Silencing Africa? – Anthropological Knowledge at the University of the Witwatersrand[1]

A research report submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the degree Master of Arts in Anthropology

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[1] Due to bureaucratic requirements of submission at the University of the Witwatersrand, this research report could not be submitted with a slightly revised title. The reader might be better served considering the following title: 'Silencing Africa? Anthropology at the University of the Witwatersrand'.

Declaration of Originality

I __________________________ (Student number: _________________) hereby declare the following:

- I confirm that I am the sole author of the written work here enclosed.
- I confirm that this research report is my own unaided work, except where I have explicitly indicated otherwise.
- I have followed the required conventions in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others.

Signature: _________________________ Date: ________________________

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Despite this generous commune, errors and shortcomings that might follow remain my own.

Table of Contents

Declaration of Originality ii
Acknowledgements iii
Introduction 1
Deconstructing anthropology from Africa 1
Outlining the problem and inquiry 1
Rationale and aims 6
Literature review 7
Method 13
Structure of report 14
Chapter 1 15
Producing the 'Native': bantu studies, social anthropology and white liberalism 15
The advent of social anthropology and bantu studies 17
Winifred Hoernlé and the white liberal establishment 21
Conclusion 26
Chapter 2 28
Opposing apartheid, protecting power: the neo-Marxist turn in anthropology 28
The neo-Marxist turn, Or, 'why are African voices silenced in South African historiography?' 29
Neo-Marxism's historical myopia 31
Activist anthropology, and the silencing of Africanist critique 34
Conclusion 38
Chapter 3 40
The cultural / 'postracial' turn in anthropology 40
The 90s moment - English-medium universities in national political context 41
The cultural turn in anthropology at Wits 42
The problem of the 'postracial', and the necessity of retrieving Mafeje's critique 48
Conclusion 51
Chapter 4 53
Reproducing the savage slot: contemporary anthropology 53
The problem of the tabula rasa 60
Conclusion 63
The exigency of conquest; the possibility of endogeneity 63
Bibliography 67

Introduction

Deconstructing anthropology from Africa

Outlining the problem and inquiry

Anthropology and its forebears have produced knowledge about Africa since at least the 18th Century (Mudimbe 1988; Mafeje 1998; Ntarangwi, Mills and Babiker 2006). The advent of the discipline was co-constitutive and unified with European Imperialism, and the historical construction of the West and its Savage Other (Trouillot 2003). African socio-political structures, once categorized/constructed in ways legible to the European imagination could be subjugated, ruled, and exploited by Europe. In this sense, anthropology has been central to the violent making and unmaking of worlds according to a Eurocentric historical experience and episteme (Mamdani 2016; Mudimbe 1988).

Since at least the 1950s, Anthropology has been systematically critiqued for its complicity in colonial rule in Africa. In some instances, this resulted in a complete rejection of the discipline by some African independence movements, politicians, scholars, and institutions (Mudimbe 1988: 78). Many believed anthropology to be incompatible with the epistemological and political project of African independence, and invested in alternative disciplinary spaces, such as sociology and African studies, to develop an endogenous social science praxis (Mafeje 1998: 20). Anthropology on the continent went 'underground' until two African congresses, one in Yaounde in 1989 and one in Dakar in 1991, were organized to 'review the status of and prospects for African Anthropology' (Mafeje 1998: 21; Sharawy 2014). During these congresses, some African anthropologists 'raised the slogan "post-anthropology", while some went as far as to declare the

death of anthropology' (Sharawy 2014: 203). Among the latter were Ifi Amadiume and Archie Mafeje. According to Mafeje, the 'concern [during the Dakar congress] was more with re-organising than with deconstructing Anthropology' (1998: 21). In their introduction to *African Anthropologies: History, Critique and Practice*, Ntarangwi Mills and Babiker suggest that African anthropologists are 'redefining the historical legacy of European and American disciplinary hegemony and developing distinctively African contributions to anthropological theory and practice' (2006: 2). Whether the volume in itself confirms the editors' proposition and resolves the longstanding debate on the endogenisation of anthropology is dubious. Ten years later, anthropologists still maintain that the decolonisation of anthropology in Africa is outstanding (Hlabangane 2016). While Anthropology continues to speak and write *about* Africa, it does not necessarily speak and write *from* Africa.

This is particularly the case for anthropology in South Africa. The debates on Africanisation / endogenisation which reshaped disciplines and institutions across the continent since the 1960s barely rippled into Anthropology in South Africa. Rather, critique of anthropology in South Africa has been characterized by a sustained parochialism. It has been bounded within the discipline's internalities, or what Trouillot terms its 'electoral politics'[2]. Debates are assembled around the apparent differences between the Afrikaans and English traditions of anthropology, and are often articulated through a politics of apology and redemption. Critique has thus functioned

[2] Trouillot describes 'electoral politics' as 'the set of institutionalized practices and relations of power that influence the production of knowledge from within academe: academic filiations, the mechanisms of institutionalization, the organization of power within and across departments, the market value of publish-or-perish prestige, and other worldly issues that include, but expand way beyond the maneuvering we usually refer to as "academic politics."' (1991: 8).

towards constructing a humanist past of social anthropology[3], foreclosing the possibility of opening the discipline up to an already existing worldly critique. Apart from Archie Mafeje's extensive oeuvre, which has received little engagement from the South African anthropology community[4], there has not been substantive debate on the question of the endogenisation of anthropological praxis. In this research report I insist on reading South African anthropology in relation to colonial projects of racist rule and epistemic violence. The report is thus an intervention into and disruption of the politics of apology which surround and cushion South African anthropology. At the centre of this insistence and inquiry is the recognition of the confluence of the mutable configurations of conquest and white supremacy in the colonial present, and their effects on anthropology and anthropological knowledge. Here I briefly discuss the work of Mogobe Ramose on the concept of conquest, and Charles Mills on the concept of white supremacy to locate the project theoretically and politically, and to stake its claims.

Philosopher Mogobe Ramose discusses the cultural context and historical process of conquest and colonization in relation to the cases of South Africa and Zimbabwe in 'I conquer, therefore I am the sovereign' (2002). 'The drawing of lines defined identities and determined the power relations between' the conqueror and the conquered (Ramose 2002: 468). The most crucial line drawn by the conqueror was that between reason and unreason. Ramose suggests that 'the African was to be treated only as an animal because by nature the African was an animal with unreason. Accordingly, it was necessary and proper to conquer and enslave the African' (Ramose 2002: 464). 'Having thus made the exclusive claim to reason, the conqueror argued that one of

[3] For example, see the Conclusion of Bank's *Pioneers of the Field: South Africa's Women Anthropologists* (2016)

[4] With the exception of the reviews of 'Anthropology and Independent Africans' in Vol. 2, No. 1 of the *African Sociological Review* (1998).

the competences of reason is to conquer nature' (Ramose 2002: 464). The conqueror extended the line he had drawn between reason and unreason to separate civilization and barbarism:

> The conqueror claimed the status of being the possessor of a superior civilization. Accordingly, when the conqueror encountered the African their respective competences, rights, and obligations were already predetermined. The conqueror was civilized and the African was the barbarian. So in the view of the former possession of a superior civilization imposed the duty to civilize the barbarian. The line between civilization and barbarism thus established the relationship of superior and inferior. Accordingly, the conqueror had competences and rights against the African without any obligations to the African. This was a one-way relationship which precluded the possibility of reciprocity. The African has only obligations towards the conqueror but no rights.
>
> (Ramose 2002: 464-465)

The conqueror also drew the line between fidels and infidels, just and unjust wars, and the geographical rayas and amity lines. The meridian line 'decided the truth and defined justice about those this side and those beyond it. It reaffirmed the conventional truth that the conqueror had sole and exclusive power. It arbitrarily defined justice as that which was due only to the conqueror'. It followed 'that fraud, forgery, and the use of brute force as a means of conquest were the recognized method of acquisition of title to the territory of the indigenous conquered peoples. By virtue of this conquest the sovereignty of the indigenous conquered peoples was supplanted and their title to territory extinguished' (467). Ramose puts forward the thesis that

> under whatever conception of law, the claim that the conquerors of the indigenous peoples of South Africa and Zimbabwe are the legal successors in title to wholesome and absolute sovereignty over these peoples is unsustainable either on the plea of Papal mandate, "discover" or the "right of conquest". Therefore, justice demands the restoration of title to territory to the indigenous conquered peoples as well as restitution to them.
>
> (Ramose 2002: 463)

The contemporary land question in South Africa is the result of extinctive prescription, a concept which is 'inconsistent with the legal philosophy of the indigenous conquered people. It is also

contrary to natural and fundamental justice' (491). Ramose argues that 'the restoration of title to territory and the reversion of unencumbered and unmodified sovereignty to the same quantum and degree as at conquest remains the basic demand of justice due to the indigenous conquered people. This included the exigencies of restitution and reparations' (491). These are the prerequisites and bases for a post-conquest South Africa. In this research report, I concur with Ramose that until restitution and reparations are secured for the indigenous conquered peoples of South Africa, conquest remains the fundamental and mutable antagonism of the South African present.

Conquest and white supremacy are historically and contemporarily unified and interdependent in South Africa. Charles Mills opens the definition of 'white supremacy' to signify an 'encompassing *de facto* as well as *de jure* white privilege, that would refer more broadly to the European domination of the planet for the past several hundred years that has left us with the racialized distributions of economic, political and cultural power that we have today' (1994: 108). White supremacy is thus global, historical and mutable. As such, 'white supremacy continues to exist in a different form, no longer backed by law, but now maintained through inherited patterns of discrimination, exclusionary racial bonding, differential white power deriving from consolidated economic privilege, etc.' (Mills 1994: 113). The use of the term 'white supremacy' does not imply synchronic or diachronic stasis – white supremacy has different historical forms (111). An analytic of white supremacy requires that 'race is no longer residual, a concern to be awkwardly shoe-horned into the structure of a theory preoccupied with other realities, but central, so that any comprehensive mapping of the polity must register this feature. And by virtue of the social-systemic rather than ideational focus, it directs our theoretical attention to the important thing, which is how racial membership privileges / disadvantages you independently of the particular ideas you happen to have' (117). In this research report I also take seriously Mills'

insistence that race be read as a central feature of the contemporary polity. I acknowledge that knowledge is embedded in and informed by a sociological and historical base, and that in South Africa this base is coordinated and structured by the fundamental problems of conquest and white supremacy.

In this research report, I engage with the problem outlined above by examining anthropology at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), a historically white English-medium university in South Africa. I concentrate on moments in the institutional development of the discipline from the establishment of the Bantu Studies department in the 1920s to the contemporary iteration of the Department of Social Anthropology, tracing the ways in which African thought and critique are silenced, and colonial unknowing reproduced.

Rationale and aims

The justification of the project is rooted in the idea that critical intellectual projects and contemporary disciplinary praxis should be understood, engaged with, and reconceived through the lens of its past. The contemporary problem of anthropology needs to be properly historicized, its sociological and epistemic bases need to be traced back to the point at which they first took shape in the world (Ellis 2002). When the discipline is opened to its roots, it becomes possible to trace how they continue to shape and influence contemporary praxis in surprising and often hidden ways – patterns emerge in innovation, and structure appears in agency (Feierman 1990). The project aims to assemble a long historical *durée* of anthropology at Wits to better understand and engage with colonial unknowing in contemporary disciplinary praxis. This is done by charting a loose but related genealogy of intellectual and political moments in the development of the discipline since its advent in the 1920s. The thesis does not seek to ossify moments into a strict

teleological timeline. Rather, it locates and reads different moments of anthropology at Wits in shifting relational processes.

In this research report, I move from a political and intellectual recognition of the colonial present and my position as a settler student/scholar in South Africa. I take seriously the significance of doing deconstructive work at the interstices of history and anthropology, and the need to exhume the hidden intellectual histories of anthropology into the present. I use a critical archaeology of anthropology to trace various iterations and rearticulations of colonial unknowing[5] in the discipline's history. Through this archaeological work, continuities and ruptures between the past and the present can be traced and deconstructed.

Literature review

The study engages work on intellectual history and critical epistemology in the social sciences and anthropology in Africa and South Africa. Although studies have approached and understood anthropological intellectual history through disciplinary (Trouillot 2003), generational (Allen and Jacobs 2016), continental (Ntarangwi, Mills and Babiker 2006; Nyamjoh 2012) and national lenses (For discussions on Anthropology in South Africa, see Boskovic and Van Wyk 2007; Kuper 1999; Pauw 1980; Sharp 2001, Ellis 1999), there has not been an extended study of the intersections of these trajectories within an institutional context at a historically white English-medium university in South Africa. As such, the study responds to a gap in the literature by providing additional insight into the ways in which broader historical and political processes, as well as processes of

[5] Vimalassery, Pegues, and Goldstein define colonial unknowing as a process which 'endeavors to render unintelligible the entanglements of racialization and colonization, occluding the mutable historicity of colonial structures and attributing finality to conquest and dispossession. Colonial unknowing establishes what can count as evidence, proof, or possibility – aiming to secure the terms of reason and reasonableness – as much as it works to dissociate and ignore' (2016).

knowledge production are articulated at the local institutional level.

The literature used can be split into two broad and interrelated spheres. The first might be categorized as general intellectual histories and critiques of Anthropology with a concentration on the discipline's history and praxis in Africa and its diaspora. The analyses of anthropology emerge from and engage with various political-intellectual traditions including discourse theory, critical race theory, and Africanist critique. This sphere includes work by Valentin Mudimbe, Michel-Rolph Trouillot, Jemima Pierre, and Archie Mafeje. The second sphere might be categorized as the intellectual history of anthropology in South Africa with a concentration on its iterations in historically white English-medium universities. This section includes literature by Adam Kuper, David Hammond-Tooke, and Andrew Bank.

In *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge*, Congolese philosopher Valentin Mudimbe engages in an extensive discourse analysis of the invention of Africa as the West's Other in the human and social sciences. Moving from Foucault's history of the human sciences in *The Order of Things*, Mudimbe traces the ethnocentric 'epistemological filiations' which have maintained Eurocentric systems of knowledge about Africa produced through disciplines such as anthropology, philosophy, and history since the 18th century (1988: 19). The book discusses the ways in which social and human science discourse about Africa has been 'fundamentally reductionist. They speak about neither Africa nor Africans, but rather justify the process of inventing and conquering a continent and naming its "primitiveness" or "disorder," as well as the subsequent means of its exploitation and methods for its "regeneration"' (1988: 20). Mudimbe diagnoses the continued power of Western hegemony in producing knowledge about Africa, and retrieves 'the usefulness of both an epistemological analysis and a critical understanding of Africanism' (1988: 23). While Mudimbe's work has been criticized for being

overdetermined by European theory by scholars such as Ifi Amadiume (1997), *The Invention of Africa* provides insight into the processes and politics of the production of knowledge about Africa, which have proved useful to the current study.

In a paper considering the production of anthropological knowledge more specifically, Haitian anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot traces anthropology's relationship and continuity with the symbolic and discursive construction of the West (2003: 8). The contention in 'Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness' is that despite possible variations within praxis across different institutional or historical contexts, anthropology continues to be overdetermined by the 'historical weight of the field of significance' which it inherited at birth (Trouillot 2003: 8). Trouillot suggests that anthropological discourse continues to be premised on a wider symbolic field in which it reproduces the 'Savage' slot necessary to the continued hegemony of the West. In a similar vein, Jemima Pierre critically discusses a genealogy of knowledge production about Africa and the African Other. In 'Anthropology and the Race of/for Africa', Pierre reads anthropology through a critical race theory lens, arguing that the discipline's 'often unwitting construction of African exceptionalism can be better understood through an examination of [its] relationship to the concept of race and the processes of racialization through which it was constructed and practised' (2006: 40). Pierre posits that, not only was anthropology founded through the construction of the racialized Other, but that race continues to structure contemporary anthropology 'fundamentally shaping the discipline's epistemology and methodology' (40-41). In a sense Archie Mafeje is the intellectual forebear of Pierre's contemporary work. Mafeje is 'well known for his unrelenting challenge of the Western "Africanist' enterprise", and has advocated for the end of anthropology as a discipline (Pierre 2006: 40). Mafeje's critique of anthropology in Africa was assembled around the idea that the

discipline was unable to escape its foundation in a racialized conceptualization of alterity. Mafeje argues that white South African anthropologists are ‘at best, neo-colonial liberals’, due to their ‘social and intellectual inability to transcend the problem of alterity’ (1998: 21). Mafeje’s contention remains relevant today, and informs the inquiry of the present study.

In 'The Decolonizing Generation: (Race and) Theory in Anthropology since the Eighties' (2016), Allen and Jobson discuss contributions and interventions by African and African diasporic anthropologists in modes of anthropological knowledge production, theory, method, and pedagogy. The paper is a response to anthropology's crisis of representation, consequences of feminist, queer, and Third World movements, and the recent crisis of reception. It situates itself in a contemporary field of dialogue 'concerning the role of anthropology in evolving public debates concerning race and global white supremacy' (Allen and Jobson 2016: 129). While the analytic of 'the decolonizing generation' is a useful and timely intervention in the genealogy of anthropological theory globally, it remains a consideration of anthropological theory and practice in the global north, or in its Euro-American iteration. The present study nonetheless draws on the generative conceptual work that Allen and Jobson's 'language of generations' does in order to engage with the fact that anthropological knowledge production in South Africa is 'a temporal experience that reflects societal exigencies of a particular moment' (130).

The works of Bernard Magubane (1971; 1973) and Archie Mafeje (1970; 1997; 1998) constitute the earliest and most enduring resistances to and ruptures of colonial anthropology in South Africa. Both scholars called for the 'ideological, political and intellectual deconstruction of colonial Anthropology' (Mafeje 1998: 29), and the indigenisation of social science concepts' (Mafeje 1998: 6). However, the political and intellectual exigencies demanded by these black South African scholars were not taken up in the mainstream academy, and they continue to be

marginalised in the anthropological cannon today. While there are a number of articles which have discussed anthropology in South Africa (Pauw 1980; Kuper 1999; Ellis 1999; Sharp 2001; Boskovic and Van Wyk 2007), Hammond-Tooke's *Imperfect Interpreters: South Africa's Anthropologists 1920-1990* (1997) represents the only comprehensive book-length intellectual history of the discipline. The book discusses various practitioners and traditions of anthropology from 1920-1990, outlining key theoretical assumptions, direction of researches, and impacts on political and administrative developments in South Africa during that period (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 1). Unfortunately, the book silences both the important contribution of women anthropologists (Bank 2016), as well as the importance of the Africanist critique of anthropology. While the book has been useful for historical data, its critical capacity leaves much to be desired. Here Adam Kuper's work has been helpful in its comprehensive discussion of the various intellectual and political turns in South African anthropology (1999).

A renewed interest in the intellectual history of liberal anthropology in South Africa has surfaced in the form of several new books published in the last five years. The new studies, *Inside African Anthropology: Monica Wilson and Her Interpreters*, edited by Andrew Bank and Leslie J. Bank (2013), *The Fires Beneath: The Life of Monica Wilson, South African Anthropologist* by Sean Morrow (2016), and *Pioneers of the field: South Africa's women anthropologists* by Leslie Bank (2016), reveal a growing concern with the intellectual history of white English-speaking anthropologists in South Africa. A review of this recent literature reveals that it is often ideologically sympathetic with the project of colonial liberals, and takes what Sharawy terms the 'Apologetic Stand', which 'continues the conservative position by maintaining that the anthropologist was a "colonialist against his will", that many of them enjoyed their work, and were fond of the people they worked upon' (2014: 202). Karen Cereso suggests that in *Inside African*

Anthropology, loyalty to Monica Wilson 'results in reluctance to criticise' her implication in the colonial project of the production of knowledge about the African Other (2013: 132). She critiques Andrew Bank's sympathetic analysis of Wilson's work, and posits that 'the reluctance to acknowledge the role of Eurocentrism and hidden colonialism implies that 21st century anthropologists and historians may be inadvertently justifying their continuity' (Cereso 2013: 132). Likewise, Andrew Bank's book *Pioneers of the field: South Africa's women anthropologists* sympathetically discusses the work of six white liberal anthropologists, arguing that the figures should be mainstreamed in the South African anthropological canon (2016). While the book offers useful historical data, Bank's 'sympathy with the idea of a "non-racial" humanist project often over-determines the discussion' (Webster 2017, forthcoming). This new generation of intellectual histories do the work of silencing the centrality of conquest and race as fundamental antagonisms in the colonial present of South Africa. They illustrate the need for research and writing which is more critical of the position of anthropology in a historical and contemporary global system of white supremacy.

The present study is restricted to the discipline of anthropology at Wits. It will thus not be engaging directly with literature on other anthropological traditions in South Africa, such as the ethnological and *volkekunde* traditions, which were mostly located in historically Afrikaans-medium universities (Hammond-Tooke 1997). The strict separation of the ethnological, *volkekunde* and social anthropological traditions should be problematized, however, as none of them seriously questioned or critically engaged the fact that the societies and structures were studied as a result of conquest in the unjust wars of colonization and disseizin resulting therefrom (Mafeje 1998; Dladla 2017).

Method

Michel-Rolph Trouillot suggests that truly critical and reflexive anthropology must turn its apparatus upon itself (2003). The research project took up Trouillot's methodological provocation by using historical and anthropological research methods to study anthropology itself. The research was conducted over an 8 month period in 2016. I used four main approaches – archival research, analysis of secondary literature, oral interviews, and ethnography. I completed the archival research in the Wits University archives, and in informal archives of the Department of Social Anthropology, including a cabinet of old reports and documents. This data covered earlier moments of anthropology at Wits, including the establishment of the Bantu Studies department in the 1920s, the neo-Marxist turn in the 1970s, and during the 1990s. I completed oral interviews from April until September 2016 with older and younger members of the department. The data gathered covered various aspects of anthropology at Wits since the 1990s. Through the ethnographic approach, I studied contemporary everyday institutional and pedagogical processes. The research included participant observation in undergraduate and post-graduate classes, in-depth formal and semi-formal interviews with staff members, and informal conversations with lecturers and students from the department. I combine the data gathered through these different methods to trace a loose genealogy of anthropology at Wits. My approach is informed by Tania Murray Li's 'analytic of conjuncture' (2014: 16), which seeks to 'tease apart the set of elements' of particular forms, and explores how 'each element set the conditions of possibility for others, in changing configurations… The elements come to life as they collide and align in particular constellations. A conjuncture is dynamic but it is not random. There is path dependence.' (Li 2014: 16). History is essential to this analytic, as each element in the present is shaped by a history, and in turn produces a new history. A conjuncture is then not located as a static moment in a linear temporality,

and can only be understood by 'peeling back layers of meaning and practice, and tracking relations across different spans of space and time' (16-17).

Structure of report

The report is comprised of four chapters, each discussing a conjuncture in the history of anthropology at Wits. Chapter 1 discusses the establishment of the Bantu Studies department, the forebear of the Department of Social Anthropology, in the early 1920s. It discusses the work of Winifred Hoernlé, the ‘mother of Social Anthropology’ in South Africa (Bank 2016), and the liberal tradition at Wits. Chapter 2 considers the neo-Marxist turn in anthropology in the 1970s. It argues that the turn to class analysis and activist anthropology was a conservative movement which obfuscated the fundamental historical antagonisms of conquest and white supremacy in South African society. Chapter 3 outlines developments in anthropology at Wits in the 1990s. It argues that despite changes in staffing and curricula, the underlying Eurocentric episteme of anthropology continued largely unchallenged into the constitutional dispensation. Chapter 4 discusses the contemporary moment of anthropology at Wits. It extends the argument concerning continuity in Chapter 3 by suggesting that despite the idea of a radical rupture in contemporary anthropological praxis at Wits, the question of the critical deconstruction and endogenisation of the discipline remains unresolved.

Chapter 1

Producing the 'Native': bantu studies, social anthropology and white liberalism

> The other, whether backward, barbarous, savage to a greater or lesser degree, is always different, and for this reason he is an object of interest to the scientist or an object of greed to the slaver.
>
> (Joseph Ki-Zerbo 1981: 13)

> [Europeans] must start from a sound knowledge of the outlook and beliefs of the natives… This knowledge of the natives is necessary to any successful administration of them…
>
> (Agnes Winifred Hoernlé 1923)

The historical and epistemological connection and bond between anthropology and colonisation in Africa has been extensively and critically traced and deconstructed (Magubane 1971; Asad 1973; Mudimbe 1988; Mafeje 1997, 1998; Ntarangwi, Mills and Babiker 2006). Fage suggests that the 'non-historical way of investigating and evaluating the cultures and societies of "primitive" peoples' of early anthropology was a 'symptomatic outcome' of processes of conquest, which required the moral justification of Hegelian and Darwinian principles of 'primitive' and 'advanced' societies (1981: 32). The problematic of colonial anthropology, and its construction of 'primitive'/ 'savage' and 'advanced'/ 'civilised' slots, was rearticulated in particular ways in early 20th century South Africa through the nexus of social anthropology, white liberalism, and the conceptualisation of the so-called 'Native Question'. These nodes were reshaped in the context of rapid urbanisation in South Africa from 1910-1950. Urbanisation and the attendant migration of Africans to urban areas installed new crises in white supremacy, and the conception of the 'Native Question', 'a set of colonialist concerns about how to manage Africans within the changing racial jurisdictions of South African society' (Gillespie 2011: 499). Urbanisation also affected the

concerns and methods of social anthropology, which increasingly reflected on the topic of African urban life. In an article tracing developments in prison reform in the 1940s, Gillespie discusses the development of conceptions of custodial responsibility and 'Christian trusteeship' among white liberals in South Africa, particularly in the work and thought of social anthropologist Winifred Hoernlé (2011: 515). The author suggests that the idea of trusteeship articulated a 'complex combination of progressive universalism and paternalistic racialism' (Gillespie 2011: 515).

This chapter discusses the nexus of social anthropology and white liberalism at Wits from the early 1920s. From the establishment and early development of the Department of Bantu Studies to the activist and welfare work of Winifred Hoernlé, the chapter considers the role of social anthropology in the (re)production of a discourse of hierarchized racial difference assembled around the African 'Native'. I argue that despite the retrospective portrayal of the liberal tradition of Social Anthropology as progressive in comparison with the Afrikaaner nationalist *Volkekunde* tradition (Hammond-Tooke 1997; Bank 2016), the two paradigms were rooted in the very same Eurocentric power-knowledge system (Mudimbe 1988). The valorisation of European trusteeship over the education and assimilation of Africans into a society in 'which European social patterns [were] imposed on African ones' (Hoernlé and Niehaus 2015: 75) by liberal scholars, rather than being rooted in a 'complex combination of progressive universalism and paternalistic racialism', as Gillespie suggests (2011: 515), was predicated on Eurocentric racism. Liberal anthropology and Bantu Studies at Wits did not question the European right to conquest, nor the posterity of white settlers in South Africa, and worked towards the establishment of a 'civilised' society based on the European model. The liberal notion that the major antagonism in South African society was Afrikaner nationalist segregation ideology functioned as an iteration of colonial unknowing (Vimalassery et al. 2016) in that it obfuscated the more fundamental problems of conquest and

settler colonialism. Rather, the two traditions should be read as ideologically and politically consistent and unified within a project of white supremacy in South Africa.

The advent of social anthropology and bantu studies

Anthropology was established as a formal university discipline in Africa some forty years after the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885. The first professional anthropology department was established at the University of Cape town in South Africa in 1921 under chair of anthropology Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown (Hammond-Tooke 1997; Bank 2016). This was followed by the establishment of the Department of Bantu Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1923, which included ethnology as one of its main teaching subjects. Radcliffe-Brown's appointment at UCT and Winifred Hoernlé's appointment at Wits would secure structural-functionalism as the central paradigm of anthropology in South Africa until the neo-Marxist turn in the 1970s (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 21; Bank 2016). The first few decades of anthropology, up until the 1950s, has been called the 'Golden Age of South African Ethnography' (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 1) due to the proliferation of lengthy and detailed ethnographic monographs. South Africa was an important location in the early development of the discipline on the continent, and was the intellectual home for scholars and ideas that would later be considered seminal in the development of the discipline globally (For example Radcliffe-Brown and Hoernlé's structural functionalism, and Gluckman's processual approach). Structural functionalism, which was essentially a combination of 'Durkheimian sociology and Malinowskian fieldwork practices' (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 31), has been accused of 'producing static and nostalgic images of indigenous societies and cultures which… were undergoing major changes' (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 7). The paradigm was anti-historical and tended to represent societies as suspended or static totalities. Theoretically, this has important implications for the early work done in the Department of Bantu

Studies. Approaching societies as bounded and immediate wholes allowed for a convenient silence concerning the topic of European conquest in South Africa, and the consequent structural relationship of inequality between 'Europeans' and Africans.

The journal *Bantu Studies and General South African Ethnology* (later simplified to *Bantu Studies*) was established in 1921 by representative of the Wits Council of Education David Rheinallt-Jones. Rheinallt-Jones was a prominent member of the liberal establishment in Johannesburg, and would later go on to be Director of the South African Institute of Race Relations (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 34). A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and Winifred Hoernlé both served on the journal's first 'Publication Committee' (Bank 2016: 34). The journal was published under the title *Bantu Studies* from 1921 until 1941, when its name was changed to *African Studies*[6]. Bank argues that *Bantu Studies* would become, together with *Africa*, 'the leading outlet for the publication of social anthropological knowledge about the [southern African] region' (2016: 35). The subtitle description of *Bantu Studies*, 'A Journal devoted to the *Scientific* Study of Bantu, Hottentot and Bushmen' (Bantu Studies 1932, emphasis added), indicates the epistemological link between a Eurocentric empiricist project, and the construction of a racialised Other. As Ki-Zerbo argues in the opening quote of this chapter, 'The other, whether backward, barbarous, savage to a greater or lesser degree, is always different, and for this reason he is an object of interest to the scientist' (1981: 13).

The journal *Bantu Studies* was a precursor to the establishment of the Department of Bantu Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1923. The department was established under the leadership of Professor of English Max Drennan, and later, from 1933, under Professor of 'Bantu

[6] Hammond-Tooke suggests that the journal 'was renamed *African Studies* in 1942 to reflect its widening scope, but not in response to objections to the terms "Bantu", "Hottentots" and "Bushmen"' (1997: 20).

linguistics,' Clement Doke (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 34-35). In the early 1920s, the department offered courses in Bantu languages, ethnology and native law and administration (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 35). It is interesting to note the field of institutional and intellectual connections in which the department was established. Firstly, the department was funded by bodies whose interests in understanding the so-called 'native question' should be critically considered in relation to their investment in controlling and maintaining the status quo of a cheap black labour force in South Africa. The department was established with financial assistance from 'the Witwatersrand Council of Education and the mining industry, through the Native Recruiting Corporation (NRC) and the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WENELA), both subdivisions of the Chamber of Mines' (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 34). Secondly, the department had very close connections with the Johannesburg school of liberalism (Bank 2016: 45), and later with the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) which was established in 1929 (Bank 2016: 17). David Rheinallt-Jones, Alfred Hoernlé, and Winifred Hoernlé would, at various times, take up the position of director of the SAIRR.

The epistemological locus of possibility for the establishment of the department is represented in quotes from two of its founding staff members. In a 1923 article titled 'Bantu Studies - Getting at the Natives' Mind' in the Rand Daily Mail, C. M. Doke, in his capacity as senior lecturer in the department, suggests that

> it is, at present, the aim of the Bantu Studies department of the University to deal with the education of the European in all matters dealing with the natives of South Africa… To get "at the back of the black man's mind," to see his viewpoint, the governing principle in his life, and the great force which his traditions bring to bear upon his conduct, the *ethnology* of his *race* must be *scientifically* studied and accurately recorded… The administrator in native territories, whether magistrate or native commissioner, the missionary, the public official who deals directly or indirectly with natives, the municipal superintendents of native affairs… all of these need training in native history, native traditions and folk-lore, native indigenous law, in the social customs and religion of the native people…

(C. M. Doke 1923, emphasis added)

The establishment of the Bantu Studies department at Wits was predicated on the racialized figure of the African 'Bantu' or 'Native', who could be scientifically studied through the methodology of ethnology. The study of the 'Native' was conceived as a necessary step towards administrating her better. In an article titled 'Must Know the Natives – How to Gain Their Goodwill' published in the Rand Daily Mail the next day, Winifred Hoernlé, in her capacity as lecturer in the Department of Bantu Studies, expands on the topic of scientific study towards better administration over the 'Native'. She wrote that

> [Europeans] must start from a sound knowledge of the outlook and beliefs of the natives, if they wish to introduce among them European principles of administration or change their habits of daily life... This knowledge of the natives is necessary to any successful administration of them, and magistrates and other officials have to seek, as best they may, to understand an outlook on life, which at many points rests on principles totally different from their own. According as they gain this insight or not, will they be wise and successful in their administration, and rule over contented peoples.

(W. Hoernlé 1923)

In the same article, Hoernlé goes on to write that the 'security and prosperity' of white South Africans depends on the 'contentment' of the 'native peoples' (1923), confirming the point made above concerning the investment in the study of the so-called 'natives' towards preserving a racist and extractive colonial status quo.

The above extracts demonstrate that the department of Bantu Studies was not conceived as an intellectual project which would come to a better understanding of indigenous African cosmology, but as a locus for the so-called 'scientific study' and (re)production of the figure of a primitive Other, who need to be educated, and benevolently ruled over by 'civilised' European settlers in South Africa. Through the work of writing and producing anthropological knowledge, by publishing both in the popular media, and in scholarly journals such as *Bantu Studies*, and

through teaching and supervising young white students, scholars such as Doke and Hoernlé (re)produced the figure of the racialized 'Native' Other. The figure and work of Hoernle will be discussed in more detail below.

Winifred Hoernlé and the white liberal establishment

Winifred Hoernlé (nee Tucker), was born in 1885 in South Africa. She was school-educated in Grahamstown, and later graduated from the South African College (currently the University of Cape Town). Hoernlé read anthropology and psychology at the University of Cambridge from 1908 (Carstens 1985: 17; Hammond-Tooke 1997: 35-37). While in England she met A. R. Radcliffe-Brown who would later establish the anthropology department at UCT (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 35-37), and with whom she would work very closely with and remain a close friend and intellectual companion of (Bank 2016). Hammond-Tooke argues that from early in her career, Hoernlé adopted a 'strongly sociological approach to the study of society' in response to her reading of Durkheim (1997: 37). Hoernlé also completed studies in Leipzig and Bonn in Germany, as well at the Sorbonne where she read sociology under Durkheim (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 37). She returned to South Africa in 1912, and completed fieldwork among the Nama in the Northern Cape. In 1913 she completed fieldwork with the Nama in German South West Africa. Hoernlé's brief for her research amongst the Nama was to conduct studies 'that could be used as evidence to motivate for the development of Nama reserves' (Banks 2016: 36). Much of her early fieldwork was ethnological, and comprised of taking physical measurements of the Nama, a factor which receives little attention in intellectual histories of Hoernlé. In a public lecture given in 1913, Hoernlé professed that '[The Nama] did not like my having all the measurements of their heads and limbs to make what dreadful use of I might wish' (Hoernlé reproduced in Bank 2016: 27).

From her early fieldwork, then, the construction of the racialized African Other through an 'empirical' ethnological approach is evident.

Winifred married R. F. A Hoernlé in 1914 and they travelled to Harvard, where her husband was appointed as professor of philosophy and psychology. In 1920 Alfred was appointed as chair of Philosophy at Wits, and the Hoernlés moved to Johannesburg (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 37). Winifred was appointed as research fellow and lecturer in Ethnology at the Department of Bantu Studies in 1923. Citing Eileen Krige's obituary for Hoernlé, Hammond-Tooke writes that she was 'an outstanding teacher, sympathetic, helpful and committed to her subject and strict scholarly standards' (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 38). Hoernlé was the teacher and intellectual 'mother' of a talented cohort of students who would go on to be leading scholars in the discipline, including Eileen Jensen Krige, Hilda Beemer Kuper, Ellen Hellman and Max Gluckman (Carstens 1985: 17; Bank 2016: 46). Niehaus suggests that Hoernle 'introduced her students to evolutionism, diffusionism and to the preferred Durkeimian sociological approach, and insisted that they read ethnographies by Boas, Lowi and Junod' (Hoernlé and Niehaus 2015: 76). She also worked together with Isaac Schapera as an advisor and mentor (Bank 2016: 54-57). She would invite Schapera to teach her classes at Wits in 1931 when she took a leave of absence, and would maintain correspondence with him after he took up a teaching post at the University of Cape Town (Hoernlé and Niehaus 2015: 76). Niehaus suggests that during the 1930s, Hoernlé 'was increasingly drawn to the attempts by Bonislaw Malinowski and the International Africa Institute of re-orienting the discipline towards the study of "culture-contact" and "change."' (Hoernlé and Niehaus 2015: 76).

Her mentor relationship with so many scholars who would come to be forerunners in the field, together with her contribution to the establishment of the paradigm of structural functionalism and the field of urban anthropology have garnered her the title 'Mother of Social

Anthropology' in South Africa (Carstens 1985; Bank 2016). In 1938 she resigned from her post at Wits to 'devote more time to her wider interests in welfare, race relations and black education' (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 38). Carstens writes that 'it was generally accepted that she wanted to devote more of her time to practical issues of public life, welfare work, questions of penal reform, race relations, and the improvement of non-European education' (1985: 17). Hoernlé acted as President of the SAIRR from 1948 to 1950, and from 1953 to 1954 (Carstens 1985: 18).

Hoernlé's opinion on the necessity of establishing a department of Bantu Studies at Wits has been outlined above. However, it is necessary to reiterate the role her work played in the (re)production of a Eurocentric and racist anthropological discourse of racial difference. This is a particularly important task considering the less than critical reviews of her work by both Hammond-Tooke (1997) and Bank (2016), and the general silence on the coloniality of her theoretical and ideological positions in the literature. In a 2015 reproduction of a previously unpublished paper, 'The Indigenous system of Social Relations' presented by Hoernlé to the New Education Fellowship Conference in Johannesburg in 1934, she argued that 'Native' society should be studied and understood in order to develop the best policy for 'Native' education (Hoernlé and Niehaus 2015: 78). According to Hoernlé, only through the development of a proper education policy which was based on indigenous social formations, as the 'explicit and deliberate part of that complex process of culture-contact and culture-change, forced upon Africans by the establishment of Whites as permanent settlers in and rulers of South Africa' , can those formations be

> maintained and developed as a vehicle through which fundamental features of *our civilisation* may be gradually incorporated into African society. As such, the African may be transformed into a truly civilised man without ceasing to be a true African, and thus may be helped to play his proper part in the South African community of the future.

(Hoernlé and Niehaus 2015: 78, emphasis added)

The irony of Hoernlé's claim seems to be completely lost on her, as she determines that only through the assimilation of the 'fundamental features' of European 'civilisation' can the African become a civilised (read human) being who can then participate in the 'South African community of the future', i.e., the thoroughly Europeanised South Africa as a true African. Despite the underlying Eurocentric racism in her work, Hoernlé continues to be represented as a benevolent and progressive mother of social anthropology, someone who was deeply concerned with the wellbeing of Africans and who dedicated her time towards the end improving the lives of Africans. It is precisely this kind of contemporary epistemology of ignorance, apologism, or colonial unknowing in intellectual histories of anthropology in South Africa which needs to be undone. It should be recognised that, through her research and writing; her teaching; and her activist work, Hoernlé was an agent in the production of a prolific and colonial 'textual economy' (Barber 2007) of the 'Native' Other. She was steadfast in her psychological attachment and dedication to 'European civilisation' and white settler society, to whom her consistent 'our society' referred. She was also of the opinion that Europeans by some inherent trick of nature or 'race' possessed a more scientific knowledge than the 'Natives' (Hoernlé and Niehaus 2015: 85). In her 1934 lecture, she argued that

> The one thing of value in our civilisation, the one thing on the basic principles of which there is no difference of opinion among us, the one thing to which we owe our economic and military superiority over the Africans, we have withheld from them to this day: the objective attitude of mind towards Nature which we call Science and the power which this knowledge should bring in its train. Some of the results and the achievements of the practical application of science we have, of course, given: Africans ride bicycles, drive motor cars, travel by train, without knowing anything of the scientific principles on which these machines are based.
>
> (Hoernlé and Niehaus 2015: 85)

The intellectual and ideological position of Hoernlé and the brand of liberal social science realised in the Bantu Studies department at Wits should be read in relation to their close association and alliance with the white liberal establishment in Johannesburg. The liberal establishment was comprised of a well-funded cohort of white intellectuals variously concerned with the so-called 'Native question', and 'the aims of Native education' (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 53). Reinhold Friedrich Alfred Hoernlé, a Professor of Philosophy at Wits; a major figure in the Senate and other councils of the university (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 35); a public intellectual (Bank 2016: 17); and Winifred Hoernlé's husband, was one of the leading proponents of the liberal tradition in Johannesburg. Alfred Hoernlé propagated a liberal segregationist ideology, which he famously outlined in his Phelps-Stokes lectures at the University of Cape Town in 1939, titled 'South African Native Policy and the Liberal Spirit' (Bank 2016: 17; Coupland 1940). According to Coupland, the lectures crystallised sixteen years 'experience of and reflection on the problems of race relations in South Africa' (1940: 304). Professor Hoernlé 'analyse[d] the content and meaning of the existing [native] policy, and discusse[d] the possibilities of its modification'. In his second lecture, Hoernlé argued that the 'Spirit of Trusteeship' could be found in 'such legislation as the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936, in improved conditions for urban Natives, in missionary devotion to Native education' (Coupland 1940: 304). The 'liberal spirit' would only allow so-called 'natives' to occupy a seat on the bottom rung of a racially stratified South African society through assimilationist processes such as missionary education. The white scholars who espoused the liberal tradition were well-established in the national intellectual landscape. They were also able to affect policy formation through their work in bodies such as the SAIRR. The formation of institutional and intellectual relationships between the liberal tradition and the Department of

Bantu Studies served to strengthen and legitimate the Othering discourses reproduced by both, and constituted a formative moment in the intellectual history of social anthropology in South Africa.

Conclusion

The early history of Bantu Studies and social anthropology, as we have seen in the writings of the figures who peopled it, was rooted in a Eurocentric power-knowledge system which uncritically accepted the Eurocentric right to conquest in much the same way as the Afrikaner nationalist tradition. As Fage suggests, the tendency towards a 'non-historical way of investigating and evaluating the cultures and societies of "primitive peoples" of [early] anthropology was a 'symptomatic outcome' of processes of conquest (1981: 32). The two processes of colonial conquest and colonial anthropology, in the form of structural functionalism, were mutually constitutive. The modes of colonial unknowing evident in early liberal social anthropology are also evident in contemporary intellectual histories of South African anthropology. Colonial unknowing reads the fundamental antagonisms of conquest and white supremacy out of South African history, 'render[ing] unintelligible the entanglements of racialization and colonization, occluding the mutable historicity of colonial structures and attributing finality to conquest and dispossession' (Vimalassery et al. 2016). For example, Andrew Bank's *Pioneers of the Field: South Africa's Women Anthropologists*, which was published in 2016, valorises the liberal 'humanist' praxis of six white women anthropologists in South Africa during the 20th century, rather than taking the opportunity to engage in a serious critique of the Eurocentric presuppositions of their work. Bank seeks to centre the work of white women scholars within an already whitewashed canon, while claiming a radical revision of that canon. There is a consistency between the epistemological locus of possibility of Bantu Studies, liberal social anthropology, and contemporary anthropology in that the mutability of conquest and dispossession has yet to be

addressed and meaningfully engaged with. The first exigency in any critical anthropological project is thus the recognition of the fundamental and outstanding antagonism of European conquest and white supremacy in South Africa, and the implications of this antagonism for research and knowledge production.

Chapter 2

Opposing apartheid, protecting power[7]: the neo-Marxist turn in anthropology

> We now come to the group that has longest enjoyed confidence from the black world - the liberal establishment, including radical and leftist groups. The biggest mistake the black world ever made was to assume that whoever opposed apartheid was an ally.
>
> (Biko 2004[1978]: 68)

Anthropology in South Africa until the early 1970s saw the rise of various traditions other than the foundational structural functionalist tradition. These included the ethnological section of the South African Department of Native Affairs, headed by N. J. van Warmelo from 1930 to 1969 (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 109) and the rise of the Afrikaner *Volkekunde* tradition, pioneered by P. J. Coertze at Stellenbosch University, the University of South Africa, the Orange Free State and the University of Pretoria (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 119-120). It also included a range of new studies on urbanisation beginning with the pioneering work of Ellen Hellman in *Rooiyard: A Sociological Survey of an Urban Native Slum Yard*, published in 1948, work by Philip Mayer on urbanisation in East London in the late 50s, and by Monica Wilson and Archie Mafeje on Langa in Cape Town in the early 60s (Kuper 1999: 95-96). At the University of the Witwatersrand, the next major paradigm shift which affected social science and anthropological praxis was the neo-Marxist turn in the 1970s. Kuper discusses the emerging critique of the social sciences and anthropology during this moment as follows:

[7] This chapter is indebted to Ally's conceptualisation of intellectualism and power in South African during the neo-Marxist turn. Ally argues that Marxist oppositional intellectualism among sociologists at Wits during the 1970s 'was securely located in a configuration of power, one in which its reformulation of the relationship between race and class represented a politics of survival and self-defence' among by white scholars (Ally 2005: 82).

> Social scientists and historians in the major English-speaking universities now developed a neo-Marxist account of South Africa, which included a critique of anthropology as conservative, and overly concerned with cultural difference. Ethnicity was false consciousness, manipulated by the regime. It was world capitalism that in truth shaped South African society. All anthropologists could effectively contribute was a critique of the discourse of cultural identity, and the documentation of the terrible effects of government policy.
>
> (Kuper 1999: 96)

According to Hammond-Tooke, the main themes taken up during the turn to neo-Marxist studies by anthropologists in South Africa were 'the effects of labour migration and of the massive forced population movements that accompanied the implementation of territorial apartheid' (1997: 6-7).

In this chapter I consider the conjuncture of the neo-Marxist turn in anthropology at Wits in the 1970s and 1980s. I focus on the way in which categories of analysis adopted by anthropologists at Wits during this time concentrated on the *effects* of apartheid and state repression at the expense of understanding white supremacy as rooted in a historical *durée* which stretched some three centuries beyond apartheid. I argue that the focus of anthropological studies on the *processes* and *effects* of territorial apartheid and the advent of 'applied'/'activist' anthropology among white leftist scholars constituted instances of colonial unknowing. Firstly, the non-racial praxis of white leftist anthropologists at Wits did not engage with, and thus silenced, a tradition of Africanist thought which critiqued liberal non-racialism in South Africa. Secondly, by understanding the immediacy of apartheid as the fundamental antagonism of South African society, white anthropologists engaged in historically myopic analysis which functioned to occlude conquest, and their own implication in structures of racism and power.

The neo-Marxist turn, Or, 'why are African voices silenced in South African historiography?'[8]

[8] (Magubane 2007: 253)

The neo-Marxist revision of South African history began in England. In response to the publication of the 'ultimate word of liberalism's irrelevant wisdom' (Magubane 2007: 261), the *Oxford History of South Africa* (Volume 1 1969; Volume 2 1971), edited by Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson, historians Shula Marks and Anthony Atmore organised a series of seminars on southern African societies at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London (Magubane 2007: 251; Hammond-Tooke 1997: 169). Marxist theory moved from the British to the South African academe largely through the return of young scholars from mostly British universities in the 1970s (Hammond-Tooke 1997; Ally 2005; Magubane 2007). Bernard Magubane highlights two points concerning this early moment in the neo-Marxist turn. The first point is that Marxist theory had existed in South Africa since the late 19th Century – 'supported by communists and by trade unionists of Marxist or Trotskyite persuasion' (Magubane 2007: 269-270). However, the revisionist scholars did not seem to be aware of this earlier tradition. The second point is that in 1969 (the same year in which the first volume of the *Oxford History of South Africa* was published), another book titled *Class and Colour in South Africa 1850-1950* by Jack and Ray Simons was published. Magubane suggests that this book built on the already existing Marxist tradition in South Africa. While the *Oxford History* was met with engagement, response, and critique, *Class and Colour* 'was completely ignored by the Neo-Marxists' (Magubane 2007: 270). These two points are recounted to underline the fact that rather than being a response to local shifts or ruptures in understanding South African society, the neo-Marxist critique was a British import that reflected and responded to shifts in the British academy[9]. What were the implications

[9] The Marxist ideas that were present in South Africa before the Neo-Marxist turn also came from England - 'with British emigrant workers. The workers… came to South Africa with the hope of making their own fortunes in the new colony. Most of them were already infected with the culture of white supremacy and racism.' (Magubane 2007: 270)

of this for the production of knowledge in and about South Africa at the time? Which debates set the frames of analysis in dominant discourse? And who determined what passed as theory or knowledge? Bernard Magubane suggests that

> These debates… never confronted what it meant for black folks to be treated as non-persons in the country of their birth. Or indeed, what it meant to be white and to be proclaimed a member of the superior race!
>
> (2007: 251-252).

Shireen Ally argues that the neo-Marxist turn in South Africa 'revolved squarely around the intellectual and political reconfiguration of the race-class debate', and adopted an 'oppositional intellectualism as a critique of liberalism, and as a response to the racial politics inspired by Black Consciousness' (2005: 74). Ally conceives of this moment in the South African academy as primarily a ‘reactionary disengagement’ from the politics and philosophy of the Black Consciousness movement, dressed up in radical and oppositional attire (82-83). Marxism and class analysis offered white intellectuals in South Africa 'not just a powerful theoretical lens to explain apartheid, but a powerful political tool… to deal more comfortably with questions of race' (73). Magubane argues that the so-called radical paradigm was another attempt ‘by beneficiaries of colonial usurpation to transcend that legacy’ (2007: 277). He groups the liberal and neo-Marxist traditions together as ‘exercises in irrelevance,’ which exposed a misunderstanding of African realities and struggles (Magubane 2007: 274).

Neo-Marxism’s historical myopia

According to Hammond-Tooke, there were broadly three kinds of neo-Marxism adopted in the South African academy – structural Marxism, taken from the French anthropologists Rey, Terray, Meillassoux and Godelier; a strand derived from the work of Gunder Frank, Eric Wolf, and from Immanuel Wallerstein’s World Systems Theory; and social history or British Historical Marxism, which was linked to the work of E.P. Thompson, Hobsbawm and Hill (1997: 169-171).

Anthropologist Deborah James describes the academic climate of the time as one in which 'the experiences of the working class and the impact of capitalism and industrialisation were predominant' (2009: 290).

The major intellectual sites of the 'radical' turn at Wits were the History Workshop and the African Studies Institute, both of which had strong institutional and intellectual connections with the Department of Social Anthropology[10]. South African anthropologist Deborah James, who taught in the Anthropology department from 1981-1997, writes that 'Anthropologists felt rather ashamed of their history in colonial Africa and so we took our lead from the historians, who seemed to have the answer as to how to understand/interpret class, material realities, modes of production and the like' (James 2016).

The African Studies Institute (ASI), which was established in 1973 under the acting-directorship of Professor of Anthropology W. D. Hammond-Tooke, was a site for interdisciplinary dialogue, research and publication in the social sciences and the humanities at Wits (African Studies Institute no date: 2)[11]. In the early 80s, the ASI ran six research projects, all of which sat comfortably in the neo-Marxist paradigm: 'Division, control and resistance in the work place'; 'The "informal sector" in the Witwatersrand metropolitan economy'; the 'Oral history project';

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[10] Members of the Department of Social Anthropology were often appointed as research associates in the ASI, and published regularly in the Journal of African studies, and other associated publications (African Studies Institute 1988) Anthropologists also often presented papers as History Workshop seminars (James 2016).

[11] While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to consider the implications of who funded the ASI, it might be of interest to readers to know that in the early 80s, the ASI cite their sponsors to be 'Chairman's Fund, Anglo American Corporation and de Beers'; 'Ford Foundation, Inc.'; 'South African Institute of Race Relations'; 'Richard Ward Endowment Fund'; and 'The Witwatersrand Council of Churches' (African Studies Institute no date: 16). In 1987, The Ford Foundation 'pledged grants totaling over half a million Rand' to underwrite ASI research projects while the Institute was only able to raise around R25 000 from domestic sources (African Studies Institute 1988: 4)

‘Social history of black South African writing English’; ‘African urban housing conditions and policy on the Witwatersrand’; and ‘Social and economic history of the Witwatersrand’. The Institute also produced ‘a steady stream of scholarly publications devoted to subjects of specialized interest within the broader field of African studies’ (African Studies Institute no date: 14), and engaged in university and community-based teaching. According to ASI, teaching, fortnightly interdisciplinary seminars, as well as a program of ‘popular talks and lectures which [were] held on the University campus and at the Johannesburg Public Library’ offered researchers the opportunity of developing relations with university staff and graduate students, as well as to share research findings with graduate and undergraduate students, and ‘inner-city workers’ (15).

The ASI provided support to members of the anthropology department in various ways in the 1980s. It offered temporary secondment to Patrick Pearson, an anthropology M.A. student, in 1983 to enable him to work on his thesis on the Rehoboth community (African Studies Institute 1988: 26), as well as the position of Visiting Research Associate from 1982-1984 (48-49). In 1985 and 1986, Pearson was ‘given the use of an office in the African Studies Institute and free use of its computer terminal’ to complete his Master’s thesis (26). Johnny Clegg of the Social Anthropology Department was also a Visiting Research Associate from 1983-1984 (48), and Deborah James from 1986-1987 (56).

The ASI informal sector project was launched in 1979 under the academic direction of Wits anthropologist David Webster. The project attempted to establish ‘To what extent black families are capable of economic survival through engaging in small scale enterprise which aims at the provision of cheap goods and services (hawking, beer selling, operating private taxis, etc.),’ and ‘How such “informal sector” activities relate to the more formal economy’ (African Studies Institute no date: 6). In a later review, the project was described as follows:

> The object of the investigation was to explore the nature and significance of 'informal' income-earning activity among the residents of Soweto under conditions of widespread and chronic unemployment. Fieldwork involved a survey of some 250 randomly selected households in six suburbs of Soweto, and the collection of a set of interviews with people involved in small-scale manufacturing, trading and service operations.'
>
> (African Studies Institute 1988: 25)

The mode of analysis which emerged during the radical revision stressed conflict rather than co-operation, and class rather than race as explanatory principles of society (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 169). The shift in social science concerns was characterised by the 'documentation and analysis of the nature of poverty and the problems of development' in South African society (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 6). The main themes in studies of the 70s and 80s 'were the effects of labour migration and of the massive forced population movements that accompanied the implementation of territorial apartheid, the nature of rural differentiation, the problems of poverty and development, and labour relations' (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 6-7). In other words, conflict and antagonism in South African society was conceived according to a brief historical timeline assembled around apartheid policy, and emerging capitalist labour relations in the 20th century. The knowledge being produced in the social and human sciences at Wits in this intellectual moment was primarily concerned with making sense of the *immediate effects* of apartheid on South African society, rather than understanding apartheid as simply another stage within or iteration of white supremacy in South Africa. Focus on the effects of apartheid constituted historically myopic analysis which functioned to occlude the mutability of conquest and racialized dispossession in South Africa (Vimalassery, Pegues, and Goldstein 2016).

Activist anthropology, and the silencing of Africanist critique

The neo-Marxist turn constituted an apparent rupture in anthropological praxis, particularly at English-medium universities such as UCT and Wits. Hammond-Tooke describes the twenty-year period as an 'intellectual hiatus' from the 'roots' and traditional concerns of anthropology (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 184). The Marxist paradigm brought into question the ability of 'classic' anthropological studies to make sense of social change (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 4), and the static and synchronic nature of structural functionalism was rejected.

At the departmental level, the turn was not so simple or clear cut. For example, while some of the younger staff in the anthropology department at Wits, including David Webster, Jeremy Keenan, and Deborah James adopted Neo-Marxist intellectual concerns in their research, writing, and teaching, Hammond-Tooke remained dedicated to the Structuralist and neo-Structuralist paradigms throughout his two-decade tenure as Chair of Anthropology at Wits (White 2016). This complexity is reflected in the subjects of post-graduate theses in the anthropology department during the 70s and 80s. Up until the mid-90s, graduate studies in the department were minimal and irregular. It was normal for a single student to complete a graduate degree (MA or PhD) per year, and in some years, no students graduated. It is thus difficult to draw conclusions from this period in isolation. Understood in comparison with the 50 years of graduate studies in the department since 1934[12], however, there is a clear rupture within the genealogy of studies on the structural functions of kinship, organisation and magic[13]. What emerges in thesis topics, particularly in the 80s, is a growing concern with social change, conflict, urban and rural development, and class

[12] Max Gluckman's MA thesis 'The Realm of the Supernatural among the South-Eastern Bantu: A Study of the Practical Working of Religions and Magic,' completed in 1934, is the earliest available thesis in the Cullen Africa Library at Wits.
[13] Examples of studies are: 'The new Bantu society in Natal: its civilization and culture, 1810-1942' (Kannemayer 1945); 'The Ambo of Northern Rhodesia' (Stefaniszyn 1956); 'Kinship and Social Organisation' (Sansom 1960); 'Bukole: Magic, Witchcraft and divination among the Lulua of South Central Congo' (Mclean 1969).

analysis[14]. While there was a clear entry of neo-Marxist concerns into the work of graduate students, studies on more 'classical' themes continued[15]. While the neo-Marxist turn did not completely alter or organise anthropology at Wits during the 70s and 80s, it constituted an apparent and momentary shift in anthropological praxis. Whether this shift in praxis represented a shift in the underlying epistemic schema of anthropology is another question.

It will be useful to briefly consider two anthropologists at Wits to analyse more closely the effect of neo-Marxist theory on anthropological praxis. According to Hammond-Tooke, David Webster and Jeremy Keenan most seriously embraced the structural approach to neo-Marxist theory in their work (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 169-170). Webster was apparently the first South African anthropologist to embrace Marxist theory in his work. On his return to Wits anthropology from a year-long teaching post in Manchester in the early seventies, he 'immediately introduced the theories of the French marxist school and elements of political economy into teaching' (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 171). At that time, Hammond-Tooke appointed Jeremy Keenan, a British geographer, to a lectureship in the department. Through the combined teaching of these two structural marxist scholars, students were

> exposed to the (sometimes highly esoteric) debates on modes of production, class analysis, the nature of surplus value, and so on. The marxist problem of how to regard the peasantry, introduced to Western scholarship through, especially, Eric Wolf and Giovanni Arrighi, led to 'peasants' becoming an important topic in the syllabuses.
>
> (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 171)

[14] Theses include: 'Marriage, The Family and Social Change Among the Gujerati Speaking Indians of Johannesburg,' PhD (Rosenthal 1976), 'Self-Help and Village Development: Rural Domestic Water Supplies in Lesotho,' MA (Cross 1980), 'Black Worker conflicts on South African Gold Mines: 1973-1982,' PhD (McNamara 1985), 'Kinship and Land in an Inter-Ethnic Rural Community,' MA (James 1987).

[15] For example, H. Kuckertz's PhD thesis 'Authority, Structure and Homestead in a Mpondo Village' (1984).

The Marxist paradigm that was imported into the department by Webster and Keenan did not necessarily speak to or from local realities, or understand or theorise South African society any better than did structural functionalism. Hammond-Tooke suggests that apart from two papers written by David Webster and one paper by Jeremy Keenan during this time, both scholars 'seem[ed] to have found it difficult to apply their theoretical ideas to the local scene' (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 173). Webster directed his attention to studying topics such as state repression and the politics of mass mobilisation during the state of emergencies in the 1980s (1987), and Keenan to the workings of government repression and coercion in Bophuthatswana, as well as changing resistance to and reform of state authority (1986, 1987). During this time, however, both Webster and Keenan's academic publishing declined, and their time was diverted to more 'immediate' and 'activist' concerns (Hammond-Tooke 1997: 173). Webster joined the African National Congress and was involved in the Detainees' Parents' Support Committee and the Five Freedoms Forum. He also apparently rode a bicycle and wore a cloth cap to demonstrate sympathy with the plight of the working classes (173). As Wamba-dia-Wamba suggests, however, 'Voluntaristic alignment to oppressed classes per se does not make one produce revolutionary historical knowledge' (1986: 342), or anthropological knowledge for that matter.

By taking up the more 'immediate' concerns of the *effects* of apartheid, while remaining within the academy and silent on their own implication in structures of racialized power dependent on the mutability of conquest and dispossession over three hundred years, Webster and Keenan were involved in the work of colonial unknowing. The turn to activist politics was possible only through either a profound ignorance or a willful silencing of or disengagement with Africanist critiques of white non-racialist activism in South Africa, beginning with the work of Anton Lembede in the 1940s, and later solidified through the philosophical writings of Robert Sobukwe

and Steve Biko, the 1967 split of The South African Student's Organisation (SASO) from the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), and the Black Consciousness movement. Both are damning. What was rendered unintelligible in anti-apartheid activist anthropology, and activist social science more broadly, was an intellectual-political concern with the fundamental historical problems in South African society, including conquest and racialized dispossession.

Conclusion

The neo-Marxist and activist turn in anthropology at Wits concentrated on analysing the effects of apartheid. One effect of the pre-eminence of apartheid as a category and symbol in South African human and social science discourse is the occlusion of the longue historical duree. Contemporary problems are not understood in relation to a historical horizon beyond 1948. South African sociologist Bernard Magubane writes that a striking characteristic of South African historiography is that 'each generation seems to think that history began only yesterday and what happened a day before yesterday is "ancient history" that has no relevance for today's problems' (2007: 253). South African philosopher and Azanian[16] Ndumiso Dladla argues that apartheid 'had limited historical significance and is often used in an obfuscatory manner to distort the length of time over which liberation has been outstanding and to deflect attention for the conquest of indigenous people in the unjust wars of colonisation' (2016: 34). This form of colonial unknowing 'render[s] unintelligible the entanglements of racialization and colonization, occluding the mutable

[16] The Azanian school should be counterposed to both the Congress and the liberal political-intellectual traditions in South Africa. Dladla writes that the Azanian school considers 'South Africa's primary political problem [to be] the unjustified forcible seizure of land from its original rightful owners, the indigenous peoples of the country from time immemorial. White Supremacy is historically linked to this insofar as it was and continues to act in the service of ensuring the irreversibility of the benefits acquired through the questionable right of conquest. This "right of conquest" has been questioned since the earliest days of the colonization of South Africa – a geographic indicator serving as a means to identify the indigenous conquered people who were in the country long, long before the colonial invasion' (2016: 167).

historicity of colonial structures and attributing finality to conquest and dispossession' (Vimalassery et al., 2016). The end of apartheid did not achieve the end of white supremacy in South Africa, and conquest and racialized dispossession are mutable within and through the colonial present. Until South Africa is 'post-conquest,' method and theory in the social sciences and the humanities which does not take a timeline beyond 1948 and conquest as the fundamental antagonism of South African society seriously runs the risk of being reactionary, and protecting white supremacy. Anthropological praxis should thus be thinking towards a 'post-conquest' framework; rather than working within a 'post-apartheid' one[17].

[17] Post-conquest would minimally require the restoration of sovereignty and title to land to the indigenous people of South Africa (Dladla 2016).

Chapter 3

The cultural / 'postracial' turn in anthropology

In a 1992 article reviewing the state of research and transformation at universities in South Africa, Mahmood Mamdani suggests that to understand the contemporary historical context of the early 1990s, it is necessary to consider the 1973 and 1976 moments in South African history. The confluence of the Durban Strikes and the Soweto uprising brought together workers and the youth into a popular struggle which ruptured the political impasse which had existed since the banning of liberation movements in 1960 after the Sharpeville massacre (Mamdani 1992: 1056). The eventual result of the renewed popular struggle was the CODESA negotiations, initiated by F. W De Klerk.

> The strategy was to effect a political change to forestall pressures for social transformation; it was to bring to bear the accumulated popularity of the major liberation movement to legitimate the reformed state apparatus, and thereby to demobilise the mass movement.
>
> (Mamdani 1992: 1056-1057)

The negotiations have been criticised as a fatal moment of acquiescence by the African National Congress, which protected white land ownership and preserved racialized economic inequality into the democratic constitutional dispensation. A significant result of the negotiations was the ascension of the Charterist over the Africanist and Black Consciousness traditions in popular discourse (Mamdani 1992). The 'new South Africa' was to be built on the tenets of reconciliation and non-racialism, paradigms which de-politicised and de-historicised questions of outstanding historical justice. White supremacy was preserved through the non-racial ideology of a 'new South Africa,' and substantive decolonisation was foreclosed.

In this chapter I consider the cultural turn in anthropology at Wits during the 1990s. I examine the conjuncture of the disciplinary turn to debates assembled around 'culture' and 'ethnicity', the national turn to a discourse of non-racialism, and changes at the departmental level. I argue that despite major turnover in the staffing of the department, and the development of new programs and courses during the 1990s, the underlying episteme of colonial anthropology remained the same. I am not concerned with an intellectual history of particular anthropologists, but rather, with a sociology of anthropological knowledge – who were its makers and its objects (Mafeje 1997). The chapter draws largely on a departmental review covering the years 1988-1993 (Department of Social Anthropology 1993), which assembles various objectives, activities and developments within the department, and includes sections on teaching activities, curricula, staff research, and publications. The data used from the review is supported with data gathered in interviews I conducted with staff members who worked in the department in the early 90s, and in later decades, as well as with data drawn from secondary literature.

The 90s moment - English-medium universities in national political context

The 1990s conjuncture was articulated differently in various institutional contexts. However, it is possible to outline some generalities of the situation at English-medium universities. Since their inception, and through the apartheid era, the so-called 'open' universities in South Africa operated 'within the conventions of white supremacy and minority rule' (Moodie 1994: 33). Moodie suggests that, even during the academic and cultural boycott, the subsidies to English-medium universities were not cut until the late eighties, at which time there was a funding decrease for all universities in South Africa (1994: 29-30). He argues that during apartheid, 'the open universities shared *increased* government support both for operating and capital expenditure' (Moodie 1994:

30, emphasis added). The resilience that this allowed meant that in the early 1990s, South Africa's open universities

> Emerged from forty years of *apartheid* and political oppression in a remarkably good, if not uniform, condition… It remains to be seen, however, whether they can make the radical changes in style organisation, and curriculum that their situation now demands.
>
> (Moodie 1994: 36)

The 'burning issue' at historically English-medium white universities in the early 1990s was that of increasing access for black students (Mamdani 1992: 1059). The process of opening access in South African universities reflected a Eurocentric assimilationist approach to transforming the colonial university. Teaching black students how to adapt to what was essentially a European university in South Africa through special admission and remedial programs constituted an integration into the colonial university; rather than a deconstruction of the role of the university itself. In 1992, Mamdani wondered if affirmative action in admission of students could have been 'an adequate social remedy to the historical problem of educational apartheid,' or whether it would be 'no more than an effective survival strategy for "white" universities in the "new" South Africa' (1059). Mamdani faults the inadequate analytical tools of the radical intelligentsia for this failure in 'dismantling the apparatus of domination which strangled a racially oppressed *majority*' (1061, original emphasis).

The cultural turn in anthropology at Wits

In a 1997 review of Sally Falk Moore's *Anthropology and Africa* (1994), Archie Mafeje emphasised that white Southern African anthropologists in the 1990s needed to reflexively consider the 'politics of knowledge-making' in post-colonial Africa (1997: 2). For scholars to grapple adequately with this question, a critical sense of the sociology of knowledge, or the relationship between anthropological knowledge and the context in which it was produced, was

necessary. He asks some simple questions which move directly to the heart of the issue – 'Who are the makers of anthropology in the 1990s and for whom? Who are the objects of anthropology and why?' (Mafeje 1997: 2). The simple answer is that makers of anthropology in the 1990s in South Africa were mostly white, and the object of anthropology remained black alterity. But let us unpack the intellectual moment to understand the ways in which this simple colonial problematic was occluded.

Anthropology at Wits in the 90s was located in a series of differently scaled and shifting landscapes. The first was the political transition at the national scale briefly outlined above. The second was an institutional transition characterised by programs built towards increasing the admission of black students (Mamdani 1992; Moodie 1994, Taylor 2016). The university established an Academic Development Centre, which aimed to 'assist black South African students to assimilate to Wits' through 'a culturative' academic process (Taylor 2016). The third was a disciplinary transition to cultural studies stimulated by the publication of *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* in 1986. Despite the department's disjointed intellectual history, the cultural studies moment which emerged in the early 90s was relatively coherent (White 2016). This moment constituted a shift away from the long-standing dominance of British social anthropology paradigms like structural functionalism and political economy, and was characterised by the turn to concerns with 'culture' and 'ethnicity' influenced by debates within American anthropology. The shift in anthropological praxis can be seen in the departmental report of 1988-1993, particularly in the curriculum section.

During the period, the department offered formal courses from the first year to the Honours level (the taught Master's program had not yet been introduced). There were just over thirty-five different courses offered, of which ten were at the honours level. There were around ten different

courses each at first and second year level, and seven at the third-year level (Department of Social Anthropology 1993: 17-19). Despite concerns around radical shifts in personnel, the department could design and implement new courses during this time, including a 'redesigned course on culture theory,' a new third year course titled 'Political Economy, Culture and Aesthetics' and a new Honours course titled 'Topics in contemporary southern African ethnography' (20-21). We can understand the new courses as an indication of what were considered important anthropological themes and debates at Wits during this time. Let us briefly consider the "Political Economy, Culture and Aesthetics" course, which was developed in response to the perception that there was a 'lack of broader insight into a series of recent theoretical trends in anthropology' among third year students going into the Honours level:

> Among these are theories and ethnographic monographs that attempt to bridge the gap, or mediate, between the Marxist or Political Economy trajectory (like Bloch, Godelier) and Culture Theorists of the American school (like Sahlins, Geertz).
>
> (Department of Social Anthropology 1993: 20-21)

Unsurprisingly, the two theoretical trends considered to be the most important for graduate students to be familiar with were imports from the Euro-American academy - the Marxist/Political Economy school and American Culture Theory. Another useful example to consider is the course 'Topics in contemporary southern African ethnography,' which was first offered in 1992. The review states that the course was developed in response to the impression that

> Honours students were graduating without a comprehensive awareness of the research done by local (and international) researchers into southern African communities. The design of the course led to an awareness that recent anthropology in South Africa has tended to concern itself more with ethnography than with theory.
>
> (Department of Social Anthropology 1993: 21)

It goes on to state that the course 'thus draws on theoretical inputs from anthropology in the USA and Europe as well as on locally-produced ethnographic materials' (21). The old trope that data is from Africa; theory from Euro-America was written into the course itself. The South African Ethnography course survived in similar form for over two decades – it was last taught in 2015, when it was boycotted by a group of post-graduate students. As a key course in the anthropology post-graduate program, 'South African Ethnography' functioned to construct a canon of 'legitimate' anthropological knowledge, and disciplined students into a particular way of doing anthropology. In its 2015 form, the semester long course prescribed a single text written by a black scholar – Bernard Magubane's 'The "Xhosa" in the Town Revisited: Urban Social Anthropology: A Failure of Method and Theory' (1973), which was included as a response to the main text for the week - Philip Mayer's *Migrancy and the Study of Africans in Towns* (1962). The rest of the texts were written by white scholars, and many from outside the continent. The course cultivated an anthropological knowledge *about* southern Africa produced by white scholars while simultaneously nurturing an ignorance on debates and knowledge from the rest of the continent.

Robert Thornton suggests that teaching and researching in anthropology, as well as in the social sciences and humanities more broadly at Wits, was always, and continues to be too heavily focused on South Africa (2016). The South African ethnography course is a good example of the danger of this South African exceptionalism – the concern with (a select pool of) literature from the region meant that important debates and traditions on the continent were silenced. Importantly, there is no mention made in any of the newly developed courses in the early 90s of the body of Post-Colonial and Africanist literature in anthropology and the social sciences that had emerged since the 70s (Magubane 1971; Mafeje 1970, 1976, 1981; Asad 1973; Mamdani 1976; Amadiume 1987). The Africanist critique of anthropology which had been institutionalised through the

formation of the Pan African Association of Anthropologists in Yaounde, Cameroon in 1989. The congress held in Yaounde followed an extended debate on the role of anthropology in Africa starting in at least the 1960s, and was succeeded by a second congress held in Dakar in 1991. At the Dakar meeting, Ifi Amadiume 'rejected Anthropology outright as racist and anti-African. She argued in rather imperative terms that Anthropology as a discipline must be abolished altogether and be replaced with "African social history and sociology of history"' (Mafeje 1998: 23).

An interesting counter-moment to the South African-centric thrust of the department was the 1993 Association for Anthropology in Southern Africa (AASA)'s annual conference, which Wits hosted in September. The 1993 report was published before the conference, however the department promised that the conference would 'be a watershed in the promotion of scholarly contacts within the African continent more widely (Department of Social Anthropology 1993: 37). In a review of the event, De Wet suggests that compared with the relatively small size of the AASA conference historically, the 1993 event was attended by 'a substantial number of anthropologists from other parts of the African continent. The keynote speaker was Professor Paul Nkwi of the University of Cameroon, President of the Pan-African Association of Anthropologists' (De Wet 1994: 148). The conference seemed to be a brief rupture in the fabric, however, rather than a moment which signified a meaningful and long-term opening of the department to scholarly work and debate on the continent more broadly. This can be seen, for example, in the resilience of South African-centric courses such as 'South African Ethnography', and the complete absence of literature on Africanist debates in anthropology in the curriculum.

The re-development of the ethnological museum was another important feature of the early 90s moment. The department's ethnological collection was initiated by Winifred Hoernle in the 1920s, and was maintained until the 1960s when 'interest in the museum lapsed' (Department of

Social Anthropology 1993: 9). The revival of the museum in the early 90s included the partial cataloguing and storing of materials and the 'object collection,' recording the photographic collection on a card index system, installation of ultra-violet filters on the windows, acquiring infrastructure for storage and cataloguing, and the development of a connection with the University Art Gallery for the sharing of storage and use of the collections (53). The refurbished museum housed various activities including a workshop on 'Public Representations of Colonial Africa,' from which a display of colonial maps was constructed, the display of 'Collecting Zulu Material Culture,' which reflected on three periods of material culture collection, a travelling exhibition titled 'Fractions of the Truth' conceptualised and mounted by Honours students. The department also curated the W. F. P Burton collection which went on loan to the centre of African Studies at UCT in 1993, provided items for the C.M. Doke Centenary Exhibition which was displayed during the Annual Meeting of the Association for Anthropology Southern Africa hosted by the Wits department in September 1993, and collaborated with various other institutions including the Africana Museum on an exhibition of the Louis Fourie collection of Bushman and Ovambo materials (54).

The refurbishment of the museum was supported and complemented by the initiation, in 1991, and development of a 'highly successful full scale' Honours course in museum practice - 'Museums and Material Culture'. The course required students to present seminars, produce reviews of exhibitions, write a paper based on a field-trip, and curate an exhibition of their own. A material residue of the cultural turn moment was left in the form of Honours exhibitions which were put together in 1994, and which remained on display until 2014, when the museum underwent another renovation. Speaking retrospectively about the presence of the exhibitions in the early 2010s, a staff member said that

> There had been some attempts… in the 1990s to shift some things around there. And it was interesting how quickly that dated, because they were done at a time when the urgent thing was to get Wits students, who were then white students, thinking about the representation of culture, and the politics around the representation of culture… by the time it was taken down, you would look at this stuff, and it was really obvious how explicitly it was addressed to a white audience. So there was a mirror which had Saartjie Baartman's figure on it. And the invitation was to imagine yourself as an Other… And that obviously had a very powerful effect in the early 1990s, in a moment when white South Africans were having to confront these questions.

The exhibition of the image of Sarah Baartman that remained in the ethnological museum for twenty years is a striking signification of the colonial problematic which underwrote the cultural turn in anthropology at Wits. The exhibition, by inviting a white audience to imagine itself as Other, functioned to deracialise and trivialise historical power and white supremacy in South Africa. By turning the Other into a transposable, a-historical *identification* or imagination, rather than a historically and structurally imposed materiality, the exhibition surfaced the problem of the postracial praxis embedded in the cultural turn in anthropology at Wits.

The problem of the 'postracial', and the necessity of retrieving Mafeje's critique

In a chapter titled 'Anthropology and the Race of/for Africa' (2006), Jemima Pierre traces the genealogy of and connection between 'race' and 'culture' in anthropological discourse over time. She discusses the

> theoretical shift in anthropology from a focus on concepts of "racial" differences to one of "cultural" differences. Exploring this shift is important because it exposes the contemporary commonsense slippage among the terms; or, more specifically, it affirms the embeddedness of race in prevailing anthropological "cultural" conceptions.
>
> (Pierre 2006: 41)

Pierre's argument is that 'culture' became a substitute for 'race,' and allowed anthropological discourse to continue in much the same colonial fashion, but with a postracial facade. David Theo

Goldberg suggests that the postracial, 'far from being the end of race, is a neo-raciality, racisms' extension if not resurrection (2015: 24). The postracial thus pronounces the end of race, while simultaneously extending and occluding the mutability of racialisation, and global racial inequality. The language of culture and ethnicity erases the evidence of racism by ending racial reference while silencing racism's structure, deeds, and effects (162-163).

Despite the shifting landscapes around anthropology at Wits in the early 90s, there were two things that remained relatively unchanged – anthropology's makers, and its objects. Reflexive anthropology was supposed to dispense with the subject/object dichotomy in ethnographic discourse (Mafeje 1998: 9). However, when considering the Wits department in the 90s from a sociology of knowledge perspective, the dichotomy remained clear and heavily racialised – anthropology's makers and teachers were largely white, and anthropology's objects were various iterations of black alterity. This can be seen by a survey of courses offered[18] and theses and dissertations produced[19] during the 1990s. The continued relationship with the trope of the racialised Other reveals a reiteration of colonial anthropological discourse.

In 1998, Mafeje published an article in which he questioned the ability of anthropology to understand the present, in which anthropology's traditional object of alterity is a 'thing of the past' in an 'ex-colonial' world (1). Could there can be African anthropology without African anthropologists in a post-independence period? The early 1990s was a transitionary period. However, with the example of four decades of post-colonial scholarship from the continent to work

[18] Apart from methodological and theory courses, there were major courses on ethnicity, peasants, kinship, poverty, famine, rural South Africa, and violence offered amongst other topics, such as gender and religion.
[19] Some titles include – 'Black taxi trade in Johannesburg: a case study,' 'Domestic servants in Florida, Johannesburg,' 'The role of Ndebele beadwork in reinforcing the patriarchal household' and 'Cultural trends and community formation in a South African township: Sharpeville 1943-1980'.

with, it seems striking that the department was resistant to seeing its own problems and silences. Of interest, is the silencing of the Pan African Anthropology Association congresses in Yaounde and Dakar. Mafeje sympathised with Amadiume's position against anthropology in Africa, but suggests that her polemic against anthropology was 'too unsystematic to amount to a deconstruction of Anthropology as a discipline. Indeed, one of the contradictions in her work [was] the out-of-hand rejection of Anthropology, while at the same time invoking the anthropological ghost in her fieldwork' (Mafeje 1998: 24). While there might have been different positions on the debate, it was clearly a seminal one in relation to anthropology on the continent. The fact that it did not register on the Wits radar at all, is peculiar. At the meeting, black South African scholars

> adopted what might be called matter-of-fact deconstruction in burying both racist Afrikaner Volkekunde (apartheid ethnology) and isolationist liberal Anthropology which treated Africans as archaeological specimens. Unable to invent an all-embracing Anthropology, they suggested that the solution to the problem of Anthropology is 'interdisciplinarity'. This could be considered as a post-anthropological proposal insofar as its authors were willing to dispense with Anthropology in their desire to deal with national issues in modern South Africa. One thing that was certain was that they were not speaking on behalf of white South African anthropologists who are, at best, neo-colonial liberals.
>
> (Mafeje 1998: 21)

The term 'neo-colonial liberals' describes the social and intellectual inability of white South African anthropologists to 'transcend the problem of alterity' (21). Mafeje's concerns, which 'echo[ed] a number of other African anthropologists (Magubane 1971; Mamdani 1990; Rigby 1996), have not managed to elicit much thoughtful and sustained engagement' (Pierre 2006: 40). According to most staff members whom I interviewed, there was no reaction to or grappling with Mafeje's 1997 and 1998 papers critiquing South African anthropology. The critique was silenced by the anthropology guild of South Africa. Nonetheless, Mafeje's analysis and assessment remains highly relevant today, and needs to be retrieved into contemporary anthropology discourse. Pierre

resuscitates it in relation to a more recent problem which is also evident in anthropology in South Africa:

> anthropology's general reluctance to address race as a category of analysis that refers to a set of socio-historical processes distinct from – though interdependent with – the categories of "culture" or "ethnicity," and the discipline's penchant for engaging "cultural difference" while remaining unable to account for persistent (global) racial inequality.
>
> (Pierre 2006: 40)

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have traced the way in which anthropology's makers and concern with black alterity at Wits continued unchallenged and unchanged through major turnovers in the staffing of the department, and the development of new programs and courses. This while anthropology constructed for itself a new postracial identity and discourse which functioned to occlude the mutability of race and racism in South Africa. We might understand this continuity to be the result of a willful ignorance of the critiques of anthropology emerging from the continent since at least the 1960s. In his 1992 paper, Mamdani notes an interesting contradiction that characterised the 'progressive intelligentsia' in South Africa. He wrote that they were

> so deeply socially conscious and informed that one is shocked to come across a pervasive and narrow Euro-centrism in the same ranks. One had the impression that this feature marks not only the elite crust of intellectuals, but seems to run through the ranks. Its basis is, on the one hand, a profound ignorance of Africa, and on the other, a strong feeling of South African Exceptionalism.
>
> (Mamdani 1992: 1060)

Together with Moodie's argument that by the 90s, South African academics were less cut off from contemporary academic debates than was the impression (1994: 19), the picture is a troubling one. The implication is that South African anthropology remained dedicated to a southern African-centric ethnographic fundamentalism, theorised from a Euro-American episteme, and which was

peopled and reproduced by white scholars. We might also understand the continuity as a reflection of the protraction of the primary historical-political antagonism of conquest in South Africa in the 'post-apartheid' period. Put another way, the extension of white supremacy beyond 1994 would render the continuation of black alterity as the object of anthropology relatively unremarkable. The reproduction of a discourse of racialised alterity by South African anthropology is then also a reflection of outstanding historical injustice.

Chapter 4

Reproducing the savage slot[20]: contemporary anthropology

> The fully racialized social and epistemological architecture upon which the modern university is built cannot be radically transformed by 'simply' adding darker faces, safer spaces, better training, and a curriculum that acknowledges historical and contemporary oppressions.
>
> (Kelley, 2016)

As an anthropologist studying anthropology, ethnography offers a focused entry into broader analysis. This thesis, however, entered the field of enquiry almost a hundred years ago, with the advent of the Department of Bantu Studies at Wits. This was a deliberate choice. I hoped to show that the production of contemporary anthropological knowledge is informed and shaped by a deep history. Contemporary historical analyses should begin with a consideration of the moment when the primary problem first took shape in the world (Ellis 2002). The problem being considered in this study is the continuity of colonial unknowing in anthropology in South Africa, using the University of the Witwatersrand as the field of focus. The primary problem emerged, then, with the establishment of Bantu Studies as a formalised and structured program and discipline of understanding, studying and representing the native Other. While the thesis is broad, and considers anthropology at Wits from several different vantage points, there have been instances of resonance across different historical moments.

In this chapter I hope to demonstrate that, despite radical changes in broader political and social contexts as well as in the staffing and curricula of the department over time, the underlying

[20] Trouillot (2003)

schema of anthropology at Wits has continued largely intact into the contemporary moment. In his seminal paper 'Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness', anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot argues that 'the internal tropes of anthropology matter much less than the larger discursive field within which anthropology operates and upon whose existence it is premised' (2003: 17). It follows that the enunciative context of anthropological discourse in a South Africa which is still characterised by conquest, while it might produce radical classrooms or ruptures of anthropology, cannot be overcome - it is woven into and interdependent with the foundational structure of white supremacy in South Africa. The ethnographic vignettes below offer insight into contemporary moments in which this problem manifests in different ways.

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I'm sitting in a large wooded lecture hall before the start of a first-year anthropology class. The shape and materiality of the lecture hall already disciplines the undergraduate students, as does the larger campus, a successful mimicry of the form of the Euro-American university. Students file through two entrances, and choose a seat on a raised platform, facing the lecture area in the front centre of the hall. The room, however, is loud and engaging, a democratic space. Some students talk in groups, many sit flicking and tapping smartphone screens. It is week three of a second semester anthropology course on privatisation and the university in South Africa, for which I am a graduate tutor. The topic of the course is current, and, judging from a weekly tutorial session which I facilitate, students are deeply engaged - they *enjoy* the coursework. The course is apparently heterodox – hardly any of the literature is 'classically' ethnographic, and the topic is contemporary and close to home[21]. However, there are some troubling problems which emerge…

[21] The latter part of the semester was often disrupted by the 2016 iteration of the Wits #FeesMustFall movement.

The lecturer quietens the hall down to begin. The lecture is prefaced by an apology for the 'Americanness' of the main theoretical article for the week. The apology was not uncommon – all the key theoretical texts of the course, helping students to think through neoliberalism, privatisation, and student debt emerged from a Euro-American epistemological context. In the opening lectures of the semester, the new South African student movement was historically contextualised in relation to the global wave of anti-privatisation student movements in the 1960s, rather than in relation to the debates and processes around decolonising the university, knowledge production, and indeed broader economic structures in Africa during the 1960s and 1970s. The students thus came to think about the role of the university in South Africa through a discourse and schema which emerged outside of the historical context of the continent. Is it possible to think about higher education in South Africa without engaging with historical examples of post-colonial strategies from the continent, without engaging with the Africanisation/endogenisation debate, or without being familiar with the historical effects of structural adjustment on higher education in Africa? To think the South African university without engaging African traditions of thought, debates on higher education, and the history of the continent more broadly is to reproduce the exceptionalisation and enclaving of scholarship in South Africa.

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Rewind one year to a different classroom, but a similar problematic. This time it is a smaller, seminar style, graduate class held in the newly renovated Anthropology museum. I am an Honours student in a class on socio-cultural theory. The course includes one week of theory from Africa – an extraction from Fanon's *Black Skins, White Masks*. The rest of the curriculum is taken up by Marx, Freud, Weber, Foucault, Gramsci, and Latour. Each week includes three hours of in-depth discussion of one theorist. Ultimately, the objective is to use the theory to help us think through

our mini research projects as anthropologists in training. To analyse the data of projects conducted mostly in South Africa, graduate students could pick from a wide assortment of Western scholars, none of which were Africanists, and Frantz Fanon. When challenged on the Eurocentrism of the curriculum in class, the lecturer contended that there were no other African scholars which could be included in a course on socio-cultural theory. The classroom was pedagogically an open and radical space, the discussion largely student-led, and the lecturer provided supportive and illuminating guidance and commentary. However, the terms of debate were always already set in a Western-centric epistemological tradition, and reproduced the trope that data from Africa can only be properly theorised through Western paradigms of thought. Once again, anthropology at Wits was reproducing a non-endogenous geography of imagination.

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Possibly the key event in the department's 2016 calendar was the formal re-opening of the newly renovated Anthropology Museum. The event included an exhibition by several student artists. The evening event included food and drinks, a live DJ, and a speech by the head of department, Dr Kelly Gillespie. In the speech, Dr Gillespie outlined the problematic which had informed the desire to renovate and reconceptualise the place of the museum in the department in 2013. The speech traced the history of the museum back to the early 20th century, citing the collection of ethnographic material objects begun by Winifred Hoernlé in the Bantu Studies Department. Dr Gillespie suggested that the department was

> confronted with the problem… about what to do with hundreds of objects that were collected through a very dubious period of disciplinary history. A period when both people and the objects that they created across the continent were rendered as ethnographic objects… many [people] in the department felt extremely uncomfortable about how [they] were to perceive these objects, and what kind of relationship [they wanted] to form with these objects, and how on earth [they] were to display them.

(Gillespie 2016, September 17, museum opening speech)

The department invited Talya Lubinsky, an artist who had done previous work on the cataloguing of objects and archives in museums in Johannesburg, to think through the role of the museum, and to curate its reopening. 'If we burn, there is ash', the main exhibit of the reopening constituted a reflection by Lubinsky, in conversation with staff and students in the department, on the politics of ethnographic objects, representation, and the history of colonial anthropology at Wits. In the foyer of the museum, the old cabinets were filled with toilet paper and bottles of Oros to commemorate the role played by the space as a storage room for the 2015 #Feesmustfall movement at Wits. Across the surface of the glass doors of the foyer cabinets the following was printed:

> In 2013 the Department of Anthropology undertook to refurbish the Anthropology Museum not only revamping the architectural design, but also ushering in a new era for reimaging [sic.] the epistemologies of the museum and the Department. The original cabinets of the old Museum still line its walls. / The decision to keep these Victorian-style display cabinets, is a pointed one [sic.]. In conceptualising the possibilities for a new Museum, members of the Department did not want to erase the problematic legacy of the collection and the display thereof. / During the 2015 #FeesMustFall protests at Wits, the student movement used the foyer of the museum as a storeroom for donated supplies and an informal meeting space. The floor was lined with orange bottles of Oros, and the walls with towers of toilet paper. The immediacy and makeshift nature of the space as an ad hoc storeroom threw the anachronous austerity of the empty cabinets into stark recognition. / However, since it's reopening the cabinets have remained empty. Their emptiness contrasts with the lively debate that happens around the large table in the Museum's main room where seminars, tutorials and meetings are held. / These tensions attest to an uneasiness within the department regarding the status of the objects in their collection, collected wince the department's establishment in 1923. The empty cabinets (previously used to display these objects) embody a yet-to-be-answered question; what is to be done with this inherited collection?
>
> (Lubinsky 2016, September 17, museum opening exhibition)

Pictured above: The cabinets in the foyer section of the exhibition 'If we burn, there is ash' by Talya Lubinsky, 2016. Photos taken by Anjuli Webster.

In the seminar room the cabinets were filled, on the one side, with piles of ash, and on the other with cement castes of bowels which were a part of the old ethnographic collection housed in the Wits Art Museum. Across the glass doors of the cabinets were printed quotes reflecting on fire from various sources, including C. L. R James' *The Black Jacobins* (1963), K. R. Chance's "Where there is fire, there is politics": Ungovernability and Material Life in Urban South Africa" (2015), unpublished poetry by Sarah Godsell (2016), and a memorandum by the Wits Registrar on the fire in the main university building in 1931. Reflecting on the exhibition, Gillespie said that

> In the end, what [Lubinsky] has presented us with is, I think, an incredibly powerful, distilled proposition around fire, remains, and the possibilities of building… On the one hand piles of ash, and on the other hand cement castes of bowls that are in our collection, what we see firstly is that in opening our collection, she hasn't used one single object in our collection, which is an interesting choice. And secondly, she's made a defence of the potential of fire. I think in this moment of the political history of our universities, this is a very bold and very brave both political and aesthetic choice. And one which forces us to confront the extremely real politics of universities…[the exhibition] calls out a fundamental question about the relationship between destruction

> and creating. And I think this relationship between burning and building… is probably our most difficult, most unyielding, and fundamental contemporary question…'
>
> (Gillespie 2016, September 17, museum opening speech)

Probably the most important moment of the museum re-opening, however, was a disruption by three #FeesMustFall activists after Gillespie's speech. Several critical questions were posed to the department, and all those involved in putting the exhibition together, as well as the attendees of the event. Primary among these problematics was the role of 'white bodies' in curating the space, and the politics and ethics of representation. The activists contended that the #FeesMustFall movement was rendered as spectacle with Oros and toilet paper. The spectacle, however, was capitalised upon by the department and the curator, whose academic projects were furthered by the apparent progressive agenda of the project. Ultimately, the contention was that the exhibition constituted a reproduction of the colonial power/knowledge system in that it materialised the trope of the white curator/scholar as a theorist who rationalises and theorises the irrational, in this case the #FeesMustFall movement, a politically black movement.

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The disruption of the museum opening and the problems which emerged in the previous two vignettes are related in important ways. The problem of the first two vignettes is located in curricula – in the centrality of a western-centric episteme to contemporary anthropological praxis. In the third vignette, this problem is brought into the space and work of the department itself. We begin to see the unintended manifestation of the larger discursive field of anthropology (Trouillot 2003) in the academic politics of the Wits department. Trouillot suggests that academic disciplines 'continuously expand, restrict, or modify in diverse ways their distinctive arsenal of tropes' (8). 'Changes in the types of statements produced as "acceptable" within a discipline… do not necessarily modify the larger field of operation, and especially the enunciative context of that

discipline' (8). In other words, the language in which anthropology expresses itself may change radically while its tongue remains the same.

The problem of the tabula rasa

The current department at Wits is seemingly in a liminal phase. When asked about how they conceive of the current moment in the department, staff would mostly say something along the lines of 'it's in the making,' or 'we've yet to see what will happen'. The idea is that the department is in a moment of radical rupture, and on the verge of a major turn in thinking and practice. The rupture is the result of several major shifts that have taken place over the past five years. The first is an almost complete changeover of staff. The old guard, characterised by the tension between two older 'big-men' anthropologists, Robert Thornton and David Coplan, who determined the terms of debate of anthropology at Wits since the 90s, has been progressively dethroned, and the current department is young and 'diverse'. Changes in the staffing of the department has led to changes in courses and curricula. The second is the 2013 renovation of the anthropology museum, which is a key space in the daily functioning of the department. These factors have combined to produce the idea of a kind of *tabula rasa* for the department - a fresh start, a break away from a problematic past, an empty shell to fill with new ideas and praxis. The third is the broader political context of the new South African student movement, which has opened various spaces within the university which are being used to push and interrogate disciplinary projects, and the politics of knowledge production in particular departments. The anthropology department has certainly been one of these spaces, and has made room for and accommodated some important disruptions and debates. To complicate the matter further, there is no definitive 'location' or 'identity' of anthropology at Wits. Rather, there are different classrooms and curricula of anthropology,

contending ideas, and regular debate and disagreement at departmental seminars, meetings, proposal presentations and events.

The problem of the current moment, however, is located in the idea of a *tabula rasa*; the idea of the possibility of a clean break with the enunciative context of anthropology (Trouillot 2003). While the debate on the future of anthropology at Wits is certainly not anti-historical, there is a sentiment that the current department is already somehow different from the past of anthropological praxis at the university simply by virtue of the passage of time and changing debates within the discipline. The idea that change and long-term continuity are compatible (Feierman 1990) does not inform the reflexive project at Wits. According to anthropologist/historian Steven Feierman, the challenge of historical analysis is 'to create a method and a form of ethnographic description which can capture… categories as both continuous and in transformation… actors as *both creating new language and speaking inherited words, all at the same time'* (Feierman 1990: 13, emphasis added). In this way, it is possible to trace continuities in discourse 'without tying each moment in the formation of discourse mechanically to the immediate narrow interests of the intellectuals' (21-22). The third vignette of this chapter describes a moment in which the anthropology department was creating a seemingly radical new language which condemned 'classical' anthropological tropes, but which was speaking an inherited tongue at the very same time. The inherited tongue is not attributable to the work of a particular figure in the department, but is rather the manifestation of an underlying structural problem, both within South African society, and anthropology as a discipline.

The underlying structural problem is also clear in the continued dominance of Euro-American theory in curricula and the sustained concern with black alterity as anthropology's subject. According to Trouillot, the condemnation of anthropological tropes does not constitute a

reflexive anthropology. A reflexive anthropology requires the reappraisal of the *longue durée* of anthropology and the 'savage slot' (2003: 9), a reappraisal which must include meaningful engagement with the place of the present in that *longue durée*. In the case of Wits and South African anthropology, this reappraisal must consider the question of conquest and white supremacy. Which conceptual tools and lines of inquiry are required for the reappraisal of the discipline and the development of 'a praxis of critique and of radical ethnography' (Pierre 2013: 5) is a question which must be left open to debate.

Conclusion

The exigency of conquest; the possibility of endogeneity

Where do the pasts of anthropology lead us to in the present? They might not lead us to any certainty about the possibility or the future of anthropology, but they have unveiled historical resonances, and highlighted the impression and edges of the silenced afterlife of conquest. As scholars, we are faced with the exigency of recognizing the mutability of conquest, of unearthing its silences, and grasping its rearticulation in the colonial present. This requires that we constantly locate and position ourselves in relation to the 'ongoing imperative of decolonization' (Vimalassery et al., 2016).

In this thesis, I have attempted to shade parts of the spectre as it manifests in anthropology at Wits. The university is intended to be a space for the pursuit of truth. A space in which we can critically know ourselves, and our relation to the world and its history. Yet the pasts of anthropology at Wits divulge the university as a space of mystification and unknowing in the service of white supremacy. A space of anti-justice. How do we work within this space, to challenge and push the boundaries of colonial unknowing? One tactic is through archaeology and deconstruction. By tracing the apparent shifts and ruptures in anthropological praxis historically, it is possible to see and think the ways in which conquest has been and continues to be silenced. The parochialism of critique in South African anthropology, the boundedness of its internalities and electoral politics (Trouillot 2003) articulate a politics of apology and redemption, which secures and enclaves the academic discipline from an already existing worldly critique. Colonial unknowing and epistemologies of ignorance (Mills 2007) continue to establish evidence, proof, and possibility, to secure 'the terms of reason and reasonableness', to disavow the

contemporariness of colonialism which, at the same time, and as historical fact, 'assumes an irrefutability that forecloses possibilities for futures otherwise' (Vimalassery et al. 2016).

Deconstruction is a necessary and important first step. Anthropology must be read alongside the projects of racist rule and epistemic violence of which it was an essential part. However, it is not the only tool or horizon available to us. There is also important constructive work to be done towards imagining and practicing the possibilities of an endogenous anthropology. In Volume I of Unesco's *General History of Africa* (1981), Joseph Ki-Zerbo suggests that particular parts and traditions of anthropological praxis will be important for the future of social science scholarship in Africa. He suggests that 'by using the intellectual tools proper to the human sciences in general, and adapting them to Africa, objective results may be achieved' (15). He goes on to propose that this will eliminate the

> faulty approaches based either on a supposed material and congenital difference between 'natives' and others, or on the idea that the former occupy a primitive stage on the path of civilization. All that is necessary is to admit that while the 'being' of Africans is the same - that of Homo sapiens - their 'being-in-the-world' is different. Once this is done, new instruments can be developed with which to apprehend their particular evolution.
>
> (Ki-Zerbo 1981: 15)

It falls to all scholars, African or Africanist, to listen to elders and engage the literature on endogenising knowledge in Africa. Perhaps a first step is to follow Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba in his foray into understanding historical knowledge (1986). He offers the tools to read knowledge as historical and social construct, built on three interrelated bases – epistemological, methodological, and sociological. The effect of each of these bases on the production of knowledge need to be considered in turn, and then in relation to each other. Participant observation has long been anthropology's claim to fame, its method of reading and representing 'indigenous' ways of

knowing and being. What does it mean if knowledge is constructed through a methodological 'indigeneity', rather than an epistemologically and sociologically indigenous base, as is often the case with anthropology in South Africa? Surely this is the realm of the savage slot?

Perhaps a second step is to follow Paulin Hountondji's work on epistemic extraversion and endogenisation in Africa (1990; 1995; 2009). To move away from the historical project of the study of Africa as one 'initiated and controlled by the West', Hountondji suggests 'an active, lucid, responsible appropriation by African societies themselves of the knowledge capitalized over centuries about them' (2009: 1). This project requires the death of extraversion, or orientation towards theories from the Euro-American academy[22]. The final goal of this project is 'an autonomous, self-reliant process of knowledge production and capitalization that enables [Africans] to answer [their] own questions and meet both the intellectual and the material needs of African societies. The first step in this direction would probably be to formulate original "problematics," original sets of problems that are grounded in a solid appropriation of the international intellectual legacy and deeply rooted in the African experience' (9).

If we take seriously Hountondji's call to endogenisation, settler or Africanist scholarship in Africa realises an ethical and political problem which needs to mainstreamed. While white/settler/Africanist scholars have an ethical obligation to work against epistemic extraversion, they simultaneously have an ethical obligation to not be involved in the project of imagining endogenous knowledge production in Africa. In many ways, Hountondji's call echoes Biko's for

[22] For example, the Socio-Cultural Theory course offered by the Department of Social Anthropology at Wits, which includes the work of Fanon as an exotic option on the menu of Western scholars and theory has no place in an African institution. Rather, it should be Marx, Freud, Durkheim, Latour, etc., who might be included as an exotic option on a menu of African scholars and theory, in which even Fanon would be relegated to the margins as a thinker rooted in a European episteme.

self-determination and struggle by those who are politically black, and for whites to do the work of addressing white racism. As a settler scholar and Africanist, I cannot take up the mantle of imagining or practicing an endogenous anthropology. This is the political and intellectual project of African scholars. It is the project of settler scholars to insist on tracing and naming the forms of colonial unknowing and epistemologies of ignorance which continue to shape intellectual projects in the colonial present. The power of white scholars in the South African academy highlights the necessity to mainstream this ethical and intellectual problem. Until the intellectual and political exigency of conquest, and the possibility of endogeneity are opened into the South African academy, forms of colonial unknowing and epistemologies of ignorance will continue.

Here, at the end, I offer no conclusive statement or final analysis. Only the possibility located in the productive tension between the exhumation of conquest and white supremacy, and the project of imagining and practising an endogenous anthropological praxis.

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