

INTRODUCTION

THE NEW JEWS

Settler Colonialism and the Personification of Capitalism

No Jew can smell out with keener instinct an opportunity
where money can be made to grow than can a Chinaman.

—*Atlantic Monthly*, 1900

Racial Capital

In August 2012, Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney issued a public apology for purging an image of a female Asian scientist from the newly designed one-hundred-dollar polymer banknote. She was replaced by a “Caucasian-looking woman”¹ who is seen peering through a microscope (figure I.1). In the foreground appears a bottle of insulin that symbolizes nationalist ingenuity through medical innovation. Based on internal reports obtained by the Canadian Press, the decision to remove the Asian scientist came in response to focus groups who previewed the design in Montreal and Charlottetown and felt that her Asian appearance “did not represent Canada”² and was “exclusionary . . . since the banknote didn’t represent other ethnicities.”³ Although the bank declined requests to release the initial design to the public, a bank spokesperson indicated that the image of a “Caucasian-looking woman” was substituted to “restore neutral ethnicity.”⁴ News of the bank’s decision met sharp criticism from Asian advocacy groups, particularly the Chinese Canadian National Coun-



FIGURE 1.1 One-hundred-dollar Canadian bill, Bank of Canada.

cil, who criticized the bank and urged it to stop “‘erasing’ visible minorities from Canada’s money.”⁵

This controversy highlights this book’s central focus on the interplay of Asian racialization, capitalism, and settler colonialism that, as I will develop below, reveals an economic modality that links constructions of the Asian and the Jew. At first glance, the controversy sheds light on the ever-simmering tension between race and national culture in Canada. In particular, the bank’s equation of a “Caucasian-looking woman” with race “neutrality” exposes the normativity of whiteness in an officially multicultural nation. That an erased woman of color’s body serves as the battleground for adjudicating cultural legitimacy participates in a long-standing objectification of nonwhite female bodies as litmus tests of racial, gender, sexual, and here *national* normativity and deviance.⁶ The Chinese Canadian National Council’s admonishment attempts to bare these contradictions but ultimately endorses the superimposing of multicultural iconography onto capital. Even US-based blogger Phil “Angry Asian Man” Yu weighed in on the politics of representation, calling the controversy “racebending on a banknote.”⁷ In response to focus group members who objected to the Asian scientist for being too stereotypical, Yu remarks, “Sure there is a stereotype of Asians excelling in math or science. But let’s be real. The reason why people didn’t want an Asian-looking woman on the \$100 bill is because an Asian-looking woman couldn’t possibly represent a face of Canada. Thus, the rush to redesign her with more Caucasian features.”⁸ For the Chinese Canadian National Council, “Angry Asian Man,” and countless other bloggers and YouTube vloggers, the controversy’s significance turns on the variable race of the scientist against the assumed stability of the money form of capital as a representation of nation. To restore the “Asian-looking” characteristics to the scientist would, by extension, restore equilibrium between race and nation. But what seems to be missing from this discussion is the peculiar intersection of race and money — of race as a form of money, or vice versa. How do we understand the variability of money as capitalist (rather than solely nationalist) fetish and its own racialized personae?

For the purposes of this book, the controversy dramatizes ways that Asian North Americans are uncomfortably associated with capital. More benign expressions of this association arise out of recognition of the upward economic mobility of Asians in North America over the twentieth century, which, at least temporarily, secured Asian Canadian representation on

the Canadian one-hundred-dollar bill and have earned Asian Americans the title of the “new Jews.”⁹ Both expressions refer to the increasing affluence and assimilation of a historically excluded minority. In the case of the Asian-Jewish analogy, Matthew Frye Jacobson’s discussion of the evolution of Jewish American immigrant identity from a non-Anglo-Saxon to a Caucasian social position in the nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries emphasizes the progressive and linear orientation of the analogy.¹⁰ This progressive emphasis is amplified in the 2012 Pew Research Center study “The Rise of Asian America,” which reported that Asians were the highest-income (earning 33 percent more than median-income households), best-educated, and fastest-growing racial group in the United States.¹¹ Despite numerous scholarly objections to the Pew Research Center’s failure to identify the extended configuration of most Asian households, the high-cost urban residential concentration of those families, and the pronounced income disparities between Asian ethnicities,¹² these facts have had little countervailing influence on the mainstream perception that Asians are more hurt than helped by affirmative action policies. Moreover, from Thomas Friedman’s recommendation that US children adopt the competitive traits of their Chinese and Indian counterparts¹³ to Québec politician François Legault’s declaration that “kids in Québec should work harder, like Asians,”¹⁴ the attributes of Asians in Asia and North America are to be ignored at one’s economic peril.

Coupled with the benign recognition of Asian North American educational and economic achievement are more unsettling aspects of the Asian-Jewish analogy. For instance, *Los Angeles Times* reporter Gregory Rodriguez emphasizes how “the Jewish comparison has a dark side.”¹⁵ According to Rodriguez, the victorious narrative of the civil rights movement has contributed to the misguided belief that “economic status rises as prejudice decreases, and vice versa . . . [and] that bias is always targeted downward at the weakest and the most vulnerable in society.”¹⁶ In other words, the Asian-Jewish analogy should not be read as an indication of what Susan Koshy refers to as a “morphing of race into ethnicity,”¹⁷ a theory stating that Asians in North America have evolved from discriminated racial minority to assimilated ethnic group over the twentieth century. Rather, according to Rodriguez, the Asian-Jewish analogy compels recognition of the *economic* contexts of modern anti-Semitism, which he characterizes as “distrust or disdain of Jews [which] can sometimes be motivated by envy or resentment of an identifiably separate group that’s significantly wealthier

than the population at large.”¹⁸ The economic conflation of Asians and Jews has a long history, explains Jonathan Freedman, who notes that “like Jews, Chinese merchants were traditionally active throughout East and South Asia and faced—again like Jews—resentment, discrimination, and even the occasional pogrom as a result.”¹⁹ Intersecting expressions of industriousness, greed, and evil have been infused in popular culture representations of both groups in Europe and North America, from novelist George Du Maurier’s 1895 creation of the Jewish-descended Svengali to novelist Sax Rohmer’s 1921 invention of Fu Manchu.²⁰ Both characters are perverse, evil geniuses who aspire to world domination.

Turning back to the controversy over the one-hundred-dollar bill, the bank’s initial effort to present an image that promotes Canadian medical innovation through the figure of the Asian Canadian scientist aligns Asian subjects with capital in more abstract, nonhuman ways. In particular, the characteristics of the model minority stereotype—educated, disciplined, obedient—embodied by the Asian Canadian scientist increasingly emphasize economic over human attributes. As Helen Jun explains, the model minority represents the ideal neoliberal subject who manifests the qualities she refers to as “human capital,” a term coined by economist Gary Becker in the 1960s to emphasize the role that education plays in adding value to labor.²¹ As human capital, the individual is regarded as an “enterprise” driven by market values who embodies an “infinite capacity for ‘self-development.’”²² Jun draws the connection between neoliberal capital and the racialization of Asian Americans in ways that can be extended to the Canadian context:

We can see that the neoliberal theory of human capital and its notion of individual enterprise and self-regulation are not merely evident in Asian American model minority discourse but are also key tenets by which Asian American racial difference came to be defined in the post-1965 period. The centrality of educational achievement and the importance of family in contemporary discourses of Asian American racial difference are no mere coincidence, as neoliberal theories of human capital championed education and parenting as the most critical investments promising the highest rates of return.²³

What this passage highlights is how key aspects of model minority discourse are reflected in Asian American racialization as a form of market-

driven instrumentality. Further bridging market instrumentality and racial form, the Bank of Canada's "Asian-looking" banknote takes Jun's notion of Asian American human capital to another level by symbolically removing the "human." Projected onto the one-hundred-dollar bill, the Asian Canadian scientist is not merely a form of human capital but a representation of capital itself. Moreover, the eventual jettisoning of her image suggests that she signified an offensive form of capital that had to be "neutralized" by whiteness.

As the personification of bad capital, the rejected "Asian-looking" one-hundred-dollar bill evokes prior economic modalities that have shaped Asian racialization. For instance, Colleen Lye's discussion of pre-1942 expressions of anti-Japanese sentiment in California agriculture demonstrates how economic resentment toward Japanese farmers is represented through the sphere of monopoly capitalism. In the naturalist fiction she examines, Lye notes how the "homogenizing evils of monopoly are entirely displaced onto sinister Japanese characters."²⁴ It is the "inorganic quality of the Asiatic body"²⁵ that manifests the "intangibly abstract" threat of finance capital.²⁶ Reflecting on the role of economic tropes embedded in racist representations of Japanese American success in agriculture in the early twentieth century, a success mirrored by Japanese Canadians in the British Columbia fishing industry, Lye points to what she calls the "economism of Asiatic racial form—a form in which economic interests are not masked but are the primary medium of race's historical expression."²⁷ The Canadian hundred-dollar-bill controversy is a heightened expression of this economism of racial form insofar as the dehumanized economism of the Asian simultaneously represents the personification of capital.

What precedes the economism of Asian racial form is the similarly destructive economism historically attributed to Jews, highlighting more disturbing implications of the "New Jews" appellation. In his essay "Anti-Semitism and National Socialism," Moishe Postone focuses on the secular elements of anti-Semitism that flourished under National Socialism in Germany, illustrating a historical process by which Jews became associated with the *abstract* evils of capitalism. Because Jews had long been segregated in finance and interest-generating sectors of European society, traditional anti-Semitism identified them as owners of money. Perhaps the most notorious literary example of traditional anti-Semitism is Shakespeare's Shylock, the sinister usurer in *The Merchant of Venice*, whose penalty for late payment

is nothing short of a pound of flesh. However, by the nineteenth century, modern anti-Semitism not only identified Jews as the owners of money but “held [them] responsible for economic crises and identified [them] with the range of social restructuring and dislocation resulting from rapid industrialization: explosive urbanization, the decline of traditional social classes and strata, the emergence of a large, increasingly organized industrial proletariat.”²⁸ In short, as Postone explains, “They [Jews] became the *personification* of the intangible, destructive, immensely powerful, and international domination of capital as a social form.”²⁹ Here the attributes of “abstractness, intangibility, universality, mobility”³⁰ that are associated with Jews are striking in their resonance with characteristic forms of Asian racialization in North America. The racial signifiers of inscrutability, perpetual foreignness, transnational mobility, and flexibility similarly register the abstract features of Asian racialization that this book aligns with the evolution of settler colonial capitalism in North America.

The controversy over the Bank of Canada’s initial design of the one-hundred-dollar bill and the “new Jews” analogy may suggest that Asian racialization has entered a new historical phase. Indeed, the model minority stereotype seems far afield from the historical repertoire of yellow perilism denoting disease, vice, and destruction. But rather than expressions associated with two distinct phases, “yellow peril” and the “model minority” stereotype function as complementary aspects of the same form of racialization, in which economic efficiency is the basis for exclusion or assimilation. This book therefore engages in the task of demonstrating how the contemporary economism of Asian racial form does not represent a break from the past but rather is part of a continuum of settler colonial capitalism and its racial formations. Building on scholarship that examines the economic modalities of “Asiatic racial form” depicted in the interplay of art and policy by white producers,³¹ I focus on contemporary Asian American and Asian Canadian literature and visual culture as a transnational genealogy of settler colonialism’s capitalist logics. What Asian North American cultural producers reveal in their rearticulation of settler colonial mythologies is how capitalism operates as a system of representation that is objective but immaterial, immanent but subject to resignification. My methodology is influenced by Marx’s dialectical method, which emphasizes dynamic relations rather than causation to illuminate the dualities and contradictions that emerge from capitalism. I am similarly guided by Fredric Jameson’s

argument that the most important task of cultural interpretation is to reveal a work's "political unconscious."³² In this spirit, I look to ways that Asian North American cultural production similarly magnifies settler colonial mythologies to reveal a system of representation that reproduces the logic of capitalism. The expansive, transnational scope of the archive also offers a framework for highlighting patterns and convergences across settler colonial borders.

This book's primary thesis is that Asian North American literature and visual culture present a genealogy of settler colonialism that magnifies a key logic of romantic anticapitalism. Romantic anticapitalism is the misperception of the *appearance* of capitalist relations for their essence, a misperception that stems from Marx's notion of the fetish. As Neil Levi points out, what romantic anticapitalism "solves is a problem of representation . . . possess[ing] an intrinsically aesthetic dimension."³³ As an aesthetic dimension, therefore, Asians give human shape to the abstract circuits of capitalism that have "no concrete manifestation, that are quite literally *unrepresentable*."³⁴ In the manner that Jews came to personify processes internal to finance capital under National Socialism, I argue that the Asian subject in North America personifies abstract processes of value formation anchored by labor. From the economic efficiency associated with Asian racialization, denigrated as "cheap" labor in the nineteenth century and valued as "efficient" in the twenty-first, Asian North American cultural production magnifies the manner through which Asians are aligned with "abstract labor," a concept that anchors Marx's labor theory of value. It is from the vantage of abstract labor, as Dipesh Chakrabarty also notes, that capitalism is both reconstituted and potentially subverted.

Let me elaborate on this connection between race and abstract labor, which I would argue is a key logic of what Cedric Robinson calls "racial capitalism."³⁵ In particular, by giving material and symbolic weight to the category of abstract labor, my project diverges from the important work of scholars such as Lisa Lowe, David Roediger, and others who have argued that capitalism has profited from labor *not* by rendering it abstract but by *producing* racialized difference. For instance, in Lowe's critique of the labor theory of value, she hones in on Marx's homogenizing definition of "abstract labor 'as the use value which confronts money posited as capital, labour is not this or another labour, but *labour pure and simple*, abstract labour; absolutely indifferent to its particular specificity."³⁶ Her point is to demonstrate

that capital has profited from the specifically gendered and racialized character of labor, qualities that are far from indistinguishable or abstract. She presents the notion of abstract labor as the erroneous basis of an equally flawed conception of abstract citizenship in the political sphere:

Abstract labor, subject to capitalist rationalization and the logic of equivalence through wages, is the adjunct of the formal political equality granted through rights and representation by the state. Yet in the history of the United States, capital has maximized its profits not through rendering labor “abstract” but precisely through the social productions of “difference,” of restrictive particularity and illegitimacy marked by race, nation, geographical origins, and gender. The law of value has operated, instead, by creating, preserving, and reproducing the specifically racialized and gendered character of labor power.³⁷

In short, she writes, “Asian immigrants and Asian Americans have been neither ‘abstract labor’ nor ‘abstract citizens.’”³⁸ David Roediger extends this line of argument, asserting that “far from flattening difference by buying undifferentiated units of labor power, US management studiously bought into inequality, preserving and continually recreating race.”³⁹

While my project is in harmony with the claim that capitalism produces racialized difference, I propose that these differentiating effects are not in contradiction with Marx’s formulation of abstract labor. What is missing from Lowe’s and Roediger’s critiques of abstract labor is a recognition of its dialectical relation to concrete labor. Concrete labor represents the racial, gendered, and qualitatively distinct form of *actual* labor that is rendered abstract as a value expression. Where I locate the principal violence of capitalism is in the very way it abstracts (or renders homogeneous as commensurable units of labor) highly differentiated gendered and racialized labor *in order to create value*. It is therefore the law of value that obscures the racial and gendered character of labor power. For value itself is what necessitates what we could characterize as the metaphoric process of turning particular labor into quantifiable units of abstract labor. So in response to the suggestion that racialized labor is *irreducible* to the conception of abstract labor because of its gendered and racial particularity, no value would be produced if this were the case. Rather, *all* commodity-determined labor plays a socially mediating role that is structured by time. Capital maximizes profit by controlling time: socially necessary labor time. Nothing prevents the exploita-

tion of racial and gendered labor from being a “social necessity” that determines average labor time. Indeed, one core logic of the settler colonial mode of production I explore in this book centers on the systematic exploitation of a racialized, gendered, and sexualized alien labor force. The structuring role of time is precisely the reason that capitalism is an *abstract* form of domination, what Petrus Liu characterizes as “impersonal domination.”⁴⁰ This doesn’t mean that we don’t daily bear witness to brutal working conditions or the near enslavement of racialized and gendered labor; rather, the very violence of labor abstraction, what Richard Godden calls “the founding moment of abstraction,”⁴¹ is what subsumes the horrors of highly differentiated labor into an abstracted quantity that is commensurable with all other things. It is the duplicity of value as a social relation that Marx denounces, such that “the various proportions in which different kinds of labour are reduced to simple labour as their unit of measurement are established by a social process that goes on behind the backs of the producers.”⁴² To put it another way, we don’t control the products of our labor; we are controlled by the products of our labor. Therefore, while I agree that capitalism produces racialized difference, this book defines social differentiation as a form of destructive abstraction anchored by a settler colonial ideology of romantic anticapitalism.

Romantic Anticapitalism

The historical processes that encode a romanticized distinction between concrete and abstract social relations grow out of Marx’s identification of an internalized duality within the commodity. Romantic anticapitalism’s confusion over the appearance and essence of the commodity is what Marx refers to as its “fetishism.” While a focus on the fetishism of the commodity appears initially removed from the realm of race and social relations, the commodity is foundational to Marx’s labor theory of value, which structures social—and hence race, gender, and sexual—relations within a capitalist mode of production. The chief effect of this fetishism is the appearance of capitalist social relations as antinomical: that an antinomy or opposition exists between concrete and abstract realms of society. Under a romantic anticapitalist view, what is real, sensory, or “thingly” is the tree in your backyard, the dusty work boots by the door, the reliable pickup truck in the driveway. These make up the concrete realm. What is unnatural, nonthingly,

or intangible is capital accumulation, surplus-value, and money. These form the abstract realm. Therefore, as Levi clarifies, “romantic anticapitalism . . . hypostatizes the concrete, rooted, and organic, and identifies capitalism solely with the abstract dimension of the antinomy.”⁴³ The antinomical view that characterizes romantic anticapitalism *glorifies* the concrete dimension while casting as evil the abstract domination of capitalism. In particular, the specific power attributed to Jews under National Socialism anthropomorphizes the internal workings of the commodity itself. What is remarkable is how the traits of mobility, abstractness, immateriality, and universality that modern anti-Semitism identifies with Jews are the very same characteristics that Marx uses to describe the commodity’s value dimension. However, as Postone clarifies, “this [value] dimension—like the supposed power of the Jews—does not appear as such, rather always in the form of a material carrier, such as the commodity. The carrier thus has a ‘double character’—value and use-value.”⁴⁴ In other words, what romantic anticapitalism misunderstands is that value, while seemingly abstract, is nonetheless objectified within the concrete, sensory form of the commodity during the exchange process. Pulling away the veil of the fetish will reveal that commodities are above all the representations (carriers) of social processes that are objectified in things, and as Marx puts it, “its analysis brings out that it is a very strange thing.”⁴⁵

The main secret hidden within the commodity is that it comprises a duality of abstract and concrete dimensions. In a section of volume 1 of *Capital* titled “The Dual Character of the Labour Embodied in Commodities,” Marx explains that the commodity internalizes two aspects: (a) use-value (a thing of use) and (b) exchange value (the exchangeability of that thing). Here we can observe a distinction between these two characteristics of the commodity; a use-value is concrete in a material sense—a table, for instance—but exchange value is abstract and immaterial in the sense that we can’t see or touch it. Dissecting the labor that produces the commodity, Marx continues by saying that “labour, too, has a dual character insofar as [when] it finds its expression in value, it no longer possesses the same characteristics as when it is the creator of use-values.”⁴⁶ Unpacking this distinction, concrete labor refers to a specific activity—whether hammering or cooking—that produces a use-value. On the other, it is “abstract labor” that objectifies a commodity’s value. Before we move on, we can pause to observe a fundamental point about value, which is that it is *immaterial but ob-*

jective:⁴⁷ “We may twist and turn a single commodity as we wish; it remains impossible to grasp it as a thing possessing value. . . . Commodities possess an objective character as values *only* in so far as they are all expressions of an identical social substance, human labor.”⁴⁸ Like gravity, value is invisible but real. What gives objectivity to the value of commodities, Marx asserts, is that they are products of human labor. A commodity’s value, therefore, is what Marx defines as “socially necessary labor time.” But what determines “social necessity”? This, it turns out, is part of the distinction between abstract and concrete labor.

The main difference between concrete and abstract labor is temporal. The actual time it takes to produce a commodity in the case of concrete labor has no immediate bearing on a particular commodity’s value. If it did, a commodity would become more valuable the *slower* a worker labored to produce it, or as Marx puts it, a given product “would be more valuable the more unskillful and lazy the worker who produced it, because he would need more time to complete the article.”⁴⁹ Concrete labor will only tell us how well made a commodity is; it is the *qualitative* dimension of use-value.⁵⁰ On the other hand, abstract labor is a *quantitative* expression of value—it is an unfixed social average of human labor time. As Marx explains, “In the former case [of concrete labor] it was a matter of the ‘how’ and the ‘what’ of labour, in the latter [abstract labor] of the ‘how much,’ of the temporal duration of labor.”⁵¹ Time is the ultimate measure of abstract labor and the magnitude of a commodity’s value. The quantity of time in abstract labor is not individual or provisional but *socially necessary*. Marx writes, “Socially necessary labour-time is the labour-time required to produce any use-value under the conditions of production normal for a given society and with the average degree of skill and intensity of labour prevalent in that society.”⁵² From this view of the dual character of labor embodied in the commodity, we see how concrete labor is more directly aligned with the *qualitative* production of use-value, while abstract labor is more directly aligned with the *quantitative* dimension of value. While use-value and value are inseparable, internal features of each and every commodity, they nevertheless *appear* on the surface as discrete.

Money *generalizes* the exchange of commodities and reinforces the fetishistic appearance that use-value and value are oppositional rather than part of the internal duality of the commodity. Marx historicizes money’s emergence through his discussion of commodity value. He explains that the

only way we can determine the value of a commodity is when it is in motion: through its exchange with a different commodity. In a simple barter situation, I might exchange two forks for your bowl. The magnitude of value — the amount of socially necessary labor time — embedded in my forks and your bowl becomes visible (or objective) only in the exchange process. What we find is that your one bowl holds the equivalent value of my two forks; my two forks express the relative value of your one bowl. Over time certain commodities come to stand as the *universal* equivalent because they offer a stable measure of equivalent value. Historically, gold and other metals have played this role. So, rather than exchanging my two forks for your one bowl, I would give you two forks in exchange for an equivalent value in gold. While gold is useful for expressing equivalent value, carrying it around and circulating it can be cumbersome, which brings us to paper money. Paper money was once the representation of real gold held in a bank, but now it is a representation of floating value contained in a bundled commodity index. As a universal equivalent, the money commodity can be exchanged with any other commodity and express any another commodity's value. Here's the takeaway: after money generalizes the exchange of commodities, money *seems* solely an expression of value rather than of use-value (as a useful piece of colored paper with numbers on it, for example). Marx makes a further observation of the way the commodity's internal duality is expressed externally:

The internal opposition between use-value and value, hidden within the commodity, is therefore represented on the surface by an external opposition, i.e. by a relation between two commodities such that the one commodity, *whose own* value is supposed to be expressed, counts directly only as a use-value, whereas the other commodity, *in which* that value is to be expressed, counts directly only as exchange-value. Hence, the simple form of value of a commodity is the simple form of the appearance of the opposition between use-value and value which is contained within the commodity.⁵³

What this means is that the duality of use-value and value, which are internal characteristics of the commodity, are expressed *externally* as an opposition between commodities and money.

The social consequences of how a binary rather than dialectical view of use-value and value is such that the use-value dimension appears

empirically-grounded while the latter, value dimension appears ephemeral or abstract. Specifically, the dialectical tension between value and use-value in the commodity requires that its dual character be materially externalized in the value form, where it appears “doubled” as money (the manifest form of value) and the commodity (the manifest form of use-value). The effect of this externalization, as Postone elaborates, is that “the commodity, although it is a social form expressing both value and use-value, appears to *contain only the latter, i.e., appears as purely material and ‘thingly’*; money, on the other hand, then appears to be the *sole repository of value, i.e., as the manifestation of the purely abstract, rather than as the externalized manifest form of the value dimension of the commodity itself.*”⁵⁴ The point here is that even though a fork and money are both commodities that internalize use-value and value, the fork appears only as a concrete “thingly” use-value and the money as an abstract source of value. This illusory opposition is at the core of the commodity fetish, which disguises the *actual* basis of value, which is “socially necessary labor time.” A key aspect of the fetish, then, is the mystification of capitalist social relations that present themselves antinomically, as *the opposition of the abstract and concrete*. Within this antinomy, the social relations specific to capitalism appear as an opposition between the concreteness of labor, commodities, and nature, on one hand, and the abstractness of money and finance, on the other. Moreover, within this fetishistic antinomy, the very origins of value — socially necessary labor time — are completely repressed.

In the nineteenth century, we can see how the social consequences of this antinomical view of capitalist social relations emerge and take on racial significance. As capitalism underwent rapid expansion, the externalization of abstract and concrete forms intrinsic to the commodity fetish became increasingly biologized and racialized in concert with prevailing socio-scientific conceptions of the world. The proliferation of scientific racism with the rise of social Darwinism in the late nineteenth century is an example of how society and historical development were increasingly understood in biological terms, moving from a more mechanical or typological worldview in which events were a reflection of divine power and design to a more secularized, biologized worldview that naturalized an antinomical view of capitalist relations. Enduring features of romanticism, the aesthetic movement that emerged in the nineteenth century, exhibit such a biologized worldview in its human (and often racial and national) identification

with the purity of the natural world, portrayed as the valorized antithesis to the negative influences of urbanization and industrialization. From the anti-materialism expressed in Henry David Thoreau's excursion to Walden Pond in the nineteenth century to Christopher McCandless's 1992 divestment of all symbols of material wealth—even setting fire to his remaining cash—for a life in the wilderness,⁵⁵ we can discern a romantic attachment to a revitalizing and pure construction of an unchanging nature, in contrast to the alienation attributed to capitalist modernity. Expressing the antinomy of concrete and abstract, nature therefore personifies concrete, perfected human relations against the social degeneration caused by the abstract circuits of capitalism.

This antinomial view of capitalism finds acute biologized expression in the context of anti-Semitism. During Germany's rapid industrialization in the nineteenth century, Jews were perceived as an all-powerful international conspiracy that orchestrated capitalism. Jews not only were identified with money but became a personification of the destructive nature and abstract domination of capital. In other words, the concrete side of this antinomy was naturalized and biologized as real, hardworking Germans. German labor and machines were glorified as concrete "counter principles to the abstract."⁵⁶ Alternatively, the manifest abstract dimension of money and finance became biologized as the Jews. As Postone explains, "Jews were not merely identified with money, with the sphere of circulation, but with capitalism itself."⁵⁷ Jews came to personify the "intangible, destructive, immensely powerful and international domination of capital as a social form."⁵⁸ His insight here is to identify an anticapitalist element of National Socialism that, in *misrecognizing* the role of the antinomy in capitalism, strove to evacuate the world of the abstract dimensions of capitalism, which was seen as the source of all evil and oppression in the world. Jews were identified as controllers of money and thus misidentified as responsible for capitalism's oppression, a misperception based on the erroneous notion that capitalist oppression *was caused by* money—despite the reality that money and commodity forms are relative expressions of value determined by socially necessary labor time.⁵⁹ Thus even though Jews were citizens, citizenship was once again deemed politically abstract compared to the more concrete notion of the nation defined by "common language, history, tradition, and religions."⁶⁰ As Postone observes, "The only group in Europe which fulfilled the determination of citizenship as a purely political

abstraction, were Jews following political emancipation in the nineteenth century. They were German or French citizens, but they were not really Germans or Frenchmen.”⁶¹ Instead, they were of the nation only “abstractly, not concretely,” which was ultimately a fatal relation to the scourge of “capitalism” and the bourgeois state. Thus anti-Semitism solves a problem of representation by incorporating an aesthetic dimension that gives human form to the abstract circuits of capitalism.⁶²

As the controversy over the Canadian one-hundred-dollar bill suggests, Asians too are associated with an abstract dimension of capitalism, but in a different sense. In the case of Jews, their conflation with the abstract domination of capitalism derived from their segregation in financial sectors of the economy. Alternatively, Asians have personified the abstract dimensions of capitalism through *labor time*. In the nineteenth-century context of Chinese railroad building in North America, the subject of chapter 1, the connection between the Chinese and the abstract domination of capitalism evolved through their identification with a mode of efficiency that was aligned with a perverse temporality of domestic and social reproduction. In other words, the Chinese personified the quantitative sphere of abstract labor, which threatened the concrete, qualitative sphere of white labor’s social reproduction.

It is from this view of labor’s socially mediating role that each chapter explores a different aspect of dominant settler colonial ideology of romantic anticapitalism that triangulates Indigenous, alien, and settler positions. Settler colonialism reinforces this triangulation through a fundamental misperception of capitalism as an opposition between a concrete natural world and a destructively abstract, value-driven one that is personified as Asian. In the sections that follow I clarify the racial interplay of settler colonial exclusion and elimination that frames my analysis of Asian North America and the personification of capitalism.

Settler Colonialism, or Postcolonial Colonialism

In this book I make the claim that the racialization of capitalism emerges from the particular contours of settler colonialism in North America whose conditions are distinct from the geopolitical context out of which modern anti-Semitism arose in Europe. At its core, settler colonialism reflects the common social, cultural, and political racial destiny of a transnational

configuration that Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds refer to simply as “white men’s countries.”⁶³ Beginning in the nineteenth century, the spread of whiteness in nations bordering the Pacific was “a transnational form of racial identification [that was] at once global in its power and personal in its meaning, the basis of geo-political alliance and a subjective sense of self.”⁶⁴ It was against the backdrop of Indigenous dispossession and the “problem” of Asian migration that settler colonial expansion could be justified through ideologies of liberal democracy. As Adam McKeown notes of the benevolence with which border controls were implemented, “The controls were created by white settler nations around the Pacific that saw themselves as the forefront of the liberal freedoms of the nineteenth century. . . . Modern border controls are not a remnant of an ‘illiberal’ political tradition, but a product of self-conscious pioneers of political freedoms and self-rule.”⁶⁵ Thus the patterns of Indigenous decimation and dispossession, racialized labor recruitment and exploitation, immigrant restriction, and internment are evolving elements that tie Canada and the United States to a racial destiny shared by Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. Indeed, as Lothrop Stoddard, a xenophobic proponent of transnational solidarity among white settler colonies, put it in the 1920s: “Nothing is more striking than the instinctive and instantaneous solidarity which binds together Australians and Afrikanders, Californians and Canadians, into a ‘sacred union’ at the mere whisper of Asiatic migration.”⁶⁶ The corresponding features of Asian racialization in settler colonies capture the moving spirit of settler colonialism: a formation that is transnational but distinctively national, similar but definitely not the same, repetitive but without a predictable rhythm, structural but highly susceptible to change, everywhere but hard to isolate. This is what we might call the music of settler colonialism. It is from the past, but never stops playing.

Until recently, white settler colonialism has received far less attention than its “postcolonial” counterpart among the multiplicity of colonial configurations, past and present.⁶⁷ On one hand, postcolonialism is the term that has often been applied to franchise colonies—British India or the Dutch East Indies, for instance—regions where economic exploitation occurred *without* large-scale white settlement. While the postcolonial condition remains a nuanced subject of theoretical debate in terms of its history and enduring social, economic, and cultural impact, the formal end of British and Dutch imperial rule and colonial administration in the late

1940s initiated a complex process of decolonization that was encoded into the “post-” of postcolonialism. Settler colonialism, on the other hand, is effectively immune to the process of decolonization. As Ian Tyrell explains, “Settler societies represented a particularly complex and resilient form of European colonial expansion often not recognized as imperial conquest by its own agents precisely because they claimed to do more than extract wealth and then return to the metropolitan space.”⁶⁸ They are “breakaway” colonies insofar as they transfer the power of the metropolitan center to the periphery, *subverting* a normative logic of colonialism.⁶⁹ In the establishing of settler colonies, the primary objective was land acquisition, as Patrick Wolfe points out, rather than the surplus value gained by mixing Native labor with it.⁷⁰ Because white settlement was an intentional aspect of colonization in British North America, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, neither the revolutionary nor the nonrevolutionary processes of detaching from British imperial rule—becoming “postcolonial,” as it were—significantly altered or ended the colonial relationship between settlers and the Indigenous population. In many ways, as Werner Biermann and Reinhart Kössler reflect on the irony of revolutionary settler independence movements like the United States’, “settler counter-imperialism cannot, in any sense, be considered of an emancipatory nature, but rather as a defense for atavistic forms of exploitation which by this token take on a politically anachronistic stature as well.”⁷¹ Therefore, in settler colonies, the diminishing role of an imperial metropole facilitated successive stages of Indigenous conquest that involved invasion, removal, relocation, reservation, assimilation, termination,⁷² co-optation, and self-determination. This renders a paradoxical situation where, as Robert Young describes it, “the postcolonial operates simultaneously as the colonial.”⁷³ In other words, what Taiaiake Alfred calls a “paradigm of post-colonial colonialism”⁷⁴ is thus a defining feature of contemporary settler colonialism in North America.

Triangulating Settler Colonialism

While Asians have not held any prominence in popular media projections of settler national culture, which often erases or figuratively disguises Asians as infiltrating replicants or alien invaders,⁷⁵ the opposite has been true for Indigenous identities. As Scott Lauria Morgensen explains, the settler colonial imaginary is continually underwritten by Indigenous tropes that convey

settler “conquest and incorporation of primitivity.”⁷⁶ Much like the way the 2011 feature film *Cowboys and Aliens* aligns cowboys and Indians with each other against an invading, technologically superior alien population—read Asian—settler identity is heavily invested in appropriating Indigeneity. This is a mode of white settler identification that Shari Huhndorf calls “going Native,”⁷⁷ which functions to cover over colonial invasion and reimagine a natural affiliation to the land. The erasure of the alien and the romantic identification with the Native are two sides of the settler colonial coin.

By mapping out the triangulation of Native, alien, and settler positions, this book moves beyond a binary theory of settler colonialism, which is predominantly structured around an opposition between Indigenous peoples and settlers. While scholarship on the settler-Indigenous dialectic has been tremendously valuable, it often falls short of clarifying the role that nonwhite migration plays within such a framework or how it intersects with other aspects of white supremacy. Reflecting on what she calls the “indigenous-settler binary,” Andrea Smith similarly cautions that this “binary certainly exists, [but] our analysis of it is insufficient if not intersected with other logics of white supremacy.”⁷⁸ In particular, key questions over the status or role that racialized migrants play within white settler colonialism often remain unasked or avoided. In a binary framework of settler colonialism—where one is either a settler or an Indigenous person—are slaves, indentured laborers, or refugees “settlers,” despite the involuntary context of their migration to North America? If we observe Jared Sexton’s claim that “no amount of tortured logic could permit the analogy to be drawn between a former slave population and an immigrant population, no matter how low-flung the latter group,”⁷⁹ do descendants of slaves exceed the conceptualization of migrants more generally? These questions highlight some of the uncertainty that surrounds the nonwhite “alien” and the role of race within settler colonialism. As the cases below signal, slavery and the abject condition of blackness complicate a straightforward approach to settler colonialism organized around a central opposition between settlers and Indigenous peoples. More directly, the “settler” classification collapses important racial distinctions between various contexts of voluntary and forced migration into one homogeneous group of “occupiers.”

Recent studies of settler colonialism that have given attention to Asian or other nonwhite, non-Indigenous cultures have often distinguished settler identity by the degree to which migration is intentional. Writing about

Canadian settler imperialism, for example, Adam Barker notes the changing provenance of settlers: “[They are] often people of European descent, but in the contemporary sense Settler increasingly includes peoples from around the globe who intentionally come to live in occupied Indigenous territories to seek enhanced privileges.”⁸⁰ In essence, settler identity—regardless of race—is predicated on the *intentionality* of migration. For those who may not have intended to migrate, however, Barker is more circumspect: “Attempts to integrate discussions of hybrid identities (such as the descendants of African peoples brought to the Americas against their will, many refugees, or Settler Muslims who are increasingly targeted by the state and other racist Settlers) with Settler and Indigenous identities are complicated and beyond the scope of this inquiry.”⁸¹ Complicating Barker’s view of voluntarism, Jodi Byrd’s theorization of settler colonialism accounts for the involuntary conditions of migration. She offers the term *arrivant* “to signify those people forced into the Americas through the violence of European and Anglo-American colonialism and imperialism around the globe.”⁸² For Byrd, structures of coerced migration distinguish the *arrivant* from the settler.

Alternatively, Patrick Wolfe forcefully opposes voluntaristic approaches that attempt to differentiate the settler from coerced migrant populations such as slaves. He maintains that “the opposition between Native and settler is a structural relationship rather than an effect of the will. . . . Neither I nor other settlers can will our way out of it, whether we want to or not.”⁸³ In particular, he draws on the Australian context in which unfree white convict labor was imported from Britain in order to pose the rhetorical question, “Does this mean that their descendants are not settlers?”⁸⁴ Given that Wolfe concedes that white convicts in Australia did not pass on the condition of their criminality to their offspring, this example fails as a comparative equivalent to a US history of African slavery. The very content of black racialization has been based on the exclusive and transferable condition of racial slavery. Moreover, in claiming that settler identity applies even to “enslaved people [who] *immigrated* against their will,” Wolfe implicitly preserves the voluntarism that he otherwise rejects in his construction of the slave as an “immigrant.” Such references to immigration project a set of voluntaristic assumptions onto widely divergent conditions of voluntary and forced migration that are central features of the United States’ specific configuration as a settler colony. In the contemporary context, the racialized

vulnerability to deportation of undocumented, guest-worker, or other provisional migrant populations similarly exceed the conceptual boundaries that attend “the immigrant.” Our awareness of these distinctions does not absolve any of these groups from being willing or unwitting participants in a settler colonial structure that is driven to eliminate Indigenous people. However, folding them into a generalized settler position through voluntaristic assumptions constrains our ability to understand how their racialized vulnerability and disposability supports a settler colonial project.

The most unequivocal work to define Asian migrants as “settlers of color” is the edited volume *Asian Settler Colonialism: From Local Governance to the Habits of Everyday Life in Hawai‘i*. Referring specifically to Asian Americans in Hawai‘i, editor Candace Fujikane states clearly that “all Asians, including those who don’t have political power, are identified in this book as settlers who participate in US settler colonialism.”⁸⁵ Acknowledging the historical exploitation of Asian plantation labor in Hawai‘i, she argues that it is equally important to acknowledge the “ways that they [Asian migrants and their descendants] are beneficiaries of US settler colonialism” and how “early Asian settlers were both active agents in the making of their own histories and unwitting recruits swept into the service of empire.”⁸⁶ In this formulation it is not necessary for migrants of color to migrate “intentionally” to become settlers; rather, settler status is a mixture of both *self-determination and structural contingency*. As Fujikane puts it succinctly, “Colonial intent [does not] define the status of Asians as settlers but rather the historical context of US colonialism for which they unknowingly became a part.”⁸⁷ Furthermore, she also dispels the notion that Asians represent a “third space” outside the Indigenous-settler dialectic. She admits her previous subscription to this idea, but explains her change of thinking as follows:

I was attempting to create a “third space” for Asians as another category of the oppressed in Hawai‘i. The attempt to ally [Asian] “locals” with “Natives,” however, created the illusion of a “shared” struggle without acknowledging that Asians have come to constitute the very political system that has taken away from Natives their rights as indigenous peoples.⁸⁸

In this view, given the political power that Asian Americans currently enjoy in Hawai‘i, they cannot be said to represent a stable third space that is exempted from the settler-Indigenous dialectic or positioned “with” Indigenous peoples and “against” settlers.

While attributing a settler identity to Asians may be germane in a demographic context such as Hawai'i, it nevertheless remains unclear whether such a settler identity is generalizable to the situation of Asian immigrant formations that exist elsewhere. Even though Fujikane stresses that political and economical subordination does not exempt Asian ethnic groups from participating as settlers in a colonial system — particularly Filipinos⁸⁹ — her emphasis on Asian demographic majority, dominant political representation, and economic power in Hawai'i emphasizes how political and economic authority are nonetheless dominant features of settler colonial identity.⁹⁰ The importance of economic and political leverage embedded in this characterization of settler identity may explain the absence, for example, of comparable discussions of “black settler colonialism.” A case in point is the postemancipation recruitment of black “Buffalo Soldiers” in anti-Indian wars in the western United States and during the Philippine-American War.⁹¹ The Buffalo Soldiers are a clear example of an oppressed group's unwitting (and sometimes unwilling) participation in settler colonialism and imperial invasion, yet the continued economic and political subjugation of African Americans seems to exempt them from most theorizing on settler colonialism, as a “third space” or otherwise. Thus the settler status of racialized migrants to Indigenous lands outside Hawai'i remains undetermined.

In some ways, the conundrum of positioning Asian North Americans within settler states highlights broader inconsistencies that mediate theories of Asian racialization in North America and the role of race in a settler colonial context. Speaking to the racial ambiguity evoked by Asians in the United States, Colleen Lye encapsulates the racial condition of Asian Americans as “racial, racialized, but lacking the certainty of a racial formation.”⁹² Remarking upon the surfeit of articles and monographs that focus either on Afro-Asian interracial contexts or on how Asian Americans disrupt conceptualizations of race anchored by a foundational opposition between black and white, Lye continues to observe the uncertainty of Asian racialization:

Asian America's attenuated relation to racial conceptualization can be seen in the extent to which critical focus on the Asian American is so often couched in terms of “needing to move beyond race as a matter of black and white.” The Asian American is more easily evoked as a third term to trouble binary habits of racial classification and analysis than to illustrate the genuine multiplicity of racial logics and racisms.⁹³

From sophisticated approaches to Asian American racialization such as Claire Jean Kim's theory of Asian America's triangulated relation to black and white, to Susan Koshy's conception of a single hierarchical axis in which Asian Americans have moved progressively away from a racialization associated with blackness toward an ethnicization associated with whiteness, most theories of Asian racialization rely, according to Lye, on the "historical agency of a racism that is foundationally antiblack."⁹⁴ However, the problem with this approach is that it constrains our ability to elaborate the specificity of Asian racialization that isn't merely a by-product of a foundational antiblackness. As it stands, what Lye calls an "Asian American analogical dependency" fails to clarify the way contemporary expressions of political liberalism and white supremacy seem to diverge so starkly from those of the late nineteenth century and, importantly, leaves unanswered whether contemporary "Asian American mobility confirms the persistent power of white privilege or whether it represents the detachment of whiteness's symbolic power from material power."⁹⁵ The Canadian context only adds to this racial uncertainty, since the absence of a similarly foundational system of racial slavery has not, as "analogical" arguments might suggest, led to divergent forms of anti-Asian racism in Canada. Indeed, the racialization of Asian Americans and Asian Canadians has unfolded as a parallel evolution of yellow peril to model minority—from immigrant restriction and segregation, wartime internment of Japanese civilians, to the 1960s-era liberalization of immigration policy. This mirrored arc of Asian racialization, therefore, cannot be entirely attributable to an inherited legacy or second-order version of antiblack racism given the absence of a similar regime of plantation-based slavery in Canada. This is not to say that structural antiblackness did not play a role in conditioning Canada's entrance into capitalist modernity; rather, the similar pattern of policies directed at Asians in Canada and the United States indicates forces that exceed those that shape the social construction of blackness.⁹⁶ To put it another way, a transnational framework contradicts an understanding of anti-Asian racism as solely derivative of a prototypical racialization of blackness. As I will argue, the vicissitudes of racialization are grounded in settler colonial logics.

This book presents a theory of settler colonialism in North America that operates as a triangulation of symbolic positions that include the Native, the alien, and the settler. The distinctions between alien and settler are by no means stable or fixed but are meant to emphasize the role of territorial en-

tlement that distinguish them. What initially distinguishes the settler from the alien migrant, as Lorenzo Veracini offers, is that “not all migrations are settler migrations.”⁹⁷ This is both poignantly true and, for African slaves, a profound understatement. As Frank Wilderson describes transatlantic slavery, “From the very beginning, we were meant to be accumulated and die.”⁹⁸ Alternatively, on the other end of the spectrum, the alien may not only be *complicit* with the settler colonial regime but may eventually inherit its sense of sovereign territorial right, such as Asian settlers in Hawai‘i.⁹⁹ Acknowledging these inconsistencies, what I demonstrate in this book is that for slaves and racialized migrants, the degree of forced or voluntary migration or level of complicity with the settler state is ultimately secondary to their subordination under a settler colonial mode of production driven by the proprietorial logics of whiteness.

In this light, highly differentiated populations of African slaves and Asian migrants historically represented *alien* rather than settler migrations. This shared status in no way implies an equivalence in the heterogeneous racial experience of African slaves and Asian migrants. Instead, it clarifies their historical relationship to North American land, which was as exclusive and excludable alien labor forces. Their unsovereign alien status was a *precondition* of their exploitation and intersects with the multiple economic logics that require and reproduce alien-ness in settler colonies. While African slaves represented a system of forced migration, unfree alien labor, and property—a form of biopolitical life that was “market alienable”¹⁰⁰—the later recruitment of indentured and “free” Chinese labor incorporated provisionality, excludability, and deportability into the notion of alien-ness. The heterogeneously racialized alien is a unique innovation of settler colonialism. Race is thus an organizing principle of settler colonialism in North America, a principle that we neglect at the risk of relegating African slaves “to the position of the unthought”¹⁰¹ and obscuring the persistence and evolution of Marx’s notion of primitive accumulation, where “conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, in short, force, play the greatest part.”¹⁰² The governing logic of white supremacy embedded in a settler colonial mode of production relies on and reproduces the exploitability, disposability, and symbolic extraterritoriality of a surplus alien labor force. Therefore, complicating an Indigenous-settler binary, this book’s focus on the settler colonial alien follows Byrd’s method of “disrupt[ing] the dialectics of settler/native, master/slave, colonizer/colonized.”¹⁰³ As I attempt to clarify below, what re-

mains fundamental to this triangulated articulation of settler colonialism is how land and labor are constitutive features of heterogeneous processes of settler colonial racialization.

Indigenous Land, Alien Labor

The triangulation of Native, alien, and settler populations comes into view when we examine two subjects who are the most racially antithetical to one another: the African American alien and the Native North American. While some have argued that a race-based framework potentially subsumes the critical importance of Indigenous sovereignty,¹⁰⁴ this exploration highlights the role that land—and land sovereignty—plays in Indigenous racial formation and what Alfred refers to as the “racism that is the foundation and core of all colonial countries.”¹⁰⁵ As Patrick Wolfe highlights, the logics of exclusion and elimination have profoundly shaped the distinct racial destinies of colonized groups. In this formulation, the *logic of exclusion* operates as a barrier within national culture to protect and reinforce settlers’ social and political control. De jure and de facto practices of segregation, disenfranchisement, exclusion, exploitation, police brutality, detention, and imprisonment are some of the ways that the settler state asserts and maintains control over an internalized alien population. On the other hand, *the logic of elimination* is driven to eradicate an Indigenous population rather than controlling it through various exclusionary measures. Genocide and biological absorption are two contradictory—but complementary—means of extinguishing an Indigenous population: the first attempts to kill the population off, the second assimilates them out of existence.¹⁰⁶ It is worth pausing here to emphasize the dire consequences of assimilation for Indigenous populations, a process that may seem benign or even beneficial to other racialized groups. As Katherine Ellinghaus clarifies, “One of the outcomes of acknowledging the links between miscegenation, assimilation policies, and genocide is . . . an acknowledgment of the underlying biological, physical, bloody aspects of assimilation policies that demonstrate the terrifying resolve of settler governments to rid themselves of the Aboriginal or Indian problem one way or another.”¹⁰⁷

Exclusion and elimination are not discrete logics but operate on a moving spectrum of biopolitical violence. For instance, a logic of exclusion applied to Indigenous peoples, who were conferred US citizenship in 1924 but

were still denied the right to vote in many states.¹⁰⁸ In Canada, a logic of exclusion denied the franchise to Indigenous nations until 1958, while a logic of elimination rendered this right of citizenship conditional on the abandonment of “Indian Status” and accompanying right to live on a reservation. In both Canada and the United States, logics of exclusion and elimination inform how Indigenous peoples are incarcerated at higher rates than other groups.¹⁰⁹ While these examples demonstrate how these logics often work in tandem, for Indigenous peoples a logic of exclusion is underscored by an overarching logic of elimination. For aliens, similarly, the eliminatory logics expressed through police-initiated murder or death-penalty sentencing of black men are tactics that simultaneously reinforce the exclusion and exclusivity of blackness.¹¹⁰ In the following section I clarify how these logics operate when land and labor are at stake in the settler colony. My focus on the comparative racialization of Indigenous peoples and African Americans draws more heavily on the United States than on Canada because the former has a longer national history, and that history presents a foundation that illuminates subsequent racial developments in both countries.

Historically, a distinctive feature of settler colonialism was that the primary objective of settlers was to appropriate land alone rather than appropriate Indigenous labor to expropriate that land’s resources. This distinguishes settler colonialism from franchise colonialism — in British India, for example — where Indigenous labor was exploited to produce commodities and extract the land’s wealth. Wolfe explains, “Settler colonialism seeks to *replace* the natives on their land rather than extract surplus value by mixing their labor with a colony’s natural resources.”¹¹¹ Therefore the primary logic of settler colonialism is one of elimination, and land establishes the relationship Indigenous peoples have with the colonizer. This is not to say that Indigenous people either never constituted a labor force or have ceased to be one. Rather, while there are numerous historical examples of Indigenous labor in settler colonies, from factory work in canneries in British Columbia to Alaska, Indigenous recruitment into surplus labor (the subject of chapter 3) occurs “*in spite of* rather than as a result of the primary tendency of settler-colonial policy.”¹¹² This logic of elimination helps to contextualize the sequence of actions directed at Indigenous peoples whose primary objective was extermination. A snapshot of these directives in the United States include eastern removal; genocidal actions taken by the US Cavalry; the 1877 Dawes Severalty Act, which turned tribes into individual

property owners and resulted in the loss of two-thirds of Indigenous land; assimilationist policies of urban relocation and boarding schools (“residential schools” in Canada); and policy on Indigenous “self-determination.” Despite the rhetorical shift in settler discourse that now celebrates Indigenous self-determination as fully incorporated citizens of the settler state through a discourse of reconciliation, this has largely involved implementing federal rather than Indigenous Nation-specific policies. As Glen Coulthard explains, “Although the semantics of the comprehensive claims policy have changed, the legal and political outcomes remain the same.”¹¹³ Further, Federal Indian Identification Policy functions as a form of what Annette Jaimes terms “statistical elimination”:¹¹⁴ the effective meaning of the state’s definition of “Indian” as a minimum of one-quarter blood quantum is that through intermarriage, Indians will eventually “be defined out of existence.”¹¹⁵ In the Canadian context, Karrmen Crey refers to this form of racial engineering as the “two-generation cutoff.”¹¹⁶ Thus if elimination meant physical relocation and/or death in the period preceding the implementation of the Dawes Act, elimination came to mean absorption in the period following it. While policy history in Canada differs, the spirit of elimination does not.¹¹⁷ And though the treaty process remains subject to negotiation in Canada while Indigenous nations in the United States have sovereignty, the predictable and ongoing process of treaty revision and violation indicates that treaties function as strategic forms of state accommodation designed to appease rather than to concede blame or to compensate.¹¹⁸ Despite formal differences, the practice of settler colonial elimination is more consistent in the two nations than not.

If the primary relationship between settler colonizers and Indigenous populations is land, in the case of African slaves transported to the United States it is *labor*. Rather than exhibiting a governing logic of elimination, a logic of racial exclusion clarifies the form of colonial exploitation experienced by African Americans in antebellum and postemancipation contexts. Because the relationship between colonizers and slaves was primarily based on labor, the objective was not to eliminate that population but to *increase* it and, by extension, increase the property value of that exclusive labor force. Consequently, a logic of exclusion applies insofar as slavery was an *inherited* condition, which made blackness equivalent to slavery and racial admixture assignable to it. Distinguishing the logic of elimination and exclusion, Wolfe explains that whereas Indigenous women “became conduits to white-

ness . . . black women came to augment white men's property by incubating the additional slaves whom they fathered."¹¹⁹ While this logic of exclusion functioned to reproduce and grow a discrete population of slaves who became synonymous with the condition of blackness, blackness was not the only condition for enslavability. For instance, Indigenous peoples were also enslavable, a lesson that Spanish colonialism in Mexico teaches us. In the most successful regimes of slavery, however, among the most important features that rendered Africans most vulnerable to enslavement was their *alienation*, "not just the natal alienation that Orlando Patterson has made famous, since indigenous societies . . . have also had their children taken away, but the *spatial alienation* that slave transportation effected."¹²⁰ The spatial alienation experienced by African slaves made them a more manageable population to control, to thwart insurrection and overthrow, and to prevent from escaping. This form of alienation therefore helps to distinguish, in the case of African Americans, the "alien" position from the Native and settler in a triangular framework. In the United States, African Americans are the original aliens.

In the post-Civil War context, race came into full emergence; it was rooted in slavery but came to life during the shift to black emancipation. Not only did Reconstruction put whiteness into crisis—whiteness was also threatened by non-Anglo-Saxon immigration of Jews and southern and eastern Europeans. Shifting the terms of the logic of exclusion, race reinforced the barrier between whites and blacks that the institution of slavery formerly performed. In other words, race became amplified with the downfall of slavery because racial domination was an implicit feature of slavery. However, in the wake of emancipation and without the barrier of slavery to designate free from unfree labor, race became unambiguously natural, reinforcing an exclusively racial division between black and white populations. By extension, without the barrier that slavery performed, whiteness became the basis of racialized privilege after emancipation. What is significant is that emancipation reproduced for African Americans an anomalous condition that similarly characterized the experience of postfrontier "incorporated" Indigenous Nations. Although freed slaves did not become anomalous as labor—in the South they continued to represent a cheap and hyperexploitable labor force—they became, as Wolfe puts it, "juridically anomalous as equals."¹²¹

Since the settler colonial solution was to eliminate anomalous postfron-

tier Indigenous peoples through racial absorption, a key question arises: Why didn't newly freed and anomalous African Americans follow the assimilative racialization of Indigenous peoples and become similarly "eliminated"? Historical attempts to colonize African Americans abroad or assimilate them into the white population point to endeavors to apply a logic of elimination to African Americans. However, given the socially engineered disproportion in the size of the black population vis-à-vis the Indigenous population, neither attempt was practical or, in the case of assimilation, imaginable. Elaborating on the difference between the population of post-emancipated slaves and Indigenous nations, Wolfe highlights the biopolitics of settler colonialism and its "calculated management of life":¹²²

In this case, it represents the difference between one group of people who had survived a centuries-long genocidal catastrophe with correspondingly depleted numbers and another group who, as commodities had been preserved, their reproduction constituting a singularly primitive form of accumulation for their owners.¹²³

The hereditary nature of slavery, which fused slavery to blackness, was thus carried over into the postemancipation context to fuse blackness to an "unlimited power to contaminate." Given that emancipated African Americans were neither "immigrants" who could be deported nor a population that could be eliminated through biological absorption, African Americans became an *undisposable* alien labor population, which accounts for the intensity through which subsequent generations of African Americans have been subject to a logic of exclusion where the only means of disposal is death. Furthermore, the force through which blackness was excluded during the Jim Crow era highlights a broader consolidation of whiteness—of Anglo-Saxons and Protestants at first, and eventually extending to other European ethnics¹²⁴—and intensified nation-building in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In both Canada and the United States, "white nationalism" was the ideological and policy response to nonwhite immigration and black incorporation.

The comparative racialization of Indigenous peoples and African Americans highlights the heterogeneity of race that is anchored by a foundational distinction between land and labor. For Indigenous peoples of North America, race was always subject to dilution and disappearance. In both Canada and the United States, the biological constitution of Indigenous

peoples was determined assimilable to whiteness. Describing this evolution in the logic of elimination, Wolfe explains that “mixed-bloodedness became the post-frontier version of the vanishing Indian.”¹²⁵ For African Americans, on the other hand, the “one-drop rule” relegated to blackness a biological permanence that would survive any amount of interracial mixing. Whereas mixed or light-skinned African Americans who passed as white *frustrated* the settler colonial racial regime, Indigenous people who assimilated to whiteness *upheld* it. Similarly, while Jim Crow and antimiscegenation laws kept the line between blacks and whites from blurring, interracial mixing was not only tolerated among Indigenous people but was often actively encouraged through policy. In the United States, the practice of “checkerboarding” during the administration of the Dawes Act (1887–1934) interpenetrated Indigenous reservations with white allotments to promote intermarriage and decrease eligible heirs to Native Title.¹²⁶ In Canada, prior to changes to the Indian Act in 1985, Indigenous women were “rewarded” with the loss of their status as “Registered Indians” for the prize of a white identity, not only if they married non-Native but non-Status men.¹²⁷

As distinct as these black and Native racial formations appear, they were still bound together by an overarching economic rationale of settler colonialism. First, for each group, race became more salient during the rise and development of industrial capitalism. For Indigenous nations, the logic of elimination became aggressively implemented as trading posts were eclipsed by industrial forms of economic production. In Canada, for instance, James Tulley explains that “the end of the British and French wars rendered the military alliances with the First Nations irrelevant. The shift from trade to settled agriculture and manufacture caused the trading treaties to decline . . . undermining Aboriginal economies and forcing Aboriginal peoples into relations of dependency.”¹²⁸ Being rendered anomalous by industrial modes of production thus signals the full onset of settler colonialism and, with it, a racial logic of elimination. In the case of African American slaves, their emancipation was contextualized by the growing challenges to plantation-based economies and the increasing demand for flexible, free labor for the emerging industrial economy. While plantation capitalism was still highly profitable before the Civil War, Southern plantations were increasingly challenged by their need to expand production into non-slave-holding states.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, in the absence of slavery, new demands of the industrial economy rendered postemancipation Afri-

can Americans anomalous as people and gave rise to an intensified notion of race as a regime of social control. From the view of capitalist expansion that lies at the heart of settler colonialism, the divergent forms of racialization that Indigenous peoples of North America and African Americans have been subject to are entirely reconcilable. As Wolfe puts it unequivocally: “The simple undifferentiated product of the encounter between African labor and Indian law was European property.”¹³⁰ Mixing alien labor with Indigenous land to expand white property was the basis and objective of settler colonialism.

Disposable/Undisposable Alien Labor and the Heterogeneity of Race

As migrants to North America, Asians’ primary relationship to settler colonizers was historically based on labor. Similar to African Americans, Asians represented an alien labor force that mixed with Indigenous land to transform it into white property and capital. What comes to light from this framework is, yet again, the heterogeneity of race under settler colonialism. Rather than presenting a derivative model of Asian racialization that is based on a prototypical antiblackness, the vicissitudes of Asian racialization are primarily shaped by the evolving economic landscape of settler colonialism within a global economy.

While African Americans and Asian North Americans share an alien status in a triangular framework, the divergent historical and economic contexts of Asian and African labor highlight the heterogeneity contained within an alien position. Asian labor migration to North America, as well as elsewhere in the Americas, occurred during the demise of plantation-based slave economies, a decline that began in the 1830s. Given shifting requirements of industrializing economies, which demanded a flexible rather than enslaved labor force, the economic context of Asian labor migration in the nineteenth century inoculated Asians from assuming the status of unfree labor. This distinction renders Asian aliens highly dependent, nevertheless, on the class of settler capitalists. This means, as Biermann and Kössler clarify, that “the migrant workers are not personally free, [although] their illiberty is not in terms of a personal relation of bondage to an individual master.”¹³¹ In addition, as Moon-Ho Jung explains, the historical importation of indentured Chinese labors to replace or supplement slave labor in the US

South represented a period of dramatically destabilized labor relations that introduced new and reinvigorated conceptualizations of race and nation.¹³² In this tumultuous economic context, Chinese labor migrants would assume none of the hereditary stain of slavery that defined blackness before emancipation or hereditary racialization that determined African American exclusion afterward.

While the presence of African American slave labor was an important context for subsequent Asian-settler labor relations in the United States, the Canadian context demonstrates that parallel expressions of Asian racialization were not wholly contingent on the prior enslavement of black people; rather, they were overwhelmingly conditioned by industrial capitalism. Therefore, in the absence of plantation-based African slavery in Canada, the common denominator of Chinese laborers' analogous experiences of exploitation and exclusion was their alien status rather than their proximity to a racialized notion of blackness. Because the industrial economy that Asian labor served did not require a permanent, reproducible, exclusive, and violently contained population of alien labor, as was the case under US slavery, the exclusionary tactics that Asians were subjected to never approximated those experienced by black slaves.¹³³ The projection of Asianness as a racial signifier of indelible, exclusively transferable attributes was less necessary as a strategy of containment. Unlike emancipated slaves, Asians *could* be excluded and eliminated from the nation-state.

If the rise of industrial capitalism solidified biological notions of race that subjected Indigenous populations to eliminatory assimilation on the basis of the mutability of their blood, and black populations to Jim Crow exclusion based on the contaminating reach of their blood, the logic of exclusion ascribed alien-ness and spatial vulnerability not simply to Asian blood but to the entire Asian body. Because Asian bodies could be entirely excluded from the nation-state, Asian labor was susceptible to more volatile forms of domestic exclusion than those experienced by African Americans. As a result, the history of domestic segregation and antimiscegenation laws targeting Asians in North America—evoked by racial fears of biological contamination and contagion¹³⁴—was more uneven than its African American counterpart.¹³⁵ A much more effective means of exclusion was through immigration control. A form of Jim Crow in a transnational context, immigration policy not only determined entry into the nation but could legally bar an immigrant from naturalizing, voting, owning and transferring property,

and working. As Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds observe, “In drawing the global colour line, immigration restriction became a version of racial segregation on an international scale.”¹³⁶

To the extent that Asians were restricted or excluded from coming to North America until the mid-1960s, and because their deportability constituted a form of what David Hernández calls “lesser citizenship,”¹³⁷ the logic of exclusion employed the national border to segregate populations and maintain social control. In a settler colonial context, these variable, exclusionary logics have resulted in the heterogeneous racialization of the alien: the African American, whose *indisposability* in the settler state requires a heightened form of racialized exclusion as a form of domestic social control, and the Asian North American, whose *disposability* from the settler state produces a less fixed and more volatile racialization by virtue of the exclusionary power of immigration restriction. In this framework of abstract labor, Asian North Americans may appear “less racial” — to adapt Lye’s language — than African Americans or Indigenous populations, whose racial essences were expressed in the relative power of blood to contaminate or to erase a population, respectively. However, if Asian racialization produced a less blood-defined racial body, it is by virtue of the exclusionary, segregationist logics that were carried out in the extraterritorial arena of immigration control that inhibited Asian exposure to more sustained domestic logics of racial exclusion and elimination. In this context, race is not only a heterogeneous formation; it is also an expression of settler power whose capacity to racialize is not, as Jodi Melamed suggests, “reducible to biology, identity, or ontology.”¹³⁸ These factors laid the settler colonial groundwork for an understanding of the abstract racialization of the Asian alien that form this book’s central concern.

While a logic of elimination functions to increase white property through the decimation of Indigenous populations who stand in the way of territorial expansion, a logic of exclusion serves industrial capitalism by furnishing a vulnerable labor force whose existence could be managed at the border. Bearing some similarity to the spatial segregation of prison inmates from inner cities, the border represents a geographical solution to manage surplus populations.¹³⁹ This focus does not discount the many other exercises of racialized domestic social control, which prevented, denied, or rescinded access to naturalization, labor, the franchise, property ownership, and, in the case of Japanese North American citizens interned during World War II,

due process or freedom of mobility. My point is that each of these modes of domestic racial control served a broader logic of exclusion that is inherent in immigration restriction: to underscore and preserve Asians' alien status by creating policy that exploited the volatility of an Asian presence. From the perspective of settler colonialism, we can build on this framework by clarifying the importance of spatial alienation (rather than Indigeneity) as a factor in the exploitation of a racialized labor force. In this light, a logic of exclusion is the *prerequisite* for the recruitment of alien labor, functioning either to reproduce an exclusive labor force in the case of African slaves or to render an Asian labor presence highly conditional to the demands of capital. Both are subject to forms of segregation, either on a national or international scale. As each of my chapters argues, this volatility is what makes it possible to view the Asian alien as the embodiment of the abstract evils of capitalism.

By clarifying the evolving triangulation of Native, alien, and settler subject positions, my purpose has been to distinguish both the heterogeneity of race and the heterogeneity of alien racialization. This formation is uniquely tied to settler colonialism, which requires a disposable reserve army labor force. In the chapters that follow, I will situate this heterogeneous racial formation within a settler colonial logic of romantic anticapitalism that hypostatizes whiteness and sublates Asianness into abstract labor and the intangible, destructive dimension of capitalist relations.

Chapter Overview

In order to magnify the capitalist logics of settler colonialism that account for the striking parallels in US and Canadian policy directed at Asian ethnic groups, this book's transnational focus draws on corresponding racial policy making at key turning points since the nineteenth century: Chinese railroad labor in the 1880s and subsequent immigrant restriction laws; the expansion of anti-Asian immigration restrictions in the 1920s; the relocation and internment of Japanese civilians during and after World War II; and the late 1960s neoliberalization of immigration policy. Because one of my goals is to reframe these historical touchstones where Chinese and Japanese populations figured predominantly, the majority of my examples are limited to this East Asian scope. However, because my project is aimed at presenting a theorization of the abstract economism of the Asian alien in a settler colo-

nial framework rather than emphasize the ethnic particularity of any one group, I have strived to construct a flexible rather than ethnically determined model that can be expanded and adapted to accommodate the specific historical circumstances of Asian populations not covered in the book.

In each chapter I explore Asian North American cultural production as a genealogical archive. As such I draw from Michel Foucault's distinction between history and genealogy, one shaped by his principle that "knowledge is not made for understanding; it is made for cutting."¹⁴⁰ Rather than the traditional approach to history as a linear and unified development—"an acquisition, a possession that grows and solidifies"—a genealogy is an "unstable assemblage of faults, fissures, and heterogeneous layers that threaten the fragile inheritor from within or from underneath."¹⁴¹ As such, genealogy opens up what Foucault calls a counter-memory: "a transformation of history into a totally different time."¹⁴² To the three modalities of counter-memory that he identifies as parodic, dissociative, and sacrificial reworkings of history, I would like to add a fourth, a "postmemory," in order to call attention to the affective register of racial genealogies. As Marianne Hirsch defines it, postmemory is a "very particular form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation."¹⁴³ She further distinguishes postmemory and memory as follows:

Postmemory characterizes the experiences of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor recreated.¹⁴⁴

Such a conceptualization of postmemory applies to the contemporary Asian North American cultural production I examine in the sense that these works present less of a direct or experiential connection to historical events than a collective consciousness of Asian American and Asian Canadians who have grown up with settler narratives of national identity and belonging that have relegated the Asian as other. I further adapt the notion of postmemory to indicate a form of future memory, a memory yet to come, to capture the simultaneously utopian and apocalyptic capitalist futurity explored in Asian North American reconfigurations of history. Given that my primary focus is on the economic modalities of Asian racialization that are tied to capitalism, my goal is to demonstrate how an Asian North American cultural gene-

alogy of settler colonialism does not simply oppose this economism but, rather, opens it up for further exposure. Laid bare, the symbolic infrastructure of this economism provides a window into what Dipesh Chakrabarty terms History 2, the relations “whose reproduction does not contribute to the reproduction of the logic of capital . . . [even though they] can actually be intimately intertwined with the relations that do.”¹⁴⁵ History 2 expresses the potential of countermemory to subvert the social relations embedded in History 1 that reproduce the logic of capital.

Most of the chapters in the book feature a dialogue between literary and visual texts. The multimedia nature of the archive that grounds my analysis of each historical episode aims to meet two objectives. First, a starting point for this book is an understanding that the ideological expression of white settler colonialism and anti-Asian sentiment in North America is a multimedia projection that has glorified whiteness in artistic constructions of landscape and delimited racial belonging in textual definitions of citizenship. Therefore the multimedia archive of Asian North American cultural production in this book is a response to both the literary and visual form of these constructions. Related to this, the visual works I incorporate attempt to address the predominance of mainstream film and television constructions of Asians that evoke untrustworthiness, mystery, or deceitfulness and collectively reinforce the destructive, unrepresentable abstraction attributed to Asian bodies. The mystery and treachery often reinforced through the visibility of Asians in popular media are distinctive because they always point to something invisible and unseen, suggesting that the negative content of Asian racialization is something that we can't see. The visual culture presented in this book thus offers imaginative responses to the challenge of visualizing the unrepresentable.

Each chapter explores how settler colonialism negatively aligns Asians with an abstract dimension of capitalism through an ideology of romantic anticapitalism — that is, through romantic anticapitalism's misperception that social relations are defined either as concrete, natural, visible, and hence noncapitalist *or* abstract, unnatural, invisible, and hence capitalist. Such a misperception of capitalism presents an ideal ideology for rationalizing and forgetting the settler colonial elimination of Native peoples and exploitation of alien labor. Thus what romantic anticapitalism offers is an ideological framework for settler colonialism to respond to economic and technological crises by imagining whiteness through indigenizing tropes

of purity and organic connection to land that function to distort and deflect responsibility for capitalist modernity. As such, each chapter examines the expression of white settler romantic anticapitalism both to indigenize whiteness and to align Asians with the threateningly abstract economism of capitalism.

The first chapter, “Sex, Time, and the Transcontinental Railway: Abstract Labor and the Queer Temporalities of History 2,” establishes the book’s foundational claim that the economism of Asian racialization arises from a temporal alignment of Chinese bodies with abstract labor, which has implications for what constitutes *socially necessary* labor time. This “abstract” racialization is reinforced by romantic anticapitalism, which projects an antinomical character of capitalist social relations expressed as an opposition between concrete and abstract dimensions. I examine how romantic anticapitalism hypostatizes the concrete, pure, and organic dimensions of white labor and leisure time, while identifying capitalism solely with the abstract dimensions of the antinomy, which is personified by Chinese labor. The chapter begins with a reflection on a nineteenth-century sketch of a Chinese laborer’s profile surrounded by financial figures drawn by William Van Horne, president of the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR). My interpretation of the sketch, whose provocative nature the CPR itself underscored by not granting me permission to reproduce in this book, sets the stage for clarifying the sexualized intersection of race and capitalism. In taking this direction I adapt Postone’s theorization of the secular, anticapitalist dimensions of modern anti-Semitism for understanding anti-Asian sentiment. Analyzing Richard Fung’s *Dirty Laundry: A History of Heroes* alongside Maxine Hong Kingston’s *China Men*, two works about Chinese labor on the transcontinental railroad, I explore the identity—or sameness—relation between Chinese labor, time, and money. Focusing on the range of gender and sexual substitutions represented in these texts, I argue that these works demonstrate how the abstract racialization of Asian alien labor is established through their alignment with a perverse temporality. While Fung’s and Kingston’s works expose the fungibility of alien labor conditioned by biologized notions of time, they also point to the queer potential of History 2 that resides within abstract labor but does not reproduce the logic of capitalism. Moreover, their contemporary approach to this history highlights the ongoing construction of racialized abstraction in the era of globalization—the new nineteenth century—which is the subject of chapter 4.

The second chapter, “Unnatural Landscapes: Romantic Anticapitalism and Alien Degeneracy,” builds on the first chapter’s focus on the abstract dimension of capitalist social relations—personified by Chinese labor—by turning its attention to the *concrete* dimension of capitalist social relations personified in artistic depictions of the settler landscape. Turning to the photographs of Tseng Kwong Chi and Jin-me Yoon, I argue that their photographic citations of 1920s- and 1930s-era landscape art parody its romanticization of whiteness-as-nature during a heightened period of Asian immigrant restriction. In particular, Tseng and Yoon respond to themes of regenerative whiteness and autochthonophilia—a term that refers to a settler colonial desire for and identification with Indigeneity—personified in the majestic landscapes by American artists Ansel Adams and Gutzon Borglum and Canadian artists Emily Carr and the Group of Seven. Disidentifying with the romanticization of the concrete, purifying landscape, Tseng’s and Yoon’s photographs expose the politics of whiteness invested in the identification with nature and Indigeneity. Further developing the theme of perversity associated with abstract labor in chapter 1, Tseng’s and Yoon’s photographs highlight how Asian bodies evolve to denote a degenerative, antinatural force associated with the abstract dimension of romantic anticapitalism’s antinominal social universe.

Chapter 3, “Japanese Internment and the Mutation of Labor,” focuses on the consequences of an increasingly unnatural, mechanical abstraction of Asian racialization developed in the previous chapters. To help contextualize the expulsion, internment, and, in the case of Japanese Canadians, postwar relocation east of the Rocky Mountains, I suggest that the modes of abstraction attributed to Japanese agriculture and fishing labor in the United States and Canada contributed to the false impression that Japanese labor held a destructive control over the creation of relative surplus-value. I suggest that Japanese internment is neither reducible to prior modalities of Asian immigrant exclusion nor a rational expression of white accumulation by racial dispossession. Instead, I argue that Japanese internment turns on the association of Japanese labor with the modernizing displacements of technological innovation, which fed a perception that Japanese labor monopolized the creation of relative surplus-value. The chapter probes how the destructive power of Japanese labor was resignified after West Coast expulsion and relocation. Focusing on Joy Kogawa’s novel *Obasan* and Rea Tajiri’s video-memoir *History and Memory*, I examine how symbolic identifi-

cation with Jewish persecution before the war shifted toward an identification with Native identities after relocation. This cross-racial identification with Native contexts evokes the neutralization of Japanese labor's association with the production of unnatural value and reconstitution as an ideal surplus labor force.

The fourth chapter, "The New Nineteenth Century: Neoliberal Borders, the City, and the Logic of Settler Colonial Capitalism," examines the persistent and evolving economism of Asian racialization in the postexclusion era, after the United States and Canada removed race-based immigration criteria in 1965 and 1967, respectively. Turning to Ken Lum's multimedia works, including his sculpture on the roof of the Vancouver Art Gallery, *Four Boats Stranded: Red and Yellow, Black and White*, along with Karen Tei Yamashita's novel *Tropic of Orange*, I track their works' reconceptualizations of labor, migration, and political consciousness. Their works point to the capacity of the neoliberal border to recruit and restrict surplus labor populations from around the world while preserving the racialized abstractions that surround both high-tech, flexible Asian labor and working-class labor. As such, free trade becomes a further conduit for the fungibility of bodies as capital across borders and the continuing perils of abstract labor associated with the "new Jew." Far from symbolizing multicultural inclusion, I suggest that the border is a central motor for the expanded fulfillment of a settler colonial mode of production that relies on a disposable migrant labor system.

The epilogue, "The Revenge of the Iron Chink," offers a meditation on an exhibition featuring an early twentieth-century fish-gutting machine called the "Iron Chink" located in my hometown of Victoria, British Columbia, personifying a racist slur. To explore its contemporary significance I turn to artist Tommy Ting's reanimation of the Iron Chink in his 2012 sculpture *Machine (Iron Chink, invented in 1903, found at the Gulf of Georgia Cannery in Steveston, British Columbia, refabricated in Beijing, China)*. Examining how Ting's sculpture recontextualizes the original machine, I reflect on aesthetic and biological dimensions of capitalism that I've tracked through the book. Probing the question of value in capitalism as the central motor of the metaphoric work of the fetish, I consider what it might mean to imagine human incommensurability in a world beyond commodity-determined labor.

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Thanks to your far seeing policy and unwavering support the Canadian Pacific Railway is completed the last rail was laid this (Saturday) morning at 9:22

W. C. Van Horne

FIGURE 1.1 Telegram from Canadian Pacific Railway president William Van Horne to Prime Minister John A. Macdonald announcing the last spike, November 7, 1885. Library and Archives Canada/Sir John A. Macdonald fonds/e000009485.