BORN FREE
wage-slaves and chattel-slaves

> Direct slavery is just as much the pivot of bourgeois industry as machinery, credits, etc. Without slavery you have no cotton; without cotton you have no modern industry. It is slavery that gave the colonies their value; it is the colonies that created world trade, and it is world trade that is the precondition of large-scale industry. Thus slavery is an economic category of the greatest importance.
>
> Karl Marx, 1847.[1]

> In the new anti-imperialist world which began in the forties, emphasis shifted, where empire had to be maintained, from islands to continents, from tropical to temperate climates, from plantations of blacks to settlements of whites.
>
> Eric Williams, 1946.[2]

No sooner had Paul Sendziuk invited me to participate in this series, than my thoughts unscrambled to come up with a foundational fiction: 'South Australia had been born capitalist.' In challenging that assumption, three streams of my thinking merged. The first goes back to Ken Dallas and whether Botany Bay began as a Trading Post or a Penal Colony; the second has been an obsession with the origins of capital-within-capitalism since the 2008 implosion in its expanded reproduction; the third spur is the up-hill battle to get *soi-disant* Marxists to pay attention to Marx's *Capital* in its sesqui-centennial year of 2017.

Chapter 33

These three backdrops to my choice of foundational fiction come together in Marx's final chapter, 'The Modern Theory of Colonisation', which is amusing, brief, and records the lessons that Wakefield drew from Thomas Peel's failure on the Swan River in 1829 where the immigrant labourers, upon regaining possession of the productive resource needed to sustain themselves – namely, land – had declined to sell their capacity to add value.[3] Henceforth, they were free to 'abstain' from enriching the would-be capitalist, Mr Peel, who

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[1] Karl Marx, '*The Poverty of Philosophy*', *Marx-Engels Collected Works* (*M-ECW*), vol. 6, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1976, p.167.

[2] Eric Williams, *Capitalism & Slavery*, New York: Capricorn Books, 1966, p.131.

[3] H.O. Pappe, 'Wakefield and Marx', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1951, pp.88-97; Lionel Robbins, *Robert Torrens and the Evolution of Classical Economics*, London: Macmillan, 1958, pp.153-73; Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part III, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971, pp. 71ff.

had 'provided for everything except the export of English relations of production to Swan River!'[4] To succeed as a capitalist, Peel needed to ship out not only things but also power relationships to drive the accumulation process. Thomas needed uncle Robert's Peelers. Chapter 33 encapsultes the critical analysis that Marx presents throughout his previous 800 pages:

> Wakefield discovered that, in the colonies, property in money, means of subsistence, machines and other means of production does not as yet stamp a man as a capitalist, if the essential complement to these things is missing: the wage-labourer, the other man, who is compelled to sell himself of his own free will.

Without those attributes, Marx adds, 'capitalist accumulation and the capitalist mode of production are impossible.'[5] To make sure that those needs could be met, advocates of Systematic Colonisation proffered a method for reproducing wage-slaves without resort to the violence overt in convictism and chattel-slavery.

Other places

Among the reasons why no one questions the foundational mode of production in South Australia none is more widespread than the assumption that, since Britain had been capitalist long before 1836,[6] its white settlement colonies could not be otherwise. This conviction can be called capitalism as cargo, by which the convicts unloaded capitalism along with Governor Phillip's pre-fabricated house. The failure at the Swan River in 1829 demonstrates its fallaciousness.[7]

U.S. of A. Given the preeminence of the United States among today's corporate warfare imperia, it may come as a surprise to find that dating the triumph of the capitalist mode there remains in contention. Alertness to those debates should reduce the strangeness of asking parallel if never exactly comparable questions about South Australia. In the U.S. case, the disputants take two lines: first, how to deal with the slave South;[8] secondly, when does the economy move beyond simple commodity production? Some scholars are content to place the switch as early as the 1790s, relying on an extension of the areas across which

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[4] Karl Marx, *Capital*, I, London: Penguin, 1976, pp.932-3.
[5] Marx, *Capital*, I, p.932.
[6] R.A. Bryer, 'Accounting for the Social Relations of Feudalism', *Accounting and Business Research,* vol. 24, no. 95, 1994, pp.218ff.; 'The history of accounting and the transition to capitalism. Part one: theory', *Accounting, Organizations And Society*, vol. 25, no. 2, 2000, pp.131-161; 'The history of accounting and the transition to capitalism. Part two: evidence', *Accounting, Organizations And Society*, vol. 25, no. 4/5, 2000, pp.327-381.
[7] Marx, *Capital*, I, pp.936-7.
[8] Eugene D. Genovese, *In Red and Black*, New York: Vintage, 1972; Eric A. Nilsson, 'Empirical evidence that the social relations of production matter: the case of the ante-bellum US South', *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, vol. 18, no. 3, 1994, pp.259-77.

goods were traded, despite a scarcity of ready money.[9] Their opponents highlight the Jacksonian counter-revolution, stressing the demolition of a regime of credit after the 1837 crisis.[10] In 1867, Marx notes that the U.S. economy 'must still be considered a European colony.' In preparing the fourth German edition in 1890, Engels adds that its 'industry holds second place in the world, without on that account entirely losing its colonial character.'[11] Marxist Professor of Accounting Rob A. Bryer deduces that simple commodity production held its own into the 1900s.[12]

Other colonies

Try this thought experiment. It is January 1788 around Botany Bay. The French arrive before Phillip's fleet, lay claim to New Holland, and beat off the British. France is still feudal, hence its latest acquisition is also feudal. Within two years, that feudal order has been overthrown. Hence, its antipodean possession now has a different mode of production. This chain of assertions is not only obviously a daft way to proceed but assumes what has to be analysed: which mode was dominant in Britain and which in France? If it is arguable that Britain was not capitalist in 1788 and France no longer feudal, both were indisputably capitalist by 1836, albeit with peculiarities etched on each because the revolution inside capital 'assumes different aspects in different countries, and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession, and at different historical epochs.'[13] Marx dismisses the attempt to impose a single-factor Malthusian explanation on human experience as 'a very rewarding method – for stilted, mock-scientific, highfaluting ignorance and intellectual laziness.'[14]

Spasmodic debate about which mode dominated the initial areas of incursion and occupation along the east coast of this continent ranges across the seventy years to 1860-61.[15] Ken Dallas wrote about the convict system as a sub-species of slavery.[16] Liz Humphries sails around the shoals of handling the mode of production as cargo by making a putative

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[9] Charles Post, 'The American Road to Capitalism', *New Left Review*, no. 133, 1982, pp.30-51; Michael Merrill, 'The Anticapitalist Origins of the United States', *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, vol.13, no. 4, 1990, pp.465-97; Michael Merrill, 'Putting "Capitalism" in Its Place: A Review of Recent Literature', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, vol. 52, no. 2, 1995, pp.315-26.

[10] Peter Temin, 'The Anglo-American Business Cycle, 1820-60', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, vol. 27, no. 2, 1974, pp.207-21; Alasdair Roberts, *America's First Great Depression: Economic Crisis and Political Disorder after the Panic of 1837*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012.

[11] *Capital*, I, p.580, n.56, cf. p.931 n. 1.

[12] Rob. A. Bryer, 'Part 1: Was America Born Capitalist?', *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, vol. 23**, no. 7/8,** 2012, pp. 511-55; for more on Bryer see my 'Accounting for capital', www.surplusvalue.org.au

[13] Marx, *Capital*, I, p.876.

[14] Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, 27 June 1870, *Marx-Engels Collected Works* (*M-ECW*), vol. 43, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1988, p.527.

[15] for my penny's worth see 'Afterword', *A New Britannia*, St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2004, pp.253-67.

[16] K.M. Dallas, 'Slavery in Australia – Convicts, Emigrants, Aborigines', Special Issue, *Papers and Proceedings, Tasmanian Historical Research Association*, vol. 16, no. 2, 1968, pp.61-76.

British capitalism determine the mode in the Australian colonies.[17] The Ken Buckley relied on quantitative determinants to conclude that Botany Bay had become capitalist within a couple of decades.[18] The only non-Marxists, G.J. Abbott, Bede Nairn and Marjorie Steven, suspended the starting date until sufficient wealth had been totaled up by 1821.[19] Elevating static structures over structured dynamics, the four fail to distinguish *initial* accumulations from the application of at least some of those hoards to *initiate* the self-expansion characteristic of capital-within-capitalism. Michael Dunn applied the Althusserian emphasis on the attainting of dominance at the political level to decide on the end of transportation in 1841.[20] Drawing on Lenin, D.W.A. Baker re-interpreted the 1861 Free Selection Acts as the victory of urban capital over the squattocracy, a view challenged by J.N. Connolly, but lately endorsed by Joe Collins drawing on Marx's concept of rent.[21]

Irrespective of the correctness of any of these claims, the disputes serve to clarify and to contextualise the concepts required to think through the question closer to home. In seeking the nature of the early years of invasion, we shall locate South Australia against these approaches for other places and within the 250-year expansion of capital-within-capitalism as a global system. Historical Enterprises Inc. got over its prejudice that Australia had no history, or that the little it did have should be hitched to the Course of Empire. An over-correction in the 1970s severed the local from the global; in a negative feedback, we shall re-tether the Company and its banks to that wider world.

'Capital' refined

To ask whether South Australia was capitalist from Proclamation Day makes sense only through two other lines of inquiry. First, what is meant by 'capitalist'? The capitalist is the 'personification of capital'.[22] That answer requires taking a further step back to ask 'what is capital?' If the former is rarely scrutinised, the latter is first cousin to the unicorn.[23] The concept of capital-within-capitalism is called for to distinguish the hoards that had been present across the millennia from the relationships and processes that were installing the

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[17] Liz Humphries, 'The Birth of Australia: Non-Capitalist Social Relations in a Capitalist Mode of Production?', *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, no. 70, 2012-13, pp.110-129.
[18] Ken Buckley, 'Primary Accumulation: The Genesis of Australian Capitalism', E.L. Wheelwright and Ken Buckley (eds), *Essays in the Political Economy of Australian Capitalism*, Volume one, Sydney: ANZ Books, 1975, pp.12-32.
[19] G.J. Abbott and N.B. Nairn (eds), *Economic Growth in Australia 1788-1821*, Carlton: MUP, 1969; Marjorie Steven's essay also accepts the 1820s, p.176.
[20] Michael Dunn, 'Early Australia: Wage labour or Slave Society', Wheelwright and Buckley (eds), *Essays,* 1975, pp.33-46.
[21] D.W.A. Baker, 'The Origins of the Robinson Land Acts', *Historical Studies of Australia and New Zealand*, vol. 8, no. 30, 1958, pp.219-33; J.N. Connolly, 'The Middling-Class victory in N.S.W. 1853-62: A critique of the Bourgeois-Pastoralist Dichotomy', *Historical Studies*, vol. 19, no. 76, 1981, pp.369-87; Joe Collins, *The Political Economy of Global Mining*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Western Sydney, 2016; Karl Marx, *Capital*, III, London: Penguin, 1981, Part VI.
[22] Marx, *Capital*, I, pp.254, 298, 342, 739, 989 and 1054.a
[23] None of the contributors to the first volume of *The Cambridge History of Capitalism from Ancient Origins to 1848* (2014) attempts to define that of which he or she is supposedly writing. See my review www.surplusvalue.org.au

form of capital which had to expand in order to persist. How that revolution inside capital was accomplished is largely beyond the compass of this lecture, which provides little more than a contextualised conspectus of the concepts required to deal with the new mode; their workings will need to be taken far beyond the margins of the Province's good earth.

By contrast, and in what Marx appreciates was 'a wonderful feat of logical acumen', Captain Robert Torrens asks us to believe that the accumulation of capital began when an aboriginal first picked up a rock to throw at a kangaroo.[24] Such vulgar economists obliterate the differences between a mode of production based on the casting of stones and the one that extracted, processed and marketed ore bodies at Moonta, with that undertaking's financial, mechanical, and commercial ramifications. In like vein, apologists for capitalism extrapolate Adam Smith's remark about 'the general disposition to truck, barter, and exchange'[25] into an eternal, natural and universal condition, thereby drying up an ocean of differences between the bartering of ochre from Bookartoo and the global marketing of paints by Dulux.[26]

Crises

My sorting through of these approaches to capital and its cognates flows from an invitation 2012 to address the Blackheath History Forum on 'The Two Depressions', meaning the 1930s and the crisis that erupted in September 2008. The memory that there had been depressions before the 1930s intersected with an awareness that capitalism is unique in as much as it has to expand in order to exist, leaving the system prone to crises of over-production. These characteristics suggest a novel way to think about the origins of capitalism. To identify the first crisis of over-production is to have a benchmark as to when a revolution inside capital had resulted in a new form of capital, capital-within-capitalism. Be very clear: the date of the first crisis can be fixed to a particular year – 1825 or 1857. Dating that crisis turns a searchlight back into a period during which the revolution must have occurred but cannot deliver equivalent exactness for its triumph. There is no 1770, no 1492, no 1066. The revolution inside capital came later than we think, certainly not much before 1800.

At the crux of this evening's presentation is linking the puzzles around the origins of capital-within-capitalism with how and when that form came to dominance in the Province

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[24] R. Torrens, *An Essay on the Production of Wealth* (1821), pp.70-71, quoted Marx, *Capital*, I, p.291, n.10; S. A. Meenai, 'Robert Torrens -1780-1864', *Economica*, New Series, vol. 23, no. 89, 1956, pp.49-61; Frank Whitson Fetter, 'Robert Torrens: Colonel of Marines and Political Economist', *Economica*, New Series, vol. 29, no. 114, 1962, pp.152-65.

[25] Adam Smith, *Inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1976, p.25.

[26] for a recent instance of a-historical incapacity see Phillip Roberts, 'Revisiting the Mount William Greenstone Quarry: employment specialisation and a market economy in early contract hunter-gatherer society', *Australian Aboriginal Studies*, 2017, no, 2, pp.14-27.

of South Australia. What is beyond dispute is that both were forged – if not produced - during the financial upheavals of 1825-6 and their aftermath. Changes in the global economy shaped the options for South Australia, notably those consequent upon Britain's protracted adoption of 'free-r trade', permitted by its dominance of world commerce. In 1828, Britain reduced tariffs on Australian exports and in 1833 deprived the East India Company of its trading monopoly, opening opportunities for South Australian venturers.

1825-32

Marx mentions 1825 as the first 'general crisis' and 1832 as the year from which capitalism attained dominance at the political level.[27] The disruptions were in part the backwash from adjusting the economy to peacetime conditions after twenty-three years of world war.[28] The proximate sources included defaulting loans to the new South American republics, including Poyais, a non-existent country. If 1825 were a crisis from over-production, rather than another upset to the financial system, then any doubts about the dominance of the capitalist mode in Britain at the time of the establishment of the Province of South Australia disappear. Even so, conditions in the United Kingdom do not explain all those in New Holland. Time, manner and place apply. Despite the exchanges between Britain, China, the East India Company and the Australian colonies, each node demands its own account.[29] What seems beyond doubt is that the legislative and business responses to the 1825-6 upheavals secured dominance for capital-within-capitalism in Britain by the mid-1830s.

The historical materialist analysis employed here is predicated on the transitoriness of social practices, structures and mentalities. For instance, conditions in 1829 need not have held sway until 1836. During those seven years, Britain underwent political-economic transformations more profound than those after the Glorious Revolution of 1688, as witnessed by the Whig victory of 1830; the Reform Act of 1832; the Poor Law of 1834; a displacement of chattel-slavery across the empire by a new kind of bonded labour. On top of those changes came commercial developments from a return to gold between 1819 to 1821, and a relaxation of the laws governing joint-stock companies and banks, while holding a line against usury.

Those dislocations and reforms had multiple impacts, both direct and indirect, personal and institutional, on the establishment of the Province. For instance, George Fife Angas almost went under, preserved by his father's £10,000 overdraft.[30] Without that guarantee, it is an open question as to whether he could have redeemed his fortunes and

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[27] Marx, *Capital*, I, pp. 96-7 and volume III, p.681; **and 1832**

[28] Arthur D. Gayer *et al*., *The Growth and Fluctuation of the British Economy 1790-1850*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1953, pp.171-210.

[29] W.E. Cheong, 'China Houses and the Bank of England Crisis of 1825', *Business History*, vol. 15, no, 1, 1973, pp.56-73.

[30] Erwin Hodder, *George Fife Angas*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1896, p.31; Peter Howell's 2004 entry for Angas *Oxford DNB*.

reputation by 1834 to take a hand in financing the South Australian Company. As a personification of capital, he faced the limited choices laid out by Max Weber:

> The belief in 'freedom of his will' is of precious little value to the manufacturer in the competitive struggle or to the broker on the stock exchange. He has the choice between economic destruction and the pursuit of very specific maxims of economic conduct.[31]

The lessons that Angas took from his peril over the seas were to give up handicraft for general merchandising, followed by a move into banking: 'He scented business as the war-horse the battle…'[32]

Weber's *'Geist'*

As keenly as E.G. Wakefield's writings revealed the actualities required for capitalist exploitation and accumulation, it took action by Angas for the Province of South Australia to come into being. Regarded as Mr Philanthropy at 5 percent, his career opens up two elements pertinent to our knowing whether the Province was capitalist from the July landing on Kangaroo Island. The first is a school of thought, which by taking a mentalist rather than a materialist line, sees capitalism as the product of an 'Idea', an approach blamed on Max Weber. As a closet Marxist, however, Weber bases his understanding of '*Geist*' ('Spirit') on rational calculation and 'free labour';[33] he shows further how, well before 1600, the calculating ethic of capitalism had vanquished the ascetic spirit of Calvin. To adapt a footnote from Marx: Cornish miners could no more live on Methodism or bonded Germans on Pietism than the Ancient world did on politics or the Middle Ages on Thomism. The task before an historical materialist is to track the transitory expressions of each ideological form as it becomes predominant for a specific time and in particular locations.[34]

The second characteristic of Angas as a personification of capital comes closer to the substance of Weber's analysis of capitalism in terms of rational calculation by drawing us into the institutions and instruments required for capital to become the production of its own reproduction.[35] Abstinence ran a poor second to the capitalists' ability to pass on their

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[31] Max Weber, *Roscher and Knies: The Logical Problems of Historical Economics*, New York: Free Press, 1975, p.193; Marx, *Capital*, I, p.990; *Capital*, III, p.374; cf. *Capital*, II, London: Penguin, 1978, pp.185-7.
[32] Hodder, p.252.
[33] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the 'Spirit' of Capitalism*, London: Penguin, 2005, pp.362-4.
[34] Marx, *Capital*, I, p.176 n.35. Marx raises the bar when he observes that it is 'much easier to discover by analysis the earthly kernel of the misty creations of religion than to do the opposite, i.e. to develop from the actual, given relations of life the forms in which these have been apotheosized. The latter method is the only materialist, and therefore the only scientific one.' p.494 n.4.
[35] Jim Main, 'Men of Capital', Eric Richards (ed.), *The Flinders History of South Australia, Social History*, Cowandilla: Wakefield, 1986, pp.96-104.

accumulations from the labour by others, eased by the emergence of joint-stock companies and banks, though in hazard until the granting of limited liability after 1856.[36]

Joint-stock

Peter Howell unpicked the tangles left by scholars who had mistaken the Bills for the Act.[37] Ferreting into how the Common Law, Commercial Law and Banking Acts shaped the business side of the South Australian Company's plans awaits its chronicler, as does the positioning of these elements within the sweep of upheavals across the globe.[38] Both lacunae are typical of the equating of power with legislatures and civil servants. A.G. Price's 1924 stricture that the Province's 'most peculiar history' had been 'seriously misinterpreted … largely due to the concentration of attention upon the political, and the neglect of the geographic and economic aspects of the story ...',[39] would retain its bite, even had the economic history volume of the Flinders History trilogy appeared in 1986.

Accounts of the colonisation of South Australia traverse four joint-stock companies starting from the South Australian Land Company in 1832,[40] before Angas took a hand in the others, the South Australian Company (1835), the Bank of South Australia (1836) and the Union Bank (1837-8).[41]

Neglect of the accumulation that characterises capital-within-capitalism[42] has meant never querying the status of the joint-stock company. Instead, scholars are content to read backwards from what the firm has come to be, not what it could be prior to 1825. In a belief that the Bubble Act of **1720** had made joint-stock companies illegal, almost none on the

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[36] P.W. Ireland, 'The Rise of the Limited Liability Company', *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, vol. 12, no. 3, 1984, pp.239-60; R. A. Bryer, 'The Mercantile Laws Commission of 1854 and the Political Economy of Limited Liability', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, vol. 50, no. 1, 1997, pp.37-56.

[37] P.A. Howell, 'The South Australia Act, 1934', Dean Jaensch (ed.) *Flinders History of South Australia*, Netley**:** Wakefield Press, 1986, pp.26-51; G.L. Fischer, 'South Australian Colonisation Act, and other related Constitutional Documents', *Adelaide Law Review*, vol. 3, no, 1, 1966, pp.360-72.

[38] Peter Burroughs, *Britain and Australia, 1831-1855: a study in imperial and crown lands administration*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1967.

[39] A. Grenfell Price, *The Foundation and Settlement of South Australia*, 1829-1845, Adelaide: F.W. Preece, 1924, p.2; in avoiding an analysis of the gold standard, Asa Briggs admits that the relations between prices and the money supply involved 'many technical points "intricate and foreign to the taste of country gentlemen" (as they have been to most historians) …', *The Age of Improvement*, London: Longmans, 1959, p.201.

[40] Its fleeting appearance was par for the course since many were launched but few went on to operate. Official figures between the 1844 Companies Registration Act and Joint Stock Companies Act of 1856 show that of the nearly 4,000 companies that sought provisional registration only 956 obtained full registration, Bishop Carleton Hunt, *The Development of the Business Corporation in England 1800-1867*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936, pp.15 and 87-89; Bernard Rudden, *The New River, A Legal History*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, p.212.

[41] In New South Wales, six unincorporated large partnerships were operating before 1836, with fifteen more by 1839, G.J. Abbott, 'The Formation of Joint-Stock Companies in Sydney during the second half of the 1830s', *The Push from the Bush*, no. 14, 1983, pp.4-27.

[42] 'Accumulate! accumulate! That is Moses and the Prophets.', Marx, *Capital*, I, p.742.

scale of the East India Company was formed across the next 105 years. Needless to say, the need to bring together more funds than most individuals or families could muster obliged undertakers to find ways around, or through, the prohibitions supposedly flowing from the Act. After the 1760s, incorporation had been bestowed on specific purposes over limited periods, for instance, to construct canals and turnpikes, with Crown charters for the provision of other public goods. Co-partnerships of up to six were the usual method to finance slaving ventures.[43] Meanwhile, the Bubble Act was looking like a dead letter until 1808 when Lord Chancellor Eldon (1751-1838) led the courts towards his interpretation of the Common Law in order to stymie stock-market speculation as a threat to funding the national debt through the sale of consols, which all sound thinkers understood underwrote **the fiscal-naval** state which kept Britain on top.[44]

Only 150 joint-stock companies were operating before 1825, mostly in transport and insurance, few of which had been incorporated by the Crown.[45] Without the business papers for G.F. Angas & Co., we cannot know how its funds had been assembled, since '& Co.' was being applied without indiscrimination to partnerships, and to the incorporated or unincorporated alike. At that time, his enterprise could have been only either a family trust or no more than a six-person partnership, both of which left all participants equally liable for the sum total of a bankrupt's debts, 'to the last shilling and the last acre'.[46] When Angas senior provided that £10,000 overdraft he could have been saving the fortunes of his extended family and not just that of one son.

Venturers like Angas might have hoped that the 1825 repeal of the Bubble Act would free businesses from these dodges. Not so. The trading of shares in an unincorporated joint-stock company remained dubious, and perhaps illegal under Common Law. Railways broke the nexus since those joint-stock companies were admixtures of both securities and real property in land but also in rolling stock so that, ineluctably, the Law Lords learnt to tell a house from a horse.[47]

So what was a joint-stock company before then, and how was it regarded? Only in Scotland was it legal. The Scots preserved their legal system, based on Roman Law and not the Common Law, allowing judicial interpretation there to be more favorable than its English counterpart to the collective enterprises essential for the expanded reproduction of capital.[48] In a world where unincorporated joint-stock companies, protected by limited

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[43] P.L. Cottrell, *Industrial Finance 1830-1914*, London: Methuen, 1980, pp.39-40.
[44] Cottrell, p.2; Rudden, pp.199-200 and 211.
[45] Chantal Stebbings, 'The Legal Nature of Shares in Landowning Joint Stock Companies in the Nineteenth Century', *The Journal of Legal History*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1987, pp.25-35; Rudden, pp.212-3 and 221-38 *passim*; Hunt, pp.39-45 and 83.
[46] Cottrell, pp.39-40.
[47] Rudden, pp. 212-3, 224ff., 233 and 244.
[48] J. Robertson Christie, 'Joint-Stock Enterprise in Scotland before the Companies Act', *Juridical Review*, vol. XXI, no, 1, 1921, pp.128-47; R.H. Campbell, 'The Law and the Joint-Stock Company in Scotland', Peter L. Payne (ed.), *Studies in*

liability, have been the order of the day for 150 years, it takes some effort to think our way into a time when they were deemed illegal. Adam Smith thought them another conspiracy against the public.[49] Even after they became lawful from 1825, *The Times* and the Law Lords continued to condemn them as threats to the natural order, a grievance and a public mischief to 'licence every species of fraud.'[50] Yet, as Marx observes, had the world 'had to wait until accumulation had got a few individual capitals far enough to be adequate for the construction of a railway,' Engels would still have been visiting him by coach in 1867. 'Centralisation, however, accomplished this in the twinkling of an eye, by means of joint-stock companies.'[51] Centralisation of funds in joint-stock firms and banks did much the same for South Australia.

Allegations of Republicanism against the Company's promoters were not, as is often assumed, a reaction to the method of government proposed for the Province, but were being hurled at every attempt to set up joint-stock companies without a Charter from the Crown. The failure of historians to appreciate the context for the accusation against one Company exemplifies the misunderstandings that must follow from even the most palid '*parliamentary cretinism*'.[52]

Banks

Writings about the institutions and instruments that supported the foundation of the Province still focus on the Company, the Commissioners and the Governors, shadowed by the hand of the British empire-market-state. No less significant were the Bank of South Australia, in both manifestations, and the Union Bank. The Province's success depended on them.[53] The Company needed to garner the initial investments, transmit funds back and forth, conduct government business,[54] and to pay wages in the colony.[55]

To understand what banks could and could not do for the South Australian Company requires purging our expectations of the sprawl of functions that financial institutions now perform. Banks might accept deposits, discount bills of exchange or issue their own notes, although the latter two were often accepted only within the area where

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Scottish Business History, London: Frank Cass, 1967, pp.136-51; Arthur Herman, *The Scottish Enlightenment, The Scots' Invention of the Modern World,* London: Fourth Estate, 2001, pp.82-96; Scone-born and Perth-educated Chief Justice Mansfield (1705-93) did what he could to bend the Common Law to the needs of commerce, Norman S. Poser, *Lord Mansfield: Justice in the Age of Reason*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014.

[49] James P. Henderson, 'Agency or alienation? Smith, Mill, and Marx on the joint-stock company', *History of Political Economy*, vol. 18, no. 1, 1986, pp.111-31.

[50] Hunt, pp.19, 38-9, 42, 56, 61 and 84; Ron Harris, 'Political Economy, Interest Groups, Legal Institutions, and the Repeal of the Bubble Act in 1825', *Economic History Review*, New Series, vol. 50, no. 4, 1997, pp.675-96.

[51] Marx, *Capital*, I, p.780.

[52] Karl Marx, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', *M-ECW*, vol. 11, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1979, p.161.

[53] Hodder, p.132.

[54] S.J. Butlin, *Foundations of the Australian Monetary System, 1788-1850*, Sydney: University of Sydney Press, 1953, pp.268-70.

[55] Butlin, p.454; Hodder, p.289.

their issuers were known personally.[56] Routine business required traders of every scale and kind to discount bills of exchange and accept promissory notes. The integration of producer, merchant and financier became part of how capitalists taught themselves how to personify capital within capitalism.[57] With every trader acting as some sort of money-lender by extending commercial credit to customers, Angas's turn to banking was predictable for a trans-Atlantic shipper. He learned the delights of joint-stock banks from his pamphleteering cousin, Thomas Joplin (1790-1847), with whom he became a co-founder of National Provincial Bank, an association of country banks, scheduled for 1829 but delayed until 1833 because of Reform-era uncertainties.[58] Just as the South Australia Act snuck through Westminster, a mania for joint-stock banks[59] saw sixty-one conducting 472 branches by March 1836, with thirty-eight more banks to open that year.[60]

Differences between Chartered banks and those with an Act of Incorporation proved more significant on paper than in practice. Of the imperial banks in Australia, only the Bank of Australasia obtained a charter, the others being authorised by local Acts.[61] To operate in the Province, the directors of the Bank of South Australia required only an Act to facilitate local legal proceedings. Accordingly, Governor Hindmarsh contented himself with publishing the regulations 'for general information', and with securing returns from the Bank by agreement.[62]

The Act confined the Bank of South Australia to within the Province, and to dealings with the United Kingdom, while the invaders had to deal with neighbouring colonies, as could the Bank of Australasia. At first, Angas hoped that it would service the Province,

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[56] Ian Bowen, 'Country Banking, The Note Issues and Banking Controversies in 1825', *Economic History*, vol. III, no. 13, 1938, pp.68-88; L.S. Pressnell, *Country Banking in the Industrial Revolution*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1956, chapters 6 and 7; Dieter Ziegler, 'Central Banking in the English Provinces in the Second Quarter of the Nineteenth Century', *Business History*, vol. 31, no. 4, 1989, pp.33-47.

[57] S.D. Chapman, 'The Foundation of the English Rothschilds: N.M. Rothschild as a Textile Merchant', *Textile History*, no. 18, 1977, pp.99-115**;** Stuart Jones, 'The Manchester Cotton Magnates' Move into Banking, 1826-1850, *Textile History*, no. 9, 1978, pp.90-111; Marx on the changes in merchant capital from proto-capitalism, *Capital*, III, chapters 16 to 20.

[58] Hodder, pp.85-7 and 254; Thomas Joplin was as influential in promoting the Currency School, which led to Robert Peel's disastrous 1844 Bank Act, as Wakefield was in publicising Systematic Colonisation, Hunt, p.64, n. 29, and p. 69 n.45; J.H. Clapham, *The Bank of England, A history*, volume II, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1944**,** pp. 11 and 92-4; Frank Whiston Fetter, *Development of British Monetary Orthodoxy, 1797-1875*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965, pp.110-11, 116 and 119ff.; A.S.J. Basker, *The Imperial Banks,* London: P.S. King, 1929, pp.56-8, 79, 120-1; in 1830, another Joplin cousin, William, proposed a land bank, p.27n.

[59] W.T.C. King, *History of the London Discount Market*, London: George Routledge & Sons, 1936, pp.39-47, reviewed by (Sir) Ian Potter, *Economic Record*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1937, pp.112-3; Hunt, p.67.

[60] David Kynaston, *The City of London, Volume I, A World of Its Own*, London: Pimlico, 1995, p.137; Iain S. Black, 'Money, information and space: banking in early-nineteenth-century England and Wales', *Journal of Historical Geography*, vol. 21, no. 4, 1995, pp.398-403.

[61] David Kynaston, *Till Time's Last Sand, A History of the Bank of England 1694-2113*, London: Bloomsbury, 2016, Chapter 5. The compliance burdens imposed by Board of Trade for the chartering of imperial banks prompted Sir James Stephen to observe in 1834 that '[t]he Merchants on the Royal Exchange would be tenfold better Authorities than all the four Courts united.' Hunt, p.59, n.12.

[62] Butlin, pp.546-7.

possibly because cousin Joplin had been spoken of as its first manager.[63] When the Australasia declined, the Company had to set up its own bank to carry out transactions in the Province and between it and London. The directors also had to establish the means to deal with businesses in the other colonies. To that end, Angas led fellow London capitalists to support the Union Bank as a rival for the Australasia, while insisting that the newcomer keep out of South Australia.[64] As the name 'Union' implies, its directors expected to merge with existing institutions, but only the Tamar did so,[65] proving a valuable connection once Launceston became a principal source of imports to Adelaide.[66]

With new banking regulations under discussion in the U.K. in late 1830s,[67] Angas worried lest the success of the Bank of South Australia stand in the way of the Company's obtaining a charter. Ever 'fertile in expedients', as his hagiographer has it, he had arranged by early in 1841 to put the Bank under a separate board but with the same set of Directors as for the Company.[68] The Bank remained an English concern after separating from the Company in 1842, gaining a charter in 1846.[69]

Primary communalism

We have placed the Company and its financial institutions in the context of the legal obligations and commercial conventions of the Reform Era which confirmed the triumph of the capitalist mode of social reproduction. What mode did its personifications and agents encounter as they came ashore?

The fictions we are being invited to challenge in this series were not conjured of the air. Conventional wisdoms draw upon the need that propertied classes have to nourish narratives supportive of their interests. Such are the culture-history wars. No red-armband view need apply. That imperative is keenest in a reluctance among the invaders to recognise an Aboriginal mode of production. If no mode of production were being practiced here, the Company could grab the lot. Yet, the people with most reason to be alarmed at the replacement of one mode of production by another were also the least likely to formulate their dispossession in those terms; they knew their own practices as integral to their survival and as central to beliefs about their place in the world, but they had no

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[63] S.J. Butlin, *Australia and New Zealand Bank* (*ANZ*), London: Longmans, 1961, p.22.
[64] Butlin, *Foundations*, pp.271ff.; *ANZ*, pp.51-57; Basker, pp.63-7.
[65] E.A. Beever, *Launceston Bank for Savings, 1835-1970*, Carlton: Melbourne University Press, pp.5-18 *passim*; Butlin, *ANZ*, pp.18-19 and 47-50; Isabella J. Mead, 'Philip Oakden', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, volume 2, Carlton: Melbourne University Press, p.290.
[66] Alan Atkinson and Marian Aveling (eds), *Australians 1838*, Sydney: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1988, p.130.
[67] Basker, pp.32-33.
[68] Hodder, pp.129-31.
[69] Butlin, *Foundations*, pp.268-70.

experience of other modes – no chattel-slavery or feudal-serfdom - against which to suppose that their ways of doing and imagining could be displaced.[70]

The teleological shadow cast over the mode known as 'primitive communism' should be erased by a coinage such as 'primary communalism', a mode more different from capitalism than capitalism is from slavery and serfdom since, unlike that trio, it has neither classes, nor a state, nor nation except in the archaic sense of tribe. Similarly, to recognize that the first peoples might have created multiple modes of production across 80,000 years without ever having had an 'economy', or a 'market' in current Western terms, is to celebrate difference, not to denigrate the other.[71] As a category, 'mode of production' is too readily equated with large-scale machinery when each mode embraces the social reproduction of every element in human existence. To Gordon Childe's way of reasoning, the Arunta saw themselves as producing food as much as through their ceremonies as by seed gathering or hunting: ' "Our magic rites," an Arunta would say, "are just as necessary and efficacious in keeping up the supply of emus and grubs, as the digging and weeding done by wretched cultivators."'[72]

Alien creatures had been advancing westwards on a broad front for more than twenty years with small pox as their advance party. Sturt reaches the Darling in February 1829 and two years later his party rows across Lake Alexandrina. The Hentys are at Portland from November 1834. Well before then, word spreads of the collapse of the pillars holding up the sky.[73] Spatially, indigenous social relations of reproduction dominated until the 1860s; demographically, they did so for a shorter period – only until the number of un-settlers went above 15,000 in the 1840s. Politically, which is to say, militarily, it is not silly to suggest that they had lost before 1836. Across the continent, the armed might of the invaders amounted to a monopoly of violence. They had won the 'Black War' in Van Diemen's Land after outlaying sums as great as the Company raised to establish the Province. The prospect of a new guerilla war encouraged an early gubernatorial prospect, Colonel Napier, to stress military preparedness.[74] Modes of social re-production extend to the means for the application of violence, with rifles as tools for killing, while the training

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[70] Their situation had nothing to do with the current misconception of how British law considered the indigenous inhabitants see Andrew Fitzmaurice, 'The Genealogy of *terra nullius*', *Australian Historical Studies*, no. 129, 2007, pp.1-15.
[71] M.I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973, chapter one; Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1957.
[72] V. Gordon Childe, *Man Makes Himself*, London, Watts, 1936, p.62; Bill Gammage explores the magical dimensions in *The Biggest Estate on Earth, How Aborigines Made Australia*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2011, chapter 4.
[73] D.H. Pike (ed.), 'The diary of James Coutts Crawford: extracts on aborigines and Adelaide, 1839 and 1841', *South Australiana*, vol. IV, no. 1, 1965, pp.3-15; Geoffrey Dutton, *The Hero as Murderer, The life of Edward John Eyre*, Melbourne: Cheshire, 1967, chapters 3 to 9; Gillian Hibbins, 'A Close Encounter of the First Kind – A Plea to Read the Overlanders', *The Push From the Bush,* no. 9, 1981, pp.87-95; Margaret Carnegie, 'Overlanders in 1838 Charles Sturt and David Reid', *The Push From the Bush*, no. 14, 1983, pp.56-64.
[74] Pike, *Paradise of Dissent*, pp.102-3.

of killers in the police and the army adds one more social division to labour.[75] The Province exemplifies 'property-as-theft' as a *pre*condition for the capitalist mode of exploitation, which, as Marx recognises, comes into the world 'dripping from head to toe, from every pore, with blood and dirt.'[76]

Prior claimants Once the Colonial Office realised that, unlike all the instructions to governors of other colonies, the 1834 Act had not spelt out protections for the prior occupants, the law officers sought to bring the projectors back into line by adding stipulations to the Letters Patent, and by extracting promises to protect animals if they were their food source.[77] In that spirit, two-thirds of the Proclamation set out those commitments.[78] Yet, the first peoples would retain title only if found to be settled, which the unsettlers understood to mean 'cultivated'. Would Torrens have accepted fisheries as cultivation? Even the Ngarrindjeri, who shifted around inside quite small territories, could seem nomadic to a Dorsetshire villager, or 'altogether homeless', as Hodder would have it sixty years later.[79]

And so it was that the so-called settled districts became the unsettled ones, unsettled by the invaders.

The failure of the 1834 Act to acknowledge prior occupancy is indicative of more than absent-minded prejudice. No document setting limits on the avarice of the investors could regulate a land-grab taking place 20,000 km away from the reach of the Crown, as had been shown by the failure of the 1831 Ripon Regulations to draw a line in the sand against squatters in New South Wales.[80] Moreover, the authorities imported the faith that the enclosure of 85 percent of England had seeded wastelands with virtue.[81] No surprise then that the Province proved to be a 'job' run by the 'veriest set of buggers', headed by Governor Hindmarsh.[82] The mess that the invaders made of their own land dealings highlights how preposterous was the thought that a delineation of native lands could have been made to work, or game preserved in their interest. Torrens's son, also Robert, came up

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[75] Fergus Robinson and Barry York, *The Black Resistance*, Camberwell: Widescope, 1977, chapter 6.
[76] Marx, *Capital*, I, p.926.
[77] Peter Moore, 'Fatal Letter: Robert Torrens and native title', *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, no. 40, 2012, pp.27-40.
[78] Fischer, 1966, pp.368-70.
[79] Hodder, pp.141ff.
[80] J. Phillips, 'Wakefieldian Influence and New South Wales, 1830-1832', *Historical Studies of Australia and New Zealand*, vol. 9, no. 34, 1960, pp.173-80.
[81] J.R. Wordie, 'The Chronology of English Enclosure, 1500-1914', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, vol. 36, no. 4, 1983, pp. 483-505; E.G. Wakefield, 'Proofs of the Rapidity with which Waste Land Rises in Value, Whenever People Congregate in Colonies', M.F. Lloyd Prichard (ed.), *The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, Glasgow: Collins, 1968, pp. 589-614.
[82] Editor of the *South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register* quoted in Howell, 1986, p.48; Rob Linn, 'First Settlers' Perceptions of the Physical and Social Environment of South Australia', *The Push from the Bush*, no. 12, 1982, pp.41-57; Ronald Parsons, *Hindmarsh Town*, Hindmarsh: The Corporation of the Town of Hindmarsh, 1974, pp.1-23.

with a novel title-transfer in 1858,[83] which conveyed how the promoters had always seen land as just another marketable commodity, a radical viewpoint then edging towards acceptance in the British courts, out from under much feudal learning which had cared not to distinguish realty from personalty.[84]

Free-d labour

No fiction remains more fundamental to the self-image of South Australians than that their patch was conceived and born free from the 'hated stain',[85] with the founders inscribing 'No convicts!' into their promotions. Lop-sided views of 'free labour' disable analyses of capitalism since a foundational fiction among vulgar Marxians is that the mode's determining characteristic is 'free labour', in contrast to the slave or serf kind. Marx's own critique of the capitalist mode is never mono-causal. Moreover, the multi-faceted operations of each of its dynamics[86] are rendered opaque by using the phrase 'free labour' for a power relationship better rendered as 'free-d labour', free-d, that is, from possessing the means of production which would otherwise allow labourers to remain self-sustaining. Setting labour free compels its owners to sell their capacity to add value, making free-d the antithesis of self-emancipatory. Indeed, free-d labour guarantees wage-slavery. To be a free-d labourer, warns Marx, is a misfortune, not a stroke of luck.[87]

By selling wastelands at a price sufficient to prevent immigrant workers from becoming self-sustaining before they had repaid more than their passage fee, Wakefield's systematic colonisation looks like a device for reproducing free-d labour. However, the agents of capital can extract the maximum of value from labour-power only after disciplining its application. The Wakefieldian promise of a measure of independence after seven years of enriching one's Master could be an indirect means to internalise the sought-after diligence in order to save up the purchase price.

Masters and Servants Acts A carrot could not spirit away the stick. Even though all 420 of the Company's workforce were indentured for three years, other employers needed to make it a crime for free-d labour to quit before even an implied contract expired. Within weeks of arrival, a Masters and Servants Act came into force. Workers could be imprisoned for six months and forfeit their wages. Because there was no gaol, offenders were chained to trees. On paper, the Act protected both parties. In practice, as a water carrier declared in 1838, it

[83] D. Pike, 'Introduction of the Real Property Act in South Australia', *Adelaide Law Review*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1960-62, pp.169-89.
[84] Rudden, pp.209ff.; Marx, *Capital*, **I, p. .**
[85] Henry Reynolds, 'That Hated Stain: The Aftermath of Transportation in Tasmania', *Historical Studies*, vol. 14, no. 53, 1969, pp.19-31.
[86] Unlike the Classical School, its successors never penetrated the phenomenal appearance to the dynamics of capital expansion, which is the essence of science in every realm, Marx, *Capital*, I, pp.174-5 n.34.
[87] Marx, *Capital*, I, p.644; *Capital*, II, p.185.

had been 'framed for the benefit of the rich alone.' After the Colonial Secretary, Lord Glenelg, found its provisions more suited to a penal colony, the Act lapsed for two years to be replaced in 1841.[88]

Masters can discipline their servants only for as long as the latter must sell their labour power in order to live. Even then, the Masters need state apparatuses to marshall that commodity. Adam Smith records how '[t]he masters …. never cease to call aloud for the assistance of the civil magistrate, and the rigorous execution of those laws which have been enacted with so much severity against the combinations of servants, labourers, and journeymen.'[89] Max Weber drew on 140 more years of developments in capitalism to recognise that

> [t]he industrialist takes into account the fact that people exist who are hungry, and that those other people in the spiked helmets will prevent them using physical force simply to take the means where they find them which could serve to allay their hunger …[90]

The fiction that the state is an umpire, the neutral arbiter, is the foundation of all apologists for class rule. To know which mode of production is dominant it is essential to discern which class or fraction has control at the political level. For South Australia in the 1830s, that search extends from Adelaide to London and back again. Yet, the existence of classes means that the state is always one more site for conflict. The long arms of Whitehall and the Admiralty made themselves felt in the disallowance of the first Master and Servants Act; while the replacement of Hindmarsh and Gawler fused the local with the imperial. There is no doubt who held state power in regard to the indigenous people. There is no doubt about which class held state power in the Province, though with more restraints on its exercise over immigrant labourers than upon the original occupiers.

To reduce unrest at home at the time of the Captain Swing riots, the Ripon Regulations of 1831 were, in part, to encourage emigration. Three years later, the Tolpuddle Martyrs were transported for resisting a further cut in their wages. More significant was the campaign through the Owenite Grand National Trade Union Confederation which won them free pardons in March 1836. By reversing that 'injustice within the law', organised workers taught the British state and the South Australia Company that they could not rule over labour in their old ways. The relative strengths of the contending classes were shifting, and did so faster in Australia where the crew of the Company vessels struck for higher

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[88] John Cashen, 'Masters and Servants in South Australia, 1837-1860', *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, no. 10, 1982, pp.32-43; John Cashen, 'Social Foundations of South Australia II "Owners of Labour" ', Richards (ed.), *The Flinders* History, pp.105-114; for the wider context see Douglas Hay and Paul Craven, *Masters, servants, and magistrates in Britain and the Empire, 1562-1955*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

[89] Smith, *The wealth of nations*, p.85.

[90] Max Weber, *Critique of Stammler*, Free Press, New York, 1977, pp. 100-1; Martin Albrow (ed.), 'Max Weber, R. Stammler's "Surmounting" of the Materialist Conception of History, Part 2', *British Journal of Law and Society*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1976, p.18.

wages as soon as they reached Kangaroo Island.[91] As the lash and the gallows lost out to the anti-transportation Leagues, the agents of capital sought to maintain their authority through ideological apparatuses.[92] Public hangings, transportation and such consolations no longer sufficed to ease emigration to a better world.

A world system In deciding which mode of production dominated here from 1836, the fiction about the freedom of its indentured labourers needs to be located in the relations between capital and labour across the globe. For Britain's propertied classes to import a million 'ghost acres' of soil from the Americas and Australasia,[93] they had to export millions of chattel slaves out of Africa, hundreds of thousands of convicts and millions of free-d labourers from the U.K.,[94] and, with the ending of chattel-slavery,[95] to dispatch contract labourers from the Indian sub-continent under 'a new system of slavery',[96] forging a supply chain which brought Gandhi to South Africa, but only a handful of coolies to South Australia.[97]

One could be forgiven for supposing that the distinction between systematic colonisation and contract labour had had something to do with the colour of one's skin. The initial proposal from the Land Company spoke of drawing its 'labour force from foreign countries in the belief that such workers would be more docile,' indeed, its promoters planned 'to discriminate against British subjects when awarding assisted passages …'[98] The risk with the 'docile' is that they are unlikely to be clock-trained and, therefore 'as every employer knows', according to Weber,

> the lack of *concienziosita* of the labourers of such countries, for instance Italy as compared with Germany, has been, to a certain extent still is, one of the principal obstacles to their capitalistic development. Capitalism cannot make use of the labour of those who practice the doctrine of undisciplined *liberum arbitrium* … [99]

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[91] Jim Moss, *Sound of Trumpets*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1985, chapter 1; David Faber, ' "The Industrial Classes" in a Liberal Utopia: "The Industrial Principle" in the inaugural 1851 South Australian Legislative Council election', *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, no. 43, 2015, pp.111-21; George W. Hilton, *The Truck System including a History of the British Truck Acts, 1465-1960*, Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1960, chapters V and VI.

[92] Michael Roe, *The Quest for Authority in Eastern Australia, 1835-1851*, Parkville: Melbourne University Press, 1965.

[93] E.A. Wrigley, 'The Transition to an Advanced Organic Economy: Half a Millennium of English Agriculture', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, vol. 59, no. 3, 2006, pp.470-1.

[94] Marx, *Capital*, I, p. **export of labour**

[95] Thomas N. Tyson *et al.*, 'Accounting, Coercion and Social Control During Apprenticeship: Converting Slave Workers to Wage Workers in the British West Indies, c. 1834-1838', *The Accounting Historians Journal*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2005, pp.201-31.

[96] Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery*, London: Oxford University Press, 1974; Robert J. Steinfeld, *Coercion, Contract and Free Labour in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

[97] Heather Foster, 'The first Indians: the Bruce and Gleeson indentured labourers in nineteenth century South Australia', *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, vol. 39, 2011, pp.21-30.

[98] Howell, p.29.

[99] Weber, *The Protestant* Ethic, p.57.

Angas could redeem his fortunes after 1841 by relying on the probity of his bonded Barossa Pietists.[100]

So many other arrivals, however, had set up farms for themselves that their wage demands made crops too expensive to harvest in 1840, causing Governor Grey to send troops and officials into the fields. More widely, grains were grown on what Dunsdorf calls a '[n]on-capitalist basis', meaning that farmers employed little or no outside labour.[101] Rather than coolies or convicts came machinery in the shape of the Bull-Ridley stripper, with fifty of them in use by 1850.[102] Marx recognised in machines a means for producing relative surplus-value, for strike-breaking and for cutting labour costs.[103]

The foundational fiction of free labour in South Australia persists because of the measure of independence that immigrant labourers won as small farmers, as processors or as unionised wage-slaves. To invert the concluding paragraph of Marx's chapter 33:

> Since we are concerned here with the condition of the Province, the principal thing that interests us is how the political economy of the Old World exposes the actualities of the New, despite being veiled by its chroniclers.

Upon reading *Capital* in 1888, the future Chief Justice Sir Samuel Griffith concurred: 'In short, the rule of the strong, which is one form is slavery, or the practical ownership of men by men, has by no means disappeared from our social system. We have abolished its most objectionable outward and apparent manifestation, but it still exists as part of the practical rule of life.'[104] Fifty years earlier, a spectre was haunting Adelaide, the spectre of chattel-slavery.

ENVOI

Checking a detail regarding George Fife Angas, I returned to his entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*:

> By 1822, Angas was carrying the main burden of his father's large establishment at Newcastle, with branches in British ports, the West Indies and Spanish America. In 1824 he moved to London to form the shipping business of G.F. Angas & Co. Next

[100] Ian Harmstorf, 'The Germans', James Jupp (ed.), *The Australian People, An Encyclopedia*, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp.360-62.
[101] Edgars Dunsdorf, *The Australian Wheat-Growing Industry 1788-1948*, Carlton; Melbourne University Press, 1956, pp.101-3, noting also that wages had to be higher than in England to attract more labourers to the colony.
[102] Frances Wheelhouse, *Digging Stick to Rotary Hoe, Men and Machines in Rural Australia*, Melbourne: Cassell, 1966, pp.51-61.
[103] Marx, *Capital*, I, p. 492.
[104] Sir Samuel Griffith 'The Distribution of Wealth', *The Centennial Magazine*, vol. 1, no. 12, 1889, pp.833-42.

> year he nearly overreached himself in bubble speculations, but recovered with his father's help.[105]

Here were foundational facts which I had failed to interrogate: how could Angas contribute to the South Australian Company? Part of his investment derived from his family's wage-slaves who crafted furniture out of Honduran mahogany harvested by chattel-slaves,[106] while a portion came from participating in the Atlantic trades that equipped the slave economies, as he could boast in September 1822: '…probably we have sent as great a quantity of British goods out during the past year as any of the Bay merchants, one excepted.'[107] Two years later, he became a 'shipper', going deeper into that triangular trade. Because his father had accumulated a hoard from like sources, he was able to rescue George Fife from ruin.

My tardiness in catching sight of the slave-hewn mahogany through the footnotes, and thus of pursuing the source of the founders' funds in 1835-6, are extensions of the want of learned interest in how the development of commercial institutions and instruments in Britain allowed the Company's directors to get about their business across the globe.

Like every venture, the invasion of South Australia was weaned on the slave system.[108]

Erwin Hodder's praise for Angas's 1822-3 campaign to free 200-300 Indian slaves along the Mosquito Coast[109] gives no hint of the Africans for whose emancipation Angas would receive £6,345 6s after 1835.[110] Without company files and private papers we can but guess why his concern for the Indians did not preclude his ownership of as many Africans. Did the logging methods of the Indians' 'owners' threaten his profits? Did he expect to

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[105] Anon. (D.H. Pike?), 'Angas, George Fife', Douglas Pike (ed.), *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (*ADB*), Volume I, Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1966, p.15; on the heavy losses, Hodder, p.31, who implies a year or two earlier.

[106] Hodder, pp.21-3; Adam Bowett, 'The English Mahogany Trade 1700-1793', Doctoral thesis, Brunel University, 1996, pp.184-92 and 205-8; Craig Stephen Revels, ' Timber, trade, and transformation: a historical geography of mahogany in Honduras' (2002). LUS Doctoral Dissertations. 1285. http://digital commons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertatons/1285 O. Nigel Bolland, *The Foundation of a Colonial Society: Belize, from Conquest to Crown Colony*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1977, and O. Nigel Bolland and Assad Shoman, *Land in Belize, 1765-1871*, Kingston, I.S.E.R. University of the West Indies, 1977.

[107] Hodder, p.30.

[108] Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery, From the Baroque to the Modern 1492-1800*, London: Verso, 1997, chapter XII; Catherine Hall *et. al*. (eds), *Emancipation and the remaking of the British Imperial World*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2014.

[109] Hodder, pp.30-36; A.G.L. Shaw, *Sir George Arthur, 1784-1854*, Carlton: MUP, 1980, makes no mention of Angas although he was superintendent and commandant in British Honduras from 1814 to 1822. Competing claims over jurisdiction and uncertain borders make it hard to be sure which of Angas's business and missionary acts were in Belize and which in British Honduras.

[110] www.UCL.ac.uk/lbs records Angas's signing claims no. 51 for £685 15s; no. 199 for £1,642 17s; no. 231 for £2,176 17s and no. 244 for £2,439 17s. Newspapers feel obliged to pretend that their total is around £5m. in today's money; a sounder comparison is with the British budget of £40m.; a seven-storey Arkwright mill for £15,000, and an agricultural labourer at less than ten shillings a week.

convert the Indians more readily than his own chattels? Whatever the reasoning, his conscience did not run to manumission.[111]

Angas put £2,500 of his compensation money into the British American Land Co., which Parliament authorised in 1834 to purchase 343 995 hectares in Lower Canada for £120,000, and which, by 1840, was in as gross a financial mess as South Australia.[112] Perhaps his financial difficulties in the early 1840s were not all the result of ill-judged investments by an Adelaide agent.[113]

Angas was not the only beneficiary from dealing in 'living tools' to promote the Company. Two Montefiore brothers involved themselves with the early years of the Province: Jamaica-born Jacob (1801-95) and Joseph Barrow (1803-93).[114] The surviving third of the Barbados Naval Office Records between 1781 and 1806 show that their father, Eliezer, had traded 211 slaves to Demerara and Belize.[115] The brothers signed compensation claims as trustees for three children of a tenant in tail; No. 2374 for £386 was granted but no. 2029 for £514 12s was not. (Sir) Moses Montefiore, recorded in his diary on 7 May 1835, that he had

> called at Downing Street on the Right Hon. Spring-Rice, Chancellor of the Exchequer. I was immediately admitted and received by him in a most friendly manner. I thanked him for having, at my request, appointed Jacob Montefiore one of Her Majesty's Commissioners for the Colonisation of South Australia. The Chancellor spoke of the many new schemes now afloat of Companies of small capital, and said he would always be glad to see me.[116]

As he was on 23 August 1835 when Montefiore returned with his regular partner and in-law, Nathan Rothschild,[117] to contract for the £15m. loan, equivalent to forty percent of the British budget, which the government needed to compensate the slave-owners.[118] Jacob

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[111] Although Britain abolished the trade in slaves out of Africa in 1807, dealing in the already enslaved and their offspring continued around the Americas, officially until the mid-1830s, to be winked at for decades thereafter by Whitehall to get cheap sugar from Cuba and Brazil. Eric Williams, 'The British West Indian Slave Trade After Its Abolition', *The Journal of Negro History,* vol. 27, no 2, 1942, pp.175-91; D. Eltis,'The Traffic in Slaves between the British West Indian Colonies, 1807-1833', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, vol. 25, no. 1, 1972, pp.55-64.

[112] Graham D. Taylor and Peter A. Baskeville, *Concise History of Business in Canada*, Toronto: OUP, 1994, pp.200-1; Angas had enough sense to keep out of the East Coast American Land Company in 1840, Hodder, p.253.

[113] Rob Linn, 'George Fife Angas: On Mining Operations', *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, 6, 1979, pp.55-66.

[114] Israel Getzler, 'Joseph Barrow Montefiore', *ADB*, vol. 2, Carlton: MUP, pp.250-1.

[115] Eli Faber, *Jews, Slaves, and the Slave Trade, Setting the Record Straight*, New York: New York University Press, 1998, p.130.

[116] L. Loewe (ed.) *Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore*, volume I, Chicago: Belford-Clarke, 1890, p.94.

[117] In partnership with Rothschild, Baring and Gurney, Montefiore formed the Alliance Assurance in 1824 with capital of £5m. for its worldwide operations, including marine insurance, after the London Assurance and the Royal Exchange lost their 100-year duopoly over Bottomry, William Schooling, *Alliance Assurance (1824-1924),* London: Alliance Assurance, 1924, pp.1-2 and 10-13; for the Marine Insurance Act, pp.76-7.

[118] For the terms see Loewe (ed.) *Diaries*, pp.98-99; the government had to borrow a total of £20m., and passed an Act late in 1837 to restructure the debt. Clapham, pp.148-50; Kynaston makes no mention of the loan in either of his books

visited in June 1843 and again in 1854.[119] Joseph spent thirteen years in New South Wales until his 1841 bankruptcy, which saw his return to London, before taking up residence in Adelaide between 1846 and 1860.[120]

Following the Company's money trail leads to the retired financier and Dissenter, Samuel Mills, who had put up most of the £23,000 contributed by early November 1835, and who could offer £120,000 in 1841 to take over the Company debt. Mills had made his millions from the London Assurance Co.,[121] which flourished on marine insurance for slave goods and against fire in the sugar refineries along the West India Dock.[122]

Other South Australians to receive compensation included the poet Fidelia Hill, who inherited an estate in Jamaica where she lived with her husband, Robert, between 1830 and 1835, from whence, flush with compensation, they moved to Adelaide 'on the understanding that [he] would be given a position.' The Creole Edward Stirling (1804-73) arrived with a remittance of £1,000 in 1838 to cut a huge figure in mining and pastoral endeavours, serve in the Legislative Council, take a hand in the colony's constitution, father Sir John Lancelot and Sir Edward Charles, and have a small municipality named after him in the Adelaide Hills. With compensation funds, the two sons of Neill Malcolm set up Poltalloch cattle station after 1838, expecting to resettle tenants cleared off the Clan estates in Argyllshire.[123] Sir Robert Dalrymple Ross (1828-87), an inheritor from his father's slaves in St Vincent, became treasurer and Speaker in the House of Assembly from 1881 until his death. The sixth governor, Sir James Fergusson, inherited from absentee slave-owners.[124] By way of contrast, a West Indian seaman, James Gordon, convicted at Port Adelaide in 1837 of stealing a watch was transported from the free colony to serve his seven-year sentence in the penal one across the border.[125]

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covering the period. No mention of these dealings appears in the *DNB* entry for Moses Montefiore, or in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, volume VIII, New York: Funk & Wagnells, 1904, pp.668-71.

[119] Hirsch Munz, *Jews in South Australia*, Adelaide, n.p., 1936, pp.12-14, reprints an extract from *The Observer*, 1 January 1887.

[120] Munz, pp.11-17; A. Fabian, ''Early Days of South Australian Jewry', *Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal*, vol. 2, 1944-48, pp. 140-2; 'The First Montefiore in Australia', Part IV, 1948, pp.467-71.

[121] Pike, *Paradise of Dissent*, pp.122 and 187.

[122] A.H. John, 'The London Assurance Company and the Marine Insurance Market of the Eighteenth Century', *Economica*, New Series, vol. 25, no. 98, 1958, pp.126-41; Clive Trebilcock, *Phoenix Assurance*, Volume I, Cambridge: CUP, 1985, pp.96-112; Robin Pearson and David Richardson, 'Business Networking in the Industrial Revolution', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, vol. 54, no. 4, 2001, pp.657-79; for the Montefiore involvements see Nicholas Draper, 'Helping to make Britain great', Catherine Hall *et al*. (eds), *Legacies of British Slave Ownership*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, p.107.

[123] Rodney Cockburn, *Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia*, Blackwood: Lynton, 1974, volume I, pp.80-1 and volume II, pp.192-3.

[124] Draper is wrong about the Montefiore brothers' receiving compensation, Hall *et al.* (eds), *Legacies*, p.63.

[125] Ian Duffield, 'From Slave Colonies to Penal Colonies: The West Indian Convict Transportees to Australia', *Slavery & Abolition*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1986, p.31.

Less directly, but more pervasively, financing the trade in slave-produced goods, more than the slave trade itself, called forth the regime of credit pivotal for the revolution inside capital.[126] For like the Tobacco Lords of Glasgow before 1778,[127] and like Jane Austin's Reverend father, gentlemen did not need to trade in human cargoes or to own slaves – as did the Gladstones and the Barings - in order to benefit from the system.[128] That bloodline explains why the free-trade British had to support the Confederacy.

The Faustian bargain struck by capitalists between indulgence and accumulation[129] allowed space for slave-based fortunes to endow the theological *Hibbert Journal* and the Codrington Library, All Souls College, Oxford, as well as many a stately home besides Fontill Abbey and Bromley Hill Place. Inheritor of wealth from the West Indies along with the Lascelles peerage, the seventh Earl of Harwood directed the 1988 Adelaide Festival of the Arts.[130] As Walter Benjamin remarks: 'There is no document of civilisation which is not at the same time a document of barbarism.'[131] The glory that was Greece/ And the grandeur that was Rome' were paid for out of dehumanising toil, from which the Athens of the South was not to be exempt.

The latest front to open in the culture-cum-history wars is the Right's promotion of Western Civilisation, underwritten by $15m to the University of Sydney, from medical over-servicing billionaire, Paul Ramsay.[132] Often as not, the case for the Western Civilisation rises on the plethora of commodities, or slides into defending the bad against the worst: the benign Britisher against Kipling's 'lesser breeds without the law.' There is no denying the existence of Western Civilisation or gainsaying its worth, both of which are the outcome of struggles against the forebears of the people who now have the lucre from their expropriating the surplus-value of wage-slaves to fund a further closing of the Australian mind. Such civilisation as the world now enjoys has been won by men and women who

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[126] R.B. Sheridan, 'The Commercial and Financial Organisation of the British Slave Trade, 1750-1807', *Economic History Review*, vol. 11, no. 2, 1958, pp.249-63; Joseph E. Inikori, 'The Credit Needs of the African Trade and the Development of the Credit Economy in England', *Explorations in Economic History*, vol. 27, no.2, 1990, pp.197-31.

[127] T.M. Devine, *The Tobacco Lords; a study of the tobacco merchants of Glasgow and their trading activities, 1740-1790*, Edinburgh: Donald, 1975; Carol Hill, 'Galloway Shipping and Regional Development, 1750-1850', *Scottish Economic and Social History*, vol. 19, no. 2, 1999, pp.95-116.

[128] Brian Southam, 'The silence of the Bertrams, Slavery and the chronology of *Mansfield Park*', *Times Literary Supplement*, 17 February 1995, pp.13-14; Edward W. Said, *Culture & Imperialism*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1993, pp.69-70 and 110-16; more to the liking of the Jane-ites is Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the war of ideas*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1975, which ignores slavery more thoroughly than did its subject.

[129] Marx, *Capital*, I, p.741.

[130] Williams, *Capitalism & Slavery*, pp.88-90 and 94.

[131] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, London: Fontana, 1973, p.259; see my 'Barbarisms and civilisations', *Temper Democratic*, Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 1998, pp.217-26. The Earl of Chatham thought it 'barabarism' not to 'consider the sugar colonies as the landed interest of this kingdom', quoted Williams, p.95.

[132] Simon Haines, 'An Education Manifesto for Western Civilisation', *Quadrant*, vol. 61, no. 12, 2017, pp.14-17, its manner and matter would affront both Allan and Harold Bloom.

broke bad laws. Slave revolts pricked consciences before the abolitions of 1807 and 1833.[133] The secretary of the Builders' Labourers Union, Samuel Champ, explained to a Domain crowd in Hobart in 1916:

> British liberties had not been won by mining magnates or stock-exchange jobbers, but by genuine men of the working-class movement who had died on the gallows and rotted in dungeons and were buried in nameless graves. These were the men to whom we owed the liberates we enjoyed today. Eight hours an other privileges in Australia had been won by men who suffered gaol and persecution.[134]

Freedom of the press owes more to Richard Carlile and the printers who followed him into prison in the 1820s by defying the four-pence duty on newspapers than to 'The Thunderer', *The Times*, or to Mass Murdoch. The engine behind the Abolitionists' victory in 1807, Thomas Clarkson, kept a brick from the Bastille on his desk while William Wilberforce promoted Acts to criminalise working-class resistance to wage-slavery.

To adapt Marx's linking of cotton and slavery with capitalism to the civilising enterprise of the South Australian Company:

> Without chattel slaves, the Angases have no mahogany to import and no market for their exports; without those profits they have no hoard. It is chattel-slavery which gives the South Australian Company its founding philanthropist. Thus, slavery is an economic category of the greatest importance for free settlement.

Not every bluestone in Adelaide is mortared with the blood of a slave as is charged against the bricks of Bristol and Liverpool, yet the fines that cemented the City of Light's Proclamation Tree were mixed with the blood of West Indian slaves and Kaurna bones, since plastered over with an insouciant scholarship.

Humphrey McQueen
14 March 2018

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[133] Peter Burroughs, 'The Mauritius Rebellion of 1832 and the Abolition of British Colonial Slavery', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. IV, no. 3, 1976, pp.243-65.
[134] *Daily Post*, 24 June 1916, p.11.