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## **Cities of refuge : slave flight and illegal freedom in the American urban South, 1800-1860**

Müller, V.F.

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**Author:** Müller, V.F.

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## **Propositions Belonging to the PhD Dissertation**

1. Runaway slaves from the US South were able to create and navigate spaces of freedom for themselves in urban settings within the South itself.
2. To understand what happened after runaways ran away (from a wide variety of coerced work relations), we have to closely investigate the groups of people they were running to.
3. Racism and white society's desire to demarcate itself from black Americans was a useful factor for slave refugees in southern cities to stay undetected.
4. Mobility is an understudied topic in relation to enslaved people. It is one of several aspects that make it difficult for scholars to agree on a definition of slavery.
5. Approaching slavery and wage labor as polar opposite forms of labor obscures our understanding of what exactly is the coercive factor in work relations.
6. Studying other regions and cultures than one's own enriches the academic field because scholars from other academic traditions and backgrounds ask different questions.
7. American history scholars in the US would benefit from more frequently consulting the works of their colleagues in Latin American, Caribbean, and European universities.
8. Having a creative idea about one's project and later finding out that somebody else already had the same idea is both a setback and a confirmation that one is on the right track.
9. The discussion about reparations for descendants of slaves in the US is important, yet it will be but a drop in the ocean if the structural discrimination in education, housing, healthcare, criminal persecution, and many other areas persists.
10. An ocean is a multitude of drops.
11. Racism is a very convenient and well-functioning tool to divide people who should be fighting for the same social and economic causes.
12. Part of modernity is that coerced labor is out of view. We abhor slavery but choose not to think about our contribution to precarious labor conditions of people who produce our food, clothes, and other consumption products.
13. With all their international conferences and archival research abroad, academics usually do not contribute to counteracting the ongoing climate change.