This paper investigates the relationship between the domain of things we call ideas, which philosophers, political theorists, and intellectual historians have claimed as their privileged object of study, and the domain of empirical history. How do we understand the entangled relationship between intellectual history and the study of ideas with the concrete material practices of political actors? I argue that the common distinction between the ideational and the material evident in dominant methodologies of intellectual history shares an affinity with a widespread understanding of democracy as involving the repression of the material body. That is, I suggest that the privileging of linguistic practices in the historical study of ideas is closely related to a certain democratic suspicion of the body. Accordingly, this paper aims to rethink the place of the body in the historiography of democracy to better attend to the material body and its capacity to generate conceptual meaning. Doing so, I propose, will help us rethink the relationship between matter and meaning and explore how the non-linguistic practices of the body can have signifying effects.

1. **Studying Ideas**

The English word “idea” originates from the Greek word eidos (εἶδος), meaning something that is seen. But if ideas can be seen, where do they exist and how exactly do we see them? Despite sophisticated developments in the study of ideas, I argue that intellectual history remains tethered to a mentalist vision that portrays ideas as immaterial objects existing in a metaphysical domain, which we can only access via logocentric practices associated with language, speech, and reason. According to this mentalist picture, ideas are related to but ultimately separable from the world of matter and the body, which is believed to be mute and ultimately incapable of signifying meaning without the linguistic apparatus of speech.

In his William James Lectures at Harvard University in 1933, Arthur Lovejoy outlined the methodological principles for the emerging disciplinary field of the history of ideas, and his comments would later be published in his 1936 study, *The Great Chain of Being*. [[1]](#footnote-1) Critical of historians for taking “very little interest in an idea when it does not wear philosophical full dress,” Lovejoy argued that understanding how certain ideas gained historical dominance requires scholars to study not just canonical philosophers but a wide variety of fields and thinkers. To do so, Lovejoy claimed that historians must study what he called “unit-ideas,” the elementary building blocks that make any larger system of thought.[[2]](#footnote-2) Lovejoy believed that the number of “essentially distinct” unit-ideas are “decidedly limited,” and so any intellectual innovations that appear in history are “due solely to the novelty of the application or arrangement” of these unit-ideas.[[3]](#footnote-3) While systems of thought may change, Lovejoy’s unit-ideas are ultimately stable and coherent across time. As such, the historian’s task is to uncover these perennially existing unit-ideas and understand how they relate together to form the overall intellectual system under investigation.

As critics have argued, Lovejoy’s assertation that there exist “persistent or recurrent” unit-ideas across history led historians to discount the messiness of political history in favour of a basic set of unchanging unit-ideas articulated in across various texts. [[4]](#footnote-4) In portraying ideas as mental phenomena independent from a changing historical context, Lovejoy’s methodological principles meant that the history of ideas took flight from the empirical and ultimately had difficulty accounting for novelty in history. It was not until the mid-20th century when Marxist historiographers rethought the relationship between the ideational and the material that the study of empirical history would prove central to any account of intellectual history. Exemplary of this Marxist intervention, Christopher Hill’s *Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution* takes historical discontinuity as its point of departure. Pointing to the historical ruptured marked by the first juridically sanctioned regicide in 17th century Europe, Hill argued that the English Revolution was a novel event that laid the theoretical foundations for the democratic revolutions of the 18th century.[[5]](#footnote-5) Rejecting Lovejoy’s presumption of perennial ideas in favour of historical discontinuity, Hill contended that historians cannot study ideas abstracted from their historical context. Yet, Hill also rejected a crude sociological Marxism that claimed “men’s ideas were merely a pale reflection of their economic needs, with no history of their own.”[[6]](#footnote-6) Novel political events required novel ideas, he argued, because “a great revolution cannot take place without ideas.”[[7]](#footnote-7) But how exactly did Hill understand the relationship between revolutionary acts and revolutionary ideas?

The historian of ideas, Hill writes, “must attach equal importance to the circumstances that gave these ideas their chance. Revolutions are not made without ideas, but they are not made by intellectuals. Steam is essential to driving a railway engine; but neither a locomotive nor a permanent way can be built out of steam.”[[8]](#footnote-8) Just as steam cannot build a train or the path of its tracks, neither can an idea build a revolutionary movement. Yet, just as steam can drive an engine, so too can ideas drive people to act. Hill attends to how thinkers of various classes justified their activities by studying the inner logic and philosophical rationality of their ideas. His approach to intellectual history suggests that political actors must first be philosophically convinced and ideationally persuaded before undertaking revolutionary action. [[9]](#footnote-9) After all, “Most men have to believe quite strongly in some ideal before they will kill or be killed.”[[10]](#footnote-10) To study the history of revolutionary thought is to study the “ways in which minds were being prepared” to justify revolutionary action.[[11]](#footnote-11) According to Hill, a revolution cannot take place without revolutionary ideas because ideas provide the justificatory context for revolutionary action and it is this philosophical justification, he suggests, that moves individuals to act.

In his 11th thesis on Feuerbach, Marx puts forward a distinction between the ideational activities of philosophers and the material action necessary to change the world. “Philosophers have only interpreted the world. The point is to change it.” In focusing on those classes that turned the world upside down,[[12]](#footnote-12) Hill shows how understanding those who changed the world requires understanding how they interpreted the world. Despite his attention to historical context, however, Hill’s method remains committed to a mentalist picture of ideas. By focusing on the philosophical logic of arguments articulated in political texts, Hill aims to reveal the rational grounds of belief that enabled subjects to justify their actions. In doing so, Hill’s methodology presumes a mind-body dualism that posits ideas as analytically distinct from and prior to the world of material action. Like Lovejoy, Hill expresses a mentalist picture that locates ideas in the rational mind, even if these are the historically contextual minds of different classes. As with Marx’s 11th thesis, therefore, Hill’s methodology maintains a distinction between the philosopher’s act of interpretation and the revolutionary’s act of change.

By the latter half of the 20th century, developments in the humanities and theoretically engaged social sciences would increasingly contest this binary between the ideational and the material. Several intellectual historians nominally categorized as the Cambridge School also rejected the belief in perennial ideas. But unlike their Marxian colleagues, these intellectual historians – of which I will take Quentin Skinner to be exemplary – did not accord primacy to economic class in the study of historical context. More importantly, they took inspiration from what is often termed “the linguistic turn” and argued that ideas in history do not serve as rational justifications for action but rather are themselves a form of material action in the world.

Influenced by Ludwig Wittgenstein’s insight that words are also deeds and by J. L. Austin’s theory of performative utterances, in the 1960s Quentin Skinner reconceptualized the agentic role of ideas in history. Against the belief that the “leading motors of historical change will always be fundamentally economic in character,” Skinner argued that political principles articulated in texts have an “independent explanatory role in accounting for the processes of social change.”[[13]](#footnote-13) According to Skinner, every text is a speech-act in and for a particular context, and so the intellectual historian must “grasp not merely what people are saying but also what they are *doing in* saying it.”[[14]](#footnote-14) By tracking the intervention of an idea-*qua*-speech-act in a particular linguistic context, the intellectual historian reveals how the textual utterance of an idea is in fact a political act. As Skinner puts it, “Political thinking is not an activity that stands apart from politics but is part of politics itself.”[[15]](#footnote-15) Ideas are not prior to and outside of the world of action but are themselves a form of action. Against Marx’s 11th thesis, then, Skinner argues that to interpret the world differently *is* to change it.

According to what continues to be intellectual history’s primary methodology of interpretation, ideas neither reflect the features of the world nor (merely) justify action in the world. Rather, ideas help constitute the world itself. Applied to the study of ideas, a performative theory of speech-acts thus seems to undermine the binary between the material realm of action and the ideational realm of meaning. Yet, even as Skinner reconceptualizes texts as a form of action, his understanding of linguistic speech-acts maintains a privileged relationship to political meaning. Far from undermining a mind-body dualism, he ends up reifying a mentalist conception of ideas. Ideas “help to construct” the world, Skinner argues, and we can understand how they do so

as soon as we reflect on the crucial consideration that normally *we can only hope to succeed in doing what we can manage to legitimize*. As a result, we are generally committed to acting only in such ways as are compatible with the claim that we are motivated by our professed principles. But this in turn means that such principles will always have to be invoked when it comes to explaining our behavior. This is because *our conduct will always in part be limited and directed by the need to legitimize what we are doing.* The explanation of what we are doing will therefore need to make reference to the principles in the light of which we seek to legitimize our behavior.[[16]](#footnote-16)

According to Skinner, ideas-*qua*-speech-acts shape the world by creating the horizon of meaning within which action can be legitimized. While Skinner’s language of legitimacy may seem to echo Hill’s arguments about justification, speech-acts for Skinner render what we do normatively thinkable and thus doable. Ideas do not justify action so much as create their horizon of intelligibility and thus make action possible in the first place. In distinguishing linguistic from non-linguistic action, Skinner accords primacy to the former in order to make the latter possible. Speech-acts are a form of action that makes material action thinkable and so doable. Only speech-acts, it seems, have the power to create the principles of meaning and legitimacy that “will always have to be invoked when it comes to explaining our behaviour.” In Skinner’s account, the rest of our non-linguistic conduct appears to be ideationally imponent. Not only do the body’s activities require these legitimizing principles to get off the ground, since the principles generated by speech both “limit” and “direct” its conduct. But more importantly, the body’s actions are themselves unable to generate these normative principles. The non-linguistic activities of the body remain mute, lacking any power of signification.

It has become a readily accepted principle among historians of thought that, like bodily action, discourse is an activity with material effects in the world. Far from undermining the distinction between the ideational and the material, however, a popular understanding of speech-acts has simply transferred the action associated with the domain of the material to the realm of speech while leaving uncontested the possibility that matter itself can generate meaning. Accordingly, discourse maintain a privileged relationship to the world of ideas and a priority in the intellectual historian’s archive, as dominant methods for the study of intellectual history in the 20th century remain tethered to mentalist vision of ideas that associates meaning-making with speech in opposition to the mute matter of the body. While the discursive utterance of ideas can certainly have material effects, can the material activities of the body have any ideational effects?

1. **Democratic Theory’s Repressive Hypothesis**
2. *The Public Sphere*

Given the mentalist underpinnings of many methodologies in the history of ideas, Skinner rejects the notion that the meanings of texts are “purely mental events.” Rather, he argues, ideas “are entirely in the public arena, and are susceptible of being recovered simply by intertextual comparisons and the inferences that can be drawn from them.”[[17]](#footnote-17) Ideas do not exist in the singular minds of philosophers but rather circulate, intertextually, in the public arena. Whether read in isolation or recited among others, texts were discussed and debated both in person and in print across a landscape of spaces that historians name the public sphere. As a result of this intertextual exchange, new ideas developed and reconstituted the horizon of meaning through which to make sense of action. Even if texts are not purely mental events, Skinner’s methodology nonetheless relies on a mentalist vision of ideas, one in which ideas are not located in the minds of singular philosophers but the minds of many individuals debating and deliberating in the public sphere.

To better understand how a discursive image of the public maintains the primacy of speech, reason, and the mind in opposition to the seemingly mute and a-signifying body, I turn to Jürgen Habermas’s early work on the public sphere. I suggest that Habermas provides us with one of the most sophisticated accounts of the deliberative public arena, the basic structure of which underpins many intellectual historians’ understandings of intertextual exchange. By highlighting how the Habermasian public is rooted in linguistic exchange and takes shape in opposition to the materiality of the body, we can not only better understand why so many intellectual historians remain captured by a mentalist image of ideas but also begin to devise an alternate account that promises to overcome intellectual history’s mind-body dualism.

In the *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* Habermas’s argues that prior to the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere, there existed what he names the *repräsentative Öffentlichkeit*.[[18]](#footnote-18) “Not by accident,” he writes, “did the English king enjoy ‘publicness’ – for lordship was something publicly represented. This *publicness* (or *publicity*) *of representation* [*repräsentative Öffentlichkeit*] was not constituted as a social realm, that is, as a public sphere; rather, it was something like a status attribute.”[[19]](#footnote-19) For Habermas, it was not the communicative exchange of speakers that organized the power at the royal court, but rather the aesthetic features of the lord’s body. The *repräsentative Öffentlichkeit* is, Habermas argues, “inseparable from the lord’s concrete existence,” that is, bodily signifiers such as “insignia”, “dress”, “demeanour”, and “rhetoric” – “in a word, to a strict code of ‘noble’ conduct.”[[20]](#footnote-20) Publicity at court was thus rooted in an embodied performance of noble status. The “court was a forum,” as Paul Monod writes, “for aristocratic display,”[[21]](#footnote-21) a forum which the state heavily regulated.[[22]](#footnote-22) At court, Habermas writes, the lord “displayed himself, [re]presented himself [*stellt sich dar*] as an *embodiment* of some sort of ‘higher’ power.”[[23]](#footnote-23) As the lord of all lords, the king embodied sovereign power in the sense that the monarch’s physical body publicly displayed and so represented the invisible higher power of the body politic.

Though Habermas does not cite *The King’s Two Bodies*, published 5 years prior to Habermas’s *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, Ernst Kantorowicz’s influential work nonetheless provides a more developed account of the embodied structure of sovereignty that operated in the early modern monarchies. According to Kantorowicz, 16th and 17th century jurists conceived of the authority of the body politic as inseparable from the organic body of the king. The body politic and body natural are, Kantorowicz writes, “one unit indivisible, each being fully contained in the other.”[[24]](#footnote-24) Subjects expressed their allegiance to the divine and metaphysical Royal Body of the kingdom via allegiance to the monarch in his or her flesh. As such, courtiers bitterly competed for physical intimacy with the king, since proximity to the king’s material body meant proximity to the ‘higher’ power of the body politic.[[25]](#footnote-25) The publicity of the king’s corporeal body was, as Habermas rightly notes, at the heart of the royal public at court.

Habermas’s attention to corporeal aesthetics at the heart of what he calls the *repräsentative Öffentlichkeit* belies any simple reading that he ignores or overlooks the body.[[26]](#footnote-26) In this early work, the body is not neglected so much as rendered irrelevant as a consequence of the rise of capitalism and the “disintegration” of the *repräsentative Öffentlichkeit*.[[27]](#footnote-27) As a result of mercantilist driven growth of the world’s market economies during the 17th century, states developed permanent bureaucratic apparatuses to meet the new demand for capital. According to Habermas, this development led to a separation between the “prince’s personal holdings and what belonged to the state,”[[28]](#footnote-28) a split that ultimately “depersonalized [the] state” and produced a new disembodied sphere of public authority.[[29]](#footnote-29) “‘Public’,” he writes, “no longer referred to the representative ‘court’ of a person endowed with authority but instead to the functioning of an apparatus with regulated spheres of jurisdiction.”[[30]](#footnote-30) In line with more recent institutional-financial accounts of state development, Habermas contends that the 17th century formation of a permanent bureaucracy to manage the state’s finances depersonalized political power as public authority became identified with the state’s administrative sphere.[[31]](#footnote-31)As a result, he claims, the body politic was severed from the natural body of the king, and the state’s authority became abstracted not just from the king’s body but, Habermas infers, from any body whatsoever.

According to Habermas, capitalism severed the semiotic chain uniting the king’s body as a public signifier to any significations of state power. The representative public at court thus came to end, for him, when the king’s representative body could no longer embody public authority. The power of the body politic was thus no longer the prerogative of one person, but the object of equal debate and discussion of those members of the bourgeois public sphere. As such, Habermas’s account of the public sphere presents a certain historiography of the downfall of monarchy and the rise of democratic society as the shift from a political regime centered around the royal body to one in which speech and deliberation take center stage. This historiography has served, I suggest, as the implicit background of intellectual history and its prioritization of intertextual exchange as the central archive of political theory. Yet, one need not be a Habermasian to believe that, with the downfall of the monarchy, there emerged a split between the material body of the king and the symbolic body of the state ultimately resulting in a democratic society that prioritized discourse as the primary arena of politics.

1. *The Democratic Revolution.*

Despite the challenge they pose to the tradition of deliberative democracy associated with Habermas’s work, the tradition of radical democracy emerging from the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe draws on a similar reading of a split between the material and the symbolic resulting from the rupture of the king’s two bodies. In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Laclau and Mouffe develop the concept of hegemony as an analytic and tool in the struggle for radical democracy. Notwithstanding the complexity of the concept, Laclau and Mouffe argue that hegemony is an “articulatory practice which constitutes and organizes social relations” (96). Laclau and Mouffe are often taken to articulate a certain political ontology in their work, given that they argue that the “the problem of the political is the problem of the institution of the social,” which is to say, the problem of the political is the organization of the symbolic domain in which political relations gain meaning (153). But insofar as their project is ontological, it is not trans-historical. As a productive strategy of political power, the project of hegemony is only possible, they argue, in a certain epoch inaugurated by what they call the democratic revolution. Turning to work of French political theorist Claude Lefort, they argue that “Lefort has shown how the ‘democratic revolution,’… supposes a profound mutation at the symbolic level [and] implies a new form of institution of the social” (186). The democratic revolution transformed the ontological terrain of the political, such that hegemony now becomes feasible as a viable political strategy. To understand Laclau and Mouffe’s identification of hegemony as a discursive practice therefore, we must understand what, according to them, took place during the democratic revolution.

According to Laclau and Mouffe, the monarchical world of Europe was “a society of a hierarchic and inegalitarian type” in which “power was incorporated in the person of the prince, who was the representative of God” (155, 186). The social imaginary of the *ancien regime* was organized according to a naturalized hierarchy of rank and status governed by a divinely ordained ruler. Beginning in France 1789, the democratic revolution broke with the monarchical society’s hierarchical imaginary. “[S]ymbolized by the Declaration of the Rights of Man,” they write,

[the democratic revolution provided] the discursive conditions which made it possible to propose the different forms of inequality as illegitimate and anti-natural…. Here lay the profound subversive power of the democratic discourse, which would allow the spread of equality and liberty in to increasingly wider domains and therefore act as a fermenting agent upon the different forms of struggle against subordination (155).

By breaking with the hierarchical order of the monarchy, the democratic revolution established a new egalitarian social imaginary. It instituted a new discursive structure in which claims of equality could now be articulated, and therefore relations of hierarchical subordination could be seen as unnatural and unjust.

But why do Laclau and Mouffe figure the democratic revolution as a discursive event? Why argue that the subversive power of democracy lays in its egalitarian discourse? The reason, I propose, is because, drawing on Lefort’s work, they put forward an account of the democratic revolution that entails the disembodiment of political power. According to Lefort, prior to the democratic revolution, political power was located in and contained by the *materiality* of the king’s body. Turning Ernst Kantorowicz’s *The King’s Two Bodies*, Lefort argues that “the society of the *ancien regime* represented its unity and its identity to itself as that of a body – a body which found its figuration in the body of the king.” What happens then in the democratic revolution is the rupture of the king’s two bodies. “The democratic revolution,” Lefort writes, “burst out when the body of the king was destroyed, when the body politic was decapitated and when, at the same time, the corporeality of the social was dissolved – There then occurred what I would call a ‘dis-incorporation’ of individuals.”[[32]](#footnote-32) Whereas monarchical power was incorporated in the body of the king, democratic power is disincorporated, since no singular body can inhabit the power and authority of ‘The People.’ As such, power is “an empty place, impossible to occupy, such that those who exercise public authority can never claim to appropriate it.”[[33]](#footnote-33) Drawing on Lefort’s concept of the “empty space,” Laclau and Mouffe argue that “The radical difference which democratic society introduces is that the site of power becomes an empty space” (186). In contrast to the monarchical world in which power was incorporated in the person of the king, political in democracy is no longer incorporated in any person. As Lefort puts it, “there is no power linked to a body,” and as such, democracy is a regime of “disincorporation.”[[34]](#footnote-34)

For Lefort, this rupture of the king’s two bodies split apart the symbolic domain of political power from the material domain of the body. As Lefort writes, the democratic revolution took place through “the destruction of the architecture of bodies.”[[35]](#footnote-35) In a democratic society, “the figure of power in its materiality and its substantiality disappears,” and Lefort describes power “as being purely symbolic.”[[36]](#footnote-36) Democracy is the only regime, he writes, “to have represented power in such a way as to show that power is an empty place and to have thereby maintained a gap between the symbolic and the real,” a gap, that is, between “symbolic power” and “its empirical determinations.”[[37]](#footnote-37) As an empty place, then, the power of the people can be briefly embodied, but its representatives do not incorporate power, since its exercise remains temporary until the next election.[[38]](#footnote-38)

As the intellectual background of Laclua and Mouffe’s radical democratic project, Lefort’s vision of the democratic revolution describes an event that that not only inaugurates a new discursive structure of equality but inaugurates the hegemonic power of discourse as such. Whereas Lefort believes that democracy emerges in an event of rupture when revolutionaries beheaded a king and Habermas claims that democracy results from the slow growth of a public sphere of equals, both theorists conceive of democracy in opposition to a monarchical regime that consolidated power in the king’s body. Given this historiographical flight away from the empirical domain of the king’s material body and towards an abstract symbolic domain, it is unsurprising that both radical democrats and deliberative democrats have turned to theorize discourse and language as the primary arena of democratic politics.[[39]](#footnote-39) The democratic regimes that emerged in the bourgeois societies of the 18th century sentenced the material body to irrelevance. The body, it seems, no longer seems to play a role in the composition of political power. Instead, public opinion, speech, and the symbolic activities of discourse now constitute the definitive features of democratic politics, and as a result, the archive of democratic theorists.

1. *Feminist Rejoinder*

In the late 20th century, feminist critiques of democratic historiography argued that the body did not disappear so much as was repressed and that this repression played a constitutive role in democracy’s formation. To critique a political structure where the family served as the basic unit of society and ancestry determined one’s place in the social hierarchy, social contract theorists elaborated a concept of the free and equal individual as a revolutionary alternative to a political system based on noble lineage and blood lines descending from the king. In her ground-breaking work *The Sexual Contract,* Carole Pateman showed how relations of equality elaborated by social contract theorists relied on a fraternal pact granting men patriarchal control over women by splitting society into a public sphere of civic freedom accessible only to men and a private familial sphere to which women were relegated. As Pateman writes, within a liberal political theory dating back to the social contract tradition, “only masculine beings are endowed with the attributes and capacities necessary to enter into contracts … only men, that is to say, are ‘individual’.”[[40]](#footnote-40) The ‘individual’ at the foundation of liberal equality is, then, by definition a gendered category, one that requires the exclusion of women as its condition of possibility.

According to Pateman, liberal democracy’s association of women with the sensuous body meant that the subject of liberal democracy is a disembodied agent of reason only accessible to men: “political life has been conceptualized in opposition to the mundane world of necessity, the body, the sexual passions and birth: in short, in opposition to women.”[[41]](#footnote-41) Through women’s oppression, the social contract tradition has come to conceal questions of the body, sexual desire, and reproduction. Accordingly, the democratic theorizing emerging out of this tradition is one in which, as Pateman writes, an “opposition between women, bodies, passion, and men, reason, rational advantage, is repressed.”[[42]](#footnote-42) Following Pateman’s intervention, queer and feminist critics have turned a critical eye to Habarmas’s account of the bourgeois public sphere and its democratic norms of deliberative equality. Critics such as Michael Warner and Joan Landes have argued that the exclusion of women and gender non-conforming people from public life was a central condition for the emergence of bourgeois deliberation, as an emerging hetero-patriarchal public sphere determined not only which bodies could speak in public but also how they could intelligibly participate in the public voice of reason.[[43]](#footnote-43) The gendered body of the bourgeoisie gained a new kind of significance and symbolic currency, as the exclusion of women was not accidental to but rather constitutive of the heterosexual masculine equality of the bourgeois public sphere.

These various historiographies of democracy put forward what could be considered, following Michel Foucault, a repressive hypothesis about the rise of democracy in the West.[[44]](#footnote-44) I don’t mean to suggest that queer and feminist critics such as Warner and Pateman view power negatively as constraint, limitation, and negation. For them, power is productive, since the exclusion of women and non-heterosexual subjects played a constitutive role in the formation of democratic societies. Such exclusion makes possible and produces, they argue, the intelligibility of certain political subjects and claims. As such, they form what has come to be called a constitutive exclusion. As Sina Kramer argues, “Constitutive exclusions occur when a system of thought or a political body defines itself by excluding some difference which is intolerable to it.” Although this excluded remainder “remains within the system or body that has excluded it,” it is nonetheless “covered over, repressed, or disavowed.”[[45]](#footnote-45) There is a sense in which power in these accounts is productive, but a central part of what it produces is repression, and in historiography of democracy, political power produces the repression of the body.

Although scholars such as Pateman, Warner, and Landes have made a number of important political critiques to dominant historiographies of democracy, the narrative dimensions of both earlier and more recent critical accounts nonetheless continue to pose the body as democracy’s outside. Whereas Habermas and Lefort claim that the shift from a monarchical to a democracy society entailed a rejection of the structure of corporeality that defined the monarchy, feminist and queer critics embrace this narrative as a matter of historical fact only to highlight how the disembodiment the political power relied on patriarchal and heterosexist exclusions. In several key theoretical texts for various traditions of political theory, such as deliberative democracy, radical democracy, and feminist political theory, a transcendence/repression of corporeality is seen as a pivotal historical feature of the emergence of a democratic form of life.

My point is not to suggest that democratic theory’s repressive hypothesis is wrong (even Foucault admitted that power does operate repressively), but rather to suggest that this story of repression is not the only way of making sense of the transition from monarchism to democracy. How else, then, should we make sense of the body’s historical role if not as democracy’s constitutive outside? And what might an alternative historiography reveal about the body’s capacity to constitute meaning and organize political life? To begin such a project requires, I believe, attending more carefully to the embodied structure of the monarchy and the language we use to speak about the king’s material body and its relationship to the body politic. In so doing, we can better understand what the emergence of a democratic body politic meant for the natural bodies of its members and hopefully overcome a persistent opposition in democratic theory between discourse and the body, between speech and its capacity to generate symbolic meaning and the seeming muteness of the non-linguistic body.

1. **From Representation to Incorporation**

To make sense of the king’s body and its relationship to divine authority, democratic theorists often employ the concept of ‘representation,’ arguing that the king’s natural body represented the symbolic power and authority of the body politic. Not coincidentally a dominant grammar of democracy, I argue that the language of representation obscures the operation of power at the royal court and hampers our ability to understand the downfall of monarchism and the emergence of democracy. Far from elucidating the relationship between the king’s material body and the symbolic power of the body politic, the grammar of representation presents certain methodological problems for speaking about and studying the king’s embodied sovereignty.

In recent years, the concept of representation has been critiqued by various theorists of affect, such as Brian Massumi, William Connolly, and Nigel Thrift. Opposing the symbolic and discursive system of meaning associated with representation, they argue that affect is an intensive and experiential flow of embodied life that takes place prior to and in excess of signification, representation, and cognition. Yet, as Ruth Leys and Linda Zerilli have argued, the conception of affect put forward by Massumi, Connolly, and others posits a distinction between the body and cognition, affect and signification, as two different and entirely distinct systems. In their attempts to center the body and the non-representational force of affect, they end up reifying a binary between mind and body. As such, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to theorize the link between signification and the body, the unity of symbolic meaning with materiality and corporeality.[[46]](#footnote-46) I believe that the challenge affect theory presents to a certain tendency to prioritize discourse, language, and representation over questions of the body, feeling, and sensation is right, but, as Leys and Lerrili have shown, the reasons commonly put forward end up recreating the binaries that many affect theorists sought to overturn. By investigating the political grammar historically opposed to representation, I aim to show how we can provide a better sense of the material body’s significance without erasing its signifying capacities.

As a political grammar of democracy, representation misconstrues the relationship between the king’s two bodies. Theorists of the king’s two bodies did not claim that the king’s physical body represented the metaphysical body politic. Rather, as Kantorowicz’s archive shows, the king’s body politic and body natural “are *incorporated* in one Person.”[[47]](#footnote-47) Why would jurists of the monarchy employ a language of incorporation rather than representation to theorize the relationship of the king’s two bodies? Historically, as Hanna Pitkin argues, the grammar of representation was employed not to think the relationship between the king and the kingdom but rather but parliament and kingdom.[[48]](#footnote-48) In one of the earliest texts employing the language of representation to describe parliament’s relationship to the body politic, Sir Thomas Smith’s 1583 *De Republica Anglorum* argues that parliament “representeth & hath the power of the whole realme both the head and the bodie. For everie Englishman is entended to bee there present, either in person or by procuration and attornies… from the Prince (be he King or Quéene) to the lowest person of Englande.”[[49]](#footnote-49) According to Smith, parliament represents the realm because in its houses are present every Englishman. These men, he claims, are either literally present in their own person (Lords, Bishops, and Prince) or they are made present “by procuration and attornies” (Commons).[[50]](#footnote-50) The grammar of representation renders grammatically intelligible parliament’s claim to act as and for the kingdom, since political representation describes parliament’s power to make present the entirety of the body politic in its houses.

Central to the political grammar of representation is then a logic of absence: parliament makes present those who are otherwise absent.[[51]](#footnote-51) Since the king could not be present everywhere and others had to act in his place, so too were the king’s agents said to represent, i.e. make present again, the absent monarch and his authority.[[52]](#footnote-52) This logic of absence so central to representation fails to adequately capture the relationship of the king’s two bodies because the king does not make present an otherwise absent body politic. Unlike for the king’s agents or for parliament, the body politic is never absent from the king’s natural body. Royalists did not view the king’s two bodies as separable but, as various scholars have put it, “indivisible,” “indissolub[le]” and “fused” together “in the actual person of the king.”[[53]](#footnote-53) Contemporaries preferred the term ‘incorporated’ and the concept underwent much elaboration at the start of the 17th century. Upon news that James VI of Scotland would inherit the crown of England, contemporaries worried that James’s accession would create a dual monarchy, “two civil or politic bodies, his two kingdoms Scotland and England.”[[54]](#footnote-54) Confronting the problem of how to make sense of the union, the jurist Francis Bacon dedicated to the new king on the eve of his coronation a work on the “Happy Union of the Kingdoms of England and Scotland.”[[55]](#footnote-55) In his attempt to show the juridical feasibility of the sovereign’s bid to unite the two realms, Bacon argued that in nature we find substances such as oil and water that can be mixed together but over time will separate, revealing “how weakely and rudely they doe incorporate,” but we can also find substances that when mixed together “are so vnited … they cannot bee seperated and reduced into the same simple bodyes againe.”[[56]](#footnote-56) Just as in nature, he argues, so too in politics do we find examples of successful “incorporation,” which he describes as the “[j]oyning or putting togeather of bodies, vnder a new Forme,” such that they will not separate again. Pointing to the “Romaines and the Sabines” as a successful case in which two distinct people “mingled vppon equall termes” and became one, Bacon reassures the King that the kingdoms of Scotland and England be incorporated together as one.

There were several ways of achieving incorporation of the two kingdoms and one method that neatly illustrates the symbolic and juridical significance of the king’s natural body was the naturalization of subjects. In Calvin’s Case (1608), English judges debated whether a child born in Scotland after the union of crowns ought to be considered under common law an English subject. In his role as the king’s solicitor-general, Bacon stated that the case of the Post-Nati of Scotland “is simple and plain: that is sufficeth to naturalization, that there be one king.” According to Bacon, a subject’s allegiance was not owed to any law or land but rather “to the person of the king.” Given that sovereignty was vested in one king, an “Alien” can only be one who “is born out of the allegiance of our lord the king.”[[57]](#footnote-57) Yet, as critics of the union alleged, the king governed two political bodies and so allegiance was necessarily split between the two kingdoms. In response, Bacon acknowledged that “his body politic of King of England and his body politic King of Scotland, be several and distinct,” but he argued that the king’s “natural person, which is one, hath an operation upon both, and createth a privity between them.”[[58]](#footnote-58) According to Bacon, it was not only that the body politic has effects on the body natural, but so too does the “the natural body of the king hath an operation and influence on his body politic.”[[59]](#footnote-59) The unity of the king’s natural body thus made possible and constituted a unity of the two kingdoms into one body politic to which subjects owed allegiance.[[60]](#footnote-60)

To make sense of the controversies surrounding the union, jurists turned to the king’s natural body and highlighted its political significance. Critiquing those who “do in effect destroy the whole force of the king’s natural capacity, as if it were drowned and swallowed up by his body politic,”[[61]](#footnote-61) Bacon argued that theorists of the king’s two bodies must not lose sight of the natural body and its constitutive role in political affairs. According to Bacon, we can understand neither the body politic nor the body natural except in and through the other. “There is in the king not a Body natural alone, nor a Body politic alone, but a body natural and politic together: *corpus corporatum in corpore naturali, et corpus naturale in corpore corporato*.”[[62]](#footnote-62) Incorporation discloses how the corporate body of the crown is in the king’s natural body just as the king’s corporeal body is in the corporate. As Henry Turner’s argues in his study of the corporate state in early modern England, the material body is not “a substitute figure that stands for the corporation in the way of a delegate or a representative but rather that it supports the corporation in a structural fashion, like a frame or a beam – it has been integrated *materially and functionally.*”[[63]](#footnote-63) The grammar of incorporation entails that we cannot speak about the body politic and the political authority with which the king ruled without also attending to the materiality of his natural body. Rooted within a Christian political theology, the grammar of incorporation more accurately articulates the natural body making flesh and incarnating the invisible body politic.[[64]](#footnote-64) As Richard II is often attributed with saying, the “laws are in the King’s mouth, or sometimes in his breast.”[[65]](#footnote-65)

According to theorists of incorporation, the body politic may have been invisible but it was neither absent nor separate from (as in parliamentary representation) the natural body of the king. Unlike incorporation, representation puts forward an already existing disjuncture between the two bodies. Absent a logic of representation, the downfall of the monarchy becomes a more fraught story and the body itself a more fraught site of political contention. If, as Bacon puts it, the body politic does not swallow up and drown the material body in its symbolic operations, then there is more at stake in the materiality of the natural body than previously considered for the ongoing production and reproduction of political power. Far from simply a matter of semantics, this conceptual language has far-reaching implications for how we make sense of the structure of monarchical authority, since the political grammars we employ (representation vs incorporation) change the kinds of propositional statements we can make about the king’s two bodies and the subsequent transition to a political order in which The People came to rule.

1. **The Democratic Revolution Revisited**

Rather than posit a split between the king’s two bodies, the grammar of incorporation effects a radical challenge for thinking their unity and understanding how one singular body could incarnate sovereign power. If, as democratic theorists contend, democracy entails a rupture of the king’s two bodies, then how do we understand the process in and through which subjects become newly invested in democratic principles of self-rule and equality? How, in other words, do we understand the emergence of and attachment to new democratic ideas without losing sight of the materiality of the body? The aim of this paper has been diagnostic and deconstructive in approach, to show how a certain historiography of democracy has entailed a certain prioritization of discourse over and above the body when it comes to political theorizing. Answering these questions would require much more space and would involve a much larger program of study focused on democratic body politics. In the remainder of this paper, then, I will briefly highlight one possible resource for this study.

On Feburary 3, 1794, about a year after the beheading of the French king and following years of insurrection against colonial rule, two delegates from Saint-Domingue, Bellay (a former slave) and Mills (a mixed-race man), came to the French convention to deliver speeches on the abolition of slavery. Upon their first visit to the assembly, a member of the convention “demand[ed] that their introduction be marked by the President’s fraternal embrace.” After sharing a kiss with the president, the convention rang out with applause. The next day, Bellay delivered a fiery speech in support of the revolution’s ideals and implored the Convention to abolish slavery. No one spoke after Bellay, and one member called a motion that the Convention not “dishonour itself by a discussion” on the matter, and so the assembly rose in acclamation, as the president announced slavery abolished. Following the announcement, the “two deputies of colour appeared on the tribune and embraced while the applause rolled around the hall from members and visitors. Lacroix led the Mulatto and the Negro to the President who gave them the presidential [fraternal] kiss, when the applause started again.” Following this embrace, the minutes of the assembly note that a certain “citizeness of colour who regularly attends the sittings of the Convention has just felt so keen a joy at seeing us give liberty to all her brethren that she has fainted (applause). I demand that this fact be mentioned in the minutes, and that this citizeness be admitted to the sitting and receive at least this much recognition of her civic virtues.” The motion carried, and Jeanne Odo,a former slave and abolitionist, walked to the front bench of the amphitheatre amidst the cheering and for the rest of the meeting sat to the President’s left.[[66]](#footnote-66)

Although an expansive literature exists on this short revolutionary period of abolition, scholars have rarely analyzed the affective and corporeal dynamics of this significant event.[[67]](#footnote-67) One years after the beheading of the king and what Lefort calls the dis-incorporation of the social body, Haitian and French revolutionaries abolished the “aristocratic of skin” and declared freed non-whites to be fully equal in rights to white Frenchmen not by abolishing the architecture of their bodies but by reorganizing their relations. The embrace of the deputies, the *baiser fraternel* (fraternal kiss) shared between Bellay and Mills with the white revolutionaries, and Odo moving from the visitors’ gallery to sit next to the president suggests that this event was not a moment of the body politic’s dis-incorporation so much as its re-incorporation, as the citizens incorporate themselves into a new body in and through the intimacy and proximity of the their natural bodies. Although the significance of Odo’s affective gesture of fainting, her bodily inclusion among the delegates and her continued legal exclusion on the basis of gender deserves far closer attention, I want to focus briefly on the fraternal embrace shared between the white and black delegates.

According to Frantz Fanon, the colonial imaginary of Europe figured the black body as an ugly untouchable object, something to be feared and avoided.[[68]](#footnote-68) In 18th century France, the category of race was inflected through biological concepts of pollution and purity. Physicians recommended that those travelling and living in the French Antilles eschew any physical and sexual commerce with slaves, considering their bodies to be physiologically degenerate and diseased, and thus capable of infecting and polluting the white body.[[69]](#footnote-69) As George Yancy argues, the historical matrix of white supremacy presents itself “in the white body’s modes of engagement.” As white bodies are affectively habituated to react with discomfort, revulsion, and disgust in the proximity of black bodies.[[70]](#footnote-70) White supremacy, on Yancy’s view, thus operates as a relationship of bodily affect organizing relations of proximity and distance, and within the corporeal architecture of colonialism, these relations were juridically enforced through laws against miscegenation and intermixing and the separation and segregation of living quarters, state services, and spaces of sociality.

According to Yancy, an alternative anti-racist practice would require “a radically different aesthetics of dwelling, of being-in-the-world, of being near, a different way or style of somatic comportment, sensing, feeling, emoting, perceiving … where the body, in this case, the white body, is already exposed to the touch of the Black body; indeed, where they are already *touching*.”[[71]](#footnote-71) Yancy’s proposal of bodily relations of touch and nearness as an alternative to the relationship of distance requires specification, however, as not every relation of touch is necessarily a relation of equality. The architecture of bodies organizing and sustaining relations of slavery and domination did involve forms of touch, which could be both violent and ‘careful.’ As Mark Smith argues, “For slave holders, skin and touch marked status, ownership, commodification, and paternalism.” Carefully inspecting the body of a slave put on market display, for instance, was a method of pricing, of analyzing the fitness and stature of the laboring body about to be bought.[[72]](#footnote-72) The slave holder could touch but not be touched. His touch was asymmetrical and inegalitarian, and in its exercise was materialized a racial structure that claimed the black body to be a commodity.

If a colonial relationship operated through relations of distance and asymmetrical contact between white and black bodies, then does the fraternal kiss and embrace shared by deputies in 1794 signal a momentary suspension of this colonial order? Marking the abolition of slavery, this gesture of the fraternity seems to gesture towards an alternative body politic defined by relations of equality and reciprocity between white and black men. Like the king’s coronation ceremony, it was ceremonial event that marked the beginnings of a new political order. In the months following, this event of slavery’s abolition was re-enacted in festivals throughout France, as various districts theatrically re-staged the assembly’s vote to abolish slavery, with citizens reciting Bellay’s speech A picture containing text, book, old, stone

Description automatically generatedand sharing “le baiser fraternel” with “nos frères de couleur [our brothers of colour].” [[73]](#footnote-73) The event was memorialized in paintings and engravings highlighting the interracial embrace as the bodily gesture of fraternity (fig. 1 & 2). The corporeal practices of fraternity exhibited at this event and its re-enactments suggest that the democratic revolution did not entail the dis-incorporation of individuals but their re-incorporation. Slavery’s abolition remade the relationship between the body politic and the natural bodies that constituted it. The new egalitarian body politic heralded by this event was realized in through the reciprocal gestures of men’s bodies. However, this project of transformation was ultimately cut short, as Napoleon re-established slavery in 1802.[[74]](#footnote-74)

Duchemin, Musée Carnavalet, Histoire de Paris (1794), G.23468

The emergence of democracy did indeed involve a splitting of the king’s two bodies, as the body politic was no longer incorporated in the singular body of the king. However, this split did not entail, as democratic theorists commonly presume, a more general separation between the domains of the material and the symbolic. Rather, as the grammar of incorporation indicates, the emergence of democracy meant a reconfiguration a how democratic power was incorporated with the bodies of its citizens. Alongside the repression of the bodies of certain gendered and racialized subjects, the rise of democracy also involved the reorganization of affective bodily practices as central to the constitution of new democratic relations of equality. Returning then to the starting point of this paper concerning methods, intellectual historians ought to attend more carefully to the political logic of bodily practice and investigate how the body itself is a site of political and intellectual contestation. To take seriously the affective practices of the body in the history of ideas thus means investigating how, alongside linguistic practice, the non-linguistic activities of the body not only articulate and constitute but, more importantly, attach individuals to and invest them in seemingly abstract philosophical ideas and political structures. Bodily practices, gestures, and affections are, in short, not opposed to but in fact central to the generation of political signification and meaning.



Nicolas Andre Monsiau, “L’abolition de l’esclavage proclamé à la Convention,” (1794).

1. The*.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Lovejoy, *Great Chain of Being*, 7. In his particular case study, Lovejoy argues that three unit-ideas make up the idea of the great chain being, which are the principles of plenitude, continuity, and gradation. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Lovejoy, *Great Chain of Being*, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Lovejoy, *Great Chain of Being,* 7. For an influential critique of Lovejoy, see Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *History & Theory* 8 (1969): 3-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. As he puts it in the 1997 revised edition, “Partisans of Parliament used arguments against the King which after the civil war democratic radicals could use for ‘the people’ against Parliament itself” (355). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Hill, *Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution*, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Hill, *Intellectual Origins*, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Hill, *Intellectual Origins*, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. In her study of the Hill’s work, Rachel Foxley summarizes his method as follows: “the broad outlines of a body of ideas might be determined by the inner logic of those ideas and their natural implications; these would then be cemented into social place by their economic implications, and interpreted in the light of the interests of the group who had latched onto them.” Rachel Foxley, “The logic of ideas in Christopher Hill's English revolution.” *Prose Studies: History, Theory, Criticism*, 36, 3 (2015): 199-208. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Hill, *Intellectual Origins*, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Hill, *Intellectual Origins*, 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (Viking Press, 1972). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. “Ideas in Context: Conversation with Quentin Skinner,” 126 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Skinner, “Meaning and Understanding,” *Visions of Politics Volume I: Regarding Method* (Cambridge, 2002)*,* 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. “Interview with Quentin Skinner,” https://archives.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/interviews/Skinner\_Quentin.html [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Q. Skinner, und H. Li. „Ideas in Context: Conversation with Quentin Skinner,” *Chicago journal of history* 7 (2016), 126-127, emphasis added. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Skinner and Li. “Ideas in Context: Conversation with Quentin Skinner,” 124. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Habermas, “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article,” *New German Critique*, 3 (1974), 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 7, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Monod, *The Power of Kings,* 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. For example, certain fabrics could only be worn by men and women of a particular social status (e.g. silk and satin were noble fabrics; fur and gold cloth were restricted to the royal family). Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries parliament passed a series sumptuary laws finetuning these aesthetic regulations and it also empowered officers to arrest anyone who transgressed these stratified dress codes. Harte, “State Control of Dress and Social Change in Pre-Industrial England.” David Kuchta, “The Semiotics of Masculinity In Renaissance England,” persuasively illustrates the state’s role in “socially naturalizing” status via clothing. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 7, emphasis added. Alongside *repräsentation*, German has two words for “representation”: *vertretung*, which has more of a sense of speaking for another, and *darstellung*, which is more aesthetically inclined in the sense of display. That Habermas uses darstellung underscores the reliance of publicity on the aesthetic rather than verbal realm. On the distinction between *vertreten* and *darstellen,* see Gayatri Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton University Press, 2016),9. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. At the 17th century French court, for instance, the royal *levée* was a daily ceremonial custom, where six different groups of people would enter the royal bedchamber in turns after the king’s waking, and a lucky few would aid in his dressing: one man to lay out his robe, two to take off his nightshirt, two to put on his day shirt, another to fasten his shoes, buckle his dagger, put on his coat, etc., all the while a growing group of spectators looked on. Norbert Elias, *Court Society*, 83-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. For critiques that Habermas excludes the body from his later work in discourse ethics, see Marie Fleming, *Emancipation and Illusion: Rationality and Gender in Habermas's Theory of Modernity* (Penn State University Press, 1997); Iris Marion Young, “Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy,” in *Democracy and Difference*, ed. Seyla Benhabib (Princeton University Press, 1996), 120–135; Young, *Inclusion and Democracy,* ch. 2; Staacy Clifford, “Making Disability Public in Deliberative Democracy,” *Contemporary Political Theory* 11, 2 (2012): 211–228; Amanda Machin, “Deliberating Bodies: Democracy, Identification, and Embodiment,” *Democratic Theory*, 2 (2015): 42-62; [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Habermas, *Structural Transformation,* 14. Though these transformations are not understood to be the structural transformations referenced by Habermas’s title, which are intended to refer to the public sphere’s degradation, I suggest that we should consider these structural transformations to be integral to Habermas’s overall account, as they make possible the emergence of the public sphere. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Habermas, *Structural Transformation,* 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Habermas, *Structural Transformation,* 17, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Habermas, *Structural Transformation,* 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Michael Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England,* 264 similarly argues that the “1660s saw something of a still-born financial revolution. This implied a *reduction in the personal authority of the monarch in that in that it appeared to transform the royal debt into a public debt*…. The power of the monarch, as medievalists would surely point out, was not ‘personal’ in a literal sense, and had been tied to a sense of the public good for some time. But here, the location of this *political authority was abstracted still further* – the security of the debt increasingly dissociated from the word of any individual. It lay, instead, with the state” (emphasis added). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Lefort, “Image of the body and totalitarianism,” 303. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Claude Lefort, “Democracy and Totalitarianism,” 279, [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Lefort, “Image of the Body,” 303. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Lefort, “Image of the Body,” 304). [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Lefort, “Question of Democracy,” 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Lefort, “Permanence of the theological political,” 225 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Lefort’s vision depends on institution of the election.[quote]. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. In the case of Habermas, consider the tradition of deliberative democracy. Regarding Lefort, see Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s theory of hegemonic articulation in *Hegemony And Socialist Strategy: Towards A Radical Democratic Politics* (Verso, 1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Pateman, *Sexual Contract,* 5-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Pateman, *Disorder of Women,* 45. See also Susan Moller Okin, “Reason and Feeling in Thinking about Justice,” *Ethics* 99 (1989): 229-249; Genevieve Lloyd. *The Man of Reason: “Male” and “Female” in Western Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Pateman, *Disorder of Women,* 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere*; Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics.* See also, Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” *Social Text* 25/26 (1990), 63; On the masculine sociability of the English coffeehouse, Brian Cowan, “English Coffeehouses and French Salons.” [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Though I do not have time to develop this point, it seems worthwhile to note that the negative conception of power Foucault critiques derives from a certain juridical conception of political power emerging from the historical rise of monarchism. According to Foucault, the European monarchies “were able to gain acceptance” in early modern Europe “because they presented themselves as agencies of regulation, … as a way of introducing order” to a feudal system havocked by the disputes and wars of feudal lords (*HS,* 86). By establishing “peace as the *prohibition* of feudal or private wars, and justice as a way of *suspending* the private settling of lawsuits,” the monarchies presented political power as a repressive power that said no, stop, and desist (*HS* 87). Indeed, it is this historical background that serves as the context for Foucault’s often-cited claim when it comes to theorizing power, “In political thought and analysis, we still have not cut off the head of the king” (88-89). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Sina Kramer, *Excluded Within: The (Un)intelligibility of Radical Political Actors* (Oxford University Press, 2017),5. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Leys, “The Turn to Affect: A Critique,” *Critical Inquiry* 37, no. 3 (2011): 434–72. Linda Zerilli, “The Turn to Affect and the Problem of Judgment,” *New Literary History*, 2015, 46: 261–286. See also, Sasha Newell, ‘The Affectiveness of Symbols: Materiality, Magicality, and the Limits of the Antisemiotic Turn’, *Current Anthropology* 59,1 (2018): 1-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Plowden, *Reports*, 213, emphasis added, quoted in Kantorowicz, *King’s Two Bodies*, 438. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Pitkin, *Concept of Representation,* 245, 244. See also Elton, “‘The Body of the Whole Realm’: Parliament and Representation in Medieval and Tudor England”. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Thomas Smith, *De republica Anglorum: The maner of gouernement or policie of the realme of England* (London, 1583). [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. According to Alan Watson, Roman law did not use the language of representation (*repræsentatio*) but rather procuration (*procurator ad litem)* to describe someone who acts on behalf of another in court. Watson, “*Repræsentatio* in classical Latin”, in *REPRÆSENTATIO: Mapping a Keyword for Churches and Governance,* 15-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Hanna Pitkin elucidates representation’s paradoxical logic of making present constituents who must otherwise remain in some sense absent in “The Paradox of Representation”, *Nomos X: Representation* (New York, 1968)**.** On the theological history of representing the absent divinity of Christ, see the essays collected in *REPRÆSENTATIO: Mapping a Keyword for Churches and Governance,* (eds.) Massimo Faggioli and Alberto Melloni (Berlin: LIT, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. David Starkey, “Representation Through Intimacy.” Starkey notes, however, that the notion of representation as monarchical delegation was undeveloped in the sixteenth century (195-6). [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies,* 9; Norbrook, “The Emperor’s New Body”, 344; Starkey, “Representation Through Intimacy”, 188, respectively. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Quoted in Levack, *The Formation of the British State,* 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Francis Bacon, *A briefe discourse, touching the happie vnion of the kingdomes of England, and Scotland* (London: Printed for Fœlix Norton, and are to be sold by William Aspley, 1603). The text is unnumbered. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Bacon names the difference between these two forms of mixture only the latter of which should be considered incorporation proper. For a discussion of incorporation in Bacon’s work, see Turner, *Corporate Commonwealth,* ch. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Francis Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon, Lord Chancellor of England.* Vol II. (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1842),176. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. *Ibid.,* 177. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. *Ibid*., [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. The political importance that Bacon ascribes to the king’s natural body for unifying the disparate kingdoms was not an innovation on his part. James had made similar statements before his first parliament on 22 march 1603/4. See, “House of Commons Journal Volume 1: 22 March 1604” in Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 1, 1547-1629 (London, 1802), 142-3. Similarly, in his arguments on Calvin’s case, Edward Coke argued that the unity of England and Scotland rested on the claim that, ever since King Arthur, Scottish allegiance had been sworn to the king’s body natural. See Axton, *The Queen’s Two Bodies,* 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon,* 177. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon,* 177. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Turner, *The Corporate Commonwealth,* 23, emphasis in original. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. On the relationship between incarnation and incorporation, see Thomas Berns and Benoît Frydman. 2005.“Généalogie de l'esprit de corps” in *L'esprit de corps, démocratie et espace public,* (eds.) Gilles Guglielmi & Claudine Haroche, Presses Universitaires de France: pp. 157-181; Henry Turner, *Corporate Commonwealth,* 70-71; Santner, *The Royal Remains*. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Quoted in Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins*: *Toussaint L’ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1989), 139-141. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. James describes the convention as having “been swept off its feet by an excess of feeling” but that it was a kind of non-event, since the revolution had already effectively ended slavery. “Long before abolition the mischief had been done in the French colonies, and it was not abolition but the refusal to abolish which had done it,” and so the “generous spontaneity of the Convention … was at the same time the soundest political policy.” James, *Black Jacobins*, 143-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York, 2008), 91-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Sean Quinlan, “Colonial Encounters: Colonial Bodies, Hygiene and Abolitionist Politics in Eighteenth-Century France,” *History Workshop Journal* 42 (1996): 107-125. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. George Yancy, “White Embodied Gazing, the Black Body as Disgust, and the Aesthetics of Un-Suturing” in Body Aesthetics, (ed.) Sherri Irvin (University of Oxford, 2016), 244-261, quote is form pg. 248. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Yancy, “White Embodied Gazing,” 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Mark M. Smith, “Getting in Touch with Slavery and Freedom,” *The Journal of American History*, 95, 2 (2008): 381-391. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Caroline Crouin, “Étude scénographique des fêtes en faveur de l’abolition de l’esclavage en France (février - juillet

    1794), *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* 339, (2005) : 55-77. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. It would take a further 46 years before France definitively abolished slavery. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)