

Department of Philosophy Colloquium Series

The Colonial System Unveiled: Towards New Perspectives of Studying Slavery in Africana Philosophy



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Thursday,
November 17
4-6 p.m.

Watson Hall
Room 517



When slave narratives have been studied in Africana philosophy, Africana philosophers have relied on continental philosophy as the basis of studying slavery. By following this trajectory, Africana philosophers had misplaced the study of slavery as encountered and addressed by 16th -19th centuries Black thinkers and subsequently failed to show that early Black thinkers developed unique genealogies that interrogated the enslavement of Africans differently from western thinkers. Following this line of reasoning, my central argument in this paper is that the detriments of relying on continental theories to study slavery in Africana philosophy has created a truncated sense of the history of the continuity of philosophies of resistance from Africa to the New World. This is to say, in the 16th century there emerged a distinct Africana critique of western slavery, that was centered on political sovereignty and self-governance that would carry on into the 18th-19th century and onwards. Such genealogies challenged just war theory, the curse of Ham as justifications for slavery, and advanced the use of violence to end slavery. This area of study needs more theorization to advance new perspectives on the study of slavery in Africana philosophy. This essay is an attempt at such an endeavor.

Everyone Welcome!

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