

“Political Economy”; The Economic Thought of
Martin R. Delany: The Antebellum Phase
（「ポリティカル・エコノミー」
マーティン・R・デラニーの経済的考察：
南北戦争前における黒人問題の一側面）

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SUMMARY IN JAPANESE：本稿では、マーティン・R・デラニーの経済思想を19世紀アメリカの黒人保守主義に位置付けようとする。デラニーは、南北戦争前のアメリカにおいて、黒人問題は人種差別ではなく、むしろ黒人の経済的劣位に端を発すると考えた。デラニーの理論では、勤勉、儉約、道徳的向上、経済的富と資源の蓄積によって黒人が自ら経済状況を改善することで、白人との平等を勝ち得るとされた。このような形で黒人が経済的に向上することは、白人の良心にもうったえ得るものであり、黒人の権利を認めさせ得るとされた。デラニーは自身の思想を経済に根ざした政治学をもとに練りあげ、黒人が経済的に発展するための科学的戦略として主張した。白人の政治的優位の原因を彼等の経済的優位に位置付けたデラニーは、黒人も経済力をつけることで、まずは政治的向上を、次に白人との平等を得よう主張した。また、黒人は宗教観念のために物質的繁栄を犠牲にしていると非難し、物質主義とキリスト教は共存するものだと言った。

19世紀初頭は奴隷廃止を筆頭に、様々な変革の聲の高まったアメリカの歴史においては楽観的な時代だったと言える。本稿では、黒人達の自助努力と変革の力を強く信じたデラニーが、まさに時代の楽観主義と変革主義の申し子であったとして、その理論をたどる。

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In its Marxian context, Political Economy is concerned with the production, distribution and accumulation of economic surplus and the attendant problem of defining the nature and exercise of political power and responsibility.¹ In essence, political economy focuses on how the distribution of economic resources shapes patterns of economic development and determines power relationship among groups within a given polity. Undoubtedly compelled by the depth of black poverty and powerlessness, black American leaders in the early decades of the nineteenth century focused attention on the relationship between the production, ownership and control of economic resources and the exercise of political power and authority. They attributed white affluence and hegemony to a monopoly of the instruments of power--economic resources. Many of the most vocal critics of white domination identified the lack of economic power as the major challenge confronting blacks. Black abolitionist leaders endeavored to educate blacks on the economic dynamics of white domination. They attributed black subordination to the lack of a fair share of the ownership and control of the nation's economic resources. The proceedings and deliberations of the early National Negro Conventions of the 1830's clearly underscore a determination by blacks to conquer poverty and dependency through the cultivation of habits of self-help, industry, economy, education and moral reform.² These values embody the kernel of moral suasion, the ideology that shaped these early conventions. Moral suasion acknowledged inherent deficiencies in the condition and character of blacks. The cultivation of these values was supposed to eradicate the deficiencies and eventually elevate blacks. An economically elevated and morally upright black populace would, many hoped, encounter little difficulty securing long-denied political and social rights and privileges. Moral suasion defined black impoverishment, wretchedness and subordination as symptoms of problems and deficiencies inherent in black character, rather than the consequences of racism and the institutionalization of slavery. Given this conception of the problem, blacks proffered solutions that emphasized changes in the black condition and character. By embracing moral suasion, however, black leaders gave credence to the prevailing proslavery attribution of black subordination and powerlessness to inherent inferiority and problems that blacks had themselves supposedly created! Blacks were therefore expected to assume greater responsibility for their own upliftment, and to seek solutions in material and behavioral changes.

Beginning with the very first National Negro Convention in Philadelphia in

1831, black leaders, most notably William Whipper, Junius C. Morel, Samuel Cornish, Abraham D. Shadd, John Vashon, Frederick Hinton, Richard Allen and John Peck, among others, declared a commitment to moral suasion. They pledged to “foster and encourage the mechanical arts and sciences among our brethren, to encourage simplicity, neatness, temperance and economy in our habits.”³ Moral suasion fostered an optimistic view of American society. Dedicated moral suasionists saw nothing inherently and irredeemably wrong with America. They believed in the persuasive force of moral and rational solutions, the strength of slavery and the depth and virulence of racism notwithstanding. Blacks who subscribed to moral suasion evinced optimism, and saw America as a land of opportunity. Anyone willing and able to work, the Reverend Lewis Woodson once argued, would have no difficulty securing opportunities for self-elevation.⁴ Industry became perhaps the most effective solution to whatever disabilities blacks experienced and suffered. Moral suasion in effect de-emphasized *race* as a critical factor in shaping the black experience, and emphasized *condition*, that is, situational deficiency instead. The underlying assumption was that blacks manifested certain self-imposed negative traits that stamped the mark of inferiority on them--indolence and its accompaniments, poverty and moral laxity. Change the condition, many believed, and everything else would follow. This conviction, in effect, relieved whites of direct responsibility for, or culpability in, the subordination and brutalization of blacks. Moral suasion was hailed as the panacea for the situational deficiency problem. It offered industry and wealth-accumulation to blacks as the foundation upon which to elevate themselves and attain meaningful freedom and equality. The first five National Negro Conventions emphasized more of character reform, material development, education and less of political demand and strategies. The high premium placed on moral suasion is reflected in the creation of the American Moral Reform Society in 1835, specifically to spearhead the moral suasionist crusade. The Moral Reform Society propagated moral suasion for about six years. Though the society collapsed by 1841, the spell of moral suasion remained strong, and the Negro State Conventions of the 1840's retained the focus on economic and character reform, even as blacks grew increasingly radical and political in their demands. The 1840's was particularly crucial for the development and strengthening of a strong black abolitionist tradition. In 1847, Frederick Douglass broke with the Garrisonians and carved out an independent path that culminated in the founding of *The North Star*, a

strong voice of black protest.⁵ The same decade witnessed intensification of organized moral suasionist efforts by black organizations, Churches and Fraternal societies in Philadelphia, Boston, New York and other northern cities. Though the framework for propagating moral suasion had disappeared by 1841, black Americans continued to perpetuate its doctrines, believing strongly in its redemptive quality. In other words, the doctrine of conditional-change-before-elevation retained credibility amongst blacks. *The North Star* became not only a voice of protest, but also a vehicle for the dissemination of moral suasion.

No black leader was as active and forceful in the propagation of moral suasion, and the conditional deficiency thesis as Martin Robison Delany, 1812-1885. Though black leaders had earlier defended moral suasion, few matched the strength and philosophical depth of Delany's commitment. Here is an aspect of his career about which very little is known. His nationalist and Pan-Africanist activities have overshadowed other critical dimensions of his career. The most critical being the complexity, or in the words of Theodore Draper, paradoxes, that dotted significant phases of his life.⁶ Few black leaders of the nineteenth century established a reputation as uncompromising critics of slavery and oppression as Delany. Though born of a free mother in Charles Town, Virginia (now in West Virginia), Delany was not immune from the indignation and brutalities that slavery and racism perpetuated. Like other free blacks, he quickly realized that slavery and racism recognized no distinctions among blacks. Race indeed mattered. Regardless of status--free or slave--a black was regarded and treated as inferior. Violence and bigotry were consequently no fairy tales to Delany. At a very early age, he witnessed his father savagely beaten by whites, leaving him permanently scarred. He felt the pinch of racism when he was denied access to the Virginia public school system. He and his brothers had to contend with nocturnal study sessions in order to learn the alphabets. In Virginia, as in other slave states, it was a crime to educate a black person. Finally, young Delany could not have missed the horror in his mother's face as she spirited her children out of Virginia to escape persecution from the authorities for the crime of letting her children gain literacy.⁷ Delany also read about and witnessed numerous instances of brutalities against blacks. These experiences and exposures fired his anti-slavery zeal, finally thrusting him into the profession of black abolitionism in Pennsylvania, the Mecca of the black struggle. He joined the Pennsylvania group in the late 1820's, energized by, and enthusiastic about, the prospect of becoming a part of black organized

efforts against oppression. Race was no doubt a factor in bringing blacks together in pursuit of a common cause. Yet, the black leaders he met, who became his mentors and colleagues (Woodson, Whipper, John Vashon, Robert Purvis and John Peck) were individuals whose lifestyles betrayed deep and abiding faith in the promises of the American Dream. Many had overcome slavery and poverty to attain economically elevated status. Some owned and operated successful business ventures in addition to their abolitionist engagements. Their modest accomplishments bolstered faith in the American Dream, earnestly believing that through continued hard-work and character reform, blacks would achieve the goal of integration. Consequently, despite experiencing discrimination, these blacks remained steadfast in their dedication to the Protestant ethics. They had come to Pennsylvania from different backgrounds, all attracted by the liberal reputation of the state. Delany shared their pain and ordeal, and equally embraced their faith in industry as the key to progress. They all stuck to the belief that a change in their material and moral condition, would appeal favorably to the moral conscience of the nation and thus accelerate the pace of integration.

Delany continued his education in Pittsburgh under the tutelage of Rev. Lewis Woodson. He was socialized to appreciate, among others, the virtues of industry, economy, moral uprightness, compromise, peace and non-violence. The lifestyles and teachings of Rev. Woodson and William Whipper distinguished them as the quintessence of hard-work and moral integrity. Many of the blacks Delany interacted with owned lucrative barbing saloons, ran city bath establishments, public transportation and Lumber businesses. Regardless of the nature or size of the business, these men all exuded faith in moral suasion, convinced that through industry and moral reform, they would eventually gain the respect and admiration of whites, and win concessions of their long-denied rights and privileges. Delany imbibed this faith and optimism, and became a dedicated moral suasionist. Though critical of slavery and discrimination, he retained confidence in the effectiveness of moral suasion as a vehicle for change, and soon assumed the leadership of its propagation.

Delany's brief function as publisher and editor of *The Pittsburgh Mystery* marked the beginning of his moral suasionist career. As a journalist, he defined his prime responsibility as essentially to help blacks unravel the mystery surrounding their predicament, and also ascertain appropriate solutions. *The Mystery* concentrated on precisely these two objectives in its short span of life

(1843-1847). It was, however, his two-year tenure as coeditor and roving lecturer for *The North Star* (1847-1849) that inaugurated the most productive and active phase of Delany's moral suasionist career. More than anyone else, including William Whipper, the acclaimed guru of moral suasion, Delany relentlessly publicized moral suasion, extending the gospel to the nooks and corners of northern free black communities. To enhance the appeal of moral suasion, he situated it within a broader philosophical framework. He integrated the notion of conditional-elevation-before-equality into a philosophical framework that became for him, a mirror into the dynamics that shaped black-white relationship in the United States. He identified this philosophical paradigm as "Political Economy." He did not provide any insight into the philosophical source or inspiration for his political economy. It is not clear how he arrived at the concept. One issue was clear, however--his faith in, and determination to make, political economy the leitmotif of his anti-slavery crusade. Delany presented political economy as the magic wand that would transform black lives. If there was one object of consistency in his career, it was his confidence in political economy. Though he vacillated and frequently shifted grounds on political and social matters, exhibiting paradoxes and ambivalence, Delany never wavered on political economy. He gave two mutually reinforcing definitions of the concept. First, he defined it as "the science of the wealth of nations--practically the application of industry for the purpose of making money." Second, he referred to it simply as "knowledge of a nation's wealth or how to make money."⁸ Both definitions underscore the critical dimension and factor or "money making." Broadly conceived, knowledge of "how to make money" entailed serious productive engagements--"the application of industry." Delany thus placed high premium on the production and accumulation of economic resources. He linked black elevation and development to the acquisition, and the practical application, of the knowledge of capitalist accumulation. In order to attain progress, blacks needed to understand the relationship between capitalism and power.

Delany stressed a linkage between production, accumulation and the possession and exercise of political power and authority. In consequence, he urged blacks to seek knowledge of "How to live in this world."⁹ He believed that blacks had yet to understand, let alone appreciate, the crucial nature of this knowledge. It is only when a group is knowledgeable on "how to live in this world," in Delany's estimation, that it can adopt appropriate strategies and

measures that would enhance that group's existence. As a *North Star* agent, he considered it a crucial part of his responsibility to help blacks attain this knowledge. The approach he adopted combined a critique of black orientation toward capitalism, and a comparative analysis of black-white relationship through historical times. The latter, that is, the comparative analysis, graphically demonstrated the shortcomings of prevailing black socialization. Blacks had been socialized, according to Delany, to acknowledge and accommodate subordination and dependency. Everything blacks were taught prevented them from appreciating the importance of Capitalism.¹⁰ He advocated a radical re-orientation. To become elevated, blacks must be enlightened on the primacy of moral suasion. He rejected the contention that blacks were lazy and inherently inferior. Black subordination, in his judgement, resulted from a skewed socialization that shaped a dependency syndrome, and molded blacks into acknowledging the divine character of slavery. Black theological indoctrination emphasized the divine origin of slavery. Blacks were persuaded to acknowledge that God had determined that they be enslaved. Delany traced the source of this claim to pro-slavery ideology.¹¹ The submission that God sanctioned slavery and chose blacks for the experience gave slavery the character of historical inevitability. Slavery became an institution whose fate could not be influenced by human actions, especially the actions of its victims: Blacks. Those who propagated this doctrine discouraged slaves from attempting to be anything but good slaves--docile and obedient--with their hopes pinned on the prospects of a better life hereafter. Wealth accumulation, and all the trappings of capitalism were deemed devilish and unchristian. Materialism unduly interfered with the primary purpose of man on earth--to be strong in faith and devotion. Though of pro-slavery origin, these ideas gained inroad into black consciousness. Several black clergies and Churches acknowledged the divine character of slavery and the doctrine of particular selection, and implored their congregations to shun worldly engagements. Poverty and degradation became insignia of particularity, the defining essence of the chosen! Delany denounced providential determinism as a carefully concocted ploy to deny blacks knowledge of the true causes of their oppression, and thereby prevent an effective remedy. According to him, providential determinism was designed to confine blacks in subordinate roles, by preventing them from actively engaging the critical problem of "How to live in this world."¹² To impart appropriate education to blacks, Delany had to confront and deal with the pervasive and debilitating influence

of religious historicism.

Delany embarked on his lecture tour in the Fall of 1847, armed with his political economy doctrine, and the conviction that blacks did not suffer from racially motivated problems, but from the consequences of their failure to change their condition. He told black Philadelphians that the notion of prejudice against color was both "ridiculous and absurd." Racism did not exist. What existed was "nothing but prejudice against condition."¹³ His tours took him into the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Delaware, and Michigan. He traveled extensively in these states, visiting and delivering anti-slavery lectures to black communities. One of his major preoccupations, reflected in his lectures, was to expose the fallacy and dangers of providential determinism. If blacks were to advance, their consciousness had to be released from the grasp and control of Providentialism. Blacks, he insisted, must assume responsibility for their upliftment. He tied human development to material attainments. No nation or individual could develop without a strong material foundation. It is materialism that opens up a vast arena of opportunities. For black Americans, therefore, industry and the acquisition of economic resources would unlock the chains of bondage and oppression.¹⁴ Delany implied a very simple equation that underlined the potency of economic power: *Industry + Wealth accumulation = White power and dominance*. This simple equation embodied the solution to the critical problem of "how to live in this world." If blacks seriously cherished the same opportunities, rights and privileges as whites, then, they had to become equally industrious, productive, and vigorously accumulate wealth. Delany repeatedly emphasized this point in his anti-slavery lectures. He identified "self-exertion," and a sound business education as the means to economic salvation, and challenged blacks to work hard and train their children in practical business education. Political economy required that knowledge be tailored to a particular objective--secular and temporal upliftment. Practical education consequently became the most critical education for blacks. He especially stressed education that was relevant to "the store and counting houses." The more motivated and committed to business blacks were, the greater their chances of catching up with whites.¹⁵ Though Delany presented his political economy as the perfect solution, he confronted an uphill task of combating Providentialism. How was he to convince blacks who had been socialized to shun worldly possessions that capitalism was not necessarily anti-God and criminal? To successfully propagate political economy, therefore, Delany had

to demonstrate its compatibility with religion.

Delany's political economy doctrine ran afoul of the inclinations and predispositions of several black churches. Though some black pastors warmly embraced his mission and opened their Church doors to his anti-slavery lectures, several others objected strongly to the materialist focus of his message. His political economy seemed abominable in an age when black congregations were expected to emphasize devotional commitment, and shun the corrupting influences of the material world. A clash between Delany and several black churches seemed inevitable, given conflicting interpretations of the doctrine of moral suasion, the very foundation of his political economy. While black churches generally endorsed the call for moral reform, many remained uncomfortable with the materialist injunctions of moral suasion. Many clergies feared that exhorting blacks to improve their economic condition would immerse them in the corruption and vices of the secular world. These clergies defined moral suasion in strictly moral terms, rejecting Delany's much broader perspective that incorporated secular values. This contradiction resulted in several churches censoring Delany. He was refused access to the buildings for his meetings, and had to meet in private homes.¹⁶ Such negative responses however only emboldened him. Determined to combat religious determinism effectively, he confronted the antagonistic churches on their own terms. He sought and presented religious corroboration for his political economy. He delved into the Bible to establish divine endorsement of capitalism. God, he maintained, sanctioned the accumulation of wealth. Capitalism was indeed consistent with God's plan for humanity. To oppose the material basis of moral suasion, therefore, constituted an obstruction of God's plan and a violation of his injunction. Delany enjoined all those striving for religious perfection to commit themselves to addressing and redressing the problems of poverty, exploitation and subordination. Christianity without compassion and concern for poverty and human misery and degradation was, Delany averred, contrary to the will of God. He thus tied the mission of Christianity closely to political economy--concern for economic, social and political equity.¹⁷

To strengthen the religious foundation of materialism, Delany advanced a theocentric solution to all human problems. God became the sole dispenser of solutions to humanity's problems. In this capacity, God gave humanity three fundamental laws for the resolution of all problems--physical, moral and spiritual laws--each with its distinct and fixed spheres. Spiritual law (prayers) ad-

addresses specifically spiritual problems. Physical and moral laws, on the other hand, are linked and deal with temporal and secular issue--the domain of slavery and racism. The components of physical and moral laws are essentially those ensconced in moral suasion--industry, thrift, economy and moral uprightness. Properly applied, each law is tailored to resolve pertinent problems. A spiritual law, for instance, could only successfully resolve a spiritual problem. Religious devotions and revivalism, therefore, could never effectively deal with slavery and degradation. Delany attributed past failures in black efforts to the wrongful application of spiritual antidotes to their essentially physical problems. Since slavery and racism were secular problems, their solutions lie in the development of capitalism. He warned against the sacrifice of materialism for religion; or the perception of the two as necessarily contradictory. Both, he argued, were in fact, compatible and complementary.¹⁸ To underscore this point, he invoked the mandate of God. According to him, God created the earth and its resources specifically for the benefit of humankind, and wished humanity to acquire mastery "over the earth, to possess its production and enjoy them."¹⁹ The accumulation of wealth thus acquired divine seal of approval. Furthermore, God's injunction to humanity to assist the poor and needy, and be loving and generous, Delany opined, would be impossible to execute without material possessions. Wealth accumulation acquired both divine and practical corroborations. In his lectures in Ohio, Michigan, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York, Delany persistently emphasized the indispensability of knowledge and practicalization of political economy to the upliftment of blacks. He did not, however, advocate the complete jettisoning of religious devotions. What he abhorred was the abrogation of personal responsibilities, and the complete surrender to the dictates of Providentialism.

To the critical question, "What shall we do to better our condition?" Delany offered knowledge and application of political economy. He implored blacks to "go to work with muscles, hands, limbs, might and strength."²⁰ He advised them to enter into agriculture, trade, real estate and general business. In Ohio, where he traveled and lectured extensively, Delany observed and lamented the low state of business consciousness among blacks. They failed to "live up to the standard" and had not "kept pace with the spirit of the age." The standard he had in mind was that set by whites--industry and wealth-accumulation. The spirit, of course, was Capitalism.²¹ Though he met wealthy blacks in Ohio, as in other places, the majority lacked the requisite capitalist education and orien-

tation, and in consequence failed to run successful and profitable investments. In fact, Delany blamed the failure of most black businesses on this deficiency in business education. Whatever profits blacks realized were usually ephemeral and transient, eventually passing into the hands of the more knowledgeable and experienced whites. He stressed the indispensability of a solid grounding in business.²² As he told fellow blacks in Philadelphia, "we must have farmers, mechanics, and shopkeepers generally among us. By these occupations we make money--those are the true sources of wealth. Give us wealth and we can obtain all the rest."²³ The accumulation and exhibition of wealth by blacks would demonstrate beyond any shadow of doubt their capacity for self-improvement and industry--qualities pro-slavery advocates deny in blacks--and thus persuade whites in general to abandon racism and bigotry. Industry would present evidence as solid as "self-existence" of black qualification for equality and elevation. As he put it,

You can scarcely imagine the effect it would have over the pro-slavery feeling in this slave holding country, if in addition to the few businessmen we have, there were in New York city, Philadelphia, Boston, even in Baltimore, Richmond, Norfolk, Washington city, and all other ports of entry where colored men are permitted to trade, and Buffalo (which has one colored mercantile house), Milwaukee, Chicago, Cincinnati and Pittsburgh and many other places, but one shipping house, wholesale or retail shop, the proprietor/s of which were colored men, and one extensive mechanic of any description of trade. Such indisputable evidence as this of the enterprise and industry of the colored man, compared with that of whites, would not admit of controversy--it would bear with it truths as evident as self-existence--truths placed beyond the shadow of a doubt.²⁴

Knowledge of political economy would facilitate the development of self-evident considerations for black elevation. The conquest of slavery and racism, therefore, did not depend on violence, moral purity or providential determinism, but on the development of a solid material base. He emphasized, however, that political economy was not a solution designed solely for blacks. It was in fact a universal precept whose values impacted everyone, regardless of race. Whites clearly demonstrated susceptibility to political economy through

their industry and material wealth. This fact explained and justified their material prosperity and political dominance. Whites had never recoiled from the challenges of industry and materialism, a disposition that had placed them over and above blacks. In fact, according to Delany, whites possessed innate drive for "higher attainments," a dynamic force in human development. Every human being, Delany maintained, is endowed with the impulse for self-improvement. This impulse is usually manifested in drives, or ambitions for greater feats. It is this impulse that determines an individual's status in society. By extension, the mobilization or dormancy of the collective impulse of a state or nation determines the standard of life of its populace. In other words, individuals and nations develop in proportion to the degree to which they mobilize the impulse for change and development. This inner impulse became Delany's framework for explaining what he characterized as the "objectionable relations" that existed between blacks and whites.²⁵ He conceived of national development as the outcome of a cooperative efforts of the citizenry, and advanced a contractual theory of black-white relationship. According to this theory, blacks and whites were united by a national compact, mandated and sealed by the fact of belonging to one nation. The development of this nation, and the nature of the distribution of economic, social and political resources depended on whether or not all citizens, regardless of race, faithfully executed their parts of the contract. This contract is neither written down, nor verbally discussed, but inherent in the nation. Parties to the contract (i.e., the citizens), according to Delany, are obliged to contribute to developing the nation, a contribution that is only possible if the impulse of higher attainments is generated and unleashed. He described whites as a people with a very active and dynamic impulse for change. Blacks on the other hand, were held down by a debilitating providential *weltanschauung*, that not only rationalized subordination, but subdued their motivational impulse. The strength and dynamism of white motivational impulse brought material prosperity, thus enabling whites to fulfill their part of the national compact. Blacks failed to fulfill theirs, and in consequence, reduced themselves to parasites of the body polity. As he put it, "whites are producers, we are consumers. They build houses and we rent them. They manufacture clothes and wares and we garnish ourselves with them. They build coaches, vessels, cars, hotels and we deliberately wait until they hat got them in readiness, then walk in as though the whole thing was bought by, paid for and belong to us."²⁶ Delany thus found both the rationalization of, and

justification for, black subordination, in the low state of industrial and material drives. In his judgement, blacks could justifiably demand equality, and the enjoyment of the same rights and privileges with whites, only if they embraced the same values, and became equally industrious. As he emphasized, "By the regulation of society, there is no equality of persons, where there is no equality of attainments."²⁷

Delany's political economy betrayed the depth of his faith in the malleability of American society. De-emphasizing, and at times completely ignoring race, he focused attention and efforts on situational deficiencies and how to remedy them. He was not alone in reposing so much confidence in the persuasive force of moral arguments. This integrative consciousness informed black leadership orientation and choices, and was much deep-rooted in black history. Regardless of how alienated and aggrieved, blacks generally harbored optimism about the prospect of eventually realizing the promises of the American Dream. However, few projected this integrative mind-set and vision as forcefully as Delany. His political economy philosophy de-emphasized the racial dimension of slavery and discrimination. He focused instead on blacks, and placed upon them greater responsibility for both their predicament and the strategies for emancipating themselves. Oftentimes, his criticisms of fellow blacks sounded unduly harsh and vituperative, and failed to acknowledge, even the positive dimensions and contributions of blacks that he himself had once articulated and defended.

Despite the opposition of several black churches, Delany's campaign struck a responsive cord. In several cities and counties, he found and commended evidence of both individual and group efforts by blacks to embrace capitalism and materialism. In his regular reports to *The North Star*, he observed numerous instances of black enterprises and economic elevation. Wherever he went, he found farmers, barbers, traders, lawyers, and physicians. Blacks branched out into several businesses, and were contributing positively to the development of their respective communities. At least, many seemed to have embraced the broader conception of moral suasion amplified in Delany's political economy.²⁸ Paradoxically, the anticipated positive response from whites did not occur. In fact, as events in Philadelphia proved, the modest achievements of a few blacks was seen as a threat to white authority and the *status quo*. The response was negative. The Mecca of the black struggle, Pennsylvania, soon became home of "the race riot capital of the country." This violence was di-

rected at the property of wealthy blacks and organizations, whose efforts at economic upliftment and wealth accumulation seemed to threaten the very foundation of white supremacy.²⁹ Perceptive blacks began gradually to question the situational deficiency thesis. Further developments reinforced the growing concern among blacks over the depth and pervasiveness of racism. The Constitutional reform that began in Pennsylvania in 1837 spread to other states of the Union. It denied blacks, many of whom owned properties and paid taxes, the franchise and citizenship.³⁰ Development at the federal level took a similar course. The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 tightened the knot of bondage, and threatened free blacks with re-enslavement. These developments pushed many blacks to the conclusion that material advancement could never induce positive change. Delegates at a State Convention of the Colored Citizens of Pennsylvania, held at Harrisburg, unanimously agreed that the problems blacks confronted derived largely from "complexional intolerance" rather than "conditional basis." Addressing voters of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the delegates declared, "The barrier that deprives us of the rights which you enjoy finds no palliative in merit--no consolation in piety--no hope in intellectual and moral pursuits--no reward in industry and enterprise."³¹ Delany shared the frustrations of fellow blacks and equally abandoned the conditional deficiency thesis. Race, rather than condition, became the focus of analysis.

The ascendance of race as a factor in black consciousness did not completely erode Delany's faith in political economy and moral suasion. The direction of anti-black violence clearly establish that whites dreaded the prospects of blacks becoming economically strong. The entire structure of oppression had subsisted on the assumption that blacks were indolent, unenterprising and incapable of self-upliftment. Blacks had themselves debunked this myth. Consequently, in Delany's estimation, political economy had not failed. On the contrary, its potency had actually been proven. It was the nation that had failed. Though there was no need to jettison political economy, there was a desperate need to abandon the nation. He concluded therefore that due to the depth of hostility to blacks, elevation was inconceivable within. The violence unleashed upon blacks, and the Fugitive Law established, beyond any shadow of doubt, the determination of whites to exclude blacks from the promises of the American Dream. He perceived federal policy as a reflection of the national character of racism, and predicted that slavery would eventually become a national institution. He deemed a continuation of the black struggle within such a hos-

tile context ill-advised. Delany advocated emigration and refocused his political economy to the creation of a black nationality abroad. He appealed to resourceful blacks to emigrate to more conducive environments outside of the United States, where they would freely develop their economic power, unencumbered by racism. He enunciated his emigrationist views in several publications and addresses. Delany envisioned the creation of an economically powerful black state, based on the cultivation of cotton, that would compete with, and ultimately undersell southern cotton in the international markets. The consequent decline in southern economy would render slavery superfluous. The success of such a black state would demonstrate to the international community that blacks were equally productive and capable of self-development, if given the opportunity. The visibility and accomplishment of an independent black nationality would have osmotic effects on the United States, compelling whites to concede freedom and equality to blacks.³²

Delany's political economy generated even more controversy in its external dimension. Blacks unequivocally rejected emigration in several state conventions. Many likened emigration to the obnoxious pro-slavery colonization plan. Most blacks opted for intensifying the struggles within the United States. Many saw emigration as an escapist strategy contrived to strengthen slavery. The widespread opposition to emigration crystallized around Frederick Douglass. Douglass did not believe that race was the critical issue. If it were, he reasoned, then whites would have detested the presence of all blacks, including slaves. What disturbed whites the most was not so much the presence of free blacks as much as their ambitions and aspirations. An economically elevated free black constituted, according to Douglass, a threatening indictment of slavery. Emigration, Douglass further argued, implied acceptance of the colonizationist and racist contention that blacks were innately inferior and therefore unfit for civilized societies such as the United States. As he put it, "for blacks to accept emigration is to stab their own cause. Is to concede a point which every black man must die rather than yield--that is, that the prejudice and maladministration towards us are invincible to truths, invincible to combined and virtuous efforts for their overthrow."³³

Though race as a problematic factor assumed a place of prominence in the consciousness of blacks, there was still no consensus on strategy. Most blacks were not as convinced as Delany apparently was of the invincibility of racism. Many saw prospects for positive change in the oppositions, tensions and con-

troversies generated by the Fugitive Law. Delany had however made up his mind. He appealed directly to the black American middle class, particularly those of "sterling worth," urging them to commit themselves and their resources to the creation of a black nationality. This is the Pan-African phase of his career. He drew the racial boundary line, insisting that blacks confronted a bleak future among whites in the United States. In fact, Delany discerned a global conspiracy by Europeans to subordinate the black race *ad infinitum*. The globality of racism rendered a black nationality all the more crucial. As he declared, "It would be duplicity longer to disguise the fact that the great issue, sooner or later, upon which must be disputed the world's destiny, will be a question of black and white, and every individual will be called upon to for his identity with one or the other." He urged blacks to "make an issue, create and event, and establish a national position for ourselves."³⁴ Delany's appeal to the black middle class, however, fell on deaf ears. Emigration was unpopular among blacks, and remained a minority movement. Overwhelmed by the opposition, but convinced of the righteousness of his cause, Delany summoned an Emigration convention in August of 1854 in Cleveland, Ohio. Though only emigration sympathizers were invited to the convention, the delegates paradoxically refused to endorse or authorize emigration. The deliberations and declarations of sentiment betrayed strong integrationist aspirations. The Convention, however, set up a National Board of Commissioners to discuss and review the emigration option in the interim between annual conventions. Delany was appointed President of the Board. The highlight of the convention was his lengthy speech in which he underscored the threat white Americans and Europeans posed to blacks. He alluded to the existence of a global conspiracy against blacks, and urged the creation of a black nationality in response. He referred to the Fugitive Law as incontrovertible evidence of a growing trend toward the nationalization of slavery. In fact, he insisted that the American government was deliberately sacrificing the interests of blacks in order to appease the South and keep the nation from splitting.³⁵ In a Presidential address to the board the following year, Delany reiterated the theme of global conspiracy against blacks. He reaffirmed the pertinence of political economy and, like previous years, made it the framework for analyzing the relationship between blacks and Europeans. Just like blacks in the United States, blacks all over the world confronted threats of European economic and political hegemony. He portrayed Europeans as highly ambitious, and like white Americans, motivated by insa-

tiable quest for higher attainments, a quality that had earned them the control of global commerce. The wealth accumulated from their global economic enterprises sustained their rule and domination over colored peoples.³⁶ Consistent with his principle of matching problems with solutions, Delany offered Commerce to blacks as the appropriate response to European hegemony.³⁷ Again, he appealed to the black middle class who possessed the resources to initiate economic enterprises abroad. He called for unity in the face of such global threat. Black economic power would, however, attract respect and induce positive changes only if presented in the context of an economically powerful and independent nationality.

In 1859, the National Board of Commissioners authorized Delany to undertake a "topographical, geological and geographical examination of the valley of the Niger--an inquiry into the state of the people--the board being entirely opposed to any emigration there as such." The limited mandate notwithstanding, Delany saw the task as an opportunity to explore the prospects for a black nationality. He had no doubt that Africa possessed the natural resources for the creation of this nationality. In fact, of all the possible places of relocation he considered, Africa combined the greatest of the advantages. The continent possessed the essential ingredients for the creation of a great black nationality: a land mass, immense natural resources, and manpower.³⁸ In May of 1859, he set sail for Africa, accompanied by the West Indian, Robert Campbell.

The quest for a black nationality was motivated as much by pure nationalist and Pan-Africanist aspirations as by the factor of political economy. In fact, Delany based the foundation of the projected nationality on the development of an alternative cotton economy that would compete with, and eventually undermine American cotton, bringing down slavery in the process. Just as he had done for the domestic American situation during the moral suasionist phase, Delany undertook a comparative analysis of the relationship between blacks and the Europeans, and found the latter to be highly motivated by desire for material and commercial wealth, a motivation that unleashed a global quest for hegemony. The creation of commercial enterprises and the acquisition of immense economic profit defined the European character. He portrayed European commerce as a hydra-headed monster that was spreading its tentacles across the entire globe, bringing immense wealth and economic power to Europeans. Blacks, on the other hand, preoccupied themselves debating the propriety or otherwise of emigration. While blacks argued and bickered, Euro-

peans gradually swallow up the world, including Africa, the ancestral homeland of blacks. As he put it, "It is commerce---that is ruling the world, that is threatening with fearful devastation, the destruction of the liberties of every nation. It was that which caused the destruction of Tyre, the overthrow of Egypt, the downfall of Carthage, and finally the decline of the commonwealth of Rome, and fearful is the thought, at the rapid strides which this omnipotent and omnipresent invader of human rights is making through the world."³⁹ Though Delany discerned a certain hegemonic and exploitative tendency in European commercial power, he nonetheless praised commerce as a nation-building force. To the Europeans, commerce represented a positive nation-building force. The wealth it generated solidified European power and hegemony. Consequently, in Delany's estimation, the most effective means of countering Europe's global advance is for blacks to embrace commerce and vigorously establish commercial venture. He implored black Americans to enter into the lucrative West Indian and African trade.⁴⁰ The success of commercial ventures of this magnitude, however, depended on the existence of a strong and independent nationality. An economically viable black nationality would tremendously enhance the chances of blacks effectively resisting the hegemonic drives of the Europeans.

Delany's trip to Africa confirmed the prevailing reputation of Africa as a treasure house of economic and natural resources. He traveled extensively in Liberia, Sierra Leone and what later became Nigeria, and found the essential ingredients for a black nationality in abundance: landmass, rich soil and economic resources (Cocoa, Rubber, Palm Oil and Nuts, Groundnuts, Cotton etc.). All that was lacking was the financial and entrepreneurial wherewithal. After a sojourn of about eleven months, he left Africa armed with immense statistical information. He then performed one of the curious paradoxes of his career. He headed straight for Britain to meet with, and solicit the assistance of British industrialists and merchants, especially cotton manufacturers, those interested in exploring alternative sources of cotton in the wake of the growing sectional tension in the United States. He appealed to British economic interests and emphasized the mutual benefits that would result from the exploitation and development of Africa's resources. He exhorted British capitalists and black American entrepreneurs to cooperate in developing the resources of Africa. He informed his British audience that Africa possessed very rich soil that could produce cotton of the finest and highest quality, and at the least possible cost,

given the abundance of cheap African labor. He won the hearts of British merchants and industrialists, who warmly embraced his scheme. The exact nature of the assistance he received, however, remains unclear.⁴¹

Delany returned to the United States emboldened and immediately launched a vigorous campaign to generate support among black Americans for his scheme. He published details of his African trip and embarked upon an extensive lecture tour. He boldly proclaimed his determination to return to Africa, and informed blacks of the wealth of Africa and the prospects for a black nationality.⁴² Unfortunately, as determined as he was, Delany succumbed to the magic spell of the Civil War. Like his erstwhile integrationist opponents, he became a strong advocate of black integration and campaigned vigorously for black participation in the war. He went on to become the first combat black Major in the Union army, and successfully served the Freedmen's Bureau as assistant commissioner during the early phase of Reconstruction. This third and final phase of his political economy is, however, beyond the scope of this paper.

In turning to Britain and campaigning for British financial and moral support for a joint economic enterprise in Africa, Delany revealed a practical dimension of his political economy--the conviction that progress, in any context, is the result of cooperation and coordination between interested forces, that are united by practical considerations regardless of ideological or racial biases. The underlying assumption is that regardless of how problematic the preexisting condition, people could still transcend those conditions and deal with each other on practical grounds, especially if such grounds promise mutual benefits. Delany's political economy construct thus represented a transcendental economic strategy designed to harmonize elements, even discordant ones. As a mirror into the economic structure of society and the attendant distribution of power and resources, political economy clearly established the need for cooperation. His strategy for bridging socio-economic imbalances and gaps entailed harmony and cooperation--one side copying and emulating the strategies that had served to elevate the other. His political economy transcended, and in fact, erased the racial boundary line he drew in the initial phase of his emigration. Though Europeans might harbor racist views, they nonetheless possessed the much needed resources without which a black nationality was inconceivable. Delany's political economy represented a pragmatic, non-ideological paradigm. For Delany, rigid ideological and doctrinaire postures seemed impracticable, given the poor responses of black Americans to the task of devel-

oping the resource base for an independent nationality abroad.

It should however be emphasized that as dramatic and inconsistent as Delany's flirtation with the British business class seemed, it was in fact consistent with the underlying principle of his earlier moral suasionist conviction. Moral suasion was essentially an integrative ideology aimed at bridging the socio-economic and, *ipso facto*, political gaps between whites and blacks. In this respect, though a conservative strategy, its objective was radical. Political economy, the philosophical expression of moral suasion, dictated compromise and cooperation. Whites possessed what blacks needed in order to advance. Their lifestyles and accomplishment illuminated the essential keys to black elevation and salvation--industry, economy, wealth accumulation, entrepreneurial abilities. Blacks had no choice therefore but to emulate and seek the assistance and cooperation of whites, regardless of how nationalistic and alienated they felt. Whites seemed to have set the stage and demonstrated the linkage between economic power and political elevation and authority. In his earlier moral suasionist phase, Delany castigated blacks for lagging behind and failing to both emulate the capitalist ambitions of whites, and effectively compete and contribute to national development, a contribution that would have registered a strong statement for inclusion. In the emigrationist phase, he again harshly condemned blacks. He saw a European world shaped by industry and the pursuit of commercial and economic power spreading its tentacles worldwide, and a black world characterized by complacency, inertia and seeming satisfaction with subordination.

It would be wrong, however, to suggest that Delany was not conscious of racism in both phases. He was certainly aware of the existence of racism, though he seemed more convinced of the magic power of economic persuasion. Racism for him represented more of a reaction to black poverty and degeneracy, a symptom, rather than the cause. As clearly established, this perception was deep-rooted in black thought and informed the moral suasionist slant of the early conventions. Consequently, though aware of the existence of racism, Delany projected economic poverty as a more serious problem, the solution of which would rid racism of its *raison d'être*. In both phases, therefore, especially in the emigrationist phase when he clearly drew the racial boundary line, Delany paradoxically seemed to accord race less significance, projecting economic factor, that is, political economy, as more salient and deserving of serious attention. He strongly believed that the attainment of economic par-

ity would heal existing racial animosity. The theme of cooperation in the moral suasionist phase was clearly represented in the notion of national contract--that is, the suggestion that blacks and whites were, by virtue of living in the same territory, engaged in a contractual relationship that obliged each to contribute toward national development, and that each advances and elevates in social status and responsibilities, and acquires rights and privileges, in proportion to the degree of contribution.

Delany strongly believed that nations and nationalities possessed unique characteristics. These characteristics constituted the essential dynamics of national growth, and determined the relationship among citizens. For a nation to progress, the citizenry must subscribe and adhere to the guiding principles of the national character. As he put it, "Whatever characteristics distinguishes a nation, each citizen or inhabitant thereof should more or less partake of this character. Each citizen of a nation should bear the same resemblance to the great leading traits which mark the enterprise of that people, as the individual members do to the family to which they belong. When partnerships are formed, it is intended for mutual benefit. Each member of the firm is required to take an investment either of capital or labor that is, money or work."⁴³ The United States being a capitalist nation, the desire for higher achievements represented the most distinguishing feature of its national character. In a capitalist society such as the United States, people lust for economic fortunes. One's motivation for higher achievements must be active and high. Unfortunately, in Delany's judgement, only one segment of the nation seemed to reflect the national character--whites. Blacks, on the other hand, had been tragically misled. Likening the relationship of blacks and whites to one of partners in a company, Delany portrayed blacks as partners without capital, "having made no available investment, and totally unqualified to render valuable useful service, the other members or partners in the concern bearing the whole burden of business, with us hanging upon their shoulders for support. This is precisely as a general rule, our relation to each other, comparing the blacks to whites as we now exist."⁴⁴

Delany faulted blacks for failing to keep their part of the national partnership. This, in his estimation, created the "objectionable relations" between blacks and whites. He suggested that the more blacks became capitalistic and business-oriented, and contribute to national development, the greater their chances of transcending poverty and subordination. The notion of cooperation is certainly inherent in the concept of partnership--blacks and whites working

together for mutual and national development. The subject of black-white co-operation became even more critical in the emigrationist phase. Delany's entire economic philosophy was based on the notion of the compatibility of means and ends. He maintained consistently that every objective or end had an appropriate means which, if applied, would most assuredly result in the attainment of the desired objective. According to him, "There can be no end without a means and every means used must be adequate to the end to be attained."⁴⁵ In both the moral suasion and emigration phases, the end sought included freedom, elevation, political rights, privileges and equality with whites. All these, according to Delany, required just one means--knowledge and pursuit of political economy. The concept in fact, embodied the very essence of physical law. Acquaintance with the dictates of political economy was what elevated whites, while blacks surrendered their fate to Providential determinism. As he put it, "The white man and woman are not satisfied without a large portion of this world's goods, and the fullness of their enjoyment, but the colored man and woman are perfectly satisfied, 'contented and happy' in the language of the slave holder, to live in the service of God, and eventually die and get to heaven."⁴⁶ Delany reasoned that if blacks were serious about attaining equality with whites, all they had to do was emulate whites--become industrious. He warned blacks to either, "learn how to gain a living, to make our bread" or, be resigned to a grim fate--being "only fit for slaves."⁴⁷

Delany's faith in political economy was such that he completely discarded race as a critical factor, implying that through hard-work, thrift and economy, "it is possible for colored people to attain all that whites have attained."⁴⁸ He thus harbored deep faith in the Protestant work ethics. Paradoxically, despite a deep sense of alienation and deprivation, Delany and other blacks vigorously propagated the conditional deficiency factor as perhaps the most critical cause of black subordination. Delany was certainly a product of his time. His political economy reflected early nineteenth century optimism and reformism. This was, in fact, an optimistic period in American History. The proliferation of reform movements--Abolitionism, Temperance, Evangelicalism--betrayed a strong faith in man's ability, capacity and responsibility to effect change for the good of society. Blacks imbibed this optimism, and projected themselves as active agents of change. Delany's political economy epitomized this conviction. His enduring faith in the ability and capacity of blacks to change their condition, his elevation of the gospel of hard-work, thrift, economy, and self-

help, made him the percussor of modern day black conservatism. His political economy embodied the essence of the bootstrap philosophy--the contention that blacks were held down by character-deficiency rather than racism. He laid the groundwork for future generations of black conservatives from Booker T. Washington down to Clarence Thomas.

NOTES

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