two types of Moor: Tawnie Moores, from North Africa, and Negroes (or Blacke Moores), from sub-Saharan Africa.

He adds that Negroes “live a beastly kind of life, being utterly destitute of the use of reason, of dexterity of wit, and of all arts. They behave as if they had continually lived in the forest among wild beasts”, and he defines the people of Guinea, Amo’s homeland, as Negroes. (Pory and Africanus 1600, 42) Leo Africanus also demonstrates that Europe is separated from Africa by the Mediterranean Sea and from Asia by the Nile River. Part of Ethiopia then resides on the Red Sea, east of the Nile River; thus part of today’s Africa was actually known as Asia. Additionally, Herodotus even talked about the “Ethiopians of Asia”. (Godley 1938, Bk7.70)

In addition, we discussed the role of the Pietists, who defined philosophers as absolute fatalists and non-Christian based on their philosophy. The Pietist rejected Orthodox Lutheranism and the *Aufklärung* because they saw them as either (1) being absolute fatalists or (2) using human reason to prove things that only God could know or that only God could define as moral. The Pietist defined total Spinozism as maintaining (1) one substance, denying the body-mind distinction; (2) an infinite regress of causation; and (3) the necessity of that infinite regress. Partial Spinozism accepts (2) and (3). Then we turned to Amo. He affirmed the body-mind distinction, particularly in his dissertation (1734). In response to (2) and (3), Amo accepted the causal chain of events but explained that human intentions can direct themselves towards an end that opposes God as long as one’s body allows it. He held causation, or the order of things according to causation, as the object of philosophy, and he believed in human freedom. Ultimately, he thought that with the correct training a mind could acquiesce soberly or beyond doubt.

Through Amo’s biography, we saw the importance of baptism for a Moor in early modern Europe. Throughout Europe the upper classes, especially in Germany, secured Moors to display their power and glory, which elevated based on the accomplishments of their Moors.

Baptism prevailed as the first and forefront accomplishment of a Moor's proprietors because it produced a change in status. Baptism, which required godparents (the Dukes for Amo), offered a Moor (1) a change in status and (2) a relationship with his or her godparents (i.e., proprietors) that made the proprietors naturalized parents and required them to contribute to the Moor's education and development. This relationship became symbiotic in some ways and complicated in others because the Moor still served his or her proprietors.

Lastly, and foremost, I wanted to update Amo scholarship by bringing together almost all of Amo's source materials, by transcribing and translating Amo's source materials for future English-speaking researchers, and by broadening our understanding of the surrounding context from Amo's Black perspective, which I argued is lacking. In this work I have cited, transcribed, and given an English translation for almost every Amo source; hopefully, future English-speaking researchers will find this valuable. Ultimately, Amo's biography forces philosophy to ask new and intriguing questions that force scholars to reevaluate the early modern context.

In my second chapter I first address (A) then conclude by addressing (B). Here I wanted to produce a comprehensive explanation of Amo's critique of Descartes then investigate why Amo had this particular critique. Descartes and Amo agreed (1) on the substantial divide between the mind and body and (2) that the faculty of sensation is not a fundamentally part of the "thinking thing". Additionally, Descartes believes that sensations arise at the union as confused modes of thinking because distinct substances do not necessitate a prevention of interaction and experience. Amo defines this premise as logically inconsistent with Descartes' ontological distinction because contrary substances cannot contain, engage with, and/or receive one another. For Descartes, if at the union the mind isn't active and passive, then one's mind could never

know pain but only ever be aware of it. Thus, for one to *know* pain, the relation of one's mind to his or her body necessitates something more intimate than causal manipulation.

Amo accepts that the mind acts together with the body through the mediation of a mutual union, but he denies that the mind suffers together with the body. This *commercium*, not commingling, between the mind and body does not allow the mind to *really* feel any sensations or suffering, which only occur to/on the body, a living entity. The mind perceives sensation by way of the body, which it cognizes, and applies those perceived ideas in its operations. The body does not substantially interact with the mind, even though it is essential to the mind's representation of ideas, and thus to the mind's effect on itself and its intentions. Amo makes a strong distinction between the material parts of the body, which sense and are alive, and the soul. The soul is an immaterial, spirit thing; by definition, it cannot receive any sensations and is not *alive*. So yes, the soul is only aware of what happens to Descartes' ship while the brain and body, being alive, have experiential knowledge of the ship, allowing humans to *think* the soul is more than aware of its pain and suffering. Yet truly, for Amo, the soul only has ideas of bodily pains.

I then proposed two reasons to explain why Amo made this particular critique: the first, based on the historical context of Descartes' *Meditationes* and the surrounding philosophical dialogue, and the second, based on human difference and the surrounding dialogue about race. For the first, Amo strengthens the immortality of Descartes' soul by widening the real distinction and not allowing the mind to be divisible nor sense. If the soul engages and receives external passions (senses), then it is alive and divisible, and thus can be killed. Amo's impassivity of sensations and the faculty of sensing thwarts this concern. For the second, Amo's widening of the real distinction necessarily concludes that material things can have no real effect on immaterial things. If we take the early modern concepts of human difference to be based on

external conditions affecting the body, which is nonessential, then with Amo's impassivity, external conditions would only affect the body, and the mind, which is essential, would never be perceived as inferior based on being affected by external conditions.

My final chapter focused only on (B). I began by asking the question: Why was Amo moderately accepted in Early Modern Europe? What was the racial landscape prior to and affecting Amo's context? Why did Johann Ernst Philippi, Professor der Beredsamkeit (Halle), write a satirical poem (c.1747) about Amo's love for a German woman? Here I start to untangle the historical ontology of race.

I begin with a brief history of slaving in England and the major early modern theories of human difference followed by an investigation into the means by which the Society both slowed and enlarged scientific racism (i.e., empirical evidence that justifies racism). I showed how Boyle rejected all the major theories of racial human difference. Boyle rejected Climate Theory because the sun cannot produce discoloration to the extremes experienced in Negroes. He rejected the Curse of Ham by displaying its impotence: (1) the curse of Blackness for Ham's descendants is not found in the Bible, (2) blackness is not inconsistent with Beauty, and (3) the subjugation of Canaan (i.e. Ham's descendants) by Israel already took place long ago. Lastly, Boyle rejects Polygenesis because (1) black babies are born white, and (2) there is no reason to believe that whites cannot have black babies.

I then inspected the legality of African slavery in England through *Butt v. Penny* (c.1677), which led to an examination of the Royal Society's reaction and the cultural response to the slave trade after this legalization. The case concluded that since Negroes are infidels and usually treated like merchandise, they can be treated like property. The key component of this case resides in the relation of Negroes to infidels. Here, the prosecution invokes Papal Law,

according to which infidel runs parallel to non-Christians. This law allowed for the “territorial dispossession and enslavement of those non-Christian peoples whose supposedly primitive living practices are in violation of natural law, typically including ‘cannibalism, sodomy, incest, bestiality,’ that is, people who live ‘like beasts in ignorance of European customs.’” (Habib 2007, 184) Negroes were infidels by religious law, which gave Europeans legal precedence over the possession of African slaves.

Lastly, I considered the application of *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* racist claims made by a few 18th Century philosophers. These claims constituted a rejection of Bacon’s “new science”. Hume, Diderot, and Kant all employ a type of Liberal Racism. Richard Popkin defines Liberal Racism as the “making the best of the European experience the model for everyone, and the eventual perfection of mankind consisting in everyone becoming creative Europeans” (Popkins 2012, 89), while Justin E. H. Smith defines it as, “a sort of color-coded value judgment” (Smith 2015, 54) that is soaked in Christian universalism, which we saw in *Butts v. Penny* and *Lowe v. Elton*. They are both right, but Smith’s religious addition is more accurate. Hume, Diderot, and Kant seem to have no real reasons behind their belief that Black people are foundationally different, which is why Smith ascribes their seemingly racial claims to *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* fallacies stemming from human differences.

Ultimately, in this chapter I showed how science, in the form of Oldenburgian inquiries and Boyle’s *Experiments and Considerations Touching Colours* (1664), used trade to correct science, but that the economy from trade, especially the slave trade, became too lucrative because even science needs financing. Economics changed the Society, which set the precedent for the West in relation to human difference, making way for the *ad hoc* and *non sequitur* racist claims made by 18th Century philosophers and the ousting of Anton Wilhelm Amo.

The goal of this project was to address (A) the lack of diversity in the philosophical canon and (B) the insufficient historical analysis of various designations of human difference. (A) was accomplished in chapters 1 and 2, and (B) was accomplished in all three chapters. Amo propels us towards a new perspective on the early modern world and aids in untangling the historical ontology of race by forcing us to ask questions about race and its relation to philosophy and culture. In addition, this project, like Africana Philosophy in general, was meant to be an expression of pride and determination of and for Black Consciousness. Anton Wilhelm Amo, the African who obtained a doctoral degree in philosophy and taught at three Germany universities in early 18th Century, is a source, a spring, of the pride and determination of and for Black Consciousness. His narrative and intellectual ability exist as a beautiful black mark on a plain white page: one that demonstrates that the impossible is possible, that fantasies can be actualized.

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APPENDIX I

OUTLINE OF *TRACTATUS DE ARTE SOBRIE ET ACCURATE PHILOSOPHANDI*¹⁴⁴

General Part

Chapter 1: On Intention – Its Different Aspects and Its Effects

- (1) Division 1 – General
- (2) Division 2 – On the Definition & Nature of Intention
- (3) Division 3 – On the Effect of Intentional Act
- (4) Division 4 – On the Application & Use of the Points Discussed Above in Learning and its Branches
- (5) Division 5 – On Learning in General
 - a. Division 6 – On the Branches of Learning with Respect to the Intention
 - b. Division 7 – Learning with Respect to the Object
 - c. Division 8 – The End of Learning
- (6) Division 9 – On the Higher Orders of the Learned, Called the Four Faculties
 - a. Division 10 – On Jurisprudence
- (7) Division 11 – On Medicine
- (8) Division 12 – On Mathematics
- (9) Division 13 – On the Other Types of Learning in General
- (10) Division 14 – On the Species of Learning which have been spoken above
 - a. On Curious Learning
 - b. On Critical Learning
 - c. On Demonstrative Learning

Chapter 2: On Philosophy

- (1) Division 1 – On the Definition of Philosophy in General
- (2) Division 2 – On the Definition of Philosophy
 - a. The Genus of the Definition
 - b. General Proposition
 - c. Special Propositions
 - d. On the End of Philosophy
- (3) Division 3 – On the Parts of Philosophy
 - a. The Speculative Parts
 - i. Ontology
 - ii. Physics

¹⁴⁴ This outline is adapted from Amo, A. W., & Siegmund-Schultze, D. (1968). *Translation of his works*. Halle (Saale: Martin-Luther-Univ. Halle-Wittenberg).

- iii. Pneumatology
- iv. Logic
- v. Ethics
- vi. Politics

Chapter 3: On Things Considered Logically

- (1) Division 1 – On the Beginning & its Principle
- (2) Division 2 – On the Division of Things
- (3) Division 3 – On the Properties or Attributes
- (4) Division 4 – On the Modes in which that which is Predicated of the Subject is Affirmed or Denied

Chapter 4: On Sensation Considered Logically

Chapter 5: The Three-Fold Faculty of the Mind: The Intellective Act, The Will, The Effective Act

- (1) Division 1 – General Remarks
- (2) Division 2 – On the Intellect in Particular
- (3) Division 3 – On Reflection

Chapter 6: Truth & Falsity in Respect of the Thing

- (1) Division 1 – On Truth in General
- (2) Division 2 – On Falsity
- (3) Division 3 – On Truth & Falsity in Respect of Our Mode of Cognition

Special Part - Section 1: On the Momentary Intellective Act of the Mind Before Reflection

Chapter 1: On Representation & Ideas

- (1) Division 1 – General Remarks
- (2) Division 2 – On Representation
- (3) Division 3 – On Ideas in General
 - a. Objectively
 - b. With Regard to Sensation
 - c. With Regard to the Act of the Mind
 - d. Intentionally
- (4) Division 4 – On Real Ideas
 - a. Objectively
 - b. Intentionally
- (5) Division 5 – On Substantial Ideas
 - a. Objectively
 - b. Intentionally
- (6) Division 6 – On Modal Ideas
 - a. Objectively
 - b. Intentionally

Chapter 2: On Sensory Ideas

- (1) Division 1 – On Sensory Ideas in General

- a. Objectively
 - b. Intentionally
- (2) Division 2 – On the remaining species of Sensory Ideas
- (3) Division 3 – The Degrees of Clarity & Obscurity of Sensory Ideas
 - a. Objectively
 - b. Intentionally

Chapter 3: On Intentional Ideas

- (1) Division 1 – On Intellectual Ideas
 - a. Objectively
 - b. Intentionally
- (2) Division 2 – On Moral Ideas
- (3) Division 3 – On Ideas According to the Modes whereby the Predicate of the Subject is Affirmed or Denied

Chapter 4: The Remaining Momentary Modes of the Intellect Before Reflection & On Attention, Fantasy, Imagination

- (1) Division 1 – On Attention
 - a. Objectively
 - b. Intentionally
- (2) Division 2 – On Fantasy & Imagination
 - a. Objectively
 - b. Intentionally

Chapter 5: On the Momentary Intellective Act of the Mind, before and after, but also during Reflection on Representation, Comparison, Repetition or Memory, Enumeration or Reviewing, Division, and Opposition

- (1) Division 1 – On Representation, Comparison, and Repetition
- (2) Division 2 – On Review, Division, and Opposition
 - a. Rules

Special Part - Section 2: On the Reflective Act of the Mind, Its Modes & Nature

Chapter 1: On Reflection

- (1) Division 1 – General Remarks
- (2) Division 2 – On Momentary Contemplation
 - a. Objectively
 - b. Intentionally

Chapter 2: On the Contemplative Act of the Mind in Particular

- (1) Rules with Respect to Origin
- (2) Rules with Respect to Existence
- (3) With Respect to Essence
 - a. Question to which Contemplation must be Directed
 - i. Whether?
 - ii. Whence?

- iii. What is the Real Principle?
- iv. What is the Formal Principles?
 - 1. On Independent Action
 - 2. On Dependent Action
- v. What Sort of a Thing is a Being?
- vi. Where?
- vii. The Connection of the Things
- viii. How?
- ix. On Account of What?
- (4) With Respect to Ideas & to the Contemplative Act of the Mind
 - a. Adjuncts
 - b. Rules
 - i. Before Contemplation
 - 1. Objectively: Thing, Sensation, and the Operation of the Mind
 - 2. Intentionally: Efficient Cause, Object, and End
 - 3. Intentionally
 - a. With Respect to Cognition
 - b. With Regard to the Will
 - c. With Regard to the Faculty of Acting
 - d. With Regard to the Mode of Acting
 - ii. During Contemplation Itself
 - 1. With Regard to the Intellect
 - 2. With Regard to the Will
 - 3. With Regard to the Enunciative Act of the Mind

**Chapter 3 does not appear in the Latin.*

Chapter 4: On the Deliberative Act of the Mind & Its Effect

- (1) Division 1 – On the Deliberative Act of the Mind in General
- (2) Division 2 – On the Deliberative act of the Mind in Particular

Chapter 5: On the Secondary Modes of Perfect Reflection

- (1) Division 1 – On the Secondary Modes of Contemplation, Probability, Possibility, Observation, and Doubt
- (2) Division 2 – On Secondary Modes of Deliberation

Chapter 6: A Succinct Repetition of what has been said about Reflection

Special Part - Section 3: Containing the Doctrines of (1) The Effects of Reflection, (2) The Momentary Modes of the Act or the Mind after Reflection & Other Things which are dealt with in Logic

Chapter 1: On the Effects of Reflection

- (1) Division 1 – On the Effects of Reflection in General
- (2) Division 2 – On Acquiescence & its Opposites

- (3) Division 3 – On the Effects of Perfect & Determinate Cognition with Acquiescence with Regard to both Reflective Acts of the Mind, on Assent, Consent, Human Belief and Destination
- (4) Division 4 – On the Effects of Inadequate Cognition and Acquiescence (i.e., On Doubt, Dissent, and Incredulity)
- (5) Division 5 – On Opposites of Attention, Representation and Reflection (i.e., Negligence, Forgetfulness, Ignorance and Error)
- (6) Division 6 – On Error & its Causes
- (7) Division 7 – On Prejudices

Chapter 2: On the Remaining Modes of the Momentary Act of the Mind after Reflection

- (1) Division 1 – General Remarks
- (2) Division 2 – On the Remaining Modes of the Momentary Act of the Mind after Contemplation
- (3) Division 3 – On Definitions & Descriptions
 - a. Objectively
 - b. Intentionally
- (4) Division 4 – On Definitions & Descriptions in Particular
- (5) Division 5 – On Real Definition
 - a. Rules with Respect to Genus
 - b. Common Rules
 - c. Features of the Definitions: The Definition cannot be Proved
- (6) Division 6 – On Sensory & Intentional Definitions
- (7) Division 7 – On the Remaining Modes of the Momentary Act of the Mind after Reflection (i.e., On Distinction, Limitation, Proof and Demonstration)
 - a. Distinction
 - b. Limitation
 - c. Proof
 - d. Demonstration
 - e. Observations
 - f. On Differences & Modes of Demonstrations
 - g. Primary Divisions of Demonstrations

Chapter 3: On the Enunciative Intellective Act of the Mind after Reflection

- (1) Division 1 – On Propositions
- (2) Division 2 – On Real Propositions
 - a. With Respect to Substance
- (3) Division 3 – On Sensory Propositions
- (4) Division 4 – On Moral Propositions

Chapter 4: On Syllogisms

- (1) Division 1 – On Syllogisms in General
 - a. Fundamental Rules
- (2) Division 2 – On Regular Syllogisms - Simple
 - a. 1st Figure
 - b. 2nd Figure

- c. 3rd Figure
- d. The Galenical Figure
- e. In Conclusion
- (3) Division 3 – On the Modes of Syllogisms
 - a. General Rules
 - b. Special Rules
 - i. 1st Figure
 - ii. 2nd Figure
 - iii. 3rd Figure
 - iv. 4th Figure
- (4) Division 4 – On Regular Syllogisms - Compound
 - a. On the Hypothetical Syllogism
 - b. On the Conditional Syllogism
 - c. On the Hypothetical, Copulative, and Disjunctive Syllogism
- (5) Division 5 – On Irregular Syllogisms
 - a. Induction
 - b. Example
 - c. Enthymeme
 - d. Dilemma
 - e. Sorites
 - f. Crocodilitis
- (6) Division 6 – On the Remaining Syllogisms Briefly
 - a. The Demonstrative Syllogism
 - b. The Dialectical or Topical Syllogism
 - c. The Pseudographic Syllogism
 - d. The Sophistic Syllogism

Chapter 5: On Fallacies or Sophisms

- (1) Division 1 – General Remarks
- (2) Division 2 – On Dictional Fallacies
- (3) Division 3 – On Fallacies in Things (i.e., Non-Dictional Fallacies)

Chapter 6: On Terms

- (1) Division 1 – General Remarks
- (2) Division 2 – On the Classification of Terms

Chapter 7: On Speech or Language

- (1) Cautions
- (2) On Dialogue
- (3) Cautions

Chapter 8: On Criticism, Hermeneutics, and Method

- (1) Division 1 – On Criticism Briefly
 - a. General Remarks
 - b. Particular Remarks
 - i. The Author

- ii. Literary Work
 - iii. Apart from the Author and the Literary Works
 - iv. The Interpreter
- (2) Division 2 – On the Recognition of a False Reading
 - a. On the Recognition of a True Reading
- (3) Division 3 – On the Negative & Affirmative Cognition of the Author
 - a. Negative Cognition
 - i. Rules
 - 1. By Reasoning
 - 2. By Belief
- (4) Division 4 – On Logical Interpretation
 - a. With Regard to the Author
 - i. With Regard to the Literary Work
 - ii. Rules with Regard to Cognition, Opinions, and Hypotheses held by us on Spirits & Sensible Things
 - b. With Regard to the Mental Act
 - c. Logical Consideration of the Literary Work
 - d. With Regard to the Interpreter
- (5) Division 5: On Legal Interpretation
 - a. Rules
- (6) Division 6: On Method

Special Part - Section 4: Comprising (1) An Essay on Confuting a Mistaken Person, (2) An Essay on the Art of Disputing

Chapter 1: On Confuting a Mistaken Person or On Confutation Caution

Chapter 2: On Confutation

- (1) Division 1
 - a. Rules Concerning the Confuter
 - i. With Regard to Intellect
 - ii. With Regard to Will
 - iii. With Regard to Practical Wisdom
- (2) Division 2 – On the Person to be Confuted

Chapter 3: On the Art of Disputing

- (1) Division 1 – General Remarks
- (2) Division 2 – On the Common Duties of the Disputants
- (3) Division 3 – On the Duty of the Chairman Single Paragraph
- (4) Division 4 – On the Duty of the Opponent
- (5) Division 5 – On the Duty of the Respondent

APPENDIX II

DIAGRAM OF THE WOLFENBÜTTEL HOUSE

Dukes of Wolfenbüttel

