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Either/or in Black (an Ethic from Sorrow)

Gabriel Morokoe Letswalo

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts by Research in Sociology

(For Sheppard)

Declaration:

This dissertation is *my work (unaided)*. I submit it for the degree of Master of Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I have not submitted it for any other degree or examination in any other University.

Gabriel Morokoe Letswalo

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Pre-sentiment

> *And herein lies the tragedy of the age: not that men are poor,—all men know something of poverty; not that men are wicked,—who is good? Not that men are ignorant,—what is Truth? Nay, but that men know so little of men* (Du Bois, 2007:118)

> *The struggle for life in South Africa is so grim that I could scarcely remember whether I owe you a letter or the way around...* (Plaatje, 1996:367).

Perhaps life in South Africa is grim, unbearable – owing to our faint speech, the South African difficulty of assigning life-death processes a proper name. Properly speaking: reading a grim life seems an effort of fear and trembling, the tragic fear of knowing, of naming the present South Africa. It is the fear of tracing the becoming of blackness. This tracing requires a reading of South Africa in its immediacy, its immediate relation to a multitude of blacks, the living or the dead. And it matters little whether the black lives to die in sleep a 'quite death', or badly dies of disease or at the hand of the state machine. Less significant if he/she lives-to-die at the hand a *fellow 'South African'*: death by knife, by gun, by poison, by psychic/physical hunger. The present may well be an endless chain of onto-historical 'misfortunes'….

My immediate concern is what happens when misfortune in the present becomes an object of political commentary, becomes thinkable through a *democratic* dis-order of South African occurrences, for instance. What happens when the *present* misfortune is a means of *representation*, representing South Africa's immediate past: 'apartheid'? What should it matter that the apartheid past, for a Nostalgic Native for example, is a mix bag of sociological this or that (spectacular or ordinary black suffering)? So that it seems inappropriate to discourage a "*nostalgic native"* (say, the suffering or disappointed *black in the present) to* reflect fondly on the 'fact' that blacks in the apartheid *past* suffered not in "the same way" (Dlamini, 2009:18). Such reflections, says a commentator, is "a reflective contemplation on the ordinary humanity" of black South Africans under apartheid (Jones, 2014:114). It is an index of yearning for an "order in an uncertain world" and, by extension, not a prop of apartheid (14).

Still: should a Nostalgic Native engage in tautologies (*blacks* experience life *differently*)? Should the native draw a balance sheet of pain, so he can remedy the so called 'master narrative' of black homogenous suffering? Inversion of terms – heterogeneity against homogeneity of experiences – gets us nowhere. The Nostalgic Native's reflections seem an occasion for conceptual trial and error, a trial which always is an error, since the 'emerging concept' (nostalgia) expresses a will-to-sophisticated-empiricism (or psychologism), a case of epistemic incoherence.

Another way of thinking the present misfortune is through the scandal of black murmuring. "When asked at the TRC what they wanted from their enemies", writes Ato Quayson, "many of the victims of apartheid violence responded that all they required was knowledge (about lost ones, about the causes of the violence, about why the perpetrators of violence failed to recognize them as human, etc.). What they asked for was not the reason but the rationale. They sought to look beyond the appearance that masks itself as truth. The essential point, however, is that tragic events of apartheid cannot ever be understood in terms of reason; they are completely unreasonable" (2003:94).

Perhaps the victim of apartheid only wished to know the causes of violence, a rational, the perpetrator's subjective determination of the causes of his/her sorrow. "When these people [the victims] interrogate the past, they are doing this not solely for its own sake but for how this interrogation might help them exist in the present". And yet: to say "the tragic events of apartheid cannot ever be understood in terms of reason; they are completely unreasonable" seems (if I am reading Quayson correctly) unreasoned. In Quayson lies a hermeneutic of obscurantism, put another way: the crisis of explanation, of the hesitance (or incapacity perhaps) to trace, to account for the coming of the black in South Africa.

So: searching for reasons for the causes (of rationales) of apartheid ought to be our point of departure, since a departure from anywhere else is a *slippery slope* to (mis)apprehend the present (the national/the black's misfortune), to misread the black in a *democratic* dis-order. It is a slippery slope to evaluate blackness through a South African democracy, say, as if blackness and democracy (the supposed space of 'race/class/sex/gender' articulation) are necessarily commensurable categories of interpretation. A slippery slope leading to obscure

calls for negative political projects (the dissolution of a 'raced society' or the emergence of the non-racial fraternity)[1].

Consider, in passing, the seriousness of Ivor Chipkin's commentary, its anxious plea for the ideal of non-racial fraternity – the moment of mutual accountability (the site of "ethical values"), of self-responsibility. On this plea, the black ought to forget Pan Africanism or Negritude, and follow Fanon's version of nationalism instead, "the dissolution of blackness", of a 'national subjectivity' (a determination and an expression of Black Nationalism). Chipkin's Fanonian beings ought to become "South African merely by choosing to be so" – in the same way that Fanon (at one point, for Chipkin) willed and chose "to be Algerian" (Chipkin, 2007:60)[2].

If Chipkin on Fanon (his becoming Algerian by 'will' alone) is correct, if it is true that Fanon's nationalism is "dissolution of blackness", did Fanon in Algeria manage to dissolve his blackness? What, really, will it take to dissolve one's blackness? Chipkin's black is quite remarkable (a miraculous figure), since this black (the national subject) could at night (of the revolution) drag him/herself to bed and in the morning wake up a not-black (a happy South African), simply because the black chooses so. A further point of concern and most crucial: Chipkin's conflation of national subjectivity and becoming national (blackness itself for our purposes). The former, I make a distinction, is an ideological determination (expressive of Black Nationalism, as Chipkin correctly sees it), *perhaps* a determination of imminent disappointment, of *failure* – a "dead end" (supposing nationalism is movement). The latter emerges beside nationalism (the latter is at once in and outside nationalism, the very condition of blackness itself). So that these two processes (becoming national vs. becoming a national subject) are commensurable in some way. Commensurable, jointly *necessary* for thinking– as I intend in the following pages – the significance of becoming black and of living ethically.

[1] Whether (and in what way) race and the state of affairs it represents are merely a moment in *historical time (*and thus a mere moment to bloat off the South African historical time) depends on the *paradigm* of conception. For instance, a scienticism of race may prefer to usher in a South African non-racial era (by way of transforming racists), since to be racialist (and racist) is according to this scientism a labour of essentialism, the irrational (as if the fault lies with the individual racist). This scientism forgets another side of the story: blackness itself is an onto-political (*social) fact*, exceeds the mere individual racist.

[2] Now, Chipkin would do well if he interrogates Fanon's readily available work (he merely relies on a few quotes from Fanon's biographer, David Macey). His failure to do so is quite exasperating...

Here, then, emerges my key concern: how is the *ethical-in-black* thinkable? Here begins our negativity: anti-empiricism, our attitude, our method: a phenome-national reading of life-in-black, the bracketing of nationalist talk/*behaviour (*though this talk/behaviour is the very condition of apprehending the national, the black as such). Anti-empiricism: peering through the window, a look into the nature of evil. Evil: the object of contemplation, for blacks. This is a method of rounding the "Problem" of problems (Du Bois)/the problem of blackness (and not so much the black problems themselves: hunger or 'criminality', for instance), the event of objective sorrow, a perpetual struggle against the definitive evil. Peering through the window is akin to listening to gypsy music, the gypsy that always (in Husserl's contemptuous talk) hovers the European landscape, albeit outside its Time – since Europe is a spirit and not a geographical space per se (Husserl,1965:160). A look into the nature of evil is, of course, a teeter on Husserlian temperament[3]: it is a search for the national (the black) time, I suggest – a search through the rubble, the national landscape and its artefact, a wounded 'animal-man'. A look into the nature of evil enfolds thinking the (non)significance of the national, the 'animal-man' (the fact of the black angst before the Supreme Court of European time), the (non)significance of the national alongside the animal-man.

But a look through the window of evil is smell of the rotten, the re-emerging colony: the Union of South Africa. Anti-empiricism is a method of the dramatic (is not the problem of problems, after all, the site of the blackness a site of drama), of the tragic ending, the method against the "tragedy of the age: not that men are poor,—all men know something of poverty; not that men are wicked,—who is good? Not that men are ignorant,—what is Truth? Nay, but that men know so little of men" (Du Bois, 2007:138). So that anti-empiricism, perhaps to reiterate in different words, is anti Grand Theory, grand Truths and Grand Goodness, in a related way that C.Wright Mills's sociology self-constitutes. Social theory is a calling for me, following Mills – a calling I wish to reject outright, unless it permits for play: a kind of a hyperbolic dis-play: dancing on my head (in the manner of Marx's dancing tables in *Capital*). Dancing on my head, since Blackness is a diss-play, a sign "below the line", beneath the social[4].

[3] Torres's 'de-colonial reduction' moves in a similar fashion: it is a type of meta-phenomenological measure, says Gordon, a measure making transparent a phenomenological critique of phenomenology itself (See Gordon, 2011).

[4] Of course, a sociologist could try hard to apprehend black life, albeit unsatisfactorily. Bozzoli (1991), for example, goes as far as imputing agency to black *Women of Phokeng*'s consciousnesses, at the same instant

The dance is a "case of blackness" in black studies, Fred Moten's "black optics…an auditory affair: a night vision given in and through voices that shadow legitimate discourse from below, breaking its ground up into broken air…" (2008:1473). The dance marks a daily ritual (through a night-by-night vigil) in the white Light, the moment and the possibility of black poesies through an analectic attitude[5]: apprehendingly listening to a black time: story (oral or writerly) here, a myth and fable there, an old Marabi shout everywhere. Apprehedingly doing ethics in politics, aesthetically.

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Shireen Alley, you took great care of me and my work. I am grateful. Bhekisizwe Peterson, your wisdom is noteworthy (there are too many fools in the 'University').

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distancing herself from 'pure' phenomenological enquiry of these lives. She remains within the phenomenological purview, though – only to defend black intentionality (a condition of the possibility of self-knowledge). Still, I fail to understand why *Women of Phokeng* elides any reading of, say, Du Bois, Fanon or Manganyi or any 'well-meaning' scholar of black life, a scholar whose work borders on a phenomenological enquiry of blackness. I do not suggest we appropriate phenomenological enquiries with a happy conscience. For what would Husserl's phenomenological reduction (anti-empiricism, the bracketing of the empirical for the sake of understanding the truth of being of things and consciousness in its confrontation with things in the world) mean in sociological terms? What would Husserl's phenomenology mean if blackness lives outside the social?

[5] I propose an analectic reading (see Dussel, 1988) of blackness. An analectic logic (a cross interrogation of *seemingly* unrelated notions/ideas) makes possible apprehending the coming of 'black poesy' alongside the truth-in-black.

On Friendship

A way of thinking the ethical-in-black is through the problem of the (im) possibility of Friendship. Friendship, put differently, is possibly an infinite, indeterminate event, a process. Not all hope is lost, though. We may think friendship alongside the possible goodness/evil-ness of the nation form[6]. Benedict Anderson considers the possible goodness of 'democratic' South Africa, for instance. The goodness of South Africa, insists Anderson (2011:113), is quite possible, since in it move worthy ancestors, since in it lives the innocence of the future. The possible goodness of the nation form in Anderson entails an articulation of memories, *the memory* of the national dead (the treasured heroes) on the one pole, and the memory for the national unborn on another. In this articulation Anderson perceives the sign of the present, an incomplete now, fresh and stale at the same instant. The present, in Anderson, is an object of concern for the living, a bridge into the innocence of the future.

The living in Anderson, then, ought to defend (and self-efface for) the innocence of the unborn: "for between us and the unborn there is a central difference". The unborn: nothing like us or the people many of us dislike, the "die-hard racists, super-violent *tsotsis*, merciless corporate bosses, corrupt politicians". The unborn: those for whom we (in the present) should sacrifice our *immediate* interests, since (implies Anderson) to leave the unborn to their devices is a labour of evil (a fragmentation of a future). The innocence of the future is the basis for national unity, on Anderson's account, despite the possibility that we "imagine among them [the innocent] descendants of those" we currently despise (Anderson, 2011:113; See Renan, 1996).

If Anderson broaches the articulation of future and past, he is a sign-post to his text, *Imagined Communities*. Anderson there has us read in the notion of time a national category, has us read in time a constitutive of the emergence of Euro nation-ness (national consciousness). For instance: the emergence of a German nation-ness is, he would say through Walter Benjamin, a determination of "homogenous, empty time", in which members (the nationals) of the

[6] Manu Goswami, in her reading of Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, makes a case for thinking nationalism through the modern nation form as a 'social form', "at once universal and particular, objective and subjective" (2002:785). The dual nature of the nation form allows Goswami to read nationalisms as structural-historical determinations and as determinations of consciousness. More, she pays "attention on the global articulation of the nation as a social form rather than the particularistic content of specific nationalist movements" (785). If Goswami is correct, I wish (as I propose in this dissertation) to think the nation form and becoming a national independently of any nationalism. Put negatively, becoming national and nationalism are not the same thing, though the former constitutes a possibility of the latter.

would-be German nation inter-relate 'transversely', 'cross-timeously', "marked by…temporal coincidence, and measured by clock". A time in which, what is the same thing, the unfolding of social events is simultaneous rather than contiguous (a case sequence of past, present and future). In this time all German drama (the becoming of a nation) occurs as though in a rudimentary novel, in which the reader and the reader alone is god-like (omniscient), in which the reader alone knows and sees in its entirety the unfolding of a plot[7].

That time constitutes nation-ness probably is saying the obvious – Anderson is aware of this, I hope. Time as a form of consciousness is a longstanding problematic in the history of metaphysics[8], and the history of metaphysics is beyond the scope of my concerns here. More useful, though, is Anderson's notion of time as a national category when we read it alongside the idea of an archive, the national uses of it (the archive) in forgetting and remembering the past, the future and the present. An archive – its contents, in Stoler's words – is not just a collection of stories in history, but rather "active, *generative* substances with *histories*", and much like ghosts they have "*itineraries* of their own" (2010:2). We see in an archive a quasi-substance, a kind of monad of a nation form – a monad if, however transient or transformable the archive seems, remains imperishable.

Though imperishable, archives are contentious, of course. The South African archive remains for instance an over-determination of 'coloniality', since ways of thinking the past in the present, ways of thinking the innocence of the future now already *subtends* the colonial episteme[9] (See Lalu, 2009). At stake in reading an imperishable, albeit an epistemically indeterminate, archive is the seeming dialectic of corrupt and incorruptible accounts of the past. This dialectic informs, Anderson may well say, how *the living* live through the nation-form. So that if nation time (an ethical intuition) is a *good or evil*, the nation form is determination of ethics[10]. In turn the nation form regulates meanings of the 'goodness' of forgetting or remembering the past, the present and the future. The nation form informs what

[7] Goswami critiques and clarifies Anderson's appropriation of Banjamin's notion of homogenous, empty time. At stake here is the notion of progress in capitalist/oppressive relations of production. For Goswami, Benjamin is concerned with historical development as dialectical (riddled with tension), so that Anderson ought to see the emergence of the modular nation form as also dialectical in real terms

[8] Time as form structures the possibility of subject-object dialectic, the possibility of knowledge of the world.

[9] In *The Deaths of Hintsa,* Premesh Lalu shows how readings of the black past in the present border on a false start – in the measure that one always confronts or is a product of a colonial archive.

[10] To the extent that the nation form structures, as Goswami (2002:785) has it, "collective identity" and political aspirations, Goswami will agree to think this form as national-temporally determined (determined through the coming of nationals); a form national-temporally determined, where national time is, I will add, an ethical intuition. This is to say a nation form is an ethical form, a determination of ethics.

aspect of the past is worth remembering or repressing, and even disavowing, for the sake of the nation present and its possible discontents.

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Remembering the past is the mode of South African public deliberations, unsurprisingly. South Africans in general can choose what to remember of the past to ensure in the present the goodness of "reconciliation, development and social cohesion" (See Hamilton, 2011:119). South Africans can choose what to remember of the past to realise the innocence of the future. Hence Anderson will have us recall a South African ritual, the 1999 commemoration of a past, the commemoration of the 'South African war' to be precise. We ought to take seriously Thabo Mbeki's participation in this commemoration, suggests Anderson. In Anderson Mbeki is aware of South Africa's incomplete past. Mbeki knows of the past that often erects "hatred and rage" and all passions that are antithetical to the innocence of the future (Mbeki, 1999:1). Hence the necessity "to contain the destructive force of these *passions*", for Mbeki. South Africans, on Mbeki's account, "took the collective decision that we will manage all our pains by admitting the wrongs we had done [and] would acknowledge that the wrongs we had done were wrongs" (Mbeki, 1999:1).

Mbeki parades the vital pronoun 'we', invaluable for the coming or a possibility of 'friendship', of 'human solidarity'. Invaluable in the coming of friendship "with HRH the Duke of Kent, as well as representatives of the Governments of the United Kingdom and other countries that supplied some of the fighting forces of the British Empire". 'We' is friendship, reconciliation with the world. Friendship in the midst of all, "the lingering pain some of us might still bear", the memory of "a terrible *conflict* in which many perished". The coming *friendship (which is now)* is "born of mutual respect and a common adherence to the vision of *freedom* and *human* dignity for all" (Mbeki, 1999:1).

Is Mbeki simply shrewd (a politician doing what is necessary to achieve nationalist goals), repressing the irrepressible (disavowing 'a past' as such)? Anderson says nothing on this score. Save to see in Mbeki's extension of *friendship to the world* "a time in the future (two generations?) when even apartheid will be remembered as a 'national tragedy', which must be *simultaneously* remembered and forgotten by all South Africans" (Anderson, 2011:113). Anderson may well be reading Ernest Renan, that "the essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common and also that they have forgotten many things" (1996:3). In Mbeki, for Anderson, friendship (of) with the world is a case of "concord", in

Aristotle's terms, a sphere of "common interest and what is important for life" (1962:257). Friendship, implies Anderson, is a necessary, *mediate* position (median value) towards responsibility for the innocence of the future.

Whether Mbeki's gesture of friendship with the world is a play of politics need not over-burden us. Still, we ought to consider vigorously the ideal of friendship, quite vigorously when friendship is begotten of "common adherence to" a notion (or idea) of *freedom.* The ideal of friendship must, of course, provoke the age-old problematic of who and what has capacity for friendship. Is it the human that has capacity for friendship? What about the animal?' Could it be that a way of thinking friendship is an interrogation of human-animal relations? Perhaps becoming a national is another way of reading oneself alongside the animal. The ritual of animal sacrifice anchors after all the very possibility of humans having, consecrating the innocence of a shared future. The trick of course is what constitutes the 'idea' of an animal or a human being and, by implication, what/which animal is worth sacrificing or preserving. At issue is what constitutes human-animal relations, what constitutes in Foucault's parlance the significance of reason, of 'life', 'labour' and 'language' (Foucault, 1970). Supposing humans have the capacity for reason (life, labour and language), this capacity may well become an index for reading the human-animal complex.

This complex (the constitution of the human-animal complex), suffice it to say, is a motif in the dramatic emergence of the white settler in seventeenth century South Africa. It is a settler's rallying point of debate, the measure of natives resembling animals against humans. In the first instance, then, the settler-native 'relation' is an expression of a subject-object dialectic – the subject determining the object (the native), or the subject becoming a determination of the object – in which determining an object may express a will or desire to know it – or, in Nietzsche's phrase, a "will to power" (Nietzsche, 1968). What, then, does determining an object or a subject in a settler colony entail? What does it entail when we wish to understand the nature of human-animal 'relation'? Can we, following Quayson, say the terror of colonial violence "counts for both the perpetrators as well as the victims of violence because there is a sense in which the perpetrators were themselves pawning *their humanity* on behalf of the then dominant order?" I name and interrogate the conditions of subject-object determinations' possibility. Interrogate and determine whether these conditions are epistemic or politico-economic and so on. Determine how these conditions ought to inform our readings of a human-animal complex in a colonial situation.

My concern, properly speaking, is a formal elaboration on the object (the native-cum-black), through Marx's commodity-form in *Capital*. I read in the black a kind of commodity, whose life-form (time as such) in the Union is an index and a determination of white (the Subject's) labour time. This labour time is indefinite, I contend, and thus occasions in blackness (the coming of the slavery, the colony, apartheid, and post-apartheid) a place of/for sorrow. The Union black is in anguish[11], in short, and must choose either to "shout-hoarse" or remain silent. He could confront the terror of Union (white labour) time, to the point of death – failing which his/her confrontational efforts betray mere sublation (the simultaneous destruction and preservation) of this terror. The place of sorrow is quite ineffable, though an expressive line of critique of vulgar (white) humanism. The place of sorrow expresses what I call the longing for an ethical-in-black.

***

How is the ethical-in-black thinkable, though? And where is the place of morality in this thinking? The ethics/morality matrix is traceable in western Philosophy, say by way of Hegel. We may locate a similar matrix in liberation philosophy (and theology), through Enrique Dussel, from whom I benefit more. Dussel reads in morality a moment of the contingent, the arbitrary (the merely functional), a mere determination of the social. "By ethics ("the ethical, and so on – of Greek derivation", on the other hand, he "denote[s] the future order of liberation, the demands of justice with respect to the poor, the oppressed and their project of salvation" ((1985:28). Right/Good or Wrong/Evil, on this account, betrays the balance of un/just forces (bourgeoisie against the poor in the case of bourgeois sociality). Goodness (holiness) is a determination of the Godhead, expressive of the poor, their struggle against the "praxis of domination" (18). Evil on the other hand is originary sacrilege, the moment of envy, the event of spilling the blood of a brother, the manner of Cain spilling the blood of Abel in the Hebrew Bible. Evil is the "praxis of domination", the production of death), and marks the being of the "prince of this world".

***

Evil is the place of the political in the Union of South Africa. The Union black sees in the Union a *form* of evil, through which the Union becomes the realisation of the white Godhead, for whom the native is the mark of sin. Evil, for the Union black, loses its ethical

[11] See Mudimbe (1994)

purchase, mutates into the realm of the political. What is goodness, though, for the Union black? Justifiably, the Union black – I contend – could suspend the category of goodness itself, since goodness is conceptually unfruitful (evil cannot determine goodness), so that life-in-black in the Union becomes a non-object of mere *ethical* evaluations. Blackness in the present (in the Union) is beyond goodness as such. The ethical in the present is a question of the political, is an object of his/her longing, the possibility of (the struggle against) political evil. The Union black does not do way with ethics, however. Ethics is a space of deliberation, of speech, of soul elaboration, possible by way of the black (the national), the measure of moral (rational) instinct. Morality, for our purposes (we depart from Dussel), is pre-discursive. Union black is a meta-ethicist, a moral critic of the ethical.

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I return to the problem of human-animal relation, alongside natives becoming black/national. Becoming national is partly-unthinkable outside the notion of publicness[12]. Consider Anton Lembede in the 1940s, for instance. Lembede 'shouts' at the white world (the Union of South Africa), publicly disbelieving a possible realisation of universal brotherhood in a colonial time. Lembede demands freedom in his 'life time'. Or, in what is a related thing, Lembede demands the beginning of meat eating (the radicalisation of anti-vegetarianism) in the Union', a critique of mere bone-eating if he is not dog (Lembede in Edgar and Msumza, 1996:100). I single out Lembede for one reason. Possibly, he is near-a perfect exemplar of 'black shouting' (black public/political voice) in the Union of South Africa in the first half of the twentieth century. He emerges at the cusp of the so called elite nativism (African nationalism) in the colonised world. So that to think Lembede's political thought (my key concern in *In the colony (Either/or*)) is in some ways akin to evaluating native nationalist thought, its significance on my reading a human-animal relation in a colonial situation.

Now: often, post-colonial evaluations of 'elite' nativism are a case of thinking missionary-educated 'natives', their angst under colonial conditions. A case of a crisis in 'native' self expression, the crisis of expressing natives' political aspirations (yearning for 'freedom' and so forth) (See Spivak, 2012; Lazarus, 1999); a case of whether elite natives have the people's best interest at heart, or whether we should see in native 'elite' politics a reproduction of colonial relations of power, namely the re-creation of bourgeois social formation. So, in the

[12] The notion of publicness should for our purposes here presuppose an open expression of a people's political interests in a socio-political formation.

immediate I have no intention of simply subjecting Lembede to this question (whether or not he reproduces colonial relations of power), important though the question may be. Rather, I will tarry with Lembede's notion of 'freedom in our life time' and read in his meat-eating metaphor a critique of a white union orgy (a festivity of having the native, the animal-man, for an object of sacrifice). Lembede's meat-eating (sorcery) is endless, if the Union orgy continues ad infinitum. In fact, the orgy would continue: for if the orgy abates, "its demise will not be credited only to the account of moral standards -- because moral stan-dards should not count or keep accounts, to be sure, but also because, on the scale which is that of a worldwide computer, the law of the mar-ketplace will have imposed another standard of calculation" (Derrida, 1985:296). Lembede's sorcery, I argue, is revenge against white ethics, Utilitarianism (the doctrine of usefulness, the use of the black skin, a basis for the production of greatest amount of happiness in the world). Lembede's revenge (meat-eating), of course, betrays in the Union black a possible moment of blood-spilling, of sacrificing animals in the Union. A non-vegetarian moment, what is more, of sacrificing oneself for one's freedom, for one's brothers. These acts of sacrifice could index the Union black's struggle against political evil (the praxis of white self-justification). And yet this struggle is neither a measure of ethical good nor evil (Lembede in Edgar and Msumza, 1996).

I am interested in the significance of Lembede's meat-eating metaphor when we read it alongside the blacks/ethics matrix[13]. The native becoming national regulates my thinking of this matrix in politics. So that blacks do ethics if these ethics articulate, *inter-alia*, a friendship-freedom axis. Let us return to Mbeki: *Friendship is* "born of mutual respect and a common adherence to the vision of *freedom* and *human* dignity for all" (1999:1). Thinking friendship constitutes, in a phrase, a hermeneutic of freedom. Since at a basic level friendship is "sharing" (despairing: remembering and hoping for) "all in common", reading a blacks-ethics matrix – we should say – is interrogating the notion of the 'common' (the idea of publicness), its articulation of freedom.

A concrete path of thinking the freedom-friendship complex is reading a black auto-biography, life-in-black in the Union of South Africa. Peter Abrahams's *Tell Freedom* merits a mention. If Lembede wants freedom (to eat meat) in his life time, Abrahams *longs* to tell and taste freedom – as if it were here and not there, beyond the horizon. Abrahams indexes his '*long* walk to freedom', the scale of his friendship – the possibility of friendship with

[13] Ethics, I reiterate, is what blacks do, while the ethical-in-black is an expression of longing.

blacks or whites (Abrahams, 1954). If, put differently, longing for friendship (living in the common) is a moral determination, a qualitative measure of friendship and its (im)possibility becomes necessary in our reading of the blacks-ethics matrix. I outline in *The Violence on Love* the (im)possible types of friendships in a colonial situation, a way to specify how becoming black (national) is an index of longing for the ethical, a way to show the conditions of possibility of blacks doing ethics.

Longing, of course, is a labour of soul-styling. So that thinking a national is at once an aesthetic practice. Becoming national may well be an aesthetic determination, then. At once we must ask how longing articulates the possible beauty of or sublime nature of voice or black speech (black shouting), and how soul-styling is possibly vehicular, a source-courier of shouting itself. What of silence, though? In a black shout (in Peter Abrahams and Anton Lembede) you will possibly hear a type of voice, a male voice. What is the nature of this voice? How does it articulate forms of black silence? And how do speech and silence inform our understanding of friendship and freedom? Is silence necessarily female, since male voices in the first half of the twentieth century seem to monopolise the 'public sphere', the newspaper for example?

And if silence or shouting is a sexed category, it may well be that black longing is a moment of 'bodily' (sexed) movement. To shout or keep silence is a movement (or stillness) of the black-skin. How we imagine this stillness, this movement and the idea of publicness ought to be our concern. An aesthetic reading of longing (longing: a source of shouting in Lembede and Abrahams, an articulation of black-skin movements in the Union of South Africa) ought to explore, I make clear in *Gnos-thetics unto Death*, a coupling of song and dance. And such a reading helps us fiddle with the gender/race/class discourse, helps rethink (in passing) the modern concepts of social analysis. This chapter interrogates the interstices of sound/dance/black and sound/dance/sex. In defence of longing for the ethical-in-black, it moves beyond dated race-class *conceptual* debate. My point: originary sociology (in its concerns with industrial society) fails to grapple with black shouts and silences.

In the colony (Either/or)

> *If I am confronting a false father who has imposed a false word on me, what sort of memory am I rejecting? This has long been the case in colonised Black Africa: having been drilled from textbooks that speak of our ancestors, the "Gauls," what happens when you wake up and discover that your ancestors were not the Gauls? Do you remain silent – or shout yourself hoarse* (Mudimbe, 1994:192)?

For the colonised black, waking up is *neither* late *nor* timely. Always, his/her sleep is half. He senses, at once to wake up to, the pressing (if immediate) presence of horror, the terror of a "false father". Waking up is the apprehension of political immediacy, apprehension of danger. Waking up forms the mediate-ness of black gnosis: a way of 'living' (thinking) through danger.

In this wakefulness the black has two options. Wakefulness, says Mudimbe, is a moment of shouting hoarse or remaining silent. For Mudimbe, shouting hoarse, confronting a false father – becoming, say, fugitive – is a labour of "negative knowledge (sorcery)". Negative knowledge (for blacks) is insufficiently constitutive of doing ethics, though: for the black must search further still, the whereabouts of the "true father". Or, gestures Mudimbe by way of Bernadette Cailler, the black must posit, run and turn to the "love" and "power" of the grandmother. This love, this power functions properly when in the grandmother the black recognises a "sign of play": "the depository and matrix of the memory of the family, the social group, and the community" (197).

A sign of play: structures the black's memory of the grandmother's speech, becoming a bridge to "positive knowledge" ("wisdom"), the "re-actualisation of what was and what will be again, at one and the same time as testimony and as a game of history" (197). "Positive knowledge" is a determination of Maternal Care, in other words. It is a play on history, makes possible the tarrying with African sediments (African everyday practices, creeping into a colonial situation, for better or worse) to regulate apprehensions of danger.

African sediments (myths and fables, say) suffer epistemic indeterminacy, of course (Positive knowledge is not a case of certitude about everything past). Hence, in myths and fables, Mudimbe (1991) reads things without a truth value, things relatively autonomous from (though constituent of) any social formation. Hence Mudimbe finds comfort in "Husserl's

radical doubt [anti-historicism]...the acceptance that the affirmation of truth [in relation to the past] is merely an assertion of a subjective proposition that only reflects our individual experiences – and, consequently, that its normative force is only a mirage" (195). "Mere reflections of individual experiences", or knowledge of the *past* pouring into *now*, is not the basis for an *ethical (normative) life*. And yet, they betray the colonised black's longing for a normative life. So that African sediments may regulate, for blacks, a longing for the ethical and, as such, regulate black gnosis.

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To reiterate, longing for an ethical-in-black is a determination of waking up, of an Either/or (a disjunctive conjunction). The black could shout hoarse *or* remain silent (or both). Or, what is the same thing, the black could, I argue in what follows, shout hoarse or keep silence at the same instant, non-contradictorily. For the shout and silence are quantitatively non-equivalent. On the other hand, though, *either* the black shouts *or* keeps silence – since doing both is qualitatively redundant, since shouting and remaining silent, I argue, are qualitatively equivalent. It is immaterial here whether the black shouts *or* keeps silence: he may well remain and find comfort in silence if he wants to, since shouting makes no difference – or vice-verse (shouting itself is silence and silence shouting). This dialectic (qualitative redundancy/equivalence and quantitatively non-equivalence), its significance, leads me to Kierkegaard's *Either/or,* an algorithm of ethics.

Either/or is an affair with despair, the darkest of all nights. How, asks Kierkegaard, is confronting despair possible? Two options. First. We may wallow in aesthetics, a case of living through unhappiness. In Book One (of *Either/or*), an unhappy person (a poet, author A in *Either/or*) "thinks" and "lives aphoristically", fears life and not death. For life is the "greatest misfortune", the misfortune of living in finitude (in worldly time). Though hopeful for a 'future', the poet hopes not for it in the present: for, hoping presently is non-poetic – is to hope in nothing. This poet likens himself to a "voluptuously beautiful woman in a harem, reclining on a sofa in her allure, not caring for anything in the world" (50), presently remembering or hoping for nothing. He hopes for eternity, since such is hoping outside time itself (where time is still) (47). He will not remember the past, since the past is yet to come. And if the past is yet to come (hence worth hoping for), *his* future already is past (not worth hoping for). The poet lives in eternal irony.

The poet mocks the merely 'happy individual', the idiot. The idiot – always unaware of his finitude – becomes "comical": labouring, gaining him/herself to lose him/herself in turn (necessarily). The idiot self-commits, say, *either* to marriage *or* bachelorhood, ignorant of the fact, namely: all commitment is a bridge to utter regret. All commitment is the mere ethical, mere ephemeral, a moment in wakefulness. Hence the poet prefers sleep over wakefulness. Waking "up in the morning" he goes "straight back to bed", for "when I sleep I never dream", since "that would be pity, for sleeping is the highest of genius" (48). Dreaming and wakefulness are one and the same form of living. So that, in the poet, a dreamless sleep is synonymous with perfection (a still moment, eternal movement). In Book One then, dreaming as living in finitude, for the poet, is a kind of hoping and remembering presently. Hence dreaming is the sphere of the ethical.

So, should 'humans' cease dreaming (leading an ordinary existence) so that a poetic (an aesthetic) life might abound? No, says Author B in Book Two of *Either/or,* a warning letter (an alternative option of dealing with despair) to the poet, the aesthetician in Book One. For B, a letter is an ethical form, medium of confronting good and evil. In his letter, B recoils from the poet's mere aesthetics, complicity with evil. The non-ethical poet in Book One, says B, nearly swallows himself up (ceases *living*), since all he longs for is a dreamless sleep, care for nothing – save wallowing in mere despair (reflected sorrow, "a doubt of personality"), imagining the unrealisable beauty of eternity. Hope in eternity, for B, is not antithetical to ethics. To live ethically, to hope in the future in the present, is to be eternally valid. In B, a good life (living in eternal validity) is a question of choice (historical necessity/force aside). A question of choice, deliberately (absolutely) choosing oneself, running in *despair*'s direction, as if to a long slope – only to cross over it into a space of personal "validity", a place of clarity. Wallowing in despair (perpetual regret in spite of oneself) borders on spiritual cowardice, purposeless "relativity" (living for mere "possibilities"). Borders living in a kind of purgatory, leading nowhere near a happy unhappiness.

The poet, for B, ought to choose himself if he longs for a happy unhappiness. For, already, (before the beginning of his subjectivity) the poet exists absolutely. Choosing himself, the poet would choose what exists already, would choose true happiness (a happy unhappiness), a determination of consciousness of his absolute existence. He would be happy, in spite of *objective* sorrow (an ontological misfortune, since objective sorrow structures social life). And in this dialectic of choice, of choosing himself amid objective sorrow, the poet *ought* to apprehend the self through sensing good and evil. Objective sorrow

is the very principle of being, of existence (a structure of becoming), and constitutes capacity for choosing good or evil. This capacity, a principle of will, in turn regulates the self's apprehension of objective sorrow.

Objective sorrow, then, conditions hoping absolutely, hoping in eternal goodness. By no means, though, does hoping in eternal goodness obviate an aesthetic existence, for B. Ethics constitute an aesthetic life. In B mere aesthetics is un-aesthetical, so to speak. Mere aesthetics is living in mere immediacy and lacks beauty – since it thrives on imagination, imagining eternity, but living not in its validity. Consider romantic love devoid of marriage, say. Love devoid of marriage is a movement in mere immediacy. Marriage, to be precise, validates love, concretises eternity and signifies the beautiful. Hence B will engage in "mortal combat" for the beautiful, only to safeguard his absolute hoping, hoping in goodness. Absolute hoping, although goodness is a state of being, beyond performance (beyond the realm of social action), beyond consequentialism, beyond Kantian duty. B will defend ethics at all costs.

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Kierkegaard's absolute hoping labours in the shadow of Hegel, whose system of *Absolute Knowledge* is (openly) an object of ridicule in Kierkegaard's later works. Kierkegaard's ridicule of Hegel is beyond the scope of this chapter. Still, here Kierkegaard gestures toward the possibility of ethical knowledge – Faith proper, knowledge of absolute freedom, similar to Hegel's: you are free when, and only when, you know you are absolutely free. But what is this Kiekegaardian freedom?

My reading of Kierkegaard is at once formal or substantive. Substantive, if Kierkegaard ethicises freedom, the (im) mortality of the European soul, the site and primacy of self-responsibility. Formal-methodical and substantive at the same instant, since Kierkegaard's *Either/or* is a *Concept*, through which we may *read* the historical development of the world. Kierkegaard's *Either/or is* a Concept (determination of being), rather than a mere a book title.

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For my purposes, *Either/or* occasions a reading of Gaulian good and evil (Euro good and evil) and, by extension, a possible reading of Europe's manifest destiny, the fulfilment of its "eternal validity". Fulfilment of its eternal destiny, since (in Husserl's parlance) Europe is

a ‘spirit’ and not a ‘geographical space’ per se. It is a spirit self-realising (self-manifesting) spatially, nonetheless. Not-accidentally, Kierkegaard ridicules Euro-Christendom, its bourgeoisie sensibility, its failure to take Faith seriously, its neglect of the Cross, its murder of Christ. Still, what does it matter if Christendom retained the cross? Will Christ obviate Europe’s manifest destiny? Idle questions, perhaps (for who knows *who* and *what* Christ is?) – save that I broach (through these questions) Euro-colonial ethics, an Either-or (to sacrifice or not sacrifice the African native, to enslave or to set him/her free and so on). Colonial ethics, I am saying here, produce at the same time a black Either/or: the black shouts hoarse or remains silent. The black Either/or (silence or a hoarse shout) is a principle, a logic-for-black, a determination of a black objective (national) sorrow. It constitute (qualitatively) the very soul of the black folk, articulates (to reiterate) the longing for an ethical-in-black.

Now: the qualitative significance of an Either/or (of shouting hoarse or remaining silent) – a gesture toward thinking black objective sorrow – merits a concerted elaboration. And I rely on Du Bois’s reading of black objective sorrow, its singularity in *the Soul of the Black Folk*. Thinking apprehensions of sorrow in the black is partly a formal concern for Du Bois, a critique of vulgar universality, whiteness as such. He asks: “Will America be poorer if she replaces her brutal dyspeptic blundering with light-hearted but determined Negro humility?” Will America substitute “the loving jovial good-humour” for “her coarse and cruel wit”? Or “the soul of the Sorrow Songs” for “her vulgar music”. For Du Bois, Black objective sorrow forms *The Soul of Black Folk* and its (dis) unity. Objective sorrow, in Du Bois, has passion – *flaps* the cover of blackness: a Veil. A veil Du Bois will raise, once and for all, “that you may view faintly its deeper recesses,—the meaning of its religion...and the struggle of its greater souls”.

Black objective sorrow, then, becomes apprehendible when we examine sorrow’s black *forms* of expression, religious music in particular. Hence, beginning “each chapter [in *The Soul of the Black Folk*], as now printed, stands a bar of the Sorrow Songs,—some echo of haunting melody from the only American music which welled up from black souls in the dark past”. Du Bois in full:

> *The Music of Negro religion is that plaintive rhythmic melody, with its touching minor cadences, which, despite caricature and defilement, still remains the most original and beautiful expression of human life and longing yet born on American soil. Sprung from the African forests, where its counterpart can still be heard, it was adapted, changed, and intensified*

> *by the tragic soul-life of the slave, until, under the stress of law and whip, it became the one true expression of a people's sorrow, despair, and hope. Finally the Frenzy of "Shouting," when the Spirit of the Lord passed by, and, seizing the devotee, made him mad with supernatural joy, was the last essential of Negro religion and the one more devoutly believed in than all the rest. It varied in expression from the silent rapt countenance or the low murmur and moan to the mad abandon of physical fervour, —the stamping, shrieking, and shouting, the rushing to and fro and wild waving of arms, the weeping and laughing, the vision and the trance. All this is nothing new in the world, but old as religion, as Delphi and Endor. And so firm a hold did it have on the Negro, that many generations firmly believed that without this visible manifestation of the God there could be no true communion with the Invisible* (Du Bois,2007:80).

More precise, the music of the Negro religion expresses (regulate the sensing of) black objective sorrow. Anxiously, Du Bois erects a complex of form and truth, truth and violence: the madness of 'joy' (the Frenzy of Negro shouting), "under the stress of the law and the whip", a true (authentic) form – true when it is an immediate (*necessary)* determination of violent America. Madness (a bodily-dramatisation as such), suggests Du Bois, mediates the slave's communion with the invisible (the indeterminate), the slave's encounter with "God". Or, in a similar manner, brings the slave closer to the Idea of (im) possible freedom. In Du Bois, the more pronounced the madness (prior emancipation), the more extant thoughts of (un)freedom, as if Du Bois expresses the slave's unequivocal suffering, the only gift to American civilisation.[14]

Du Bois pre-echoes Mudimbe. He broaches the hoarse shout(Frenzy Shout)-silence ("the silent rapt countenance or the low murmur and moan") matrix. As if to elaborate on the significance of Negro religious forms, their move from silence to shouting. He reads these forms alongside black 'reflected sorrow' (apprehensions of objective sorrow). Partly, then:

[14] Elsewhere, I show the possible significance of this joy, the madness: in the new world, the slave celebrates (by way of Ring Shout) 'incoherent bonds' with his/her ancestor. The Shout posits "musical individuality within [slave] collectivity" (Floyd, 2002:52). It points to a common present – that of negativity, becoming a stranger in a foreign land. The Ring Shout: here the slave hops up, down in a trance, violently shifting his/her body sideways, turning around, leading, chanting, singing a spiritual (It seems to matter in some slave circles whether a *clockwise or anti-clockwise* Shout is an appropriate expressive form. What form gains an upper-hand is possibly a carry-over [from West Africa, say] into the new world. In the new world, the carry-over gains new symbolism. For instance: to imagination, an anti-clockwise may well point to a critique of progress, of slavery in time, may well symbolise struggle – so that the magnitude of "madness of joy" in the slave is a determination of his suffering [new conditions of existence]). Another slave sings melancholically, as if wishful to forget Africa and possibly 'make do' with the New World. Over time, he/she may convert to Christianity, appropriates the Shout, give it a new a Christian significance (a *form* of communing with the invisible). Conversion to Christianity could intensify, of course, "the foundations of proto-nationalist consciousness and at the same time occasion "a universalist offer of forgiveness and ultimate reconciliation to white America" (Stuckey, 1987:24).

Du Bois's reading of black apprehensions of objective sorrow is a methodical ruse. If slavery is the source of black (objective) sorrow, "what" then "did slavery mean to the African savage?" he asks. "What was [the slave's] attitude toward the World and Life? What seemed to him good and evil,—God and Devil? Whither went his longings and strivings, and wherefore were his heart-burnings and disappointments?" Answer: you need only *read* "Negro religion as a development", suggests Du Bois, "through its gradual changes from the heathenism of the Gold Coast to the institutional Negro church of Chicago".

Inquiring into a Negro religion and its development (from the "silent rapt" to the "mad abandon of physical fervour"), Du Bois gestures toward negative/positive knowledge axis – arrogating (it seems to me) to silence the black enquiry into Maternal Care, and to a shout the black negating the master. Recall our initial intention: we ought to see still, see how the black (living in objective sorrow) can shout hoarse and remain silent at the same instant. To see this possibility (shouting hoarse and remaining silent at the same instant), *demands we read in a* hoarse shout/or silence a critique of the colony, the colony's creation of value.

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A hoarse shout/silence is value (a return), in the first instance. It is a return from a method (to recall Du Bois's wip and the law) of violating the native beyond suture, imposing a 'false word' on him/her. Let us put it another way: a shout/silence is return value, a determination of exchange value (the native becoming an object, a mere commodity). The shout-silence matrix, then, calls for a visit to Marx's *Capital (*an exposé of 'bourgeois philistinism'). In *Capital,* Marx tells of a materialist emergence of exchange value. The production of an object (and the market for its destination) is the emergence of exchange value (a property of a commodity form), for Marx. "If commodities could speak" [or shout], says Marx, "they would say this: our use value may interest men, but it does not belong to us as objects. What does belong to us as objects, however, is our value. Our own intercourse as commodities proves it. We relate to each other merely as exchange values...Riches are the attribute of man, value is the attribute of commodities. A man or a community is rich, a peal or a diamond is valuable as a peal or diamond" (Marx, 1990:176) [15]. In the other commodities, put another way, one commodity form (exchange value) expresses its relational status, its value-ness.

[15] I owe the specificity of this quotation to Fred Moten (2003), whose work (blacks as speaking commodities) I engage in the penultimate chapter.

Properly speaking, though, exchange value is intelligible, for Marx – intelligible when we think its universal form. A commodity (say a table) must self-express in universal terms, in its universal equivalent, namely the money form. However: the money form (in its particular materiality) is, on Marx's account, an arbitrary standard (representation) of the commodity's 'magnitude of value' – since the money form could simply, materially self-express in silver or gold, or any other object. There is nothing essential to silver or gold as a measure of exchange value.

Aside the arbitrariness of the money form's materiality, the money form is not merely "imaginary" (185), a contingent human invention. The money-form is beyond contingent, for Marx: the money form is a "necessary form of appearance of the measure of value...the social incarnation of human labour" (188/192). For all to see, Marx parades the commodity's common descent, namely: labour time. So that the commodity form (if we return to the native-commodity and thus add to Marx) conditions our seeing in the violent colonial method the expending of the colony's *abstract labour power:* a method in which the coloniser (subject) creates/determines the colonised (the native-object)[16], *drags the object (with or without its consent) to the market place. The object acquires exchange status (false word, a name), by way of a universal equivalent (the money form).* The money form measures the value of coloniser's labour power itself: the condition for the production of the colonised, commodity-forms. More: the money form betrays all commodities' q*ualitative equality*[17] *(commonality),* if they are "realised human labour", or (in our case) determinations of colonial labour time.

The money form is value itself, however. In Marx, the money form is use value in its materiality (silver or gold, for example). Gold, says Marx, is use value, since you could with it patch a broken tooth, produce from (and by) it an exotic artefact and so on. Gold, however, becomes exchange value (commodity) when its producers drag it to the market place. Gold becomes exchange value when it is comparable to its universal equivalent, the money form (Gold takes on the money form {becomes value, a commodity}, when it is exchangeable for money itself, whose material base could in turn be gold or silver or any other metal). Gold

[16] Needless to say: the colony produces/determines the colonised. This is true, since the predicate term is contained in the concept of the subject. Fanon has it as well: "It is the white man who creates the Negro" (1965:47).

[17] Marx: "The first main function of gold is to supply commodities with the material for the expression of their values, or to represent their values as magnitudes of the same denomination, qualitatively equal and quantitatively comparable. It thus acts as a universal measure of value, and only through performing this function does gold, the specific equivalent commodity, become money" (1990/188).

(taking on the money form), needless to say, is a determination of labour time. So that the money form this gold takes is a variable value, for Marx. This value fluctuates when the value of labour time (time of producing gold) fluctuates. Anything else constant, a decrease in the value of labour time (for producing gold) is, in Marx, a decrease in the value of gold (the value of the money form as such): it may take less time to produce gold, for instance, owing to (say) use of new mining techniques. Nonetheless: a decrease in the value of gold (the value of the money form itself) need not, cautions Marx, imply a decrease in the value of labour time (for producing another commodity, say, a table – for which the value of the money form is a universal equivalent). Need not imply a decrease in the value of labour time (for producing a table), in the same way that a decrease in the value of this labour time (owing to changes in production techniques, for example) need not lead to a decrease in the value of the money form.

The variability of the money form, then, makes possible *quantitative measure* (pricing) of the commodity form. Commodity prices measure the value of labour time. They are not the value of labour time itself. So that, in spite of commodities' qualitative equality (to the extent of their having labour time for common descent), two commodities (say a table and chair), could be worth different prices (could have unequal quantitative values), owing to, say, their differing use values. But, to recall Marx, commodities care little for their use values (use values after all are arbitrary: one could use a table for eating or sitting or dancing, etcetera). In short, prices in themselves do not bring the commodities into existence. What makes a commodity is – we said this already – the value of its producer's labour time (which finds expression through the money form, its universal equivalent). What bring the commodity into existence are the immediate conditions of its production, labour power, to name one.

Now: labour power in Marx is physical power: the human body in labour. Still, humans and not animals produce what already is in the mind. So that thinking power is a constituent of total labour power, so that total labour time (the condition of labour power) contains thinking time (a determination of the human soul, in which the creation of a commodity or any object of labour for that matter first finds expression). The money form (the universal equivalent of the commodity), then, ought to measure the value of thinking

time[18] as well. We could think thinking power (as constituent of thinking time) in this manner: consider a table producer imagining how to make a table-chair. The chair producer could stand still and think a table-chair (continuously, mentally work out a collection of simple and complex ideas which make up the 'idea' of a table-chair). He/she could take a while to work through the simplicity and complexity of these ideas, so that the matrix of simplicity and complexity of these ideas increase the duration of the thinking necessary to produce a table chair. In short, the actual production of a table-chair could require more time (duration) than the production of a mere table. In a related fashion, "it might seem that if the value of a commodity is determined by the quantity of labour expended to produce it, it would be the more valuable the more unskilful and lazy the worker who produced it, because he would need more time to complete the article" (Marx, 1990:129). The point is: the quantity of thinking (as part of labour power) is variable. Yet the quantity of thinking spent on a commodity production does not obviate commodities' qualitative equivalence, to the extent that commodities have labour time for common descent.

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How, then, do we think total labour time alongside the shout-silence matrix? Recall that a shout or silence comes (is a return) from the black (a commodity, an exchange value). I read in this matrix the coloniser's thinking time (constituent of the total value of the coloniser's labour time). Put differently, the native-commodity is partly a product of the coloniser's psychic-mental labour power. The coloniser's thinking time is a constituent of total labour time. By extension, the coloniser's thinking power (power to project fantasies on the native) is a constituent of total labour power (including the power to create the native by way of physical violence). We know that in the native the coloniser ('the human being') sees an animal (what appears strange to them)[19], whom he/she must violate.

The notion of animality in colonial circles is a key point of discussion, a *fundamental parameter*, an organising principle of colonial violence. The notion of animality is the point

[18] The fact that the labourer in Marx is alienated need not mean the labourer uses not his/her mind or is simply unskilled. "A commodity may be the product of the most skilled labour, but its value, by equating it to the product of simple unskilled labour, represents a definite quantity of the latter labour alone", so that "for simplicity 'sake we shall henceforth account every kind of labour to be unskilled, simple labour" (Marx,1990:136).

[19] See Mbembe (2001:236) on the native as an animal: "As an animal, the native is supposed to belong to the family of eminently mechanical, almost physical things, without language, even though endowed with sense organs, veins, muscles, nerves, and arteries through which nature, in its virginal power, manifest itself. Placed at the margins of the human, the native, with the animal, belongs to the register of imperfection, error, deviation, approximation, corruption, and monstrosity".

of a 'civilised' talk: how to turn the animal into a commodity (alongside an ox[20], a horse, a donkey, a dog and so forth), how best to drag the native to the market (how to consummate the native's blackness), how best to determine the commodity's price tag (a quantitative measure) – how, in simple terms, the coloniser *quantitatively* measures the value of the native. It seems necessary that the coloniser classifies the native-come-animal-come-commodity. The coloniser ought to know: does the native appear strong or weak physically, does he shout hoarse or remain silent on his way towards the market? The coloniser may well measure the hoarseness of his shouts, if the native shouts. The coloniser may well measure the impact of the native's silence, should the native remain silent. Asks the coloniser, what is more: Is this native a domestic or wild animal[21], or hovers somewhere in between? Or, rather, can the native (has he the capacity to) 'read' or 'write' humanely? Only then will the coloniser appropriate the money-form (the native-come-animal-come-commodity's universal equivalent), put on the native a price tag (the price tag does measure the use-type of commodity, to reiterate). In the last instance, the money form, by way of a price tag, is a "necessary form of appearance of the measure of value" (188/9) of his (the coloniser's) labour time.

However, the money form partially succeeds in representing the coloniser's total labour time. Partially succeeds, since the money form represent total labour time, represents labour time only if labour time is finite. Under normal (general) conditions of production (the production of a table-chair, for instance), one could sell his/her labour power for a while (for

[20] Observe a Bantustan kindergarten calypso (in Sepedi):

Ke nna Tonki
Ke as Soma
Ga ke sa busa Moya
Ditomo – Wa, Wa, Wa
Samboko – Vu,Vu,Vu
Hai!
Kakata, Kakata, Kakata...

(my translation)

A donkey, I am
I work and work
I hold no breath
Reins on my back – Wa, Wa, Wa
Sjambok – Vu, Vu, Vu
Hai
I gallop on end (Kakata, Kakata, Kakata...)

[21] Mbembe goes as far as suggesting that the domesticity or wildness of the animal (the native) is the basis for colonial conviviality, that is, "conviviality as an act of venality" – for the native's wildness or domesticity justifies the coloniser's attitude toward the native, the coloniser's "appropriation" and "utilisation" of the native-animal.

a specified period of time for a wage/salary), since to sell it indefinitely will, in Marx, amount to selling him/herself into slavery. Nonetheless: there obtains (in a colonial situation) unique conditions of production (here we depart from Marx). The coloniser's working life takes on a different turn when he produces the colonised. The coloniser must expend his/her labour power indefinitely, if he will satisfy his material and psychic needs, if she is to save herself and remain universally/eternally valid (or free, what is the same thing). He is enslaved to his future needs (material and psychical). He is enslaved to his eternal freedom. Hence the necessity of the coloniser's future labour time.

The money form (the wage and the surplus), then, cannot represent the total value of the coloniser's labour time (of producing the colonised) – for, as we say following Marx, the money form (a universal equivalent) represents/values not future-labour time. We could, of course, represent the value of future labour time – only if, to recall Kierkegaard, the future is past. But the past in not past – the past is yet to come, says Kierkegaard. The money form cannot represent the value of labour time (the production of the colonised) as past time – since the past is yet to come. At first appearance, then, to have the money form represent the indefinite colonial labour time is to have the money form suspend sense, necessity. It is to have the money form perform signs and wonders.

This performance (the money form's defying of Aristotelian-logic) is not an illusion, sure. For, on some level, to represent the value of indefinite labour time is well within a horizon of possibility. The notion of the animal, you will recall, is input to (a parameter in) the violent method of producing the commodity (the black). This notion, of course, remains (post putting the native on the market) extant in the colonist's consciousness. My point: The coloniser's notion of the animal determines (in the coloniser's mind) the fate of the native: whether the native remains a commodity (and what kind). Consider, for a moment, the native (animal in the coloniser's mind) suddenly resembling a 'human being', perhaps owing to the native's newly found faith in the coloniser's doctrine of dignity of committed leisure (reading, writing, etcetera), or the dignity of purposive labour (see Coetzee, 1989; De cock, 1996:9-10)[22]. The coloniser could grant the native voting rights, freedom of movement, teach the colonised how to read and write, teach the colonised how to shout 'humanely' or remain silent. The native, then, becomes a light-seeing native.

[22] In the next chapter, in the fashion of Coetzee's reading of the supposed native animality, I make sense of native responses to their supposed animality.

This native is an object of the coloniser's enjoyment, perhaps an index of the coloniser's cultural and spiritual achievement. Animality remains the criterion of indexing the native's progress (cultural development). The native progresses (is 'freer'), only if he/she is on the path of the coloniser's humanity[23]. The native's progression from animality to humanity indexes the coloniser's vision of him/herself. Colonial (or the coloniser's) humanity is eternally valid. It is the principle, an absolute standard[24], the measure of the newly acquired native humanity. The coloniser is more indefinite than the indefiniteness of his labour time (the perpetual production of the native-commodity). So that the coloniser (his very thought) is the absolute-universal equivalent (he is the new money form[25]) and represents the value of his indefinite labour time.

Now: you ought to undo (destroy) the coloniser to cancel the indefiniteness of her labour time. This way you negate the native's colonial humanity itself (*black objective sorrow*), the determination of the coloniser's indefinite labour time.

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How, then, is destroying the coloniser's indefinite labour and its determination (im) possible? First: the category 'humanity', its emergence and conceptual implications, merits a brief re-elaboration (nearly as we have done already, by way of colonial humanity). Let us read Carl Schmitt (2008). And we read him circumspectly. In Schmitt, humanity is an "eighteenth-century humanitarian concept", and emerges through the liberal doctrine of universality. It emerges, discredits and vandalises the feudal ideological (the pre-1879 revolution) infrastructure. And yet, humanity itself is a non-political category. It precludes political social groupings, precludes class struggles and so on. Humanity is possible, "only when the real possibility of war is precluded...". Still: that humanity, for instance, grounds the

[23] Appadurai makes a related observation on the commodity. An object is a commodity merely because, among other things, it is commodity phase in its social-life history (of course, whether or not it has social life is a question of disputation as many thinkers have adduced). Once a commodity, it can on first appearance cease being this or that kind of a commodity – in the sense that its seller (or buyer) can sell it for other purposes than its "accustomed" (path) purpose (can divert selling a table for sitting to something else, sell it as an exotic artefact for example). Diversion of a commodity confers new value on the object, so that the process of diversion itself is a de-commoditisation as it is potentially an "intensification" of re-commoditisation. For our purposes here, converting the slave (animality) to a human being is a case of diverting the slave, shifting him/her from an accustomed value path.

[24] This is justifiable scientific principle, for the coloniser – for first principles make easier the carrying out of philosophical experiments, Heidegger teaches us (1962:27).

[25] The coloniser is Value itself. The coloniser's humanity, the new universal equivalent, needs a different labour time (cultural time, if you will) to re-produce this humanity, his Value. Whether this value decreases or not, the Value of his indefinite labour time (the production of the slave) remains intact. Decrease in the Value of his/her humanity need not, necessarily, affect the Value of his labour time, the exchange Value of the slave.

French revolution smacks of irony, implies Schmitt. Smacks of irony, since this revolution is, by definition, *nationalist*. The humanistic principle of freedom, equality and fraternity, for Schmitt, is a functionary of the state and its apparatus.

> *Bourgeois liberalism was never radical in a political sense...it remains self-evident that liberalism's negation of state and the political, its neutralizations, depoliticalizations, and* ***declarations of freedom*** *have likewise a certain political meaning, and in a concrete situation these are polemically directed against a specific state and its political power. But this is neither a political theory nor a political idea. Although liberalism has not radically denied the state, it has, on the other hand, neither advanced a positive theory of state nor on its own discovered how to reform the state, but has attempted only to tie the political to the ethical and to subjugate it to economics. It has produced a doctrine of the separation and balance of powers, i.e., a system of checks and controls of state and government. This cannot be characterized as either a theory of state or a basic political principle* [emphasis mine].

Declarations of freedom. A moment – a utilitarian moment of politicisation by other means: de-politicisation. So that humanity, less surprisingly, is a fine ruse of "imperialist expansion", self-arrays in the ideological apparel of *"ethical-humanitarian[ism]", peddling a ship* of "economic imperialism". An appeal to humanity is will-to-cheat, says Schmitt through Proudhon. Same thing: "To confiscate the word humanity, to invoke and monopolize such a term probably has certain incalculable effects, such as denying the enemy the quality of being human and declaring him to be an outlaw of humanity". The humanitarian forces the enemy (foe) to accept his definition of humanity, has the enemy learn what it entails to behave (to shout or remain silent, for instance) rightly or wrongly. The humanitarian projects an aura of neutral if naive normative ethics, repressing a crass reality: that someone somewhere (wittingly or unwittingly) in the modern world is already a foe or a "friend".

In Schmitt, a friend-foe antithesis is an antagonism, a disjunction devoid of conjunction. It is simply an Either-or (Either someone is your friend or foe) and not an Either/or. It is a political antithesis. For Schmit, this anti-thesis is incommensurable with ethical or aesthetic Either/or's, namely good or evil; beautiful or ugly. This friend-foe antithesis is autonomous, absolutely autonomous from good and evil, beautiful and ugly. Of course, absolute autonomy is not a non-relationality of political and ethical anti-theses. Quite the opposite. In Schmitt, evil has a way of forcing a group of people to locate its source (say in another group), thereby perceiving the latter as a foe. But this – calling the source of evil a foe – is not necessary, for Schmitt. "The morally evil, aesthetically ugly or economically damaging need not necessarily be the enemy" and "the morally good, aesthetically beautiful,

and economically profitable need not necessarily become the friend in the specifically political sense of the word". The converse is true, for Schmitt. A foe need not necessarily be evil or economically unfriendly, just as a friend need not necessarily be good or aesthetically pleasing. Let us put it positively: friendship with the morally evil is a possibility and permissible, politically speaking – in the same way as the possibility and permissibility of enmity with the morally good.

If Schmitt is correct (that one can befriend the morally evil), I turn to the problem of evil in the colony, the native's sinfulness and the black's progression from evil (sinfulness) to colonial humanity through animality. If Schmitt is correct (that one can befriend the morally evil), it seems justified that the coloniser could simply 'befriend' the black (in his animality, sinfulness), the evil native. We know, of course, that the coloniser does not befriend the evil native. In the native the coloniser sees a foe worth enslaving. He could then civilise the native, his shouts and silences, could begin to see in this foe a semblance of humanity. Put another way, the coloniser wants a friendship-like relationship with a good-native, the colonised.

What value is there in the coloniser's befriending the good native, save celebrating the native's progression from evil to goodness? What value is there in the coloniser's befriending the good native, when the native (in the coloniser) possibly sees a foe (not a friend) and an appearance or the measure of evil? For: in reality no coloniser is good, says Sartre. The coloniser, his/her state of being (state of being is basis for goodness or evil, on Kierkegaard's account), is a concentration (and concretisation) of Guilt, cannot produce a good action. Concretisation of Guilt – for all the coloniser works (transforming the native into a human being, say) is outside the realm of goodness. An idle task, then, is to impute goodness to the coloniser's state of being, if his actions are already outside the realm of goodness (this, Kierkegaard would insist, is not to say actions are the basis of moral judgement). Justifiably, the native could see in colonialism (in the apprehension of objective sorrow) a melange of a foe and evil. For, on this native's account (we depart from Schmitt), colonialism is an evil political content, since it is a foe, and is a foe since it is an evil content (whether or not the black finds colonialism and its [so called] symbols aesthetically pleasing is not the question here.

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The native (black), then, welcomes Schmitt's political anti-thesis (the antagonism), save that he/she will not accept its absolute autonomy from ethics (good and evil). The black will impute evil to politics (evil becomes a political category). And this black, henceforth, will shout or remain silent, not because remaining silent or shouting hoarse (in their quantitative non-equivalence or qualitative equivalence) are good. This black will have little, if any, interest in his/her "goodness" – for his/her blackness is *perversity* writ deep. The black *tip-toes* on the shadow of 'beyond good' in Fredrick Nietzsche[26]. All calls to "transcendental good", for the black, are a call for suspicion. For: what is good when colonial-ness is a determinate *evil (a political category)*, a foe (evil with content) and begets perversity[27] (goodness cannot follow from an evil form, even if the black were to believe in post-colonial/decolonial goodness[28]). The black, in other words, apprehends evil, where goodness is untraceable. From this evil proceeds a black imperative (a longing for the ethical), nonetheless: *(Either/or)*: shout hoarse or remain silent: the case of a maroon-slave – of, say, Fanon (for whom, in Mudimbe, an escape from evil {a kind of shouting} is "honouring" a spiritual call) and Glissant (for whom an escape is "downstream or upstream [hopefulness]" expression of positive helplessness (in the failure of locating his historical roots) (Mudimbe, 1994:193).

Then: the black imperative (Either/or; a longing for an ethical life) expresses (non)freedom of choice, a condition of a theory of doing politics. The possible choice of shouting hoarse or remaining silent is not (on some level) a *real* choice, for a hoarse shouting and remaining silent are return values, you will recall, and are *qualitatively* equal in the first instance. Equal if they articulate black objective sorrow, equal if they are a determination of a commodity (have indefinite colonial labour time for common descent). The black imperative, on the other hand, gestures toward a *living* perversity (mediative perversity, mediative of sorrow). For, the possible choice of shouting hoarse or remaining silent is an *ideal* choice (not imaginary) – since the value of a shout and silence *could b*e quantitatively unequal (we could put a price tag on them, depending on their *use values*). The black imperative, you will

[26] In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche (1966) ridicules Christianity and Platonism for fashioning Europe 'spiritual decadence. He mocks Plato's dogmatic "invention of the pure spirit and of transcendental goodness". Nietzsche likens this moment – the struggle against Platonic antics – as the task of "wakefulness" itself, as if anticipating Mudimbe's colonised, waking up and suddenly discovering the false father in the Gauls.

[27] I follow up on Fanon's assertion: that Whiteness (slavery/the colony/evil) creates Blackness and Blackness creates negritude. Which is to say, evil creates blackness; blackness can never produce political good.

[28] In Nietzsche: truth and, by extension, goodness per se cannot come from this world; and, I could add, the colonial world of Euro-Christendom. Possibly, *truth* could emerge from beneath the earth.

recall, is the content/moment of wakefulness, a moment of black gnosis, mediates the longing for an ethical-in-black: a way of 'living' through danger/evil. To shout hoarse or remain silent mediates the relation between negative (negation of the false father) and positive knowledge (determination of Maternal Care, the search of the true father).

I wish to say more on qualitative nature of this search. It is near insignificant (qualitatively speaking) whether in silence or noisily the colonised searches for the true father. Near insignificant if a silent or a noisy search is merely a case of self-talk, a moment of remembering, of longing for lost (stolen) things (the self, say) and hoping (perhaps hopelessly) to find them. The false father need not feature in this self-talk, at least directly or immediately. However, the false father will feature when the search for the true father takes longer than expected. The false father features in the case of negative knowledge, the moment of cursing him – overtly or otherwise. More, silence or shouting (if quantitatively unequal) have direct effect on the false father (supposing the false father is right beside the child, the black). Silence or a shout may quantitatively matter, depending on the colonised's political intentions (choosing to shout hoarse or to keep silence is purely a utilitarian[29] move).

We are far from disarticulating negative and positive knowledge. Otherwise we risk rejecting or valorising one for the other[30], when in reality negative and positive knowledge are formally equivalent, similar mo(ve)ments or species of black gnosis (self-enquiry). Not only is negative knowledge an insufficient element of an ethic-in-black or a coherent longing for an ethical-in-black. Negative knowledge itself is constitutive of positive knowledge (and vice versa). This is to imply (needless to say, perhaps) negative thought and positive thought share in form (though never in force and direction). Any *thought* is negative after all (destructive), negative as it is positive (preservative, unification of itself with the negated (See Mudimbe, 1994)). In the black (the commodity), thought could sub-late its immediacy: negate (in wakeful shouts or silences) its immediate evil, a foe[31], preserving it (through shouts or silences) at the same instant.

[29] This has nothing to do with Utilitarianist kind of normative ethics.

[30] Negative knowledge (sorcery) frames Mbembe's critique of Nativism. A critique of narrow nationalist thought (nationalism as political practice, it seems) (See, Mbembe, 2002). I wish to proceed in a different direction, and make a distinction between *nationalist thought* and *national thought* here. The former is an ideological/quantitative determination (of nationalism), while the latter emerges beside nationalism (the latter is an ontological/qualitative status, within which positive and negative knowledge are realisable; the latter is at once in and outside nationalism).

[31] There is no need for colonial goodness (positivity), says the colonised. Yes, the evil content of colonialism negates itself (by way of, say, anti-colonial struggle). When this evil (as absence of goodness), owing to

I take a leap: To destroy (if the black must) the coloniser's indefinite labour time and its determination (the black's colonially imposed humanity, objective sorrow as such) is to preserve this humanity and the coloniser's indefinite labour time. Blackness, its recursive loop (negation and preservation of a foe), seem to survive near ad infinitum, then. At the same time, though: '*analectically'*, the black searches in struggle (a determination of the form of Maternal Care) for an opening (at time through indeterminate African sediments {his/her very soul}). Of course: finding in this form anything for comfort is not, to recall Mudimbe, a call for normative action. Maternal Care is merely a condition for doing ethics in black, for consummating a longing for an ethical-in-black. Or, what comes to the same thing: the black – though mired in perversity (a political notion) – necessarily (through *love*, *an express moment of longing for an* ethical life) strives against political evil.

The following pages further address problem of love, its relation to commodity-hood (alongside the notion of personhood. First, however, I elaborate on the processes of colonial violence (the production of native) and native sublation of this violence, and its bearing on our thinking the idea freedom.

necessity, negates itself (into a semblance of goodness), it merely preserves itself in its determinateness (nothing with content). If, in short, it creates a semblance of goodness, it is on its own terms, self-perpetuation. Hegel (in the Science of Logic) will call this state of affairs (negation of negation as affirmative) a paradox for consciousness, albeit a trivial one for understanding (?). But a paradox is not necessarily a paradox, ethically speaking. For the colonised, the preserved content (evil) is but a rock to stand on (but not for long, since it must negate itself, by way of decolonial struggle), if only to look at this semblance of goodness and simply suspends it as mere meaningless.

The Utility of Meat-eating

The following pages elaborate on national (black) morality in the Union of South Africa, a morality without the merely ethical. It is my bid to think a Lembedeian meat-wanting[32] (meat-eating)', a metaphor for 'Freedom in our life time'. Lembedeian meat-eating (sorcery/negativity) is endless, though – endless if Union whiteness constitutes an expression of the indefinite white labour time. Still: Lembedeian sorcery, I argue, is a critique of white ethics (ethicality), a condition for the production of greatest amount of happiness in the world. Lembede's critique (meat-eating), of course, betrays in the Union black a possible moment of blood-spilling, of sacrificing animals in the Union. A non-vegetarian moment, what is more, of sacrificing oneself for one's freedom, for one's brothers.

To be precise: sacrificing oneself for one's freedom, for one's brothers is a critique of a white union orgy (a white brotherhood festivity of having the native, the animal-man, for an object of sacrifice). Hence "we shall", following Derrida, "ask ourselves, inevitably, what happens to the fraternity of brothers when an animal enters the scene. Or, conversely, what happens to the animal when one brother comes after the other, when Abel is after Cain who is after Abel. Or when a son is after his father. What happens to animals, surrogate or not, to the ass and ram on mount Moriah? (Derrida, 1998:12). What happens, put another way, when Cain murders Abel for sacrificing an animal, for appeasing Yahweh? What happens to Abel's blood, its shout of innocence, pleading to Yahweh for revenge? What happens when Abraham, through Yahweh, substitutes a ram for Isaac, the child of promise? At stake here is animal life, animal suffering – the condition of enmity between brothers (and between man {Cain} and Yahweh), or a condition of friendship between man {Abel} and Yahweh, between a son {Isaac} and the father {Abraham}.

What of the roaming ram, the animal-man (the black), roaming the South African landscape? What of this animal, when it enters or constitutes the 'little white quarrel' (when the English liberal is after the Boer)? Derrida does not say. But nineteenth century Anglo liberalism has an answer: you ought to "sacrifice" the animal-man ("'the nigger' absolutely") and all is well (Milner in Magubane, 1996:235). Violently (we have said in the previous chapter), you banish the native from Union life, re-reduce him/her to commodity-hood, and

[32] Lembede: "It appears that General Smuts is preparing for the next Uno session next September and he wants to convince the "prejudiced" "ill-informed" outside world as to how much the Union has done for the Natives, We maintain that the world must know the truth. We want no "bone to chew." We want meant. We are not dogs" (Edgar & Msumza, 1996:117).

kill him/her if rebellious. Anglo whiteness could instead kill a white Briton, of course. In Britain, lest we forget, nineteenth century capitalism reaches a crisis of profitability, creating an unemployed Briton *here* and a homeless *there*, creating (in short) a surplus white, risking a possibility of English civil war (Magubane, 1979:13).

White liberalism cannot afford to kill a surplus white, though. For that would amount to killing a being decked in a capacity for freedom, for self-consciousness. White liberalism ought to find a surrogate victim, the animal-man (the black). Hence, Anglo liberalism sails the cape, quarrels with a brother (originary Broederbond). Aside their intra-animosity, it is a matter of *time* before Broederbond and Anglo liberalism become a White political cult. A matter of time before the white cult sacrifices an animal-man, founding the Union South Africa and beginning the white orgy (festivities). Sacrificing an animal man: an act of destroying "what cannot be used [what is precious, of sacrificial value], and is really the preparation of the offering for a meal, the feast that cheats the act out of its negative significance" (Hegel, 1998:434). Sacrificing an animal-man is the destroying of white animality itself.

Here begins the white séance. The animal-man is an offering to a divine Being. The act of sacrificing this animal is a moment of respect, of recognising divinity. A divinity devoid of animality, a free divinity – a condition of its perpetual joyfulness. This act is an achievement of a white divine status, a moment of loving death: "the source of his [the white cult member] anguish-and all the more so that he seeks it out, desires it and sometimes freely chooses it", so that he will be a "man", free and all (Battaile,1990:12). In this death there is individuality, 'liberty', the express case of a conscious onto-historical development, culminating in a white State, the white Right. This act is a "positive" moment, for divine Being. So that the "objective existence of the divine being is transformed into self-conscious existence" (Hegel, 1998:435), making possible the white awareness of its oneness with divinity itself.

The divining of whiteness is far from peaceful, though. For the white memory of the dying animal-man confronts the white cult. Paranoid, it suspects of a botched sacrifice, that the animal-man (the black) is yet to die; and that, by extension, the cult has yet to consummate its divine status. Doubtless, its paranoia is justifiable – for, in reality the animal never dies, speculates Battaile. It has not a Language. It has not a 'soul' (See Coetzee, 2004).

The animal has not the capacity for self-consciousness, in Battaille, a capacity to think its future disappearance (death). Nothing dies if it knows nothing of its future death. And if Battaile is correct, the white cult's paranoia is justified (it seems to me) to sacrifice the animal-man, over and over again. In reality the white orgy never ends.

We need not rehash in detail the history of the coming Union divinity – save to recall its British-Afrikaner consummation. Save to recall, alongside Magubane, that "it is customary in liberal circles to see British actions toward the Afrikaners as a gesture of good will and to see the betrayal of Africans as the unforeseen price that had to be paid for such magnanimity". And that, continues Magubane, "the ethical problem that faced Britain was less important than the political one, and far less so than the economic" (Magubane, 1996:51). Magubane could add: imputation of the ethical to Afrikaner actions toward natives (the founding of Bantustans, for instance) is a misguided effort: the ethical (and morality) are less insignificant than political economy – insignificant in the Afrikaner Broederbond's consummation of colonial-apartheid. So that "if one day apartheid is abolished", in Derrida's words, "its demise will not be credited only to the account of moral standards -- because moral stan-dards should not count or keep accounts, to be sure, but also because, on the scale which is that of a worldwide computer, the law of the mar-ketplace will have imposed another standard of calculation" (Derrida, 1985:296). We could – and this is the point – distinguish white moral standards from the standards (the law) of the market place, in the related way that Magubane's sentiment (historiographical) on British economic actions, his distinction (of ethics, politics and economics), is permissible.

The moral standard/market place standard distinction must remain an analytical ruse, however. In a reality, white moral standards could find expression through the law of the market place. How? Let us re-read Derrida's caution on the possible demise of apartheid: "its demise will not be credited only to the account of moral standards -- because moral stan-dards should not count or keep accounts, to be sure..." (296). It is unclear what kind of moral standards Derrida is thinking here, save that he has us recall the danger of following vulgar morality (a determination of a vulgar ethical system), a calculus-bound morality, say a kind of consequentialism. Derrida will not mention consequentualism by name. I will – for no reason, except for its practical value: a ruse to read Jeremy Bentham (Utilitarianism, specie of consequentialist ethics).

Reflect, for a moment, on Bentham's philanthropy (consequentialist imperative), Bentham's care for animals/black slaves in nineteenth century Britain. Bentham cares for animals and slaves for one reason and one reason only: animals and slaves have capacity for suffering. Hence animal rights activism or white abolitionism (allaying of slave's suffering and sorrow[33]) is noble practice. Put another way, animal or slave suffering matters to white abolitionists, since suffering is a barrier to universal fraternity, limit to progress, limit to the production of the *greatest* amount of happiness (well-being) in the world.

Bentham is a philistine, however – for Marx. Bentham subsumes extant human relations in mere "relation of utility", mystifying the nature, the human relations of production and pity (pity for slaves and animals). For, says Marx: "To know what is useful for a dog, one must investigate the nature of dogs". And knowledge of animal nature "is not itself deducible from the principle of utility", for Marx. In fact: "Applying this (the futility of utilitarian principle) to man, he that would judge all human acts, movements, relations, etc. according to the principle of utility" is a mark of "dryest naiveté". This principle "would first have to deal with human nature in general, and then with human nature as historically modified in each epoch" (Marx, 1990:759). Would have to examine seriously the contingent "bourgeois epoch", for instance: an epoch quite peculiar, melting solids "into air", profaning all holiness in its "constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation" (Marx and Engels, 1970:224). The utility principle, then, *ought* to content with the nature of "bourgeois epoch" – and not merely frown on its obstacles (feudal remnants, slave masters, animal owners and so on), says Marx (1970). Until then, the bourgeois' principle of use (utility) is quite idle, arbitrary – an ideological determination. Marx concedes: animals or slaves have capacity for suffering – and Britons are justified to allay animal/human suffering, save doing so in the shadow of Bentham. None can occasion the greatest amount of happiness (usefulness/utility) in the world, when he/she reproduces bourgeois relations of existence.

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We may further think White bourgeois ethics, the regulation of the coming of the Union of South Africa. So that utilitarianism is partly the spirit, the vein of bourgeois/proletariat relations, the vein of white paternalism in the colony (the civilising mission). To desecrate the ideology of utilitarianism, the communist needs (by way of the

[33] There is (in abolitionist circles) strong suspicion of slaves capacity for reflective sorrow.

International Communist League) a coordination of all proletariat national struggles in the Union, culminating in The Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA). What in the Union, though, is the *significance* of proletarian self-determination? What is its significance, read against or alongside Magubane's phrases: "British actions toward the Afrikaners", "the betrayal of Africans", "unforeseen price", "magnanimity"? Consider, at once, the CPSA's early white proletarian struggle (a type of 'betrayal' of black Africans): white worker self-determination: the unity of white workers and the defence of white South Africa. I read in these phrases – 'action towards' or 'betrayal' of or 'price' for a black African – a regulative moment for a *becoming* of a longing for the ethical-in-Black. And I think these phrases through Anton Lembede.

Lembede's recoil from white communism is on record. Lembede sees in white communism in South Africa a trace of European self-aggrandizement. In turn, communists see in Lembede a native separatist (a kind of 'counter revolutionary'). Read, for a moment, a September 1944 *Nkululeko* editorial ("an organ of the Communist Party of South Africa"). The editorial sees in Lembede Hitler's new convert. At a congress meeting in Orlando, Lembede "condemned every organisation which has Europeans in its ranks and lashed at Jews in the most vicious terms", reports the editor (clearly in defence of communist infiltration in the African National Congress). To which Lembede replies:

> *We cannot acquiesce in the political confusion occasioned by some white men who start or run some African political organisations which divide the Africans and render them helpless and impotent. It is immaterial whether such white men are English, Dutch, German or Jew. In the Orlando meeting I made mention of […] Englishmen and Dutchmen and Jews. I was not conscious of the fact that mention of the Jew is taboo in this democratic country* (Edgar & Msumza, 1996:117).

Already, for Lembede, a white man is a suspect. The white man is a problem, in spite of his usefulness, in spite of Lembede's walk on his/her discourses and, at times, on his/her temperament. Lembede sees in Hitler (to his 'comrades' discomfort) passion for self-determination personified, for instance. He reads Hegel, Spinoza, Descartes. He accepts Marxian injunctions: a "full stomach" is better than a head-ful of English sonnets. He can read what he likes – since Europeans have not (for him) monopoly over forms of self-enquiry (political, scientific, artistic, philosophic or religious). Lembede goes as far as upholding Christianity, transfigures its axiology into an axiology of the black-Now. "We need Christianity for its sublime and lofty ethical values. Morality is the soul of society. Without sound morals a society must inevitability gravitate to low levels of *beastly* existence – So

History teaches… the essence of Christianity is cavalry, or the cross – the ready willingness to offer and sacrifice one's life at the altar of one's own convictions, for the benefit of one's fellow men. This is a revolutionary doctrine" (113).

Whether Lembede is justified to appropriate Christianity is not the question. Enquiries into the compatibility of black-Africanness and 'Christianity' are beyond the scope of our concerns. In any case I will defer such questions to ontologists of religion, save for reading in this Lembedeian shouting (appropriation of Christianity) a desperate moment: an expression of loss, of living through an ethical indeterminacy (through a desecrated or colonised ethical paradigm {it matters little what this paradigm is in its ante-colonial state}). You will sense, at once, Lembede's regret for the incalculable African defeat (at the hand of the European), the lost "glory" of an African past. Put another way: Lembede longs for a normative life, through an appeal to a glorious past (originary Maternal Care), betraying a crisis of national/moral life (a moral-national life destitute of the ethical).

This longing (a determination of wisdom), in itself, has not (to think Mudimbe-Husserl's radical doubt) a normative force. Of normative force is the present itself (the Union time/the black's political immediacy). Necessarily, the black must sublate the present.

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So, let us see in Lembede's Political Thought a refraction of distaste for Union times, the misery of the black, the "Ja-Baas mentality, which for centuries has been systematically and subtlety implanted into the minds of the Africans" (Edgar & Msumza, 1996:91). And let us read in Lembede a flow of aspirations for Africa's future ("divine destiny"), a counting on African youth (and its vitality). Youth (a form of becoming national) ought to hope in Africa, its future. Hope after all, says Lembede through Alexandra Pope, "springs eternal in the human breast… … is our driving and unfailing force" (74). It is far from scandalous to count-on, conjure up the future, implies Lembede, since "Man never is but always to be blest". Counting-on is a mid-wife, a fact of permanent fantasie: Always there (springing forth from inside the heart), counting-on (hoping in) the future (a faculty of blessedness) must *drive* youth struggle and secure a national victory, *Freedom in our Lifetime.*

Lembede is cautious, though. He leaves open the possibility of an uncertain future. He shuns predictive registers – black sibylline zeal (tendentious foretelling and foreclosures of the future, good or bad). To any black future-teller, Lembede retaliates: "I thought it was only

the Jewish race which excelled in producing prophets as the Bible shows. It appears, however, that the African race is strong rival of the Jews in this type of day-dreaming about what will happen in the future… [T]he future is a closed book for us". The future, time as such, is transcendent (unknowable in itself), so that Africa's future greatness (glory) falls within the sphere of possibility. It is worthwhile, still, to risk counting on an uncertain future: for although "we have so far achieved practically nothing, momentous tasks of vast dimensions and stupendous proportions still await us in the future" (74). *We have done little in practice, implies Lembede. We are doing much in theory, nonetheless. We will get there, to our divine-destiny. Already we are there, in theory, we look no farther than in our breasts. We possess a hope-drive.* Hence: "[w]e are not called to peace, comfort and enjoyment, but to hard work, struggle and sweat. We need young women and men of high moral stamina and integrity; of courage and vision…this means that we have to *develop* a new type of youth – not the pleasure-loving, frivolous, dissolute, light minded type – but youth of stoical discipline, trained to endure suffering and difficulties" (74). Lembede has us think a possible glory in black youth, and has us substitute this glory for Africa's incalculable defeat.

In youth, then, Lembede articulates a dialectics of history – an uncertain divine destiny. He gestures towards the sublation of the present (to reiterate), and that it is up to youth to decide on the method/form. Youth embodies a kind of Spirit, by implication. And this Spirit forms the movement of history. Lembede moves, it seems, on Hegel's heels. I will read Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, for a moment. The Hegelian Spirit has a 'Past', a moment of mere immediacy (the indeterminacy of Being itself). This Spirit lives as though in the absence of time, has a form of 'Plantness' (always vegetative), as if self-eating (in its immediacy) without dying. The Spirit, in its beginning, is an unconscious consciousness. Necessarily, though, the Spirit has a 'Present' – an egress from nature, a move toward mere animality. The Spirit (in its Present), not surprisingly, self-expresses (inter alia), by way of "antagonistic national Spirits who hate and fight each other to death and become conscious of specific forms of animals as their essence" (Hegel, 1998:420). Hence – Hegel could speculate – the world will have Russia (through Stalin) and the Nazi Germany (through Hitler): the (anti) heroes. Then: in Hegel we take (anti) heroes seriously, only to a point nonetheless. We may forgive their (mis)deeds, for they do not know what they do. Unbeknown to them, (anti) heroes serve a higher purpose: the universal Idea, the attainment of Freedom (1998,420). Mere subjects, (anti) heroes in the world have the Spirit realise their own universality, the

Spirit's Freedom, its 'Future'. The Spirt self-realises, through the inter-articulation of the 'absolute' (the abstract) and 'the special' (human passions).

So, the 'Future' of the Spirit is the 'I', Self-consciousness. Or, what is a similar thing, Freedom is the substance of the self-conscious Spirit, self-consciousness's very condition of possibility. So that Freedom is a deferring to and a determination of Reason, necessity. Reason articulates universality – its own laws through laws of Nature – since "Nature [itself] is an embodiment of Reason" (Hegel, 2001:7). Reason moves the Spirit from a Past into the Future, a circular movement which already is complete. In Reason the Spirit was, is, and will be – at the same instant. Reason then, is the substance of world-universal history, has in itself the final purpose: the world's attaining consciousness of Freedom, through the (anti) hero for instance.

By no means, however, is the (anti) hero (the subject) in Hegel necessarily non-rational. The subject is a rational will-in-passion, Thought itself (26). A rational will, the Hegelian subject is free. Rational will forms the idea of Freedom, by which the formation of, say, a State (the form of the Spirit, absolute form of Freedom[34]) is possible. 'Man' is free only if he/she *knows* he/she is free. Freedom is dependence on nothing outside (externality). Freedom is reliance on the self: self-accountability. The subject is only unfree in its singularity (the mere One) – in mere desire, destitute of itself, its own object, merely hopeful, waiting for some satisfaction in the 'future'…. (Hegel, 1998). By way of rational will, then, Reason makes possible Man's knowledge of his freedom – for how can Man know of his freedom if he has not heard of this freedom? Reason is the originary voice, the logos, "beyond definition", an articulation of the finite (human passions) and the infinite. "Freedom (as such) is an infinite category". Hence Hegel finds comfort in divinising Freedom (finds in the nature of God's will the Idea, Freedom itself – for "all God only wills himself is his own Will" (Hegel, 2001:11). And God, Thought itself, constitutes human capacity for thought, for conceptual (non-empiricist) apprehension of the world. Hence Hegel, to take a leap here, rejects vulgar historiography, historisisation bereft of prior categories (the Concept).

If Hegel is humble historicist, he is a proud idealist.

[34] Absolute form of Freedom is the State, whose base is the notion of Revealed Religion (and not natural religion nor positive religion, like Christianity) (See Hegel, 1998; Lukács, 1977). To apprehend this relation – Religion as the substrate of the State, the State as a form of the idea Freedom – we need art. To apprehend and understand it, we need Philosophy.

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Reading Lembede's hopes in black youth alongside the Hegelian Spirit is to betray (we have said this already, in some ways) a hapless longing for a language (an ante-black language), a holy language to write a feasible plan of combat, the struggle for Africa's destiny. Lembede's longing is thinking the possible *development* of youth as Spirit (in a related way that, suffice it to say, Du Bois traces the longing soul of the black folk through the development of Negro religions. In Negro spirituals, the soul of the black folk, you will recall, longs for an indeterminate freedom. The soul of the black folk is the critique of White American freedom itself). Lembede thinks an Africa finally free (in the youth's life time), thus questioning/correcting the Hegelian notion of freedom itself: that freedom, for the black, is not knowledge of his freedom. Rather, freedom for the black is possible through necessity (sublation of the master {the present}). This necessity is the beginning of freedom 'in our life time' – so that this freedom rhetorically potent as it is, in fact, conceptually redundant. He takes this freedom seriously, in other words – and goes as far as symbolising it: it is time for Blacks to eat meat (and not crush bones), he says, since *blacks are not dogs*. Meat-eating expresses a struggle for Africa's destiny, a longing for the ethical-in-black (an articulation of regret for African defeat and the necessity of sublating the present).

Meat-eating, for Lembede, may well have us think in black youth (passion-infused) a possible spectre of *rational instinct* (rather than the Hegelian rational will), haunting the colony, living outside the law (vandalising the white phallus). The black youth follows his rational instinct, since (we learn from Mphahlele' *Grieg on a stolen Piano*) the white "Christ never explained what a black man should do in order to earn a decent living in this country" (Mphahlele, 1967:44). To eat meat is following one's instinct (the necessity to sublate/vandalise white things, the Master) without becoming a dog (a mere animal) itself. The black youth follows his rational instinct: the great offense to the coloniser (since in this black rational instinct the coloniser simply sees an animal instinct).

Still, should it matter that Lembede distinguishes himself from dogs and not any other animal? Sure: Lembede's meat-eating metaphor is a responds to Smuts (who thinks blacks merit a treatment similar to that of dogs). Yet there is more to the Lembedeian fixation on dogs. I read, then, the time of the native dog in the Union, the so called 'Africanis'. The white cult reduces the Africanis to a status of proto-dogness, a pariah in the land of its birth, an "outcast" (Gallant, 2002:44). An outcast (or the potentiality of becoming an outcast): a

question of value, akin a commodity. Africanis' outcast status is a case of white affirmative preference, in favour of the 'Boer-dog' at the advent of the Union of South Africa. The Boer dog after all is one casualty in the Anglo-Boer (the little white) quarrel. In this quarrel the Boer-dog has *sacrificial* value (in a material sense of the term), lives not for its own sake. This dog is a representative of the Boer culture, and thus worth sacrificing, for the sake of British self-appreciation. So: rehabilitating the Boer-dog marks the rehabilitation of Boer culture.

I will say nothing more of the Boer dog (or white dog in general), for I am concerned with the Africanis and its outcast status, its arbitrary life. What is the nature of this arbitrariness? Consider the magnitude of its (un)'freedom' of movement in the Union's urban settlements. On the one hand, few native dogs could have it good (health), if their black owners feed them. The Africanis could have it bad, on the other – quite bad if it is destitute of a legal owner, if none in the Union pays its tax (possibly, the poor potential dog tax payer would rather use his/her money for other things, his/her food for instance).The potential dog tax payer could simply lack wherewithal to feed a dog. Destitute of owners, the native dog has a homeless home, starving – to the point of nearly puking its tongue. Starving, then, some native dogs simply die out. Others turn "feral and survive as [bone] scavengers on the fringes" of Orlando, Doorfontein, Vrededorp, Thulandivile or Sophiatown. These dogs turn feral, enlisting in the already feralled, the already "disenchanted" dog world (Gallant, 2002:44).

Turning feral, to return to Marx, betrays the dynamism of Africanis' nature. Feral dog-life is unnatural, shows dog nature "as historically modified in each epoch" (Marx, 1990:759). Marx pre-echoes Karabo in Mphahlele's *Mrs Plum*. Karabo (a female domestic worker in the white Mrs Plum's house) sees clever, purposeful animals in 'native' dogs, and that this is their glory – vis-a-vis 'white' dogs. "A [real] dog must look for its own food when it is not time for meals, not these stupid spoiled angels the whites keep giving tea and biscuits...the spoiled angels" the whites like to see eat "with fork and knife" (Mphahlele, 173:1967). Karabo's dislike for 'white' dogs is a self-preserving principle, staying clear the white things where possible. "Me", she says, "I take a master's bitch by the leg, me, and throw it away so that it keeps howling, tjwe – tjwe! ngo-wu ngo-wu! I don't play about with them, me…" (173)

Could Karabo's principle be a critique of white vision, whites seeing in animals and animal-men lives destitute of embodied souls? In which case Karabo could bite the bullet: what does it matter if I am an animal-man (and embodies not a soul for white eyes)? At issue, she could say, I have alongside native dogs the capacity for clever and purposeful existent. I have my instincts, capacity to get my "own food when it is not time for meals" (173). Karabo is not an animal (a dog, for example), of course. For, although the dog is clever, purposeful and responds to its hunger, it may be a stretch to think it has *conceptual intuition* of its hunger. The dog, I speculate following Derrida, has not an *ethical* apprehension of its hunger (in a related way that, already naked, a dog {or a cat} for Derrida has not a sense of its nakedness). The animal has not capacity for ethics (knowledge of good and evil), since it has not and cannot long for a Language (Derrida, 2008:380).

All dogs might have souls (since all could have morals (opinion of right or wrong), a purpose), of course, though bereft of the capacity to apprehend sorrow. They have a past, though without attendant analytics of historiography. It may seem strange, then, that Karabo disgraces a thing (a 'white dog'), originarily incapable of conceptually apprehending sorrow. For what does she gain, save the comfort of causing pain to the animal? Yet, it is more than being sadistic, for her. In the final analysis, her wish to disgrace white dogs is a wish to vandalise Mrs Plum herself, their Master, a wish to desecrate whiteness itself. She could destroy Mrs Plum herself, of course, given a chance. Could destroy her in a similar (related) way that, to bring it to our times, black boys in Coetzee's *Disgrace*, violate a white woman's dangerous dogs, only to disgrace (rape) her in turn.

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Violating animals (in general) is non-scandalous, for Union blacks. The act of spilling blood in general, the blood of a sacrificial goat say (and *possibly* not eating its meat), appeasing the gods (for this or that reason), wagering a blessed life, is quite familiar to a Union black. Here I rely on Harriet Ngubane's theological anthropology, and observe a *possible* case, one *scenario* of a Union Black's animal sacrifice (beneficial for the recently dead, for instance). Animal Sacrifice in the Union black is a bridge, mythico-alchemically speaking. It *consummates the recently dead's* immortality of the soul, the soul of the black folk: a shadow. A shadow, the union black could believe, leaves "the *body* when a person dies … . A shadow in this sense can be seen as synonymous with a soul, in that it is believed to depart from the *body* in the form of the body, although *invisible***.** A dead person is initially an *isithunzi* until a sacrifice is performed after a period of mourning". The shadow is an

incorporeal corporality, a gesture toward an afterlife. An afterlife, realisable when, and only when, animal sacrifice concatenates the recently dead and the already dead, the "down below – beneath the earth…The sacrifice brings him back home as an idlozi (sing*)", an ancestor.*

Ante-sacrifice: the recently dead becomes a potential ancestor. Post-sacrifice: he procures a new capacity. He could look after the 'still living', the recently born in particular (having emerged from beneath the earth) – if and only if the still living (the elderly up the earth) spills goat-blood and pours beer on the floor, aligning the shadows of the ancestors and the recently born. Only if they spill the blood and then have the ancestor eat the meat and drink the beer. Hence, on Ngubane's account, a black rural *kraal* in the Union has "the great hut", in which "the upper part of the floor is marked off by an inch-high ridge forming a semi-circle as umsamo. *No stranger* may go beyond the ridge into the umsamo area, for it is *here* that the offering to the ancestors is made by burning incense; the beer set aside for ancestors is kept *here* and the sacrificial meat hangs *here* overnight – the beer is to be sipped and the meat licked or eaten by the ancestors. The ancestors are said to rest on the rafters", *here* in "the great hurt" (Ngubane, 1977:57).

There is the-*here* in the hurt. Where is the-*there* in this hurt, though? Ngubane is quite on this score, justifiably. For, what should the absence of *a there* in Ngubane's account matter? It matters little if this space, the semi-circle, belongs to the ancestor in the last instance. The *here-there* distinction would be idle then (it seems to me), since the ancestor *lives anywhere* (which matters to him/her), *walks* beneath and *hovers* the earth. The ancestor blesses his/her suppliants, young and old, nearly indifferent to suppliants' spacio-temporal location (their places of laboring, of 'family' life and so on). The ancestor, *a sacred fact*, may seem distant (transcendent). Nevertheless, the ancestor, you may recall, is invisibly sensuous, decked in an invisible body and, by extension, immanent (in the suppliant), immediately imposing (albeit transcendently) on the suppliant[35].

The mise-en-scène, the here (the not there), the sacred semi-circle unsamo area, is quite revealing, clearly – if, what is more, we *imagine* an ancestor *resting* there-as-here, on a rafter, meat eating. Meat-eating, *resting* inside-above everyone else (suppliants), seems at once an ancestral self-celebration, celebrating an ancestral capacity, responsibility for others

[35] This is near-analogous social/moral facts (in Durkheim). Higher than a moral fact, though, the ancestor *radically* imposes him/herself on the suppliant. The ancestor is a universal singularity: concatenates body-soul above the earth (the damned of the earth, seeking recourse, redeeming a 'cancerous' present, the culture-nature complex) and those beneath. The suppliant as such is a *moral agent*. And he believes *(enquiringly)* that the ancestor on the rafter, too, is a moral 'agent'.

(or, same thing, self-responsibility) or – in a phrase, ancestral 'freedom' or morality (love and power, Maternal Care). This Care, seemingly transcendental, informs black manners (expressive of wisdom), only to a point. For, on the one hand, ancestral moral life (love and power/Maternal Care), is not the basis for union black's normative (ethical) life[36]: since this moral life is at once immanent and transcendent. Since it is near-indeterminate, fractured and thus undependable. Is not the basis for union black's ethical life, since it betrays (we return to Mudimbe-Husserl's anti-historicism once again) phenomenology's radical doubt (the fact that to appeal to ancestral moral life borders on a kind of native historicism). Is not the basis for union black's ethical life, since (to take the doubt further) the Union black is in the *first* and *las*t instance an object of national sorrow (an immediate determination and immediate condition of white ethics), which imposes itself on the Union black, *severing* the Union black's consciousness. The *severing* of the Union black's consciousness renders 'black intentionality'near-indeterminate.

National sorrow then (though a determination of white ethics {utilitarianism in the Union}, is quite spectral, self-expresses somatically, by way of the black's state of wakefulness, a kind of self-sensing[37]. It auto-expresses through the black body-soul, the black body and its shadow. So that rafters in semi-circle unsamo area (the moment of black animal sacrifice {the concatenation of ancestral body and the supplicants'}) merits further reading. It suffices to reiterate one point here: ancestral moral life is a condition of wisdom and not an epistemic condition. It has not a constitutive bearing on the black ethical life. Aancestral moral life is sensible, nonetheless – sensible when the Union black (the suppliant) apprehends his/her reflexes: 'somatic' responses to, or expressions of, fear from present violence (a kind of political sickness) or violence to come for instance. Seeing the invisible ancestral body on the rafters is a moment of self-enquiry then, for this black suppliant, a moment of thinking his/her potential/actual sickness.

Seeing the ancestral body on the rafters is moral moment of longing, clearly. Put another way: Sacrificial longing [38] is heteronomously determined (recall that the ancestor's

[36] See Mudimbe(1994)

[37] I rely on Derrida (2012) here. Witnessing a ghost, one need not merely bracket its phamtomacity. One must also confront the real body of the ghost, the constitution, the condition (not merely its causes) of the ghost's appearance.

[38] In addition to Durkheimian desire – think Durkheimian desire here, for a moment, necessary for the possibility of becoming a moral agent, we may reflect an unconscious desire for that which is contra one's long

morality imposes itself on the suppliant). Sacrificial longing is positively negative, an originary identificatory moment with a living-death (living absence): the living ancestor. It is a substratum of gnosis, the condition of its possibility. So that animal sacrifice, on the other hand, express the black suppliant's *shadow kind of* longing, longing for an ethical paradigm. Longing in blackness, then: *less* a faculty of obligation (dutifulness towards this or that) than a mark of black's state of abjection (a black's speculative *appropriation* of the living absents/ancestral agency/Maternal Care). On the other, animal sacrifice indexes the black's indefinite moment of violence against 'nature', whiteness itself. Longing articulates black negation of the notion of 'nature'.

We then sense why the black's (Karabo's, for instance) negation of white animals subtends a longing for an elusive ethical paradigm.

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I return to the Lembedein *moral* moment of longing, the moment of meat-eating. Lembede is a spectacular suppliant, in other words: for he sacrifices an animal, only to eat its meat. Lembedeian animal-killing could be a non-sacrificial act, of course, could be a ritual (necessary) for feasting purposes – in which case freedom in his life time is an object of mere taste, of hunger, a mere 'means to an end'. Lembede's animal-killing is nonetheless a sacrificial act, I content, an object of incalculable longing. Recall, for a moment, Lembede's desperate appropriation of a Christian axiology. In Lembede, "the essence of Christianity is cavalry, or the cross – the ready willingness to offer and sacrifice one's life at the *altar* of one's own convictions, for the benefit of one's fellow men. This is a revolutionary doctrine". Calvary, the cross, for Lembede, may well be a special site of animal-killing, the mark of (and perhaps a substitute for) his "ready willingness to" self-offer and self-sacrifice for his "fellow men" (113). Calvary, what is the same thing, becomes pseudo-metaphor for Ngubane's "Great Hut". The cross here, a *desperate allegory*, is a near-symbolic for *Umsamo area* beyond the ridge (the site of spectacular supplication, for Lembede, an affirmation of his longings and convictions: namely, the struggle for freedom in his life time).

In the semi-circle *area*, then, Lembede and his fellow suppliants kill the animal and eat the meat themselves. They share it not with the ancestors or the divine, so that a mere

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term interests, as in the black desire for whiteness, for instance. Desire, for the black supplicant, is an originary identificatory moment with a living death, the ancestor as such.

reading of Lembede's sacrificial act, by way of Christian temporality/symbolism (only because Lembede appropropriates the Christian ethical), is mere *desperation*, unfruitful. Lembedeian sacrifice (constitutive of his longing for freedom in his life time) is *partly* possible within a quasi-messianic time, to be sure. Partly messianic, akin Benjaminian messianic time (in Anderson), stilled or stopped time, in which events unfold simultaneously", all in the present. Time in which the spectator – he/she alone – is near god-like (omniscient), knows and sees (as though trough a clock) the unfolding plot in its entirety. So that the Lembedeian national time ("the flow of thoughts" and "their arrest", a moment for sacrifice) is neither susceptible to prophetic (soothsaying) hoping nor prophetic nihilism (recall that there are no black prophets {soothsayers}, for Lembede). Paradoxically, then, Lembedeian national time is partly non-messianic. The future (in the present) exists (albeit bereft of guarantees vis-à-vis messianic time {in which the actual messiah will come any time). The "future" in Lembede, you will recall, "is a closed book for us".

Lembedeian national time is non-messianic, since 'freedom' (meat eating) in his life time is not a question of longing for a future/afterlife (or longing to commune with ancestors, all beneath the earth). Lembedeian national time is non-messianic when at stake is the *life-here*, the mise-en-scène of black morality (the expression of rational instinct). Black morality: the life-here, bereft of "peace, comfort and enjoyment", the life-here of "hard work, struggle and sweat", of "high moral stamina and integrity; of courage and vision", *by* which life "we have to *develop* a new type of youth – not the pleasure-loving, frivolous, dissolute, light minded type – but youth of stoical discipline, trained to endure suffering and difficulties" (74). Precisely, the life-here (of the animal sacrifice) in Lembede articulates black longing, a longing for an ethical-in-black, the necessity of sublating the present.

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Now, black longing is vehicular, the beginning of initialising a possibility of a 'national culture', a possibility of thinking politically appropriate forms of animal sacrifice and meat-eating. We may, at once, enquire of any particular animal Lembede would sacrifice. We may think, too, his form (and style) of meat-eating. This is a difficult enquiry – since Lembede talks meat in general, meat in the abstract – betraying an indefinite indeterminacy of meat-eating, similar to (though incommensurate with) the form of the indefinite idea of Hegelian freedom. Lembede's general talk, put another way, is of little help in thinking the kind of animal he would sacrifice and the manner of eating it. He would not, we could

speculate of course, sacrifice a dog, for instance. Lembede (and many a Union black), after all, does not eat dog meat. What is more, he is not a dog – suggesting, perhaps, that Lembede's manner of eating in general need not resemble a dog's. Lembede's manner of meat-eating need not resemble the Africanis's, for example – since the Africanis eats out of mere hunger, and possibly not out of longing (recall that an animal, we speculate, has not a conceptual intuition for its hunger, similar to the absence of its conceptual intuition for nakedness).

A cue for the Lembedeian manner/form of meat-eating lies in Lembede's life-here of "hard work, struggle and sweat", of "high moral stamina and integrity; of courage and vision", where "we have to *develop* a new type of youth – not the pleasure-loving, frivolous, dissolute, light minded type – but youth of stoical discipline, trained to endure suffering and difficulties" (74). Unwittingly, Lembede may well be asking black youth (Africa's glory) to sense a possible political virtue of non-dog manners of eating, a possible virtuous form of meat-eating: an index of struggle for the ethical-in-black, a confrontation of political evil. Whether Lembede is asking too much of black youth is not my concern here. And we need not see in Lembede a *kind* of protestant ethic, if (for our purposes) we think 'stoical discipline' an ethical acme proper only to Protestantism. The Christian ethical, you will recall, is an object of mere appropriation, for the Union black. So that the Christian ethical betray the indeterminacy of the ethical, for blacks.

My point: Lembedeian national time is a determination of white time, and white time is *singular* and heterogeneous, heterogeneously *heteronomous*, at once a present object of necessary sublation. This time hovers (independently of any *individual* black), self-inscribing at the same instant through a dynamic-heterogeneous array (random multiplicity) of blacks. Let us reiterate: the *struggle* for the ethical-in-black is possible, partly owing to blackness's sense of *political (colonial) evil* – blackness and evil, after all, are partly of the same onto-political type, negativity. A struggle for the ethical-in-black, the fact of animal sacrifice and meat eating for instance, is always a confrontation of evil (a political category). Lembedeian sacrifice and meat eating, in short, marks a black s*tate* of struggle, of longing, more than its being an object of mere *ethical* evaluation. Lembedeian sacrifice as such is beyond *evil* or *goodness* (as mere ethical categories[39]), although the sacrifice itself is possible by way of longing in and for the *ethical-in-black*.

[39] For our purposes, evil is a politico-ethical category.

A violence on Love

I gestured toward the problem of freedom in the previous chapter, by way of Hegel (Hegelian freedom, the realisability of which knowledge of one's freedom is a pre-requisite. The realisability of which, in a Union formation, the moment of self-sacrifice and sacrificing the 'animal' (the black) is necessary). And I thought freedom through Lembede (Lembedeian "freedom", the necessity of rational instinct, a critique of a Hegelianism itself.

Now I am concerned with the problem of freedom, still – freedom and its articulation of the union black's (in) capacity for love and friendship. Thinking freedom alongside love and friendship is a movement further, a move towards a reading of black (nation) time. A move with/through Peter Abrahams's *Tell Freedom*, the telling of a freedom bereft of "beauty" (1954:248). A telling and feeling structured in romanticism, hovering within the hopelessness/hopefulness matrix, in which the difficulty of sexual taste (violated sexuality), for instance, marks a possible friendship with history itself.

By no means, though, is *Tell Freedom* a total solution for Hegelian crisis. Suffice it to reflect on the political limits of the Hegelian system, once more. Perhaps a compelling western critique of Hegelian freedom is in Emmanuel Levinas. Levinas (in *Time and the Other*): none is ever free (completely) – or, rather, one is free and not free in the same moment. A being (existent) is a determination of existing (eternity), although being is relatively free (separate) from existing itself. A "free being is already no longer free, because it is responsible for itself (1987:55). And the capacity to "be responsible for oneself" (being-determination) articulates an experience of being-in-solitude, a seamless (non-dictatorial) articulation of existent (being) and existing (eternity), where time is absent (1967:103). Freedom leads to solitude, fullness of joy.

If solitude, Levinas seems to suggest, is an experience of fullness of joy, "all enjoyment is knowledge and light as such" (1987:67). More: "pain, sorrow and suffering… constitute solitude, fullness of joy" (69). And "in suffering there is an absence of all refuge, so that suffering is the impossibility of nothingness" (69). Suffering, then, marks a moment in/of Freedom. Freedom, put another way, is the very expression of the impossibility of being nothing. Freedom is the moment of self-responsibility, the condition (to reiterate) of joyfulness. Self-responsibility (being present): existing for being in existence: free (being) and dependent on existing (eternity).

Still more: always, death is present in suffering, for Levinas. And yet its presence "does not confirm solitude". It desecrates ('breaks') solitude. So that death becomes the suffering subject's real other, the real threat, the ultimate alterity. So that self-responsibility is a moment of being in death while un-dead. Self-responsibility marks the emergence of the subject, in a word. The subject or subjectivity emerges, for Levinas, "not at the level of its purely egoist protestation against totality, nor in its anguish before death, but as founded in the idea of death" (1967:26). The idea of Death (the subject's ultimate alterity) is less profound, though. It is a *non-absolute* alterity. For death, though *immanent*, is undesirable (has little work with itself as a subject's object of desire).

At the same moment the subject emerges, by way of the idea of death, the subject determines/produces the idea of infinity. "Infinity", says Levinas, "does not first exist, and then reveal itself. Its infinitude is produced as revelation, as a positing of its idea in me…produced in the improbable feat whereby a separated being faced in its identity, the same, the I, nonetheless contains in itself what it can neither contain nor receive solely by virtue of its own identity" (26). Then: the absolute, profound other, in Levinas, is Infinity itself. The subject desires the Other – infinity – without ever satisfying its desire. This subject does not and cannot negate the Other, the infinite (41). The subject-Infinity relation is, in Derrida, "neither mediate nor immediate": it is "absolute proximity and absolute distance". The Other is "the only one capable of opening the space of transcendence" (Derrida, 1978:82). To desire the Other (which is religious-like process) marks an impossibility of possessing the infinite[40], expression of the finality of equality between the same and the Other: a condition of Peace.

The infinite is indefinitely an object of desire, so that Levinus will distance himself from western metaphysics in general – Hegel and Heidegger in particular, for whom being is a determination of Being, for whom totality is an object of desire, for whom the relation of being and Being is simply a forced or authoritarian expression or determination of Totality (40), where the "subject's freedom comes from obedience to Being", where "it is not man who possess freedom" but freedom man. (Levinas, 1967:2645, 47), where "freedom precedes justice". Then: the pre-condition of freedom, for Levinas, is justice. Justice is the substratum of freedom, and freedom leads to solitude (of joyfulness, of knowledge and light). So that solitude (joy) marks a moment of desiring infinity, the Other.

[40] See Derrida (1978).

How else, implies Levinas in all this, can we explain the Hegelian Spirit (Geist), its parade of a seemingly predestined Universal History, the history of war against Peace. How else can we explain Hitler's National Socialism, for instance? Failure to achieve fullness of joy ("knowledge and light"), failure to commune seamlessly with the infinite may have the suffering western subject grope for socialism. Socialism here, in Levinas, becomes a compensatory form (a kind of replica) of joyfulness.

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Who will deny 'good' intentions in Levinas's efforts? Noble efforts, dripping of disappointment in the European light-cum-darkness, decadence (expressed through the Holocaust). But, says Derrida, the road to re-live Western decadence is paved with the noble intentions. Can Levinas, so to speak, substitute one light for another? How is the metaphor of light (contiguous to knowledge) in Levinas a critique of "the history of the light of Being" (Derrida, 1978:86). How is Levinas's community in/of "light anterior to Platonic light"? How is it a "light before neutral light....the light of light beyond light" (82), how is it the condition of goodness beyond "neutral Goodness" put another way? Levinas's light (or goodness) is not neutral, "since at stake is the creation of the other, and creation "can be only as paternity, and the relations of the father to son escape all the logical, ontological and phenomenological categories in which the absoluteness of the other is necessarily the same" (86). Derrida wants to say the history of the Other in Levinas escapes all the concept of history: the Other's "eschatology" is irreducible, is outside the realm of history (88).

And yet, Derrida is not convinced: Levinas' light is an object of suspicion. For: "Light perhaps has no opposite; if it does, it is certainly not night. If all languages combat within it, modifying only the same metaphor and choosing the best light...Perhaps [Derrida echoes Borges] Universal history is the history of metaphors" (94). A play of metaphors, a will to hide or obfuscate the nature of things…..Herein lies the crisis. It seems Levinas cannot think the light of being before it calls him first. Always, then, one (the western critic) is named by Platonic sunshine, the coming of violence itself. Levinas's ethics (by way of the metaphor of light, infinity) mask or opens a possible re-creation of the platonic, Hegelian Other, totality. Levinasian infinity may well be a critique of Platonic sunshine, and yet: Platonic sunshine is Teflon.

I will say at once: this light is the life of the indefinite white labour time in the Union. The re-creation of the commodity form, the black.

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I turn to Abrahams here, to see in *Tell Freedom* an *artistic* enunciation (specie of black babbling) in ethics, a way of thinking the Union black, and his /her moral anguish. A way of thinking an articulation of remaining silent/shouting within a Platonic light. I turn to see in Abrahams's first portrait (Lee's momentary solitude), for instance, an indefinite moral-*libidinal loop*, longing and indefinite fantasy: a moralising method (its form and function of combat), a wager for an escape from political immediacy, a recoil from the Union light (time).

Lee:

> *I pushed my nose and lips against the pane and tried to lick a raindrop sliding on the other side. As it slid past my eyes, I saw the many colours in the raindrop…it must be warm in there. Warm and dry. And perhaps the sun would be shining in there. The green must be the trees and the grass; and the brightness, the sun…. I was inside the raindrop, away from the misery of the cold damp room. I was in a place of warmth and sunshine, inside my raindrop world* (1954:1).

Lee's wager for 'life' – the sun, green grass and trees, the dry warmth – seems morally necessary, a determination of rational instinct. Still, what happens when this life is wagered on a vanishing object of taste (a rain drop), a vanishing moment of possible enjoyment (a state of joyfulness)? What happens when the wagered life (solitude in sunshine) already is a determination of platonic sunshine (Union time)? Lee's wagered life in solitude (warmth in the sunshine) passes for a mirage. However permissible morally, Lee's wager is scandalous, in a similar way that elsewhere in *Tell Freedom* the proverbial white civility is Lee's object of non-achievable caress.

> *Impelled by something I could not explain, I went, night after night, on long lonely walks into the whites areas of Johannesburg. Night after night, I left black Vrededorp and walked along broad, clean, tree-lined streets. I walked slowly and felt the cool breeze and heard the sweet silences of these streets … sweet silences of the streets…clean air…strong houses finely fashioned plates…chairs…big and comfortable…rooms had space…cheerful-looking little cafes. No visible sign was up. But I knew these, too, were ….RESERVED FOR EUROPEANS ONLY* (163).

RESERVED FOR EUROPEANS ONLY is a case of a vanishing rain drop, of Lee's impossible nocturnal escape. An escape from what, though? This is a question of history, for Lee, the dialectic of the past and the present: the past in the present ad infinitum. So that a wager for a warm present (a mirage, an 'objective' *falsehood)* is wagering in the present (a wish to escape the present), a *logical* consequent of a past – in a related way that a wager for

a good past (always a mirage) is possible in the present (possible by way confronting the present). All this makes for a platitude: the present is in-escapable; or rather, all what-is is the present itself. Through his father, the present calls Lee out of a brooding: "*Lee...Lee…*". *And then follows Lee's meditation:*

> *The **sound jerked me out of my rain drop world**. I was at the window, looking out, feeling damp. I sensed that that was the **sound** by which I was identified. I turned and looked at the man who made it. He was tall, thin and dark. He had a big head, wide forehead, and **a long face** that tapered down to a **narrow chin**. He eyes were big, round, and hooded. There was softness in them. He leaned back in a chair, his legs stretched in front of him, the right crossed over the left. He held his right hand out to the fire in the centre of the room. With his left he played with the **hair of the girl** who sat on the floor beside his chair. I knew that man. Although I seemed to be seeing him for the first time, he was no stranger to me. He belonged most naturally and intimately to me and my world. The man said. 'Come, Lee. **Tell us what you see and we'll make it into a story'**. The way he looked at me disturbed me. I felt tense and desperate suddenly. I was unsure of this man, unsure of what he wanted from me. I turned my eyes from **his face** […] I turned to the man again. And then I knew that he was my father* (9) [emphasis mine].

The long face of the *black man*, the substrate of Union civility: taste for Johannesburg and its nice things – plump houses, broad and palm-leafy streets and so forth. A long black face, a miner without a Vote, awaiting the archetypical future – an unaccountable death[41].

Still, what is this *sound* Lee hears from his father, the sound that calls for a face-to-face (a seeming conflictual) encounter? This may well be a call to move in the direction of Levinas, through Derrida – a case of seeing in this relationship of "paternity and the relations of the father to son" a possible *displacement* of "all the logical, ontological and phenomenological categories in which the absoluteness of the other is necessarily the same". A case of thinking originary paternity outside world history.

The sound, however, moves (and this is primary) beyond representation (beyond a Derriderean text) and is by extension, to lean on Paul Gilroy, a non-object of a literary criticism (1993). So that what *displaces* "all the logical, ontological and phenomenological categories" is the sound or the movement of love itself. The thing not everyone knows *what* it is, it seems, the thing whose *movement* could nonetheless proceed from father to son, so that

[41] Lee knows this face, a man's face with a past, Ethiopian by birth (a descendent of valorous slave owners, a descendent of struggle against Italian presence (9)). Lee here become a Garvey-ite historian, meddles in a Pan Africanist struggles, so to speak, now self-pitying, now pitying his father, presently at the mercy of Union time.

the son (Lee), sensing it, is unsure of what is required of him: "I knew that man. Although I seemed to be seeing him for the first time, he was no stranger to me…The way he looked at me disturbed me. I felt tense and desperate suddenly. I was unsure of this man, unsure of what he wanted from me".

It is tempting to read in love a thing (an object) to give to, or perhaps share with, another. More: it is tempting to read in love a kind of a verb, if we read Derrida reading Aristotle (2005): love is what 'humans' do to/for others. So that love (an immaterial object) is un-knowable to one unless one acts it out. Derrida goes as far as seeing in the beloved the one who knows not what love is, unless he/she acts it out. All this (love-the-condition-of-joy) amounts to saying: forget or fret not about unrequited love, since in loving one loses nothing: one, in fact, is set to be a beneficiary of one's loving. All this gestures toward the meaning of a friend, of friendship. The possibility of friendship itself emerges through loving another. To know love (since one loves) is the very condition of Friendship. The Friend, in Derrida: he that has capacity to love, he that loves me, though I may not know he is a friend unless I love him. The Friend is he that loves beyond death, he that can love the deceased with ease: for his joy depends not on requited love. This is the moment of "primary friendship" (possible between humans), from which every other kind of friendship, say friendship from a man to an animal, could emerge. Love as such (the moment of friendship) is a determination of human capacity: virtue. Knowledge of love is possible, Aristotle will say, between good men (1962).

But our concern is the articulation of love and friendship in *Tell Freedom*. In the first place: love and friendship in *Tell Freedom* are expressive categories (non-representational), to return to Gilroy, a ruse for apprehending black longings. So that purely discursively-mediated readings of *Tell Freedom* (and black life) are already a scandal.

Consider Robert Ensor's reading, for a moment. *Tell Freedom* merely is a mark of Abraham's predilection for black liberal humanism, for Ensor. Love and friendship, alongside goodness or evil, are empty (ideological) categories. "It is these empty categories or silences ("goodness, 'evil', 'alienation', 'authenticity' and others) that Abrahams articulates the assertion of [black] petty bourgeois hegemony" (1992:182). Put another way:

> *… early on in his writing Abrahams objected to what he understood to be a limited view of society and history of many Communist party members and committed Marxist revolutionaries--a view which in his opinion denied the role of the individual and individual action, conscience and enlightenment were of central importance* (108).

Ensor casts Abrahams's work a prop of black liberal bourgeoisie leadership, a move away from Marxian or materialist hermeneutics of Union politics (Abrahams abjures class fractions in the Union of South Africa).

Now: is Abrahams' objection to communist views a necessary effect of black bourgeois liberalism? Do uses of terms with a supposed genealogy of liberal humanism make a black writer's work a necessary prop of [black] petty bourgeois hegemony? What is [black] petty bourgeois hegemony anyway? True, a Black writer's employ of particular discourses and their ideological orientation could matter to us, in evaluating their work, their themes. None need deny that Abrahams through the 1930s, 1940s 1950s in fact imagines some *practicality* in British liberalism (it matters to him in London that he can move as he *pleases*). Abrahams, what is more, prefers Shirley and Byron over Marx and Lenin (As a writer, Abrahams is *least* interested in political causes *than* 'human beings' and their problems) (1953). Still: what does it matter that Abrahams should, for Ensor, root Union politics in a Materialist hermeneutic? Will such a hermeneutic or apprehension usher us a *proper grasp* of Union blackness?

Lest you misread me. I do not dismiss Ensor's efforts, their use-value and political implications: for nearly always, Abrahams' seeming hope (with little references to structural considerations) for love and friendship amongst blacks, between white and blacks is possibly self-belying. Yet: seeing in Abrahams a prop of black liberal humanism is a case of Ensor's empirical/materialist/discursive reductionisms, a refusal to sense the irreducibility of black longing.

Tell Freedom mediates a black "political immediacy" and participates in a collage of black shouting, the genre of black soul-styling: a black bid to soul-elaboration, a possibility of moral responsibility. And *Tell Freedom* may well be a minor shout (political *enunciation) – since* English writing from an English colony is exemplarily proper to Minor literature[42]. And yet *Tell Freedom* is beyond the Minority, exceeds the major-minor matrix, in the sense that it may not be literature at all (if literature is a determination of he/she that has capacity for solitude). Tell Freedom has us apprehend, above all, Black life's onto-historical status. Tell Freedom, I argue, is a simulation of black's difficult escape (from danger). Tell Freedom betrays Blackness as heteronymous (Blackness lives in and outside the black him/herself at

[42] See Deleuze & Guattari (1986).

the same instant). More: it betrays a heteronymous blackness alongside the reality of love, which is neither a verb nor an object to give another, since the black in *Tell Freedom* has not solitude, has not capacity for giving love to another, black or white. Love for blacks is a Subject, I contend. So that a reading of love (though it is not a verb or an object) alongside Tell Freedom's father-son relationship is a generative effort.

Already we said love is originary, for the black. It is an originary past, the past before the coming of the light, of violence, white time. This violence regulates maternal care, or more properly, the "love of the grandmother", the grandmother's speech. It regulates "the memory of the family, the social group, and the community…the re-actualisation of what was and what will be again, at one and the same time as testimony and as a game of history" (Mudimbe, 1994:197). A game of history: wisdom: the hope in the futureless 'future', the future that already is past. And what if hope, after love, confronts "all the logical, ontological and phenomenological categories"? So that hoping, for a commodity that speaks (the black), perhaps is possible through love, the love that neither is an object to give nor a verb, the love that is the *form* or *style* of hoping itself? And yet all this game of history, to return to Mudimbe, all this form or style of hoping has a non-normative force, a non-necessary basis for an ethical life in the present[43]).

But here we are thinking *Tell Freedom*. Lee: "He held his right hand out to the fire in the centre of the room. With his left he played with the hair of the girl who sat on the floor beside his chair … the man said. 'Come, Lee. ***Tell us what you see and we'll make it into a story'"***. At once we notice in Abrahams an invocation of a time of *play*, *paternal* play on the female-head. A paternal play beside the fire, a play with 'nature' – a *daughter*'s hair that already is growing, a symbol of maternal growth, love as such. More, it is a play on the son, his capacity to tell a story beside the fire, to give his version of events (his longings). Why a story though, why the demand for a story alongside a play on female hair? Is this a case of Abrahams's emphasis or penchant for myth: the native in Africa by the fire in the middle of a hut, telling tales of animal tragi-comedies and such? Perhaps.

Certainly, though: Abrahams is anxious to present in fire a concrete symbol of friendship. Put another way: Fire and friendships in *Tell Freedom* hover contiguously, a case of metonymic order. Fire in Abrahams is a "thing of friendship as it is a thing of warmth"

[43] The colonised need not necessarily appeal to or privilege a glorious past to lead an ethical life. At stake is the present itself, in which ethical life necessarily subtends politics.

(119). So that, for us, a paternal play beside the fire (warmth) – a demand for a story for instance – expresses a difficulty of friendship. A difficulty, since Lee is ambivalent towards paternal friendship. Lee: *"I pushed my nose and lips against the pane and tried to lick a raindrop sliding on the other side….. I felt tense and desperate suddenly. I was unsure of this man, unsure of what he wanted from me. I turned my eyes from* ***his face*** *[…] I turned to the man again. And then I knew that he was my father".* It is as though Lee rejects the father and accepts him (his friendship) at once, a possible case of paternal relations confronting all logic in which the law of contradiction holds good.

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To the extent that Friendship is Abrahams' key concern, I turn to the (im) possibility of friendship among peers (non-paternal friendship) in *Tell Freedom*. First: let us consider Lee's encounter with the white world-proper in Book one-chapter one/section four. Lee and a black male companion, at the mercy of *three* white boys, for instance. Second, Book one-chapter two/section four: Lee and *three* black male companions on the run. On the run for trespassing (a coal-collecting adventure) a white zone, from Vrededorp to the world reserved for "Europeans Only". Almost always in these situations, Lee is an escapist. So that Abrahams parades patterns of black motions (through companionship), Lee's restive movements and Lee's apprehensions of danger, perceptive of permanent rat-traps (black-traps) across the Union. Lee is perceptive of permanent rat-traps (black traps), to the point of insinuating himself (or trying to find refuge) in white communist (materialist) circles later on, hoping for a socialist friendship[44]. A hoping that ends in utter disappointment, the impossibility of reciprocal love between blacks and whites[45], (and for that matter the impossibility of reciprocal love between blacks themselves) in the Union light. An impossibility of reciprocal love – owing to the blacks' incapacity to love another (for blacks, love is a neither a verb nor an object to give to another/). My point is this: Lee may have all

[44] At once we imagine a difference of spirit in Peter's socialist white friends, different from a brand of Marx's followers (white workers of Union of South Africa) in the early 1920s. The brand of Marx's followers in the Communist Party of South Africa, the brand that took to Johannesburg streets: "Workers of the world to unite and save White South Africa", the brand in which the white worker does not recognise the black, the brand for which the black is a commodity as such (he does not sell his labour power but him/herself) [I don't follow this bit…not sure what you are saying here?]. The black is always (al) ready for exchange. Perhaps Peter's white friends will have asked: what about a black miner, the black South African?

[45] We may add that primary friendship between blacks and whites is unthinkable. Primary friendship is impossible between humans (whites) and animal-men (the native).

kinds of companions, a way of surviving black traps in the Union. And yet, companionship here need not amount to Friendship[46], since Friendship (recall Aristotle) presupposes loving another[47], another who is good (and we know that there is neither a good white nor a good black in the Union of South Africa).

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Alongside this impossibility of 'primary friendship' (friendship between 'people') Abrahams erects few motions of/for the erotic. An erection: through Lee's heterosexual sensibility, through a trinity of erotic movements, perhaps motions that nonetheless interdict Lee's Fantasy, hope for life in and perhaps beyond the *limit* of Union Light. But what is the erotic when it is at once a determination of another's Light, white Time? Let us read in *Lee's Ellen (the first erotic movement at the end of Book One) portraiture of measure, Lee's measure of things erotic. Abrahams* betrays, for instance, Lee's heterosexual attitude, through an interdicted speech: Lee's difficulty of saying 'I like you' to Ellen (a light if beautiful black girl). The difficulty of saying 'I like you' when he is too dark for a light skin, the case of seeing in Ellen a mirror of his soul, quite aside the fact of Ellen's blackness, the case of Lee's guilt through the light, the condition of Lee's self-doubt.

Perhaps this marks Lee's immaturity of perception, a curable pathology. Yet, to set the first iteration of Lee's erotic passion here (the end of Book one) is quite remarkable. Could it be that Lee, for Abrahams, remembers the darkness of his father's face at the beginning of Book one? Is it accidental that Lee's darkness interdicts the possibility of erotic pleasure in the Union light? Abrahams erects a circle, the seeming articulation of light and darkness – first their animation of son and father's (im)possible friendship. Second, the impossibility of black boy-girl friendship. Perhaps this articulation is most violent in Lee's s*econd erotic movement (mid-Book Two)*. Lee and Anne, the most beautiful girl in Vrederdorp, on Abrahams' romanticist account (Abrahams say nothing of Anne's complexion). "I love you for your brownness/And the rounded darkness of your breast", says Lee (1954:211). And Anne is listening: "I love you for the breaking sadness in your

[46] One can survive a black trap, owing to his/her companion's help for instance. The companion need not be a friend per se. We depart from Derrida, in other words, for whom Friendship is a condition for surviving (1995).

[47] The union black has no business in loving another (and Abrahams knows the impossibility of black-white friendship in the Union, though he hopes for its possibility {once he is in Britain} – to the point of denouncing his blackness: "In a sense, this is my declaration of independence, my deliberate revolt against both black and white…here then is my declaration. If it is a spear let it draw my own blood" (Abrahams, 1953)

voice/And the shadows where your wayward eyelids rest" (211). Lee's romantic love aside, Lee and black Anne are young and, on their wisdom, must stay clear of the Act, the sexual act. Why? Fear of unwanted babies. Still, asks Anne: what if Lee should lose patience? What if, after many a black 'boy', Lee tires of waiting? What if Lee sleeps "with other girls"? Lee, Anne will suggest, ought to speak out if he really wants to Act (if he wants to remain in the dark we could say), for Anne's grandmother could concoct a calculus, a sex aid programme, to reduce probabilities of begetting a child, quite an embarrassing state of affairs in the now churched Vrederdorp. "I'll never get tired", Lee assures Anne. And Abrahams lets the scene (The scene of Lee-Anne's sex talk) break. "We had finished with sex. I lay on my back, my head pillowed on Anne's lap" (211). Lee must say what is really in question, the purpose of being with Anne: selling Anne his dreams, the dream of being a writer (a light bearer).

But, why would Abrahams pit the possibility of sexual pleasure against light-bearing? Is selling a dream (becoming a light bearer) a case of groping for white 'civility', the sureness of repressing Lee's dark libido? None, of course, need deny the apparent usefulness of Lee's sexual prudence: 'social functionality', the subjection of oneself to a morality (the case of the young waiting for their turn). And yet: the scene of sharing/selling a dream – a kind of fantasy, a simulation of hope for a future – marks Abraham's thematic fidelity: the complex of light and darkness, the light that nonetheless is unachievable for the black in the Union (in time Anne will know that the wish for black-white equality is different from the actual black-white equality). Anne refuses to believe that "we are as good as they are" in reality (214).

Now: will Lee *get* another girl, asks Anne? Will he get another (a writer-girlfriend perhaps) more educated than her? Anne is a bridge (middle of Book Two) towards the beginning of an end, prefiguring Lee's third *erotic movement (the beginning of Book Three*): a Lee and Jane (a white socialist girlfriend) moment, the finality of the trial at the possibility of white-black communion. For Abrahams, Lee and Jane sexual moment is bereft of aesthetic allure, perhaps owing to (if Jane is correct on the one hand) Lee's Christianised inhibitions (the refusal to let sexual pleasure be). It is, on the other hand, a moment of "freedom without beauty", for Lee, "liberation without dedication" (1954:248). And lack of beauty and dedication, for Lee, is a question of soul-doubt (doubt of personality, to vandalise Kierkegaard): *am I worth it, the white soul (body and mind), the Light*?

Lee and Jane's moment ends its beginning – or, to reiterate, begins the end of hoping in the possibility of romantic *communion* between light and darkness, the end of Lee's

thinking a possibility of fully partaking in the Union light. Abrahams' thematic fidelity (the reading of darkness against light) is, through Lee's trinity of erotic moments gone wrong (incomplete), a sign post of *Tell Freedom*'s key concern: the telling of freedom in the light (Abrahams writes *Tell Freedom* while living in British light). So that *Tell Freedom* itself confounds all manner of hoping (Abrahams' included) in the possibility of friendship beyond the Union, hope in the light beyond the Union light. In sexual love Abrahams betrays the problem of freedom, a release (the possibility of a momentary escape), albeit a non pleasant site or object of wonder. It is the impossibility of a quasi-Levinasian light beyond light. It is the incommensurateness of 'light' and 'darkness' (animality): analogous to an impossible, fulfilling sexual relation between the 'human' (white) and an animal-man (the black): the impossibility of black-white friendships in the Union.

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Tell Freedom or, more precisely, Lee's erotic movements (sexual agony) echo the crisis of black migrant sexuality in the Union. The black sexuality that confounds all hope in the possibility of friendship with oneself, with one's supposed romantic partner. To probe, in sociological terms, Black migrant sexuality in the Union is to think Black sexuality alongside the Union's moral (circumstances under which moral judgement of the sexual obtain) and political economy (the measure of white civility; the measure of black privation). We may cite, in passing, the conditions of black migrant sexuality's becoming: the necessity of wage labour, for the native. Consider blacks in the western Transvaal. By 1920s, many a 'Union black' had suffered utter humiliation, land dispossession, turned into (Plaatje reminds us) Pariahs in their own land. A Bechuanaland black, too, becomes a tax payer. He/she must earn a wage consequently. He could, for instance, migrate eastward (Johannesburg), secure livelihood, now labouring in a white shop, now in white kitchen, now in white mine (Bozzoli, 1991:87).

Quite often migrancy is a "lure of 'liberty'", Bozzoli has it (a lure of liberty in the measure of black men freeing themselves from chiefly rule). What is at stake here, though? Why should liberty "without beauty" ("liberation without dedication") matter[48]? The black migrant in the city after all confronts the pressures "of the microeconomics of household reproduction and communal subsistence with an affective interest in personal relations with kin and lovers" (Breckenridge2006:150). Relations marked in the "*pain of betrayal and*

[48] See Abrahams (1954:248).

abandonment, made only more intense by the prolonged absences of migrant employment" (Breckenridge, 2006:150). This pain: at times an object of mediation, in and through letter writing – or, simply, through an amanuensis. Observe a young black migrant's reminiscence of a past sexual encounter, for instance. An encounter in the Reserve (the 'rural').

> *I am happy to have an opportunity of writing to you. I greet you my friend, but I myself believe that you are my wife. Yes, the days change, I don't know whether we'll keep it up. I hope you are still very well, my wife, my sweet one, by the will of God. Friend, I myself am still well, truly my wife, there is nothing wrong…I still think of how we loved each other; I think of how you behaved to me, my wife; I did not lack anything that belonged to you. All things I did not buy, but I just got them, together with your body; you were too good for me, and you were very, very sweet, more than any sweet things that I have ever had… our bloods like each other so much in our bodies … These letters have got secret matters, you must not lose them, if you don't want to keep them burn them all in the fire* (Schapera, 1933:24).

What is a letter-form? A genre of ethics, to recall Kierkegaard. So that the migrant's *reminiscence*, a seeming sexual reciprocity (goodness) between the young man and his 'lover' merits an interrogation. Is it accidental that the black migrant employs the word behaviour to measure the sexual relation itself? Could this mark the immediacy or the immediate nature of the sexual pleasure, so that the sexual act in itself is purposeless (non-telic?)? And, what does it mean to recall the presence of a body, a free gift, an unmerited favour sweeter than anything in the world, this body (coupled with other things) that the young man did not buy?

The young man's romanticism hinges, so to speak, on the ideal of total (unmediated) enjoyment. Totality of enjoyment: possible, the migrant seems to suggest, when he and his wife are of commensurate *bloods*. Blood: what a metaphor (a concrete metaphor)! Presently the migrant's body is on the Union market. Will it be a stretch, then, to see in the migrant's sexual reminiscence a shout, a wail for respite, a longing for an imagined goodness (outside the Union market[49])? Is this a wailing of a disenchanted commodity, betraying the fact that the commodity is a commodity with blood (a living/bloody commodity)? Put another way: to evaluate the sweetest sexual gift, another's body is an instance of hoping in the future. The black hopes in repetition, though – if it is true that the future is already past. All this hoping

[49] Consider yet another black male migrant's erotic anticipation. He sends a potential lover-friend a letter. Receives a positive reply.

> "Ha! Once the lady responds favourably [to your letter] you would leave your job and go home to your new girlfriend", (Sogoni in Breckenridge, 2006:150).

marks the irreducibility of white *Time itself, the time that constitutes (to* regulate) black sexual relations, by way of the interstices of Union labour and capital.

For now on the Rand, the migrant continues to reminisce on the encounter (a 'good' sexual encounter, possibly), possibly. Continues his wage-labour, and then, in few months, revisits the friend/sexual partner. This is a migrant's erotic loop, an expression of romantic 'love'/passion mediated by labour and capital: Union violence. Romantic 'love' (friendship) is the problem of mediate-immediacy/or the immediate in immediacy. Romantic 'love' is a moment of immediacy mediated by violence {another kind of immediacy}). So that we ask whether the migrant is *sure* (can know) of the love he gives. And: can the wife ever know of the love she receives? Is giving a violated love not a case of giving love (or loving) *without beauty* (a site of non-wonder and thus a non object of knowledge)? The migrant, it seems, gives something else but love.

Then: the actually beautiful is the migrant's memory, perhaps – the very capacity to remember, to know that one is a bloody-commodity, and that things on the market is never a site of wonder, of goodness itself. It could be that the beautiful too, for the migrant, is the very capacity to 'write' (through an amanuensis or not), the very capacity to critique white humanism (the white human is he that can write[50]).

Let us return to Tell Freedom. Things on the market are non-objects of wonder. Consider Lee on his father, once again. "*I knew that man. Although I seemed to be seeing him for the first time, he was no stranger to me"*. The father and son share the immediacy of the cold, you will recall. "*I turned my eyes from* ***his face*** *[…] I turned to the man again. And then I knew that he was my father* (1954:9). In this immediacy the father is in the realm of the familiar, the familiar face against which to turn one's gaze. Yet wonder is a near-possibility, is possible when the non-object of beauty/wonder is the source of the wondrous, the man – the sound itself, the very promise of a story: "Come, Lee. Tell us what you see and we'll make it into a story" (9). This is the paternal sound (a determination of pain) that has Lee re-turn the gaze (to see the familiar face), perhaps heeding the demand to remember the immediate past, the past of hopeless hoping (hope for warmth that is not there). Put differently: what makes remembering the past possible, for Lee (or the migrant on the Rand for that matter) is Love

[50] Writing is "oft conceived by clowns and intellectuals as the natural attributes of whoever would hope to be known as human" (Moten, 2004:12). I reflect more on writing in the next chapter.

(the sound) itself. This Love (its expression) is, we need not forget, regulated by colonial violence.

Remembering the past is the black's moral determination, suffice it to say. Love constitutes and styles the black's moral consciousness/imagination. The black is morally fallible after all, for Abrahams. Moral 'life', moral struggle in Abrahams, is necessity, a formal determination of rational instinct. The black struggles morally (a determination of instinct) to think/struggle for the (im) possibility of 'freedom'. In this struggle, the black reads time in Time, actual possibility of black friendship. So that moral responsibility is the demand to befriend time itself, the demand to be aware: Blackness has time, Whiteness has Time (Time is the becoming of whiteness (without blackness being white, analytically speaking). The black experiences its time by way of whiteness. So that 'history' itself is the Black's other, the ultimate alterity. A queer history, in a word: now stationary, now moving, neither finite nor infinite (though it is transcendent and immanent at the same instant).

Moral responsibility is a ritual, though – a case of how the black can 'live' in the Union. For a moment let us return to Peter's raindrop-word, the "*many colours", and the green that he supposes to be "trees and the grass, the brightness, the sun"*. Would Lee in his raindrop world perceive the green trees *and their shadows? When* he turns his head toward the father, w*ould he* in brightness of the fire perceive his fathers' shadow, would he see his own shadow? Abrahams will not have Lee not wander that far. Lee's ignorance of his shadow does not, of course, imply its absence. What could such a picture, the melange of shadow and sound betray? Lee's idea of the possibility of warmth (and solitude) is but unclear and indistinct, as though in a dream. Some "night I entered a world in which the dividing line between reality and dream was so fine as not to exist. And I lived many quite moments of many years in that strange region that is neither of this world nor out of it" (Abrahams, 1954:67). Black moral responsibility is nothing but a case of choice-less choosing. Choice-less choosing, by way a black instinct. Confronting the immediacy of violence, Either/or: the black shouts hoarse or remains silent. Either/or: the black moves or remain stationary.

So that moral responsibility, for the Union black, is as much a case of choice-less choice (measure of a black sound (a silence or a shout)) as it is a measure of black bodily movement. The measure of bodily movement: since the union black could remain a miner on the Rand to earn a livelihood or simply earn enough money to pay Lobola in the name of tradition. He could turn a priest or Tsotsi ... he could enlist in a Black Nationalist struggle,

say the congress movement. He could, as does Abrahams, escape the Union; he could leave behind his family, only to see them a decade or more later.

Moral responsibility, possible by way of instinct, is an aesthetic (but prophetic) moment of Telling (of) an ugly Freedom and its '(im)possibility'. Moral responsibility: express a moment of ethics, a critique of white humanism, a critique of a possibly irrepressible Union Jack (an inescapable light).

Gnos-thetics unto Death

Union (white) time is a black moral fact, heteronymous: *transcendent* and *immanent at the same instant*, a mark/or determinant of black sorrow. Conversely, black sorrow expresses national time: to reiterate, the thing that hovers (autonomously of the black him/herself, the individual) and self-fashions at the same moment, by way of a dynamic-heterogeneous array (random multiplicity) of blacks. Black sorrow in the Union is a quirky form, expressing (so to speak) the extension and motion of the soul of the black folk. And to speak of the extension and the motion of this soul (a shadow) is, of course, to refer to the blood of the black folk itself *and* its silent shout (actual/substantive death), a *possible* 'victory' over political evil.

A way of thinking blood-in-the-black is first to rethink the form of the black. I mean the commodity form (exchange value), forming the shadow (soul in motion) of the black folk. One may at once recoil from "the notion that value [the commodity form] is an inherent part of the object", and, by extension, an inherent part of the soul of the black folk. Moten here (through Marx,) has us imagine a moment of the possibility of this soul's restiveness: the possibility of its speech. Or, rather, we could after Moten see in the soul (the shadow) a kind of objection to white (union) time, precisely because the commodity-form is a non-essential property of blood-in-black. There is, in a phrase, restive blood in the commodity (the thing on the market). Moten cites Marx:

> *But, to avoid anticipating, we will content ourselves here with one more example relating to the commodity-form itself. If commodities could speak they would say this: our use-value may interest men, but it does not belong to us as objects. What does belong to us as objects, however, is our value. Our own intercourse as commodities proves it. We relate to each other merely as exchange-values. Now listen how those commodities speak through the mouth of the economist:*
>
> *"Value (i.e., exchange-value) is a property of things, riches (i.e., usevalue) of man. Value in this sense necessarily implies exchanges, riches do not."*
>
> *"Riches (use-value) are the attribute of man, value is the attribute of commodities. A man or a community is rich, a pearl or a diamond is valuable. . . . A pearl or a diamond is valuable as a pearl or diamond."*
>
> *So far no chemist has ever discovered exchange-value either in a pearl or a diamond. The economists who have discovered this chemical substance, and who lay special claim to critical acumen, nevertheless find that the use-value of material objects belongs to them independently of their material properties, while their value, on the other hand, forms a part of them as objects. What confirms them in this view is the peculiar circumstance that the use-value of a thing is realized without exchange, i.e.*

> *in a social process. Who would not call to mind at this point the advice given by the good Dogberry to the night-watchman Seacoal?*
>
> *"To be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but reading and writing comes by nature*" (Moten, 2003:9).

In question, for Moten, is Marx's subjunctivity: "if commodities could speak...". It is a question of "knowledge of the future [the commodity's future speech] in the present", for Moten. Which knowledge Marx unfortunately dismisses, since chemists or anyone else but economists are yet to discover "exchange-value either in a pearl or a diamond". Marx, Moten may well imply, is quick to favour the economist, quick to give up or repress the chemists' possible discovery of the substance (exchange value), the essential property of the commodity. Marx ignores the conditions of such discovery and its possibility, namely: the very "fact of the commodity's speech". Chemists or anyone else but economists are yet to discover "exchange-value either in a pearl or a diamond", precisely because of the impossibility of the commodity's speech, for Moten. Hence only he/she (the economist) has the capacity for speaking on the commodity's behalf. The economist has this capacity, I will add, since on the question of the commodity he is more competent than chemist or anybody else[51]. Marx, says Moten put another way, is interested in mere 'ventriloquisations': Marx imputes speech to the 'dumb commodity', through the "reproduction" of the economist's speech. But, between the imputation and the "reproduction", for Moten, Marx ignores the conditions of the commodity's future-actual (non ventriloquised) speech. At "stake [for Marx] is not *what* the commodity says but *that* the commodity says or, more properly, that the commodity, in its inability to say, must be made to say" (Moten, 2003:9).

Moten – and this is the point – wants to think the existential fact of the "(exchange-) value" of the commodity prior to the actual exchange on the market. The (exchange-) value "exists precisely as the capacity for exchange and the capacity for a literary, performative, phonographic disruption of the protocols of exchange". The (exchange-) value (the existential fact) is in fact an objection to being exchanged on the market, so that this objection itself is "the exchange [on the market]'s condition of possibility". He finds in this disruption ("objection to exchange) an achievement given", to reiterate, "in speech, literary phonography". We ought to see in the existential disruption "the condition of an object's resistance". We ought to see

[51] For Marx it seems, a chemist has not the intellectual resources to discover the 'substance' of the 'object', its exchange value.

> *the secret Marx revealed by way of the music he subjunctively mutes* (11)*…The commodity whose speech sounds embodies the critique of value, of private property, of the sign. Such embodiment is also bound to the (critique of) reading and writing, oft conceived by clowns and intellectuals as the natural attributes of whoever would hope to be known as human... what's at stake in the music [is "**its revolutionary force**"], the universalization or socialization of the surplus, **the generative force** of a venerable phonic propulsion, the ontological and historical priority of resistance to power and objection to subjection, the old-new thing, the freedom drive that animates black performances* (12).

"Resistance to power", "the freedom-drive" in Black performances. The onto-historically revolutionary force, "the generative force of venerable phonic propulsion" in Moten is, we should add, in the realm of the personhood. So that we should critique…the supposed sameness of "personhood and subjectivity"; and see in the object-cum-commodity (the person) "the resistance or objection that is always already in excess of the limits of subjection/subjectivity", of politics as such.

What, now, does excess of the mere subjective (the limits of political practice) mean? How far can we go with the non-sameness of personhood and the realm of political practices? In short, what 'epistemic' access do we have of personhood, save (as Moten would have it) through the fact of the object's non-essential property (commodity-hood)? We only know of the object's negative ontological status through the commodity's actual speech (the existential fact), in other words. Moten, it seems to me, gestures toward the space of politics relatively autonomous from personhood (blood-hood, possibly a thing in itself), and thus existentially irreducible and unreadable. So that "race or sex or gender, of the differences these terms mark, form, and reify" are non-categories of personhood. So that blackness is what it is, the measureless measure: measure beyond black as race (for race is a mode of concretely placing or of a materially-structured representation, a determination of white (violent) phantasy). The sensuous sound (the bloody-sound) of the object, of personhood, blood-hood as such, exceeds the categories of race, sex, gender and class – the modern day sociological categories of analysis.

The disassociation of personhood and subjectivity seems mysterious, though. One way of looking into the personhood-politics matrix, this seeming mystery, is through the logical moment of an Either/or, I suggest: the disjunctive conjunction of the ethical-in-black we proposed in the first chapter. An Either/or of the commodity: 1) either the commodity can

speak (shout hoarse) or remain silent; 2) the commodity can speak and remain silent at the same instant. The Either/or of speech and silence marks an entry into thinking the nature of personhood. The black could read his objecthood (personhood) thorough the sound/the music of his/her silence or shout.

How does one read a shout or silence? Can one, for instance, ethically and quantitatively read a shout or silence? Partly this question interests me owing to the notion of personhood in Moten, a gesture toward the realm of the ethical in art. He peers into Adrian Piper's meta-ethics, the substratum of Piper's aesthetics. "Piper's work [which we will not discuss here] is not the suspension of the aesthetic but a kind of return to it, precisely by way of its materiality. You don't have to privilege the ethical over the aesthetic in art if the aesthetic remains the conditions of possibility of the ethical in art" [52](249). Still, it is unclear what Moten means by the ethical in art, what ethical categories Moten has in mind. Is he concerned with goodness or evil in art? This question matters – if notions of good and evil are thinkable within the realm of politics and its limitations, if good and evil in fact are ethico-political categories.

The political here is the very condition of the ethical in art. Of course, says Kgositsile's, "there is nothing like art-in the oppressor's sense of art. There is only movement. Force. Creative power. The walk of Sophiatown tsotsi or my Harlem brother in Lenox Avenue. Field hollers. The Blues. A Trane riff. Marvin Gaye or mba-qanga. Anguished happiness"... "creative power, in whatever form it is released", moving "like the dancer's muscles" where "*the impulse is personal*" (Kgositsile,1968:42). The impulse is personal (the realm of personhood): not surprisingly, Moten sees in Piper's ethics in art the workings of a bloody passion – the freedom drive – in the object. Ethics-in-art, then, is an instance of black performance, whose condition of possibility is the political, so that the ethical in art expresses the *moral* confrontation of political evil. Moral-hood is an articulation, the median point of personhood and politics. It articulates, to recall Peter Abrahams, the instinctual struggle, a

[52] "The relationship between object and objectivity in Piper is disjunctive. Think about objectivity as universality, as a set of faculties or attributes given in the set of human beings; objectivity is the quality of being When Piper speaks aboutwanting to eliminate subjective judgments (i.e., valuative or aesthetic judgments, the question of beauty and, even, pleasure—what might have been called the immanent aesthetic) from her experience of art, she moves within a certain desire for the objective (i.e., epistemological/ethical, the categorical and its imperatives, the transcendental aesthetic as the ideality of space-time) in art. Similarly, when Piper turns herself into an object of art she could be said to be moving in the desire for a detachment from certain subjective/invalid judgments. What she calls, in her description of the *Untitled Performance for Max's Kansas City*, the self-consciousness of art-consciousness, especially in that it is shaped by the visual pathology of racist categorization, is the Weld of such bad judgment" (Moten, 2003:244).

"struggle" for a 'beautiful' freedom. So that evaluations and practices of art (gnos-thetics from blackness), the thinking of the space of performance (the moral time of critiquing political evil), is a time for diss/play, the play on history (an expression of love itself) and the act of dissing (negativity, sorcery, and vandalism) vulgar universality, white humanism: the fact of darkness dissing the Light.

Dissing, we should say at once, regulates 'popular culture, the interpretation of which is impossible without the "meanings of freedom and the idiom" of its apprehension (Gilroy, 1993:74). It suffices here to think Union music of blackness in the first half of the twentieth century, for instance. To turn to aesthetics in relation to the idiom of (non) freedom for blacks. To be 'black' beside the Light (Union of South Africa), to practice or listen or dance to Caluza's spirituals, ragtime and dance music, Ballantine tells us, is to be "moved by expressions in the songs of longing for justice, freedom and a universal fraternity of human kind" (Ballantine,1993:5; Ansell,2005)). Ballantine's judgement seems controversial. For: how can the trinity of liberalism (justice, freedom and universal fraternity of human kind) be an object of longing for blacks? We may put this question another way: why should Union blacks long for universal fraternity (if such is possible), for instance, when they and their music *always are potentially* on the Union market (the white market)?

We return to Moten for an answer. What matters, for Moten, is the secret in the music (the "shriek" of the commodity), the secret that Marx "subjunctively mutes". Black speech ("resistance to power", "freedom drive", "objection to subjection"), a phonic critique of phonophobia (the scene of reading and writing), critique of the violence of Light (enlightenment), is beyond the market dealer's aesthetic mapping, for whom the commodity, its performance, is an object of consumption, a bridge to self-appreciation. But: perhaps black (as) music is *relatively autonomous* from institutional politics in the way that other forms of black stylings (literature for instance) are not (Mphahlele, 1962:28). In any case: in any "paradigmatic" reading of the black (as) music: "the necessity…is to leave the bitter…rotten and one might add "overly professional or careerist" parts alone (Baker, 1984:111). For, recall Du Bois:

> *The Music of Negro religion is that plaintive rhythmic melody, with its touching minor cadences, which, despite caricature and defilement, still remains the most original and beautiful expression of human life and longing yet born on American soil. Sprung from the African forests, where its counterpart can still be heard, it was adapted, changed, and intensified*

> *by the tragic soul-life of the slave, until, under the stress of law and whip, it became the one true expression of a people's sorrow, despair, and hope (*Du Bois, 2007:80*)*

The reader of the music must return to the commodity (the music as such) prior its exchange on market. This is to say: *soul-life of the black on the* Union market conditions our ability to sense the hidden in this soul, the secret in the black (as) music.

I carry on with Du Bois's seeming hyperbole, for a moment. "*The Music of Negro religion ... that plaintive rhythmic melody … still remains the most original and beautiful expression of human life and* longing *yet born on American soil*". Du Bois's aesthetics abjures historical relativism: he wants to privilege the time of slavery, the coming of the *modern world*. He disses, it seems, vulgar humanism (universalism): American civilisation, a moment of the "white unconscious", the repression of African-human life. So that the act of dissing (through a reading of black music) is, in Motenian parlance, "bound to the (critique of) reading and writing, oft conceived by clowns and intellectuals as the natural attributes of whoever would hope to be known as human".

Du Bois leads us back to Ballantine's aesthetics, the supposed black longing for longing universal fraternity of human kind in black music. What if we thought black music through the pair of longing and desire (rather than through longing by itself)? The black in Ballantine, I suggest here, desires rather than longs for universal fraternity, *vulgar humanism itself*[53]. The black, we know this through Fanon, desires whiteness, white morality. What he longs for, however, is the ethical, an ethical-reversal (the possibility of self-justification).

Desire for white humanism and longing for the ethical, then, inform our concerns in what follows. Consider the workings of desire and longing post-1920 (the cusp of black (national) zeal throughout the earth), for instance. I return to Abrahams's *Tell Freedom*. All faith in the possibility of realising universal brotherhood in the Union becomes groundless, for Lee Abrahams, a Negro youth – regretful of leading, by birth, "an empty life", futureless and suffering "the pain of life's cruel ways". And yet, the Union black (Lee) could long for another kind of fraternity, of course: by way of longing for a concrete relation with the diasporic blackness. This else-where of blackness is a pseudo-transcendental signifier, for the

[53] For all its generativity, Marabi is a 'socially restrictive' and 'dehumanising' enterprise (See Peterson, 2003:33).

Union black (Abrahams himself), a potential mediator of an already doubled self. Abrahams is a *national* beyond borders.

> *The world is calling me,*
>
> *Over the sea,*
>
> *I have no other plea,*
>
> *Under the sea.*
>
> *Away I must flee* (Abrahams in Couzens & Patel, 1982:84)

Playfully monotonous. This is Abrahams the poet, anticipating Lee in *Tell Freedom*. Lee is a grown up, and could hear of the elsewhere over *the sea*, the elsewhere of blackness: The music of the Negro, Paul Robeson, for instance. Could hear the voice, coming through the "velvet quality of organ notes" (192). Lee could whisper to himself: "That was a black man, one of us! I knew it. I needed no proof…" Could read the sound of a black folk, Du bois' shrieking ink: "'for this much all men know: despite compromise, war, struggle, the Negro is not free" (192). Could then sense, at once, that Robeson is unfree. Could see the else-where of black stories and poems: "We were not made eternally to weep" (194?). And he could feel: "Something had risen in me: these poems and stories were written by Negroes! Something burst deep inside me. The world could never again belong to white people only. Never again" (194). He could declare once, but not for all: "I became a nationalist, a colour nationalist through the writings of men and women who lived a world away from me. To them I owe great debt for crystallising my vague yearnings to write and for showing me the long dream was attainable" (197). Over the sea: not only will he read Negro writers, though. He would read Shirley, Keats, Lord Byron and other whites (writers) beside. He could not declare colour nationalism once and for all, since in *time* Abrahams could repudiate all nationalisms – although he could not (even if he wished) abjure becoming a black national. Blackness here, in short, is everywhere beneath the world. The distinction between the here and elsewhere of blackness becomes dys-operative.

Blackness is everywhere. Yet blackness is a vernacular. We could look into Ballantine, once again, since in Marabi music (perhaps in much of the urban black music in the Union and its influence on the Union popular culture, for example) he traces "roots deep in pre-colonial African music", owing to its "endlessly repeating chord sequence". Hence the white trombonist (Jasper Cook) could say: "I've always loved trains. And Marabi music for me always seemed to have that same quality as the sound of a train: it just goes on and on, but as

it goes it always changes and you know it's going somewhere". Of course, Marabi could be an occasion for black-'bodily' movement[54] (a cryptic repertoire of movement, in which the Christianised Union black may sense the sinfulness of untutored leisure and aesthetic depravity (Ballantine, 1993; Ansell, 2005). Abrahams remembers a Marabi scene:

> *and there were the house maids, dressed in their brightest and best. They pranced awkwardly up and down the streets on their high-heeled shoes. Their dark mouths and cheeks were brightly painted. They wore hats, white gloves, and hid their beautiful legs in cheap, shiny stockings. They laughed and chattered loudly. Later, as the night wore on and they found partners, they would take off the silly hat, the uncomfortable shoes, the gloves and stockings. They would relax and dance till daybreak as some marabi, egged on by the thumping noise of a broken-down piano. Till daybreak … That is, if the police did not come* (Abrahams, 1954:109).

It matters here that the house maids "would take off the silly hat, the uncomfortable shoes, the gloves and stockings", only to "relax" and move themselves "till daybreak" in case the white dogs (the police), the agents of evil, do "not come". It matters that possibly the "silly hat, uncomfortable shoes, the gloves and stockings" in Abrahams are allegories of white modernising terror and its trappings on the black.

But: relaxed and moving "till daybreak", what is black's quality of movement analogous to? What is this quality comparable to, when for white ears Marabi music seems to exude a sound quality similar to a moving train? It is tempting, in the first place, to trace in the moving black (the black dance) "roots deep in pre-colonial African" dance. Consider, for instance, a possible trace of a ring shout in a Marabi dance[55]. A shout in which males and females chant, hop up and down in a circle, shifting side to side – a ritual in celebration of a rite of passage (an initiation ceremony, say). Men could dance (nearly always clockwise or anti-clockwise) in and through the night. Women form a "loose circle", dance in the direction opposite to men (Comaroff, 1985:106). The male dance could signify an initiates' induction into the myth of manhood. The female dance: a consecration of the induction itself. Or, as in

[54] For one Union black, of course: "Marabi …was the environment. You get there, you pay your ten cents, you get your share of whatever concoctions there and you dance" (Ansell, 2005:38). Marabi dance itself – a cryptic repertoire of bodily movements, in which the Christianised Union black may sense the sinfulness of untutored leisure and aesthetic depravity (Ballantine,1993) – is possibly a moment of bodily remembrance, by way of the body's rational instinct (body automaticity).

[55] In a South African colonial situation, as in the American South for instance, a Ring Shout could take a form of religious chant in a black initiated religious space. So that, to the extent that there are traces of spirituals in Marabi improvisations (See Ballantine, 1991).

the case of West Africa, death of a loved one could initiate a ring dance, a way of mourning the deceased, a soliciting of ancestral kindness to welcome his/her soul (Stuckey, 1987).

Now, the relation between Abrahams's Marabi dance and its 'past' (roots deep in "pre-colonial African" dance) is a case of the Union black's difficulty to remember the past, it seem to me. The black after all is un-free to remember, clad in the modernising terror and its trappings (the threat of white dogs and such). How, then, can we account for a 'freedom drive' in black here? In what way could it be that the black in Marabi be a revelatory motion, revealing, in Ellison's words, "that which has been concealed by [onto-historical] time, by custom, and by our trained incapacity to perceive the truth" (1986:229)? We confront, yet again, the *epistemic* huddle of 'African sediments' in the colony or in the New World.

Of the new world. Richard Wright is anxious, for Houston Baker, quite dismissive of sediments for dubious reasons. Unjustifiably Wright, in Baker, gestures towards the value-lessness of these carry overs, what Wright calls the ""Forms of Things Unknown"" (say, "blues, jazz, work songs, and verbal forms such as folktales, boasts, toasts, and dozens"), a non-criterion for sensing the beautiful and achieving an *egalitarian society*; values-less, meriting their total "disappearance" from America civility, unless blacks are free (self-conscious) in America, in which case these sediments could be "raised to a level of self-conscious art" (See Baker, 1981:4). Wright, for Baker, is enamoured of the "integrationist poetics". So that Wright's dismissal of the possible aesthetic value of these sediments is an object of suspicion. A reading of black art or literature in the New World is, for Baker (partly echoing Baraka's position on "the changing same" of black music), nearly unthinkable outside the black *vernacular* framework of expression, a framework which has for its referent by implication (however indeterminately) the past, ante-blackness. Hence Baker proposes what he terms "anthropology of art", an inter-*diss*-*i*-plinary motion of art criticism, preparing way for Fred Moten's black operations, the moment of ill-discipline/anti-discipline. V*ernacular* forms of expression (African sediments), Bakers may well be suggesting, have a pseudo-transcendental lid (significant) on black memory of the future or past, though (we could add) this past in itself is indeterminate and thus lack a normative force.

Sediments in the new world or in the African colony. Fanon, justifiably, senses the danger of aesthetic carnality (canalisation of native aggression), of artistic-religio catharsis: the colonised finds condolence in trances (singing/dancing, appropriating this or that

'vernacular' style) when at stake is taking up arms, and assaulting the colony itself (Fanon, 1965:57)[56]. So that the form of these practices (their referents to be precise, say, "vampirism, possession by djinns, by zombies…"), in Fanon, is a necessary condition for thinking the colonised's capacity for violence[57]. They are, for the native revolutionary youth (the youth "growing up in an atmosphere of shot and fire"), an object of mockery. The revolutionary native channels his aggression in a different direction, an armed struggle against the colony.

By no means, though, need this imply an absence of aesthetic practice in the colony. While the pre-independence artist may grope for non-representational art, may "set a high value on non-figurative art, or more often specialize … in still life", the post-independence artist ought to set value an imaginative (living) art in the direction of the creation of *National Culture* (the non-exoticisation of the already dead customs) (Fanon, 1963:161-162). Put another way, the pre-independent and post-independent distinction in Fanon's aesthetic marks a necessary (revolutionary) progression, for the black. So that the very national practice (struggle against the coloniser, the struggle to replace colonial symbols) constitutes and, to allow circularity here, marks the emergence (throughout the struggle) of *'national culture'*.

The aesthetic practice for blacks is at once dialectic and analectic, so that I must return to the pair of desire and longing, a kind of a parallelogram, two parallel lines joined by an act (line) of sorcery on the one side, and an act (a line) of wisdom on the other. The movement of the black in the music (Marabi): at once a sublation (negation and preservation of evil) of the past (through longing and a desire). This movement gestures toward a kind of gnosis, for the black, revealing, to turn to Ellison once again, "that which has been concealed by [onto-historical] time, by custom, and by our trained incapacity to perceive the truth" (1986:229). The truth is the secret of black's struggle drive, a rational instinct. More: this movement gestures toward a kind of gnosis, in the related way that Mudimbe suggests gnosis in Black Africa beyond episteme. Inter-alia, then, music in dance in the present is the site of gnosis, the very site of struggle to remember the past (however indeterminate) and a condition of the possibility for perceiving the 'truth'. No truth, of course, is accessible by way

[56] See Samir Amin's related remark: African 'survivals' (cultural or political) have a way of veiling 'capitalist 'social' relations' in colonised Africa, for Samir Amin (Mudimbe,1991).

[57] Fanon (1963:57): "…any study of the colonial world should take into consideration the phenomena of the dance and of possession. The native's relaxation takes precisely the form of a muscular orgy in which the most acute aggressivity and the most impelling violence are canalized, transformed, and conjured away".

of the past *in itself*, the past of African cultural stylings in themselves, for example. In fact, the past in itself has not a normative force. It is no basis for ethical self-evaluation (through ethical categories of good or evil, to be precise). You ought to think the past through the present: "what seems good and evil", for the black in Du Bois, is discernible through aesthetics in the present, through a study of "Negro religion as a development, through its gradual changes from the heathenism of the Gold Coast to the institutional Negro church of Chicago" (Du Bois,2007:80).

This is the point: good and evil, for the black, is the realm of political immediacy, the present. The "present" (Union times), in Kgositsile's phrases here, that "is a dangerous place to live/… is articulate/and knows no peace…" (Kgositsile, 1974:5). Kgositsile, for whom to reiterate, "there is nothing like art-in the oppressor's sense of art. There is only movement. Force. Creative power..." for whom "the impulse is personal." Under normal conditions, this force is creative through the 'body'. The body has consciousness, has a perspective - this is its reality[58]. But, in the Union (the white market), this reality is denied. Denial of this reality, Gordon could say, affirms (as does Whiteness in the Union) the absence of the black body itself, an absence in which the black is in an endless anguish. He could know the reason for his anguish, and then choose to shout hoarsely or remain silent, the meanings of which remain a secret to the white world. A secret if silence (say), for Mudimbe, marks the sick soul of the black folk's conscious/unconscious wish for the apocalyptic, a wish for the master, the psychoanalyst's death – a death that in reality is non-sentimental, neither a *vulgar* hatred or love for psychoanalyst[59] (192). The soul/shadow as such is an absent body, a double body in the "Valley of Humiliation", the valley of incalculable defeat. And yet, the absent body moves in the state of an endless doubt, a rhetorical doubt: "what am I"?

The wish for the psychoanalyst's death is possible by way of love itself, though this love is neither a verb nor an abject to give or share with another. I must return to Kgositsile's poetics. "I do not write protest poetry", he says, betraying (it seems) literary anxiety, defending his art against the imminent charge of "protest literature" from the US's

[58] See Gordon (1995)

[59] This is the case of the patient (the native) believing the psychoanalyst (master)'s guidance, the story of progress. "Lying down on the couch he/she is often silent, like a dead thing, as if waiting for someone who could put "it" elsewhere, in its place" (Mudimbe, 1994:192). The patient is an express case of death, more so than the psychoanalyst, for whom attentive silence express the virtue of listening to a free association.

mainstream literary establishment. Anxious of being misread, of others misreading his theory of time, of black writing. "I do not write protest poetry. My poetry is love poetry…I do not Write English…the English give love as a privilege or a means towards some material profit – and I have historical evidence [in the Union]"[60]. Love in black, he may well say, constitutes the possibility of memory, for the black, the memory of the "Grandmother".

I used to wonder
Was her grave warm enough
'Madikeledi, my grandmother …

Madikeledi: the mother of tears. Tears which begot the poet himself. But why see in M*adikeledi*'s grave a space of warmth? Is this the poet's other-wordily hope, a compensation of the *always already* cold time, the Union of South Africa? No:

The elegance of memory,
Deeper than the grave
Where she went before I could
Know her sadness, is larger
Than the distance between
My country and I. Thing more solid
Than the rocks with which those sinister
Thieves tried to break our back (Kgositsile, 1968:45)

All this is a gesture towards Love-in-black (generative of the poetry itself), love mightier than the Union rock, white weaponry as such. Kgositsile implies the depth of indeterminacy (love is an originary subject), confronting "the ontological, phenomenological and logical categories". It is depth deeper than the warmth of the grave, transcending all space, "Deeper than grief…Stronger Than the cold enemy … Deeper than the ocean". All this amounts to dissing English-Jesus's love, supposedly wonderful, high that you cannot get over it, low you cannot get under it, deeper than the ocean too, save it sails, by way of an empire, across the Atlantic/Indian Ocean, converting the native (by this or that method, at times at gun-point when necessary).

All this (love in black) amounts to fighting love with love in black. Once again the poet listens to the Grandmother,

…Her
Voice clearer now than then: 'Boykie,
Don't ever take any nonsense from them,
You hear!'
…
Pry your heart open, Brother, mine too,

[60] Kgositsile echoes our discussion of British Utilitarianism in the second chapter of this dissertation.

Learn to love the clear voice
The music in the memory pried
Open to the bone of feeling, no distances (Kgositsile, 1968:45)

Love is a verb here, only a verb when music (not a particular individual) is an object. Brother must love (Listen-to) clarity, the music per se. And this love (Listening-to) is possible because Brother (no particular individual) is a constituent of love itself. Love in black begets love-in-the-black (capacity to Listen). Listening, the black remembers the originairity of Love (love simply there, neither self-conscious nor non-self-conscious). So that in sound Love lives through black time, the possibility of confronting evil.

I return to the sound of Marabi music (and dance) here, the moment of anguished happiness, now an anguished memory of Louis Armstrong[61]: Armstrong's self-propelling (unwitting) diss…. by way of August Musarurgwa's *brassed band*[62] Marabi composition (*Skokiaan*).

Oooooh, Take a trip to Africa
Take any ship to Africa
Come on along and learn the lingo
Beside a jungle bungalow
Skokiaan, Skokiaan, Skokiaan

Oooooh, if you go to Africa
Happy, happy, Africa
You live along like a king-o
Right in the jungle bungalo[63]

[61] That Armstrong was the ambassador for American propaganda of goodwill in the 'developing world'', and that he become an object of ridicule within the more militant circles of the civil rights movement is quite revealing. Although he was not politically sophisticated, writes one of his biographers, "he was not so naive as to be unable to guess at the State Department's intentions. His position on the matter would have been colored by two factors. The first was that his audience, for some time, had been primarily white. It was white record buyers and moviegoers who were making him rich and famous, and he felt a good deal of loyalty to this audience. Conversely, many blacks, especially young blacks, had not only abandoned him and his music but had openly and frequently chastised him for not speaking out on racial discrimination. Armstrong had been hurt by the attacks of the militants, and while he certainly opposed segregation and supported efforts to end it, he was not entirely in sympathy with the groups who had so frequently accused him 'of tomming" (321).

[62] Armstrong would have found similarities in this brass band and the brass band in New Orleans of his youth. In South Africa, "the British and German missionaries" had long introduced brass bands "for the glory of God, the advancement of 'civilisation'". And "Africans soon appropriated the idea for their own, rather different, purposes…. [other] Whites, after the missionaries, also continued to establish black brass bands, and for not dissimilar reasons" (Ballantine, 1991:137-138).

[63] See http://lyrics.wikia.com/wiki/Louis_Armstrong:Skokiaan

Armstrong's rasping baritone-tenor trudges on, dissing (perhaps unwittingly) the notion of happiness itself (needless to say), the idea of 'happy Africa'. It is a diss on happiness, in a related way that Kgositsile confronts English love. So that a 'happy Africa', for the black (the sick soul/the shadow), is an immediate place of terror (Kgositsile's Anguished happiness[64]). We should ask, then: who is this "you" in Armstrong's *Skokiaan*, the 'you' taking a trip to a 'happy Africa'? Unwittingly (and not subjunctively), Armstrong need not simply imagine a possible 'you', a *white audience: the British imperialism ("only a British man wants to be happy after all", says Nietzsche), without which present day Zimbabwe is unthinkable. Armstrong thinks an actual event, a Briton (or his American descendent)* taking any ship, *brass marching* as he/she does to a manifest destiny, whiteness's indefinite labour time (the necessity of producing the artefact, the black, the speaking commodity).

But: Armstrong (the artefact itself) has and is the secret. He is an artefact with speech. Although commodities, recall Marx, "relate to each other merely as exchange-values", they apprehend "the future in the present…bound up with what is given in something Marx could only subjunctively imagine: the commodity who speaks". They shout hoarse or remain silent whenever they apprehend the present, a "dangerous place to live" (Kgositsile, 1974:5). The present is the future in perverse motion. The future, Kierkegaard is correct, is already past though the past is yet to come. To apprehend the future in the dangerous present, then, the black lives through the "unspeakable and yet an expressive" condition of black sorrow. Expressive of the *weight* of an imposed categorical reality on the black: the animal-man (an object of sacrifice) that 'he/she is', for Union time. The animal-man, a pre-condition of the Union's little white quarrel (the so called South Africa war). Expressive, hence stylish, for the black: the "style" which is not a *thing itself*, and therefore ""not" a means of representation" (Mudimbe, 1994:169).

This style is apprehendible, for the black, apprehendible through "the exchange between the" the Union landscape and the animal-proper {the Africanis, say} (169). Recall that the landscape is a site of blood spilling (the blood of the animal-proper or the black him/herself, at the hand of a white cult. So that *black* is synonymous with a sublime anticipation: a matter of when he will get killed. Hence he will, of moral necessity, negate this present. The black (in confronting the sublime present) thinks the past that is yet to come.

[64] Kgositsile with the problem, Skokiaan (and Marabi). "Marabi is a filthy Memory/Marabi is talent stomped in stokvel/and smothered in skokiaan fumes" (Kgositsile, 2004:37).

He/she thinks this, owing to originary Love (of the Grandmother), thinks at the same instant of actual time outside Union Time), the finality of victory against political evil, the time he/she is totally, if quantitatively, Silent (realises actual death itself). Without which realisation black shouting is merely a sublation of Union times, the case of failure of complete destruction of white labour power. Put another way: the sublation of the present ("the ineffable terror" of whiteness) is an anticipation of the *future* of commodity-hood: that although *commodity-hood is the black's non-essential property, it does (or will) not wish itself away. Unless, of course, the black calls for Silence, the actual (what Paul Gilroy would call "redemptive") death*[65].

We follow Gilroy here (the notion of 'redemptive death, a kind of 'jubilee') to discredit (render meaningless) utopian notions of freedom within Union time. But we must say more about redemptive death. For what calls for Silence (the *materiality* of death itself) is black in formal death (a living death/death-through-life). Du Bois would denote the living death in the black "the shadow of death", a death before actual death, inscribing "the worldwandering of a soul in search for itself", the strivings and the defeats of Union black (Abrahams, "Sophiatown tsotsi", a churchman or a drunkard), strivings "in half despair", through "poverty and starvation". This death inscribes the moment of national sorrow, propelling the black's hearing the sound of its movement (the secret: inessentiality of *commodity-hood*). Here the black befriends black time itself[66] {by way of its hopefulness in the present}. It propels the black to struggle for "freedom" in his "life time" (his own time, outside union time), to the point of the substantial death, total Silence (in so far as the Union time is concerned). Silence: the consummation of the formal death in the soul of the black folk. Whether this Silence is really Silence (redemption) remains an object of speculation.

[65] In Du Bois, the living death frames Alexandra Grummel's biography, his resolve against white time. "No wonder we point to thief and murderer, and haunting prostitute, and the everending throng of unhearsed dead! The Valley of the Shadow of Death gives few of its pilgrims back to the world. But Alexander Crummell it gave back. Out of the temptation of Hate, and burned by the fire of Despair, triumphant over Doubt, and steeled by Sacrifice against humiliation, he turned at last home across the waters, humble and strong, gentle and determined. He bent to all the gibes and prejudices, to all hatred and discrimination, with that rare courtesy which is the armour of pure souls".

[66] James Baldwin goes as far as thinking that music itself is the very condition of friendship with time; which seems to suggest that performance is the condition of longing the ethical. The point here is to make peace with the fact of potentially being a commodity and then permanently struggling against it; by way of varying moral appropriations of the present. Baldwin: Music is our witness, and our ally. The **beat** is the confession which recognises, changes and conquers time. Then, history becomes a garment we can wear, and share, and not a cloak in which to hide: and time becomes a friend" (See Baldwin in Gilroy,1993:203)

Silence is an object and moment of black gnosis, possibly a permanent aesthetic practice in life and after death. Redemption need not imply a ‘good’/simple life after death.

Post-sentiment

> *If you were still alive now, Refentse child of Hillbrow and Tiragalong, if you were still alive, all of this that you have heard seen heard about felt smelt believed disbelieved shirked embraced brewing in your consciousness would still find chilling haunting echoes in the simple words …*
>
> *Welcome to our Hillbrow …* (Mpe, 2001:62)

The valley of the shadow of death is the substrate (and expression) of subjective sorrow, you will recall through Dubois – the sorrow of black folk. So that sorrow for the black in, say, a South African post-apartheid (our concern in what follows) is an anticipation of death and its aftermath (the possibility of a life-after-black-death).

The possibility of a post-apartheid life-after-black-death may well be hard to read or imagine, I sense – hard to read if none (other than Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to our Hillbrow*) in the post-apartheid order has it for a forceful interrogation. And if *Welcome to our Hillbrow* is a force, it is by way of the notion of victory-over-death (the last leap of hope in black), by way of Refentse (the protagonist) in other words.

Refentse (*We conquered*[67]) is the very emblem of victory-over-death if in 'Notes from Heaven' (*Welcome to Our Hillbrow*'s second chapter) he is an object of a narration in subjunctive mood ("If you were still alive…" (Mpe, 2001:62)), as if Heaven is a scene of bliss, peace as such. Yet Mpe's Heaven is an indeterminate infinity, carrying within it a Hell. Heaven is not "some far-off place where God sits in judgement, waiting to read out his endless, cruel list of offenders on Earth" (2001:47). Rather, it is a *nowhere* place of victory, of restive rest, a place in which one (Refentse on Earth) nonetheless becomes an object of a kind-of-judgement.

A literary judgment if Heaven is an Archimedean point, from which Mpe could escape the trap of a literary binary, namely, fiction vs. non-fiction. How? Mpe has us think of Refentse's earthly thoughts, for instance. Refentse "used to think about the scarcity of written Hillbow fictions in English and Sepedi" and other official South African languages. Yet Mpe (through Du Bois) assures us: "this narrative [writing about Hillbrow] is no fiction". So that

[67] An English translation from Sepedi (mine)

Welcome to our Hillbrow is a model of fiction in non-fiction, a kind of imaginative realism. For: if Hillbrow ("of milk and honey and bile, all brewing in our collective consciousness …" (41)) is non-fictitious place (an object of our disbelief), Mpe pits it against Tiragalong, its fictitious counterpart. Tiragalong is a stage[68], an ideal metaphor of a possible happening in any South African village north of Johannesburg. Hillbrow-the-name and-place (the referent), on the other hand, exists in real time.

Hillbrow-the-name-and-place is a concrete metaphor for the possibility/the reality of the seductiveness of black suicide, I contend, a reality through which Mpe signals a writely challenge: how can a *black write* on suicide when he (himself/herself) lives through the shadow of the valley of death? How can he write other than through the dialectics of fiction and nonfiction? *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* is clearly a warning to any fiction writer (or a social scientist for that matter) on Hillbrow or anyone who writes Hillbrow into being without apprehending its indeterminate reality.

Still, Mpe (the novelist) is less interested in representation-ism (the mere representation of reality) than in expressionism (an expression of black death and its aftermath, and vice versa), traceable through a penchant for proper names/metaphors, the substance of his form/plotting. Think, for a moment, Mpe's play of names, the Refilwe/Lerato/Bohlale/Refentse matrix[69]. Mpe's play through names is fairly conventional but quite revealing, betraying the near-simple-ness of the narrative progression in *Welcome to our Hillbrow*. In one sub-plot: Refentse must break his love-relation, must break from Refilwe (a home girl/a gift from Tiragolong, if you will). For he cannot 'love' a sexually lose village woman. He will love a Town woman, Lerato (Love as such) if needs be – though he would in a while 'betray' her (Refentse will sleep with his male friend's lover (Bohlale/Wisdom)), only in time to be an object of betrayal (the day Lerato, in turn, sleeps with (Bohlale's lover). So that Refentse, disappointed by life in Hillbrow, *must* commit suicide.

Suffice it to say, though. The seductiveness of suicide is non-scandalous, since betrayal (and disappointment, the condition of this seductiveness) in *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* is proper to being "*human"*. Proper to humanness, albeit difficult to recognise as such when one is the betrayed but not the betrayer. Proper to humanness, and easy to

[68] Tiragalong is a Sepedi word for Stage/mise-en-scene.

[69] We could transpose the matrix into a phrase: We conquered death to the extent that we have Love and Wisdom. Refilwe is a Sepedi name. It has not an English equivalent, to the extent that Refilwe in English is not a proper name but a passive-phrase, 'We are given'; Lerato is a Sepedi name for Love; Bothale is a Sepedi name for Wisdom.

appreciate when one (Refentse) is the betrayer and not the object/victim of betrayal, so that this "humanness...could [in Refentse] be viewed as human only so long as it remained uncovered by prying eyes and unpublicised by enthusiastic tongues" (52), so long as the betrayed (Refentse's friend) never finds out. Humanness here becomes a relative idea, becomes human when it corresponds to Refentse's idea of humanity.

Perhaps Refentse's seeming self-criticism ought to be an object of our sympathy – if only to heap a scorn, unjustifiably it seems to me, on the relativity of Refentse's idea of humanness. Heap a scorn on this idea owing to our political fetish of absolute idea of the human (or human nature). Unjustified scorn, in other words, since human nature (humanness) is a kind of an illusion. Humanness is unnatural (relative), lest we forget – unnatural, if it is "modified in each epoch" (Marx, 1990:759). Put another way: that friends betray each other cannot be a determination of absolute humanness. Humanness in Refentse is particular to him, though humanness in Refentse and his friend (we may add) are a version of black humanness (humanness modified in the new-old South African time).

Then: saying to Refentse, "Welcome to our Hillbrow", is to say, 'Welcome to our historically conditioned humanness'. Saying "Welcome to our Hillbrow" is to affirm what I know already, the possibility of a historically conditioned suicide. Saying *Welcome to our Hillbrow* is similar to saying: "*it was just a matter of time before you got here, Refentse child of Tiragalong (the mise-en-scene in black), before you took your own life. It is quite hard not to entertain the seductiveness of suicide when you live in post apartheid Hillbrow, when you have* composite experience: a taste of "milk *and* honey *and* bile, all brewing in our collective consciousness" (41).

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In different terms: *Welcome to our Hillbrow* is a warning to a literary ethicist: he/she who thinks it a novel of mere morals, appealing to a kind of Levinasian "ethics of entanglements", by way of which blacks could have a "consciousness of vulnerability, self-reflection and [human] imperfection …" (Nuttal, 2008:204), by way of which blacks ought to be hospitable and non-judgemental (a condition of justice) among themselves. *Welcome to our Hillbrow* is a warning to the ethicist – aside the noble wish for hospitability among Mpe's blacks. Yet Levinas is an inappropriate aid to our thinking Mpe's concerns in *Welcome to our Hillbrow*. Levinas's privileging of ethics (where justice precedes freedom) could not – we know this by now – stop the indefinite white labour time (the thing that culminates in a post-apartheid order, for instance). We need not ride on pure ethics, as if the ethical ('justice'/hospitality) amongst blacks precede/is autonomous from the political

('freedom'/friend-foe antithesis)[70]. To do ethics through *Welcome to our Hillbrow* is to ask wisely, following Bohlale: "What kind of friends are we, Refentse, who could lead themselves into temptation like that? What friends betray their loved ones in this manner?" (52).

Ethics through *Welcome to our Hillbrow* is an ethics in black, then, a gesture to thinking the impossibility of black friendships in a post-apartheid time. Mpe as such is no mere moralist (concerned with ethics bereft of politics or the notion of political evil) but a poet/an ironist through politics – a poet who may well sympathise with, say, a non-ethical poet in Kierkegaard, for whom sleeping (living in immediacy) and doing nothing is the best life-policy, for whom all choices lead to utter regret. Mpe way well sympathise with creative 'nihilism': the futility of Refentse leaving Tiragalong for Hillbrow. For there is possibly a Hillbrow/Tiragalong anywhere the black goes (searching for greener pastures).

In Refentse Mpe has us see more, nonetheless: Refentse's need to act and strive through the 'valley of the shadow of death', since merely to sleep in the valley (simply to sit by the fictitious-real stage/stay a spectator in Tiragalong) is a refusal to face a possibility of a Hillbrowian suicide, the very condition of victory over death, a refusal to mount a place (a Hill-top beyond Hillbrow/the real-fictitious stage) from which Refentse could see all the black happenings: the fact of blackness everywhere, blackness in Tiragalong echoing the coming blackness in (and the coming Welcome to our) Hillbrow.

Yet to strive through the 'valley of the shadow of death' is not an ethical act per se (the merely ethical bereft of politics). Rather, it is an onto-political act (informed by an ethics in black), if only because Refentse can only negate to preserve the present (The scene: Tiragalong). A move from Tiragalong to Hillbrow (a trial *movement* away from mere immediacy) is nearly akin a maroon act, since to run away from slavery is a wish to become free (though such a move is not a mark of slave's freedom from the master's perspective). A move from Tiragalong to Hillbrow is a wish to become free from the valley of the shadow of death, a wish for a life, albeit by way of suicidal death. A wish for life after death betrays the fact that existence in black is founded in the idea of the valley of the shadow of death (breathing in death), so that real death itself is not at any rate a threat. Death (needless to say)

[70] Welcome to our Hillbrow echoes of Peter Abrahams' Tell Freedom, its account of the impossibility of black primary friendships (friendship among blacks/friendship between blacks and whites) in the Union of South Africa. Blacks, in Abrahams, lack capacity for 'joyfulness' (where love is a verb or an object to give to another). Primary friendships are impossibility, if Union blackness is a product of political evil, a determination of a false paternity (whiteness as such)). Evil, in other words, *cannot* produce friends.

in Refentse is desirable, a leap (a bracketing of all other considerations) towards a Heaven (a place of certainty), betraying (or hence) the threat-lessness of real death, for Refentse.

Real death is desirable if the desire is the expression of a better (a proper/sonic) sense or apprehension of life on earth, a condition for listening to a note, an anguished (blue) note from Heaven. It is a condition for listening to a heavenly note before one gets to Heaven. So that we ask if and how the living (those on Earth, in Hillbrow/Tiragalong) have capacity for note listening. It is no accident that music in "Welcome to our Hillbrow" is Refentse's solo brooding's background accompaniment. Refentse broods over political evil, listening to Stimela's *See the World Though the eyes of a Child*, his "favourite song" ("released in 1994"), "a song about a neglected, homeless child exposed to much street violence and blood, and subsequently grown to be scared of darkness" (84). A Song, in Stimelaian signature, in which the voice is indispensable, a black man's anguished tenor – the time of Nana Coyote's coarse breathing, intercepting a lead string, a call for a backing vocal, funereal-like Wu's: Wu, wu, wu… .So that Refentse could brood on, as though anticipating a black funeral (his). Music (in this life), in short, is mimicry of (or my cry for) life after death, anticipating someone else to say: 'Welcome to our Hell in Heaven'.

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Music/and song in *Welcome to our Hillbrow* is a call for an analectic listening. Music in Welcome to our Hillbrow is an echo of 'some music' in the street, what the rapper Tuks Sengnga properly names a *Ticket to Jozi*, or what we may call a Mid-night Train ticket to and through Hell (if, says the rapper, "diheleng re a ikisa/ka mollo re a phisa[71]" (Tuks, 2006)) where people fight (gura) "for a dime", not worth the rapper's time. For: at stake in the rapper's time is "hunger to be free", to "keep you on the edge of your [train] seat". And this hunger is the very condition of urgent listening, of listening to a time (less) signature in the sound of the moving train. Recall from the preceding chapter the white trombonist's sentiment: the train sound sounds just like a Marabi sound: "it just goes on and on, but as it goes it always changes and you know it's going somewhere".

Now, if (say) the 'substance' of the thumping Marabi organ or trombone is any different from Motswako (*Ticket to Jozi*) organ/ trombone, it is a different/"changing same". Is not Motswako after all a kind of a post-apartheid Marabi, in the measure of their related conditions of emergence? Marabi comes before 1948. Motswako is possible post-1994. All point to the insincerity of fetishizing/privileging apartheid (the supposed alpha and omega of

[71] To hell we send ourselves/ in the fire we commit ourselves.

political evil) in thinking blacks in South Africa, the insincerity of asking tautological questions (of whether blacks in apartheid suffered in different ways), or the comedy of seeing in the end of apartheid (or any coming epoch) the end of evil. All point to tragedy of failure to listen and learn: if the sound of *Ticket to Jozi* is going anywhere (to Hell, if we are to help the white trombonist), it is an expression/determination of blackness. What comes to the same thing: if the sound of *Ticket to Jozi* is going anywhere, it is the sound of the black going through Hell (from somewhere, say Mafikeng or Tiragalong, to Jozi). Mafikeng or Tiragalong is qualitatively equivalent to Jozi. Going from Jozi to Mafikeng is qualitatively similar to going from Jozi to Mafikeng. To leave Mafikeng for Jozi existentially is to leave Jozi for anywhere, so that a ticket to Jozi is necessarily a *return ticket* (Hell in black is everywhere).

Tuks, of course, may prefer us to privilege Jozi/Mafikeng's quantitative distinction (non-equivalence). Going to Jozi (the industrial city as such) in Tuks the rapper is one way of finding wisdom[72], of hustling, a way of thinking (and seeing) the necessity of struggle to keep "you on your feet", recognition of the sad fact that many things change while "it remains the same for people downstairs". The black must move – even *if* to move is to go nowhere. To move to Jozi could be the impossibility of the black (through wisdom) taking a simple fact ("it remains the same for people downstairs") for granted. A move to Jozi (a move through Hell) is a pursuit for simple understanding, since Jozi in Tuks the rapper is "a simpler place and time".

By no means, I say in passing, is Tuks (in *Ticket to Jozi)* a romantic, clearly. How can Jozi, and not Mafikeng, be a "simpler place and time"? You will know that Ticket to Jozi is an arrangement and a sly critique of Gladys Knight's *Mid-night Train to Georgia'*. It is critique of Knight's blues-soul (romantic) concern for the force of failure, a black man's differed hopes for stardom in Los Angeles, a critique of the black woman in Knight, the woman who sympathises with the nostalgic black man and follows him to a Georgian past, a "simpler place and time" – if only she will "rather live in his world than be without him", in hers. Ticket to Jozi is a correction: If Georgian is a simpler place and time, so is Los Angeles and Jozi – qualitatively speaking. At stake, then, is an Either/or, in Tuks: the choice of simplicity of living in (listening to) the receding past (Georgia/Mafikeng) or simplicity of living in (listening to) the difficult present (Jozi/Los Angeles). The past-present matrix is a simple idea, if the qualitative distinction between present and past is an ideal distinction. For

[72] "Kef a ke ile/ke o batla mahlale" (Tuks, 2006).

the present will now become past. And the past is yet to come, while the future is already past (Kierkegaard). To live in the present is to live in the past and the future.

Yet: the past-present matrix is a complex, concrete idea. It has political significance, the sublation of evil (evil: a pre-condition of foolishness), the acquiring of wisdom (understanding that the past and the present are quantitatively distinct) in a practical struggle. Of wisdom: hence to leave Mafikeng for Jozi is also a wish not to forget the past, the wish for the past not to forget one's distant commitment to this past (home as such (Mafikeng)). Hence Jozi, the present, is quantitatively simpler (than Mafikeng) a call for response to become a wise hustler (to "s*how love still").* Tuks:

One shot at life, I'll be damned if I live mine like a candle
In the wind
Zone 7 maz' phelele, so what you want bling?
Show love we all got blood lines of kings and queens…
Show love still, black got his land back but it's hard to build
But it's hard to build.

Jozi becomes the real test of spiritual development when one can succeed to live in it by way of *going beyond* bling (the fight 'for dimes')[73]. Jozi is the real test when one can – a critique of Knight aside – show love through an art form: music: through a hearing of, say, Motswako notes. Or through hearing a heavenly (blue/brooding) notes in "Welcome to our Hillbrow", through hearing, say, Stimela's a funereal-like timber and, then, seeing the '*World' (whiteness as such) though the eyes of a Child.* So that we could read in this Child a kind of weeping: Stimela's Nana Coyote's very voice, the raspy tenor, not so much what it shouts but the manner (style) of its shout, an expression of disappointment: the failure of black folk to show love or, what is the same thing, the black folk's failure to build him/her a safe, warm place, despite in principle getting back the land. We could read in this Child, too, the *voice* of the rapper, shouting "One *shot at life, I'll be damned if I live mine like a candle/In the wind", suggesting* the rapper wants beautiful things (life as such), except (says the rapper elsewhere) he will and cannot not for them put his soul on the market place.

Of course, none (goes on the rapper) apprehends the significance of what he says, since he raps "in codes" and is "way ahead" of his time. His voice is a secret.

Now: rap "in codes" (a mark of a type of childishness) is a kind-of-pure art (in spite of Tuks' political garb/phrases). To practice pure art is to express what one pleases, to please

[73] Hence movement is better than stillness, in other words.

no audience (at least in the immediate) and, by extension, to risk attack: envy. By envy I mean the need for adults to steal what they do not possess. I mean the moment of employing "purposely wrong orthography, the use of children's expression [*'so what you want bling'*]", in a philistine bid to avail oneself on the market place. Put another way: "Genuine and pseudo-nursery rhymes are combined with purposeful alterations of the lyrics of original nursery rhymes in order to make commercial hits". They are "combined...to make the musical product "popular" with the subjects' consciousness, the distance between themselves and the plugging agencies, by approaching them with the trusting attitude of the child asking an adult for the correct time even though he knows neither the strange man nor the meaning of time" (Adorno,2002:451). The use of nursery like rhymes to make mere hit songs is anti-pure-art, disrespect for an adult black audience's doubled consciousness, if one produces and listens on their behalf (Adorno, 2002). Such disrespect is less distasteful when the audience cares less of what they listen to – less distasteful when the audience itself already is a commodity (cares not to think of its {non}place in the white world). More sad, however, is the case of employing "lyrics characterised by an ambiguous irony in that, while affecting a children's language, they at the same time display contempt of the adult for the child or even give or sadistic meaning to" the child's expression (2002:450). So that to rap "so what you want bling" is blasphemous. It is to use the child (the voice) in vain, to use one's voice to avail oneself on the market place.

To be used in vain (to be an object of contempt) is to be unlistenable when you plead: *See the World Though the Eyes of a Child or Show love still.* The adult has not capacity to *listen* to a childish plead (except for contempt), has not capacity to care. In short, *black got his land back but it's hard to build/But it's hard to build.* Then: the child (the voice) is left alone in the cold. The child in *Welcome to our Hillbrow*, you will recall, is homeless, "exposed to much street violence and blood, and subsequently grown to be scared of darkness" (Mpe, 2001:84). Only he can hear himself in an *empty* street echo. Yet the child hears him/herself without mediation, since the child has not self-consciousness. The child hears itself in the immediacy of violence, absence of a show of love. This is the child with the soul of the black folk.

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What should this absence of a show of love signify in an age of a popular speech-making, when an adult (a politician) declares conviviality between the soul of South African black folk and whites, who supposedly "took the collective decision that we will manage all our pains by admitting the wrongs we had done [and] would acknowledge that the wrongs we

had done were wrongs"? The we pronoun is a case of a popular composer listening to his political song, relishing it on behalf of an adult audience, to whom he could also declare South Africa a friend of the world, a *friendship* "born of mutual respect and a common adherence to the vision of *freedom* and *human* dignity for all" (Mbeki, 1999:1). So that to speak of ideals of *freedom* and *human dignity* is to take an adult audience for political children, to see in these ideals an object of childlike faith.

This is a case of a popular stage, an instant and a place of '*glamour'* in which an adult audience ought to feel triumphant for partaking in a new experiment, a South African demos. The popular composer and his adult audience must "fight to forgive what could not be undone … make a commitment to [themselves] …one to the other, that …[they] would strive to work together to build something which, perhaps, no other people had succeeded to construct…What remains is that … [they] continue to strive to do what … [they] thought was the correct thing to do - to build a better world, free of the pain represented by the graves at this place, which are a bitter reminder of a bitter past". A place of glamour (a condition of the new), despite a South African present being an endless chain of onto-political 'misfortunes', a place of past-present-future sorrow, the black trial to build children a *warm* place. It is an instant of glamour if decked in a standard jargon of *nationalist* truth and reconciliation, a better way to deal with the politician's voice: "none of us is without a scar" (Mbeki, 1999:1). A necessary jargon, since popular performance of politics requires a childish national audience incapable of recognising the truth of a lie: the black capacity of reconciling with another (the foe/master) before he could (if he could) reconcile with himself. Requires childish audience for a dancer, whose skin peels in the market-place, the dancer – whom this truth never hurts. He prefers the ear-tickling after all, distraction of the black's responsibility to see the world through the *eyes* of the actual child, who (we'll reiterate) hears himself say: '"black got his land back but it's hard to build/But it's hard to build", the black is a commodity, South Africa is proper to white time'[74], hence, understandably, the black cannot show love.

Now, commodity-hood is a form of forgetting one's personhood, the thing that conditions a possibility of refusal of not showing love (the refusal of subjection). By personhood we mean an object's existential status, the fact that the commodity-hood is an

[74] We may say this in a different way: the jargon is grand-paraphrase of the long-standing charterist chatter: South Africa is property, proper to everyone who lives in it, everyone with the capacity to build. So that, in the final analysis, the politician's wish for friendship with the world is not an aporia, since South Africa (by definition) belongs to white Time…

object's non-essential property (Moten, 2003). Personhood is a pointer to his/her soul. The soul of the black folk forms in the interstices of commodity (the shadow of the valley of death) and personhood. The soul, then, can either gravitate towards personhood or commodityhood. The rapper has a choice of putting not his soul on the market place. He may well imply an existential certainty: there is such a thing as a black soul (the soul on the market) if there is such a thing as the soul of the black folk. It is the soul of the black folk (short of being necessarily on the market) that can radiate personhood, the consequence of which is to show love, a *trial* at building a child a warm place. It is a trial if the soul of the black folk cannot after all get rid of its onto-political status: the black is formed through a white Time, so that the soul of the black folk must necessarily show love even if the black folk (and the black soul) will fail, must necessarily show love, maternal (originary) care: the fact *we all got blood lines of kings and queens, the fact that we can rule ~~ourselves~~ even when* the white world rules.

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Against white South African time sits my voice, my child. He/she lives in a hellish-heaven, in the measure that he is a child in black, a child of Hillbrow and of Tiragalong, in the measure that it lives through the (post-apartheid) market place, the University. Yet the child, you will recall, is a voice that hears itself without mediation. It is not subjectivity *per se*. It does not use itself. It has not self-consciousness. It is in an expression, a style of personhood, and as such beyond representation. It is a determination of the soul of the black folk, a form of a radical, rational instinct (regardless of whether or not the black folk are a commodity – live in hell that is heaven). The voice, put another way, has an immediate capacity to judge, since it is at once an expression of personhood of the black folk in hell (in politics). And what is to judge immediately other than a practice of ethics in black, the practice of having the soul's best interest at heart? And what is ethics in black (ethics from sorrow) other than my recognition of the (im)possibility of or perversity of black studies? Ethics from sorrow is a recognition of the (im) possibility of black studies, since black studies are on the market place, in the South African university, say. Black studies have not an immediate relationship with an ethics in black as such. Black studies and ethics from sorrow (ethics in black) are at war. "You can't live without our thing", says the black 'good' student.

Responds the ethicist in black: "perhaps, though I am not a thing per se but my own style and thus beyond your appropriation, unless you wish to look comical".

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