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Doing Research Otherwise: Critical Essays on 'The Land Question', Farmworkers and Resistance in South Africa.

Mbuso Nkosi

Supervisor: Dr. Prishani Naidoo

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Development Studies).

Johannesburg, 2018

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Mbuso Nkosi _____

(Name of candidate and Signature)

Date: 15 March 2018

Abstract

This thesis is a collection of essays. It is an attempt to critically focus on how Blacks resisted land dispossession and how the question of land in the current society has re-emerged as a need to redress the injustices of the past. The first argument advanced is that there is a need to rethink resistance and understand the conceptual importance of silence as not that which indicates the inability to speak (to be mute or non-existent). Instead, in certain conditions it reflects a disinterest in shaping the course of power. Secondly, the essays recast the entire focus of dispossession from being an economic problem and focus on other questions, like the ontological and eschatological. The essays, therefore, aim to understand what the meaning of land is, what does it mean to belong to the land and what does it mean to be returned to the land? The two essays that draw on archival material and the farm violence in Bethal from the 1940s-1960s argue that the historical problem of violence, on South African farms, reflects a historical nervousness of those that have termed themselves the 'owners' of the land, the White farmer. In that case, we discover that the land question holds a broader meaning, beyond the economic and it is in the anxiety of the question, 'where will we die' that we begin to appreciate the land as a home. Hence, I argue that the question of land has approached me as a question of death. When all is said and done, whence does salvation then lie in a society torn by this particular past? Salvation is possible only if we move towards those voices that are assumed to be mute or in need of being spoken for. That is why the farmworker or the one who works in the belly of the earth will help in revealing the great secret of the land, which the present seeks to remember only for it to be forgotten again, in empty political rhetoric that assumes that the land can be owned. Thirdly, the essays find the concept of reflexivity insufficient, for it loses nothing while it bends and reflects the conditions of the scholė with their holy trinity: the theory, the field, and themselves. This approach begs the question, what about the ethical? What does it mean to encounter the face of the Other making a demand to be seen for who they are? The critique advanced is that social science research has no conception of the 'ethical' beyond the bureaucratic stamp we get from the University ethics committee. That is why a question emerges as to what it means for a Black student to research their communities as if they are not from those communities. This is why a call is made 'To do Research Otherwise' from a position, that appreciates alterity.

Dedication

Before I make a dedication… let me express the infinitely nourishing love that God granted me in this journey. Maka bongwe, ufanelwe lonke udumo!

This work is dedicated to two things that matter the most to me:

To that voice that keeps on speaking. To that voice that filled my lungs when I was close to death. To that voice that was heard by her and then whispered to me. To that voice that began to exist independently in me. To all those that are able to hear that silent voice speaking. That voice that comforts, strengthens, calls to love, and reminds us that nothing may conquer those who have obeyed it. Keep on!

To my family: abakwa Nkosi, abakwa Vezi, my father and his parents- abakwa Dongo. Mostly my maternal family for they nurtured my Mother and then nurtured me ngoba ke mina ngilibhaca elabhaca koMama ngenkathi ubaba esweleka! To my great grandmother Lephinah Ntombizine Mthethwa owendela kaVezi ethathwa ngu Absolom Vezi owavikelwa uMalume wakhe wakhulela kaZondi. The power of clairvoyance that my mother has inherited from the Vezi's, then from my great grandmother Evelyn Gugile uMaTwala owendela kaNkosi ethathwa nguAndries Nkosi. From all this rich history, I became! I experienced this history from uGogo Sithandwa Mary MaVezi owendela kaNkosi ethathwa ngumkhulu uAaron Nkosi. To uMkhulu Mphambi Nkosi, whom in my concern and the families concern for his grave that "disappeared" led me to enquire deep about if we are going to rest in death. I look forward to a land freed to itself. I hope we will one day find your grave.

To the memory of my Brother, Lebogang Mainole (Dongo), whose death this year meant I had lost my lower limbs. The pain of knowing that there is no one again who will say 'my brother' to me, makes me cry! Lahamba ithambo likaMzikayifane, RIP.

Acknowledgements

Oh, since I was young, been groovin' to my own drum

Ain't that many teachers, show me my potential

Felt like a failure, momma said you know better

Future in my hands

God, she had a plan

Stronger than I know, soon I'd understand

The power I possess, the story of the Chosen

Lost since I was young, been groovin' to my own drum

Ain't that many teachers show me my potential

Felt like a failure, momma said you know better

Future in my hands

God, she had a plan

Stronger than I know, soon I'd understand

The power I possess, the story of The Chosen

(Kid Cudi, 2016: Rose Golden)

Gogo, will I ever find peace knowing that in this world I will never ever see you again or talk to you? I will forever miss the philosophy that you assiduously inculcated in my young impatient mind. I was the only kid in primary during lunch who did not play that much with other kids, but spent his lunch in conversation with his grandmother. I will forever miss your mastery in conversation. Your care for others is something I am yet to find in any book! However, I am comforted by the fact that at least through Nonhle you came back and the conversation can still continue. I am here because I am still afraid of failing you!

Mkhulu, through Nkosingiphile, I see that awe struck face of yours. You knew that my idea of being a man was that which came from women (uDidi no Gogo). But, from you I learnt a lot and that can be surmised into one word, RESPONSIBILITY! In me masculinity and femininity could produce a peaceful dance. I will continue being responsible. Thank you for the comical relief and with Nkosingiphile we can all laugh again, sometimes in discomfort.

Mama, like the Mother of the Great Zulu King, Shaka Zulu, you knew that a great man ought to be raised by his mother's family. Bayede Ndlovukazi! Kuwe ngiyazithoba! You provided me with great roots, no wind can move me! A prophetess who was never supposed to be blessed with a child; busk in your kingdom then! Jabula eMbusweni wakho! I stand today infused with great teachings from abakwaVezi to abakwaNkosi. You are not just a philosopher, but also a mathematician… In those many papers you have filled with different calculations, it seems you are calculating and modelling some secret life that you are only going to create.

Sisi Ntonto uyakhumbula ngikubiza in grade R ukuthi uzongibhalela ufive? Ngiyabonga ngothando ongibonise lona, yingakho ngingeke ngikukholwe.

Mama Mabasa ngiyabonga ngakho konke. Ungisizile ngeqa umgwaqo obunzima!

Nokuphiwe 'John' Nkosi, oh I remember that day on the 7th of April 1993 where I told my friends ukuthi kithi konomntwana o-brown. Since that day I have always been bothering you. Mina nawe sizondlula uDidi noFanky.

Then in that very household we were introduced to Philane Mbatha. Oh, that little boy made me look forward to going back home after a long day at school! I wish that God may comfort you and remind you that you are loved. Intwana yami!

Years later, I was introduced to enye intwana, Kekeletso. Always entertaining and singing for us. For the first time I saw uGogo laugh with worry because you were very strange. Then you would always come shouting, "Gogo! Gogo! Gogo!" Keke, I hope one day you will make your parents very proud.

Mbali "Stanana", I wish that you grow up and make your parents proud! To Tumelo and Philane, know that you are loved by your fathers family! Thando, I hope you will grow up with the strength that you have and know that you are loved by your family!

Siyabonga, to be a father to you makes me anxious. How can I claim to be a father if I am burdened by paternity being a legal fiction? I wish all the best for you my boy. I remember those days when you were an infant suffering from eczema and you would cry… I would pick you up and lay you on my chest and you would fall sleep. It was the same thing when you were refusing to go to school; while other kids were walking on their own, there you were resting on my chest. I will always be there for you! I wish that you carve your own path and do it to the best of your abilities.

How can I forget the blood that my father said was his and resembled him! He was right and like him I want to surpass my father. Ngiyabonga Mzikayifane Brian Hamilton Dongo ungimbese ubucwebe bebhubesi. It is sad that I did not get a chance to know Francis Dongo, uMkhulu. But I vaguely remember him and from him the love for sweet things was imbued in me. Kukhokonke engikuzwile kumina ngiyalizwa legazi elinodlame kodwa ke ngoba ngiyindoda eyabhaca koMama, impilo yami igcwele uthando. Uma ngonile sesiyokulungisa kusasa noma ngelinye ilanga mhla sibonana futhi!

Malume Mgcina, you taught me how to fight. I remember those weekends that were dedicated to watching soccer as we travelled to different locations as fans of Diepkloof Liverpool. I can say that you were my young father. I still look up to you.

Malume Lungi, you use to draw for me and your attention for detail is something I still wish for! I enjoyed the attention you paid to my stories about how funny my friends at school were. However, I am not going to stop being an Orlando Pirates supporter.

Malume Linda, every time before we slept you told me jokes and reminded me that I should not take life too seriously. Was it not in the joke "wena ukhohlisa ogogo uthi umhlaba ubalance ngekwayiyi" that we always repeated before going to sleep that I knew that I was loved and cared for? I miss hearing you crack a joke and oh, what a beautiful smile you have! Most importantly I miss those walks we had when we were going to church. You continued where Gogo had started, teaching me the value of having a relationship with God.

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I am a child of my community. Mama Nonhlanhla Mbatha, even though your friendship with my mother was cut short by me coming to this world... you extended your love to me. You sparked my mind with books to read, a radio to listen to, stationary to decorate my school work. I remember those walks as a child, albeit I complained that you walked slow… I discovered a lot with you!

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At the University, I encountered many great individuals, so I thank them all, to count the ones that come to mind:

Rajohane Matshedisho taught me the meaning of words. I thought I did not know words. I remember asking one professor (when I was in first year) what he meant in his assignment by

‘discuss’ and he chided me that I need to go get the dictionary. Rajohane in his favourite term, disambiguation, always reminded us that words hold many meanings. I was then again confident after hearing this. I knew that maybe I knew words but did not hear like others and did not pronounce like others. That is what I thought Rajohane meant for example through concepts like “class”, he showed us Weber and showed Marx and said, “see concepts have more than one meaning.”

Prishani Naidoo my supervisor reinforced the idea that I can stand on my own. A destroyer of tradition(s) standing with a torch of flame. While this idea of standing on my own may seem destructive, given that one does it with a torch of flame that might burn us all. However, it is a flame that seeks to build! A building flame. Oh Prishani, your humanity shines so bright. If I were a poet I would compose a poem every YEAR for you and read it to the flowers and birds in the morning. Your approach, so calm and yet so loud, is one I am yet to understand. Like a mother who has seen the future of her children, you were always calming. Abakwa Nkosi bayabonga ngalokhu okwenzile ukusiza owabo afinyelele phambili.

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counted in South African history as people who have taken care of the dreams of many Black families!

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In that moment of confusion and rejection, I went to the historical papers and was alerted to the case of Bethal. I would like to thank the staff at the historical papers and their zeal in keeping historical records. I spent most of my University years at the Waternweiler Library and later Cullen Library… appreciation is extended to the library staff, Mr Simon Lesejane and uMama uDuduzile Mnguni. I would also like to extend my appreciation to Dr. Tshepo Moloi who provided me with some material on Bethal, the interviews gave me a voice of the living since at the historical papers I was dealing with the dead.

While I was away from home, West Campus Village became my home. I would like to thank Mam Mtshali, Mam Connie, Mam Johanna, Mam Tebogo, Mam Suzan for they become Mothers to me while I was away from my Mother. I would also like to extend great appreciation to uBhuti Tsietsi who attended to every need I had, all your efforts are appreciated.

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Introduction: Through the Eye of the Needle

> *A work is finished when we can no longer improve it, though we know it to be inadequate and incomplete. We are so overtaxed by it that we no longer have the power to add a single comma, however indispensable. What determines the degree to which a work is done is not a requirement of art or of truth, it is exhaustion and, even more, disgust. Cioran, E.M. 1976, 26.* ***The trouble with being born***. [Oh Dear Cioran where is the pleasure in what we do? If we need to go beyond birth as an important moment in our lives… what is the purpose of living and dying? If we have no place to die then where will we bury our umbilical cords-Mbuso Nkosi]
>
> *Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril*. Wilde, O. 2000 [1891], 4. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Some works are spoken of to be works, some become works because they are spoken about but never read, others are works because they are fought for, not complete, cannot be forgotten, others because they are burned, because they cannot be burnt, because others died for them, misquoted them, misjudged them, suffered for them, others are works because they are works. How does one judge that which holds my name in bold **Mbuso Nkosi**; will it be judged according to the standard that argues that this work is not work because it has not engaged the works spoken about in the manner we have been speaking about them for centuries? Is it going to be judged from what it is not or from what it desires to be? A project that attempts to articulate truth in that which is inconsistent, incoherent - life. Will its frustrations be known and what of the voice and dreams that kept it going, seeking to speak through me and beyond me? I wondered about how to present this particular method to the scholar who might be following the rigid rules of the academe. I wondered of the wrongs I might be committing, and this was all done in solitude! For Benjamin (1986: 302), the one who is going to create must take on the role of a hermit since “the creator seeks solitude.” For in the previous years as a student who was competing for marks, I could wrestle in public until the sun threatened to come up and I would not let go of my opponent until I received my blessings. Now, I had to wrestle in solitude after

the blessings had been bestowed. How could it be wrong, with its desire - that of arriving at the truth in that vast land of knowledge? Will it be understood? That was my constant anxiety. However, please consider that there are those who read works from the perspective of its silences and beyond, which is the method that many have employed before me, citing the names of the greats. For me it was Marx in my early teens and early days in varsity, then later Foucault in 2014. For those who are interested in the question of where the work is located or locating itself, was it not Ellmann (1984:477) who argued that in the creative process "the erect pen has no conscience"?

This particular project represents my desire to extend myself to the world of truth and knowledge. Marx and Engels (1845, point XI: 3) in their eleven philosophical notes known as the *Theses on Feuerbach (*which were an outline of the *German Ideology)* argued that "[T]he philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it." It was this quote which I read in Grade 11 that forced me to think critically of my life and foster Marx and Engels' understanding of the working class as the force of change as my compass. It is not by coincidence that my undergraduate and postgraduate degrees were in industrial sociology. When I discovered Marx's discomfort, the peasant, which to him could be seen as a sack of potatoes[1] belonging in the historical dustbin (Gouldner, 1982: 871) since "the identity of their interests forms no community, no national bond, and no political organization among them, they do not constitute a class" (Marx, 1851/1852: 62). In this analysis the peasantry cannot exist independently, "[t]hey cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, an unlimited governmental power which protects them from the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above" (Marx, 1851/1852: 62). Context matters, because at this particular moment we might be reminded that Marx was writing of the French peasantry, but as Gouldner (1982) indicates, this seemed to be Marx's general attitude regarding the peasantry. This was also expressed in the *Communist Manifesto* as he and Engels (1997:136) argued that:

[1] We return to the subject of potatoes in **essay 5** titled **These Potatoes Look like Humans: In the Abode of God, Bethal from the 1940-1960s.** The potato (the peasant) is an idle object, much like my subjects in this research, it is assumed they cannot even represent themselves.

> The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the *peasant*, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history.

I knew that for me as a South African born on the African continent and faced with many questions attributed to colonialism which left most Blacks in the countryside as permanent peasants (albeit it is now noted that South Africa is no longer an agrarian society), the discomfort did not sit well with me as some of my lecturers tried to avoid it. I might not be dealing with the peasantry in this PhD project, but the question of representation and speaking for others haunts my project as I later warn that to think of the problem of the South African farmworkers as a question of representation in the form of unions misses the point (see Nkosi, 2017). This discomfort came with an awareness that the dustbin of history is never a safe place since there are those who are also adroitly gifted in recycling rubbish. In the dustbin of history a lot re-emerges, therefore the dustbin is never a safe place to throw objects in if one wants to get rid of them! What a strange place/object the dustbin is in human society. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* it seems Marx (1851/1852:6) was also aware of the strangeness of the dustbin when he reminded us of the struggles that sometimes require the image of the dead to be able to articulate its convictions. Here he cites the words of Christ when he said (to one of his followers) "…let the dead bury the dead" (Luke 9 verse 60). Despite the various interpretations of what Marx is saying in this text, maybe he was also saying that we should allow the things that belong in the dustbin to rot in the dustbin. What an uncomfortable place to exist in, the dustbin of history!

Notwithstanding that call by Marx and Engels (1845) to change the world, four years into my PhD I heard a voice deep in a hole illuminated by 1369 bulbs in its *Invisibility* and hibernation speaking of a man who could not be seen by the world "because people refuse to see… [him]" (Ellison, 1952: 3). I heard the voice and was in tears, was this my life? Was I naïve in my desire to extend myself to the world, truth, and knowledge? In writing what you read, I was not of the

world anymore; I only heard the voice of Mam Winnie*[2] calling me to a responsibility I did not understand. Yet, I was in deep hibernation, writing and thinking about that which you will read. "I was looking for myself and asking everyone except myself questions which I, and only I, could answer. It took me a long time and much painful boomeranging of my expectations to achieve a realization everyone else appears to have been born with: That I am nobody but myself. But I had to discover that I am an invisible man!" (Ellison, 1952:15). That which you are going to read is a product of hibernation a "covert preparation for a more overt action" (Ellison, 1952:13). This was a wild and cumbersome journey of trying to attain some pure understanding, during which I could hear Kant (1998:146) in the *Critique of Pure Reason* comforting me and letting me know that the land of pure knowledge:

> …is an island, and enclosed by nature herself within unchangeable limits. It is the land of truth (an attractive word), surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean, the region of illusion, where many a fog-bank, many an iceberg, seems to the mariner, on his voyage of discovery, a new country, and, while constantly deluding him with vain hopes, engages him in dangerous adventures, from which he never can desist, and which yet he never can bring to a termination. But before venturing upon this sea, in order to explore it in its whole extent, and to arrive at a certainty whether anything is to be discovered there, it will not be without advantage if we cast our eyes upon the chart of the land that we are about to leave, and to ask ourselves, firstly, whether we cannot rest perfectly contented with what it contains, or whether we must not of necessity be contented with it, if we can find nowhere else a solid foundation to build upon; and, secondly, by what title we possess this land itself, and how we hold it secure against all hostile claims?

This project should not be read as that which is complete (anyway show me anything that is complete in life), but as a project that seeks to show a position that is still emerging in my thinking (in that wide stormy ocean). It is a voice that I hear, that needs to be heard, but even to me it is still not clear since I have been waiting to hear it for many years and it sounds so new. This should not be read as an introduction that should be followed by a conclusion (as the conventional way of writing demands). Instead this should be read as how 'the work' or the 'thesis' came to approach me. I was never a researcher, a being in search of something; instead,

[2] *Pseudonym

the topics I wrote of approached me as I was trying to figure out what to write about next, who am I, and what is unique about me doing a PhD! It even intrigues me, while it is said that PhDs are read by a few, it would seem that this manuscript is intended for me to read in many years to come and rework it. A project speaking to me, it might elude many, but I hope some fragments of it may be heard by the reader (for it never assumes to exist in totality/it is never complete!). The work presents itself as a collection of critical essays, essays that speak to each other for each other, but never in totality.

I remember that little task my grandmother used to give me, of inserting a cotton thread into the eye of the needle. She would praise my precision and the power of my clear young eyesight something she no longer seemed to have. Mine too would later diminish as I also became myopic and had to wear prescriptive glasses. To be able to insert a thread of cotton in the eye of the needle, a task so small to an eyesight so good (maybe not so good today) requires that one be able to see the broad in the minute for the eye of needle is very broad for one who seeks to insert the cotton thread in it. Yet in unison, it is very small if one does not look deep into it. To enter into the eye of the needle, is to see the little in the broad, and the broad in the little. Broadness is mostly shunned in academe since most students are usually warned of the burden of the works that are 'broad' and their inability to yield results. And yet still I insist, if the work gets accused of being too broad, then my answer is: go look into the eye of the needle!

In conjunction, Mafeje (1991) has argued that the academe has a number of infinite texts and each individual seeking to make an argument should not worry about the infinity of these texts. He goes on to say that each individual should be concerned about how they deal with what they perceive to be lacking in what they have dealt with. They should instead be judged by how well they handle the little material they have selected (Mafeje, 1991). Hence, the title of the introduction is 'through the eye of the needle' for I am dealing with a number of selected texts and I try to go beyond what they have raised. Each particular essay makes a certain contribution; unfortunately, the PhD goes beyond the norm in academe where the student seeks to outline the research question, how the question was answered or should have been answered, the rationale

using particular methods over others, and what the contribution is. My consolation became that particular task that my grandmother used to ask me to do, since in the research process we all begin from different views. Others may only see the eye of the needle as small and be able to insert the thread without looking deep into it. On the other hand, for me all the small things were broad and that is what helped me insert the cotton thread and accept that maybe I need to approach the entire process 'otherwise'. This is why the fear: will the work be read by what it speaks to, the inconsistencies that it had to deal with? The unconventional- going beyond the many disciplines we have been taught in the classroom as to how things are and have been for many years. Maybe that is the greatest contribution of the work, a creation of a possibility, of reading, writing, and thinking differently from the convention, a task of a new generation. However, this does not mean we do not engage in what is valued in the academe, reading! As much as each equation to Ramanujan had no meaning unless it reflected "a thought of God" or the infinity of God (Kanigel, 1991: 67), his mathematical calculations to him were always correct, but without a method to prove them they were merely scribbles he learnt. So, he also had to follow the method or logic of proof. Below then I try to go back to the methodical presentation of the work (yet still protesting its rigidity). At the end I hope that each word, sentence, and paragraph may represent the infinity of God! For me, God represents knowledge in its infinity and that is the beauty that I appreciated when I read the *The Man Who Knew Infinity: A Life of the Genius Ramanujan* (Kanigel, 1991).

The Structure of the Essays: The Needle

If you are interested in the questions of the research problem and research question, mine is that the reading in South African scholarship (the ones I cite in the essays, lest I be charged for generalising the particular) failed to transcend a political economic reading of resistance, in it with a strong language of the economy! This perspective then misconstrued, misidentified, and misrecognised the people it studied (who were mostly Blacks) since what they encountered was explained within the vagaries of the South African economy. Were they not then dealing with a different subject, an imagined subject similar to the one in Europe? This has also been Chakrabarty's (1989) concern in his study, *Rethinking Working-Class History: Bengal 1890-1940*. Chakrabarty (1989:xiii) asks "[W]hat happens, then when we have a 'working class' born

into a culture characterized by the persistence of precapitalist relationships (or by the absence of notions of "citizenship," "individualism," "equality before the law" and so on?)" How does this condition even "affect its capacity for class and revolutionary action?" (Chakrabarty (1989: xiii). Failure to ask such questions has created a condition in which, in writing, the author (mostly White in the cases I cite) presents their subjective experiences as objective; the author's positionality is mute and silenced. If that is the case how do we rethink resistance beyond the economic and political in South African history? How does one offer a different conceptual reading of resistance or agency not grounded in the economic? Can resistance be explained outside political movements? Is resistance always informed by economic and political issues? Does resistance have a language? What about the self… is it always a product of the economic and the political? How does the self-fashion itself?

The above questions drive the thesis and lead me to try and offer a different theoretical, conceptual and methodical reading of resistance. I was to consider such questions later in my PhD though, since my entry point was informed by my writing on the agricultural sector, as well as what I had read regarding the Western Cape horticultural strikes which started in the De Doorns region and spread to other parts of the province. Farmworkers in this region wanted their working and living conditions improved, arguing for an increase to R150 a day. The strike resulted in the Minister of Labour making amends to the Sectoral Determination, stipulating a minimum wage of R105 a day, as of March 2013; whereas previously workers earned R69 for a nine-hour work day (see Department of Labour, 2012 for the Sectoral Determination). Post the unrest in the Western Cape, farmers in Limpopo and Mpumalanga retrenched close to 2,000 workers in favour of mechanisation, in fear of a repeat of the incident in De Doorns (Essop, 2013). One leader from the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) argued that farmworkers in the sector do not have a collective voice (i.e. a trade union) that represents their interests and that is why farmers have been able to oppress them. Thus, it was argued that the overall struggle for farmworkers is for them to be organised by a trade union that will represent their interests (Wildermann, 2015; Nkosi, 2013b; Webster and Nkosi, 2013; Webb, 2017).

The strike in the Western Cape is presented as the first of its kind in the South African political consciousness of farmworkers (Wilderman, 2015; Webb, 2017). Interestingly enough, outside the Western Cape promissory moment there is little account of farmworkers' resistance to their exploitation; except for what White (2011) and Ndungu (2012) saw as the symbolic power of workers when farmworkers held marches together with a movement called Sikhula Sonke and different civil society movements. In 2012, the same year of the strike, I was conducting my research on the horticultural farms of Gauteng, and concluded the research by arguing that there is a need for trade unions to organise farmworkers in this sector, drawing on the work by Selwyn (2012) who used the concepts of structural power and associational power as important sources of identifying alternative sources of power at the disposal of workers (Nkosi, 2013a).[3] With a union density of 4% in the horticultural sector and a total of 3% unionisation in all sectors (in Gauteng), the concern with these figures led me to call for unionisation and this line of reasoning was synchronised with the study by the National Labour Economic Development Institute (NALEDI, 2011) on *Identifying Obstacles to Union Organizing in Farms: Towards A Decent Work Strategy in the Farming Sector*. The study estimated that there are 34 unions organising in the sector, but in spite of the large number of unions, union density has rarely exceeded 10% in the post 1994 period: in 2003 it was 6.6%, in 2007 10.2%, and by September 2011, it had dropped to 3.4%. Thus, my study was in the trend of solving the question of unionising farmworkers. Interestingly, it was also linked with the above concerns of authors who had reported what was happening in the Western Cape. The aforementioned figures express a decline of 6.8% in union density over a period of four years and it is here that the enquiry of my current study began. We are not given an explanation of the source of the sudden drop in numbers, but we find the idea that there is a need to shift strategies of organising workers to adjust to the issue of unions not being able to access farmworkers in their place of work as a key explanation to the decline (NALEDI, 2011). To borrow from van Onselen (1973: 237), the above observations on farmworkers and trade unionisation "seem to be underpinned by a common assumption- that the political consciousness of black workers should be assessed largely through the presence or

[3] Selwyn builds on the theoretical framework of Erik Olin Wright (2000) on *Working-class power, capitalist-class interests, and class compromise* as well as the work of Silver (2003) who divided Wright's concept of structural power into two sub categories, namely: market place bargaining power and workplace bargaining power. However, there has been no critical examination of the analytical Marxist approach adopted by Wright and his usage of game theory to represent the interests of different agents. His work is guided by the idea of 'rationality' borrowing from the methodological individualism of classical liberalism.

absence of associations and organisations which manifestly articulate worker interests." Does it mean that low union density translates to a lack of worker consciousness? This was my first point of entry.

What was not analysed in the strike was the fact that the trade union form is not always what determines resistance in this sphere of society. The neglected historical records of workers resistance in agriculture is visible, and brings with it a danger that the present faces, that of adopting an ahistorical view of resistance that elevates the present and neglects the role of history in shaping the present. In South African history, we have also witnessed political movements linked to the concerns of the farmworkers, with the prominent example of the potato boycott of 26 June 1959 launched by the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), lamenting the violent conditions Black farmworkers in Bethal were subjected to. At the same time, there are books that have shown the resistance to oppression, apartheid and land dispossession in the Eastern Cape. In particular, Govan Mbeki (1964) in *South Africa: the peasants' revolt* argues that the South African peasants know what it feels like to be crushed by armed forces and the likes of Isaac Bangani Tabata (1954) arguing that such resistance is the defining factor of the agrarian problem/question in South Africa and those interested in revolutionary change should place at the centre of their analyses the agency of those in the countryside. With the emergence of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) in 1919, authors like Bradford (1986; 1988) documented how, in places like Natal, it created possibilities of hope and gave the peasantry a taste of freedom. In focusing on the peasant resistance in the countryside, Bundy (1984) has argued that "without political leadership, without any class alliances, peasant unrest (in South Africa as elsewhere) was unlikely to transcend its isolated and sporadic nature and to pose an effective political threat." The utterance by Marx about the peasantry weighs heavily on the peasant studies and the likes of Eric Wolf (1968) in *Peasant wars of the twentieth century* have been able to show the influence of the peasantry in revolutions focusing on countries like Russia, Mexico, China, Algeria, Cuba, and Vietnam. The role of the peasantry in overthrowing colonialism in Africa has been elevated by Fanon (2005) whose observation of the role of the peasantry in Algeria, in fighting colonialism, led him to argue that the peasantry is the only revolutionary

class! Nkrumah (1972:75) took a different stance and argued that it only holds a potential for socialist revolution given its size, but, it is "dispersed, unorganised, and for the most part unrevolutionary" and therefore there was a need for the revolutionary working class intelligentsia in the urban areas to conscientise them. While it seems I am deviating from what I seek to do, the debate on the role of the peasantry shapes our present understanding of the agency of the farmworkers since, as I argued, it is believed that for them to achieve what they desire they need trade unions and this analysis valorises the trade union movement as a significant force in shaping the South African political economy, democracy, and industrial relations. The language here is still within the paradigm of 'material gains', and therefore, the above questions, I have asked may be overlooked. As it will be observed, the essays try to offer a different reading of the (re)presentation of history.

I draw from various ways of thinking so as to argue that to go beyond the problem of the political economic account of resistance would mean we will have to broaden the scope of our understanding of the problem as it approached me. From the postmodernist school, I draw on the question of the construction of self and resistance, more specifically on the theories of the subject/subjectivity/subjectivation and a reading of Foucault drives this. From postcolonial theory, I draw on the idea of rethinking working class history and it is Chakrabarty who fuels this by focusing on how we can rethink the concepts we have inherited from Marx(ism) and at the same time a rethinking that is aware of the colonial wound. From the literary studies, I was fascinated with modernist literature and that desire of the individual to discover their face and a consciousness not directed by society. That is why later, in drawing from the literary criticism, the question of who an author is, excited me and the methods of showing the silences of the text provided tools of how to offer criticism of the works that one reads (while this comes to be something that the postmodernist takes up with Foucault (1969) arguing that the author has been treated like a god-like figure who is not present in the text, making it difficult to distinguish them). While one is doing an inquisition, I do not throw away the aesthetics in the text (hence the opening with 'some works are works because…'). I am aware that a life that has frozen time without any adherence to ethics is in a state of perpetual youth that leads to decadency and at its helm is Dorian Grey. Thus, in all of this there was that constant conversation(s) on the 'field'

that eluded my plan at the time (when I was still concerned about keeping to my research plan), which made me ask what it is that I am going to write about since these conversations for me were not about the scholastic project. In that case I was pushed beyond the condition of the scholė and I did not find the concept of 'reflexivity' enough (for it loses nothing, it only bends), hence I had to read some of the ideas from the phenomenological movement, especially on the question of the face to face encounter and questions of the eschatological- reading the works of Levinas (1969, 1974, 1979, 1999), Derrida (1995b), and the Danish philosopher Løgstrup (1997). That is why in all of this I wondered about how I would give myself to those I study (for there is a demand), how I (re)present it to the reader, how I (re)present myself in relation to that which I write and I also felt that it was a question of ethics (as it will be explained in how I treated the field as a Black PhD student and how that made me change my views and the writing of the thesis). In reflection the limit of the thesis was this desire to understand myself more and with that came the failure to deliberate substantially on the contribution of feminist theories as well as the denuded faces of the farmworkers calling me to responsibility. Hence, the first essay begins with the question of method and aims to first show the possibility of doing research otherwise. The argument is also meditating on the woman/women who teaches and argues that perhaps that is also a struggle they will wage on their own; not to be spoken for! The exhaustion was already with me, oh dear Cioran! Nonetheless, in **essay 1** the contribution of feminist theorists is meditated upon, especially the question of a decolonising method from the position of the indigenous people through the indigenous anthropologists and their love for their communities, not as distant 'Western researchers' (Richards, 1979; Mitchell, 1982; Wilmer, 1993; Smith, 1999; Domínguez, 2000; Behar, 2003; Motsei, 2004). This methodological intervention, we realise, also has to do with the problem of justice and not only of giving voice to the voiceless, but dealing with how research is conducted and how the current state of research in academia is linked to the colonial. If that is the problem: how does the researcher position themselves, especially given that they are not only having conversations with their communities (they are also part of them)?… how do we ensure that we do not end up seeing ourselves as the only permitted representatives of our communities; that without us there cannot be others that speak? These are questions that emerged and are addressed in a simple answer: intellectuals can struggle with their communities but to claim to be the only voice of a particular community, given one's history and struggle as a member of that community is merely curatorship. The

musings in **essay 1** reflect a desire to go beyond Western metaphysics with its privileging of the I and to a question(s)/answer(s) of a collective subjectivity that knows that to destroy this I, a new dis(order) shall emerge guided by love and not eschewing the collective as the political… If the question of what this thesis is contributing to has not vacated your thinking… or you are still bothered by the question of where the thread is, or where the beginning is, then the 'thesis' begins at the level of the ethical which for the reader might be read as the methodological. It argues that to create possibilities of doing research otherwise, from a position of alterity, we need to meditate deep on the question of the ethical. The work deals with this crucial question: what does it mean for a Black student to research their communities as if they are not from those communities?

I am registered in Development Studies, a field that I feel is yet to rethink itself and its relation to the world in a wave that has gone beyond the nationalist decolonisation in Africa and the economic developmentalist discourse that emerged post-World War Two with its valorisation of the welfare state and state capitalism (Mafeje, 1995; Nabudere, 2006 Mamdani, Mkandawire, and Wamba-dia-Wamba, 1988). Then it is apt that such questions are also inserted in this field, for this field as it has been indicated has failed to interrogate deeply the economic discourse of development and its expert centric view which is top down similar to the trickle down ideas of classical liberalism (Ferguson, 1990, 2006; Escobar, 1995; Mitchell, 2002; Easterly, 2008, 2010). I am of the view that it is not just the concept of development that is proving to be problematic when focusing on Africa, for example it is also how we think resistance occurs to the developmentalist project that we need to interrogate more. While this is not the scope of the thesis, mine has already been highlighted above, and I hope such rethinking will aid in thinking about how we think about the history of colonial Africa beyond that which bemoans the collapse of the colonial state in post-colonial Africa and the lack of movements that are similar to the former nationalist movements or the belief that if a shout exists then resistance exists.

The problem one was faced with of providing an account of resistance beyond the explanation of the political economy is not new to the African scholar or a burden carried by me alone.

Mamdani (2005:2) in a keynote address at the Arusha Conference on "New Frontiers of Social Policy" presented a paper on *Political Identity, Citizenship and Ethnicity in Post-colonial Africa* and argued that the first generation of postcolonial African intellectuals, those who wrote during the early phases of decolonisation in Africa, were "convinced that the impact of colonialism on our societies was mainly economic." This conviction was grounded in the political economic view informed by Marxism which always explained colonial realities through narrow economic ways, notwithstanding the great contributions made about how colonial markets developed or how market based identities emerged in Africa. The limits of the political economy, he argued, were that it has failed to explain postcolonial violence. While the question of postcolonial violence is one of its limits, it can also be argued that violence in political economy is still seen within the economic with the market seen as bringing conditions of economic coercion and colonial violence like the whipping of farmworkers, read as extra-economic coercion similar to the feudal epoch. The problem is that this framework locates all forms of experience within the material/economic. If our accounts of resistance are rooted in political economy, a field that seeks to explain the rationality behind individual/collective resistance within institutions and through economic terms, then economics in our current state or the idea of the economy becomes an idea of individual states, governance, or individuals making decisions in conditions of uncertainty and scarcity (Fine, 2009; Mitchell, 2002). The question of how far "twentieth-century economics also has a colonial genealogy has been overlooked" (Mitchell, 2002: 7-8). Such an exploration does not aim to render mute the colonial history and at the same time remains open to other possibilities of resistance of a coming of a different political identity/subjectivity. What I am trying to do, especially in **essay 2**, is to say that as much as I am looking at the idea of resistance, it needs to be problematised further (especially if it is given within a political economic account) even though I begin by looking at the interplay between domination and resistance. It will become apparent that to locate resistance, it does not need to bring about 'change' (whatever notion of change one subscribes to) for 'it' to be resistance.

Cooper (1994:1532) argues that we need to be careful in writing as if the "R" in resistance is capitalised. Thus, "what is being resisted is not necessarily clear, and "colonialism" sometimes appears as a force whose nature and implications do not have to be unpacked." Cooper (1994:

1532) continues to argue that this has pushed scholars to a focus of "little actions" or a small "*r*" which entails desertion from labour contracts, alternative religious communities, and acts of defiance of white officials. These acts as Cooper (1994) and Scott (1984; 1990) have argued lead to 'big events'. However, in presenting the *r*esistance that happens through everyday experience/life the problem becomes one of asking if this form of resistance has any "potential" to be linked with "political processes" (Cooper, 1994: 1532). It is this problem which needs to be engaged. Why even study this *r*esistance is another question that needs to be answered. Those who have been interested in these questions have shifted the focus to the study of everyday life and I would argue that the Marxist was right when he argued that Marxism has a lot to say about everyday life since it is the study of everyday life (Lefebvre, 1947); albeit as it is argued its resistance is mostly linked to the question of the relation with the commodity.

Does Resistance Have A Language? Essay 2 goes back to theory and the questions raised above - it reads the question(s) of resistance from different theoretical positions (reading the work of Scott and Foucault side by side, including questions raised in literary studies), and I ask if resistance has a language and what is the role of the intellectual in writing and thinking about resistance? Are we merely intellectual beings that seem to exist outside of resistance? This critical role that questions the role of the intellectual in writing is present in every essay; hence I have presented the work in the manner I have (by inserting what is important to me first). What is the role of silence? Why is the scholar of resistance concerned or not concerned with silence? Why is resistance seen within a Manichean view, resistance with a Big R or resistance with a small r? How is silence conceptualised?

I later move to **The problem of land and labour in South African Studies** (**essay 3)**, which shows how problematic the language of the economy is, particularly in the South African scholarship written from the 1900s, known as the liberal historiography and the school that launched the critique known as the revisionist school of Marxism. On the question of land and labour and if one were to borrow from Derrida (1978) then it is clear that the language of the economy seems to offer some kind of totality and presence so that it may conceal that which is

absent to ensure that its narrative can hold (here one attempts to shake that totality!). As those in the decolonial school of thought were to remind Derrida that the Western metaphysics of totality is projected from within a particular locality and the "Western metaphysics is not a totality but a global design. It is precisely the coming into being of a historical and critical consciousness of both the global scope of Western metaphysics as an instrument of colonization (from religion to reason)" (Mignolo, 2012: 329; Richards, 1979). The language of the economy allows intellectuals to be 'objective' to suggest that we are dealing with something that is scientific (far reaching) and can be measured; the other exists in the grey zone of irrationality. Francis Wheen (2004) criticises the emergence of neoliberalism as 'mumbo jumbo' because it tries to employ the narrative of the imagined epoch of Enlightenment, a criticism which is appreciated since it launches a critique of rationality. The other part of Wheen (2004) suggesting that we cannot expect humans to be rational in everyday life needs to be appreciated since he complicates the problem (is it rationality vs irrationality?). If we say neoliberal economics is based on mumbo jumbo trying to predict human behaviour then does it mean we also have to conclude that human behaviour transcends any form of economism? This is followed in a different manner, through a reading of different periods in South African historiography and one tries to reconstruct how those who were faced with dispossession responded (does this response follow the rational logic of a people facing proletarianisation?).

I try to expand on the above argument as I quote a particularly persisting question in Mam Winnie's dialogue (I will introduce her in the coming paragraphs) and the question is "**Where will we die (Sizofelaphi Na)? The Return of the Black Body to itself, the Land" (essay 4).** In this I continue to move to the particular scholarship that emerges in 1977 known as social history and is housed at the University of the Witwatersrand under the name 'History Workshop' (I select a few texts from individuals associated with this project). Many have warned of this violence of representation and the parochialism of the White South African Scholarship and its method of othering those that they have studied and the incapability of appreciating their problems; mystifying their role as they present the 'voices' of those they study as if it involved no interpretation/their perspective (Leroke, 1998; Adésínà, 2006; 2008; Sithole, 2014, Lushaba, 2015). 'Where will we die?' is an insertion of the question of death into the history of

dispossession in South Africa and I make the argument that maybe the question of land should also be read from a different perspective, focusing on a question many Blacks asked themselves when being uprooted from the land, 'where will we die?' Is it a cry? By whom? Addressed to whom? Is it a conversation; addressed to which temporality? This I heard in the conversations in Mam Winnie's shack (2015). At the time, I was reading the South African Scholarship on land as it saw Black people moving from one land to the other, this movement was known as asking for a pass trek. In this 'request' for a pass trek the scholars saw it as a form of bargaining power (this movement is read in economic terms) since the Black person who was dispossessed (the sharecropper or the labour tenant) employed this 'strategy' to move from one farm to the other in search of better conditions. By inserting this question, my intention is not to say that we need to ensure that the plight of Blacks is made visible given that the White scholarship has silenced the experiences of Blacks or has engaged in some form of epistemic alterity (as I have cited the literature that has done this well). The process of correcting history was the project of the social historians (is it even possible to correct history? Is this not the privilege of the scholé?). The process of correcting history was also a project of justice, but as those who have questioned this scholarship would ask, justice for whom? To move away from those who have corrected history by suggesting that the corrective process has silenced the other is also a method of corrective history, albeit this time the subject of this correction is the Black scholar. Scholarship for justice is a project of representation; this is the danger of speaking for others that the Black scholar should be wary of. In seeking historical justice and correcting history we are bound to encounter that figure of representation or resurrect the dead to show that they are also capable of speaking our language. The dead are capable of speaking for themselves (which is the subject of **essay 6**). This is why the concept of epistemic silence is important (which is introduced in the essay **Does resistance have a language?**). With epistemic silence we are dealing with the possibility that the language embodied in the academe may not be able articulate certain forms of knowledge. Thus, in approaching history in the manner that I do, the intention is never to show the effects of silencing other forms of knowledge (this is not a project of justice or speaking for others). Instead, the argument is that the dead will be born again and are capable of speaking for themselves, a problem of the unknown future. The dustbin of history is not only about the decomposed figure that comes in a different form or about the spectre that comes to haunt certain societies. We cannot speak of the dustbin of history without speaking of the grave with those

among us that know that the dead do not die forever but are merely sleeping for a few decades or centuries, only to re-emerge again. Their justice can never be enjoyed by the living since the living are only seeking them out so that they can be in yoke with them once again. Did they not die so that they can transcend the yoke? Instead, those that demand justice in their name bring them back… so that they can suffer again as comforters of the wounded. The dead will not lull the wailing child; let the dead bury the dead. The justice of the dead is a truth that will never be had by the living; that is why they are exhumed with the hope that they will be able to peacefully coexist with us. They hate it when we cry for them and push us more when we forget them. That is why in this particular society the question of the land has remerged for it is the question of the dead. Where will we die? What will become of us given that the dead have been buried in the land? Where is Salvation in a society politically and spiritually torn by land dispossession and racial categorisations? This becomes the subject explored by **essay 7** titled **Perambulating towards Salvation**.

To return the Black Body to the land is read as an ethical question that goes beyond the economical shout for the return of the stolen land by illegitimate beneficiaries. This essay is dealing with the authors' subjectivities, continuing with the questions that emerge from the previous essays. Foucault (1969) tries to remind us in *What is an Author?*, that we have made the author a god-like figure and treat them as invisible when we read their work. Here we encounter Foucault (1969) trying to contribute in the theories of literary criticism and in his contribution he tries to bring the author back on the stage so as to allow the reader to place the author in their context and understand their contribution, as well creating the possibility to differ with the author.[4] In this section (following the method raised in the aforementioned essays), I resurrect those that are dead so as to remind us of the question of presence (or making something present), that for something to be present it must conceal the absent - the different authors I cite in the essays, in presenting their arguments and their questions, have already made certain issues absent. A certain question(s) might bother the reader, 'why focus on old texts mostly written by White scholars?' 'Why not direct your energies towards the contribution of Black scholars and

[4] Here it is as if Foucault is finding fault with Wilde's (1891 [2000]: 3) epigram "To reveal art and conceal the artist is art's aim."

show their differences?' Or 'Why not delve deeper in showing differences in the many texts you cite, by not only drawing a dichotomous difference bothered by Black/White or by race?' Well, this work begins from an awareness that the written consciousness about the country I was born in was bequeathed to me mostly by White lecturers who prescribed a White 'canon'. Therefore keeping to the trend in the academe that measures the greatness of a work by its ability to settle its theoretical scores, mine also settles its scores. Many have written critiques of the works I cite, but at least let it be known that there was once a younger Black scholar who sat silently in the lecture room, uncomfortable. A scholar who later knew that the uncomfortable silence was a call to possibilities. Ain't I Black too? Why was I not seen when the plight of those said to be facing dispossession was taught to me in the lecture theatre? That is why, if there is an interest of possibilities, the answer for me is that things have to be done OTHERWISE!

Given that this work is interested in the questions of labour (by the scholarship dealt with), I go into the archive where I divide the archival material into two. The first one extends the idea of paternalism and Andries du Toit's (1996) *Paternalism and Modernity on South African Wine and Fruit Farms* brilliantly shows how the paternalistic discourse came to be constructed on the Cape farms from slavery, colonialism, and later reconstructed in the 1990's. The discourse of paternalism has been extended and even in the present it is still argued that the South African White farmers continue to treat the farmworkers as their children (see Wilderman, 2017; Webb, 2017; Nkosi, 2017). If that is the case, I am not delusional in going to the historical to trace the problem. **Essay 5** is **Docility and the Black Farmworker**, and in this essay I look at various letters on farmworkers written by the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR); as well as the problem of labour on South African farms and how to entice South African Blacks to work on the farms. In this, as the letters show, the SAIRR as an institute 'that is progressive' was concerned with ensuring that Black workers are treated fairly on the farm. In reading the letters, I came to a realisation that the language of 'progressive' was a paternal/maternal language that not only speaks on behalf of the farmworker, but was also very racialist or racist, where the Black worker is constructed as a docile child who is backward. I arrived at these letters while I was looking at the material for what was known as the farmworker scandal in Bethal from 1940-1960. In reading these letters we realise that the paternalistic discourse goes beyond the Cape

farms and is one, as we observe even in the newspaper articles and 'scientific research' which existed in the South African racist institutes, which always assumed that Blacks/farmworkers cannot speak for themselves (remember my discomfort with Marx). This charge can also be protracted to the scholarship I deal with in the previous essays. Paternalism conceals the anxious father (the White) who knows that his position is illegitimate.[5]

The dead come back in **essay 6** and they demand justice from the past and ask to be freed. I take the reader into the "abode of God "Bethal"", from the 1940's, using the report by Rev Michael Scott (1947:1). One would see that even the manner in which the archive is organised still shows the silence I will be speaking about, with newspaper articles being at the core - articles/ *Drum Magazine* stories published by Henry Nxumalo, some reports, and government documents acting as a way of anchoring my argument. The voices of those who were in the house of God do not appear and only a letter smuggled from Bethal is the sole voice found in the archive, which details the violence on one farm. Bethal is a land donated by two farmers intending to create a dorp (town) for isolated farmers, naming it after their wives Elizabeth (Beth) and Alida (Al). Compounding these names, it became known as Bethal and specialised in farming labour intensive crops like maize and potatoes. Those that worked that land dubbed it the House of God, from the name Bethel in Jacob's dream in the book of Genesis 28:10-18. White farmers in this land were like a god, they did not have the power to decide the birth of Black labourers (otherwise Ruth First, 1958, would have not observed issues of labour scarcity faced by farmers in Eastern Transvaal), but had the power to end the lives of those that worked the land. The violent treatment of Black workers in the region is read within the interpretation of a shortage of labour on South African farms with the introduction of the Petty Offenders Scheme (POS) of 1954 as a measure employed by the state to solve the problem. POS saw offenders of laws of the state (example: not having a pass) being set to work/serve on farms for three months for 10 shillings a day. I present how the problem of violence on the farm was read (as a crisis of attaining cheap labour on South African farms); also indicating the blind spot of the archive on the question of the violence of dispossession. In touching the archive, the hands, mind, and eyes

[5] Here I thank my friend Isaac Dumisani Ntuli for commenting on this question of paternalism, making me read James Joyce and reminding me of the anxiousness of the father.

are already dealing with a problem of the representation of making the forgotten remembered and the remembered otherwise to be forgotten yet again (Derrida, 1994, 1995a; Moran, 2004). The pragmatist asks: 'What is the value of the archive and how can it assist us in understanding the present?' I argue that the value of the archive is in its silence(s), its (re)presentation of the presence of the past, and of the preoccupation with the past which the present has demanded a future from (as the question goes: what is the value of the archive? Is it useful in this present present?).

On Method: The Present beyond the Essays-The Cotton Thread

Like all students, I began with a particular proposal and intention, but my project did not move in the direction I had intended. The aim of the study or moving from the proposal stage, I intended to focus on the question of rethinking resistance with a focus on everyday experiences of farmworkers. The aim was to understand what forms of resistance and engagement farmworkers in Gauteng participate in and create in order to effect change in their individual and collective lives. In order to answer the question, the intention was to conduct an ethnographic study on a large farm that employs 100+ workers in Germiston. The ethnography would entail me working as a farmworker on the farm and in February 2016 I was due to begin the fieldwork but found that the farmer would no longer keep to our arrangement. Through the advice of a farmworker (Mam Winnie) with whom I had constant interaction (since 2012) regarding her experiences of being in Gauteng and working on a farm, the project changed. In my disappointment, I confided in Mam Winnie who then said to me "in order to understand yourself and your project you have to study me. It is through your relationship with me that you will begin to understand the truth about yourself and your study" (*Conversation*, Mam Winnie 7/03/2015). This was not only a profound statement casting into light philosophical questions about the self and the other, but it forced me to think differently about how 'researchers' relate to their 'participants.' How do you study an individual? This was the problem I faced (lest I be accused of methodological individualism). Hence, I did not use any form of structure or semi-structured questions to ask, instead, I opted for 'organic' conversations (I did not have any structure). We spoke of many different things under the sun and as many would come visit her shack, they would constantly ask what I am studying, which I would always explain (later it did not even matter since I

became known as her son from Soweto). The fluidity of the environment allowed for a diversity in the interactions. I always wrote the 'material' on my phone in short hand when I was going home and then expanded on a notebook. How do you relate to this material was the question I asked myself? How do you relate to everyone you have encountered in the shack?

The above poses questions of who gets to be studied under the guise of ethics, for example, to study farmworkers, the university demands that a permission letter should be signed by the farmer since one will be studying people on his/her private property. This also speaks to the question of paternalism on South African farms and even institutions in South Africa that have accepted this framework, for it is not questioned how 'access' is made possible, who gets to be 'accessible' (beyond the question of age and gender). To understand these questions, **essay1** on **An encounter of the ethical subject with the Other: A method of destruction** is instructive.

My method or methodology, after the botched attempt at being a farmworker, shifted to weekend visits to Mam Winnie's shack where she sells alcohol and a number of farmworkers frequent the place and from this I try to recast the conversation into theory. If we go deeper with what happened with the 'agreement' with the farmer, firstly, it reflected my acceptance of what is seen as the status quo in South African farms, that to access farmworkers one has to go through the farmer.[6] Secondly, I did not reflect on my privilege, indeed, I would also be Black like all the workers in the field, but I would be working for 'nothing' or no pay but to collect information since in my agreement with the farmer we had followed the bureaucratic procedure of ethics, that there must be no financial benefit or compensation to be attained from the 'organisation' that one studies. This privilege would allow me to rent a house in the community (with the money from my scholarship) since there was no space on the farm and walk to and from the farm. In ethnography, I would argue, if we look deeper psychoanalytically and even beyond the repression of the orgasm as the problem of the modern world (ala Reich, 1973), have we not

[6] The argument by the farmer was that it is not because he does not want me to work on the farm, but the issue is that I took six months to find a place to stay in the community. To him I did not show enough desperation and again an indication of my privilege. He had acquired a student who was White and from an agricultural college to come 'intern' on the farm. One could say I provided a space for the farmer to think about employing people with knowledge for free, anyway a PhD student "not from the plaas" was not a good candidate.

stumbled upon a voyeurism which seeks to get closer to an 'Other' as an adventure that seeks to find the ultimate orgasm for the intellectual... One that goes beyond just observing but being active in a life obscure to many of our fellow colleagues but has also made itself only visible through us who have been in it. Unlike the classical voyeur who only found pleasure in observing this new voyeur is not content in observing the energy but also wants to experience it. Wilhelm Reich (1973) in *The Function of the Orgasm Sex Economic Problems of the Biological Energy* associates sexual orgasm with freedom and argues that in the modern family there has been various ways to psychologically condition children through authoritative parenting which polices sexual pleasure and causes a pleasure anxiety. This anxiety leads to a dictator producing view of life. Then for him dictatorship or fascism does not only come from the economic conditions but can be linked to the psychological suppression and biological repression, the controlling of the natural pleasure associated with orgasm. Foucault (1978) was to go beyond the repression hypothesis of pleasure and show that sexual pleasure in the modern world has found and created other spaces. In this experience of the libidinal energy, we are guided by ethics, guided to get close to the Other but not so close that you lose yourself in the experience. This orgy of the intellectual, themselves, their theory, and their subject seeks to speak of an experience that only the writer bears memory of in their body, so much so that any critique of their method can be shrugged off since whoever criticises it has to go to the 'field' and experience what the researcher has experienced. Like a sexual encounter, we can only judge its pleasurability if we were active in it! We have found our orgasm, it is in the field (remember Laud Humphreys (1970) and his *Tearoom Trade*!). This is not to trivialise qualitative research or academic work and its contribution to changing the world. With books like *Academic Capitalism* (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997) and *Universities in the Market Place* (Bok, 2003) which show the effects of the commercialisation of the higher education sector and the key focus on research output which has led to the 'celebrity' professor who has large sums of research grants and travels the world; one cannot shake off the suspicion and that is why it becomes necessary to think ethically about the role of the intellectual in the world. Thirdly, my rejection from the farmer connects me again to that which I overlooked, the person I have been visiting every weekend, not as a planned subject. Instead she becomes one's salvation, but this comes at a cost, there is a demand made, to be ethical, but not in the sense of ticking the boxes on that ethics form. This I did not understand, since for me the rejection from the farmer was the end, for I

wanted to discover the farmworkers from my privileged position. Yes, the visits allowed me to go back to my world at the university, but what was important, is that in the process of the visits, I became a son to Mam Winnie. What did this mean? This meant that the conversation was no longer that which ended as soon as the project is 'done' now there is a much deeper commitment to maintain the relations. For in my lenses of the researcher I was merely "relating to a *role* not a *person*" (Derrida, 1995b: 36). This is not an issue per se, since as a PhD candidate I come from a particular intellectual community guided by its 'ethics', and with going to the farm, one was going to engage with a different community, an Other, a community that we believe is not guided by a particular set of commitments, like the production of theory. In engaging this community, we are only at the level of the performative, seeking the role that reveals itself to us, the observer. Unlike the White scholar or the European scholar, some of us are from those very communities. That is why one becomes a son and why family values also come into play, since from childhood one was taught that any woman who is old is one's mother/grandmother. Therefore, the university ethics have also alienated us from our own communities. What does it mean for Black students to study their communities? From our family values we are taught that a child is an extension and representative of their family and the community they were raised in. If I go to any community and conduct myself in a manner that shocks the norms and values of that community, it is not the university that gets judged, but my family. That is to say, the question to them will be, 'what kind of family does this young man come from?' Similarly, having been raised by my community, I am therefore also an extension and representative of the community. Likewise, the judgement will also be extended to my community. Here a destruction of method had to occur and a method of destruction had to prevail. As soon as these issues started to dawn on me, I realised that I will have to create possibilities of accounting for that experience, without engaging in the above voyeurism. This is why the title of the thesis incorporates the idea of doing research 'Otherwise' since this means that if we acknowledge that the works we have read in the essays have Othered Blacks and failed to consider their experiences. The challenge I was faced with was not of only being aware of those issues or the need to correct them, but to also think ethically about ways of academic inquisition. The failure to attain a job also revealed my attachment to that particular farm; it was possible to go to another area, since there are many farms in Gauteng. What was it about this area that was so special? The attachment was to Mam Winnie. In 2012, I tried to help her open a case of assault against the farmer, so at the back of my

mind there was always that question of justice. It was no longer about the farm, but about this mother who I was now concerned about, but did not know how to respond to. There was a silence I did not understand, a silence making a demand to me... At the same time, the conversations were to force me to question the knowledge I had by reminding me of the challenges that my community is facing which expresses itself every weekend through the many burials that occur in the township. I do not stay at home during the academic calendar, but if I am at home, I know that one has to divide their time by deciding which funeral to attend. The conversations were addressed to this temporality, but I had to wonder about those who had to deal with being uprooted from the land and trekked to the unknown. In the conversations, I was no longer interested in understanding if there was overt or covert resistance, the questions I had started with in my proposal for studying resistance, but my interests now lay in whether resistance can be rethought by questioning the past, present, and the future (also rethinking the research process). There was a resistance that was occurring in the shacks, for many of those that found themselves in Buhle Park came from various parts of Southern Africa fleeing the conditions back home in search of a better home to die in, just like those who had to trek. This forced me to think of this question that Ellen Khuzwayo (1985:4) in *Call Me Woman* was to ask: "Where is home for a Black person in South Africa?"

From these visits, I had intended to write her life history, but in my visits, I had discovered that one of her daughters was sick and was in a depressive state most of the times. I also realised that the critique I wage on the South African scholarship and the violence of representation, which has 'Othered' their participants and rendered both the researcher and the researched mute, would be the fate that this work suffers from. While its intentions may be genuine, intending to present how, through the interactions, my life was shaped and why she needs to be present in the work… the work was still going to mute her in many ways. Instead, in the chapters that follow I offer certain reflections, moments in my visits, where certain conversations we had, changed the way I think. Hence, the reader should not be shocked to see a chapter that begins with a reflection and then a discussion. While the essays may represent the needle, the conversations were the cotton thread for without the conversations, I would not be able to write the essays. This method is unconventional since most works that entailed 'fieldwork' usually present a section on the

findings separate from the questions they consider in the literature. Instead, my method does not see the separation of theory and the field and every conversation we had was part and parcel of the theory as it dawned on me later.

Mam Winnie bears much resemblance to women I know and have read about. I gave her the name Mam Winnie because of the resemblance to anti-apartheid activist Winnie Madikizela-Mandela (2014), in particular her absence or being unable to actively participate in raising some of her children. This is not uncommon; instead this is the classic story of many Black women in our society and hence I am not displaced from her reality. While for Madikizela-Mandela (2014) it was due to her involvement in the anti-apartheid struggle and the liberation of South Africa, for many women it has been their relationship with their work. This work demands that they leave their own children with their grandmothers only to go raise others or to be at work early. Despite this, there is some resilience and courage to fight, as with the incident when she was assaulted by the farmer in 2012 (I deal with this incident in the next essay and how we both felt about it).

My difficulty was how I would write about her after she had spoken to me about her life as a mother. That is perhaps the disappointing part of the work that I could not write about her. Instead, my future, this thesis and many of the arguments, are written with her. When, I say with her, I do not mean that she had to sit and type the work. Instead, I mean she had to push me to write otherwise in order to understand her, as an act of understanding myself. If I did understand some parts of herself as an act of understanding myself, how can the work not be hers as well? This form of writing, I must concede, is a task too steep. Most importantly, she is also my mother. As mentioned above, in the African sense of maternity that an African woman is a mother to every child and every child is the child of the community. In this relationship, in her having conversations with me, she was intending to teach and all that she spoke of was a lesson for me in the now and in the future. The method of biography was going to be limited since the relations would prohibit me from even asking intimate details, after all there is only so much a child can ask the parent. This is one of the problems that university ethics does not understand,

for example it is unethical in our African teachings to ask how much adults earn, yet a question of this nature, if submitted to the research ethics committee, would not be rejected. In writing her biography I would be having her "pasts reconstituted with [her]…right of reply. Oscar Wilde remarked that biography adds to death a new terror…" (Ellmann, 1984: 468). Freud also warned that for one to be a biographer one "must tie… [oneself] up in lies, concealments, hypocrisies, false colourings, and even in hiding a lack of understanding, for biographical truth is not to be had and if it were to be had, we could not use it" (Freud cited in Ellmann, 1984: 469). As Ellmann (1984) argues that through a Freudian analysis on the question of literary biography, doing biographical work reflects more of our fixation or a search for the father figure or the mother figure. Is it possible then to develop a counter fixation that does not idealise, distanced from the subject (withdrawn a bit)? Ellmann's (1984) answer is in the affirmative, but that is the task of the literary biographer. How was I going to write the biography or even account for her 'self'? To deal with these questions I read various biographies, autobiographies and literary works that wrote of the figure of the woman, with the intention of offering a different way of offering a biography (Khuzwayo, 1985; Bozzoli, 1991; Madikizela-Mandela, 2014 Ramphele, 1996, Head, 2010, Wolf, 1928, Hurston, 1986, Dangaremba, 2004; Motsei, 2004, Lewis, 2007; April, 2012; Daymond, 2015; Gqola, 2017). I wondered if I was going to write about sexuality, a subject I had come to be interested in through a combination of a male German psychoanalyst, Freud and through another male figure who is French, Foucault. Was I going to analyse the story she always repeats about how when she was around the age of 11 years she fell sick and had died. She then went to heaven and encountered Jesus seated with two other men besides him wearing a robe and sandals? Was I going to show that despite the deep connections we have established, her life is one with many contradictions? O'Brien (1994:149) warns of how, when women's histories have been written, they have focused on their "complete responsibilities for the welfare and survival of their families, are so limited by being passive, nurturing and motherly and they cannot at the same time be powerful, independent, and political active." In my conversation with Mam Winnie I had come to be interested in the role she played in her household and the relationship she has with other farmworkers who came to purchase alcohol from her shack. Mamphela Ramphele (2000) in 'Teach Me how to be a Man: An Exploration of the Definition of Masculinity,' indicates that indeed women are the fulcrum of the African family household where many men are not present, but through their role they have been able to

continue the patriarchal idea that men are the head of the family. This notion of the man as the head of the household continued even when the community and the household did not have the presence of men and she argues that this was done to ensure that the community and the household do not suffer from an "ethical breakdown" (Ramphele, 2000:115). O'Brien (1992:148) argues that:

> There is an important distinction to be made between the black male author's portrayal of the mythological Mother Africa and the verisimilitude of South African mother who appears in women's writing. As opposed to the stereotypical, passive, idealized mother men allude to, we see in women's poetry [writing about themselves] the suffering and struggle involved in gaining control over their own lives and defining their own harsh, unglamorous role in the salvation of the country and its children.

Reading the above complicated my problem (how to write about Mam Winnie) and others would argue that maybe a diary would solve the problem of idealisation and yet I am dealing with someone who is illiterate (not just a matter of education), but one has to consider that she starts her day at 4am and ends at 4/5pm, and is involved in strenuous work on the farm. A recorder was going to help, but I was trying to avoid creating a distance between myself and her so that I can be taught by her as suggested. The PhD ends without a conclusion (this is a protest waged by the work!), for the conversation with Mam Winnie and the problems still exist beyond the written as I have quoted Cioran (1986), the problem is a problem of exhaustion, and anyway the resources (especially) would not permit that I go beyond the stated number of years for the PhD. I am merely resting before I get tired, and I shall continue again. Hopefully, in my intellectual life, these conversations will give birth to a 'work' that will be valued beyond the academe, even if it does not, I will always take comfort in the fact that I lived a life that was fulfilling and interested in changing whatever I was involved in. Therefore, maybe the change that Marx and Engels spoke of might emerge as one continues to engage and think about these issues. This is my ethical commitment!

In phenomenology, alterity is not shunned upon since there is always an Other that exists outside myself and to be dealing with alterity in knowledge production does not mean to use the language of morality, that this form of knowledge is wrong. The only issue is that we cannot assume that we can take the position of the Other or speak for the Other or take the space of the Other, while we have acknowledged that they are an Other (Levinas, 1999; Derrida, 1995b). At the same time, there is always an Other in me (for I am an Other to another Other) and that is what the face to face encounter reminds us of, but to go as far as correcting history or to show that history has silenced the Other is an absurdity! That is why I did not intend to 'show' the voice of Mam Winnie so to speak, for the voice of an Other is always esoteric and silent in its demand, that is why we acknowledge alterity, for here we are not dealing with homogeneity, unless if we are engaged in politics and its demand of collective subjectivity (to overthrow an injustice), then we can always enter the struggle with the Other. If that is the case, we must be clear that our writing is a political project that is interested in showing an injustice! This was the problem that was facing the White South African writers and other activists whose writing was not only academic, but also interested in the political problem of oppression; if that is the case, then the charge of silencing Blacks while they spoke on their behalf is politic! The charge draws from the material bases of the problem as it approached them in their problem statement (since it begins from the position of an injustice committed, locating that injustice in material conditions). I hope this elucidates why the effort to draw from various perspectives, for the work is not one that seeks to enter the debate at the level of the accusative, which can be political since the accusative also seeks justice. However, in dealing with the problem statement of the writers it engages, it questions those works from the questions that the work begins with and that is why the argument that the political economic account first begins with the material and locates every form of resistance/experience from the material. To do otherwise, instead, the work seeks to create possibilities and a possibility can only exist from failures and that is perhaps the success of the work that emerges from its failures since it draws strength from possibilities. That it is why maybe a PhD is read by so many readers (I tell myself, so that we can delight in failure), but by only a few outside our academic pact.

In the end, the text is also concerned with one's own nakedness in a society that has given us a category of Blacks. It is this nakedness that bothers one, without being too absorbed in trying to show that an injustice has been committed or without being too absorbed in shouting at the top of one's lungs so that its madness can be felt. Then the political cannot be avoided for this is an awareness that remains throughout the thesis, since the ideas that I write about should also be judged according to the following: Who is this **Mbuso Nkosi**? Where was he born? Who were his parents, grandparents, great grandparents etc.? Unfortunately a PhD is not an autobiography (I convince myself), but let it be known that each subject touched upon in the essays spoke to the question of who am I? If I am located in that manner then the painful trek associated with dispossession is not a distant memory to me. Until today, my family is still trying to locate my grandfather's missing grave in a public cemetery. Oh where will we die? What is the conclusion? Can this thesis have a conclusion? To alleviate the frustration of that question: instead of concluding, in the last essay it perambulates towards salvation.

1. An encounter of the ethical subject with the Other: A method of destruction.

Conversation from the Fieldwork Note Book[7]

Mam Winnie resides in an area in Germiston called Buhle Park, a stone's throw away from Osborn Road. Buhle Park is a township that has RDP houses that have both electricity and running water (this is where I had planned to rent a house during my occupation on the farm). She works in the Klippoortjie area. Klippoortjie is an Afrikaans word for 'lots'. The area has farms and has houses that were built during apartheid which were meant for the civil servants and those that owned farms. The yards are spacious, houses are electrified, running tap water, sewage and swimming pools. The workers who reside on the farm I was planning to work on used a communal tap on the farm; they complained that the water from this tap came from a borehole intended for the crops, so it was salty, and made them very sick. For drinking and cooking water, they had to walk to another farm. Most of the workers on the Klipportjie farms are from various parts of Africa and in 2012, I interviewed two sisters who were from Senegal. In the area, most people speak isiZulu and Sesotho. Mam Winnie is from Musina/Messina in Limpopo, which is next to the border of Zimbabwe.

At least 2.4 kilometres away from Osborn Road is Roodekop Road where one finds an informal settlement occupied by people who are also from various parts of Southern Africa (Lesotho, Swaziland, Zimbabwe), and various parts of South Africa. Those who stay in these shacks are mostly employed on the farms, which are located in Klippoortjie. Most of the workers who reside on and off the farm do not have identity documents - in the colonial language of borders, they came to the country illegally or as asylum seekers. Starting from 2013, those who stayed on the farm that I was intending to research (including Mam Winnie) were removed because the farmer's son (the one I had an agreement with) had new ideas about extending his father's farm. Most of them then moved to the shacks and they consoled themselves by arguing that the

[7] The quotes are attributed to the people who articulated the words

Ekhureleni municipality (which Germiston falls under) has tried to help them by providing solar electricity for the shacks, even though people steal it… now they are forced to illegally connect their electricity by drawing from the RDP houses.

During my visit to Mam Winnie on the 15th of July 2015, she reminds me of the incident that happened in May 2012 when the farmer assaulted her. Adding to her devastation at the time, was that she had difficulties convincing those people who witnessed her assault to come forward and help in the case she had opened at the police station against the farmer. She indicates that my presence, and that of a professor and a trade unionist that accompanied me, helped her to be able to fight "for herself". To backtrack a bit, I first met Mam Winnie in 2012 when she was still residing in Klippoortjie in the compounds on the farm where I interviewed a number of farmworkers. She was one of the people I interviewed, but interestingly enough the bulk of the interview was conducted by her, asking me a number of questions about my personal and academic life. Consequently, I was unable to use the 'interview material' because the dynamics of the interview had changed. Realising that the interview had went off course, I stopped recording and we entered into *a conversation* off the record. By the end of the conversation, she requested my contact details so that she can "check-up" on me as "a mother" from time to time. Interestingly, she told me that her dream as a child was to be a lawyer and to help people.

During that year, my lectures were in the evenings and she would usually call before the lecture to ask how I was, if I was coping at school and wish me a productive study session. As usual, she called on one cold Monday in May and I could sense some sadness in her voice, so I asked what was wrong. She indicated that the farmer had assaulted her after he found her picking up morogo (a wild spinach/ African spinach that is actually a harmful weed to the crops). He then told her that "this is not Mandela's land… she cannot do as she pleases." I have since realised that morogo is her favourite food and it was actually not the assault that made her "fight" the farmer by opening a case against him, but it was because she was "denied of eating from the land." Morogo is important to her since it reminds her of her childhood and that "in this world one would never go hungry since the land has a way of feeding us." When she asked me to come to

the farm and help her, I did not know what to do and it was my first time encountering violence on the farm first hand. I had in a number of interviews from different farmworkers in Gauteng in 2012, discovered that one way that the farmer inflicted some form of violence upon them was through the tractor. They told me how when the farmer would drive a tractor with workers on the back, he would speed and if one was not holding on tight enough they would fall and injure themselves. This was being retold at every farm I had conducted interviews on. Therefore, direct assault was new to me.

About the assault and how it made me feel- I then called Professor Eddie Webster who was my co-supervisor at the time and he offered to accompany me to the farm after our focus group. On Tuesday morning, we had a focus group scheduled where we accompanied a unionist from the Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU) to one of the poultry farms where they organised workers. After the focus group, we drove to Germiston with one female unionist, Eddie, and me. Mam Winnie was supposed to go to church, but cancelled when I called to let her know that I am coming with people who might be able to help. The farm she works on is not organised by any trade union and so it was her first time meeting someone from the trade union, or a White professor for that matter. We later accompanied her to her compound where we would be able to talk to her more extensively. That day still haunts me and has left me traumatised until this day! When we entered her compound (which did not have electricity), we found her sick daughter sitting next to a coal fire/*imbawula* to warm herself (this I felt would not ameliorate her condition given the smoke from the fire). She was emaciated and one could see that she was in a critical condition. The trade unionist asked Mam Winnie what was wrong and she told us of the condition of her daughter and mentioned how long she has been nursing her. This brought tears to my eyes and I tried to hide this from everyone. She relayed the story of her assault and asked what we can do to help her. We left the compound together and went to the shop since she wanted to buy a few things. While she was buying we were seating in Eddie's car and we deliberated on the matter. When deliberating, Eddie was aghast, I still vividly remember him saying "shooo you would never say that this place has people who are living in such poor conditions [referring to the state of the compound]." While we deliberated, Eddie touched on an ethical question, "we are researchers… how do we deal with this? We can't intervene in a

manner that might show a bias." The trade unionist suggested we accompany the woman to the police station, but to first ask her if she was willing to do this. She indicated that in the same area they were dealing with a case of violence where the farmer had made workers who belonged to their trade union pick heavy rocks, so she was used to farm violence. We then went back to the compound and the trade unionist asked Mam Winnie if she would consider opening a case, to which she agreed. When we got to the police station the officer who opened the case indicated that the farm owner is an arrogant man and that last time he had to compensate one of the women who sells food next to the farm since he drove over her pot. He said he has always suspected that "there are abuses going on in that farm since you always find people bending from 5am to 5pm." He said that they will visit the farmer and Mam Winnie must try gathering witnesses in the meantime. While all of this was happening, I felt that we were not offering enough help, I felt helpless and ireful. I wondered why all the workers told me about the injustices they faced on the farm. I felt like I was betraying the workers' confidence in me, I felt I was capable of helping. But, how? When Mam Winnie thanked me, I wondered why and what it is that I did. While we were talking in her shack and while she was reminding us of the incident, there were other people who were present. She indicates that my help "indicated that I was not wrong when I saw a son in you. I knew that you came to interview me for a reason. You have Ubuntu. I saw that you were disheartened by what happened and I also wanted to comfort you that it will be fine." I still feel that she is exaggerating my presence when all I did was remain conflicted! Hence, when I was done with the Masters, I felt that I needed to forget about farmworkers. However, I still maintained contact with her. What pained me the most was not that she was an interviewee or someone I met on the field, rather, I saw a Mother and I could imagine what I would have done if someone had done that to my own biological mother. Ethics, at that time, were the furthest thing on my mind. An injustice was committed against my Mother and something needed to be done. Going to the police, deep down I knew, was merely a performance and hearing the police officer speak in the manner that he did, confirmed that no justice would be served. How could I fail someone who requested my help…? How could I fail an elder? That was a shame I needed to hide from myself and convincing myself that at least we went to the police. I did something. That is why after submitting the final report this experience needed to be let go of and I did not need to 'study' farmworkers any further.

In 2014, I struggled to come up with ideas to write the PhD proposal on and I returned to the topic of farmworkers, mainly because I felt there was a lot that was not resolved and I needed to help the workers. Hence, in my methodology section I thought the best way of doing this is to understand the working conditions of farmworkers through the use of an ethnography. This was part of my future strategy of helping farmworkers by forming a movement that would address the issues they face. Looking back from the now, I needed to deal with the moment that made me vulnerable! That was the assault. An injustice was committed and the perpetrator needed to be punished, that is how I still feel! Yet, I was still within the language of legality in my confrontation of a historical problem that makes the farmers view themselves as the law in their 'own' land, a land not belonging to Mandela (at that time Mandela was still alive)!

Let us go back to Mam Winnie

In her words:

> I am a person who is willing to fight anything that does not sit well with me. I do not tolerate being treated badly and I do not treat others badly. I am always willing to help and everyone in the farm knows that if they need help my door is always open. Even in this small shop that I run I always allow them to get food on credit even though some do not pay me, I still give them food. I know the importance of loving people and that is what we are taught at church. We are suffering together, we know that the white man (umlungu) is not giving us enough. I was sad that no one could come forward when I needed witnesses, but it was fine. I understood their silence. Their silence was a fear of being victimised and the possibility of losing their job. Who would want to go hungry? I am just glad that despite the failure of ensuring that I get justice through the police, I can say I still got my justice. Since the farmer knew that, I am not one to be abused! He now worries when I am silent! That is why I say you helped me that day because I could see how sad you were, but you were willing to help and you even brought other people with you to assist me. It was tough that time since my daughter was sick, but if you can see her now she is now fat. I will never forget that day. Your presence showed me the results of loving people; that to love people is to love yourself. It showed me that you loved what you were doing even though I am not educated as you are and do not fully understand what you are studying, but it is clear that you love it. That day showed it.

How we arrive here and the argument of the essay

This essay presents an aperçu of my approach to qualitative methodology. I view this approach as one to take forward when embarking on qualitative research and therefore this marks an evolution in my thinking about how the problem of justice in research is approached. When conducting research on a certain topic in any community, we are already dealing with the question of justice, but because of the 'ethical rules' we follow we tend to ignore this question of justice that the Other calls us towards. This, as it will be argued, has been the limit of the qualitative research method in social sciences since its methods are also linked to the colonial problem where the Other is merely seen as an object of information or the 'field' is merely seen as a place where the researcher, usually White, extracts information without giving back. As I have noted in the introduction, I will be using the method of 'conversation' to indicate how conversations with those we research shape our understanding of our theories or may help us go beyond the theories we use. The meditations here span from my master's research in 2012 and I try to present a different view of how we can write and conduct research Otherwise. As indicated in the introduction my initial focus for the PhD was on the question of rethinking resistance with a focus on everyday experiences of farmworkers. The aim was to understand what forms of resistance and engagement farmworkers in Gauteng participate in and create in order to effect change in their individual and collective lives. In order to answer the question, the intention was to conduct an ethnographic study on a large-scale farm in Germiston that employs 100+ workers. The ethnography would entail me working as a farmworker on the farm. In February 2016, I was due to begin the fieldwork but found that the farmer would no longer keep to our arrangement (see introduction on the explanation). Through the advice of a farmworker (Mam Winnie), with whom I had constant interaction (since 2012) regarding her experiences of being in Gauteng and working on a farm, the project changed. In my disappointment, I confided in Mam Winnie who then said to me "in order to understand yourself and your project you have to study me. It is through your relationship with me that you will begin to understand the truth about yourself and your study" (Mam Winnie, 7/03/2015). This was not only a profound statement casting into light philosophical questions about the self and the Other, but it forced me to think differently about how 'researchers' relate to their 'participants.' Thus, the 'method' involved weekend visits to her shack where she sells alcohol and a number of farmworkers frequent the place and from this, I try to recast the conversation into theory.

My approach was first inspired by the methodological approach employed by Michael Burawoy (1979; 1985; 1998) who has explored different kinds of work places and has argued that any work context involves an economic dimension, a political dimension, and an ideological dimension. I did not seek to speak for those from the shacks, as much as in Burawoy we do not encounter the voices of those he researches or if we do, we encounter them scantly. The more dominant voices are those of the Marxist theorists he engages and his own. In Burawoy, we get to understand the context of the field, the political and economic environment of the field; but as to who the people are, this we have to keep searching for, but to no avail. What was inspiring about Burawoy's (1998:5) extended case method was his application of a reflexive model of science "that embraces not detachment but engagement as a road to knowledge" and through being an active participant observer (an empirical method of collecting data mostly associated with ethnography) he is able to build theory through case studies and allow the interaction with the subjects studied to shape theories. "The extended case method is thus a form of craft production of knowledge wherein the conceiver of research is simultaneously the executor" (Burawoy, 1998: 28). Burawoy (1998:6) goes on to argue that the extended case method is able to dig through the binaries of the "colonizer, and colonized, white and black…" This method dances to its own tune, not adhering to scientific notions (associated with positivism) or reliability, representativity and replicability. Case studies or areas of study are chosen because of their importance in building theory or shaping/reconstructing it. Yet, in Burawoy we do not get to understand how to conduct research ethically, maybe that is because as a White person, Burawoy is a global citizen so to speak, able to move to any part of the world to explore theoretical questions without encountering restrictions or being overburdened, since he does not 'belong' to the community he studies. This has been the problem of research that it is usually associated with Whites and assumes that they are the only competent researchers which allows them access to any 'field' as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), on her book *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, has argued. Therefore, those of us who are Black and go to do research in our communities are confronted by the injustices that the communities suffer from and the demand and cry for help they usually place on us since they recognise us as potential allies. Yet, like the White scholar, we usually go to our communities to either generate theory, for some of us guided by the extended case method since we believe that this method allows us to go beyond the rigidities associated with positivism. On the other hand,

we simply seek degrees or are employed by White professors to conduct the research on their behalf, mainly because of the language barrier between them and those they intend to 'research'. Sometimes there is that voice that says, 'maybe we have become spies revealing how those that look like us behave, to those who cannot access them.' At the same time: what about this question of justice? We cower when we become aware of that demand and cite university ethics as that which prohibits us to go further. We cower mainly because we have recognised ourselves in the face of the Other who makes that demand, but we usually feel that we are unable to approach that demand. What does it mean to be ethical? This is another problem this essay addresses. It moves to the philosophical and focuses on questions of transcendence, responsibility, and destruction of this cowering. What our Marxist sociologist, Burawoy, has failed to address is the question of ethics because he is also driven by the need to generate theory even though from a position that is reflexive, able to show the position of the scholar, the theory they use, and those they study. In reflexivity, what is at stake? In reflexivity, the theorists are able to sublimate the burden of the demand made on the 'field' by the face of the Other, by casting the problem as that which has political, ideological, and theoretical implications. This reflection occurs on our couches in academia (through conferences, books and journal articles). The demand made by the Other which first approaches us as a problem of justice is left unattended. For example, every time we conduct research, those we research usually begin to harbour hope that we may ameliorate their conditions. Yet, we leave the 'field' feeling burdened, traumatised, given that we do not understand what are their problems or what is it that they demand from us. We shut out this voice inside us that says, 'maybe more can be done,' by reflecting on our theories, our research method or what we call our instrument, and also rest comfortably since there is also that voice that always says it is 'unethical' to go that far. The problem that confronts us, I believe, is also of what is the intellectual's commitment to their communities, especially those of us who recognise ourselves in those communities. For we did not enter universities as tabalu rasas. If sociologically we teach that the family unit is responsible for primary socialisation, then in the African family we were also taught ethical values grounded on principals such as Ubuntu and that is why then maybe we cower when we see another mother suffer or another sister or brother being victims of conditions not of their own making.

From the 'Field': Love, Resistance, and the Ethical Subject

When Mam Winnie decided to open a police case it is clear that she resisted being silent like her colleagues usually were and decided to fight back. We are implicated in this strength. The above reflection touches on a number of themes, to avoid being too latitudinous, I want to touch on two issues, namely resistance and love. How can one write of resistance and love and how do they affect how we understand the research process (remember that we are taught that the ethical researcher is one who is able to be empathetic but still remain objective, see Konrath and Grynberg (2013) on empathy)? I want to anchor my understanding of the two concepts through the concept of vulnerability (which, the reader is aware, features in my reflection). You might resist because you want to protect that which you believe in. As much as there are people who want to believe they can love and still protect themselves. In this, there is no engagement with vulnerability. I have to remind you that the antonym of vulnerability is resistance. Is love not a form of destruction/vulnerability and at the same time a form of salvation? To love becomes a process of learning and unlearning. Let us go to a demand that is made by Jesus, that which the philosopher Critchley (2013:54) sees as a ridiculous demand!

Matthew 5:43-48:

> **43** "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' **44** But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, **45** so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. **46** For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? **47** And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? **48**

Critchley (2013:52) goes on to remind us that Christ was addressing a Jewish audience and that if they wanted to be children of their Father, God, they needed "to subject themselves to this exorbitant demand…asking his audience to be perfect, god-like, 'even as your Father which is in heaven.'" This is Christ demanding others to be shaped by "the radical, one-sided, unfulfillable ethical demand for the other, and to fail the other is to fail that existence irreparably" (Critchley, 2013:54). As Løgstrup (1997) argues, this demand is unfulfillable because it is radical, it is rapturous for it demands that we go beyond what we assume to be the normal, an impossibility if

we rationalise it. Hence, the call to love the Other is a demanding form of love, that which demands the individual to extend themselves to the Other albeit this bears a possibility of being held completely captive, traumatised by the Other ala Levinas (1974). This is the kind of love that Leo Tolstoy (2009:989) on *War and Peace*, through the character of Prince Andrei, sees as a divine love, especially if extended to one's enemies. As Andrei puts it, it is divine because it:

> …is the very essence of the soul and does not require an object. Now again I feel that bliss. To love one's neighbours, to love one's enemies, to love everything, to love God in all His manifestations. It is possible to love someone dear to you with human love, but an enemy can only be loved by divine love… When loving with human love one may pass from love to hatred, but divine love cannot change. No, neither death nor anything else can destroy it.

This form of love requires a kind of commitment that exposes one completely to the Other, goes beyond the eros and ethos since its commitment stems from the metaphor that another person's life has been delivered into one's hands (Løgstrup, 1997). However, there is still a fear of being destroyed as one becomes 'otherwise' for this love does not draw on the idea of the reciprocal, that we love in order to be loved in return for here one loves even if one is not loved. This love does not fear being destroyed and I would argue that it sees destruction as an activity that creates a surplus, for to love in this manner brings us closer to Jesus' command[8]. Here one thinks of Freud's formulation of how melancholia is a self-destruction of the ego so that one emerges much better (1917 [1915]). Yet, Freud's (1917 [1915]) formulation is not enough since it deals with the ego (internal processes of the psyche), not relating to the relationship one has with Others; thus melancholia is only viewed as a critical reflection of the ego to improve itself, although it may become pathological. I am interested in that which allows one: To be you and yet at the same time to lose you to create a better you. While these exist at the individual level,

[8] Here, one is walking in contradistinction to Badiou (2012) who sees love from a position that emphasises difference for his concept of love is mostly within the eros. This makes one wonder what is radical about that which emphasises a view of the world that is aware of vulnerability and its stance is that which seeks to ascend (this problem of vulnerability) difference as a way of giving… This emphasis of individual retention through difference is one which fails to deal with the denuded heart as it seeks to create an abode with the Other's heart (if we analyse the problem from the eros). At the same time, we can appreciate the warning that the form of love suggested (Divine Love) here is one that seems to emphasises Sameness. With this I feel the point is being missed, this love recognises difference, but is not deterred by it; hence it even loves the enemy.

the above self-reflection goes beyond the individual who seeks to elaborate fully their Other. As a locus classicus, I would have said here is Mam Winnie, this is what she does and says and this is important because it seeks to show Mam Winnie's voice. However, what I intended to do is to insert myself as a present being in this encounter or this extension of self to the Other and how it constructs my way of seeing life as well as how my presence shapes and validates Mam Winnie's beliefs. Through the shared vulnerability, we are speaking to each Other with a kind of love that transcends difference.

Furthermore, I am thinking of the ethical fear in the anthropological method (on ethnography/ participant observation) where we are warned of becoming too enmeshed into the activities of the community, to the point that one loses their objectivity (Jackson, 1987; Robson, 2002). This problem is yet to explain who and what defines the borders of 'the community'. As I argued in the introduction that I share certain attributes and life experiences that might make me a part of that 'community'. It might seem then that such rules are directed to a different subject, the White scholar, who sometimes fails to recognise themselves in those communities and only gains 'experience' of how it feels to be 'them' after many years of study. Another problem with the above methodical conundrum is that it does not understand that the researcher is engaged in a process where they extend themselves to the Other and as they study the communities they are also being studied by that community they study (Smith, 1999; Nabudere, 2006). This destruction does not mean that the researcher will become a tabula rasa or a parrot whose only relationship to speech is mimicry. This means that like a student whose task is to learn, the extension of the self to the Other (in this case the community/ in my case Mam Winnie) is a process in which we do not let go of the accumulated knowledge but instead we destroy it as we extend ourselves to the Other. We destroy it in the sense that we have to question anew what it means to be an ethical subject/ to be an ethical researcher, as seen in this section. The Other is our collaborator in this act of destruction. One must also be aware that by using the idea of Other, one is not using the language that was used during colonial times where the Other is merely seen as an object to be conquered, spoken for and civilised. Instead, this language of the Other is one which is drawn from the phenomenological, for here I am suggesting that indeed we come from those communities we research, we care and love them, but we also come from an

academic community and must be aware of our positionality. As explained in the introduction that in phenomenology the Other exists outside myself and to be dealing with alterity means there is always an Other in me (for I am an Other to another Other) and that is what the face to face encounter reminds us of (which moves from the phenomenological to the ethical).

Let us fast forward to a different Christ who later embodies resistance and love at the same time, who refuses to be human and yet is failed by his humanly flesh, who saves the humans from their sin and yet he has to die. Remember, we die because of sin. A Christ who dies with a question. He dies not through natural causes but dies an undignified death, very violently for everyone to see and to rejoice in. "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is to say, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). To show your thoughts and self while extending yourself. This is resistance with love. This moment is important because the world needed to see the Son of God vulnerable. Christ became a human for the first time on the cross! That is why the crucifixion is an important moment. Christ did lose himself in order to resurrect (altered in form, albeit still the same in spirit-the Messiah whose role is to save us). While one is returning to the Bible and some reading of philosophy, I have to admit that I am neither trained in hermeneutics nor philosophy; my task here is to speak of that which I know to be the role of the researcher in the world. That which became crucified in my relation to the 'research subject' (as the *reflection* above points towards). That is to say, my approach to understanding the experiences of the farmworkers requires that I be stripped of my theoretical predisposition to resistance. However, to do that I did not disregard the theories and/or the theoreticians because in my consideration of such theories/theoreticians comes the realisation of their limitations and in realising their limitations I also realise my own limitations; this is the way to the Calvary!

With love- beyond exteriority: The ethical subject

Authors like Richards (1979), Hountondji (1990, 2009) and Nabudere (2006) have long elaborated on the processes in which knowledge comes to exist in exteriority to the researcher (especially those in the African context) and the community they study. The 'field' (which is always in quotation) has colonial connotations where the colonialist went to record the objects on

the ‘field’ based on a method that cast the beliefs of their society as the standard of viewing the world. Secondly, this links with the colonial method of research which can be seen in how the ‘field’ is only a space of data and the analyses exists outside and those in the ‘field’ are assumed incapable of being sovereign, incapable of speaking and defining themselves (Smith, 1999; Nabudere, 2006). This is extractivism where the researcher goes to the ‘field’ to attain information without recognising the faces of those who occupy such spaces or who they are. Like the resources that get extracted in Africa and then ‘added value’ in the colonisers country then sold at a higher price in Africa… the same occurs with this process where the data is analysed in the Mother country/university and the recommendations are sent back as the only salvation for those objects of research. This manner of research reflects a detachment-where the researcher is omniscient and the participant only aims to confirm the theory or merely seen as spaces of collecting data. Ethnography/ participant observation should go beyond this and embody the idea of the love introduced above, the researcher who is in love with the community since they do not see themselves as distant from that community (Domínguez, 2000; Behar, 2003). To use the word community indicates love, since it suggests that we are dealing with humans with different feelings and views instead of the word ‘field’, which suggests a more clinical relationship (Smith, 1999).

What does it mean for a researcher to be ethical? This question of being ethical can be detected in the manner in which Eddie, in the reflection, suggests that we should not intervene in a manner that shows a bias (remember that we have not heard the side of the farmer). To Rand (1962:13) ethics “is a code of values to guide man’s choices and actions- the choices and actions that determine the purpose and the course of his life.” This code then involves how we respond to certain demands and rationalise them (Critchley, 2013). Thus if that is the case, it is clear that one cannot speak of ethics without having an understanding of the self or the theory of the subject. For, if we have to ask the question ‘am I being ethical as a researcher when I do this?’ this means we have become ethical subjects. It is Foucault (1985), in the Second Volume of *The History of Sexuality: The Use of Pleasure*, who can help us with the theorisation. It is in *The Use of Pleasure* that one is able to better grasp the theorisation of the self (in relation to ethics/ the ethical subject) and as Critchley (2013:20) argues as if citing Foucault, that “self is something

that shapes itself through whatever it determines as its good…" (Critchley, 2013: 20). Foucault (1985) starts by reminding us that his study on sexuality (he shows that the term only appeared in the beginning of the 19th century) was not to focus on sexual behaviours or practices; instead he aimed at dealing with how the Western man became a subject of sexuality. His endeavour was to record a history of the experience of sexuality in the West. This experience that saw individuals recognising themselves "as subjects of "sexuality" was accessible to very diverse fields of knowledge and linked to a system of rules and constraints" (Foucault, 1985:4). By experience, he means the "correlation between fields of knowledge, types of normativity, and forms of subjectivity in a particular culture" (Foucault, 1985: 4). As a result, Foucault is trying to understand how the Western man came to recognise himself as a subject of desire (Foucault, 1978; 1985; 1986). Foucault is dealing with the desire of the desiring subject; that is to say as he traces the question of sexuality he gives to us a genealogy and how this genealogy came to inform experiences. "In short, with this genealogy the idea was to investigate how individuals were led to practice, on themselves and on others, a hermeneutics of desire, a hermeneutics of which their sexual behaviour was doubtless the occasion, but certainly not the exclusive domain" (Foucault, 1985: 5). Thus, he is dealing with the "games of truth" "in their interplay with one another, as exemplified by certain empirical sciences in the seventeenth century and eighteenth centuries, and then studying their interaction with power relations, as exemplified by practices…" (Foucault, 1985:6). These games of truth are studied in a context in which self is in a relationship with self, taking into context the history of the desiring subject. As he continues to elaborate:

> The games of truth and error through which being is historically constituted as experience; that is, as something that can and must be thought. What are the games of truth by which man proposes to think his own nature when he perceives himself to be mad; when he considers himself to be ill; when he conceives himself as a living, speaking, laboring being; when he judges and punishes himself as a criminal? What were the games of truth by which human beings came to see themselves as desiring individuals?"(Foucault, 1985: 6-7)

Foucault (1985) is dealing with a problematisation by arguing that it is believed that Christianity has more sexual morality with values like sex before marriage being immoral (the Fall/sin), conjugal virtue, disallowance of sexual practices of individuals of the same sex. In contrast, it is

believed that the pagan culture jettisoned those values. It is here that this problematisation begins. In this volume, he resorts to philosophy, particularly classical antiquity, with reference to how Greek and Roman antiquity dealt with the practices of self. As a result, he also deals with questions of ethics and the ethical subject. By an ethical subject he means a process in which a person "form[s] the object of his moral practice, defines his position relative to the perception he will follow, and decides on a certain mode of being that will serve as his moral goal. And this requires him to act upon himself, to monitor, test, improve, and transform himself" (Foucault, 1985:28). It is clear that Foucault's (1985) understanding of ethical subjectivity is that which places at the centre individual choice/freedom (as he does in *The Care of the Self* (1986) that the care of the self is a practice of freedom). It is here that the formulation comes into direct conflict with me; what does one do when a particular situation as indicated in the *reflection* requires one to act (take a stance)? What does one do when faced with a demand made by an Other? The answer from Christ is to love the Other; meaning one must allow themselves to extend their self's to the Other. This means in practice we do not hide our feelings since we are giving or extending ourselves to the Other. "How does a self bind itself to whatever it determines as its good?" (Critchley, 2013:8). Do we as researchers have a commitment to do a certain good? Why do we research certain topics (beyond the attainment of a degree)? For me to be an ethical subject echoes Critchley's (2013) formulation of ethical subjectivity of how do we bind ourselves to our good even when that which demands us to take a stance is no longer present? Mam Winnie once argued that "in order to understand yourself and your project you have to study me. It is through your relationship with me that you will begin to understand the truth about yourself and your study" (Mam Winnie, 7/03/2015). However, this means that this extension to the Other requires one to Love the Other as one loves themselves. It is in the protection of the Other that I will emerge. This is to say, that we are not merely doing research, but we are involved in the expansion of ourselves as much as those communities we study extend their selves to us and the question is how do we write about ourselves as we write about them? Thus, I had mixed feelings on that day we went to the police because I felt that more needed to be done to help Mam Winnie; instead, I have come to learn that our presence and my vulnerability (which was noticed by her) was enough and in this, one begins to think differently about the research process and writing about it.

The Face-to-Face: The ethics of the Other and the Hearing Eye

Let me offer a much more nuanced version of what the above aims to go to, a reading of Emmanuel Levinas (1969, 1974, 1987) which encompasses two of his major works *Totality and Infinity an Essay on Exteriority, Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* and the collection of his essays *Time and the Other*. I may not have read the entire "phenomenological movement" (Wild, 1969:11; Spiegelberg, 1978; Derrida, 1973) nor have any training in the Western philosophical traditions that Levinas (1969, 1974, 1987) deals with in his work to bring forward the importance of the social relations which take form in the face-to-face encounter. However, one appreciates the critique (in this Levinas offers an extensive reading of Socrates, Plato, Hegel, Kant, Heidegger, Descartes, Husserl, Sartre, etc.) that Western philosophy has failed to transcend the egoist 'I'. This section is a reading of he who deposed of "philosophy in favour of ethics" (Badiou, 2001:18) as a way of understanding what it means to be in proximity to the Other. My intention is to use the ideas raised by Levinas as one of the tools that may help in bringing forward a different methodological reading of the relationship between the I (researcher, student, interviewer) and the Other (the one who Levinas (1969) argues is always exterior to me and I cannot fully grasp- in my case the face of the research participant/interviewee). It is Levinas who helps with theorising ethics, taking into consideration the face of the Other (Badiou, 2001). Into the bargain, what makes the works also enthralling is the theorisation on subjectivity, which "is constituted in the common act of the sensing and the sensed as the self of an other, and is constituted within a relation with the other, within a relation with the face" (Levinas, 1969:271). Therefore, in his formulation, subjectivity "is from the first substitution offered in place of another, but before the distinction between freedom and nonfreedom" (Levinas, 1974: 145). This subjectivity is relational and does not elevate solipsism.

To Levinas (1969:43) "[W]estern philosophy has most often been an ontology: a reduction of the other to the same by interposition of a middle and neutral term that the comprehension of being." The problem with ontology is that it reduces the other to the same and then "promotes freedom- the freedom that is the identification of the same, not allowing itself to be alienated by the other" (Levinas, 1969:42). This "there is" lacks alterity or "the "mystery" of the other person" (Cohen, 1987:1). Thus, in *Totality and Infinity* he shows why the face to face constitutes an ethical

commitment that has transcended the relationship between the Other and the same with Western philosophy seeing the Other as the same (here he argues that this is mainly based from the reading of Greek philosophy- also see Badiou, 2001) since this relationship comes from the egoist I. In this, he tries to bring a different reading of being in the world (the domain of metaphysics) and propounds the notion of transcendence. This "egology" (Levinas, 1987: 98) or the dwelling in the egoist I, has resulted in different interpretations of metaphysics where the subjectivity of the I whose being in the world (Dasein a concept used by Heidegger), unfamiliar to it (thrownness or *Geworfenheit*), is about being for itself or return to oneself. It becomes apparent that this egology of the I, the term he uses in *Time and the Other* and in *Totality and Infinity*, or the imperiality of the I, a term he uses in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, is one which is autarchic. This is problematic, and is what Critchley (2013: 36) calls the "autonomy orthodoxy" which can be traced in Kantian and Post-Kantian philosophy where "Fichte, Hegel, Marx and Heidegger and their many heirs in the philosophical tradition, the philosophical goal remains some conception of autonomy, whether the individual ego, individualised Dasein, the intersubjectively constituted realm of Spirit, the collective praxis of the proletariat as the index of humanity, or whatever." To Levinas (1969: 44) "[Western] Philosophy is an egology."

Then how do we arrive at the concept of transcendence if the world is read through solitude or existence (the domain of ontology) in the different philosophical traditions that Levinas contests? Why is transcendence important, is it not important to know thyself or to care for the self (epimeleia heautou), the ultimate ascetic and ethical experience ala Foucault (1985, 1986) or discover one's face away from the noise of society ala modernism? Whence does salvation come from? If we have to go beyond the idea of solitude to existing in the world where the Other exists (alterity), 'does it mean then we let go of the I or ourselves' fears the one who is interested in holding to an ipseity which is totalising.

A cowering being in the Superior Frontal Gyrus: Allow me to Speak!

This egology, in form, entails a cowering being in the superior frontal gyrus. At first, before it meets the Other, it is enthroned in the superior frontal gyrus for it has gone through that violent

struggle of recognition. It is for itself by itself and aware of itself. This anthropocentricism in form is not just looking inward in solitude nor believing in its dominance as it believes itself as the centre of the universe, it is not just being at home with oneself or when it encounters the Other relying on its ability to return to its home (as Levinas works seems to show). In its jittering as it encounters the face of the Other, it either pursues its objective not only by returning to its home, but through other means (that is politics). Is politics not about an imagined collective? In politics one can never find the idea of transcendence since in entering politics this egological I or self goes to every extent to protect that which allows for its solitude (read as dominance/self-mastery/asceticism) to continue and that is the purpose of war which also finds expression in political subjectivity (Critchley, 2013, Levinas, 1969, Cohen, 1998). The political movement with its requirement of the political subject which almost always speaks to collective subjectivity (whether you read Marx and Engles (1997) on *The Communist Manifesto*, or Critchley (2013) on another form of anarchism, or another dogmatic anarchism interested in establishing what is anarchist or not as Van der Walt and Schmidt (2009) do), fails to account for why in action this figure of the I which finds solace in the collective is still aware of itself and its home. If this I or self comes to politics and articulates the idea of collective subjectivity and stating its positionality (Critchley, 2013, Spivak,1994); then this self is still in circumspection since it involves a certain awareness of the action as one presents and represents themselves. To present and represent is a chain of logic of consciousness that is bound to return to the self even as it encounters the Other but this time it cowers for there is a demand made by the face of the Other and remains aware of it (Levinas, 1974).

Transcendence is vertiginous since the face of the Other assaults the apparatus of consciousness with its views of presentation of the present and how this present seems to represent a past that is present in the face of the Other (Levinas, 1974). Transcendence is vertiginous since the face of the Other symbolises an infinity, an existence outside of what I have called being in the superior frontal gyrus (the essence that Levinas critiques with regards to Heidegger's understanding of being in the world). To be transcendental or this metaphysics of transcendence:

> designates a relation with a reality infinitely distant from my own reality, yet without this distance destroying this relation and without this relation destroying this distance, as would happen with

> relations within the same; this relation does not become an implantation in the other and a confusion with him, does not affect the very identity of the same, its ipseity does not silence the apology, does not become apostasy and ecstasy (Levinas, 1969: 42).

This infinity is eschatological and that is the work of transcendence since it goes for that which is Other than one's self and finds in the face of the Other a demand (thy shall not kill), a voice (which is clear and yet cannot be accounted in the present nor represented as a past calling one to responsibility), an existent which is exterior to me and expresses the idea of God. Therefore, the social relations of the face to face are ethical and the ethical to Levinas (1969, 1974, 1987) is optical. The face to Levinas speaks and it first speaks to the hearing eye (Levinas, 1974). If one reads *Totality and Infinity* and then goes to *Otherwise than Being* one might make the mistake of overlooking the difference in how alterity is theorised and how the face to face in the former is first viewed as that which is exterior to me and yet proximal, appearing denuded and yet at the same time the one who is exposed to the face can still sublimate the demand since one can respond to the demand made by the face. In this, there is still a concept of the surplus subjectivity (the hither side) or morality (Levinas, 1969, 1974). If one reads *Otherwise than Being* it is clear that this ethical encounter is traumatic! To go beyond being or essence, one needs to appreciate this struggle that occurs within the imperial I as it encounters the Other. What the Other does is fissional to the I since it tries to hold on to its being and return to itself and yet at the same time it is called to responsibility to an ethical commitment to the Other who is exterior (Levinas, 1974). Hence, this form of subjectivity that is for the Other, called to an ethical commitment is not one which is in lack since it is "finding oneself while losing oneself" (Levinas, 1974:11).

I plead with the reader that they be patient with what seems to be an unnecessary protracted and magniloquent assessment. I am trying to arrive at an important methodological point while not losing my voice and ideas. May I be permitted to find that which emerged in the paragraphs below? Levinas (1969; 1974) accuses sociology and psychology of failing to deal with the Other (alterity). For such studies to him have failed to deal with the demand made by the face of the Other. Yet, I have argued that if the demand is made then the intellectual cowers. Then

intellectual life- I would like to make an assertion is about this cowering being in the superior frontal gyrus and its many endeavours to remain there (to avoid alterity). Its gasconade is that which argues that in the encounter with the face of the Other it comes to be aware of its positionality (even Bourdieu (2000) is guilty of this-where does his reflexivity end if it does not reveal him as well!) and yet we learn here that the ethical demand is radical, traumatic, infinite, it bases itself on a secret we do not understand, but try to move towards. If the I is imperial it means that in its interiority, in its autarchy it is aware of its self (its essence) and the Other and of the guilt laid bare by the denuded face forcing it to Goodness (the infinite-God) and at the same time always finding it guilty! To respond to the Other it must jettison its autarky! Here the language of the eschatological, which to me will forever make the work by Levinas unique, is that it has allowed for this voice, which speaks of:

> An openness of the self to the other, which is not a conditioning or a foundation of oneself in some principle, a fixity of a sedentary inhabitant or a nomad, but a relation wholly different from the occupation of a site, a building, or a settling oneself, breathing is transcendence in the form of opening up. It reveals all its meaning only in the relationship with the other, in the proximity of a neighbor, which is responsibility for him, substitution for him. This pneumatism is not nonbeing; it is disinterestedness, excluded middle of essence, besides being and non being. But is not the diachrony of the inspiration and expiration separated by the instant that belongs to an animality? Would animality be the openness upon the beyond essence? But perhaps animality is only the soul's still being too short of breath. In human breathing, in its everyday equality, perhaps we have to already hear the breathlessness of an inspiration that paralyzes essence, that transpierces it with an inspiration by the other, an inspiration that is already expiration, that "rends the soul"! It is the longest breath there is, spirit. Is man not the living being capable of the longest breath in inspiration, without a stopping point, and in expiration, without return? To transcend oneself, to leave one's home to the point of leaving oneself, is to substitute oneself for another. lt is, in my bearing of myself, not to conduct myself well, but by my unicity as a unique being to expiate for the other. The openness of space as an openness of self without a world, without a place, utopia, the not being walled in, inspiration to the end, even to expiration, is proximity of the other which is possible only as responsibility for the other, as substitution for him. The alterity of the other is not a particular case, a species of alterity, but its original exception. It is not because the other is new, an unheard of quiddity, that he signifies transcendence, or, more exactly, signifies, purely and simply; it is because newness comes from the other that there is in newness transcendence

> and signification. It is through the other that newness signifies in being the otherwise than being. Without the proximity of the other in his face everything is absorbed, sunken into, walled in being, goes to the same side, forms a whole, absorbing the very subject to which it is disclosed (Levinas, 1974: 181-182).

How then can one remain the Same if one has already encountered the denuded face? That is why then, in *Otherwise than Being,* this ethical call to responsibility for the Other is seen as traumatic and also obsessive (Levinas, 1974). The work of transcendence is not that which we invite in our lives or the idea of infinity is not that which is a choice (it is a passivity), in meeting the Other we are exposed to:

> Vulnerability, exposure to outrage, to wounding, passivity more passive than all patience, passivity of the accusative form, trauma of accusation suffered by a hostage to the point of persecution, implicating the identity of the hostage who substitutes himself for the others: all this is the self, a defecting or defeat of the ego's identity. And this, pushed to the limit, is sensibility, sensibility as the subjectivity of the subject. It is a substitution for another, one in the place of another, expiation. Responsibility for the other, in its antecedence to my freedom, its antecedence to the present and to representation, is a passivity more passive than all passivity, an exposure to the other without this exposure being assumed, an exposure without holding back, exposure of exposedness, expression, saying. This exposure is the frankness, sincerity, veracity of saying. Not saying dissimulating itself and protecting itself in the said, just giving out words in the face of the other, but saying uncovering itself, that is, denuding itself of its skin, sensibility on the surface of the skin, at the edge of the nerves, offering itself even in suffering- and thus wholly sign, signifying itself… But this saying remains, in its activity, a passivity, more passive than all passivity, for it is a sacrifice without reserve, without holding back, *and in this non-voluntary- the sacrifice of a hostage designated who has not chosen himself to be hostage, but possibly elected by the Good, in an involuntary election not assumed by the elected one.* For the Good cannot enter into a present nor be put into a representation. But being Good it redeems the violence of its alterity, even if the subject has to suffer through the augmentation of this ever more demanding violence (Levinas, 1974: 15 emphasis mine).

Bureaucratic Ethics and the violence of the Other

We were individually brought to the Good, not willingly, on that day we went to Mam Winnie's place of stay. I was also traumatised by the face of her daughter and to borrow the lexis of Levinas, it was finding me guilty of a crime I had not committed, forcing me to responsibility, a Good electing me. A call to justice to a morality that does not dupe us (Levinas, 1969). That is why this PhD project draws from that experience, since I vertiginously moved from my cowering position. Ironically, I had intended not to do my PhD on farmworkers because of that encounter. University ethics entail the idea that research has the potential to harm the participants (the 'do no harm' approach) and they must be protected from any harm that may be caused by the study, and they must be informed of why they participate in any study or experiment. The classical case in medicine being the Tuskegee Syphilis Study that did not only show the unscrupulous medical practices, but how medical research (but not restricted to medicine) always involved racial dynamics, with the subjugated race always used as subjects (in the case of Tuskegee-Black Americans being the subjects) (Brandt, 1978). In the social sciences, the classic cases being the tearoom trade and the Stanford prison experiment (see Humphreys, 1970; Babbie, 2004, Putt, 2012). This conception of ethics is one, which firstly teaches that the researcher ought to take responsibility for their subjects before they even conduct the study. This responsibility is bureaucratically binding since there is an ethics protocol number handed to each researcher and if the participants are violated in any form, they call the university to report the matter. In my observation from the conference of the *National Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences* (NIHSS from the 2-3rd of November 2016), where the draft of the essay was presented, it became clear that ethics in most conversations involved a university ethics form which must be submitted so that the candidate can begin with their research. Thus, failing to reflect deeply on what the encounter with the Other means and at the same time indicating that responsibility for the Other was only stated on the ethics form. Once on the 'field' they can do as they please! Another problem most students were anxious about is that in interviewing the participant, the researcher must then be able to hide what they think or feel so that they are able to probe and get the information required for answering the study. Here we realise that this method eschews vulnerability.

This form of methodology privileges the said and seeks to protect the Other from the implications of what they say and tries to hold the researcher accountable to what they ask and say. What the researcher asks and says is never seen from a position that may argue that what is being asked and said may be misinterpreted and misread, given the disparity in the sapour of the lexicon of the researcher and that of the researched (was this not Bourdieu's, 2000 concern in *Pascallian Meditations*?). What about the unsaid? This goes to the privileging of anonymity. To the point that we can begin to argue is that it is not only the Other who is studied who remains anonymous; this condition of anonymity extends to the works which boldly carries the name of the author and lays the responsibility of that particular thesis to their intellectual understating. Can the researcher write the unsaid? How does the researcher deal with the unsaid? The voice that seems to exist in the conversation and yet incapable of being arrested in the storage of the recorder. A mouth that is wiped before an answer? The face that speaks yet echoes silence! This is why the social scientist, as it will become clear in the next essay, is interested in the silence of their participant for they seek to understand the infinitely demanding or the radical ethical demand on their own terms which we have learnt so far is an impossibility. If intellectual life or the condition known as life as I would like to protract my thesis entails a voice in the head (and as my argument goes that now this voice is that of the cowering being in the superior frontal gyrus) can we then argue that ethically the bureaucratic form of ethical considerations really protects both the researcher and the participant? I am arguing that it may seem methodologically wistful to labour as I do here, to articulate a view that goes beyond the said which ought to be protected. This said that ought to be protected, is a said that ought to be directed! Thus, the bureaucratic ethics seeks to direct, whether through the idea of the submission of the formal question or the informal interview (issues to be observed) since it seeks to arrest the conversation to a particular theme(s) which seeks to fulfil the scholastic wishes ala Bourdieu (2000). Divorced from that world, and enjoying an unrestrained form of freedom (Bourdieu, 2000). If the research (the thick description of the qualitative research) were also dictated by that which is articulated by the ones we research, would it not be sensible to argue that the research question is almost always wrong? For the research question is not only an intellectual inquiry but it reflects one's experiences, location in the world, their race, gender, and ideological stance. Does this not make the entire concept of a proposal one of the scholastic games of freedom? Since it exists in a condition that is not necessarily of that world (the world that is going to be studied-was this not

Bourdieu's concerns with scholastic fallacy?). Is it not that the world that we study or the Other we encounter is a figure of violence since they perform a violence that is directed inwards to that being that seeks to engage the world on their own terms-the researcher! To be held accountable, declined of your intentionality and freedom! This is to say one has been moved into a zone that is destructive to the scholastic project as soon as one seeks the Other. For in our academic world it is believed that by having a topic and a bureaucratic stamp with an ethics number, you have access to the world of the Other.

In placing the research process into historical and political processes with issues like colonialism considered, Hountondji (1990, 2009) and Nabudere (2006) were trying to remind us that Africa also has its own knowledge and we should not act as if the colonisers encountered an empty space. One can agree with them since we cannot divorce the form of violation, which the Other encounters and this can always be linked to colonialism with its view of research which always infantilises the colonised Other, whether through brain hemispheric analyses or the obsession with genital sizes (Brandt, 1978; Fanon, 1952). With the power relations in our particularity that seek to partition proximity between humans, can we not go as far as arguing that the bureaucratic form of ethics, in trying to correct the aforementioned conditions, has actually enforced them in a different way? Is the researcher not being protected from encountering their Other as humanly as possible? This is what I have learnt in the years I have spent doing the PhD and it is conflictual/violent since you meet an Other who insists 'here I am, take me for who I am' and not what you are taught- how to avoid me so that I can fit into your scholastic world. Would this encounter not force one to cower in the superior frontal gyrus wanting to protect themselves in their Self-Awareness in their ability to reflect on themselves?

It is as if Lewis Nkosi (2004:56) in his novel, *Mating Birds,* through the protagonist Ndi Sibiya who is in jail waiting to be hanged for violating the sexual laws of apartheid for 'raping' a white woman, was speaking to the aforementioned problem when he relates to the difficulties he encounters in his interaction with the criminologist Emile Dufré.

> To the criminologists, to Emile Dufré and the rest of his brotherhood, I feel I am nothing more than a specimen of a socially malfunctioning individual whose name may yet figure in the growing annals of sexual crimes. Of my actual personality, of my roots and the meaning of my past, of the subtle and complex emotions that the merest recollection of the landscape of my childhood is still capable of evoking, Dufré is *woefully* ignorant (Nkosi, 2004:56 emphasis mine).

To Sibiya it is clear that the listening skills that Dufré exhibits are not genuine since he is convinced that the words he articulates will help in showing why he is an African rapist. This is visible in how he fails to investigate deeper as to why Sibiya is pleading not guilty to the crime (it would seem at the back of his mind he is saying 'anyway what was Sibiya thinking pursuing a White woman in a country that prohibited proximity between races? Of course he is guilty, he is Black!'). Sibiya goes to the heart of this problem and why their conversations are cumbersome:

> Nothing is more offensive to me than the distant objectivity in a social scientist who is more concerned with proving hypotheses than with discovering the true character of one man's passion for another human being (Nkosi, 2004:63).

From what we learn at home

Now we can approach this particular problem of ethics from different lenses and attempt to go beyond the question of the face to face. For it may be argued, why privilege European theory when you have also identified yourself as Black? The decolonial critique has shown that Western metaphysics is not a totality but reflects a particular locality and mentality to colonise the world (Richards, 1979; Mignolo, 2009, 2012; Chatterjee, 1997; Quijano, 2007). Herbert Vilakazi (2015) on *Ubuntu* has argued that if archaeology traces the human origins back to the African continent then it must be emphasised that throughout the continent the principal that drives human relations is Ubuntu. To him Ubuntu is a World View instead of a philosophical preoccupation. Since "UBUNTU is not an historical phenomenon similar to "classical German philosophy", "existentialism", "Liberalism", or "modernism". Each of these historical phenomena… [are] products and preoccupations of a thin stratum of intellectuals in modern history. It is a specialist preoccupation of a thin layer of modern intellectuals. It is not a World-

View, or "Weltanschauung", of the masses of society members" (Vilakazi, 2015: N.P.). My argument is that if we read the question of ethics raised by the face-to-face encounter one does not find it poles apart to some of the principals raised in the views of Ubuntu, that a person is a person through other people (a way of life espoused by those who have Ubuntu). On the other hand, we can trace such principals in the political concept of communal life that was expounded during the presidency of Julius Nyerere (2008) in Tanzania under Ujamaa or Brotherhood, where the commonality of experience is grounded on the equality of existence expressed through all those working the land and sharing in the produce of the land. Many have written about the importance of Ubuntu or African philosophical education in research and showing the ideas emerging from Ubuntu and arguing that they go beyond the privileging of individual autonomy associated with Kantian ethics, since the understanding of personhood is conceptualised as relational (a person is a person through others) (Kunene, 1980; Verhoef and Michel, 1997 Adeyemi and Adeyinka, 2003; Metz, 2007; Metz and Gaie, 2010; Vilakazi, 2015). Metz and Gaie (2010:275) map how Ubuntu is understood:

> If one harms others, e.g. by being exploitive, deceptive or unfaithful, or even if one is merely indifferent to others and fails to share oneself with them, then one is said to be lacking 'Botho' (Sotho-Tswana) or 'Ubuntu' (Nguni), literally lacking in personhood or humanness. In the way that 'an unjust law is no law at all' (as per Augustine's On free choice of the will [trans. Williams, 1993]) or just as we might say that a jalopy is 'not a real car'…so Africans would say of an individual who does not relate positively to others that 'he is not a person'. Indeed, those without much Ubuntu/Botho are often described as animals.

Driven by such a way of relating to all those that walk the land then research does not only seek to establish results or prove hypotheses. The feminist researchers from the South, have shown when dealing with how as a counter to colonial anthropology an anthropologist seeking to do things differently needs to privilege their history by seeing themselves through the teachings of their indigenous communities (Wilmer, 1993; Smith, 1999; Domínguez, 2000; Behar, 2003; Motsei, 2004). These teachings in the African continent first privilege the wisdom the elders possess and that is why it is an insult to call a possessor of knowledge and sacred rituals by their name (Adeyemi and Adeyinka, 2003; Motsei, 2004). Therefore, in acquiring education, it is also

believed that one's education is for the greater good of their society. Maybe, that is why, when we go to our communities; they hope that we will aid them and we leave burdened because in most African households we are taught such principals: to always treat the elders with respect, to always greet a person one meets, to love, to share, to care for another person is to care for yourself (expressed in the Zulu proverb: Izandla ziyagezana/ Hands wash each other), to care for the stranger (expressed in the Zulu proverb: Unyawo alunampumulo/emphasising treating foreigners well). This we learnt from most of our homes or at school and we recited them every day as the most important way of relating to humans and this way of existing is also extended to treating animals and the cosmos with dignity (Kunene, 1980). To Kunene (1980), the material hardships associated with colonialism have led many to jettison such beliefs since in his view (focusing on literature) many started to focus on protesting or the genre that came to be known as protest literature. If we interpret Kunene (1980), it can be argued that the problem in the African continent was then approached as a material problem or a political problem jettisoning the ethical and spiritual. Thus, by having Ubuntu, one does not see the separation between spiritual and material or political and ethical… one sees them as interrelated. The political has been used to force ideas of reconciliation when there is a need for reparation, since it is argued that those who call for reparations do not have Ubuntu, they must reconcile. This is a political misrepresentation of Ubuntu since Ubuntu also calls for justice and reconciliation and argues that if a wrong is committed it is normal for one to pay, like being fined a cow/goat for impregnating a girl outside wedlock.

I do not see the ideas raised by Løgstrup or Levinas as incongruent to the principals of Ubuntu as Løgstrup also indicated that (1997: 124-125):

> When we care for the other person's life, it is not only that person's life which succeeds, but our own as well…a person is him or herself a participation in the success of the other person, because by caring for the other person's life he or she helps him or herself to become successful. When we counsel ourselves or one another we therefore appeal in one and the same breath to that will best serves both ourselves and the other person… However, there is no room for the idea that the care of the other person is motivated exclusively by a concern for our own flourishing, and that

> our concern for his or her weal or woe is only a means to that end. This idea is excluded because by virtue of our love for the other person he or she constitutes a vital part of our life.

When Reich (1966) argued that the story of Christ reflects the predicament of human kind to escape the problem of hate by loving… I appreciated this argument, for I also recognise the teachings of Christ as not being limited to institutional representation of Christ. Reich (1966) then argued that because of the suppression of Nature (God read as Nature/ the word of God), especially the suppression of sexual pleasure, this has resulted in the people of Europe wanting Barabbas (read as a violent and dangerous human being). Indeed in an age where truth is suppressed and the only responses proposed do not have conceptions of love; the people will always seek Barabbas for the problem to them is one that is only perceived as arising from the material. To love, as we learnt from the above quote from Løgstrup and even in the principals of Ubuntu, is not seen from a position of the reciprocal and that is why one finds the teachings espoused by Christ revolutionary for he did not come to only dwell with those that read the Gospel.

Here we can then begin to place, in conversations, alternative forms of knowledge which exist in the world. One is not calling a return to some unknown past, but I am interested in fashioning tools based on what still survives in the contemporary. However, this is a difficult task as the above authors cited have warned us that the Western experience has been elevated as the only way of knowing the world. This is where one can appreciate the different ways of seeing the world from the position of those colonised which the decolonial theorists are pointing towards (Smith, 1999; Quijano, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mignolo, 2009). Another issue is that the ethical in Ubuntu is not grounded only in the question of the face to face but also relates to the relationship with the land, as I will be arguing that the first ethical relationship that we establish is through the land when we attach our umbilical cords to the land. From this we do not only respect the land but also people that are born/dead for they all come from the land and will return with us to the land. This, of course, is a knowledge that comes to be lost as we are dispossessed from the land/Mother Earth, a problem that is also related to the patriarchal writing of the

relationship with land, which erases the role of women/ their relationship with land (Sjöö and Mor, 1987). In referring to ethics, one had to begin from the position of a student in a Western University in the African continent. I began from what I have been taught at the University and that is why then the argument is that; why not even look at the philosophical stance that comes from Western philosophy (especially post World War Two) before we even speak of the African philosophy, since the latter gets that derogatory term of merely being indigenous knowledge which many are claiming as a political stance that reflects a different relationship with the knowledge, the world, and the cosmos. This is the importance of decolonising methodology, as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999:39) argues, that it is not a total rejection of theory or Western theory, but it is "about centering our concerns [those colonised] and world views and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives and for our own purposes." The egology of the 'I' realises 'being' in the world through war/death, which is the Western philosophical problem. At the same time, a study of this problem can help us explain why the Western intellectual or their understanding of the 'I' has failed to understand alterity. From this critique we can bring about a different politics which is grounded in love, as Maldonado-Torres (2007) has also argued (drawing from a reading of Levinas). However, if we come to be aware that research is a collective process, then we also have to think about questions of collective subjectivity, what it means to go produce research with a particular community beyond the privileging of the problematic I. It is this awareness that leads to a different (dis)ordering of writing which the feminist writers from the South have been calling towards. A position that does not only privilege the insider perspective, but locates it within ethical protocols that are aware that the research process has always been linked with coloniality which has always viewed those researched as mute and without a history. In my case, the assumption that the farmworker needs to be spoken for, is one which is challenged, hence the privileging of conversation. If the problem is realised as such, then it is sensible to argue that if one is concerned about their communities and the questions of justice then already the writer is in the terrain of the political, but to enter the discourse, it does not elevate the I. Maybe then this is a question of participatory research or community research/ indigenous research, the researchers not going to the community as bearers of knowledge and seeing the community as merely a 'field' that enriches theory. Instead, one proposes a movement beyond the cowering being in their superior frontal gyrus. At the same time, there is the awareness that we do not get justice on paper or through

appealing to Western conceptions of legality, which may not be enough, but we enter a struggle through love for our communities, through an extension of ourselves as a form of destruction of what we know. By destroying how we currently do research and destroying how we should engage with those we seek to gain knowledge from, we go beyond the emphasis that seeks to answer a question based on Western forms of understanding. This is why the concept of epistemic silence which is introduced in the next essay is apt for we come to be aware that certain forms of knowledge can only take us so far and that is why we cannot always privilege them. In being at Buhle Park, I was no longer in an invisible hole. At Buhle Park I was with my uncles, young brothers, sisters, and many mothers. Yet, I cannot speak for them. We were in a conversation and that is why I did not write about them or for them…since this is a project of the future where they will speak for themselves or where we are aware that we are speaking together. That is why it was difficult to present the thesis, for in conversations I was no longer guided by a research problem; instead I was called to an understanding of myself through the many conversations we had. This seems to be an impossibility, for I cannot take the position of the Other as argued in the introduction and maybe this call is one which speaks to the political in research.

The above musing is not only an anthropological solution that aims to put people (humans) first as Moutu (2017) argues, but one is aware of the problem that writers like Sylvia Wynter (1984) have been calling towards the problematisation of the human, calling for the movement beyond the ratiomorphic ratio-ontological apparatus of ordering the world (beyond the religious or biological). Or calling for a position that can be seen as misanthropic doubt that also inserts the position of those under coloniality whenever there are shouts privileging the thinking human, that:

> If the ego cogito was built upon the foundations of the ego conquiro [war and later slavery and rape], the ‘I think therefore I am’ presupposes two unacknowledged dimesnsions. Beneath the ‘I think’ we can read ‘others do not think’, and behind the ‘I am’ it is possible to locate the philosophical justification for the idea that ‘others are not’ or do not have being” (Maldonado-Torres, 2007: 252)

Indeed, we come from the communities that suffer from the colonial wound and exist beyond the wound (coloniality). What about the knowledge we have acquired from the universities and the selves we have fashioned based on that particular knowledge… how do we reflect on ourselves before we even try to speak of an injustice? How do we jettison the problem of the superior self and dwell on the collective…? Is it not in the modernist literature, especially in Dostoevsky's (1994) work, that we realise that individuals who fight an injustice can sometimes be so consumed by the fight that they become unjust? Love can serve as our mediation, but the challenge is how do we avoid speaking on behalf of Others? Here Spivak's (1994) intervention is appreciated; even though it is only seen as belonging in the postcolonial, which is argued has not meditated enough on the question of coloniality. This is a critique waged by Smith (1999) on postcolonial theory since she suggests that to call the current condition of the colonised as postcolonial suggests that the colonised exist outside the colonial. The problem with the postcolonial, she continues to argue, is that in its analyses it privileges the postmodern theorists, as she argues that the business of the decolonial is that of modernity itself since it does not as Mignolo (2009) argues abandon modernity but wants to speak about the modernity of the colonised/'our modernity'. The question is simple, with the history of most struggles resulting in the emergence of the elite, those who are interested in the decolonial, what are the ethical measures that can be used to guard against the emergence of an elite in this era of academic commercialisation?

My Failures may not be Failures

When I read the above notes, I realised that my failures may not be as bad as I imagined for in my head, by 2018, I would have been able to start a movement of farmworkers. But in actuality, I would be doing an injustice to many for I would still be taking the stance of speaking on their behalf without hearing them speaking for themselves, an injustice I would be committing while fighting an injustice (oh Dostoevsky and your warning of those who fight injustice). By visiting Mam Winnie, I have come to realise the power of conversation, mainly because I do not only meet people and see them face to face, but I get to appreciate their dreams and how they see their lives. To organise themselves as a trade union that fights for their rights on the farm may not be the only immediate concern. For example, in 2013 they were removed from ezimbuzini (barn for

goats) a compound they used to stay in and many of those removed decided to go build shacks in Buhle Park. The compounds were stables for animals, hence the naming after animals, ezimbuzini, ezinkomeni (cattle kraal).[9] According to the Establishment of Security Tenure (ESTA) of South Africa, Chapter IV:

> (4) The right of residence of an occupier who has resided on the land in question or any other land belonging to the owner for 10 years and— (a) has reached the age of 60 years; or (b) is an employee or former employee of the owner or person in charge, and as a result of ill health. injury or disability is unable to supply labour to the owner or person in charge, may not be terminated unless that occupier has committed a breach contemplated in section 10(1) (a), (b) or (c): Provided that for the purposes of this subsection, the mere refusal or failure to provide labour shall not constitute such a breach (Republic of South Africa, 1997: 12).

Many of those who find themselves in the shacks were on the farm for more than 10 years, some were sick and others had reached the age of 60. I have even met people who were on the farm since the 1980s, as one woman pointed out that she came to the farm when the son of the farmer was only two years old and now he is running the farm. In being in the shack and hearing such conversations, one realises that these conversations are moments that will one-day lead to a greater resistance. This law (ESTA) matters not, for those on the farms are uneducated, as many have indicated to the farmer that they suspected that they were illegally removed. At the moment, one is only listening, and letting go of the idea that I need to speak on their behalf; unless one day they ask what we can do together. There has been an instance where one has also been asked to make a trip to the Department of Home Affairs in aid of one Mama who was trying to get her pension and the farmer only wrote a letter that said they cannot assist, they hope the government can aid her instead. I have come to a realisation that there are multiple problems that the farmworkers face and these, as I have argued, deal with the construction of the Black farmworker (someone who cannot speak for him/herself). To move in the terrain of the political, what I have been pondering will require one to be ethical, for one is not only fighting a political

[9] It can be argued that because they were not organised they could not speak for themselves and that is why the farmer moved them easily. However, it can also be argued that by being moved to the shacks they are beginning to think about organising themselves based on their experiences rather than a leader coming into the farm/shacks dictating what they should do.

problem, but is also dealing with an ethical problem that is aware that we need to go beyond the messiah complex. Guided by a spirit of Ubuntu, aware of that infinitely demanding task of giving oneself to the other, one is aware of the destructive nature of this move, for the way forward exists beyond the (re)presentation of the problem on paper. Maybe sometimes our presence is simply enough. If it is not enough and we are called to do more, we ought not to fear.

In what follows, I chose to address the academic problem confronting us and go about it through the question of the historical representation of land. In so doing, my intention as essay 4 will show, is that this particular method I have adopted has helped in indicating that there is an ontological lack of belonging in the literature of land or what it means to belong to the land. We have discovered in this essay, that the ontological is always violent, hence by asking what it means to belong to the land, there is an ethical contribution, that goes beyond what it means to own the land (as essay 3 and 4 show). I then go to the archive to understand the construction of the farmworker and address historical violence. The archival material has helped me appreciate that the moment in 2012 was the historical in the present. In Bethal, we will encounter workers who complained about the backbreaking work of picking potatoes and being abused because they were slow or simply because it was not their land, just as Mam Winnie was also told that this was not 'Mandela's land'. Through my interaction with her and all those alike in Buhle Park, I was reminded of the historical Otherwise, but still being aware of the silencing effect of speaking for others since the representation of the problem might be a misrepresentation, or the recognition might be a misrecognition, it will be argued in the next essay on: Does resistance have a language? To call for the ethical is to realise that the journey is as long as long is, for we are dealing with past, present, and future. I am not a messiah, but I am still interested in this spiritual and political problem of being landless and how those who produce food for the nation experience it. It is undeniable that the problem faced by the research was that we are dealing with a historical injustice that still exists in the present; even the language of legality still failed us in the democratic state for the police in Mam Winnie's case, just like those many violent reports in Bethal, required someone to speak against the farmer. The case of Mam Winnie is not divorced from the material I will be dealing with, she is present in Bethal, her former place of stay, the compound ezimbuzi is similar to those in Bethal, she is present in the historical trek from the

farms, and she is present in the Manicheanism of the representation of resistance. Fortunately, I am encountering all the farmworkers, not in the language of them being inside the farmer's land or it being the language of the hidden transcript, away from the ears of power for we also have to realise that power is everywhere; whatever they say can easily get to the farmer. Moving forward all that will be done will not be done out of duty, but will be done in recognising the challenge of the ethical demand, of knowing the power of love!

2. Does Resistance Have a Language?

The call to return to studying everyday life and its importance

The post-world war two period, during which the African colonies came to gain their independence from the West, has rendered itself an interesting subject in the field of social sciences. To Go (2013), this period (1950s-1960's) became known as the first wave in the thinking of decolonisation with its proponents including authors like Frantz Fanon, Steve Biko, Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Kwame Nkrumah, and Julius Nyerere, to name a few. In the sphere of the social sciences there emerged questions around how we study this period (Cooper, 2005, Chakrabarty, 1992, Chatterjee, 1986, Go, 2013). More specifically, in the fields of anthropology, sociology, and history there emerged a strong interest in the work of E.P. Thompson (1963; 1967; 1971). Thompson (1971:76) provided insight to those researchers who were interested in decolonisation and colonialism with the idea that the "common people… can be taken as a historical agent." Scholars used Thompson's (1963; 1967; 1971) work to analyse the forms of domination that existed and the resistance to it by the oppressed group to bring to the fore this historical agent (Chakrabarty, 1989, Comaroff, 1985; 1991; Scott, 1985, 1990; Moodie, Ndatshe, Sibuyi, 1988; Moodie, 2015, Atkins, 1986; 1993).

It was not only the work of Thompson that inspired the aforementioned studies; others found inspiration in the works of post-modern thinkers like Michel Foucault. A prominent theme that we also see featuring in these studies is the call to study everyday life as an important method of bringing to the fore the important voices that have been buried in the colonial archive and the developmentalist approaches of the 1920's-1950's (Escobar, 1995; Chakrabarty, 1992). Foucault (1982:778) on *The Subject and Power* argues that "We have to know the *historical conditions* which motivate our conceptualisation. We need a historical awareness of our present circumstance." This is a conceptualisation that does not see the past divorced from the present and looks at the present through its relationship with the past. This conceptualisation is one which also responds to the question of how we can link the conceptual needs to practice or

theory to practice (Foucault and Deleuze, 1972). From this, Foucault (1982:785) makes a case of why we should study the everyday; he views studying the everyday as a response to a philosophical question of "what are we" - posed by Kant in 1784. Thus, he argues that this question is one that aims to offer an analysis "of both us and our present" (Foucault, 1982:785). He then shows that the present has allowed for a broader move to 'who are we' in this present (Foucault, 1982: 781). This present or this every day is seen by Foucault (1982:780) as consisting

> …of taking the forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point. To use another metaphor, it consists of using this resistance as a chemical catalyst so as to bring to light power relations, locate their position, and find out their point of application and the method used…Rather than analyzing power relations from the point of view of its internal rationality, it consists of analyzing power relations through the antagonism of strategies

Others have taken Foucault's reading of Kant to task and posed questions of who has the right to exercise free speech (who is 'us/we/our present') since this seems to be reserved for the "authority of specialists" (Chatterjee, 1997: 12). This question, to Mignolo (2009), reflects the fact that Chatterjee's question is one which is caused by the colonial wound, meaning that both Foucault and Kant could not be able to understand the question he poses since their focus was on Europe. Inspired by the call of studying everyday life and what it means to embark on such a study by focusing on colonial history, Cooper (2005:242) reminds us that studying everyday life in colonial history retells how in "the most oppressive of political systems, people found not just niches in which to hide and fend for themselves, but handles by which the system itself could be moved." Thus, the everyday is elevated since it shows how ordinary people's resistance was able to get a hold of the handles that moved the colonial system. However, on his work on *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* Scott (1990) does not seek to look at the moments when the ordinary people get a hold of the handles that change the system, instead he looks at the moment when ordinary people are able to hide their resistance in plain sight.

Perhaps it is useful to deal with the work of Scott (1990) below to bring forward certain questions that I feel arise when aiming to study everyday life, resistance, and domination. After a careful examination of the work by Scott, I proceed to a reading of different texts, I try to unveil a different way of thinking about resistance in the everyday life, and that is through silence. This essay advances different arguments and aims to make an epistemological contribution which is grounded in the idea of epistemic silence, a method that argues that in reading works we need to factor in the possibility of what the work cannot say. It is hoped that the reader will appreciate the figure of incomprehensibility (our dear Bartleby) whose silence is revolutionary and goes beyond the formulation that is presented by the different texts. Therefore the aim of this essay is to delve deeper into the theoretical debate of resistance that focuses on silence. By focusing on silence, the essay shifts from silence as the unspoken language of resistance and instead aims to argue that resistance may not always be about the change of power. Through silence it will be argued that we come to appreciate that silence may not always be interested in the fate of power. That is to say, perhaps the danger (if we care to label) of silence may not be understood in the present and if it is heard in the future, it still escapes us. The contribution of the work, in focusing on silence, avoids offering the interpretation of silence per se; instead in dwelling on the different readings, it aims to show how the interpretation of silence as a language of resistance has limited the perilous role of silence to power.

The reading of everyday resistance by Scott: What the text does not say!

> *Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves together; that at length they may emerge, full-formed and majestic, into the daylight of Life, which they are thenceforth to rule…Nay, in thy own mean perplexities, do thou thyself but hold thy tongue for one day: on the morrow, how much clearer are thy purposes and duties; what wreck and rubbish have those mute workmen within thee swept away, when intrusive noises were shut out! Speech is too often not, as the Frenchman defined it, the art of concealing Thought; but of quite stifling and suspending Thought, so that there is none to conceal. Speech too is great, but not the greatest. As the Swiss Inscription says: Sprecfien ist silbern, Schweigen ist golden (Speech is silvern, Silence is golden); or as I might rather express it: Speech is of Time, Silence is of*

Eternity…Thought will not work except in Silence: neither will Virtue work except in Secrecy-Thomas Carlyle, Sartor Resartus, 1897:174

In the first chapter ("Behind the Official Story") of his book *Domination and the Arts of Resistanc*e, Scott (1990: 1) opens with the idea that "IF THE EXPRESSION "Speak truth to power" still has a utopian ring to it, even in modern democracies, this is surely because it is so rarely practiced." The point he puts across in this opening is that the 'weak' hide their disgruntlement when facing power and that is why it seems they hardly speak truth to power. Why do the weak hardly speak truth to power? According to Scott (1990), it is a choice by the weak to be silent, in what he calls the public transcript – a mask they wear. As he sees it, it is clear that the mask is the defining prop in ensuring a performance which does not show the authenticity of the actions of the subordinates. The public transcript then "will typically, by its accomodationist tone, provide convincing evidence for the hegemony of dominant values, for the hegemony of dominant discourse" (Scott, 1990:4). As he indicates, the nature of the mask worn depends on the nature of power – the more threatening the power, the thicker the mask (Scott, 1990:3). Outside the public transcript, in what he calls the hidden transcript, the weak may then decide to remove their mask. Therefore, the hidden transcript is the offstage; a space that is beyond the surveillance of power (Scott, 1990). Scott (1990) tries to document how a subversive understanding of the social is conceptualised and shared by the weak. Central to his work is the idea of communication that cannot be shared between the 'weak' and the powerful; the resistance that emerges in certain spaces away from the gaze of the powerful. Foucault (1982) reminds us that one cannot speak of resistance conceptually without factoring in the question of power and he further suggests, above, that we need to study power through antagonistic concepts. If we want to understand what we mean by legality; we need to study illegality "[A]nd, in order to understand what power relations are about, perhaps we should investigate the forms of resistance and attempts made to dissociate these relations" (Foucault, 1982: 780). Scott (1990) does not deviate from Foucault's perspective as he does not see the struggles he cites in his book as directed to a particular individual. To him, the form of power relations he documents in the book makes individuals subjects who are putting up a performance.

Since Scott (1990) reads resistance as an art, he presents us with a way of interpreting this art. He draws from Goffman's (1990) dramaturgical approach to everyday life. Despite drawing on the micro sociological work of Goffman (1990) on how we present ourselves and construct meaning, he is still able to locate his project within macrosociology by focusing on different social orders (as I show below). I also argue that his interpretation is similar to a hermeneutical approach[10] which requires that he engages in an interpretation of what the art is saying. At the same time he is engaged in the act of "saying something about something else…explaining or account[ing] for something" (Palmer, 1969:20). Moreover, in this hermeneutics, the importance of his translation lies in establishing an understanding of how the weak come to speak. Essentially, hermeneutics "is the art of understanding any utterance in language" (Palmer, 1969: 94). I am not inferring what is not there in Scott (1990: 17), as he also argues that his purpose "IS TO SUGGEST how we might more successfully read, interpret, and understand the often fugitive political conduct of subordinate groups." To achieve this he draws from literature (citing George Elliot and George Orwell for example) and draws from a variety of social orders like slavery, serfdom, peasant societies (his previous work in Malaysia, see Scott, 1985), and racial domination (colonialism). Central to the reading of these different social orders is the idea that in all of these social orders we tend to see a "politics of disguise and anonymity" or the infra-politics of the subordinate which "*dare not speak in their own name* [emphasis mine]" (Scott, 1990: 19). This disguise is where he locates the idea of silence, for the subordinates do not speak in the face of power, or when under the gaze of the powerful, and when they do this, it generates what he calls political electricity, where:

> …we can metaphorically think of those with comparable hidden transcripts in a society as forming part of a single power grid…This is not to say that every declaration of the hidden transcript will ramify through the entire grid, only that the grid itself, as defined by the hidden transcript, delimits the maximum possible symbolic reach of such acts, the population for whom such acts carry comparable meaning (Scott, 1990: 224).

[10] "Hermeneutics, when defined… [is] the study of the understanding of the works of man, transcending linguistic forms of interpretation. Its principles apply not only to works in written form but to any work of art" (Palmer, 1969:10). Palmer shows that hermeneutics cannot be seen as only applying to literature, theology, and law but can be extended to other forms of 'art'.

To Scott (1990), everyday life is understood as that which involves the subordinates who are avoiding confrontation with the powerful and at the same time involves the powerful not sharing what they think of the subordinates – again, there is a breach in communication between the two sides. Contrary to what is previously discussed; this suggests that there is also a hidden transcript on the part of the powerful, but in the book he is only dealing with that of the subordinates. He is looking at the everyday through the eyes of the subordinates. He argues that "[I]f subordination requires a credible performance of humility and deference, so domination seems to require a credible performance of haughtiness" (Scott, 1990:11).

If one reads Scott (1990) patiently, it is visible that there is a contradiction in the infrapolitics argument since in the last chapter of the book he pushes us to a political electricity which is generated when the hidden transcript speaks in the face of power. While I am interested in the speaking of truth to power, the question is:

a) Under which conditions is the silence considered necessary by subordinates? Or
b) When is the act of speaking silent? Or in some cases:
c) Why is it an act of speaking and being silent at the same time?

To supplement the above questions posed in Scott's (1990) work, I turn to the work of Pierre Macherey (1978). Macherey (1978), who deals with the question of silence in reading literature, can also help in showing the silence in the work of Scott and the silence he fails to deal with when looking at resistance. Macherey writes as a Marxist philosopher:

> from within the French Communist Party, working inside the problematic of the 'early' Althusser[11] , and addressing himself to the question of literature as a part of the larger enterprise of rethinking and recovering the very categories of historical materialism in the aftermath of de-Stalinisation (Wall, 1978: vii-viii).

[11] This was an Althusser who was more interested in a humanist perspective in Marxism, his later work reflecting a shift from this stance.

Macherey (1978:6) offers to us a way of seeing the act of knowledge production as an "articulation of a silence." Embarking on showing the articulation of silence in the literature or theory means that one subjects it to criticism. Macherey (1978:3) elucidates that criticism is a twofold process: on one hand it is a refusal, a hostile judgement and on the other hand a "positive knowledge of limits" which reflects criticism as an acceptance of the work or a form of explanation and appreciation. This then involves trying to understand what can be said of the work which requires an understanding of the material, the means, and the product (Macherey, 1978). I have been engaged in the latter when looking at Scott. The former then involves identifying what the "work does not say" (Macherey, 1978:87). Macherey (1978:87) adds that:

> This is not the same as the careless notation 'what it refuses to say,' although that would in itself be interesting: a method might be built on it, with the task of *measuring silences,* whether acknowledged or unacknowledged. But rather than this, what the work *cannot say is* important, because there the elaboration of the utterance is acted out, in a sort of journey to silence [emphasis from the original text].

Scott (1990) (as Cooper (1994: 1534) rightly argues) is vague in specifying the domain in which his arguments apply, "eliding slavery and colonialism and taking examples from a wide array of cases as if the particular structures of power in each were of little consequence." The idea of presenting resistance as hidden is problematic since it gives the impression that to speak of resistance as hidden is to take a view that it is not publicly present. This is the silence in Scott or what he cannot say (unable to look at the act of speaking within silence). He cannot present a moment when silence and speech act together (see Carlyle, 1897: 175). What does it mean for silence as being of eternity as Carlyle suggests? To be silent to Scott (1990) needs to be seen as a very important moment since it conceals and the concealed act forms a great part of resistance. That is why Scott (1985; 1990) deals mostly with the silence that is present in the public transcript and the speaking which is assumed to take place in the hidden transcript or when the act of speaking makes itself present in the public transcript (the moment of political electricity). Why is silence golden? For Scott it is golden since it avoids confrontation and allows for resistance elsewhere, a place not accessible to power. To me, Scott fails to document the "co-existence of the visible and the hidden: [since] the visible is merely the hidden in a different

guise" (Macherey, 1978:86). A befitting example of such can be seen in the worker who would be called by their employer in an emergency situation and responds by shouting "I'll be there as quickly as I can boss and walks slowly." How do we read that? It can be assumed that the worker is well aware of the nature of the situation but purposely dupes the employer into believing that his response is of concern. Is that not speaking and silence, a moment of resistance in the public transcript and yet hidden at the same time (Scott will agree to this, but you will see that this needs to be pushed a bit further)? A number of questions emerge when one follows Scott's logic and Macherey (1978:85-86) covers this problem very well when he asks:

> Can we say that this silence is hidden? What is it? A condition of existence-point of departure, methodological beginning-essential foundation-ideal culmination-absolute origin which lends meaning to the endeavour? Means or form of connection? Can we make this silence speak? What is the unspoken saying? What does it mean? To what extent is dissimulation a way of speaking? Can something that has hidden *itself* be recalled to our presence…? Is what I am really saying what I am not saying?

This then poses the question of whether resistance does have a language: if it's language is that of no longer speaking truth to power (but concealment). If silence is of an eternity which is greater than speech, is this silence a language? Can we regard this silence as a speaking silence? Perhaps it would be useful to turn to the post-modern theorist, Foucault and see how he deals with such questions in the *History of Sexuality Vol 1*.

The Speaking Subject who is silent in everyday interaction

The History of Sexuality Volume 1, as Foucault (1978) explains, is an attempt to explore his interest in the interconnected historical relationship between power and discourses on sex. He goes beyond a juridical representation of power (as I will show in paragraphs to follow). Sexuality is a name given to a historical construct, a network which deals with stimulation of bodies, pleasure, strengthening of controls and resistance, the formation of special strategies of knowledge and power (see Foucault, 1978: 105-106). Most importantly, he is interested in how the Western man became a subject of sexuality.

In part one of *The History of Sexuality* (We "Other Victorians"), Foucault (1978:3) argues that in the West there came to dominate a view that it was at the beginning of the seventeenth century when sexual practices "had little need of secrecy; words were said without undue reticence, and things were done without too much concealment; one had a tolerant familiarity with the illicit." This was a time of direct gestures, shameless discourse, and was "a period when bodies "made a display of themselves"" (*ibid*). However, the age of sexual freedom is said to have ended when the Victorian bourgeoisie came to dominate (Foucault, 1978). The mid seventeenth century was the period of the development of capitalism in the West; a period during which it was argued that sexuality moved to the home and the family absorbed it and when it came to sex "*silence* became the rule (emphasis mine)" (Foucault, 1978:3). This was a period in which it was believed that sex was subjugated at the level of language, controlled "…in speech, expunged it from the things that were said, and extinguished the words that rendered it too visibly present" (Foucault, 1978:17). Foucault (1978) deals with the parents' bedroom as a space in which sexuality was seen to be acknowledged.

Therefore, what is this silence (cited above)? Can we read the silence as a form of resistance? (That we leave for page 96 on resistance and the theory of power). He argues that in this period of the beginning of capitalism in Europe, that which did not play a reproductive function was "driven out, denied, and reduced to silence (Foucault, 1978: 4)." Again Foucault brings forward the idea of silence and how the reproductive function of sex was given high priority and that which did not occur in the parent's bedroom was reduced to silence. This epoch is said to be that of repression and Foucault argues that "repression operated as a sentence to disappear, but also as an injunction to *silence*, an affirmation of nonexistence, and, by implication, an admission that there was nothing to say about such things, nothing to see, and nothing to know" (*ibid*). However, Foucault (1978: *ibid*) shows that this period was forced to make "a few concessions" (exposing the hypocrisy of this bourgeois society) for the illegitimate sexualities, and the spaces which allowed for such activities:

> …the brothel and the mental hospital would be those places of tolerance: the prostitute, the client, and the pimp, together with the physiatrist and his hysteric- those "other Victorians" as Steve Marcus would say-seem to have surreptitiously transferred the pleasures that are *unspoken* into

> the order of things that are counted. Words and gestures, quietly authorized, could be exchanged there at the going rate. Only in those places would untrammeled sex have a right to (safely insularized) forms of reality, and only to clandestine, circumscribed, and coded types of discourse.

Foucault introduces to us two concepts here, silence and the unspoken. The silence, he shows, was said to be a product of repression; the unspoken were pleasures that existed outside the parents' bedroom and seemed to be a form of speaking or a form of resistance to this confinement that was happening. One might ask why I am looking to Foucault, especially *The History of Sexuality* to understand the question of whether resistance has a language or when does resistance speak… I argue that to read Foucault (1978) is important since he also sheds some light on the two concepts under investigation: silence and the unspoken. He links the two concepts with the idea of repression which has a "fundamental" link with "power, knowledge, and sexuality" (Foucault, 1978:5). He goes on to argue that what makes it fascinating to look at sex and power through repression is because of his interest in what he calls "the *speaker's benefit* (emphasis mine)" (Foucault, 1978:6). The speaker's benefit has in it the concept of the unspoken to speak and purposively silence that which does not benefit the speaker. Thus, what is important in the unspoken as it exists 'outside repression' is what is not said and what is not said at one level is different to what is repressed. Despite the repression thesis, Foucault (1978:11) shows that we have to accept that sex, in this period, was spoken about in the church (confession room), with the psychoanalysist or a doctor in the mental institute - this was a ""discursive fact"" and he renders us to that vigilance which questions "who does the speaking, the position and viewpoints from which they speak, the institutions which prompt people to speak about it and which store and distribute the things that are said." Foucault (1987:6) argues (when looking at the repressive hypothesis) that:

> If sex is repressed, that is, condemned to prohibition, nonexistence, and silence, then the mere fact that one is speaking about it has the appearance of a deliberate transgression. A person who holds forth in such language places himself to a certain extent outside the reach of power; he upsets established law; he somehow anticipates the *coming freedom*" [emphasis mine].

To speak, in this case, had in it the importance of the coming of freedom. To exist outside the repression was to speak but where did this speaking happen, why did the subjects of sexuality speak (what was the benefit), in which space and according to whose terms? The answer would come if we were to highlight Foucault's (1987:7) political and philosophical project:

> What sustains our eagerness to speak of sex in terms of repression is doubtless this opportunity to speak out against the powers that be, to utter truths and promise bliss, to link together enlightenment, liberation, and manifold pleasures; to pronounce a discourse that combines the fervor of knowledge, the determination to change the laws, and the longing for the garden of earthly delights.

Foucault (1978:8) continues to deal with the two concepts I am interested in, by arguing that his aim in this volume is to:

> examine the case of a society which has been *loudly* castigating itself for its hypocrisy for more than a century, which *speaks verbosely of its own silence*, takes great pains to tolerate in detail *the things it does not say*, denounces the powers it exercises, and promises to liberate itself from the very laws that made it function [emphasis mine].

What makes *The History of Sexuality* interesting when relating it to the question of how did this resistance to 'sexual repression' occur, is how Foucault deals with the question of what was not said about sexuality in this period. He is able to show this by indicating that there was, at the level of discourse, the proliferation of certain discourses that were concerned with "sex-specific discourses, different from one another both by their form and their object: a discursive ferment that gathered momentum from the eighteenth century onward (Foucault, 1978: 18)." This discursive ferment was to be found in the church (the confession room), the hospital/ medicine (biology of reproduction, psychiatry), areas of pedagogy (with school children), justice, civil law (the union), and in economics (the idea of the population). These were spaces of dealing with the question of sexuality and in the church, the discourse which came to dominate was that of the sin presented as "disquieting enigma: not a thing which stubbornly shows itself, but one which always hides, the insidious presence that speaks in a voice so muted and often disguised that one

risks remaining deaf to it" (Foucault, 1978:35). Despite this confession, Foucault (1978) shows that even then there was a lot which was not said as people came forward to confess their sins. Again Foucault (1978) seems to be dealing with the idea of silence within the confession space and the other spaces alike. One might ask why the interest with silence? The interest with silence at the level of language and power seems to show to us that there was nothing which was hidden or repressed in this century; instead the silence was how that which was present came to be regulated and managed as he says it"[S]ex was driven out of hiding and constrained to lead a discursive existence" (Foucault, 1978:33). Foucault argues (1978:27) that in this period:

> …things were said in a different way it was different people who said them, from different points of view, in order to obtain different results. Silence itself- the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name, the discretion that is required between different speakers-is less the absolute limit of discourse, the other side from which it is separated by a strict boundary, than an element that functions alongside the things said, with them and in relation to them within over-all strategies. There is no binary division to be made between *what one says and what one does not say*; *we must try to determine the different ways of not saying such things, how those who can and those who cannot speak of them are distributed*, which type of discourse is authorized, or which form of discretion is either case [emphasis mine].

The rejection of the binary of what one says or does not say, as the above quote seems to indicate to us and as I have introduced when dealing with Scott (1990), is that Foucault (1978) aimed to drive across the point that we are not merely dealing with silence but silences and their importance. This is shown in *Volume 2 of The History of Sexuality*, where Foucault (1985) does this by dealing with what he calls the games which permeate discourses. These 'games of truth' are studies in a context in which self is in a relationship with self, taking into context the history of the desiring subject (Here he is dealing with subjectification)[12]. Foucault (1978:100) warns us that we must not see discourse as:

[12] "[t]he games of truth and error through which being is historically constituted as experience; that is, as something that can and must be thought. What are the games of truth by which man proposes to think his own nature when he perceives himself to be mad; when he considers himself to be ill; when he conceives himself as a living, speaking, labouring being; when he judges and punishes himself as a criminal? What were the games of truth by which human beings came to see themselves as desiring individuals?" (Foucault, 1985:6-7)…

> …a series of discontinuous segments whose tactical function is neither uniform nor stable…we must not imagine a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and the dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies

Thus, sex was also a problem of truth. At the core of this ordering came the intersection of pleasure and power. Since the pleasure that results from "exercising a power that questions, monitors, watches, spies, searches out, palpates, brings to light; and on the other hand, the pleasure that kindles at having to evade this power, flee from it, fool it, or travesty. The power that lets itself be invaded by the pleasure it is pursuing…" (Foucault, 1978:45). This kind of power played itself out in peoples bodies and "were solidified in them; they were drawn out, revealed, isolated, intensified, incorporated, by multifarious" methods (Foucault, 1978:47-48). Thus, the body becomes an important site of struggle. The spirals between power and pleasure seem to suggest a game of visibility and invisibility, the possibility of invading power as one subjects themselves to power. This is different from what Scott (1990) is presenting when he brings forward the dichotomy between the public and the hidden transcript. This is due to the fact that the public is a submissive act that does not aim to make itself visible in the face of power, but in this spiral of power and pleasure cited from Foucault (1978) we see an acceptance to the monitoring, not to hide but as a form of pleasure which enables one to resist in plain sight.

To be a subject of this power- as the Western man became a confessing animal, what did he gain from this? Why did they not avoid confession and continue with their perversions in silence (outside monitoring)? This is a point that Foucault (1978) aims to show. He asks: who is to say that during the confession there were no 'previsions', which highlights the idea that the confession was also a space of pleasure - to escape the power by accepting that which the doctors, and the priests seemed to monitor for to speak was beneficial to the subject observed. Thus, to use Scott's terms, it seems that Foucault brings us a resistance that is happening in the public transcript and not the one which is hidden or spreading 'elsewhere.' One can go as far as arguing that in Foucault there is a hidden transcript, the space which existed outside the 'repressive' apparatus. Thus, there is an emerging agreement between the two authors about resistance in the public and hidden transcript; albeit Foucault suggests that if we go beyond the

light treatment of the discursive ferment, the public act of confession bares traces of a visible resistance. How? This I have shown above, that speaking of sex goes against the thesis that came to dominate that the subject of sex was repressed in the West from the seventeenth century onwards. The confession became a game of truth as well, but "[c]onfession frees, but power reduces one to silence; truth does not belong to the order of power, but shares an original affinity with freedom..." (Foucault, 1978:60) The confession gained more prominence in the nineteenth century. One question emerges throughout this reading: Is the confessing subject really free? The answer would be no; to confess is a desire for freedom but this desire is tied to a relationship with power. As Foucault (1978: 62) argues:

> ... the agency of domination does not reside in the one who speaks (for it is he who is constrained), but in the one who listens and says nothing; not in the one who knows and answers, but in the one who questions and is not supposed to know. And this discourse of truth finally takes effect, in the one who receives it, but in the one from who it is wrested. With these confessed truths, we are a long way from the learned initiations into pleasure with their technique and their mastery.

Power and Resistance

Foucault (1978: 82) reminds us that his inquiry of linking the subject of sex with power is not aimed at only theorising about power, but also dealing with how power is formed and the types of tools that will help in the analysis. This, as he shows, is one which aims to go beyond the focus of the importance of law but of seeing law as power and this power is linked to desire. "Power is essentially what dictates its law to sex. Which means first of all that sex is placed by power in a binary system: licit and illicit, permitted and forbidden" (Foucault, 1978:83). Power gives an order and again in this analytics of power, Foucault pushes us to a question of language by insisting that power acts by laying down the rule, that is to say "[I]t speaks, and that is the rule" (*ibid*). Speaking about sex in this period plays an important act in the face of power for this means "[R]enounce yourself or suffer the penalty of being suppressed; do not appear if you do not want to disappear" (*ibid*). This is a very important statement if one is interested in the question of speaking truth to power for speaking in this instance meant that one would be made visible (the act of acknowledging your sins) and at the same time this act involves disappearing

(not being recognised-for the speaker desires freedom). The one who is speaking truth to power is exposed to power as a law[13] and this means that speaking truth to power means one distances themselves from themselves and appears to disappear. Foucault (1978:84) makes this clear by arguing that "[Y]our existence will be maintained only at the cost of your nullification". The act of speaking, as Foucault (1978) shows, is not divorced from what he has termed the logic of censorship. It is best to cite Foucault (1978:84) at length here:

> But it is here that one imagines a sort of logical sequence that characterizes censorship mechanisms: it links the inexistent, the illicit and the inexpressible in such a way that each is at the same time the principle and the effect of the others: one must not talk about what is forbidden until it is annulled in reality; what is inexistent has no right to show itself, even in the order of speech where its inexistence is declared; and that which one must keep silent about is banished from reality as the thing that is tabooed above all else. The logic of power exerted on sex is tabooed above all else. The logic of power exerted on sex is the paradoxical logic of a law that might be expressed as an injunction of *nonexistence, non-manifestation, and silence* [emphasis mine].

From the above he states that his interest, when it comes to power, was not focused on a system of domination which is exerted by one group over another. Instead, he argues that we need to understand power in its "multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them…" (Foucault, 1978:92). Pages 92-95 are very important since they explain in-depth Foucault's theory of power. He sees power as being everywhere, not as a homogenous thing or tool in the hands of the bourgeoisie, the state or the dominant in society. Hence Foucault (1978) goes beyond the relationship between economic structures and state apparatus to an idea of everyday life[14] by focusing on the prisoners, the mad, the "abnormal," and the sexual minorities to show the omnipresence of power.

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[13] This involves a "legislative power on side, and an obedient subject on the other." Expressed in this manner we see the "citizen opposite the state, the child opposite the parent, or the disciple opposite the master. A legislative power on one side, and an obedient subject on the other (Foucault, 1978: 85)

[14] See Zamora, D. 2014. "Can We Criticize Foucault," *Jacobin Magazine*, https://www.jacobinmag.com/2014/12/foucault-interview/ , Date Accessed, 16/12/14.

Seeing power as coming from everywhere and as involving manifold relations, he also argues that where there is power "there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (1978: 95). Given that, the subject matter of this essay is the question of resistance, a question then arises: 'does this mean that if one is interested in resistance one cannot imagine a condition of resistance without factoring power?' If one employs Foucault, the answer would be that resistance only exists where there is power. Then what does it mean to resist? After a careful reading of the question of resistance in Foucault (Vol. 1, 2, 3, and on *The Subject and Power* (1982), and in *Discipline and Punish* (1995)) it is clear that Foucault (1978: 95-96) sees resistance in its multiplicity, as much as he sees power as being omnipresent. This can be seen where he argues that:

> …there is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead there is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case: resistances that are possible, necessary, improbable; others that are spontaneous, sage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial; by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations.

One can go as far as making a case for everyday life to be seen as an important sphere in understanding the heterogeneous forms of resistance as they confront the omnipresence of power. Those who are interested in the big moments, the rapturous moments that change the movement of history, will be disappointed if they read Foucault the way I did. However, this is not to say that Foucault negates the idea of a big rupture or a revolution, as I have shown above. He argues that it is doubtless that the "strategic codification of these points of resistance…make a revolution possible" (Foucault, 1978:96).

The Subject and the language of resistance in the colonial state.

From the above it is clear that I have taken Foucault's (1982) idea of subjection into much consideration. In his case he was dealing with how humans "are made subjects" and also how a human being "turns himself into a subject" (Foucault, 1982: 777-778). In the above section I dealt mostly with Volume 1, and did not go to Volume 2, *The Use of Pleasure* and Volume 3,

The Care of the Self (as he sees the care of the self as the practice of freedom) (see Foucault, 1985; 1986). I dealt with volume one because in the other volumes he deals mostly with how sexual behaviour came to be seen as a domain of moral experience in the Greek world and late antiquity (see Foucault, 1985; 1986). The areas he focuses on are the body (from self-control (symphonises and enkrateia/ ascesis/askesis), diet, exercise, the problematisation of pleasure), the wife, relations with boys, and truth. In these other volumes, the idea presented is a history of ethics and ascetics involving forms of moral subjectivation and practices of the self which are meant to ensure one's commitment to self (Foucault, 1985). While these may be important, their approach on ethics is tangential to what I have been aiming to do so far, which is to deal with the subject of resistance. How does this subject speak or how is this subject made to speak in the literature, or even silenced? This line of reasoning can also be found in the works of Edward W. Said (2003) on *Orientalism* and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's (1994) *Can the Subaltern Speak* which drew from the work of Said (2003:15) who was interested in the idea of how the Orient was represented, asking "[W]hat other sorts of intellectual, aesthetic, scholarly, and cultural energies went into the making of an imperialist tradition like the Orientalist one?"

Foucault (1982:781) gives two meanings of the word ""subject": subject *to someone else by control and dependence*; and tied to his own identity by a conscience of self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to" [emphasis mine]. Thus subjection cannot, according to Foucault (1982), be studied outside the mechanisms of domination and exploitation. This then brings us to his next explanation of when this power, that subjugates, is exercised. He states that this power is exercised "only over free subjects… By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments, may be realized" (Foucault, 1982: 790).

In any case, one needs to read Foucault with caution because he is dealing with Western forms of subjectivity and if one is trying to study the Other of Europe or the non-Western world, one needs to go beyond this individual subjectification (Spivak, 1994; Chatterjee, 1997; Mignolo,

2009). As Spivak (1994:90) argues, what remains useful in the works of Foucault for those who are interested in presenting a non-Western perspective is how he deals with "mechanics of disciplinarization and institutionalization, the constitution, as it were, of the colonizer. [However]… [he] does not relate it to any version, early or late, proto-or post-of imperialism" (Spivak, 1994: 90). What Spivak (1994:86) suggests is that "to buy [into this]… self-contained version of the West is to ignore its production by the imperialist project."

This then brings us to his explanation of when this power that subjugates is exercised. He states that this power is exercised "only over free subjects" and this relationship with power and the resistance of freedom to submit are interwoven" (Foucault, 1982:790). If one were to adopt this way of responding, when applied to the non-Western world, it is ontologically and methodologically problematic. This is because the history of the non-Western being does not start with a free subject who goes through the enlightenment epoch to claim his individual freedom; instead it is one which goes through different oppressive social formations from slavery, colonialism, and then later capitalism. If we use the antagonism of concepts then we will have to study the subjugated subject to understand what we mean by freedom from a standpoint of a non-Western world. This is visible in most scholarship that studies resistance through violence ala Fanon (2005); another view which is presented when studying resistance is through violence which can be found in the book edited by Abbink, Bruijn, and Walraven (2003) on *Rethinking resistance: Revolt and violence in African history*. Violence and resistance become concepts that seek to fill and reach that which is missing (which is freedom) in the colonial context, to that which is restrictive, that is colonial power in this instance. Thus, we are turned to the "violence of resistance" as "a rejoinder to the violence of colonialism" (Gordon, 2014:1; Fanon, 2005, Abbink et al., 2003; Hunt, 2016, Scott, 1999). To document the internalised violence of the colonial state in the Black body, Fanon (2005) turns to psychoanalysis to show us that the colonised is always dreaming of running or swimming, which can be interpreted as a yearning for freedom. In this situation as Fanon (2005:4) argues, the domination is naked:

> We have seen how the government's agent uses a language of pure violence. The agent does not alleviate oppression or mask domination. He displays and demonstrates them with the clear

> conscience of the law enforcer, and brings violence into the homes and minds of the colonized subject

The colonised subject is always a "figure of lack" (Chakrabarty, 1992:6). This figure of lack is captured in subjecthood, not citizenship and this lack can be seen in the justification of colonialism as a civilising or modernising mission of the benevolent European. Seen from this stand point it is clear that the conquered subject remains a child in the eyes of the conqueror (Chakrabarty, 1992). Just like the child, they need to learn from the parent and hence in some cases the fixation with language and speaking. To be assumed incapable of speaking is to be infantilised. The colonised subject is a subject who requires eternal tutelage as she/he is lacking (Chatterjee, 1986). To speak is an important act if one reads the history of the colonised from this perspective. But more importantly the question becomes 'how does one speak?' Does one speak from the position of 'lack' or from a position that seeks to substitute "one 'species' of mankind by another." (Fanon, 2005:1) To be able to speak and express this desire for freedom, as the chapter by Fanon in *On Violence* (in *the Wretched of the Earth*) shows, violence is seen as a political tool to be used by the oppressed to overthrow colonialism. Here then the language of resistance is overt revolutionary violence against the colonial state. Thus, decolonisation as he posits is a violent process (Fanon, 2005). Decolonisation's "… natural rhythm into existence, [is] introduced by new men, and *with it a new language* and a new humanity [emphasis mine]" (Fanon, 2005: 28). In Cooper's (1994) formulation, it is clear that Fanon is focusing on resistance with a big/ capitalised *R* which means he is focusing on the big moments that bring revolutionary change in society. The language of this Resistance then is posited within the concept of violence. As I have noted, those who focus on the everyday do not turn us to a focus on big moments; instead they look more closely at the day to day of the everyday. Thus, my question can then be reformulated to mean: 'does everyday resistance have a language?'

The Speaking Subject and The silent intellectual: studying the everyday through silences, speaking without using speech or language?

Spivak (1994:70) draws on Marx to criticise Foucault and Deleuze (1972) mostly on their discussion of the Western Subject and their lack of understanding of "representation as 'speaking for,' as in politics and representation as 're-presentation, as in art or philosophy" (Spivak, 1994: 70). She goes on to argue that since theory is "also only 'action', the theoretician does not represent (speak for) the oppressed group" (Spivak, 1994: 70). Spivak (1994) puts the idea of speaking at the centre of her analysis and yet at the same time takes the idea of representation away from the theoretician to ask if the oppressed or, in her case, if the subaltern can speak? This line of reasoning can be found in Said (2003:21) who had argued, when looking at the idea of representation, that [T]he exteriority of the representation is always governed by some version of the truism that if the Orient could represent itself, it would; since it cannot, the representation does the job, for the West." In Said (2003:21), the West had come to represent a certain discourse of the Orient, where it exists in exteriority, made to speak, rendered "plain for and to the West." Just like Said (2003), Spivak (1994) argues that it is Marx who can aid us when looking at the idea of representation, particularly the text on the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. She argues that Marx sharpens the contrast that was not well grasped by Foucault and Deleuze (1972) since the concepts of representation and re-presentation can be read as a difference between a "proxy and a portrait" (Spivak, 1994:71). In this contrast lies the idea of speaking and how we read the act of speaking, especially in the constructed Other of Europe (Spivak, 1994) Spivak (1994:70) citing Deleuze (in conversation with Foucault, 1972) argues that:

> …the person who speaks and acts… is always a multiplicity', no theorizing intellectual… [or] party or … union' can represent 'those who act and struggle… *Are those who act and struggle mute, as opposed to those who act and speak*?... The binary of leftist intellectuals' lists of self-knowing, politically canny subalterns stands revealed; representing them, the intellectuals represent themselves as transparent [emphasis added].

The ideas presented above by Spivak (1994) are not only epistemologically important, but they can be stretched as far as being methodologically important. Since she does not only try to show

how intellectuals have presented themselves as transparent through theory; I might also add that they present themselves as silent, in a sense. They bestow to theory its interpretative power and do not see themselves as acting agents who are also speaking through theory as they study those who act and struggle and those who act and speak. Spivak (1994:69) would also see the everyday as important, but she argues that "[T]he unrecognized contradiction within a position that valorizes the concrete experience of the oppressed, while being so uncritical about the historical role of the intellectual" needs to be read critically. This is covered very well as she argues against presenting a homogenous view when studying everyday life and how intellectuals need to learn how to represent themselves in this encounter since:

> …there are people whose consciousness we cannot grasp if we close off our benevolence by constructing a homogenous Other referring only to our own place in the seat of the Same or the Self. Here are subsistence farmers, unorganized peasant labo[u]r, the tribals and the communities of zero workers on the street or in the countryside. To confront them is not to represent (*vertreten*) them but to learn to represent (*darstellen*) ourselves. (Spivak, 1994:84)

Spivak (1994: 71) aids my formulation since she brings the question of when do we understand or under which conditions do the "oppressed subjects speak, act and know *for themselves*"? From this reading it would seem that Spivak (1994:77) is shifting us to the silence within the intellectual as an important starting point; since it is intellectuals in most cases who are interested in representation- the proxy and are engaged in the silencing or what she calls the epistemic violence which has heterogeneously "constitute[d] the colonial subject as other". Spivak (1994) does not shun the role of the intellectual since she shows this by looking at the subaltern group with its thinkers like Guha who drew on Foucault, Marx, and Gramsci. She argues that:

> For the 'true' subaltern group, whose identity is its difference, there is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself; the intellectual's solution is not to abstain from representation. The problem is that the subject's itinerary has not been traced so as to offer an object of seduction to the representing intellectual (Spivak, 1994:80).

In asking, "Can the subaltern speak? And can the subaltern (as woman) speak?" (Spivak, 1994:92-104) reaches a conclusion that given that Western theory or the reliance on Western theory has led many into the idea of representation (the proxy), then the "[T]he subaltern cannot speak… Representation has not withered away." I find this text important in addressing the questions I have set when looking at Scott's (1990) work since at the core of this is how do we document the portrait (re-presentation as an art) of the oppressed; while at the same time being aware of our own silences. Thus, while we show the silence in the everyday life of the oppressed (representation through theory as an act of speaking for), we must not fail to step back as intellectuals and ponder upon our own silences (the portrait of the intellectual).

In presenting the complexity of the portrait (re-presentation as art), Spivak (1994) presents the example of Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri. The story of Bhaduri, for the interest of this study, presents a very critical moment to the questions I have raised previously about language, speech, and silence. Perhaps citing the story in length will aid my argument here:

> A young woman of sixteen or seventeen, Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri hanged herself in her father's modest apartment in North Calcutta in 1925. The suicide was a puzzle since, as Bhuvaneswari was menstruating at the time, it was clearly not a case of illicit pregnancy. Nearly a decade later, it was discovered that she was a member of one of the many groups involved in the armed struggle for Indian independence. She had finally been entrusted with a political assassination. Unable to confront the task and yet aware of the practical need for trust, she killed herself. Bhuvaneswari had known that her death would be diagnosed as the outcome of illegitimate passion. She had therefore waited for the onset of menstruation.

For me the case of Bhaduri is a case in which her act of suicide, a form of resistance, cannot be read as a silent act and yet at the same time she was speaking without using language. However, Spivak (1994) in the text leaves this act as open ended to avoid what she has been criticising, the idea of trying to present a clear consciousness of the subaltern or to make the subaltern speak or giving voice to the voiceless. This act is in conversation with the French intellectuals she has cited in the text and is also an act of going against the dominant ideology of *sati* (going against

patriarchal views from the West with 'white men saving brown women from brown men'), going against the construction of the "homogenous 'Indian'" (Spivak, 1994: 101).

Epistemic Silence: What the work cannot say!

If we follow the argument so far, we realise that the intellectual is at the core of the production of silence and this production of silence in writing is that which falls in the domain of epistemic violence, according to Spivak (1994). Under the rubric of objectivity (detachment/distance from the subject of study), the intellectual presents themselves in the writing as if they are not present. Trouillot's (1995) *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* offers a luminous retelling of the Haitian revolution and how it complicated the philosophers' understanding of slavery and the slaves' yearning for freedom (movement towards freedom). Trouillot (1995) reminds us that the philosophers and writers of the time (during the revolution and after) had been so enmeshed in their understanding of Renaissance and Enlightenment that they could not grasp how the figure that is not a man could express a desire for freedom. This question of how a slave could violently fight for its freedom reflected a deficiency in their tools of analysis; thence they resorted to silencing this period (silencing the past) or spoke of it as that which was merely an impossibility and argued that this figure of lack, the slave, could not understand and express freedom unless there are French intellectuals or other forces involved in the revolution (Trouillot, 1995). Trouillot's (1995) analysis shows that within the silence lies the connection between philosophy and slavery; how philosophers were implicated in the perpetuation/justification of slavery and because of this, they never imagined that one day slaves will demand that which was only accorded to the free man. This form of silence is responsible for the silencing of the past since the agency of the subaltern only gets read through the cannon which silenced it. This line of reasoning was one which Said (2003:13) emphasised through a reading of Harry Bracken that "philosophers will conduct their discussion of Locke, Hume, and empiricism without ever taking into account that there is an explicit connection in these classic writers between their "philosophic" doctrines and racial theory, justifications of slavery, or arguments for colonial exploitations." Here is epistemic violence at play, the silence of the intellectual that was grounded in their understanding of the concept of MAN and SCIENCE and those that did not exist under such tools could not reach a kind of subjectivity that desires freedom and therefore

they needed to be governed, kept in bondage, and exploited (Mignolo, 2009; Maldonado-Torres, 2007). Thus, when tools of analysis are inadequate the intellectual either resorts to their archaeology of knowledge (which presents itself as objective since it "pretends it has no geo-determinations" (Spivak, 1994: 66) or simply silences the Other. In their silence, they are ready to show the impossibility of certain moments. What am I trying to do here? I am articulating how silence and epistemic violence in the writings of the intellectual are linked to the standpoint the intellectual claims. In claiming a standpoint, the intellectual takes on an invisibility blanket and this blanket helps in their disappearance in silence. Indeed the cannon saw the problems from a European perspective, for their world was Europe and the rest of the world to them is still Europe (Adésínà, 2006). To read, for example, Foucault in conversation with Deleuze (1972), one gets a sense of two white European male figures praising their achievements and their power of clairvoyance in predicting their societies and to charge them of epistemic violence and their failure of seeing the non-Western other is to make a futile plea.

Spivak also uses the work of Macherey (1978) and in her essay her focus is on what the conversation between Foucault and Deleuze (1972) refuses to say; that is its ideological refusal. Was Spivak not premature to accuse Foucault and Deleuze of epistemic violence only? In her essay, she was accusing them from the standpoint that aimed to show how they have been accusing others. She follows the formula of her interlocutors without factoring the possibility of an impossibility of application in Other terrains. Then her critique acts as a salvation instead of a betrayal. She seeks to make her interlocutors phenomenologically hear- the voice of the other in them. The discursive method, we have realised, speaks to the question of silences in the said and written! Was it not epistemic silence, the language of the discursive method? Yet, the biggest silence is that the authors analysed by Spivak could not speak about other geographical terrains because they did not really believe they had anything to contribute in the particular problem they had been discussing… Yes, it does become epistemic violence to those who see the problem from this abstraction: knowledge + power + body = regimes of truth. It is a violence for those who hear the formula/ equation will ask -whose knowledge, -whose power, -whose body, and -whose truth. Therefore, this uses the same method as the one critiqued since it hopes that the European thinker will be able to transcend their ethnocentrism. If we seek to extend the hand of

salvation to Foucault (or the Western Canon) we might get an answer that says: 'my work has been focusing on Europe.' Epistemic violence is always linked to epistemic silence. We cannot speak of violence without factoring its desired outcome, that of silence. Thus, to see violence on its own is to seek to remedy it without understanding its continuity when the blood is no longer on the scene. Instead; to push forward the silences of such knowledge we need not ask who's what; but as a point of departure the focus, as Macherey (1978) argues, should also be what the work cannot say. That is epistemic silence! Cannot say, is a matter of acknowledging that a particular knowledge cannot be saved no matter how hard we may try to ensure that it hears the voice of the Other; that its silences are its shame and can no longer bother those who seek to theorise Otherwise. For to invest in showing the violence of the episteme of the West is to seek to bring it to a salvation it does not want to entertain, the face of the non-Western Other. There are certain things that our 'great thinkers' cannot say and will not be able to say; while others will accuse them of othering or silencing the past or engaging in epistemic violence. Mignolo (2009:4) speaks of how to unveil the epistemic silences of the Western epistemology.

> My humble claim is that geo- and body-politics of knowledge has been hidden from the self-serving interests of Western epistemology and that a task of de-colonial thinking is the unveiling of epistemic silences of Western epistemology and affirming the epistemic rights of the racially devalued, and de-colonial options to allow the silences to build arguments to confront those who take 'originality' as the ultimate criterion for the final judgment

The concept of epistemic silence moves beyond delinking or some kind of epistemic disobedience (i.e. disobeying the cannon ala Mignolo, 2009), that is to say it does not say that since the cannon has universalised itself through epistemic violence; those of us who have been misread by the knowing subject of the West need to delink from this knowledge. Instead the concept of epistemic silence, for me, must first acknowledge that each author will silence certain things based on their location but at the same time, epistemic silence also shows the incapability of the author to speak beyond their nakedness. Each act of academic writing is a political project concerned with how each generation based on their skin colour, their gender, and their location in the world aimed to address its problems. Indeed the canon saw the problems from a European perspective. Hence, moving with epistemic silence and being aware of the project of writing, we

then realise that the posture is that which is no longer interested in pointing out the wrongs nor engaging them (to bring them to salvation they do not desire); but moves from an understanding that the order of ordering the world by the West is that which has silenced many of its discomforts, these are issues related to race, freedom, culture, land, gender, knowledge (epistemology), ontology, and even eschatology (to name a few). What is this silence; the question still stands…?

Silence as the Ultimate Paradox of Power

Silence is the ultimate paradox of power. On the one hand, it is a condition of freedom, a choice made whereby we express our multiform resistance. And on the other hand, the idea that "silence means consent" is a method used in producing a condition of silenced silence, by power. It is a method used to prevent the emergence of subversive subjectivity or to entirely erase subjectivity. Once the silence is silent (an act of producing a silenced subject), your mechanism of expression has been revoked, producing the counter action of 'speaking truth to power!' In the instance where silence means consent, it means we can be told to be silent; with silence being interpreted as consent (on the part of power) or resistance (on the part of the subject). To Foucault, the act of speaking involves the speakers benefit; to someone who understands the multiplicity of power we may need to extend the notion of the speakers benefit and deal with the subject who holds their tongue deliberately. Thus, can we really interpret silence? Moreover, without understanding the silentors (she/he who is silent) benefit?

One wonders how Foucault's *Confession of the Flesh* would read. Was he going to go into the visceral and how it comes to occupy politics and in turn thwarting a deeper understanding of the self and its relation to truth? Was it going to be a problematisation of modes of subjection where the Western subject comes to truth because of a particular affiliation, a cult or way of life since the individual comes to perceive themselves as heirs of a particular tradition? In turn, seeing truth as a game in which power gets accessed-like in politics where individuals in opposition parties speak truth in order to expose the blatant use of power by the ruling party? This speaking of truth by the opposition is also intended to access power. It would seem that it is only in

collective politics, where speaking truth to power is appreciated, where truth is only seen as a goal to power instead of a relationship with the self. Therefore, to speak truth is to enter into a relationship with self and this relationship is ethical (as Foucault argues see 1983).[15]

In the six lectures given at the University of California at Berkeley on *Discourse and Truth: the Problematization of Parrhesia*, Foucault's (1983) philosophical stance goes deeper into this relationship between truth, silence, and power. I would argue that as much as it is argued that *Volume 1* of *The History of Sexuality* pronounces Foucault as a theorist of resistance (see Oksala, 2014)- the lectures distinguish him as a philosopher whose view of his world, or what is known as the genealogical method, allows for a tracing of the importance of the relationship that self has with self, hence the use of the Greek concept of "epimeleia heautou", the "care of the self" which he names the last volume of *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault, 1983:35). The genealogical method is not a history of ideas (preoccupied with the emergence of a particular idea in historical texts), but a history of thought, defined as a "history of the way people begin to take care of something, of the way they become anxious about this or that" (Foucault, 1983: 28). This method is then extended to the word parrhesia.

Let us delve into Foucault's focus on the word parrhesia and why it may help us understand the spoken in the silent or why holding one's tongue is regarded as powerful[16], as well as the confrontation between truth (read as a relationship with self) and power. Foucault (1983) indicates that the word parrhesia broadly appears in the Greek literature from the end of the fourth and fifth century BC, albeit it does appear in the fourth and fifth century AD. Etymologically, parrhesiazesthai means "to say everything from "pan" (everything) and "rhema" (that which is said)" (Foucault, 1983). The parrhesiastes is one who says what is on their mind and does not conceal anything. Therefore, parrhesia reflects the relationship between what the

[15] The critics of Foucault have argued that his understanding of ethics is a methodological individualist project or bourgeois since it gives too much rationality to the individual and understands freedom from the point of view of the individual (see Macey, 1993) if that is the case one can also associate his ideas with Rand's (1961) objectivist ethics. Others have warned that the acolytes of Foucault have committed themselves to a blind solipsism and to a work that is "devoid of women" and is irresponsible (Paglia, 1998: internet source; Paglia, 1991).

[16] From the position of power as you will see in his reading of Apollo's silence

speaker believes in and what they say (Foucault, 1983). Foucault (1983:2) explicates this relationship between what the speaker says and what they believe in as a particular relationship where the speaker is the subject of the enunciation and at the same time, the grammatical subject of the enounced or the subject of enunciadum; meaning that the speaker is a subject of their opinions. “The specific “speech activity” of the parrhesiastic enunciation thus takes the form “I am the one who thinks this and that”” (Foucault, 1983:2). If we read into this relationship deeper, then we see that the one who speaks is always interested in their interlocutor (even phenomenology reminds us of this-Levinas, 1969; Derrida, 1973). However, the parrhesiastes in most cases does not possess power; so the parrhesiastes is an individual who is below their superiors, like a student vs the professor, the president vs the citizen or the king vs the subject/advisor. The word parrhesia involves frankness, some sort of danger (since one is speaking to their superiors and going against power), duty (since the one who speaks feels it is their duty to speak), criticism (the ability to criticise other people, as well as self-criticism), and it is always in relation to one’s freedom (Foucault, 1983). So, parrhesia is that relationship between truth and power; truth and freedom. Truth then is always in a relationship with power (Deere, 2014). Does power possess the ability to speak truth or is it merely a receptor of truth? In this relationship we see that truth is able to make power since speaking truth to power allows for power to change its direction. Is truth power since truth is able to make power or given that power is able to allow truth? It would seem that in this relationship power is always in need of truth as he argues that “power without limitation is directly related to madness. The man who exercises power is wise only insofar as there exists someone who can use parrhesia to criticize him, thereby putting some limit to his power, to his command.” (Foucault, 1983:9). Where is silence in this relationship? How frank is frankness. These are the questions that this section seeks to zero in on.

The act of speaking truth to power or the one who speaks truth to power is always interested in shaping the fate of their interlocutor and in this it is clear that truth is invested in power. For all of this to be possible, there is a need for what he calls the parrhesiastic contract where:

> The sovereign, the one who has power but lacks the truth, addresses himself to the one who has the truth but lacks power, and tells him: if you tell me the truth, no matter what this truth turns out

> to be, you won't be punished; and those who are responsible for any injustices will be punished, but not those who speak the truth about such injustices… As the kings servant, the messenger is still quite vulnerable, and still takes a risk in speaking. But, although he is courageous, he is also not reckless, and is cautious about the consequences of what he might say. The "contract" is intended to limit the risk he takes in speaking (Foucault, 1983:10).

The contract then falls under what, somewhere else, he describes as 'games of truth' where the self enters into a relationship with the self (the subject of truth telling) and the one who is supposed to hear the truth. For example: through his focus on the play by Euripides (1819) *Ion,* one begins to appreciate the relationship between truth and silence. As the Truth shifts from the god Apollo (since he is known as the god of truth and prophecy) to Creus and Ion, we realise that silence is also a space of truth that is never spoken. This is where power is incapable of speaking truth (that is to Foucault, 1983) and truth rests in the tongues of mortals through misunderstanding, a different kind of discourse intended to unravel the silence so that truth is discovered. In the play, Apollo raped Creus, and she gave birth to a son Ion and she left him in the cave where Apollo had raped her. She thought that the creatures of the wild devoured Ion (Euripides, 1819; Foucault, 1983). Ion is then rescued by Apollo's brother (Hermes) and brought up in the temple of Delphi where he becomes Apollo's 'servant'. This silence is disturbed when years later Creus comes to the temple with her husband Xuthus who seeks to enquire from Apollo if they will have children (since Creus is near a period where she cannot bear children). When the play begins, it is narrated by Hermes revealing his brothers act/silence/shame and his role in that which is about to transpire (Euripides, 1819). One wonders why Foucault does not begin from the moment when truth is revealed by one of the god's, Hermes, and how at this particular moment power is speaking truth. Why does the play begin with Hermes and his confession to us the audience and what does it say about the truth that is about to transpire in the silence as the mother meets the son for the first time and as Xuthus is duped to loving a son he has long desired, but not his? In the dialogue between Ion and Cereus, do we not hear the silent truth that is concealed in both parties, one seeking to confess to this servant of the god, and a servant who does not know his identity wishing for the love of the mother, sharing Creus's pain? At the same time as the Chorus asks "Speech?-silence?-what is it that we should do?" (Euripides, 1819:77). This is at the core of the play, which Foucault is also aware of, and this is the

exploration of this work (speaking truth to power). These may come across as trivial details, but if one is interested in the games of truth, how is it possible that in his reading of this play, the games of truth, played by all parties involved in the play, are not mentioned; instead we arrive at parrhesia only through two individuals, Creusa and Ion, and we see Apollo's silence taking form in Xuthus recognition of Ion as a son ("Ion- set eye on him then first then forsoot", Euripides, 1819: 83). What about Hermes? In his analyses he implicitly gives power a mythical violence (Benjamin, 1986), a justice never to be had by mortals who are also seeking to ensure the continuity of law (since they believe Apollo will speak truth). If we proceed in this manner, we realise much deeper the silence that is violent in Apollo's prophecy, that makes even the truth to go beyond parrhesia, a demand for justice by the mortals, an impossibility it might seem. This is my stretching of the play; at the same time, it reveals Foucault's one-sided mission of revealing how truth is spoken and it is here that we get to unravel his silence on the many matters, for example: how is it that truth comes to the fore through women who were wronged? This is a subject, which might be pursued in-depth elsewhere by minds interested in the female figure and truth. This is a question which might also be read deeper in the work of Euripides, for example: the anger Electra expresses towards her mother Clytemnestra after murdering Agamemnon and guarantees Electra that she will not be punished if she expresses herself - this is masqueraded as a conversation between mother (queen) and daughter (a slave as well) and the daughter's desire to speak and know the truth; this also tells us a lot about the question of anger (the feeling of being wronged) in demand of truth. However, Foucault (1983:11) only sees this interaction as a moment in which the parrhesiastic contract, entered into by Clytemnestra and Electra, became "a subversive trap for Clytemnestra" since after her confession she is murdered as well. In defining parrhesia, as mentioned, his interest seems to be on frankness, duty, criticism and the most important aspect is freedom. To show the importance of these concepts he has related them in the sphere of politics, rhetoric, and philosophy. In this, we realise the following blind spot: how is it possible that we can speak of the act of speaking truth without speaking of the question of justice? In the plays he explores, we realise how anger is a product of an injustice that is never spoken (silenced/silent in the play) and therefore for the individuals to realise their freedom they come to speak in order to address an injustice committed. This reading of the Greek literature by Foucault reveals a particular interest of his, which is the interest of the body and truth and which is read as the question of the self and freedom (even power gets seen as that which thwarts one's

ability to achieve that self-mastery) and this is predicated on the physical and with the question of self-mastery or the care of the self expressed in how self-mastery is the ultimate freedom one can achieve (from Socrates to the Stoics).

In analysing *Ion,* Foucault (1983: 39) argues that what we see is the "problematization of parrhesia in the form of a game between logos, truth, and genos (birth) in the relations between the gods and mortals; and Ion's parrhesiastic role was grounded in a mythical genealogy descended from Athens". In the space of political institution what we observe in the play is the problematisation of parrhesia involving "a game between logos, truth, and nomos (law); and the parrhesiastes was needed to disclose those truths which would ensure the salvation of welfare of the city" (Foucault, 1983: 39). In the above musings on the play, my intention is to reveal a much deeper concern in Foucault's analysis and at the same time its silences (that which it cannot say). Rather than seeing the importance of parrhesia, here we also observe Foucault's (1983) interests in discovering the importance of silence or of making silence speak or the inability of power to speak truth. This is the much salient point throughout the lectures. In all the lectures what we can observe is how, from a textual reading, Foucault aims to offer an analysis of the act of speaking (and this continued interest in silence). Of the text, we get no clearer sense of how pain itself, is the force for speaking truth. One can read this pain when Creus tries to open up to Ion about her circumstances of giving birth and the birth of the son –that she "and that cave know a deed of shame" (Euripides, 1819: 31) and later when asking Ion about his mother… Ion responds that given that he does not know the whereabouts of his parents perhaps he is a product of a "woman's wrong" (Euripides, 1819: 35). The silence is also present in the mortals since the wronged woman seeks truth from power and realises that power is incapable of granting truth and therefore is forced to speak truth to Ion otherwise (since she claims that she seeks to speak to Phoebus/Apollo on behalf of her friend) and show the silence of Phoebus. So, does this mean that silence is the forte of power? To Foucault (1983) Creus enables the silence to speak through her emotional breakdown as her husband Xuthus is granted their son with Apollo, Ion as his (which is the lie the god of truth tells- in his silence). As he argues that "[T]ruth thus comes to light as emotional reaction to the god's injustice and his lies" (Foucault, 1983: 20). Following his logic, when confronted with the possibility of truth it seems that power either has two options,

namely, to allow for truth to exist, or to go into a mode of silence which means that in its silence it either lies to prevent the mission of truth or its lie is a reflection of some silence. What about the role of Hermes?! Foucault's defence (Foucault, 1983: 64) is that throughout the lectures his "intention was not to deal with the problem of truth, but the problem of truth-teller or truth-telling as an activity." Yet, he has silenced a lot of activity in the play to only focus on the importance of parrhesia and where one is born, to whom they are born (a slave or free woman), etc. His defence might be that his was to provide an apercu of this activity of truth telling and therefore, I am pushing it to terrains he had not intended to venture into in his ephemeral reading of the texts. My intention here is to offer a theory of criticism of the author which seeks to critique the author on their silences, using the method in which they have criticised others, and apply it to their own work. This is expounded in the concept of epistemic silence. Is it possible to repeat the author to the point that the text cannot reproduce itself, rendering us in that space where the text itself cannot defend itself after it reads itself to itself?

My interest in that which is raised from the above stems from a genuine frustration and an intention to understand silence and at the same time to understand why certain classes are capable of protesting or speaking truth to power and others 'choose' silence. The word choose, is in quotation marks because one seeks to understand if silence is a choice. This is a point that is reflected in the quotes that follow (see section on **What about those who do not want to speak?**) and the difficulty of making others speak or of observing people silence themselves. This, perhaps as the essay on the question of method does, is a methodological question that needs to go deep into understanding not only why certain people resist or keep silent, but if it is possible that there are those who do not want to speak… if they do not want to speak does that mean that the social science student who is interested in finding out what lies below the silence is doomed to failure? Are we to understand the world or study it only through what exists in the said- a form of positivistic empiricism that only assumes that the empirical is the spoken or the accounted for mathematically? Or are we also to acknowledge that even in the said there is always the unsaid. The latter proposes the possibility that in the said there is always the unsaid which is possible to read (still moving towards the evidence-based method). Discourse analyses textually or even in the field of literary studies yields greater outcomes, for the text does not

speak back (cannot defend itself-Derrida,1973) and at the same time we are reminded that reading is poaching (De Certeau, 1984), a poaching that involves an extraction from the silences of the text. While noting these concerns, my other interest is in the author's conceptual relations to the subject they study. The focus, from the above so far has been on the question of the textual silence that which remains silent in what we read. This is what was discussed when I delved into the problem of what Spivak called epistemic violence where I posited a different argument putting forward the idea of epistemic silence, that which the author or the text cannot say and will be incapable of saying. For me, dealing with epistemic silence is liberatory, for I am not only providing criticism (as Macherey, 1978 has shown that criticism stems also from the acceptance of the work), but to indicate the incapability of any work to say what I want to say, meaning that there is a contribution to be made by what I am saying even though the work is still located within what it reads, but as a point of departure from the number of silences in the works that one has dealt with.

The Mute Always Speak

Motsemme (2004:910) on the *Mute Always Speak: On the women's silences at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC]*, seeks to deal with the question of how social science can be able to read silence since it has invested in "reading speech and action". This continues within the trend of teasing out the utility of silence, that is to say how can researchers utilise silence to construct a different discourse. Her method however is not clear in the paper, but she moves with the supposition that the reader knows how she was able to attain the different voices that she cites, but one can surmise that her work is a reading of archival transcripts of the TRC. Her navigational question is (Motsemme, 2004: 910):

> …what happens when those who have been denied the occasion to tell their stories, and whose bodies and cultures have been systematically violated and dehumanized, discover that there are things that remain unspeakable? In a society that regards articulation as primary to formulate meaning and structure interactions, what do social science theory and analysis have to say about these moments that some individuals and communities experience?

One can also locate her thinking within the Foucauldian understanding of speaking and silence to show that within the spoken lies that which is not spoken (silence) and speaking or not speaking is seen as a commitment to a certain kind of self. Within silence lies an agency. She indicates that her thinking needs to be located within the Black feminist project. She argues that Black feminism has been able to show the importance behind the idea of breaking the silence where those who have been silenced (the women) have been able to speak from a position of defiance and through this process have been able to find healing, sanity, dignity and the possibility to reclaim selfhood (Motsemme, 2004). In chorus with this view, she aims to broaden it and show that women's silence has meaning and purpose and in many cases the silence speaks and its language is resistance. For Motsemme (2004:919) the "idea of silence as resistance forces us to abandon stable continuous and coherent notions of resistance, and instead adopt explanations that take into account that fragmentation and discontinuity are also vital components to the landscape of women's resistance to oppressive forms of power." How does this silence resist? In the context of apartheid where the emphasis on violence in the TRC was that which aimed to deal with the vertical violence- a violence that was unleashed by the state on those it governed (Hamber and Kibble, 1999; Hamber, 2000) - silence then can be seen as a means to protect (secrecy), as it was the case during apartheid were women would conceal information from police regarding the whereabouts of their family members. Silence was a survival strategy where women would employ it to ensure that certain societal values hold and prevent the loss of "innocence for children who lived in a violent everyday", for example when gunshots would be heard at night and in the morning it would not be spoken about in front of the children (Motsemme, 2004: 921). In conditions where the violence seeks to reduce the other into a space of non-being, silence became a site of coping and reconstituting one's self and women would do this through prayer, as she cites the case of Ma Ngewu who even after her son was killed by the police her candle of prayer was always burning. From Motsemme's (2004) contribution we can surmise that to read silence is to be able to see resistance in conditions of violence and when there are no voices raised it does not mean that people are not resisting and resistance may not take the form of seeking to destabilise power, but instead to build a self that power has tried to destabilise. This is a different kind of resistance where it is not expressed in the hidden transcript (for mothers tried to conceal the everyday violence of the apartheid state in their houses), but deals with a much deeper question, that of a construction of self. In reading Motsemme (2004)

we see that her work is a political project that seeks to show that silence itself is a voice, a voice that aims to build a self, in a world where the self is under threat.

What about those who keep silent? What about those who prefer not to speak?

> *"… There is certain information I cannot divulge to you as a worker in this farm. Even right now as I speak to you there is a lot I can tell you, but there is a lot you can miss because you are not from here…" (Victor* Fieldwork interview1, 01/04/12)*

> *"Whenever I had asked them about their working conditions and issues of wages they always wiped their mouths as if to silence themselves… Followed by ngizothini (what will I say) or you will not be able to understand it… From this there was a lot of silence and it frustrates me because I am failing to tap into it" (Nkosi, 31/03/2012; Fieldwork notes)*

The two quotes, at the time, revealed my commitment to the idea that within silence(s) rests the ability of the researcher to make their participants speak. It aimed to show that the mute or the muted speak. At the same time, interested in uncovering how they became mute or why they silence themselves. From the above, I had intended to proceed in a particular way, that is to go and work on a farm so that I can be able to hear the private transcript and also be "from there", to be part of the community of farmworkers, to unearth the silence and give it expression as well as to ""to go behind" dialogue in ordinary language" (McCarthy, 1985:272). From this expression, the intention was to link the literature I have dealt with, to show that silence does speak and the language of silence is resistance. Therefore, the intention was to show how the idiographic can be (dis)articulated in the nomothetic. Silence then was seen as a methodological problem in which I needed to be aware of my position as an outsider first, to be able to allow myself to hear the voices/silences of those that I was going to study. This was not only a commitment to the field or the method or the people I was going to study, but an awareness of my positionality. Therefore, the value of ethnography to me, as different researchers (as argued in the introduction and the previous essay) have been able to show, was its ability to deal with those silencing themselves to 'strangers' (at the same time this was its limit as the essay on the ethical subject

shows). But what about those who do not want to speak? What about those that keep silence? Those who prefer not to answer when asked to speak?

Despite the games of truth in the Foucauldian sense or some form of understanding of resistance which renders itself within that which tries to understand the utility of silence, one realises that there is another form of resistance which is not geared towards a relationship with the world or the other; which is not interested in the importance of the relationship between the one that speaks and the interlocutor, one which speaks these words when requested to perform a task by their superior: "I would prefer not to" (Melville, 1856:7). In Herman's Melville story of *Bartlebey, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall-street* one encounters a resistance located only in five spoken words yet so silent that one cannot begin to force the one who utters the words to do the job or begin to comprehend the meaning of those words. Many have offered an interpretation of who Bartlebey is, to Deleuze (1997:90) he is a "new Christ or the brother to us all." This reference to the messianic figure of Christ might not be false and in Bartlebey we are reminded of that prophecy that revealed itself to Isiah (6:9-10) that Christ in the Parable of the Sower (Matthew, 13:1-23) evokes ("…ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving"). While those that have encountered Bartleby had eyes, they were not able to see him and they had ears, they were not able to hear him or if they forced him to speak, he preferred not to speak, if they asked about his past or life, he preferred not to answer! Still within the biblical, Derrida (1995b:74) sees in Bartleby a being who can be compared to Job "not to him who hoped to join the kings and counselors one day after his death, but to him who dreamed of not being born." In speaking and not being understood, in engaging in a language that is elusive to many, Derrida sees Bartleby as being parallel to Abraham (Genesis 22: 1-19) who when tested by the Lord to sacrifice his son Isaac (this might read differently if one is a Muslim and reads the Quran- to this faith it was Ishmael who was the sacrifice) spoke a language that was neither understood by Sarah nor Isaac. Others have offered different ontological explanations to the five words uttered by Bartleby, with Hardt and Negri (2001:203) seeing in Bartleby a "figure of absolute refusal" which reflects a long going tradition in the refusal of work, and in his refusal lies a "being as such, being and nothing more." While to Hardt and Negri (2001:204) this absolute refusal is only a beginning, but if it continues to exist in solitude its fate is "social

suicide". Therefore, this absolute refusal needs to be linked to a much greater political project of creating a social body that is grounded in the politics of the multitude. This political project aims to create a different reality based on commonality of experience (Hardt and Negri, 2001). For Agamben (1993:259), Bartleby embodies Aristotle's idea of potentiality (expressing the capacity/one's lack), dancing in the "indifference between Being and Nothing" exceeding both; pushing the dance to the space of rather. Therefore, this potentiality is that which can be or not be, contingent in that sense "can also occur and that once it exists, given that it is not necessary there will be no potential in it not to be" (Agamben, 1993: 264). While to Whyte (2009: 310) "[H]e is neither an exemplar of civil disobedience, nor a revolutionary. He does not actively resist; he simply prefers not to." What a being that many like those in the story are yet to understand, indeed he escapes the eyes or ears, maybe we ought to hear him with our eyes, and see him with ours ears, a figure of madness! Indeed he is a figure of madness, for society always marvels at the truth of the madman/woman.

At the same time, we see a resistance in Bartleby that "prefer[s] not to dine" (Melville, 1856: 29). Bartleby dies in prison of starvation despite the lawyers' offers to save his life and give him a place to stay or by trying to bribe a prison warder to ensure that Bartleby eats. The 'I would prefer not to' enters into a dialogue for there is a request, but denies the action for he was given a task but refuses based on his preferences. Might I add that we cannot access those preferences or understand them or even recognise them… The spoken that remains silent and the silent that cannot be forced into action! What a being… That the conclusion of this short story is "Ah Bartleby! Ah humanity!" (Melville, 1856: 29). Did Bartleby possess that which humanity failed to understand? To die for one's silence, to starve to death is that which any form of power cannot get to. Is not starving to death a forever holding one's peace, a peace which cannot be tainted nor reached? To be able to hear the sound of silence is the ultimate link to the unknown that makes itself only known to the one whose tongue does not move. What of the silence that no longer resides in what Bartleby does or says, that silence that makes the other begin to use the words 'prefer not to' or be paralysed once they are uttered (it makes everyone mad in the story). The silence that Bartleby gives is one which goes beyond the ontological descriptions given above and transcends the phenomenological idea of the spoken (expressive), signifying the

intentionality of the speaker -he goes beyond the inner life of the self which is a subjectivity that is still reliant on the auto-affective as the voice that once spoken no longer belongs to the speaker but is capable of being heard by the speaker (existing as soliloquy/ the other within) (Derrida, 1973). Once one has entered into this discourse of silence, to exist without the movement of the tongue, we realise that we are dealing with a being whose struggle is not towards (mis)recognition. Is recognition not a form of shackling (as a result of misrecognising the person you perceive) the one who is perceived? Once recognised one's image has to follow what one is recognised for. If one decides to move away from the typecasting of recognition then one will be rendered into that space of being silenced. A condition which may cause hysteresis for the being that speaks in order to be recognised (one wonders if Bourdieu's hysteresis of the habitus is not also the result of (mis)recognition, see the section on mismatches, discordance and misfirings on page 159 in *Pascallian Meditations*, 2000 or see *The Logic of Practice*, 1980: 59-61). To be misrecognised is embarrassing, paralysing, frustrating, silencing, nauseating, cold, and lonesome! Since being misrecognised is a result of that phenomenological idea that to speak is to teach (ala Levinas, 1969), and to speak is to be heard and to be heard is to be understood (Derrida, 1973). Therefore, in speaking a language that is not understood by many or silent even when spoken we realise that silence sometimes cannot be interpreted! Therefore, in speaking a language that is not understood by many/ that which is silent, we realise that silence is that which is no longer interested in teaching the hearer or committed to being understood. Then it is no wonder that a social science student (me/I) would fear silence, since it might give the idea that the Other is not committed to the project, does not even bother to entertain that line of recognising or even at least misrecognising me so that I can explain myself to be heard by them. Who would not fear the silent treatment?

Manicheanism in the Literature of Resistance

In proceeding in the manner that I have, we discover that the literature of resistance is always dealing with a Manicheanism when it comes to resistance; that is overt vs. covert, violent versus non-violent, resistance with a Big R and resistance with a small r (D'Arcy, 2013; Lilja, Baaz, Schulz Vinthagen, 2017; Scott, 1985; 1990; Mitchell, 1990; Gal, 1995, Bayat, 2000; Cooper, 1994). However, this Manicheanism always has a bridge which is action versus non-action. In

the case of the overt or the violent form of resistance, people resist to make their voices heard and in covert people do not speak, but they engage in certain acts that show their disgruntlement like sabotage (saboteur), hunger strike, a silent march, etc. This Manicheanism can be read as Malcom X versus Dr Martin Luther King Jr., or Fanon versus Ghandi, pacifism versus violence. Those that try to go beyond the Manicheanism end up conjuring provocative words like the voice of the voiceless, the language of the unheard, resistance from below, making the invisible visible. What of those whom I have described above, who are not hiding because they are forced, who are visibly invisible because of reasons that may not be found in the ideas of institutional representation… Are there such people? Why bother with them since they are not engaging in any form of action? If they are perceived to be inactive then it is assumed that they must be silenced… what if they are observing a silence engaged by a tongue, which is not moving- this is a silence that might be dangerous to the narrative of the analyst. Because it cannot be rendered in the now, silence is of eternity as Charley (1897) would remind us. It is transcendental! So that when the 'rupture' occurs it is always misrepresented because it existed before the present! What if when they decide to speak they may not be speaking of the present? What if when they decide to speak of the present we cannot hear them because their language cannot and will not be captured by the present? Maybe that is why policies fail, social movements disintegrate-maybe because the language of representation and performance is of the present geared towards the what is to be done in the now (its language-an injustice has been committed and it is must be fought now!) or its preparation of the future is read within the present. It is then clear that silence is revolutionary if read in the manner that I propose. Even the phenomenologist fears that form of interaction where the Other does not engage their interlocutor (Levinas, 1969). To be silent clearly is not to be passive and at the same time it is not be forced into action! It cannot be read by eyes that are wearing glasses that see in the now or eyes that hear a cry of injustice located only in their temporality.

""Listen to the silence… Listen and take pleasure in what you were not given in life-quiet"" says the character Margarita to the Master (Bulgakov, 1997: 325). Is coming to the world not an encounter with noise so much so that maybe the struggle is to attain the silence that we were never given; even in our mothers' bellies we were never afforded silence. Oh silence, what a

beauty you are, for we search and yearn for you. We speak in order to find you… we stop our tongues from moving in order to hear you. We even disrupt those that are silent so that they can speak of you… that is to say we make people speak so that it is made possible to understand how they became silent so that we can silence them once again when they have spoken.

By way of Conclusion through the Formula

To be met by silence is a possibility of a violence that remains far from the eyes and ears of the interlocutor and that is why silence, in most cases, is met by a violent response. For example take the case of a violent interrogator who believes that the more silence they encounter the greater the plot of violence (or crime) from their examinee. This violence in the interrogation room could be physical and symbolic (the good cop/bad cop; deceptive). Was this not the case in the novel by J.M Coetzee (1999) *Waiting for the Barbarians* where a rumour circulates that the barbarians will attack the small colonial town of the Empire? In response to this threat, a state of emergency is declared to hunt down the barbarians and Colonel Joll leads it. Colonel Joll is an 'experienced' interrogator and we discover that the rumour was unravelled when he tortured and killed an old man and interestingly, the old man never spoke and hence his death. The state of emergency is declared because of a 'confession' attained from the tortured child who was with the old man (how absurd). The barbarians become victims of the violent regime merely because none of the barbarians that were interrogated spoke (and many were killed as a result)! The silence of the barbarians is regarded as dangerous and confirming the rumour to be true, that indeed one day, they will come and destroy this small colonial town with the civilised White people. To Joll, not speaking (even when more forms of violence were applied during interrogation) was seen as validating the rumour. To summarise, to a person who is not familiar with mathematics, we can see that the argument the essay has pushed in many ways has been: Silence=resistance+violence. If we follow this simple calculation or formula, then it is possible to restructure it according to mathematical principles and deduce that violence=silence-resistance. This is to say that whenever there is violence we move with the supposition that there is a possibility that one is silenced or was resisting or was silenced for resisting. Therefore, with violence one always anticipates its ability to silence and take away the agency of its victims. If the victims have agency then it means the formula can be violence=speaking+resistance;

meaning that the violence enacted by the oppressed is a result of an act of speaking and this form of speaking is resistance. This formula is one valued by power (think of the violent interrogator) since this means its existence (usage of violence) is justified. This is a formula that many should be mindful of, especially the student of social science who seeks to make the mute speak, is this not violence? From this formula, we discover the violence/silence in Scott, for he seeks to show that indeed the subaltern do speak truth to power and cannot see that by making them speaking he has to perform some textual violence hence he draws willy-nilly from any contexts to implicitly speak of some universality. Enter, Bartleby!

3. The Problem of Land, Labour, and Resistance in South African Scholarship

> *"The land. Our purpose is the land; that is what we must achieve. The land is our whole lives…we are buried in it. When the whites took our land away from us we lost the dignity of our lives, we could no longer feed our children. We were forced to become servants, we are treated like animals. Our people have many problems, we are beaten and killed by the farmers, the wages we earn are too little to buy even a bag of a mielie-meal… In everything we do we must remember that there is only one aim and one solution and that is the land, the soil…" Petros Nkosi at a meeting to discuss the formation of a regional committee representing seventeen different rural communities in the South Eastern Transvaal in July 1989 cited in Claassens (1989).*

The Problem that confronts me: Prostrating to the Economy!

Perhaps crucial to my argument on the question of land, labour and resistance is the foundation of the current impasse around land redistribution in South Africa and how scholars and activists have argued that we need to take the history of dispossession seriously. However, what does it mean to take the history of dispossession seriously? Michael Aliber (2015:155), in his contribution on the *Land Divided Land Restored: Land Reform in South Africa for the 21st Century* book, argues that:

> Taking history seriously suggests that the white beneficiaries of land dispossession go far, far beyond current commercial farmers. At the turn of the twentieth century, half of all white South Africans lived in rural areas, whereas in 2011 only eight per cent did so. In 1911 agriculture, forestry and fisheries accounted for about 22 per cent of GDP, whereas in 2012 it was about two per cent. Between 1950 and 2007, the number of white commercial farms dropped by two thirds, that is, from 117,000 to less than 40,000. In 2010 commercial farms had a combined market value of about R300 billion (my own estimate, based on deeds transaction data), which is about six per cent of the estimated value of total private real estate for that year of R4. 9 trillion.

The above provides an interesting statistical representation of the current state of agrarian affairs in South Africa. In the same book, Walker and Cousins (2015: 4) go on to confirm the above by indicating that in the country "most people, urban and rural purchase their food, and a growing population has to be fed by a declining number of farmers. Unlike a hundred years ago, when the Land Act was passed, *this is not a predominantly agrarian society* [emphasis mine]". More interesting is the fact that the above evidence points towards a decline in agricultural activity and a latent decline in economic relevance; hence fuelling the fire around the current debate of the impracticability of the Black South African's cry for the return of their land. Why are they (Blacks) interested in the land question when even the large commercial farms are on the decline? Why the interest in the land question when the farmers have been employing fewer people? Is the shift only towards mining, which has lucrative resources? It is indicated that "[O]ver 300 000 farm jobs have been lost in the past 20 years, and now there are fewer permanent than casual and seasonal workers" (Hall, 2015: 142). The land ownership in South Africa continues to be skewed with White farmers owning 73.3 per cent of agricultural land, in contrast to 26.7 per cent (at least 5 million acres) belonging to Black owners (De Lange, 2017). It is odd that despite these figures and the grumbles from the White farmers about the unprofitability of farming in South Africa, they vehemently refuse to return the land (Krog, 2015)! These pertinent questions are of relevance to my cause and can be attributed to my interest in the attempt to read differently questions relating to land in South Africa.[17] However, my interest is not exclusive to the question of land and labour as articulated by different Marxists in the times way before my existence (Wolpe, 1972, Meillassoux, 1972, Morris, 1976, Trapido, 1971, Leggasick, 1974). My interest can be extended to tracing the ancient roots of the arguments above and how they can be traced back to the academic debates about agrarian change, colonialism, apartheid, and development. In so doing, what I seek to do is to argue that it is no wonder the current academic debates are arrested by the following questions: 'what are the alternative forms of developments to be adopted when looking at the question of land? Which policies can deal with poverty and unemployment in the rural areas?' Such questions continue from the old traditions that I will be dealing with. Thus, the debate can be encapsulated as mainly and broadly speaking as that of the 'economic' (a problem vexing *Land Divided Land Restored*,

[17] Please take note- I am not reducing the 'land question' to the agricultural land. I am merely focusing on agriculture since this is the subject matter of the PhD.

2015). I will be arguing that this interest in the 'economic' emanates from the hegemony of the old interpretations about land, labour, and resistance. These old interpretations can be located in the debates that occurred between the liberals, revisionists, and social historians regarding agrarian change; however, mine is not to regurgitate the debates here since Yudelman (1983: 102) has already told us that the "debate is boring". The method here is that which seeks "to make the present problematic as a historical object" (Djaballah, 2008:3). This present, which has in it the articulation/ reverberation of the past, can be seen in how Walker and Cousins (2015: 60) direct us on which questions need to be engaged regarding the land question today:

> …what alternative directions could and should land reform take? Why have the spatial and institutional legacies of the past been so hard to dislodge? How much is 'history' to blame for present challenges? What is the primary purpose of land reform, and what are the key considerations that need to be taken into account in developing forward-looking interventions? How, for instance, should the relationship between urban and rural development policy be understood? What does redress for past land injustices mean in a society that is no longer primary agrarian? What is the relationship between land reform and democracy in the rural areas? What are the larger economic, social and ecological considerations that must be brought to bear on this debate? What would a 'restored' countryside look like- how should we understand this goal midway through the second decade of the twenty-first century?

The presentation of the debates will not place too much emphasis on chronology since this is not a historiographical endeavour. Instead, it is an attempt to show why the old ideas (mostly inherited from the liberals, revisionist thinkers and social historians) continue to be within the path of the economic when relating to the question of land. This influence is visible in how the current impasse on land redistribution is framed and I point the reader to the *book Land Divided Land Restored*, 2015, that was tasked with understanding the legacy of the 1913 Land Act in its centenary. The book raises all the aforementioned questions about land in South Africa and I would argue the framing of the problem of land dispossession is still within the economic. However, I also argue in the next essay that the article by Krog titled *Baas van die plass* seems out of place when we compare it to the various contributions made in that book. My intention in looking at the historical influences regarding the land question is to argue that, what the ideas have done for us today is to foreclose the possibility of thinking about dispossession beyond the

questions that were raised at the time. In this, I will be showing that all the arguments (even the ones that are raised in the 21st Century) seem to be informed by the idea of what is good for the 'economy' and how the economy has moved forward. Why did certain policies fail when applied? Ultimately, I push the reader to that which was dismissed by the scholars of this particular history as irrational, that which was referred to as 'primitive superstition' of how Black Africans developed a relationship with the land and in turn problematising the 'economic' narrative. The points raised may appear ephemeral, but they are intended to speak to questions of resistance, epistemology, eschatology, axiology, ontology, and ethics. In essence, my argument is that the ultimate ethical demand for Blacks has always been giving oneself to the land so that we may emerge as one with the land. This kind of self may be unfamiliar in its views of ethical subjectivity, because it goes beyond that of a Foucauldian nature (read as the ultimate care of the self, as one which embraces individual freedom) or that of a Løgstrupian nature (read as the ethical demand being that of giving self to the Other completely).

On Method

The intention of this essay, and the one that follows, is one that is not accusative for it aims to show that for each generation the ways of the old weigh heavy on it and those ways may be useful and sometimes may only be useful in helping to arrive at certain ways of thinking and go no further. In so doing we realise that each generation of scholarship was interested in their nakedness; the issues that affected their time and themselves as White South Africans who encountered Blacks who they thought could not speak (had no vote) or must be spoken for. Thus, we realise that their project was indeed the project of what needed to be done in their now/present. This we may not need to rebuke but unfortunately, their present, like any present, is linked with the future or echoes into the future. My method in the two essays repeats the problem since we are reminded that for the brain to learn it appreciates repetition (Grill-Spector, Henson and Martin, 2006). Therefore, I include extensive quotes from some of the works to indicate the manner in which they posed the problem and in so doing, I show other problems the works failed to approach. Thus, this essay poses questions that the works failed to address. Considering the scholars were writing in a time of segregation or apartheid, the manner in which they saw the problem was influenced by their time- a condition in which human relations were partitioned. A

condition in which one could not encounter the Black person in full and therefore the scholarship only encountered the fragments of the problem that they saw as that which was emanating from the material, the land question. How does it become possible to read it Otherwise (a question will arise)? Then the burden of proof lies with the person who tries to provide a method of reading. To do so we must begin from that which pushes many to write, this being the question of dispossession of the Native or the Black person from the land. I read this problem from a different perspective that tries not to be grounded only in the historical, sociological, psychological, but sees the problem Otherwise, from the philosophical concern of what is the ethical relationship established with land; how does the trek caused by dispossession help us understand what became an imminent confrontation with death. What does this question of death tell us? I argue that the question of death is linked with a question of the home, for dispossession forced many to be homeless and by being homeless, they were grave-less (see Plaatje, 1998- *Chapter IV One Night with the Fugitives*, which I will also turn to in the next essay). Essay one of two, first maps the problem in the scholarship and then essay two begins with a conversation in Mam Winnie's shack about this problem of death and then continues with that which tries to go beyond the problems raised by social historians. Even social history and its corrective method of history fails to tell us about this encounter with the Other and their frustration and search for a home in a future that had become futureless. The justice of the social historian is only enjoyed by the scholar since its justice was based on an obvious exploration- to show that Blacks can speak… but as indicated in the introduction there is suspicion whether it is the Blacks speaking or the intellectual speaking on their behalf, all in the name of agency (Leroke, 1998). As indicated in the introduction, the question might be, why bother with offering a critique of that which might be read as 'White writing' on the question of land? Why not show the many differences in 'White writing? 'Or why not focus on the Black writing and the many differences within it?' Well, these texts were firstly taught to me at University as the canon in the making of South African social order. Interestingly, these works, continue to enjoy a lot of citation. Thus, there is a lot of inheritance that occurs which is not being acknowledged. That is the issue of economic rationality. Therefore, there is that which pushes one to deal with their first coming into consciousness and sometimes coming into consciousness is not a glorious event. Sometimes, it may leave one with a lot of numbness. Secondly, to go to the old does not mean one is suggesting that there existed nothing outside of it. My intention is to first dislodge the roots of

this particular tree. Once that has been appreciated, then we enter into the domain of possibilities. My argument in this essay and the following essays is grounded on the view that there is a need to expand our scope of understanding dispossession beyond the economic expansion of land or that of seeing land as an economic factor of production. Instead, we are yet to understand what it means to belong to the land, which goes beyond the violent notion of what it means to own the land. The concept of ownership conceals an anxiousness of those that claim to be the owners of the land since the benevolence, in the name of Fatherhood, reflects a possibility of a confrontation with the unknown future where the owner might be deposed violently to right the wrong concealed in the title deed. Then enter, Bethal-the House of God! Where the violence is applied to those who are silent, not only with the intention to silence the silent but to ensure that the Future is not met with resistance. To speak of the land question is to speak of the Native question, that is to say, how can we dominate the land and all that comes with it (the Native Soul), without being met by resistance in the Future. Let us exercise our patience since we have not arrived at that Promised Land, the House of God.

Land and modernity from conquest to freedom through the market

Africa my Beginning

They came from the west

Sailing to the east

With hatred and disease flowing from their flesh

And a burden to harden our lives

They claimed to be friends

When they found us friendly

And when foreigner met foreigner

They fought for the reign

Exploiters of Africa

Africa my beginning

And Africa my ending

Suckers of my country

They laid their sponges

Flat on its soil and absorbed its resources to fill their coffers

Agostinho had spoken in the language of poets

That they went away in multitudes

And forgot their hearts behind

But late is never a bad start in

Africa my beginning

And Africa my ending- Ingoapele Madingoane (2011)

In 1652 when the ship of Jan Van Riebeeck docked in what was to become the Cape of Good Hope, we are told that the intention was to create a refreshment station to service the ships and the people of the Dutch East Indian Company who were engaged in trade in the Far East and India (Miles, 1987; Katzen, 1969; Mostert, 1993). Who were these people and how did they come to shape South African history? Those who landed in that part of the land were the European (Dutch) settlers who were officials of the company and were later "supplemented by a small number of independent settlers [who were later referred to as the frontiersmen[18]]" (Miles, 1987:119). "The latter were permitted to lease land under an annual license, but the process of land occupation was largely uncontrolled, and Dutch cattle-herders continuously extended the

[18] Legassick (1972:1) shows that these settlers were perceived as "[I]solated from Cape Town, isolated from Europe, isolated from government, isolated from markets, isolated from the influences of "civilization"…" Thus, it has been argued by those who were interested in the frontier like MacCrone and Walker, that due to this isolation they played a very important role in the making of South African history especially when it came to race attitudes they had regarding those they encountered (Legassick, 1972).

boundaries of the settlement, contrary to the wishes of local government" (Miles, 1987:119). Maybe the fortune of these settlers seeking means of survival can be attributed to their encounter with the Khoikhoi whose relation to the land was not that of ownership but that of subsistence, a source of existence (Macmillan, 1919; Coetzee, 1988; Mostert, 1993). This land was to be their salvation since many who came from sea had suffered from scurvy. The area was rich in vitamin C and dairy products (from cattle). The refreshment station was later to be turned into a colony and the curse of work was to become real, one can hear the book of Genesis 3:19 "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." Miles (1987: 119) indicates what this contact with the Europeans did to the previous system of existence of the Khoi:

> As was with the case with the Aboriginal population in the Australian colonies, this had implications for the outcome of the contact with the mode of production initiated by the European settlers. European occupation of land and the continual extension of the European frontier progressively disrupted the reproduction of these subsistence, redistributive modes of production by utilizing land required for migratory herding, and by disturbing the environment in ways which made hunting less productive…there was also conflict over land occupation, grazing rights, and cattle raiding. The combination of conflict and the disruption of the economic structure of the KhoiKhoi (along with the spread of new diseases) led to the break-up of socio-political structure of their communities, murder, and enforced dependence on European settlement on the part of those survived.

By 1715, a substantial number of local Khoi were affected by the smallpox epidemic which was also an accelerating factor in their extermination (see Katzen, 1969; Mostert, 1993). Many died as a result of the epidemic, leaving others to flee to other parts of the Cape to get away from what they saw as the bewitching power of the Dutch (Mostert, 1993). At the same time, we realise that the emphasis on 1652 is because from this date onwards they were to lose their relationship with the land and "branded as the children of Ham, a stigma eventually assigned to all the dark peoples of Africa" (Mostert, 1993: 117). Even before the extermination of the Khoi, we are reminded of how, for the first time, the question of dealing with crime and work was a pertinent problem that would worry the settlers. Robben Island Prison was to acquire important political power in dealing with the Khoi (Mostert, 1993). Mostert (1993: 138) argued that the

problem of the settler was the 'lazy' Native who deserted work. It was not their laziness that led to their extermination but their resistance to selling their labour and their best cattle to the meat-eating Dutch (Elphick, 1977; Mostert, 1993). The problem was then: land, labour, sex (the subordination of women), and cattle! That is why the Dutch relied on chief Autshumato or the man who was to be known as Harry Hottentot/ The Strandloper to negotiate with his people to exchange for their cattle or even to pimp out women (was this not the fate of her cousin Kratoa even though she married a Dutchman). The very same Autshumato led the first rebellion against the Dutch and made off with the heads of cattle from the Dutch (Mostert, 1993). The quarrel was around the purchasing of cattle by the Dutch who suspected Autshumato of double standards since the Khoi were mostly selling old cattle to the Dutch (Mostert, 1993). After the rebellion, he was caught and imprisoned on Robben Island as the first political prisoner, albeit he later escaped and was allowed back since the Dutch had not found someone to fill his task of interpreter, albeit they later replaced him with his cousin Kratoa as an interpreter (Mostert, 1993).

The encounter with the Khoi was, at first (it is argued), based on the need to establish a refreshment station and much less on dispossessing them of the land. Interestingly, however, acquiring cattle became the settler's first aim of establishing themselves in this foreign land. This fight for cattle is to remind us that the Khoi did not first encounter the cattle thieves through the Dutch, they had encountered and fought the Portuguese before in the -1400s a period represented by the figure of Vasco Da Gama (Mostert, 1993). In 1510, they were also able to defeat the sailor, Francisco de Almeida, and his men who tried to steal their cattle. This encounter with the Portuguese is interesting for the land that is known as the Cape of Good Hope was to inspire hope and dreams of the future with Antonio de Saldanha who had gone ashore when most Portuguese had sailed past it. Antonio de Saldanha, in his exploration, was to climb a mountain "from whence he saw the end of the Cape, and the sea that lies beyond it to the east… and from these landmarks he knew that it was indeed the Cape of Good Hope" (Mostert, 1993: 83). That area was to be known as the Table of the Cape of Good Hope. Colonisation was not possible at this particular moment for the Portuguese were to encounter a people who were willing to defend their cattle and possessions. Those of us born in cattle breeding nations, which the Khoi

belonged to, know that despite the provision of milk, means of exchange (for dowry) and meat-the cattle are a great symbol of the future. To see cattle grazing freely in the field gave one a satisfactory feeling since it indicated that the future was great and if the fields were dry it always meant that there were some areas somewhere where one could take the cattle to graze freely. The freedom of cattle is the freedom of men! This relationship of the Khoi and cattle is not only emphasised by Elphick (1977), we also see it in the book by Peires (1982) *The House of Phalo* who argued that to have cattle for the Xhosas was also an important indication of a greater future (we will also turn to the cattle-killing movement in the next essay)! To dream of cattle grazing in the field is interpreted as a great future and to dream of eating a cow's meat is an indication of death in the family since it means a cow has been killed in the family. Elphick's (1977) book the *Kraal and Castle: Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa* shows us the importance of the acquisition of cattle by the colonist and how this acquisition was the first movement to the founding of White rule in South Africa. Elphick (1977) shows that the Khoi had to protect themselves from the constant cattle raids and the tragedy that befell them with the smallpox epidemic that broke out in 1713, leading to the death of many Khoi. This was the culmination of a difficult period in history of a people trying to defend their place of birth and cattle. We will see that the dispossession of cattle will later come to haunt the apartheid state in song! Therefore, it is interesting that the question of land dispossession in South Africa has not spoken to the subjugation that cattle had to suffer (we will hear in the poems by Antjie Krog (2015)). To speak of land is to also speak of cattle and all other animals that belong to the land!

It is through a close following of this history that best illustrates why there is a continuation of what Aliber (2015) calls a moral attachment to land redistribution in South Africa. This moral attachment, to him, draws on the understanding that land dispossession was wrong and those who are Black are the sufferers of this historical injustice. There are various ways that dispossession is understood. Firstly, dispossession could be best described as genocide, land theft, and rape of the women of the territories conquered (McClintock, 1995). Secondly, it is argued that this period is that of the development and progress of the society of barbarians and their economy (mainly the development of capitalist relations) (Richards, 1979; Marx and Engels, 1997). Those who read the agrarian history read it from the second position and are not

likely to focus on what the violent removals and systemic extermination of the Khoi meant or philosophically raise questions of morality. Thus, when reading the literature on dispossession, the scholars to be cited in the work are a prime example of those who were never interested in what Aliber (2015) sees as a moral question. This is because they were interested in how the society that had emerged after the dispossession was to look like or how the dispossessed Blacks were negotiating their existence in this new society[19]. Yet, at the same time, the question of justice is approached through the economy, the promised revolution that is to take shape if those oppressed organised. Did this revolution understand the dreams and songs of those forced to trek?

The liberal scholars delved into the unusual state of existence that emerged from the colonial encounter whereby a number of Africans were coerced into working in the forever-expanding land, which was claimed to belong to Europeans (Macmillan, 1919; Die Kiewet, 1941). Once the labour was secured, the relations of production ranged from slavery in the Cape later methods like 'forced apprenticeship' of children/inboekseiling/isibalo and indentured labour in KwaZulu Natal, sharecropping, labour tenancy, and later the emergence of farmworkers. When reading South African history, the problems that preoccupied most scholars, as Bozolli and Delius (1990: 13) argued, were that of trying to understand:

> …the nature of the South African political economy and of its peculiarly African version of capitalism; the role played by Africans in the formation of that system; the complex interlocking of racial and class structures, and the powerful and authoritarian nature of the state.

These questions were not just questions raised by the White left of the 1970s, but they were questions which ran across all schools of thought in South Africa - whether liberal, revisionist or

[19] Despite the debates between the revisionist and social historian around questions of method/research, it is clear that the common thread in the work was in its understanding of the type of society that had emerged after the dispossession and how the Blacks who were dispossessed were to negotiate their existence in this new society and this can be seen in the following literature of Bundy (1979); Legassick (19974), Bozolli (1991), Wiiliams (1990), van Onselen (1990), Keegan (1983, 1985), Trapido (1971), Marks and Rathbone (1982). Thus, scholars became interested in analysing the nature of industrialisation in South Africa "the structure of the white state, and the processes of proletarianisation and impoverishment" (Marks, 1976:195).

social historians, they were all preoccupied with the above. Most scholars drew from a European language, which aimed to understand "the development of industrial capitalism, and the economic and political forms of its internalisation, generated new pressures on agrarian classes of pre-capitalist provenance as it brought them within its circuit of production, exchange and consumption" (Bernstein, 2002: 436). Equipped with terms like 'feudal', 'primitive', 'precapitalist', 'articulation of modes of production', 'the state', this was a language that emerged in the 1970s which was aimed at doing away with the liberal language of " Bantu, Boer, and Briton" (Bozzoli and Delius, 1990:19). Despite the different generational languages, the scholars that will be cited in this overview gave to us a language that lasted for decades when it came to understanding dispossession. Today we may have to ask if that language is sufficient (as much as the generation of the 1970s-1990s had to ponder upon this), does it understand the vernacular or merely transposing it with the global?

Liberal scholars like Walker, MacCrone (1957), Macmillan (1919), Die Kiewet (1941) and later, scholars who drew from the liberal tradition like Thomspon and Wilson (1969) had argued that because of the aforementioned encounter in the Cape, there emerged toxic racial relations where the conquered in South Africa (starting from the Cape extending to other parts of the platteland) were treated as objects. This view argued that domination, which expressed itself racially, was about psychological superiority, which can be traced to the Afrikaner/Burgher who subscribed to the view of land ownership, being that which is according to blood/inheritance. Those who were inferior, it was justified, were of a weaker blood and could not rule the land. It was this particular relationship, it is argued, that later led to the emergence of what is viewed as a racial nationalism by those who labelled themselves as born from the African land- the Afrikaner (Die Kiewt, 1941; Wilson, 1971; Stanley, 2008; Higginson, 2015). It is argued that the Anglo Boer War of 1899-1902 was the accelerating factor which fuelled the desire to create a land that will allow the Afrikaner to mourn no more (Stanley, 2008; Higginson, 2015). Others were to add that the violence of nationalism was directed towards those who were deemed inferior and fuelling a spirit of independence against the English, viewed as the coloniser (Thompson, 1960; Rich, 1978; Worden, 2012). This tradition argues that in 1910, with the formation of Union of South Africa, the entire nation was to be captured in a state of regressive politics of racial domination

that was not reflective of the English spirit that had come to dominate in the Cape (or the liberal tradition which had granted Blacks the right to vote) (even Sol T Plaatje, 1988 forms part of this tradition). The argument by this scholarship was that:

> The roots of apartheid are to be found not in the white cities, nor even in the endless tunnels of the gold mines of the Rand. They are buried deep in the red soil of the white-owned farms, where for some two hundred years, before even South Africa became an urban industrial economy and the word apartheid was thought of, relationships were being forged between white masters and black servants (Ainslie, 1977: 7)

We return to the farm in essay 6 to understand what it is that is buried on the farm; why is it buried and what does it demand? These arguments entertained in essay 3 and 4 set the stage for arguments in essay 6 as we go into the archival material and focus on the case of Bethal. Martin Legassick (1972:2), in his focus on what he terms *The Frontier Tradition in South African Historiography*, is at pains to show that the encounter did not only produce toxic racial relations where "the frontiersman regarded the non-white only as a servant or enemy" but the two were linked by economic relations. Legassick (1972:19) argues that:

> The stereotype of the non-white as enemy, therefore, does not seem to be explicitly a frontier product, whether one examines the San frontier, the Xhosa frontier, the pre-Trek northern frontier, or the frontier that developed predominantly in the Transvaal (the most "isolated" area) after the Trek. Moreover, we must be careful not to equate the greater violence, brutality and harshness of treatment of dependants in such areas, with greater racism.

To Legassick (1972) it would be much more fruitful to interrogate the economic relations that developed in most regions during the colonial period. He concludes by arguing that it is clear that the relations were not always brutal or violent, but show some level of dependency between the two races (Legassick, 1972). Wilson and Thompson (1969) show that there was never a clear intention to fully colonise South Africa by the Dutch East Indian Company. This is because they had viewed the Cape as a refreshment station that needed to be protected from Portuguese invasion (Wilson and Thompson,1969). Once they had settled in the Cape some never returned

and were faced with issues of survival and these were known as the burghers who tracked inwards and avoided going back home or being of service to Holland (MacMillan, 1919; Mostert, 1993). Then from this history Macmillan (1919) in his book *The South African Agrarian Problem and Its Historical Development* was to argue that the poverty experienced by the poor Afrikaner family and farmer (the bijowner) can be traced back to these free burghers. Therefore, the question to him was how do we understand the poverty that is facing the Afrikaner? He was to argue that we have to locate it back to the arrival of the Dutch.

The problem for Macmillan (1919) was that this trek inwards by the burghers made it difficult for the Dutch East Indian Company to establish rule and order and at the same time, it set in place a particular relationship with the land; where the desire was to accumulate large hectors of land and not work them.

This encounter in the Cape created a concern by scholars around what this settlement meant and this was the entry point of the 'liberal' historiography (Saunders, 1986, Macmillan, 1919; De Kiewet, 1941; Beinart and Delius, 1986[20], Tatham, 1990, Glaser, 2001). Macmillan's (1919) emphasis was that to understand the South African historical processes we need to locate them within the everyday life. However, we see in Macmillan (1919:21) a hidden contempt for the trek Boer since he lays the blame on them for "marrying the land", where after acquiring large hectors of land many families ended up sub diving it, not for productive reasons. To him, the problem of the poor White is a problem of a historical failure to utilise the land. De Kiewet (1941) was to share this view that subdivision of land was an important historical feature of South African land acquisition and that this reflected the lack of insight of the Afrikaner who failed to convert the Natives to workers. The emergence of liberal historiography marks the beginning of seeing the agrarian problem through the lenses of the 'economic', since (to summarise) their modern problem of racial poverty (the poor White) needed to be understood in

[20] Beinart and Delius provide a very comprehensive overview of the contributions by the liberal tradition stemming from Macmillan and later his student De Kiewet and how they began to shape a number of debates concerning agrarian change. See also Saunders' (1986) reading of the writing of De Kiewet and his contribution to South African history.

their relationship with the land. This concern regarding land was stretched and the question of Blacks subservience was inserted, their voicelessness (not having a vote was seen as problem), the spread of civilisation in the countryside, the opposition to slavery and the promotion of modernity were seen as important issues in changing the political context (Macmillan, 1919; De Kiewet, 1946; Wilson and Thompson, 1969, 1971; Beinart and Delius, 1986; Du Toit, 1996; Saunders, 1986, Bundy, 1986; Plaatje, 1998). "Writing at a time when segregation, the "reserves" and African land rights were of acute political concern, they viewed the main struggle as one for land" (Legassick, 1972: 18). The bodies of those who were conquered only appeared as figures of lack, thence to be Black was to be an aesthetic object who controlled "neither space nor access to property" (Magubane, 2004:36).

The liberal scholarship had a language of transformation that drew from Europe in the 16th- 19th Century as she transitioned from feudalism to industrialism; at the same time, there is still a lack of articulating what this landscape meant for those who were conquered (Mokoena, 2011). Instead, the argument was that the historical transition in South Africa was not that which mirrored Europe since 'old' South Africa was dominated by toxic racial relations (Macmillan, 1919; Beinart and Delius, 1986). This line of reasoning that draws similarities and differences with Europe also bears a certain racial fear since to them the problem was also a problem of looming racial violence/conflict in the future, as Sampson (1956:251-252) argued that:

> In this new Africa of towns and industries, the African has much in common with the European worker in any industrial revolution. The transition of the tribal Zulu from his kraal to Johannesburg, spectacular as it is, is not much more abrupt than that of an English farmhand coming to town a century ago…The South African situation is in some ways a dramatization, or caricature of the problems of every industrial country, with workers painted Black and employers painted white. There is nothing so grim in South Africa to-day that it cannot be matched by nineteenth-century England… South Africa's problem, however much disguised, is fundamentally the problem of different races living together. Sooner or later the question will not be whether whites will tolerate Blacks, but whether Blacks will tolerate whites.

Shula Marks (1976: 187-188) in her chapter on "South African Studies Since World War Two" in the *African Studies Since 1945: A tribute to Basil Davidson* argues that in South Africa during 1930-1940, the:

> …. intellectual foundations for historians, economists, sociologists and political scientists… were also those of *classical liberalism*. Deeply concerned, as many of those scholars were, with the tension and conflict arising in the course of industrialisation and urbanisation in twentieth-century South Africa, they saw these as arising essentially from the irrational heritage of the past- much as classical liberal economists, both in South Africa and elsewhere attribute the failure of capitalism to achieve perfect equilibrium, perfect competition, to extraneous, non-economic- broadly speaking 'political'- factors.

Therefore, in studying the everyday life we come to understand that land ownership was not only economic, it also came with the ownership of many souls that resided on the farm and the farmer became the law and the police officer (this I also take up in **essay 5 and 6**). This was said to be a tradition of paternalism (see Du Toit, 1996). The idea of paternalism is traced back to the violent relations during the period of slavery where the master depended on violence and a "discourse that tried to define slaves' labour as a legitimate return for their masters' protection" (Du Toit, 1996: 56). Therefore, many have attributed the emergence of paternalism to the Cape wine farms in the 19th Century where the farmers styled themselves as the Father when pressure mounted for the abolition of slavery, giving a new master and servant relationship that denied the independence of those termed children (Du Toit, 1996; de Kiewiet, 1946; van Onselen, 1997b). Du Toit (1996) argued that this view drew on 18th Century Europe, which emphasised the master's despotic powers over their child (the servant). Therefore, the idea of paternalism draws on a patriarchal family structure where the farm is seen as a family unit where the White landowner becomes the Father to all those who are staying and offering their labour on his farm for many generations (Bradford, 1988; Du Toit, 1993; van Onselen, 1997b). The women have it worse since they have no authority but to obey their brother in the household who will take over the role of the father and their White Father who controls the entire family structure. The labour power is for the service of the White Father first. This relationship is usually said to be violent with the farmer using a whip to discipline his children or through the symbolic power, which

always aims to infantilise the servants by giving them names that suggest that they are children (Bradford, 1988; Du Toit, 1996; van Onselen, 1997b). If violence is not used to perpetuate the inferiority of the children, it is the 'gift', which is given to the children, which is used to perpetuate the idea that the family unit cannot survive without the Father. In the Cape, this involved the payment in kind system, which also entailed the notorious dop system, which resulted in alcoholism for many working on the farm, including pregnant women, affecting the health of the child (London, 1999).

It is Head (1971:109) who provides us with a sequence of colonial domination "…first conquest, then abhorrence at the looks of the conquered and, from there onwards, all forms of horror and evil practices." Within this logic is the perverted idea that the conquered cannot "think for themselves. They don't know anything" (Head, 1971:108). This is very important when one documents the question of land since the question of land had in it the construction of an identity for those who were conquered. Thus, the emergence of paternalism has to be located within this history, that rendered the conquered "faceless, voiceless, almost nameless in the country. That they even had a life or soul to project had never been considered" (Head, 1971:108). However, the liberal tradition was optimistic that these old views would be swept away. They emphasised the 'spirit of the new age' which was to be led by state intervention on labour relations, with the example of the Caledon's code of 1809 and Ordinance 50 of 1828 which "abolished the distinction between Khoi and other free persons and created the conditions for a free labour force at the Cape" (Du Toit, 1996:40). Another idea that the liberal scholars relied on was the idea of the arrival of missionaries to promote freedom, arguing that the gospel would trump the backward views of violent relations between master and servant (Du Toit, 1996:40; Wilson, 1969). My argument is that when looking at the idea of land and labour there is something which the present has inherited from the liberal tradition - the idea that modernity (i.e economic progress and rationality) would trump all the ideas of backwardness, as suggested above (this idea of modernity is one which is questioned in essay 5 and 6).

Du Toit (1996:43) covers the misconception of the idea of progress, which was embedded in the liberal view, when he argues that:

> They persisted in a false optimism that could not come to grips with the persistence of relations of domination within the context of "progress". At the root of this analysis was a perspective that saw a profound dichotomy between "backwardness" and "freedom". For them, the South African countryside was the scene of the coming into the modern age of an isolated, unprogressive mindset - paternalist and seigneurial in the case of white farmers, tradition-minded and dependent in the case of workers - that was inherently hostile to any Enlightenment notion of autonomy and freedom. Counter posed to this hidebound world-view, and having nothing in common with it, was a modernity that was itself the precondition for freedom and equality. Change, if it was to come to the farm, would come from outside. In this narrative, farm workers themselves were all but absent as protagonists.

Beinart and Delius (1986:7) argued that as much as the liberal tradition intended to give an overview of economic and social changes in South Africa, from colonialism to the establishment of the mining industry, it failed to document agrarian change in a nuanced manner. It neglected the "development of wine and wheat estates in the western and SOUTHERN Cape; the rise of the Natal sugar plantations; the considerable expansion of wool production on the farms of the midland Cape and the southern Orange Free State…" (Beinart and Delius, 1986:7). One can go as far as to argue that this myopic view stems from the fact that it was mostly concerned with showing what went wrong with the South African method of accumulation (hence their starting point is race and land) and to them, this was mainly because of the backward views of the Afrikaner/burgher.

Perhaps what has been overlooked in the criticism of this tradition, and readily emphasised, was its critique of the irrational spirit attributed to the frontiers man and yet what was not dealt with is that the authors were dismissive of the moral question of dispossession. At the core of this, was their faith in the language of the transition of Europe during its period of enlightenment and their belief in the rational man. They had faith in the rational White man (they spoke of the Cape tradition) who would do away with backward methods like slavery and racism and instead foster

economic growth. Economic growth was given much attention by this tradition since it was believed that with economic growth comes greater freedom and less racial tensions. Hence, Marks (1976) had argued that the preoccupations of the school were that of classical liberalism. What does this mean? What this means is that their understanding of South Africa was within the lenses that aimed to show capitalistic failure "to achieve a perfect equilibrium, perfect competition, [attributed] to extraneous, non-economic-broadly speaking 'political' –factors" (Marks, 1976:188). Thus, in criticising the liberals and showing that racism was inherent in the capitalist mode of accumulation, authors like Legassick (1972) (in his critique of the Frontier tradition) and later Johnstone (1976) were still within their terrain when asking questions pertaining to why the growth in the economy did not bring about equal racial relations. What needs to be acknowledged is that the liberal tradition bestowed White scholars (whether the later generation of liberals- Lipton or the later generation of White radicals, as I cite them below) with the view that it is in the economy that the struggle ought to be waged. Thus, land becomes part of the 'economy'. The Blacks who were dispossessed of land are analysed as they encounter the market (I will elaborate on this further when looking at Bundy, 1979). Hence, then today the language of the economy or economic progress plays itself out in that crude belief that the more Black people acquire the land that was stolen from them and have greater ownership of the economy; then we would have done away with 'toxic racial relations.'

Revisionist History and South Africa's capital accumulation

In the 1970s, a group of "left wing academics, teachers, and students came together in London, Oxford, and Sussex" with an interest in the "recasting of entire periods" in South African history, challenging the historiographical approach of the liberals (see Bozzoli and Delius, 1990:19; Bundy, 1979, Beinart and Delius, 1986; Bozzolli and Delius, 1990; Morris, 1976; Wolpe, 1976, Johnstone, 1976, Legassick, 1974). The scholars of this period had argued that the liberal historiography with its language of the Boer, Bantu, and the bywoners left a lacuna which could be filled by theoretical enquiries and they turned to Marxism (Morris, 1976). The studies were interested in the analysis of South Africa where there was tension caused by the method of accumulation during the dominance of maize and gold (Trapido, 1971). The studies resorted to theory, not only to offer us nomothetic statements, but there was a desire to rationalise South

Africa's industrialisation. The primary objective of this method was to transcend the language of seeing the political struggles as belonging to the irrational past or seeing Afrikaner nationalism, as espoused by the apartheid state, as aligned with the irrational past. Perhaps what remains interesting about the theorisation, as it will be indicated below when looking at Morris's[21] and Wolpe's work, is that it tried to link the question of land with that of labour. Hence, in their analysis, they try feature state policies like the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts with their intention to create a proletariat (cheap Black labourer).

Morris (1976:292) had argued that there has been less theoretical focus on the "development of capitalism in South African agriculture" and hence he began attempting to focus on "…an analysis of the contradictions within agriculture and between the capitalist countryside and the towns in the 20th century, after the capitalist mode of production (CMP) had already come to dominate." Morris (1976) resorts to the following theorists to articulate his points, Poulantzas covering the process of transition, Rey on how the precapitalist mode of production and the capitalist mode of production were articulated, and Lenin on the accumulation from above or the 'Prussian path'. The question of land dispossession by Morris (1976) is understood within the theoretical lenses of transition and accumulation from above. The points raised by Morris are:

1) In the second part of the 20th Century, commercial agriculture was capitalist, albeit in other areas like Northern Transvaal there was still a continuation of labour tenancy which is viewed as precapitalist (Morris, 1976).
2) To understand the economic transition in agriculture one has to understand the economic interest of the two opposing classes (the White land owners and the labour tenants) and the contradictions that emerged in the 1930s-1940s in the South African countryside (by countryside he is referring to the 'White rural districts'). Thus, "… it is… always the class struggle which has primacy and which determines the actual outcome of the

[21] I am dealing with Morris (1976) because his theoretical analysis on agrarian change sparked a lot of debate with the later generation of White scholars ('the social historians'). He argued that the inability to theories by social historians has resulted in them drawing from the liberal tradition hence this meant that "we are back with a primary dependence on 'race', 'white supremacy' and 'racist farmers' as… major explanatory variables" (Morris, 1988: 66).

transition- i.e. the forms of transformation that take place. The conditions under which the class struggle takes place set the limits to the conjuncture" (Morris, 1976: 312).

3) Thus, the actions of both actors cannot be understood through a subjectivist explanation.

Morris (1976) argues that the dispossession of land and eventually the conversion of labour tenants to farmworkers can only be understood within the structural changes of the South African economy. Morris (1976) does not aim to offer a historical periodisation but only a snapshot of the second part of the 20th Century. At the core of the analysis are the questions of the role played by state legislature in the form of the 1913 Land Act, which is said to have given the White minority 87% of the land and the Black majority only 13%. One has to note that, unlike Wolpe (1972) who drew from an Althusserian language of functionality, Morris (1976) recognised a clash within this system (as I will indicate below). Wolpe (1972) saw the reserves economies (precapitalist) as playing a vital role in the capitalist development in South Africa since they allowed the Black labour to socially reproduce themselves and reducing the costs of Black labour for the capitalist (since the Blacks had access to land in the reserves). Let us draw our attention to Wolpe (1972) briefly. The acts, to Wolpe (1972), benefited the mining industry since it assured a pool of cheap labour from the reserves. Wolpe (1972) makes use of the idea of the 'precapitalist' to cover the different land arrangements, be it sharecropping, labour tenancy and what he terms redistributive economies of the Africans (see Mafeje, 1981). Secondly, the problem is not only the all catch phrase of the precapitalist; instead, the issue lies with the representation of African life as static. This suggests that Africans relate to land in a way that ensures their reproduction. This reproduction, in turn, serves the capitalist system since it ensures that Africans can be paid low wages. Wolpe (1972) writes of the 'precapitalist society' without analysing it in depth! Mafeje (1981:134) indicates that the problem with Wolpe is that "he does not see any limit to the demand for cheap, migrant labour. Yet in recent years we have witnessed in South Africa the dumping of unwanted labour in the reserves, not to reproduce their labour-power but to perish." The problem with South African capitalism is then seen as one where Blacks are finding it difficult to socially reproduce themselves, citing the only remedy to this as the access to land. This is a result of some faith in the political economy, that is to say political economists or those in labour studies (inspired by Marxism see Cousins, 2007, Atkins 2007,

Scully, 2012, Arrighi et al., 2010, Hart, 2014, Scully and Webster, 2016) have come to see land as playing a part in solving the capitalist crisis of social reproduction. The proposition that emerge from this line of reasoning are ideas that seem to present capitalism with a human face, where land redistribution will curb inequality, help solve the problem of social reproduction since land can act as a form of a wage. This is the acceptance that land is private property and can be shifted from one group to another and this shift can easily benefit any group if there are good policies in place. If we follow this logic, the salvation will come from an economic policy that will appreciate the economic importance of land in solving the crisis of social reproduction.

The ideas of production and reproduction, especially in reference to land and labour when applied to the South African context, seem to draw from the work of the Meillassoux (1972). It was Meillassoux who inspired Wolpe's (1976) understanding of the 'precapitalist' society and hence the latter sees this society playing a major role in capitalism as it aids in the reproduction of labour power. Meillassoux's (1972) work on production and reproduction was aimed at speaking to economic anthropologists who: 1) were interested in homo economicus - interested in looking at individual choices (as if problems of economic activity are merely psychological) in relation to consumption without focusing on production. Thus, the problem was viewed as a problem of distribution instead of production. 2) To show that the economic anthropologists who followed Marx never had a deeper analysis of the primitive society.

Let us focus on the second proposition that allows us to delve much deeper into the concept of reproduction, particularly when it is linked to land ownership. As Meillassoux (1972:97) shows that "[I]t was not Marx's intention to analyse the pre-capitalist formations from within, but rather to discover their distinctive features and their successions." He continues to argue that the work by economic anthropologists remained at the hypothetical level when it came to the analyses of primitive societies and did not deal with how primitive societies related to land (Meillassoux, 1972). Meillassoux (1972:98) indicates that in reading *Capital*, one can detect two concepts used by Marx in reference to possible functions of land. One is "'subject'", the other as "'instrument of labour'". The former applies at the lower stage of development, like in hunter and gatherer

societies, whereby people extract only what they require from it (Meillassoux, 1972). The latter occurs at the higher stage of the development of productive forces (e.g. in self-sustaining agriculture) whereby the investment on one's labour on land is grounded on the expectation of a later return. Meillassoux (1972:101) (emphasis from original) shows to us that in the case of land being the instrument of labour, the society never sees land as private property or the control of land as that which allows for the means of material production; instead they saw it as a "*means of human reproduction*: subsistence and women. Their end is reproduction of life as a precondition of production." Thus, their interest is the control of the means of reproduction which involves women and ideas of lineage. The idea of reproduction is clearly a patriarchal view; leading one to ask how did women relate to the land in precapitalist society? Is the relationship with land a men's affair? Many South Africans have also argued that the precapitalist society was very patriarchal. The chief would allocate the communal land to the head of the homestead - the father or the elders. They in turn, would determine if a boy had become a man and was ready to marry and would then be given land. In some occasions those who had served in the army would be given a piece of land and cattle to marry and reproduce (Guy, 1979; Wolpe, 1972, Bundy, 1979; Peires, 1982; 1989; Mafeje, 1981; Kinsman, 1983). When the man had taken a wife, she would then work the land. Thus agricultural work became a woman's work. If the man had large hectors of land he would enter into polygamy to ensure that there was enough labour to work the land. Bundy (1979:95) argues that as soon as a number of Blacks started selling their produce on the market, they would acquire the plough which required that the man be present on the field and in turn "the economic basis of polygamy- the need of the head of a large household to have more than one (food-producing) wife-was greatly diminished." Peires (1989) goes on to argue that since it was women who worked the land during the Xhosa cattle-killing movement, they supported the movement, especially since it meant they could not work the land. What I am intending to do here is to argue that without analysing the 'precapitalist society' we are bound to view land in a patriarchal manner which excludes women's resistances and relations with the land or does not show institutions that emerged to protect women's political power (see Hanretta, 1998). Thus, women are at the core of the 'land question'. At the same time, there is the work of feminism on the question of reproduction where they show the importance of women, especially looking at housework and reproduction- the control of women's bodies and the role that this plays in the social reproduction of labour power in capitalism. This view also showed that

women experience “social contradictions of imperialism very differently from colonial men” (McClintock, 1995:6; Bradford, 1996; Federici, 2004). This work is important since it does not discard the struggle women face and allows for a thinking of work/wages beyond the factory/the sphere of production (see Mosoetsa, 2011; Fakier, 2009; Bezuidenhout and Fakier, 2006; Sitas, 1983; Bonnin, 1987)!

We must also remember that this period was not only a period where Europe was searching for markets and resources... in this particular period, we saw in the previous essay, entailed an obsession and confession about the body and pleasure. When Europe encountered the unknown terrains, the interest was not only about material resources, but the bodies of the Other were also exported to be paraded in the spectacle of anthropological showcasing (Magubane, 2004). This conquest of the world by White European men also entailed the symbolic representation of the land as women. Therefore, positioning the conquest of the Other’s land “as an erotics of ravishment” (McClintock, 1995: 22). “Colonialism as a regime was obsessively concerned with mapping land and subject, and the body was one specific site which became a point of capture for colonial power” (Garuba, 2002:106). Thus, the body to Garuba (2002:106) is central in the understanding of colonialism because “colonial alterity was mapped on land and subject using the body as the site of its mapping…” Later when the conquered terrains demanded their freedom, Europe was to export the dead in the form of private parts of women or bodies of women stored in some museum! Europe also exported its patriarchal understanding of history and it was not only the penis of the conquered that gained intense scrutiny but also the vagina and womb of the independent women encountered in these unknown terrains (Sjöö and Mor, 1987). As the conqueror went into the tombs and caves of those they conquered, they had discovered parietal art depicting the importance of the womb and tomb, placing the importance of Mother Earth as the giver of life and displaying the important role of women in the formation of the ‘prehistorical’ society. It is no wonder then that the women from the colonies became stars of these anthropological shows, since from the parietal art they were depicted as important figures in the formation of the history and culture of those conquered. We learn from Sjöö and Mor (1987) in their radical and luminous book titled the *Great Cosmic Mother* that this particular interpretation and importation of the bodies of those conquered was not to discover their ‘being’

scientifically but to destroy the importance of the female figure in the historical formation of the world. Colonialism was the exportation of patriarchy on a global scale and an exportation of dead female figures in the period of independence. Sjöö and Mor (1987) place women at the centre of great revolutions and evolution (the biological process beginning as female), religious changes, archaeological formations, anthropological interpretations- the formation of culture, and society (the sociological). Therefore, they argue we cannot understand the process that began from the land without studying the factor in all of this-the woman. Drawing from the book by William Irwin Thompson (1981), *The Time Falling Bodies Take to Light: Mythology, Sexuality and the Origins of Culture,* he indicated that evolutionary hominisation is firstly the formation of female features. Secondly symbolisation, the manner in which we develop speech, shows that symbols of communication emanate from women, with research indicating that speech develops quicker in women than men. Thirdly, the most important stage was the relationship with the land through agriculturalisation, which is the domestication of seed and food production led by women. Using these stages, Sjöö and Mor (1987) indicate that the problem is not a lack of sufficient evidence to show the importance of the contribution of women in agriculture. For them, the problem is at the epistemic level since this knowledge is silenced because of the patriarchal and colonial view that comes to dominate. Sjöö and Mor (1987: 42) argued that:

> Our primordial and practical, material-magical perception of oneness between ourselves and the universe is the innate female state which, in this modern patriarchal world, we are all supposed to "grow out of" in order to become . . . men. In the place of our ancient female mode of being, now referred to as "primitive animism," the academic psychotherapists, God-logicians, existential poetry technicians, and new car salesmen offer us their own product, called "the agony of alienation," otherwise known as everyday life—which you can fix temporarily by buying something.

In his critique of Wolpe and Morris, Mafeje (1981) goes on to argue that their failure to offer a clear analysis of how Blacks treated land in the precapitalist society limited their view on understanding the concept of private property. He argues that if one uses Meillassoux's (1972) works there is evidence that if primitive societies were interested in lineage then it is cattle that was regarded as private property, rather than land, since it was cattle that showed how wealthy a

man was and it is cattle which was used in acquiring women (through lobola/ dowry) (Mafeje, 1981). However, even Mafeje (1981) does not hear how gender-loaded the language of "From REPRODUCTION to PRODUCTION" is. It might have been acknowledged that the societies that the men studied were patriarchal, but an acknowledgement is not an analysis, therefore there is a need to indicate the relationship between women and land since this might help in fostering a different meaning of what it means to belong to the land. My work is not immune from this critique since the entry point of my questions comes from men (White I might add) and I am also a man!

Let us return to Morris (1976) who is not using the above schema of production/reproduction but instead, focuses on the 1913 Land Act as that which was intended not only to ensure the securing of cheap labour in the mines, but also as a policy which was intended to bar Blacks from squatting on White commercial land. Hence, he looks at the White land as the domain of class struggle. It is clear from Morris' work that he accepts the dispossession as a given (that which does not require a historical analysis), thence he does not see the Whites as occupying the land illegally. Besides, he would not have seen that because by virtue of apartheid, White occupation of land was seen as legal and that the only relationship Blacks are supposed to have with land was as servants. This relationship is said to be accelerated by the state, which was serving the interest of the Afrikaner farmer. One has to note that the popular belief that the 1913 Land Act is the major event in the dispossession of land is problematic since it bestows too much narrative power to the state/ policy and aims to evade the colonial encounter, whether from 1652 when the Dutch ship docked or when the Xhosas where fighting the British as free subjects. As Beinart and Delius (2015:39) show that "dispossession was largely complete by 1913, so the quantity of rural land falling under this Act was very limited, probably not more than three per cent of the total." This is to say that dispossession of major hectares of land during this period had already occurred. If one is interested in dispossession, one has to try to understand the major struggles around land (waged by Blacks in defence of their way of life) that occurred before the Union of South Africa.

According to Morris (1976), the emergence of the money form relations in agriculture is an indication that capitalist relations in agriculture were already ushered in. I can point to the work of van Onselen's (1997a) which shows that even in the 1930s onwards there were still sharecropping arrangements in South-Western Transvaal as that which is in contrast with the argument Morris (1976) who only argued that such relations were only present in Northern Transvaal. Morris (1976:296) does not write about sharecropping (or use the word extensively), instead he speaks of a feudal mode of production (FMP)[22] (which predates the enforced labour tenancy from above), and hence, he argues that labour tenancy:

> …pre-dated the enforced transformation [through the 1913 land act] of many squatter peasants into labour tenant relations. In some very important respects however it was fundamentally dissimilar in this earlier period. It had its origins in earlier times of land abundance when agriculture was definitely pre-capitalist and production was limited, not being oriented towards exchange. Labour tenancy in that situation was [before the 1920's] was "'free' labour service (i.e. no wages were paid at all), yearly continuous labour for 'two days a week' so that the tenant was completely bound in serf-like manner to the soil and the availability and usage of the labour tenants' own implements (oxen etc.) for working (e.g. ploughing) the landlord's land. In exchange for this purely labour rent, the tenant received land and grazing rights. This particular form of labour tenancy (corresponding to feudal corvée labour') was however dying out by the 1920's. By then most labour tenants were being contracted for a definite period of time (usually 3-4 months) and left free to make their own additional arrangements after that.

The aim by Morris (1976) is to show that there is a distinction between the CMP and FMP in terms of how surplus extraction occurs. Morris (1976:299) also draws from the works of Hindess and Hirst to show that despite the property relations in this mode of production, in the FMP products of production do not belong to the landlord since he does not own the labour power of the tenant. "Surplus labour is therefore directly 'given' (i.e. politically extorted [or through extra economic coercion]) to the landlord in the form of rent. Under the FMP the very production of necessary labour/surplus is therefore not part of an indissociable process, as under capitalist production" (Morris, 1976:299). By possessing their implements, the dispossessed (to use the language used by Morris-the direct producer) had that which allowed for the reproduction of

[22] It must be reiterated that he is arguing that in the White lands, Blacks did not own any land.

their own labour power (Morris, 1976). In the "CMP the direct producer is separated from the means of production…he has to sell his labour power like a commodity in order to subsist" (Morris, 1976:299). When Marx was writing of the CMP and the proletariat having to sell his labour power like a commodity, the idea was that the proletariat becomes an object who relates to the world as an object. Unless the proletariat comes to some form of consciousness (class for itself-which is when the proletariat has the power to resist) and achieves its human status of transforming history (smashing the capitalist production) (Lefebvre, 1947). If one accepts this, then it means we are no longer dealing with people who are capable of feeling for they have become commodities since they "possess nothing but… [their] labour-power offer[ed] for sale to the capitalist" (Morris, 1976:300). As Morris (1976) reminds us that a mode of production cannot produce the conditions of its existence/reproduction or transformation; this can only occur through the class struggle in social formations. Thus, to explain the transition, Morris (1976: 309) draws from Lenin to show that:

> The transition from the dominance of one mode to another, i.e. the specific 'road' that will be taken can only be the outcome of a concrete class struggle. There is therefore no single invariant path in the transition from (e.g.) feudal agriculture to capitalist agriculture. There a number of 'roads' that can be taken- how else could capitalism in English, French, American, Prussian and Russian agriculture have developed in such different ways?- and which path is taken is primarily dependent upon the class struggle within that social formation. If we return to our question-why did labour tenancy dominate agriculture in its capitalist phase in South Africa?
>
> The answer to the question of the particular road that resulted in the transformation/retention of labour tenancy rather than, e.g., the complete separation of the direct producer from land, has to be sought in the concrete conditions of the class struggle that ensured the victory of that particular road.

Morris (1976) points us to two changes in this period, namely the structural changes/contradictions in the 19th Century and the class struggle in regards to the disintegration of labour tenancy and migration into the cities by Blacks. He argues that most White farms had been large in the 19th Century, with some portions of the farm remaining unused. Agriculture was not very profitable, access to cash was scarce and farmers could not mechanise the industry

(Morris, 1976). Hence, the White farmers could only afford payment in kind and at the same time, there was the possibility to earn wages in the cities in the gold mining industry. Therefore, high wages had to be paid in agriculture to ensure that there is an adequate supply of farm labour (Morris, 1976). To Morris (1976) what this period did was to accelerate the transformation from "labour service peasants" to "labour tenant farm workers" who were contracted to work the land on a fixed contract (say about 3 months-this was the period of the emergence of the money form relations in the sector). These contradictions became more visible in the 1930s-1940s (post the period of the great depression and world war one) which Morris (1976:312) sees as a process of an "uneven development" which favoured the mining industry, to the detriment of agriculture. The process was as follows: the demand for gold (and the high prices) meant that there was a demand for labour in the mining industry (this was also followed by the boom of manufacturing in 1932), shortage of seasonal labour (as labourers left the land to work in the mines), the cost of agricultural implements, the reduction of grazing land for cattle and a lack of an increase of wages for farm labourers (Morris, 1976). Because of these conditions, the agricultural road in South Africa to him was Prussian, whereby the feudal Junker economy in Prussia "was transformed into capitalist agriculture by the landlord acting as the agent of capitalist transformation- i.e. from above" (Morris, 1976: 310). According to Morris (1976:310) what made the Prussian path possible is that the Boer estate had what he sees as an unrestricted political power and an access to state power and "the absence of an emerging rich peasantry"[23].

Morris (1976) argues that the path was met with resistance by the labour tenants. If the labour tenant was not given a labour tenant 'contract' that allowed them access to larger land for their cattle, they would leave the farm and ask for a 'pass trek' and move to another land owner where they would negotiate a better labour tenant agreement (Morris, 1976). I aim to cite Morris (1976) at length, in paragraphs to follow, to show his understanding of land, labour and resistance (regarding his reading of asking for a pass trek) which to him was purely an 'economic' one and based on 'class struggle.' As it will be visible, there are inconsistences in his statements that need to be dealt with to show that the revisionist tradition failed to transcend the language of the

[23] Bundy (1979) is in agreement with Morris (1976) about the Prussian Path, albeit he sees state intervention as a method which was used to prevent the economic competiveness of the African peasantry.

economic, which they inherited from the liberals! Morris (1976) gives the first response by the labour tenants regarding the aforementioned structural changes and argues that:

> The dominated class did not just sit idly by, accepting the situation with stoicism. They responded, as best they could, in defence of their class position. It was, unfortunately, not enough of a response in the long term. It was however not surprising, especially in view of the near total lack of response or patently inadequate response on the part of all the supposed representative of the African masses (a sizable portion being labour tenants!) to organize, unify and ally with their class struggle. In the long term they could not transform their struggle into political class struggle, but in the short term their class response-albeit unorganised, disjointed, individualistic and in practically every sense a-political-was sufficient to exacerbate the farmer's crisis and continuously reduce it... The most general response to the curtailment of land and grazing was a general 'deterioration in the racial situation in the rural areas which seemed to have their origin agrarian conditions'… Farmers complained bitterly of a changed attitude of Natives towards farmers bewailing the fact 'that a strained relationship between the two exists' now… The mood of insubordination was prevalent throughout the country districts…

It is clear that Morris (1976:322) criticises the idea of reading the labour tenants resistance or the farmworkers resistance through the lenses of subjectivity and factors in the farmer's response to indicate that the struggle was economic. He argues that:

> The economic class struggle, on the farmer's side, was grounded in the impossible structural conditions they found themselves in. Their actions cannot therefore be reduced simply to a subjectivist explanation-e.g. 'backwardness' or 'prejudiced maliciousness' although they displayed that side of the struggle so wholeheartedly to make it seem superficially plausible. In essence they were trapped in an extremely unfavourable internal and external situations, as one important report, which was not at all overly sympathetic to them realized. 'Many Free state farmers are struggling with antiquated methods to produce crops for a world market that is supplied largely by mechanized agriculture and they are not to be blamed for safeguarding their own economic position'… It was a class struggle rooted in the structural conditions of the conjuncture.

Morris (1976: 323-324) goes on to show that:

> The second response of labour tenants was purely *economic* in the sense that they withdrew their labour from a farmer who had curtailed their grazing and land rights, and tried to move to another farm which they hoped would be more beneficial in these respects. Often of course this would involve moving from one district to another… They were defending not only their incomes but also the labour tenancy system, i.e. they were attempting to maintain their *partial access to the land*. *Land and cattle were not simply economic means to ends*. They were objects to be valued in themselves. They still established him within the coordinates of *an ideological past* only recently left behind… The causes were manifold, amongst which the most important were the function of cattle as lobola (dowry) payment, and their fairly recent peasant past. Even if labour tenants were no longer peasants, this does not mean that their class position was not permeated with a peasant class ideology (emphasis mine).

The debate with Morris (1976) and the social historians was also based on the fact that he was too 'structuralist' (Tatham, 1992). It is not only Morris' (1976) structuralism, which is mortifying, but also the fact that in his language of the economic, he sees some kind of rationality on the side of the labour tenant and the White farmer. The labour tenant, to him, is able to ask for a pass trek since he is aware that in some region there is a White farmer who is willing to give him some access to land. So the pass trek was used as a bargaining tool and the question that emerged here is: was the labour tenant not already insecure given that he had no attachment to the land (the pass trek is a representation of this precariousness)? We learn from Lacey (1981) and Plaatje (1998) that to trek was a dangerous move since it was difficult to find a farmer that never made steep demands on the landless. Morris (1976) is aware of the question: what was the tie the labour tenant had with land? To him, it has to do with some peasant past, some ideological past related to cattle and lobola. What was this past? His answer would be that this was not the intention of the paper since he was "indulging in an artificial exercises" of speaking of modes of production (Morris, 1976: 339). Why would the Blacks fight for land then? Was the fight for land economic? In the Marxian sense, did this struggle reflect a peasantry wanting to hold back the wheel of history? Was this the case in all clans in South Africa? As Mafeje (1981:131) indicates that the "omission of parallel struggles by originally autonomous pastoralists, clan and lineages as a reaction to conquest is indicative of an inability to theorize the

colonial factor." Morris (1976) fails to ask what was colonial about this situation; instead focuses on what was economic and the economic rational to him trumps any subjective understanding. "To do otherwise is to succumb to the fallacy of a history without subject and to the substitution of modes of production for human action and consciousness" (Mafeje, 1981:131). The work by Mafeje (1981) which is a reflection of the pitfalls of Marxism/revisionism in South Africa is stimulating, albeit its intention is still to include that which has been excluded in European-derived theory. It is shocking that despite his aim to rescue the theoretical deficiencies in the Marxian tradition, his piece was seen as convoluted and its points were not attended to. Maybe his cry for inclusion was not possible since they (Wolpe and Morris) failed to understand what he was pushing them to do - to ask the question of what was colonial about dispossession and asking them to investigate deeper into what they caricatured as precapitalist ideology. Mafeje was instead met with silence. As Mafeje (1981:137) asks "if 'class-struggle' is the motor of history, can this be materialised, without political agents? Concomitantly, can we conceive of political agents, without an ideology/subjective identity? In our times imperialism means not only economic exploitation but also *confrontation between different subjects of history* [emphasis mine]." This then brings us to the idea that I have raised above, relating to the view that seeing the struggle for land as an economic struggle is problematic for it neglects other views regarding land and terms them 'subjective' or ideological. Perchance the language of economic struggle was also intended to try to deal with the question of race, which the liberals had raised. To be 'economic' is to be rational. These scholars were intending to speak on behalf of Blacks who were assumed irrational or the farmer who was said to hold irrational views! Thus, class struggle justified the economic rational. In the end, we never get to understand the question of the subjectivity of the oppressed if we employ this model since this subjectivity is seen as that which is reactionary (remember my discomfort with Marx, 1851/1852 and his comment on the peasantry).

For now, let us draw our focus on the work by Bundy to further elucidate some points of this essay. Bundy's (1979) book on *The Rise and Fall of The South African Peasantry* is one of the books that belong to the revisionist tradition (transcends it as well/belonging to social history[24]),

[24] Since he tries to offer a historical view from the experiences of the peasantry and sometimes offers their voices.

albeit his interest is underdevelopment theory. Therefore, what Bundy is doing is to chronicle the history of African agriculture in South Africa, with 1870 to 1913 being the point of interest. The cases he focuses on are the Cape, Herschel, Natal, Transvaal and Orange Free State. The period of 1870 was when there was a discovery of diamonds in Kimberly and in this period "mercantile capital was dominant in Southern Africa, and was primarily interested in extracting commodities produced within the precapitalist sector" (Bundy, 1979:239). Because of this demand a number of African peasantry, in the cases he documents, were able to respond to the opportunities presented by the market economy. Post this period (including early 1900) we witness a shift in the South African political economy whereby mining capital begins to dominate and its demands for labour which it drew mostly from the countryside. The mining industry firstly had problems in acquiring labour since there was an existence of an independent peasantry who could avoid supplying its labour power to the mines. From this tradition, we learn that this independency and ability to resist work was seen as a threat that needed to be dealt with and the state intervened intensely to facilitate the process.

Bundy (1979) weighs in on a number of questions and his entry point is the everyday life of those who were colonised and how they were able to negotiate their insertion into the market economy. Therefore, unlike that peasantry we encountered in Marx who seek to turn back the wheel of history, the peasantry in Bundy's (1979) study were moving with the economic times and did not intend to return to Morris's ideological past. Bundy's (1979) point of analysis is not the violent resistance to colonialism by those oppressed, but their interaction with the market. At the same, if we read his conclusion we realise a lot about colonial violence masked as that which he terms in Marxian terms as an extra economic coercion that led to the death of many Black in South Africans in the countryside. For if it was not colonial it would have not suppressed the emergence of the Black middle capitalist class for the state in its aim to protect the interest of Afrikaners aimed to ensure that those who were controlling state power were to be the main dominant class (Mafeje, 1986).

From the reading of the book, it is clear that Bundy (1979:1) is also writing "corrective history." This stance of corrective history is propelled by the idea that "[T]he emergence and existence of a peasantry, and its initial productive boom and its relative economic sufficiency, tend to have been obscured by the decisiveness of its later decline" (Bundy, 1979: *preface*). He argues that most (liberal) historiography at the time had their gaze on White farms and focused on how productive Whites were when compared to the Black farms who failed to respond to the economic changes in South Africa especially from the 1900s onwards. It was said that this was because of the "inherent weaknesses of the tribal economy, the disadvantages that it imposed on Africans when they encountered the cash nexus and market relations, and the inability of Africans either to adapt to that economy, or to forsake it, so as to participate 'successfully' in the market economy" (Bundy, 1979:3).

If the scholarship focused on the Black peasants (especially the liberal historiography), it was argued that because of their irrationality which was linked to tradition, the Blacks could not negotiate the various economic transitions in South Africa. It is the 'irrational' and 'uneconomic' attitudes that Africans were said to have [destroyed African progress]" that sets Bundy on the path of corrective history; his answer is that from a closer examination of the period of 1870-1913 it can be argued, "African peasants were more efficient and productive than white farmers" (Bundy, 1979:125; 69). Just like his contemporaries, at the time, Bundy's (1979: 243) political economic account is still within the realm of the economic, that which is interested in showing that the rise and fall of the peasantry in South Africa needs to be explained:

> …in terms of the particular historical features of economic growth (and not in terms of its opposition to a rational and colour-blind development)…underdevelopment of an African peasantry can only be understood with the framework of the development, severally, of agrarian, mining and industrial capital in South Africa… The emergence and decline of the peasantry was a necessary component of, and not distinct from, the process of capitalist development in South Africa: the structural underdevelopment of the peasantry was the other side of the coin of capitalist development in South Africa.

In search of veracity, it is here that one can begin to see the generational mission of the scholarship of the 1970s. Despite its theoretical claims, it was still concerned with revising/correcting history, this commences from the economic, and the basis of this corrective history, as indicated, is to prove the rationality of the colonised Black! To seek justice for the historical misrepresentation of Black life was the journey of this scholarship. In Bundy's case (1979) it was also his preoccupation with the underdevelopment theory, which was making waves in the 1970s. The prostration to the economic emanated from the logic that the analysis made by the liberals was spurious since it adhered too much to the laissez-faire approach failing to show contradictions and contestations in the economy (Marks, 1975). To be fair, we also judge the authors project not only from the epoch they are part of or from their ideological orientation but also by the set of questions that guide their project and from that vantage point, one can also explicate its blind spots. I intend to focus extensively on Bundy (1979) because his book is the source that gave zeal to my own intellectual project. It was in his preface and his critique of South African historiography being too preoccupied with political economic questions (with a strong emphasis on the economic) that made me realise that my project was not erroneous; 247 pages into the book I was disappointed that he also could not transcend that which he critiqued. We remember that sometimes a critique begins with an appreciation of the work or in agreement with the work. Perhaps the critique of the time failed to epistemologically move according to that which aimed to go beyond the silences of its interlocutors instead the voice of the interlocutors were too internalised and the scholarship suffered from vertigo and then fell to the principal of the economic since in their climb there seemed to be no salvation. "Hoist with his own petard" (Shakespeare, 2000: 135).

Did this scholarship understand the subject, those it wrote on their behalf- the Blacks? Did its desire for justice not reflect its desire to claim credence from its peers and representing the ideas of the peers as history and therefore, corrective history is also a project of the scholė? For me, it is not the correction of the past that gives impetus to the truth, but it was that contumacious will to live that makes us appreciate the truth of those faced with death. As we will see and discuss that painful trek and the question of death or that potato that haunted the farmer in his own land. The possibilities to create life in conditions where life was at threat is that which I appreciate

about this sorrowful history. It is not the corrective 'truth' that is appealing to me since it conceals the political objectives of the individual all in the name of a collective assumed to be mute or muted by history (in this we hear that susurration that finds guilty their White peers of epistemic violence)!

However, the book still allows me to make my point strappingly, that the scholarship in South Africa is still prostrating to the political economic account whose argument is also to show that Blacks are also economically rational! I validate this by showing that despite his interest in detailing the relationship that Blacks have with land, Bundy (1979) could not see this outside the economic (it is clear that he is also in chorus with Morris; I will explain). The adherence to the economic fosters a reading of subjectivity that is hoisted on the economic as if self, or the creation thereof, is that which emerges outside itself. The question of the relationship that Blacks had with land (outside the economic) is still mute! Three points of inquiry guide Bundy (1979:12), namely:

1) The relations of the peasant and the land he farmed, his crops, cattle, ploughs and pastures
2) The relations between the peasant and the market, his experience of new systems of trade and transport, prices and debts
3) The relations between the peasant and the wielders of economic and political power outside his own social class, the transfer of surplus in rents, taxes and labour, and his response to the pressures of legislators, administrators and employers.

It is the above points that guide my points of departure from the book and validate why I argue that even the *Rise and Fall of the South African Peasa*ntry is grounded in a narrative that seeks to show the economic rationality of the Black peasantry. Point **1** of the book seems to suggest that the author seeks to go beyond the economic. So, what is this relationship? How did the Black peasantry relate to the land and was it different from White farmers? What was the importance of land to the peasantry (beyond it feeding and nourishing them)? These questions cannot be answered by Bundy (1979) instead, points **2** and **3** are much more important to him. Why do they

become important? They are important since they seek to present a different account to that which was presented by the liberal historiography- the inefficient Black peasantry who could not rationally use the land. This critique of the inefficiency of the Black peasantry in South Africa can help in dispelling the myth that it becomes impossible for small-scale farmers to produce for the market since they are inefficient when compared to large-scale commercial farmers. If one is interested in those economic questions then one will find a gold mine of statistics in Bundy (1979) that proves otherwise (this is the interesting part about the book- its idiographic depth/ empirical evidence). To Bundy (1979) it was the "cumulative and interacting fashion" of the political and economic that led to the fall of the peasantry (Bundy, 1979:132). Therefore, the Rise and the Fall, that is to say the early period of growth and the latter period of stagnation, involved factors that were outside the peasant's control. These include wars, recession (international factors), environment (drought and rinderpest), the influence of traders (as people who bought the produce, gave loans, and recruited the peasant to work in town), state legislation/ intervention (interested in supplying labour to the mines and farms and the formation/protection of White commercial agriculture). Therefore, the conversion from peasantry to proletariat was a result of the interaction of these factors. To Bundy (1979:238) during the periods understudy there existed three types of peasants: 1) those who were found in the reserves or areas designated for Blacks whose traditional structures were not altered; 2) those who were peasants that occupied land that was owned by White people and paid rent (in cash, labour service, and in kind); 3) those peasants who had departed with the economic, social and traditional structures and "directed their activities to a greater degree towards the market and towards accumulation."

Let us go back to point **1** and why it is stained by the economic narrative of points **2 and 3**. As a result of the stance of corrective history, we see Bundy focusing on the argument by Monica Wilson (1971) on the *Growth of Peasant Communities* who indicated that there was "an initial period of 'early prosperity' in the reserve areas of South Africa (an in the territories that are today Botswana. Lesotho and Swaziland), followed only later by the symptoms of underdevelopment and subsistence living standards" (Bundy, 1979: 3). From this, Bundy (1979:11) tries to draw attention to what he means by the term peasant from a range of sources and he arrives at this stance:

> An African peasant was a rural cultivator, enjoying access to a portion of land, the fruits which he could dispose of as if he owned the land; he used his own labour and that of members of his family in agricultural or pastoral pursuits and sought through this to satisfy directly the consumption needs of his family; in addition he looked to the sale of a portion of what he raised to meet the demands (taxes, rents and other fees) that arose from his involvement in an economic and political system beyond the bounds of his immediate community. Like peasants elsewhere, he had recourse to a specific traditional culture; and under colonialism, with the sudden introduction of the religious, educational and ideological aspects of the colonists' culture, the peasant could not but have a different cultural identity from that of his immediate forebears. Like peasants elsewhere, he was dominated economically, politically and culturally by outsiders in a wider society –involved in relations of coercion and obedience-but under colonialism the extent to which the state or its representatives could enforce these relations differed sharply from time to time and from place to place.

Clearly, the peasant, as defined does not always belong to the land, produces for sustenance, and then later engages with the market. This is where the colonial encounter is operative and theorising about dispossession becomes relevant. What is it that they lost in this encounter beyond the opportunities presented by the market or thwarted by the state? It becomes difficult to address point **1** because the relationship with the land is already altered by dispossession. However, the question remains: what is this relationship? The answer:

> The principal resource in Nguni society was land, but the relationship between man and land was not purely economic. The members of the society depended upon land not only for subsistence, but also for recognition as members of the social group: the allocation of land to an individual was a badge of his membership of clan or tribe. Land occupied by a tribe 'belonged to' rather than being 'owned' by the tribe; it was treated as theirs by usage (Bundy, 1979:21).

It was believed in the Nguni culture that "'all land is God's, and he gave it to the chiefs only'" (Sonjica cited in Bundy, 1979:94). It was believed then that the chiefs had the power to allow people to belong to the land or the community. "Once allocated, arable land was alienable only by dispossession; if a man lost his land he lost his membership in the community" (Bundy,

1979:21). The Mfengu (the exiles/wanderers) or ukuMfenguza (to be a wanderer) did not belong to any land (they can be said to belong to the third category of the peasantry) for they had lost their land and lived as exiles. However, the Mfengu cannot be understood outside the *Mfecane wars* (which resulted in a displacement of many tribes) or the nature of dispossession itself (Ayliff, 1962; Bundy, 1979; Peires, 1981). What I mean by this is that once they were displaced from the land they never had any attachment to a particular place for they existed within many areas (finding refuge in Gcaleka land) as people who would work the land and look after cattle, engaging in the cultivation of tobacco and exchange with other clans. They then trekked from Gcaleka and had an agreement with Sir Benjamin d'Urban to settle near the Great Fish River with their 22 000 head of cattle. The Mfengu also collaborated with the colonialists in exchange for land during the Frontier Wars forming a shield between the colonists and the Xhosas (Bundy, 1979). The only way they could survive was through the accumulation of cattle/stock and hence they viewed the opportunities that came with the market economy favourable since their survival was anchored in material accumulation. Hence, they became known as the "Jews of Kaffirland" (Bundy, 1979:34). In this brief encounter with the Mfengu history, I am trying to argue that given that the Mfengu were separated from the land and never had a sense of belonging, their relationship with the land or their existence was expressed in economic terms; primarily because they were trying to avoid their experience of becoming the dogs of the Gcaleka's land again or a precarious future under other men's house. One can also find similarities between Amafengu and those who occupied the area of Herschel where it "attracted peasants who had already accumulated a certain amount of wealth, and that the absence of powerful traditional political structures facilitated further accumulation" (Bundy, 1979:152). What we observe here is a people whose existence we are led to believe was tied to the economic ideas of accumulation since they did not have traditional authority curtailing their economic yearnings. It can then be argued that without ideas of communality of land, they viewed land as private property linked to independence and wealth. In this, Bundy is responding to the idea which was raised in the *Oxford History of South Africa* at the time that the mission stations played an important role as "torch-bearers of capitalist social norms and commercial activity" since they transmitted new ideas of agricultural change and facilitated the spread of new agricultural ideas like the usage of oxen plough and the Blacks who were freed from tradition were taught two things "the word of the Lord and the payment of rent" (Bundy, 1979: 37-42).

What I am trying to allude from the above (also tracing the disappointment that I confronted from the book) is that in his study of the rise of the peasantry in South Africa, Bundy was already influenced by the liberal historiography and this influence spates the entire pages of his book. If the question of land was about belonging, what did it mean to work in a White farm and producing in halves (as sharecroppers or category 2)? What are about those sections of the Nguni's that still had access to land (category 1); how did they relate to land? This is where I want to argue that Bundy does not give us a detailed explanation as to why a number of the Nguni's, when faced with tough economic pressures, never left the land. The answer from Morris (1973) would be that those that remained behind on the farms and worked as farmworkers, denied of keeping cattle or a small piece of land, were merely suffering from melancholia- a yearning for some ideological past.

The economic rationality of the Blacks that is painted in the book clearly falls short if one goes deep with the question of what the attachment to land meant or what is the relationship that the Black peasants had with the land. Which is also the subject of the next essay and explored deeper. If the peasant was as rational as we are made to believe, as soon as the White farmers began to adopt capitalist ways of production rooted in large scale production and employment of wage labour, many Black peasants would not dare remain in that land (Bundy, 1979). For it did not make any economic sense if one remained on a farm where they did not have grazing and ploughing rights. This we witnessed in the *Native life in South Africa* where Plaatje (1998) argued that after the passing of the 1913 Land Act many of those families who were making a great profit by producing in halves trekked to the Transvaal with the hope that there would be some land available for them and their cattle, where their cattle would not be forced to work the land. They were soon to discover that there was no land available to them. Let us hear the sorrow of the wander to nowhere in that *One Nigh with the Fugitives* in 1913*:*

> Needless to say the Natives did not see their way to agree with such a one-sided bargain. They moved up country, but only to find the next farmer offering the same terms, however, with a good many more disturbing details – and the next farmer and the next – so that after this native farmer had wandered from farm to farm, occasionally getting into trouble for travelling with unknown

> stock, “across my ground without my permission”, and at times escaping arrest for he knew not what, and further, being abused for the crimes of having a black skin and no master, he sold some of his stock along the way, beside losing many which died of cold and starvation; and after thus having lost much of his substance, he eventually worked his way back to Bloemhof with the remainder, sold them for anything they could fetch, and went to work for a digger (Plaatje, 1998:53)

The trek in 1913 we discover was because many Natives were told, “cattle shall henceforth work for the landlord free of charge” (Plaatje, 1988: 52). Instead of subjugating their cattle, their future, many believed it was better to seek a life free of yoke for both the family and cattle since “[a]n African home without its flock and herd is like an English home without its bread-winner” (Plaatje, 1998: 277). Talk about some ideological past (hear hear). They refused to subject their future, their cattle to yoke and we are reminded of a distant past, of those who also refused to trade their cattle with those that came in 1652 and we now know their fate. We will see later that in their trek they were now forced to even steal a grave to bury their dead (Plaatje, 1998). All those that trek were already criminals travelling with their future in a land that could not accommodate their dreams. Now we discover a certain formulation at play here, being: -land (being landless/not belonging to the land)+labour (servants without cattle) = death! In the American literature and its wonderful phraseology this was a death bound subjectivity where the violence unleashed by the White supremacist society produced a subjectivity whose subjecthood “is formed, from infancy on, by the imminent and ubiquitous threat of death” (JanMohamed, 2005: 2). We will realise later that the death bound subjectivity is an ephemeral existence whose resistance is always related to conditions of the past speaking through the body in the present. Either to fear death or to always resist it since in this conception, it ontologically seems that there is nothing possible beyond the violence of death for the Blacks. In this, we then assume a freedom promised by death! What about those who come back and demand freedom from death? Is their death not an indication of that verdict ‘umuntu akafi aphelele?’That was the danger the Future was faced with, that many Blacks could count many of their dead as they trekked and therefore their dead were already buried on the land!

We must remember that the above trek to Morris (1976) reflected an economic rationality. However, what about those that did not ask for the trek and remained in the oppressive conditions- those threatened with death and refusing to leave the land? Clearly, we may argue that it was the attachment to the land that mattered to them. However, what was this attachment? Our theorists are mute here. The burden of not belonging to the land lay on the shoulders of young men who had no place to call home, whose fathers had no cattle (and could not transfer ways of being a man), and were forced to make means in the city (This line of reasoning is further pursued in the other essays). The question of why not trek was also asked by Wilson (1971:142) who posed in this way:

> Faced with these worsening conditions, why then did many not leave the land in great numbers than they did? The answer lies in the barriers to mobility. These were extremely effective. The *strongest* was the monetary indebtedness of farm labourers to their employers, but in addition, there were the pass laws and the rel*uctance of many to give up their grazing rights thus losing any chance of owing cattle* [emphasis mine].

We are reminded by Wilson (1971) that they were already relying on debt for their survival because of the long history of paternalism in the countryside where many farmers granted their workers credit through food items sold on their trading stores. Therefore, the major reason for their stay, we are told, was this issue of debt that had shackled them to the land. We are also told that there were many who did not trek because of the fear of losing their grazing right or the hope that the conditions would eventually improve. Those that remained behind saw their sons and daughters flee to the city, and even in their flight they harboured hope that they will one day return home, we will add Mzuzephi in the next essay as part of this category (van Onselen, 1982). The period of the fall of the peasantry is intrinsically linked to the colonial encounter and I am arguing that without an understanding of what colonialism is or what this attachment to land means, we see Bundy (1979) dwelling on the extra economic coercion as an important factor in the acceleration of proletarianisation. Unable to deal with point 1 sufficiently, it is here that point to 2 and 3 take hold. These are all economic questions that relate to the relations with the peasant and the market (as I have shown above that it was a success until the 1900s), the class relations, state legislation, taxes, and proleterianisation. The rise of the peasantry to him was a hindrance to

the second phase of industrialisation in South Africa since this phase needed cheap labour and the peasants had the power to withhold their labour. Here, again, Bundy is in chorus with Morris (1973) that the extra economic coercion serves as a class instrument as there was a desire for cheap labour from both the rising White commercial farmers and the mining industry; agriculture faced a challenge as a number of people migrated to the cities since they had 'better' wages and agriculture lacked labour. We are told that the systematic crash of the peasantry who were designated to homelands and given small barren land also resulted from the shift to mechanisation by farmers, in particular the use of tractors, and the state intervening in commercial agriculture through the creation of the Land Bank that granted loans for farmers to buy instruments of production (Bundy, 1979, Nkadimeng and Relly, 1994; Morris, 1976).

One Day We Will Return Home

Black South Africans according to Bundy (1979) were in a condition of land hunger, unable to feed themselves from the land because of the small barren plots they were assigned to by the state. Many of those who opted to migrate from the place of dearth, hunger, and death (the countryside) were to discover that there is a need to create other possibilities of life and this was the promise of a possibility of returning home. To make home better! Which home? Perhaps that was the anxiety of the new homeowner (that is why we go to the House of God)! The trekkers promised those at home that they will return, perhaps the return of the land question discussed by those in the city is the reflection of the return of those who promised to improve home or maybe just a political reflection according to Mafeje (1986:119) of a state reflecting an agenda of a stifled "petit-bourgeois bureaucratic elite".

I will be arguing that the argument of land dispossession also took on a spiritual form with attachment to land being about the question of the spirit! No, wonder then to some, as we will uncover in the House of God, this issue of land was to cause them a lot of anxiety which is concealed in that peaceful terminology of paternalism, concealing the anxiousness of the Father about their Future. The core of the argument of the essays that follow is that there is a need to see the problem of land beyond the economic lenses. The violent policy passed that Blacks could not

purchase land was a question of the Future and this entailed a spiritual curtailment that left many homeless and grave-less. In such conditions, the only possibility available at first glance was persevering the yoke of the economic forces since it promised that one day, with enough accumulation, many would return home. We will discover that this might not have captured the despair of those who trekked, as we are told that their relationship with work and the land had now become that of working for sleep (Lacey, 1981). The argument presented is that to frame the land question as the question of the economic locates the salvation of those who trekked outside their capabilities. It mutes their understanding of what it means to belong to the land and places their hopes and dreams in the hands of benevolent technocrats who will control policy and the state to write the wrongs of the past. Those dispossessed are still seen within a framework of their inability to speak and fight for themselves since it would seem they need a messiah. That is why their justice will never be had by any state or present for their plight transcends the future constructed by this present with its dubious shout of the return of land on their behalf: remember that under capitalism the formula is: -land+labour=death. Any view of the land as an economic factor of production fails to transcend the formula and looks to reform the problem under a benevolent state. Now once the problem is outlined in this manner, the messiah complex still does not vacate our discourse, for I will be asked: what is the alternative? You cannot seek salvation from me, for I am still perambulating towards it with those who trekked! To seek a way forward from me is to request that I continue to perform some epistemic violence since we will be moving with the supposition that those that suffered dispossession and had to deal with its sorrow are mute or dead.

Then one is sympathetic to the plight of Professor Archibald Mafeje's (1981) with his method and form of inquiry- trying to understanding what the colonial encounter meant. For he wanted to understand what was foreign about land dispossession. One realises that maybe his protraction of a theoretical hand of peace and scholarly criticism was an extension of a peaceful hand to those who were already holding knives and comfortable in their convictions! To lull you, dear Professor, maybe the response was still coming since your interlocutors with their knives left this land before you did. Maybe, let us consider the possibility that those who were living did not really understand your line of questioning. It is not your fault, but their inability to relate to your

wound. When you tried to ask whether it is possible for the Marxian theory to understand the vernacular- the language of the people it studied, their concerns in relation to their historical place and time (Mafeje, 1986)… I wonder of the discomfort that propelled you to ask such questions. Oh, the burden of suffering from "shades of romantic anthropology!" (First, 1978: 95).

4. Where will we die (Sizofelaphi Na)? The Return of the Black Body to itself, the Land.

From the Notebook: Where will we die?

It is Friday evening on the 10th of April 2015, I make a call to arrange to visit Mam Winnie. I had last seen her in 2014 after they had been evicted from the farm. She indicates that I can come at any time on Saturday or Sunday and I chose Saturday. Saturday morning, the 11th of April 2015, I travel to Buhle Park. I get lost and cannot find Mam Winnie's shack and I speak to some people in the area to ask if they know her and they direct me to a woman they say works on the farm and might fit my description. I meet a woman who is doing washing outside her shack, who I later come to know as Ma Dlala*. I introduce myself and I request her assistance in helping me find where Mam Winnie stays and she gladly says, "that is my friend and I know where she stays." We walk towards Mam Winnie's shack; Ma Dladla tells me stories of how they work together on the farm and how long they have been friends.

As we get inside the shack, Mam Winnie is very tense and cold towards me. I wonder what is wrong since this does not seem like the person I had spoken to on the phone who was looking forward to seeing me. I request to buy some refreshments (since she runs a small shop), sharing a coke with her son Stephen* (who is about 23 years old) and Mam Winnie's daughter (the one we met in essay 1). For her, Ma Dadla, Ma Mbatha* (who I found seating with Mam Winnie) I buy three Hansa Pilsner beers. I then discovered after a few drinks that the problem was not with me- it was because I came with Ma Dladla. While we were watching television, the conversation was about the programme on air and the comedic relief it provides. Later the conversation changes to the topic of death. Mam Winnie tells me that she fell ill after I saw her last year (from October onwards) and nearly died and it was Ma Dladla who nursed her. There is now tension in the room and Mam Winnie "jokingly" says that Ma Dladla is a witch and she did not know that she would bewitch her. How could she do such? Ma Dladla responds by saying that, "Oh today I am

a witch? How could you accuse me of such? When I was the one helping you, carrying loads of buckets of vomit, cleaning your house and making sure that you get better!" Mam Winnie says, "I am joking my friend you could not kill me." She then turns to Ma Mbatha and says that this woman is my friend. I ask how Ma Setshaba* is doing, and Mam Winnie tells me her story that "she went home (Lesotho) after a long battle with a cough that did not go away. She then passed away." Ma Setshaba was the first woman I had interviewed on the farm in 2012 and when I saw Mam Winnie in 2014 she told me that she was sick. I was very sad since in 2012 I could see that she was not well and she had told me during the interview that in July (2012) she would be going home to Lesotho to be with her family. Going home brought many fond memories to Ma Setshaba, even though she complained that the wage was not enough to allow her to go home often or buy presents for her grandchildren. Mam Winnie then adds that Ma Setshaba's children are now selling her shack. They reminisce of how they had built a community when they still stayed on the farm and how people wanted Mam Winnie to represent them against the farmer (I suspect because she reported the abuse against the farmer in 2012, see essay 1). Mam Mbatha adds that she respects Mam Winnie because she has great spiritual powers and she had helped her when her son was in trouble with the police (she does not go into details). She also says that she has never worked on the farms, but knows Mam Winnie because her children used to work on the farm with her and that is how they became friends. The conversation then shifts to the powers of the farmer, the man who assaulted Mam Winnie in 2014 and Ma Dladla says, "if you want to know a wizard that person is a wizard" and Mam Winnie agrees. Ma Dladla indicates, "he can say to you that you will not be able to work on this farm next Monday! Then the person will not come back, they will be dead! He is a wizard. He will tell you that you are sick then suddenly you are sick!" Then Ma Dladla adds, "he told another worker that she must go to Sosobala (a Sangoma) because she is bewitched and will get help. Or go kwaMai Mai (a traditional medicine market located in central Johannesburg)!" They are both in agreement that the farmer is a wizard! His powers, adds Ma Dladla, can be seen in how "one worker who also helps by cleaning his house always cleans a room with piles of money and yet they are not able to steal the money. How is that possible?" We laugh and two young men who also work on the farm request to buy four beers and I am introduced to them as Mam Winnie's son from Johannesburg and she tells them that I used to come to the farm. They then leave and a man (who is at least in his late 50's) walks in and I am also introduced to him, again, as Mam Winnie's son.

She tells him of the incident where she was assaulted by the farmer and how I brought people with me to help her. The man asks, where my umbilical cord is. This is a way to understand if someone knows their 'roots' or their home. I just tell him I from Diepkloof, Soweto, and he also enjoys some beer and then leaves.

A few hours later, the conversation then goes back to the farm and how they need to fight for themselves since they felt that they had been unfairly treated by being removed from the farm in 2013. Mam Winnie says boldly "There will be a time when we fight harder than the other workers in the area who seem to be making some gains. This will be a fight we fight on our own (sizozilwela)… But what keeps me up at night is that we are all aging and many of us seem to be fighting different kinds of sicknesses in these shacks. We wonder if it was even right for us to be removed from the farm in 2013. We wonder what will happen to us if we were to die. We ask ourselves, "Where will we die?" (Sizofelaphi Na?)… I wonder, how will my body be returned home? There is no rest here!" The sadness can be read in the faces of Ma Dladla and Ma Mbatha. Ma Mbatha then says, "eyi now she has started with the things that will make us sad and when she is like this she gets very angry." Ma Dladla adds that working with the soil is not an easy task for everything is now brown and maybe "our lungs are also brown." They laugh. This strikes me, I am also feeling sad and interestingly I have been reading some literature on land dispossession in preparation for the fieldwork. I do not ask any questions when this topic of death is discussed. Ma Dladla adds that, for example, it was very sad to see that the only thing worth selling that Ma Setshaba owned was her shack. That maybe it is a blunder to sell it since she spent most of her last days in that shack. This subject of death was not the first time I had heard it. I remember while Mam Winnie was staying on the farm in 2012, I met an inebriated man who, when I look back, I had dismissed because of his state. This man mentioned that he is pained by the insults from the farmer since he treats them like dogs who have no place to die in.

Now it is time to leave and I tell Mam Winnie that I will come back. While in the taxi going back, the conversation keeps on coming back and the question: "where will we die?" I read the following scripture and wrote it down in my fieldwork notebook.

Toil Is Meaningless

17 So I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. 18 I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. 19 And who knows whether that person will be wise or foolish? Yet they will have control over all the fruit of my toil into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless. 20 So my heart began to despair over all my toilsome labour under the sun. 21 For a person may labour with wisdom, knowledge and skill, and then they must leave all they own to another who has not toiled for it. This too is meaningless and a great misfortune. 22 What do people get for all the toil and anxious striving with which they labour under the sun? 23 All their days their work is grief and pain; even at night their minds do not rest. This too is meaningless. 24 A person can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their own toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, 25 for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment? 26 To the person who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

Ecclesiastes 2:17-26New International Version (NIV)

The Journey to Nowhere

The disappointment I read from the writing of King Solomon in Ecclessiastes was my disappointment since at that the time I had amassed myself with some knowledge on the question of land in South Africa. Yet, this particular conversation on death made me see all this strife as meaningless, especially for farmworkers. When I read the words of Mam Winnie that there will come a time that they will fight for themselves, I did not understand what this actually meant. I did not understand why this concern about death. A few months later in the book by Sol T Plaatje (1998) *Native life in South Africa*, I began to appreciate the question of death. Plaatje (1998) documents how the 1913 Land Act made criminals of all those Blacks (labour tenants) who refused to abide by the law which argued that they would become servants of the farmer and work the land along with their cattle. He encounters families in Bloemhof, Transvaal who had

become criminals as a consequence of this resistance. Instead, they trekked into unknown land and risked being caught where they would be charged for trespassing and even worse travelling with stock, which they might have also been asked 'to whom does it belong.' Many had thought that it was only in the Orange Free State that this law was applicable and ignored warnings indicating that even in other parts of the Union the law was applicable. Now all Natives without land were to become servants- those who refused this arrangement were "wandering [to] somewhere" (Plaatje, 1998: 54). In this painful trek, numerous cattle succumbed to the unfavourable conditions of the trek and many of those who trekked "incidentally [became] well versed in the law that was responsible for their compulsory unsettlement" (Plaatje, 1998: 54). Plaatje uses the words of Jesus Christ, in Mathew 24:20, when he spoke of the *Signs of the End of the Age*, where Jesus tells His disciples to "Pray that your flight will not take place in winter…" That cold winter of the Union of South Africa was to claim many lives who were travelling to somewhere but nowhere, since in the Union they were required to be servants bound to the land like serfs. Christ, in verse 19 of Matthew 24, had said, "How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers!" They were to search everywhere and we are informed, in the scripture, that not even in the desert would Christ be found! This was a painful trek, for many had left their places of birth and had to travel the cold land with children. This was the plight of the Kgobadi family, who travelled with a sick child who later died on the journey to nowhere. After the death of their offspring, they were confronted with a challenge of where they would bury their dead:

> The deceased child had to be buried, but where, when, and how? This young wandering family decided to dig a grave under cover of the darkness of that night, when no one was looking, and in that crude manner the dead child was interred – and interred amid fear and trembling, as well as the throbs of a torturing anguish, in a stolen grave, lest the proprietor of the spot, or any of his servants, should surprise them in the act. Even criminals dropping straight from the gallows have an undisputed claim to six feet of ground on which to rest their criminal remains, but under the cruel operation of the Natives' Land Act little children, whose only crime is that God did not make them white, are sometimes denied that right in their ancestral home (Plaatje, 1998: 59-60)

This was a painful end of an era, for the land, as I have argued, was already gone and those that trekked were to be reminded that the land is no longer their ancestral home. 'Oh, where will we die?' I can hear them ask themselves… This was perhaps the pain of being homeless and grave-less which the scholarship, I am dealing with, failed to understand when touching on the land question. Maybe that is because as Whites they had been guaranteed a home in South Africa and from their privileged position never imagined land this way. All those who trekked from the countryside where official criminals and we will discover in the House of God that the criminals could not be treated with benevolence- the language fit for them was that of violence so that they understand that to desert the Father is to attract violence.

Being in the shack and hearing that conversation reminded me of the importance placed on the funeral in Black communities. The problem of being landless expresses itself in the public cemetery. For example to acquire a grave at the Nasrec cemetery in Johannesburg can cost between R10000 and R30000 and this excludes the coffin, food, tent, etc.[25] Note that on average, the farmworker earns a minimum wage of R3001.13 (from 1 March 2017- 29 February 2018). That is only if the farmer adheres to the sectoral determination but most workers on the Germiston farms earn between R1500 and R2300, much less than the average. Funerals only then serve as a reminder of the burden of being landless. The question of death is also a question of land or the question of land is a question of death. The trek by Blacks, described in the literature, I will be arguing is not just about exercising one's bargaining power but about finding a location for the body to be returned to itself, the land. Death, such an immaterial thing I thought, but it was to reveal, to me, not only the cost of living, but also the cost of dying landless. To prepare for the future of the dead (linking them with their ancestors), a cow is slaughtered (which costs R7000 on average) and in some African cultures, the skin of the cow is placed in the tomb along with a blanket so that the spirit of the cow can be with them on the journey they are embarking on, just as the cow had accompanied the Black family on their trek to nowhere. The dead have a future, it is believed. This sadness was one that caused me to reflect a lot because from 2012 to 2015 I had laid to rest a number of my family members who were close

[25] Taking into consideration the question of whether the body will be returned back home or if they will be buried in the area they stay in.

to me. Despite the pain, I would here the elders reflect on how dignified the funeral was, as if comforted by this dignity. To then hear Mam Winnie speak of wondering where will she die? It was something I had never imagined before because I was of the view that a dignified funeral is an inevitability. Secondly, when those in Plaatje's (1998) book refused to shackle their cattle to the yoke of agricultural work, they were refusing because the cattle were their family's future. This future was not limited to the acquisition of women as the literature saw cattle in what they called precapitalist or feudal societies (a problem Mafeje dealt with extensively (see 1981; 1991). It also linked them to the world of their ancestors in times of sorrow. In times of happiness, it provided food. Therefore, what I am arguing is that the land question, which is mostly read as the material question, also bears importance to the question of the eschatological. This is why there is a need for a deeper understanding of what it means to belong to the land or finding "a way to be owned by *umhlaba* [the land] without owning it" (Ndebele, 20I5: 40). I am arguing that by being dispossessed, the historical evidence may be read as indicating that those that trekked realised that the future was futureless - for they had no place of belonging and their cattle were to be in yoke with them! From such questions, the essay shows that, perhaps, this is the beginning of entertaining possibilities of relating to land differently, instead of it being an economic factor of production. If one is charged with elevating matters of death and the subjectivity of those who had to deal with dispossession and not appreciating the structural issues, which are read within the political and the economic, then it is clear that "[w]e understand what death is only by suddenly remembering the face of someone who has been a matter of indifference to us" (Cioran, 1986: 27).

That moment was to expose me to the entire history of dispossession and reading Plaatje (1998) and the scholars that I will be citing below, I realised that in that shack or in that particular present or the now of the people I was having a conversation with, the historical (past) was alive and present. I meet them after they had left what they had seen as a home, in a land they were told does not belong to them and hence their existence on the farm had no bearing on the farmer's son needing to expand it. They had no choice but to trek. However, in their trek they never left the farm, they are still workers of that farm. In their stay as Mam Winnie has indicated they will one day have to fight for themselves! Ma Mbatha, who is only visiting Mam Winnie,

does not reside in the area, but is aware of how sad this story that Mam Winnie is telling. The sadness for me was induced, as I later reflected, by questions of how I could help and I again saw myself as incapable of helping, just like in 2012 (see essay 1). To hear an elder, someone who calls you their son, worry about their death, was something new to me. At the same time, I realised at that moment that all of this pain has to do with the land and not necessarily reduced to the finality of the body but more so the insecurity of the future where the body does not belong to the land. This is a condition of being laid to rest on the land without the land. The grave is only bought and we will realise that to buy does not always equate to belonging.

What about the land? They had just lost a home! This question of dignity, what did it mean to me? I have to admit, as indicated above, that it was my first time experiencing elders' worry about their death. This issue of death was to force me to think about what matters in my community and then at the same time, what has been missed in the entire representation of the problem of dispossession. Ma Setshaba was to return to her home to die, and from the conversation, it seems that her death also worried Mam Winnie and Ma Dladla as to whether they will be afforded dignity in their death. This is a painful story, for in those faces I knew that my approach to this problem of land dispossession, at the time, did not reflect what I was hearing. I was convinced that it was an issue of the failure of state policy in post-apartheid South Africa to redistribute land. Hearing the question: Sizofelaphi Na? I realised that I am beginning from failure; I am only seeing this pain from a very instrumentalist approach and just like the social historians, which I will turn to below and the previous generation, I was not seeing the faces of the people I am having a conversation with. I was taken aback because this painful question was to strike at the core of my being. Who am I? In times of existential crisis, I turn to *Ecclesiastes* and even King Solomon's articulation of strife as nothing new under the sun was not to comfort me. This cry for a home, was it new to me? No! As indicated, I had buried people close to me in that period and the conversation first turned me to see that death is one of the ways that highlights the peaceful return of the body to itself, the land. I was not born on a farm or a place where there is someone who 'owns' the land and can decide to evict you at any time. Home and death. What do these two things have to do with each other? I did not understand. Then I could hear again the question "iphi inkaba yakho (Where is your umbilical cord)?" Then

this question was to make me see that the question of a home is an important thing, for the child is first introduced to the land, where they are born, through the burying of their umbilical cord. What about the children born on that particular farm, where they introduced to the land? I wondered. I might be asked, 'why did you not focus on the eviction?' I contemplated focusing on that particular event, but the question was, using which tools, if the scholarship which I look at below could not understand this problem of being homeless or graveless. Then I realised that this is not a problem of research or tools for me, but it is an issue of justice. Conducting research and focusing on this moment would be a futile exercise where I would only be entertaining scholastic ideas or policy ideas for the future. At the same time, was I going to look at that moment as a detached observer and try understand the experiences of the workers to conform to academic methodology? Yet, I have argued that the problem that confronts us (see essay 1) as Black scholars that go to study our communities is an issue of justice, for we see ourselves in those many faces in those communities we research. I have come to realise that to be called a son places a lot of burden on one's shoulders and at the same time, shows a lot of love that one gets to experience because people begin to recognise you as a son, 'Winnie's son' and see you as belonging with them. Indeed, I was no longer doing 'research' (searching the Other as Smith 1999 argues), because all my tools had collapsed and that is why essay 1 looks at the question of ethics. I realised that the people that social historians wrote about were familiar to me. Ma Dladla's expression of the spiritual powers of Mam Winnie made me wonder about the mothers of those that left the countryside in the literature… how did they feel when their sons and daughters were to no longer return home? How did Kas Maine (1997a) feel that he was going nowhere in a land that had turned him into a foreigner? Did van Onselen (1997a) understand his pain? The stories are all linked, again it all depends on who tells the story and the discomfort they feel from it. In the essays, I am trying to create a certain way of seeing my community (or the world), that will be useful for me in the future. I know that in future I will return to this question of farmworkers because I have become 'too attached' to it. Then that is why I also argue that the issue is also the issue of methodology, creating ways that allow many of us who are concerned about our communities to extend a hand. Then, there is a voice of doubt that says be careful, that is not the duty of a PhD research… ahh the scholė and their freedom! In the end, maybe that is the reason that in the last essay I 'perambulate towards salvation', for Mam Winnie has helped strengthen my convictions, to read the world is not enough! The trek, I realised, was

not that people were fleeing and not intending to go home, as Mam Winnie says that one day they will fight! Perhaps they are drawing strength after losing a battle in a long historical war that is still unfolding. Below I try to map the problem again and try emphasising that to see the problem of land as an economic problem is to reduce the meaning of land. In the meantime, let us return to the Teacher:

> "[12]The sleep of a labourer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep" (Ecclesiastes, 5:12).
>
> "[3]A man may have a hundred children and live many years; yet no matter how long he lives, if he cannot enjoy his prosperity and does not receive a proper burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he." (Ecclesiastes, 6:3).

Indeed nothing is new under the sun. The questions that emerge in the work are those that have been written before but it is amazing that for me they forced me to turn more to the question of the Spiritual. That is why, at one level I am launching a critique on this issue of seeing land as an economic factor of production for the question of dispossession had also moved to the question of a Spirit that is wounded as one is detached from their belonging, the land.

Doing History from Below: Correcting History from the 'Agency' of Black People

In 1977, a seed was planted on fertile ground in Melville, Johannesburg with the meeting of a few White scholars and from this meeting the History Workshop at the University of the Witwatersrand was reaped. Those associated with the workshop had an assortment of interests-focusing on trade union formation, worker education, consciousness of the oppressed, life in the countryside, urban life, labour migration, and teacher education with the purpose of coming up with a different version of South African history (Bozzoli, 1979, 1983; Bozzoli & Delius, 1990; Callinicos, 1981; Glaser, 2001; Hyslop, 1990; Keegan, 1990, Tatham, 1992; Webster, 1978, 1985). Their period was characterised as "the rise of a "new social history" of industrial South Arica… which has tended to draw attention away from issues of political economy" (Keegan, 1990: 198). Unlike the previous generation, these scholars were within South Africa and had witnessed different forms of Black resistance, with the 1973 Durban strike and the 1976 Soweto

uprising fresh in their minds. This was a period when the winds of change had already been blowing in Africa and a number of African states were gaining independence. Their existence was a response to two challenges: firstly, what they perceived to be the Eurocentrism of the revisionist thinkers (taking issue with the theorisation by Morris, for example, see Keegan, 1990). Secondly, an awareness/response to a critique of Black consciousness about White activists and liberals as being an irksome hypocritical gang who never reflected on their privilege and role in trying to influence how Blacks should respond to their oppression (Biko, 2004, Ally and Ally, 2008). They argued that their challenge was to decolonise history and theory from the Eurocentrism of the previous generations (including the liberal historiography) (Bozzoli & Delius, 1990, Tatham, 1990). Instead of looking inwards (focusing on their community), as Biko (2004) had argued that this was the only route available for Whites, they went into Black communities and conducted different research from archival work, oral history projects, and life histories (van Onselen, 1982, 1997a, Bozzoli, 1983, 1991).

I do not intend to relook at the debate between this generation and the previous one since this is not the direction of the essay, but I am aware of its existence. Instead, I am reading this scholarship as a continuation of the questions of the liberal tradition and the revisionist tradition. It is a continuation since they acknowledge the liberal historiography for focusing on race, albeit they argued that the Black voices were mute, hence their quest for going for the hidden voices or reading history from the eyes of the oppressed (below) (Tatham, 1990; van Onselen, 1990). This view from below can be traced back as far as Macmillan (1919) who saw the challenge in South Africa as that of studying the everyday life- with the historian not emphasising big events but focusing on the everyday life of those faced with particular issues. While drawing from the method of liberal historiography, they also went against what they saw as a narrow representation of race relations in the countryside with van Onselen (1990, 1997a), arguing that his study of sharecropping shows an existence of social equality and cultural exchanges in the countryside between Whites and Blacks; instead of the narrative of unequal, violent racial relations. This new school never eschewed theorisation, for example, they returned to the conceptualisation of the agrarian transformation as Keegan (1985, 1990) did and the various workshops starting from 1978 onwards (Tatham, 1992). For example, Keegan (1990:199) took

on Morris (1979) and he argued that the problem in South Africa "needs to be retheorized" and a deeper analysis of the role of merchant capital needs to be offered when looking at the precapitalist economy. In this, he used a number of the cases that came from the workshop to drive his point across that primitive accumulation evolved in correspondence to the many phases of merchant capital. Echoing something akin to the liberal historiography, cited earlier, Keegan (1990:203) argued: "[I]t is out of these processes of primitive accumulation and state formation, also, that a state-initiated and state-sustained political economy of racial supremacy began to emerge in the interior regions of pre-industrial South Africa." Keegan (1990: 205) argues that the Prussian Path (transformation from above) as articulated by Morris (1979) did follow "familiar patterns" in the "late-industrializing economy in which capitalism arrived ready-made in the form of large-scale industrial production, with a strong state exercising heavy extra-economic coercion over a peasantry being transformed into a proletariat." Keegan (1990) then suggests that comparative work would help boost the theorisation and focuses on Chile to argue that the country went through a mineral revolution (with the presence of mining) and yet capitalism in the countryside was not stimulated (complicating Morris's argument that it was inevitable for relations to be capitalistic in the countryside because of the mining revolution). The theorisation by Keegan, despite its ability to complicate the neat version of history presented by Morris (1979), was in the sphere of a political-economic account failing to show a different reading of what the pain of dispossession meant for those who were rendered sojourners in the country of their birth (despite drawing from the work of his peers). Aware of this challenge, Johnstone (1982:23) expressed the view that the challenge for this new school was:

> …the fact remains that many specific questions of political economy, especially about the precise linkages between class interests and actions, state policy, and political history, require further elucidation. But the more we move from political economy into such areas as political sociology and social psychology - to issues of culture and subjectivity, of ideology and psychology, of meaning and identity, the more the Marxist approach is faced with the paradigmatic weaknesses of an essentially materialist approach confronted by the role of non-economic factors in history and society. And regardless of how much of a paradigmatic problem this actually is, this is still an area in need of more attention, because the fact is that the new work has tended to prefer the secure ground of political economy, and focused its energies there. The very strengths of Marxist

> political economy have perhaps discouraged a greater concern for and sensitivity to this whole issue of the non-economic.

It seems Charles van Onselen (1982), in his *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886-1914,* did respond to the above challenge. He offers a different reading of everyday life with the intention of showing that radical scholars in the 1960s (especially in Africa), through their awareness of Fanon (2005) and his praise of the peasantry as a radical force that can overthrow colonialism, might be shocked to find out that the radicalness of the peasantry or the lumpenproletariat is not always pronounced. This can be observed through his interpretation of *The Regiment of the Hills-Umkosi Wezintaba*. One can take away one thing from the study. Van Onselen (1982) seeks to show that the consciousness of the oppressed may not always be characterised as false consciousness if it does not clearly express the theoretical language of scholars about radical consciousness, which leads to the fall of oppression/capitalism/ colonialism (see also van Onselen, 1973). At the same time, he goes on to take on the work of Hobsbawm (1959) on *Primitive Rebels* and argues that the Black criminal gangs did not follow the idea of social banditry and instead they were "anti-social bandits" (which I will show below) (van Onselen, 1982: 195).

The focus here will be on the life of Mzoozepi (Mzuzephi/ where did you get him) Mathebula who left Zululand for the Witwatersrand in 1886, after he was accused of losing a horse that belonged to Mr. Tom J and was forced to pay for it. In the Witwatersrand, he changed his name to Jan Note (and later becomes known as Nongoloza- the man with piercing eyes). He enters the labyrinth life of crime and soon becomes a 'King' of the biggest underground Black gang ""against the government's law"", the Regiment of the Hills in 1890-1899 and later leading the People of the Stone /Ninevites (from 1902-1912) (Mzoozepi cited in van Onselen, 1982: 175). Van Onselen (1982: 171) is aware of the brutality of dispossession and the emergence of capitalism in the countryside, which moved "Black South Africans off their land, separated them from their families, reduced them to the status of workers and then ruthlessly relocated them to towns." In the towns, they were on a "leash of the pass laws, they were soon exposed to two

sociologically similar institutions which served the rapidly industrialising economic system particularly well-the prisons and the mine compounds" (van Onselen, 1982: 171). Because of this "prison-compound complex", Nongoloza's gang was able to grow through recruiting the labourers in the mines and in the prisons "since in South Africa today's proletarian was tomorrow's prisoner" (van Onselen, 1982: 195). The life of crime can then be read as an act of justice since the gangs would rob White stores. However, as van Onselen (1982) tries to show that Nongoloza was not "Robin Hood, the archetype of the social rebel 'who took from the rich to give to the poor and never killed but in self-defence or just revenge'" (Hobsbawm, 1959: 13). Instead, the Ninevites robbed even Blacks, especially migrant miners. If social bandits are respected and hidden by the community since they are perceived to be protecting their interest (description provided by Hobsbawm (1959)), then the Ninevites did not fit this description since they terrorised even the oppressed Blacks (with the exception of the 1890s when they existed in Shabalawawa). Hobsbawn (1959) observed that the social banditry came to exist during moments when the primitive societies became modern economies and the peasantry was shifted from their land. Van Onselen (1982: 195) agrees with this, as he shows that between 1880 and 1920 many Black people shifted from the countryside to the city, albeit the Ninevites were under the "*conceptual baggage of the countrysi*de [emphasis mine]."

The conceptual baggage of the countryside, to van Onselen (1982), means that the gang members did not let go of the memory of the countryside. The attachment to the countryside is only read as a conceptual baggage - making one wonder if van Onselen (1982) understands the pain of not having a place of belonging or a home, forced to stay in a hole as they did in Shabalawawa. Maybe the Blacks that joined the gangs needed a place they could call home since they could never go back home at that moment. Van Onselen (1982) is mostly fascinated by the refusal to be fully proleterianised. Hence, van Onselen (1982: 194) argues "[T]he earliest Ninevities can thus partly be seen as landless labourers seeking to return to a peasant life that was being rapidly destroyed; urban bands with a form of rural consciousness resisting proleterianisation." We can then choose to go back to Marx (1851/1852), as well as Marx and Engels' (1997) characterisation of the peasantry as those who seek to hold back the wheel of capitalist progress and argue that van Onselen (1982) even though he is able to show that this peasantry could speak

for itself its consciousness was nonetheless that of a people suffering from the conceptual baggage of the countryside. Therefore, they are not revolutionary for they are stuck in the ways of the old. Mzuzephi's cooperation with the police as an informant after serving many years in prison can be read as a man who seeks to go back home (to the land), to a place he can die peacefully in since he "spoke warmly of… [his] longing and love for cattle and the countryside" (van Onselen, 1982:194). This scholarship, in its focus on the consciousness of the oppressed, was interested in how those oppressed like a gas in a porous material were able to seepage through the laws of the state, which were intended to make them proletariat in the city. What I am arguing is that the authors of this new school were interested in showing that in their trek and in the conditions of being criminals, Blacks were not irrational beings who could not navigate their way around a harsh city. Therefore, the rationality of the Blacks expressed itself economically, since in the city they found economic means of survival (crime, washing clothes, domestic work, prostitution, etc.). Hence, the "informal sector" for example is seen as allowing for those with an entrepreneurial spirit to survive (Bozzoli, 1991: 45). These scholars were unable to fully escape the 'economic' and their mobilisation of the concept of the bargaining power, as it will be seen below, reflects this inability to escape the logic of economic rationality; let us turn to another work from van Onselen (1997a) to clarify this point further. The White scholarship took interest in speaking back to state policies, or their cronies in academia, by using or documenting how Black people survived outside the gaze of the racist state. *The Life of Kas Maine*, who was a sharecropper in the South-Western Transvaal/The Triangle (1894-1985), can be used as another example. What seems to be at the core of this story is the narrative of the economic, and in this case the "economic independence" of Kas Maine and his family during their existence as sharecroppers (van Onselen, 1997a:3). The story of Kas Maine retells the painful story of dispossession and highlights what van Onselen (1997a:8) seeks to extrapolate from the story, whereby:

> …the emerging South African state engaged in a hundred year war to seal off the sharecropping frontier so as to deliver politically privileged white landlords a Black labour force that capitalist agriculture demanded. It is within the context of this long march north and white landlords whose whispered verbal agreements remain muffled to this day by the sigh of the Highveld breeze. Only when we place the strivings of the Maines in this broad context can we make sense of the limited *options they could exercise when forced to choose between 'right' and 'wrong' and 'evil'*. Kas

> Maine's odyssey was but a moment in a tiny corner of a wider world that thousands of Black South African sharecropping families came to know on a journey to *nowhere* [emphasis mine]

Van Onselen (1997a) reads the painful story of Kas Maine as that which had moments of success in the history of the violent encounter with the colonial state and its policies that aimed to maintain the existence of a Black soul that is without a home. Hence, Kas Maine and his family in their journey to nowhere, are seen as people who had to rationalise their existence since theirs was a family in a "process of adaptation" (van Onselen, 1997a:8). Kas played a role of being a "chameleon amongst the Boers" (van Onselen, 1997a:336). What was lost in the journey to nowhere can never be reclaimed by decision-making (or Kas's economic independence, his bargaining power/ his power to ask for a pass trek) and van Onselen (1997a) is aware of this but instead, chooses to tell a good story as the two subjects of history met: the White settler/ coloniser and the Blacks/colonised. This story involves terms likes of cultural osmosis (van Onselen, 1990, 1997a). This involved relations whereby there was no great "economic distance separating" the White landlords and the Black sharecroppers and instead "developed a modus vivendi embracing shared ideas about dress, health, justice, language, production, recreation and religious life/ Poor Afrikaners emerged… 'Africanised'… while better-off Africans were far more 'Afrikanerised'" (van Onselen, 1997a: 7). This reads like Legassick's (1972) thesis on the frontier tradition, whereby he was arguing against the ideas that were raised by the liberals (as shown in the previous essay) since in the context of economic cooperation Blacks and Whites forged relations, which were not always violent. Yet, the authors neglected that which bound the two subjects of history together- the violent history of dispossession (who gets to 'own' the land). At the same time, that influence by De Kiewiet (1941:79) who argued that the "reading of South African history is the growth of a new society in which white and black are bound together in the closest dependence upon each other" is one that can still be detected in the preface of van Onselen (1997a). In the preface, he tries to reflect on his life in the countryside and how this interdependence between Afrikaners and Blacks was not always violent. It can also be argued that the commonality of experience between the colonised and the coloniser stems from the understanding that the coloniser and colonised shared a common life, the colonised life. Leroke (1998) was to argue that the story of Kas Maine was van Onselen's story since it concealed his

autobiographical desires represented through the Maine family. This is perhaps, one of the epistemic silences of this work. The author or the White scholar, with the aim of speaking back to what is misrepresented about their society, in turn, misrecognises the Maine's. Van Onselen being an Afrikaner and the historical narrative placing a burden on colonial violence against the Blacks on Afrikaners leads him to try to show that in the platteland there is some social equality. Perhaps this scholarship carried metaphysical guilt- that is why when challenged by the emergence of Black consciousness they went to Black communities- the White man's burden, which goes to great pains to show that within the cracks of segregation and apartheid there were certain White individuals who were different. We will return to this problem in the next essay, which wants to problematise the systemic issues by looking at interpersonal relations as if the political problem of difference was one that was merely attitudinal. Lest I be accused of being polemical or advancing an argumentum ad hominem, let us go back to van Onselen's Kas Maine.

The sharecropper's journey to nowhere attests to the pain and sorrow I have been describing, which goes beyond the economic. What I am suggesting here is that through the peaceable relations that emerged during sharecropping, van Onselen (1997a) prostrated to the idea of cultural osmosis, instead of offering a deeper analysis of the pain. The last request of a pass trek by Kas Maine, from his long time 'friend' and sharecropper Piet Labuschagne, reflects the failure by van Onselen (1997a) to see beyond the economic. Kas Maine in his moment of desperation turns to Piet for a cart because his daughter is sick and Piet denies the request because a kaffir cannot use the cart. We must remember that earlier van Onselen (1997a) had indicated to us the great relations between these two sharecroppers. The economic was the bond to this friendship and at the same time, it can be argued that the political, the emergence of Afrikaner nationalism and its expression through the state, is that which breaks the friendship according to van Onselen (1997a). Clearly, for van Onselen (1997a) the economic pact was disturbed by the political. What I am arguing is that for van Onselen (1997a), the economic is the greatest equaliser and we will see below that we can extend this to the entire periods of scholarship. They never had a clear understanding of what the racial relations meant in South Africa, instead there is an implicit belief that the economic will trump the racial relations or that the economic shows that it is not enough to explain issues of race in South Africa. Therefore,

perhaps in the future, the relations will take on a class expression; through a class expression, it was then believed that the subjective (race) which maybe reflected through the state policies would be done away with. Who is the subject they are analysing? To understand their subject, I think it would have been better for them, as I argue above, to enter into a mode of self-reflection… who they are, where were they born, and their society. Then maybe they would have fruitful conversations with those they studied; instead, they were burdened by the messiah complex, speaking on their behalf, carrying that which Biko (2004) saw as a character of their society of believing itself to be able to express the suffering of Blacks. To be fair, maybe that is not the duty of the White scholarship to be addressing the questions I am asking, maybe that is the duty of my generation to understand the pain of dying without a place of burial (a place one can call home). This may help us provide ways of being, that do not only seek to merely make life bearable for Black people, but also ways that offer a different political understanding of belonging. Maybe it is not a coincidence that the scholarship which emerged in the period of Black consciousness decided to focus on the consciousness of the Black people and they sometimes found it to possess a revolutionary vigour and sometimes lacking and they argued that theirs was intended to see Black lives from"…below, however they [Blacks] see things in terms of their own" (Bozzoli, 1991:62). Perhaps it is also not by coincidence that I found myself reading Bozzoli's (1991: 226) book on *Women of Phokeng: Consciousness, Life Strategy, and Migrancy in South Africa, 1900-1983* and realised that "[a] concern with death and its attendant rituals, is present in all the testimonies." Let us give this book some attention below.

Through the assistance of Mmantho Nkotse, who conducts intimate and detailed interviews with 22 elderly women in Phokeng, who were in their late seventies and early eighties, Bozzoli offers us a study of the consciousness of the women. Offering "an exploration of…the more intimate private domains within which power is fought over, and consciousness born-those of personal life, family, community, and experience" (Bozzoli, 1991:3). One wonders how the women would narrate their stories to Bozzoli if she were the one conducting the interviews; and at the same time, how would the book read like if it was written by Nkotse? This is not just a parenthesis, for the stories were shared with Nkotse as guidance for her generation as a young woman who comes from a village near Phokeng. The interviews are presented as a conversation and yet the

voice of Nkotse is not present, it only appears when she 'probes' the participants so that Bozzoli can make her point. Clearly, the project itself, that of doing history from below, is paternal/maternal in nature, whereby the Black researchers appear as 'data collectors' trained on which questions to ask and how to do research in their communities with people they recognise as their mothers, grandmothers, fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers, and sisters. The irony of all of this is that Black consciousness had argued that Whites should focus on their communities and instead, those critiqued went on to teach Black students how to conduct research in Black communities. This reminds me of Spivak's (1994) critique on questions of representation (see essay 2) and how the intellectual, in their journey to make the 'unheard voices' heard will have to learn to represent themselves. Bozzoli's voice appears as that which orders and instructs which elements of the consciousness of the women are important, but at the same time, she presents the work as if she is not present and yet her intellectual yearnings guide how the voices ought to be (re)presented. This is what I call the epistemic silence of the intellectual in essay 2.

There are three questions which guide Bozzoli (1991); the order of questions is not particularly placed according to their importance, however the last point of interest seems to be what is of main interest and 1) and 2) are used to provide empirical validity to the account of doing history from below:

1) To examine the broad processes and events that have shaped their experiences as Black South African women.
2) To explore the specific ways in which their gender has affected their lives.
3) To study the forms of consciousness they express in their own interpretations of their histories.

Bozzoli (1991) argues that her task is not to construct a phenomenological study of the evolving subjectivity of the women who are interviewed but instead, seeks to look at subjectivity through a sociological account grounded in questions of structure and agency; mainly through "[W]hat happens to consciousness when the forces of structure and agency are so unevenly balanced?" (Bozzoli, 1991:2). Bozzoli (1991:239) eloquently elaborates through the book that there is no

neatly ordered view of consciousness and by so arguing, she dispels the two versions of history that preoccupy her as she reads the life stories, namely:

> The "victimology" that caricatures Black South Africans as the somewhat pathetic objects of colonialism, racism, oppression, poverty, patriarchy, and capitalism; and the converse of this- the "rah rah" approach, which makes romantic, celebratory, and teleological assumptions about Black South African consciousness and struggle.

The above quote exposes her concern throughout the book about how history ought to be read. Therefore, the book itself involves an ordering of consciousness by the author. This ordering guides how she wants to read the history of the periods that the women give: from the 1900s (the period of their birth/peasant daughters), 1920 (the period of their youth and going to Johannesburg/leaving home), 1940 (settling in Johannesburg, marriage for many/ Courtship and Marriage/ Respectable Matrons), 1950s (the period of apartheid, different forms of resistance from the potato boycott, the bus boycott, the women's resistance against passes, mass removals from Alexander, Sophiatown/ Resentment and Defiance), 1960 (Leaving the city), and finally through their old age the 1980s (back to Phokeng/ Grandmothers and Pensioners). One would have to commend the book for endeavouring to go beyond the economic and as Bozzoli (1991:14) argues that "the lives of African men and women are thus only minimally explicable by reference to 'political economy'". One would also have to commend the book for offering the experiences of women in their interpretation of history (from the period of Kruger to Apartheid). However, the positionality of the author in the book is hidden under the blanket of how she has merely presented the "women's own depiction of their past and present" and in this presentation she might have discarded other forms of analysis, but this does not mean that she is "unaware of what is "really" going on (Bozzoli, 1991:241-242)."

Given that my intellectual endeavour is to understand the relationship that Blacks had with the land they farmed, the places they came from/stayed in, we can see that this is a theme that comes up repeatedly in Bozzoli (1991). In the Bafokeng strategy of siding with Kruger from 1836 and the chiefs' ability to be able to rely on the wages of men who worked in the Kimberly mines

during the discovery of diamonds to purchase land, the Bafokeng are said to not have been completely dispossessed since they had a place they could call home even when they were in the city. Hence, one can see that Mrs. Tshedi (cited in Bozzoli, 1991:186) recalls how one Tswana women spoke to those who did not join the women anti-pass march in 1953, relating it to the fact that they had a place they called home:

> One Tswana woman went to them [Xhosas, Tsongas, Zulu, Pedi-my insertion] and said, "Hey you are busy here making profits because you don't care for what happens since your land has long been taken away from you by whites. Your chiefs have sold your land to the whites, now you have come here to work for your children and you don't care to join in our struggle. You are satisfied when you rent a house, we [Tswanas] rent houses with the hope that we would go back to our villages and settle there eventually…

Hence, we see that the language during the time of forced removals in the city, (the example, Sophiatown removals in the mid-1950s) was the language of "Ons dak nie, ons phola hier" (we will not move-we are going to stay here). This language expressed the fact of belonging to the land (Bozzoli, 1991; Sampson, 1956). This, to Mrs. Mekge, reflected a plight of a people who did not have a place they called home (those who used the language of Ons Phola hier). The Bafokeng women had Phokeng and they could participate in city life and forms of resistance that emerged in the 1950s but they were not too concerned about belonging in the city or a place of burial, for Phokeng was a place where they could be buried in. If they had Phokeng, why did they participate in city struggles? It can be argued that the women did not hold reactionary views of belonging, only seeing themselves as people of Phokeng for they were interested in the political, which was restricting the movement of many Black women who had come to work in the city. Maybe to them, the city was too busy for them to bury in or be buried in and at the same time, they shared the burden of those who no longer had a place to be buried in. It is the question of death that I want to turn to, and read it in relation to belonging to the land, and what this means. At the same time, we see that the language of Ons dak nie ons phola hier was a refusal to be dispossessed once again, for many had created ways of existing in those spaces that tried to offer an escape to the repressive times. Those 'slums' in the city were a place they had called home and a possible place for some to be buried in. According to apartheid logic, no Black

person belonged to the city since they were assigned homes in what was known as the Bantustans.

The Land is Dead: Working the Land without the Land.

In their reading of agrarian change, the aforementioned different generations did not see colonialism as producing an eccentric phenomenon, that of which an African had to work the land without the land (-land) or if they did, they overlooked it and attributed it to some ideological past or the burden of the countryside. What do I mean by this? Let us consider the case of the 'cattle-killing movement' inspired by the prophecies of Nongqawuse and Nonkosi in 1856-7 that urged the Xhosa's to kill their cattle, burn their corn, and dig out new pits. By doing so, they would allow for the dead to arise and the gift of new cattle, free from lung sickness, would also come from beneath the land (Peires, 1989). As Peires (1989:233) shows that the prophecies did not come true and at the same time, notes that:

> The effect on the believers was remarkable, considering the number of disappointments they had already suffered…Many who had found employment or a safe refuge returned to the destitution and starvation of their deserted homesteads. They busied themselves building huge new kraals to receive the cattle that were to rise, burning patches for gardens that would automatically fill with maize and pumpkins, digging pits for corn and cleaning threshing floors.

In this, there is the question of how the Xhosa's (amathamba/believers) treated the land. Peires (1989:157) notes that during the period of the prophecies, cultivation was considered "a human interference with the earth and the believers [of the prophecy] felt that it would 'disturb' the ground." Hence, "Xhosa labouring on the roads during the Cattle-Killing abandoned their jobs lest the noise of their picks disturb the cattle and delay their appearance" (Peires, 1989:158). Thus, the land seems to have some spiritual character that of a provider, that which holds the dead who may later arise, and may be disturbed by the use of certain utensils. Even Peires (1989) is viewing this history from a position that seeks to show that there must have been a rational explanation for why the Xhosas killed their cattle. To put it in his words, "I believe, and I trust that this book will demonstrate, that the Cattle-Killing was a logical and rational response,

perhaps even an inevitable response, by a nation driven to desperation by pressures that people can barely imagine" (Peires, 1989: 12). Elsewhere he had warned us "that history is not a work of the imagination" (Peires, 1981: viii). How then does he propose to understand the subjectivity of those who had to kill their cattle without employing imagination (his own subjectivity)? To do this he realises that he must silence certain historical accounts which reflect the voices of those he deems as having an irrational explanation of the account of cattle-killing. Therefore, the rational account seeks to present an objective view of the days of cattle-killing, as if those involved in the cattle-killing were objective beings always calculating the outcomes. Then we can continue with the formula: epistemic silence + epistemic violence = historical silencing/correction. I might also add that, unable to understand the subjective experiences (I need not remind the reader that it was said that more than 80% believed in the prophecies) of those that believed in cattle-killing, we see Pieres (1989) being at pains to show that the cattle-killing movement was a rational response by the Xhosas. This was because many of their cattle fell ill because of lung sickness. So, to preserve those that were not infected, they killed those that were. However, we see that the killing of cattle was also influenced and propelled by the prophecies of Nongqawuse (a young girl under her uncle's care, Mhlakaza). Yet, the belief in the prophecy is portrayed as a childish act filled with a lot of chicanery. My question is, can we separate the killing of cattle from the prophecies (and the practices that emanated from the instructions of the prophecies)? At the same time, the work is aware that for the Xhosa "life itself was inextricably bound up… with cattle" as expressed by the saying in Xhosa "Inkomo luhlanga, zifile luyakufa uhlanga, 'Cattle are the race, they being dead the race dies.'" (Mostert, 1993: 1187). Why would all the Xhosas, when faced with the sickness of cattle and colonial oppression, decide to choose death? The rational account cannot help explain this.

My intention is not to deal in depth with the book, but I intend to show that the author was also engaging in a project of corrective history and the language he employs falls/cannot hold since it reflects his subjective desire to interpret history from a standpoint of rationality (here I am in chorus with Ashforth's, 1991, critique of the book). In the end, what we can observe is that we are persuaded to accept the rational view of history, which is unable to understand that which is perceived as irrational (the Xhosas subjectivity). Maybe it is about time that we pursue the

irrational, as I try to do below on what it means to belong to the land. For the cattle-killing draws on a particular inference that the land always gives and those who died always come back. Perhaps this was the secret understood by many women and that is why the prophecies came mostly from women. Even worse, if this society is considered patriarchal then how could women have an influence in that which was considered a domain of men, cattle, and even went further to question their sexual behaviour, which was also defiling the cattle (Bradford, 1996:363)? Bradford (1996: 3638) argued that "[t]he causes of mass starvation have not yet been adequately determined, because the catastrophe has been seen through the androcentric lens of 'cattle-killing' and women's labour has been trivialized… Narratives that subject women to textual abuse while declining to listen to their voice." Many have criticised the work by Peires (1989) but I will not repeat the arguments here (see Bradford, 1996; Ashforth, 1991; Lewis, 1991; Sithole, 2014; Lushaba, 2015). Instead, my addition of the work by Peires (1989), to this epoch of history from below, is to argue that just like his peers in the workshop, their doing of history from below was that which aimed to offer the author's rationality as the rationality of those hidden below, assumed to be voiceless. In the end, the injustice they were seeking to address, historical records silencing the voices of Blacks, was that which they perpetuated this time around, all in search of the rationality of Blacks. I need not repeat the argument made in essay 2 about the representative language that seeks to recognise those said to be silenced by power!

We must remember that particular terminology the Xhosas used to explain war or the colonial encounter. The word was imfazwe, meaning that the land is dead and this was to express the devastating experiences of those who suffered the effects of the Frontier Wars, where during the raids, the colonists burnt the land, arrested women to prevent them from farming, destroyed the crops, and stole the cattle. From the interpretation of the Xhosas, such attacks signified the death of the land (Peires, 1981; Moster, 1993). Then land is a living entity and the attack on the land was an attack on all that lived on the land, even the dead. At the same time, we discovered from the history of cattle-killing that it was from the land that it was believed the new people would come from. In Mokoena's (Fuze cited in Mokoena, 2011:265-256) conclusion on *Magema Fuze: The Making of a Kholwa Intellectual* on "Death and Dying"; Fuze indicates that (this he does when he speaks on how the Zulu's related to death):

> It is a fact that everything was created to reflect the state [structure] of the earth so that, once the person departs from the body, it decays, and then it is buried in the soil. The grave is actually like the womb of a woman, from which the person emerges on the day they are born, and is then buried in the earth like s/he was in the womb, they disappear as if they are not yet born. Even a child must know that a corpse is just earth, it is not a person.

To work the land with the land, to be one with the land is something that is respect and hence the land is given characteristics of a living being, capable of feeling, that is to say "A person's body was created and made similar to the earth on which we are living" (Mokonena, 2011: 265 citing Fuze). Thus, the relationship that Blacks (in this case I have cited two societies from the Nguni) had with land was not that which only saw land as that which provides but as that which they were one with. Fuze was to say "'umuntu kafi aphele' (When a person dies, that is not the end to him)" (Fuze cited in Mokoena, 2011:253). To respect the land we were taught is to respect the living and the dead, but more so, to respect the dead is to respect the living. That is why in tracing a person's geanology *(izithakazelo*) we begin by respecting their dead and the land whence they come from.

What I have come to appreciate through the three volumes of the *History of Sexuality* is that people resist because of being made something they are not. To be a subject of self is to make self-accountable to self (asketics/enkrekia) (Foucault, 1978, 1985, 1986). Therefore, I am arguing that resistance is not only grounded in the material, the state, or the economy (Oksala, 2014)! We resist because we are being fashioned into something that we are not. Peasants, we are not. Miners, we are not. Farmworkers, we are not. We are what we fashion ourselves to be. That is the ultimate care of the self. Therefore, the class analysis is a science; it first needs to come with a diagnosis for it to understand the problem (the cure and sickness were found in the material!). They are asking questions like: do the proletariat possess some class-consciousness? When one asks: what is class-consciousness? They tell us that it is divided into two. Why two? Because there is a class in itself and a class for itself. They go on to explain that the latter is important since it forms the basis of organising (which Johnstone, 1982, became aware of). What a problem! What I am trying to do is to argue that the class analysis (of the 70s), during this

period, did not even bother to look at the situation in their diagnosis (the vernacular as Mafeje, 1986, argued), they assumed that all patients have a similar problem! The social history project delved into these issues through a view of everyday life from below. Despite their belief in the history from below and the belief that their perspective had a fortiori claim, since each condition they studied allowed them to argue that generalisation cannot be made without going below (Tatham, 1992). Conceptually they still placed an emphasis on the concept of the sharecroppers "bargaining position/ [power]" which lays too much emphasis on the power and rationality of the dispossessed and still locates the problem as that of the material (Tatham, 1992:235, Keegan, 1990, Bozzoli, 1990, van Onselen, 1996, Nkadimeng and Relly, 1994). The concept of bargaining power tries to eschew the view of the ""victimology"" (Bozzoli, 1990: 239) of the Black peasants of the time, but it seems indifferent to the precarious existence of the peasant and how they have been turned into sojourners battling to survive (this, of course, is not to negate the periods of success that the scholarship eloquently shows). Asking for a pass trek, for example, is to ask for death! Your cows, during the trek, might die and as a result, the owners' pride/future ceases to exist as well. The one asking for a trek had to face death we learnt from Plaatje (1998). So, if only 3% of land was left in 1913 then how did the Blacks socially reproduce themselves? Was the 'countryside' not also a place of death then? People went home to die! Life was in the City, it was believed! In their trek, one can imagine a people who found a land no longer possessing what the Africans had thought was its name since now the land had been named after the colonisers. This land, without a name (the South of Africa indicating a cardinal point on the map) to those that trekked, symbolised that indeed there was no home anymore. The land was dead! Leading Ellen Kuzwayo (1985:4) in *Call Me Woman* to ask "Where is home for a black person in South Africa?" The Black workers in the city were only to return to a place assigned to them by the state, termed home, for them to die. They discovered that they were not in the city because there was prosperity, they were in transition, waiting to return home to die (as I argued in my reading of *Women of Phokeng* and this was the case with Ma Setshaba.)… This was a dangerous transition; we will discover when we arrive in Bethal. Many discovered that they were turned into moving beings, without even a place to be buried! From this, we discover that Blacks are always running, but never early, going somewhere, but to nowhere (since there is no destination for them in a society -land). There is an attachment to the land because it is in the land that umbilical cords are buried, so if you find that your father has trekked and left your

identity behind (sometimes this also involves leaving behind the family graves), then your attachment to the land is gone! Where will we die then (Sizofelaphi na?)? That question kept on echoing in my ear and was not only a plight of the trekkers described by Plaatje (1998) or the ones found in the Marxian literature, but was present in that shack in 2015. It is a poignant question, which interprets dispossession as disturbing the linkage between life and land, land and death. Of course, this question of death was overlooked because the question relating to land is/was seen as an economic movement. If the family treks it leaves behind the bones of its predecessors - what a painful experience! Hence, the cry in the 1950's of 'Ons Phola Hier' can also be read in relation to the question of where we will die! The song by Hugh Masekela (1974) "Stimela" from the album (recording) *I Am Not Afraid* (as he tries to relate how workers from Mozambique felt) comes close to capturing the yearning that existed deep in the belly of the earth or even in Bethal. This song was banned by the apartheid state since it represented a particular yearning by those working in the belly of the earth. This yearning for that which was lost as many began to work the land without the land, the destroyed relations (love, the nuclear family), the pain of dispossession (finding oneself in unfamiliar terrain) ,the unspoken freedom that I am trying to construct for the reader (let the music play):

Stimela si hamba nga malahle

Sivele Dalagubayi

Sa ngi lahla kwa Guqa

Bathi si zomba malahle

Iyo!! Sidhl'i nyuel'e nkomponi

Si hleli nje nge zinja

Emigodini

Sikhaleli zihlobo zethu

Sikhaleli izingane zethu

Sikhalela Bazali bethu

Sikhalela abafaz' bethu

(retort) Masi buyelene'e Dalagubyi

Stimela si hamba nga malahle

Sivel'e Dalaguybayi

(Translation)

Coal train from Delagoa Bay

Let me off in Witbank

Say we go dig for coal

Damn! We eat shit in the barracks

We live the life of dogs in the mines underground

We long for our families

We long for our children

We long for our parents

We long for out women

Coal train from Delagoa Bay[26]

Those that drew from Liberalism and Marxism in South Africa, through their work, were analysing a different subject who either possessed some kind of rationality ala liberalism or who was subjected to the juggernaut of capital whose emancipation was framed within the economic language. Both shared a belief that it is in the economic that real progress or transformation can be witnessed. As Lipton's (1985:5) book on *Capitalism and Apartheid South Africa, 1910-1986*

[26] Transcription and translation from *dismal niche from* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1fIjdUEe5c

indicates that “much of the argument about SA has been couched in terms of whether economic forces, usually described as ‘rational,’ would prevail over ‘irrational’ political and ideological forces such as race prejudice and Afrikaner nationalism.” A similar point was made by the book by Horwitz (1976) *The Political Economy of South Africa* which saw the South African economic history as a battle that involves the rationality of the free market and the irrationality of what was said to be the polity (meaning state). In her book, Lipton (1985) eloquently shows and validates that the debate between the liberals and Marxist, of her time, was only just about the future of South Africa with the former accepting capitalism with multi-racial (non-racial) aspects and the latter preferring socialism. They are, however, in chorus that “the behaviour of white South Africans does not, alas, diverge much from the behaviour of comparable groups in other societies, faced with competition for resources from people readily distinguished from themselves by colour, culture or religion... ” (Lipton, 1985:11).

What dispossession did was to make Africans what they were not. Hence, the many forms of resistance that emerged during the colonial encounter, whether be it that of the Khoi and their fight for cattle or that of the sharecropper who cursed the White man. For they resisted that which was foreign to them and the kind of life they had fashioned for themselves. Here, we acquaint ourselves with the work of the Danish philosopher Løgstrup (1956) whose view of the ethical demand stems from a radical reading of the figure of Christ as a self that gives itself to the other completely (to love even one’s enemies as Christ demanded ala Luke 6:27-28/Matthew 5:43-48) as the ultimate ethical demand that humans need to fulfil, so that we may have a common ‘humanity’ that cares for the Other. To give one’s self to the land was that which we practiced, firstly, through the burying of the umbilical cord of a child (and this is perceived as the most important act in any child’s life) and with this act comes the instruction, “uwuhloniphe lomhlaba ngoba ilapho inkaba yakho ikhona (respect this land for it is where your umbilical cord is).” This might be attributed to some irrational or some desire for an ideological past, but at every Black funeral there is always a male elder walking ahead of the coffin, talking to the dead through the branch of a tree. That branch is important since it is believed that it is the one that has ‘fetched the spirit’ of the dead person, taking it back to the land. This is an important practice that shows the link to the land- in the conditions of belonging to the land, the burial of an

umbilical cord is followed by the planting of a tree and at death, a branch of that tree is the one that fetches the spirit of the person to be united once again with the land. In most funerals, the coffin is then covered with the skin of the cow slaughtered in preparation for burial or laid on top of the coffin as a reflection that the spirit of that person is going to the future (they have not died completely, for they will return or they are with the ancestors, *abaphansi* (those of the land)). Then to hear Nongqawuse speaking of cattle and cows from below the land, I was reminded of the burial service in the township with different rituals observed, that link the deceased to the land. Here is an idea echoing other various ideas emanating from the different cases cited, from Nongqawuse to Fuze, the idea that we belong to the land since we will rise with it, in death we are returned to it, and in birth, we are introduced to it through the burying of the umbilical cord! 'Where will we die' raises epistemological, ontological, eschatological and ethical questions. Since it pushes us to a different understanding of relating to the land, at the same time pushes us to a way of being that is one with the land and a form of being that is committed to being part of the land. For a true humanity or humanness, as Krog (2015) argues, is one whereby we belong to the land. I want to turn to the work of Krog (2015) to hammer this point and at the same time, articulate my point of departure from her work.

If I am a Man, I must own the Land!

Krog's (2015) contribution to *Land Divided Land Restored* in her chapter "Baas van die plaas" aims to understand what it means to belong to the land through a reading of Afrikaner, Xam (a subgroup of the San in the Northern Cape), Xhosa, and Tshwana poems. Krog's (2015:214) conclusion based on the reading of the poems is: for the Afrikaner it would seem that the "land is imperative for masculinity and power" and for the African tribes "land is imperative for the humaneness of a specific culture of caring to materialise." Let us cite one of the poems which was "recorded as oral verse in the Petrus Steyn district of the Orange Free State in the decade following the Natives Land Act of 1913" titled 'As ek 'n man is' (translated as 'If I am a man'):

> If I am a man,
>
> Then I should also have a farm;
>
> when they come ask me

what's the name of my farm.

Over-the-Mountains is the name of my farm.

If I then have a farm,

I should also then have a wife;

when they come ask me,

what's the name of my wife-

Little-heart-love is the name of my wife,

Over-the-Mountains is the name of my farm.

If I then have a wife,

I should also then have a child;

when they come ask me,

what's the name of my child-

Truly-loved is the name of my child,

Little-heart-love is the name of my wife,

Over-the-Mountains is the name of my farm.

If I then have a child,

I should also then have a maid;

When they come ask me,

What's the name of my maid-

Truly-willing-to-serve is the name of my maid,

Truly-loved is the name of my child,

Little-heart-love is the name of my wife,

Over-the Mountains is the name of my farm.

If I then have a maid,

I should also then have a Black boy;

When they come ask me,

What's the name of my Black boy-

Black-tongue is the name of my boy…

If I then have a Black boy,

I should also then have an ox;

when they come ask me,

what's the name of my ox-

Lockespedox is the name of my ox,…

Krog (2015: 208) goes on to ask "so you're a man, you have a farm, do you plant mealies, or hoe the land?" The answer is no! Clearly Krog (2015) seems to be touching on a very important topic here, that of production. In the current discourse of land redistribution in South Africa, it is argued that if Blacks are given the land they do not tend to use the land productively (Griessel, 2011). Yet in the poem productivity does not feature, so the demand for land to the Afrikaner was about a validation of one's manhood first and production only comes later, that is to say he obtains an ox at last. As Plaatje (1998) also wrote, that by 1913 many of those Natives who

trekked from the Orange Free State were confronted by vast hectors of land, there were no crops and yet the land was said to belong to certain individuals or families. To Krog (2015) this accumulation of land shows a relationship that aims to dominate the land since land is seen as a form of property that validates the man's power. I would hear in different debates, today in South Africa, when Blacks demand the land, the question becomes a condescending one of 'what are you going to do with the land? Do you want to be unproductive just like Zimbabwe?' (As Aliber, 2015, also tries to deal with such questions, albeit unsatisfactory, from a position that seeks to speak to policy; see also Griessel, 2011; Pityana, 2015).

The above question of what will you do with the land, may also allow us to engage the debate on the efficiency of large-scale farms, that Krog (2015) has debunked and the book *Land Divided Land Restored* has shown that large-scale farms in South Africa are not efficiently productive. If we engage in the debate of productivity, to say that people do not deserve to belong to land because we cannot be productive is as fallacious as believing that in a year, after claiming the land with the right implements and knowledge, the person will be 'productive'. Research has been showing that most households in South Africa are food insecure (see Altman, Hart and Jacobs, 2009). It is the future promise of profit that is laid on the land and we also learn from the story by Keynes (1931) that this future promise may also reflect greed and the (un)certainty about tomorrow. The poems also show that this kind of relationship with the land that enforces suffering to those that work that land is even crueller to the animals, the cattle, who will have to work to death. These poems, according to Krog (2016), may be showing that those dispossessed had an ecological awareness (a care for all that live on the land) that the present is seeking as an alternative to the destructive capitalist production system. This system has destroyed the environment, suffered many crises and has enforced the same methods which led to the crisis as the solution. Plaatje (1998: 63) was to argue that if we are to add the victims of the violent law of the Union that forced many to be without a home, we must add the cattle:

> We frequently met those roving pariahs, with their hungry cattle, and wondered if the animals were not more deserving of pity than their owners. It may be the cattle's misfortune that they have a black owner, but it is certainly not their fault, for sheep have no choice in the selection of a colour for their owners, and no cows or goats are ever asked to decide if the black boy who milks

> them shall be their owner, or but a herd in the employ of a white man; so why should they be starved on account of the colour of their owners? We knew of a law to prevent cruelty to animals, but had never thought that we should live to meet in one day so many dumb creatures making silent appeals to Heaven for protection against the law.

Plaatje (1998) might have forgotten to add that it was not just nameless cattle that fell. They had names; they were treated individually, seen to possess different temperaments and loved collectively. Even children were named after a certain cow. Therefore, they were indeed the future since they predicted the time to come when they fell in that trek. They showed that, indeed, the land was dead! It must have been a painful thing to witness cattle fall into the land because of starvation and the owner knowing that very soon they might suffer the same fate. This is why their future was futureless since a life without cattle was a life that was moving to an oppressive death. A death of a Black nation. All those that had to work the land after their cattle had fallen, saw themselves as cattle since "black men and women could be herded like so many heads of cattle, rearing their offspring as best they could and preparing them for a life of serfdom on the surrounding properties" (Plaatje, 1998: 274). Maybe there is a deeper fear of those 'owning' the land, that of waking up one day and being homeless in South Africa. If those that 'own' the land in South Africa were to become permanent sojourns, then that promise made that the trek from the Cape and the defeat in the Ango-Boer War was their last moment of suffering, would be broken. Krog (2015: 221) articulates a political project of what ought to be done regarding the land question:

> The land has to be expropriated and given back to itself, so that it can stop being possessed, awarded, emptied out, made exclusive, fractured by some: expropriated so that it can belong wholly to itself. We have to go into a covenant with the land, because South Africa does *not* belong to those who live in it, but by the grace of the land, those of us who live here belong here.

The above raises questions of political and ethical subjectivity in this project of allowing the land to belong to itself. However, how can we give ourselves to the land and yet at the same time free it? Here, Krog (2015) is evading the idea that there are those who have subjugated the land, have accepted the concepts of ownership, and are not willing to entertain any ideas that may put their

Future at stake. What is the political and ethical subjectivity that is available for those who are interested in going beyond ownership? As I have argued that to give one's self to the land was that which we practiced firstly through the burying of the umbilical cord of the child and later through the saying "uwuhloniphe lomhlaba ngoba ilapho inkaba yakho ikhona (respect this land for it is where your umbilical cord is, it is where all mankind comes from)." Krog (2015) is aware that most South African tribes (as the scale of this paper is still limited to South Africa) venerated the land as a place of belonging. The subjugated people cannot practice Ubuntu (Humanness) since we do not belong to the land. The subjugated people cannot love as Christ demanded his followers, for they do not have a place of belonging, where humanity belongs, that is in the land. The only recourse available in such conditions of existence, as Fanon (2005) was also aware, is violence. Once the land has acquired the status of property, with those claiming to be owners of the land and violently holding onto the title deed, then it is believed that another Father in the name of the state can expropriate the land.

As Keynes (1930) has it, that in the end, we are all dead, for we do not know what tomorrow holds. It is death that is a bride to us all and it comes at any time! It is death which is the pressing question! In every conversation I have with Mama Winnie, she relays to me the fear of dying and she continually argues that: even if farmworkers win better working conditions or better wages, they are still confronted by death and where they will die or be buried is that which bothers many. It is a reflection which makes one wonder about the nature of the colonial encounter and dispossession which uprooted many Black people and dumped them in different spaces. The farmworker who works the land without the land wonders if she will be returned to the land... We will also discover in essay 6 that there are Spirits who are not finding any rest, who have come back to haunt the land that is 'owned'. By going with the idea of an impossibility of owning the land, the argument entertained is that of a collective political subjectivity whose ethical awareness stems from the principal that we belong to the land. The land cannot belong to the individual or a political collective that speaks of interests of certain individuals over others (here we remember Mwalimu Nyerere, 2008, even though he attempted this from above/through the state). This collective political subjectivity is not singing peaceful songs for it is aware that such ideas in the period of capitalism will be met with resistance. Such ideas only reflect perhaps

my intellectual viewpoints now, but my broader argument is that this collective political subjectivity is one which will arise in conversation/struggle with those who work in the belly of the earth or from those who are working the land without the land. In interact with them about their experiences we will learn that the past is not that which ended, but they have been able to see the past, the present, and the future all at once. The introduction of the child through the umbilical cord serves a reminder that one day they will return to the land. However, the question of where will we die is an indication that in conditions where the land is dead; belonging to certain individuals and said to be important for economic use or as a factor of production, then the future is futureless for the body will have no place to be returned to. Then the alternatives proposed call for the return of the Father to decide who gets to use the land, when and for what reasons; who gets to reside where and not where. This is said to be done all in the name of justice and on behalf of those said to be oppressed because they work the land without the land. Then what is the way forward (again you want solutions in the now)? The option available at the moment or the questions I have been posing for me is to first inquire, what is this land? What does it mean to belong to the land? This is the first step available, otherwise if we are in a rush we might as well go for capitalism with a human face (and dupe ourselves that we are moving towards justice) that will argue that all that is done is done for those who cannot speak for themselves since they are oppressed by the White Father. However, we will see that the deciding Father is always anxious and anxious parents are violent parents!

The Sorrow of Nowhere

For all those that had to wander to ukuMfenguza had a secret. To create a life that was yet to be understood. To wander how to create a space for death, maybe to reach that unknown eternity that Hermoine in *Steppenwolf* speaks of (Hesse, 1955). This was not a destructive journey, for they knew the secret of capitalism; that it leads to an ontological nowhere. Attached and detached. Attached to work and detached to life. A secret Marx (1844) knew too well in his language of alienation. That which human beings had to create, a monster existing out of them, calling them to the factory, to their collective destruction. It was not the material and it is not in the material that these Souls, in their wandering to nowhere, aimed to create or recreate. It was a conversation with a future, which to them was bound to be Futureless if it dwelled only on the

language of the material. The conditions of alienation speak to a destruction of a particular relationship that humans have with nature and a yearning for a world yet to come. In death, laid the secret of life. In death, laid a resistance to the world, as we have to come to know it, that man must eat first. Oh, the revolutionary said, “Man does not live on bread alone...” (Mathew, 4:4) Was this not the refusal to even subject cattle to the yoke of toil that all these humans trekked to nowhere? Just like Christ, the Spirit led them to the wilderness. In *A Native of nowhere*, our Nat Nakasa (1964), in a foreign cold world, was met with depression, a state of an impossibility to create and he had to jump to his death. No this is not the death I am speaking of. Those that trekked to nowhere were seeking to create, hence the music that came when they no longer walked this world. This music sang of the Future and this was lived through songs that spoke of boys and cattle. The apartheid state knew the danger of this music for it spoke of a Future free from yoke. This music also served as a reminder of the disjointed time. Listen to Letta Mbulu (1973) *Zimkile* which was banned by the apartheid state (let the music play):

Verse 1

Zimkile inkomo, mama ndofika nini na?

Zimkile bekutjo, oh mama ndofika nini na?

[Bridge]

Zimkile mama! Zimkile mama, kunye nezizwe

Oh mama, ndofika nini na?

Zimkile mama, kunye nezinja

Mama, oh ndofika nini na?

Zimkile mama! Zimkile mama, nditjo nezizwe

Ha! Mama, ndofika nini na?

Zimkile mama! Zimkile mama, nditjo nezinja!

Ah! Mama, ndofika nini na?

Verse 2

Lakhala iqhude

Limkile ixesha babo

Butani mawethu, sunulala

Oh butani mawethu, kubuchayi mawethu

Butani mawethu

Kaphinde

Oh kaphinde

Kaphinde

Ndithi kaphinde

Thina sofika nini na?

Thina sofika nini na?

Thina sofika nini na?

Thina sofika nini na?

Kaphinde

Ndithi kaphinde

Ewu ndithi kaphinde

One might be judged as "yearning for ontological wholeness and certainty in the midst of what is seen as colonial fragmentation" (Garuba, 2002: 107). If we follow closely how, through fiction, Zakes Mda (2015: 263; 2000; 2013; 1995) is able to tell a story "[T]he end is always a journey" or in one of the tour de forces in American Literature, through Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man,*

"The end was in the beginning" (Ellison, 1952:571). That which seems to be lost or cannot be regained forms part of this journey, for nothing completely disappears but, of course, the invisible man in his invisibly 'free world', would remind us that to understand this occurs "at a price" (Ellison, 1952: 570). To plunge out history, as Tod Clifton aptly puts in the novel (Ellison, 1952), is a journey to seeing the world from a particular principle, beyond the reach of any violence, ideology, and power that seeks to reduce a particular history of those oppressed as nothing. It is a refusal to accept the promise of freedom, said to be found if one sells one's soul in the market. To go for ontological wholeness is a philosophical melancholia. If to be a philosopher is about transcending disappointment or if to be a philosopher is to first be confronted by disappointment (ala Critchley, 2013) and then taking a subjective ethical stance in relation to that disappointment, then philosophically it is futile to seek for ontological wholeness, for it is a commitment neither grounded in disappointment nor utopia. In this refusal that one is waging, it is clear that I am writing of a journey whose beginning seems as an ending whose ending is its beginning. Hence today the shout of the return of Black land, which in 1994 seemed as an unachievable object, as most Black South Africans voted for a party that campaigned for jobs and neglected the one that spoke of Izwe Lwethu (Our land). Is this cry not a cry for a return to some "much needed spiritual revolution" (Motsei, 2004: 156)? Motsei (2004) in her autobiography speaks of a spiritual revolution that seeks healing and confronts colonialism through accepting what was lost and why it is important in the journey of the spiritual healing to go back to this moment of dispossession. For Motsei (2004), dispossession was not merely a material loss but it was a spiritual loss that has left many Africans desiring spiritual healing. The 'dispossessor' also requires healing. Their wound might be deeper as they continue to be haunted in their Future! That is a journey they will have to take on their own if they also require salvation, but I cannot speak for them! Their problems were articulated by White scholars who were seeking justice for the Blacks while they did not reflect on their society. By arguing that this scholarship forecloses ways of seeing the land question beyond the economic is to argue that its knowledge exists as some historical archive, with evidence of how things are, have been, or ought to be. This makes it difficult to map new terrains of inquiry, as I was also paralysed by what approached me as an impossibility of arguing otherwise- against so many historical facts. That moment in 2015 was to remind me of the importance of writing history, that it begins from a person's discomfort and I was then comforted by the knowledge contained in the *Oxford*

History of South Africa that “the individual historian is conditioned by the assumptions and prejudices of his own community…” (Wilson and Thompson, 1969: v). For me, this was a moment when I was forced to plunge out of the facts of historical evidence and seek liberation elsewhere- in the discomfort of those who trekked. In the next two essays on the archive, we will be going to the historical records, to extend the argument made in these essays on land and show this misrecognition of those dispossessed.

5. Docility and the Black Farmworker, Paternalism and the Labour Question in South Africa: The case of the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) from 1940-1960.

Why the Letters Matter.

Archival material from the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) located at the Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand, offers an in-depth analysis (throughout the Union) of what, in the different correspondences, is known as 'the farm labour question' and what was referred to as 'the farm labour crisis' by the farmers. This was a cry by farmers about the shortage of farmworkers or the lack of interest by Natives[27] in agricultural work. In the next essay, I try to investigate deeper the farmers' and state's responses to the problem and I focus on the area of Bethal. The case of Bethal, it will be argued, offers us a different understanding of the violence of dispossession beyond the rational explanation of it being progressive since it proletarianised the dispossessed. In the case study, we investigate the objective of violence on South African farms to uncover the question: what does it mean to belong to the land? In this essay, the focus is not on the dispossessed per se but the one who perpetuates the violence, the farmer and the one who aims to speak on behalf of the oppressed, the SAIRR.

The SAIRR collection is one of the largest collections at the Historical Papers and I used this collection since it has an assortment of collections from letters shared amongst individuals (from the 1940s-1960s), responses from the state (for example through the secretary of Native Affairs),

[27] The term 'Natives' was used to refer to Black South Africans… I use it interchangeably with Blacks… As a social and political construct, the term Native goes through various changes from segregation to apartheid (see also Ashforth, 1990). With the emergence of the Black Consciousness Movement, the term Black went beyond the question of skin colour to reflect a collective political subjectivity of the oppressed (the state of mind) and it came to include all those oppressed by apartheid including the coloured, the Indians, even the Chinese one might argue fell into this category of Black (see Biko, 2004). This latter explanation of Black is the one I subscribe to when speaking of those oppressed.

various newspapers clippings, policy documents, minutes from meetings, etc. This collection does not only focus on the region of Bethal or one particular region in the Union; instead it aimed to give a much more nuanced understanding of the agricultural sectors. As you will see in my analysis of the letters sent in the late 1940s by Quentin Whyte, the Director (and others in senior positions like the acting director or the assistant director), that the institution itself was not an innocent think-tank responsible for research. The time frame I dealt with was from 1940-1960. Thus, the institutional outlook of what an African is like, as I will show with the letter written by the assistant director, also shapes how the institution constructs the 'labour question' (also see Ashforth, 1990 on this discourse of the Native and labour). This outlook as it is made clear in the series of letters I have read, is paternalistic, as van Wyk (03/03/1952: 2) assistant Director at the time indicates that the "attitude [of the Native] is one of UZUNGADINWA NANGOMSO (Please do not tire to-morrow) i.e. (Please continue giving us gifts, etc.)." This act of giving back to the Blacks or being a voice of the Black person's rights in some cases, as the letters show, has also led to interventions in the question of how to make Blacks/Natives interested in farm work. At the same time one realises through these letters the number of praises that go to the farmers that are paternalistic (or progressive to use their language) that if all farmers in South Africa were to follow such examples then farms would be better places. Hence in the communications they spoke of a progressive farmer[28], meaning a paternalistic farmer who cares for the wellbeing of the Native. It is for this very reason that the Bethal case would come as a shock to the institution with their concern being - why would individual farmers treat Natives this badly? This seems to individualise a systemic problem. At the same time what this offers is not how Blacks thought of their problems, but an important insight on how those who were aiding Blacks communicated amongst themselves about how Blacks behave and relate to their own problems. It is a construction that is informed by two views: the first is the idea that, institutionally, Blacks do not have a voice. Secondly, this 'inability' of Blacks to speak, to them, suggests that it is possible for those who have a voice to speak for them. As I have been arguing, that to speak for the Other has always been a challenge for most White activists who were seeking justice for this repressed Other.[29]

[28] I have come to realise that the usage of the word progressive in the archive is paternalist.

[29] This essay, however, is not an in-depth analysis of these issues and it uses the Bethal case study (the following essay) not in depth, that is to say, it does not go into detail like an MA or PhD thesis would if it was only dedicated

This calls into question how we read an archive. My intention is not to show the voice of the oppressed or how the subaltern is muted (or how difference was constructed- civilised vs savages) or how the voice of the White institutions is 'cathedralised' (seen as holding value and to be worshipped) in this archive, as many others have done before me when dealing with the archive or issues of representation (Coetzee, 1988; Mitchell, 1991; Desai and Vahed, 2010, Hartman, 1997; Lushaba, 2015; Sithole, 2014; Bhambra, 2007; Magubane, 2004; Hall, 2002; Brown, 2006). Mine is intended to follow a particular argument about how through the recognition of the Native/ Black person, as a person to be protected or spoken for, the archive does not only mute the voice; instead it misrecognises the issues faced by the 'Natives.' This idea of misrecognition is developed in other essays (especially in the essay: *Does resistance have a language?*). This is perhaps a danger of paternalism, that in recognising the 'Native' it misrecognises the person completely. Similarly, this is the danger of fatherhood and it seems that every parent is aware that they may not know their children hence each method of parental care reveals the anxiety of the parent (we leave this form of theorisation for the essay on *Perambulating Towards Salvation*).

On Method and The argument of this Essay

A question of method then arises, which I also address in the next essay, as to how we read an archive. In the archive I am more interested in the discourse that was used. As indicated in the essay on resistance, we can now agree that discourse analysis is interested in the said and also in the interpretation of the unsaid or the utility of the silences in the said and the unsaid. As it will become apparent that as we deal with the archive or the 'historical', we are already in the terrain of tracing the said and at the same time the silences in the historical. As Ernst (2016) notes, the archive is sometimes seen as a terrain of historiography since it is seen as a terrain of those who have a fixation with the presentation of a linear understanding of history or the implicit belief in a linearity of history. This was also seen as the scientific objectivity of the historical method (Iggers, 2005). If not linear, there is a supposition that deep within the archive we will discover how things are or how things were or ought to be (if certain events were not misread). For

to it. Instead, the case study falls into a larger part of my argument and the reader should read it within the logic of continuity of the argument made in the previous essay (and also carries into the next essay).

example “[f]or nineteenth century historians, the archive was in its essence an institution that made it possible to access “frozen” sectors of past time” (Ernst, 2016: 14). In reading the letters in the archive, my intention is not to present a linear story/ chronological sequence. Instead, I view the letters as important in showing the institutional view of the SAIRR and at the same time, they help in teasing out questions of the logic of representation. These views did not only reflect the institutional outlook of SAIRR, but were also ideas of a particular time in South African history. As many historians have indicated, it is difficult to present a linear account of history, but the presentation of history itself is a subjective process, which also reflects the author’s interests and biases (Deacon, 1996; Holdridge, n.d.; Brown, 2003). My interest in the reading of the letters was one of teasing out the question of (re)presentation/ (mis)representation and how this aids in the making of that figure known as the “Native”, as well as how this knowledge of the Native was one constructed from a historical encounter (colonialism in it with questions of empire) and one of the everyday encounters. I am not interested in correcting the narrative presented in the archive or to speak back to it since that would be a method that is interested in justice. Instead, we should see a continuity here. Those who were dispossessed from their ability to self-define, from the land, their voice, and their knowledge were read from a particular lens that argued that they are different given that they did not follow the ideas of the European Man/Anthropological Man with particular “physical appearance, dress, diet, medicine, crafts” (Coetzee, 1988: 22; Mitchell, 1991; Magubane, 2004). Their resistance to this (re)presentation, as it will be seen, was expressed in their rejection of agricultural work or farm work, as if to speak against that notion of the European Man/Anthropological Man who adores the dignity that comes with work.

We must remember that the time frame we are in is that of Apartheid, where Blacks had no political institutional voice/representation and the idea of separate development was seen as an alternative to the question of proximity between the different races in South Africa. SAIRR was formed in 1929 and it tasked itself “to work for peaceful and practical co-operation between the various sections and races of the South African population. One of its methods of procedure has been to study the facts of current situations in order, if possible, to ensure the elimination of causes of inter-group fiction” (SAIRR, 30/7/1959). The ‘welfare’ of the country was its concern.

As an independent liberal institute that advocated for racial harmony, through this archive we gain access to the different letters addressed to it by the state on issues of national importance relating to the economy, crime, and racial relations amongst many other issues. The letters may also be read as that which contested law-making or informed law or policy making and in certain cases, SAIRR had good relations with institutes like the Reform League of South Africa which offered different proposals as to how to reform South African prisons and questions of justice in South Africa. The question of farm labour was seen as one that might affect the racial relations in future (we may even add-what is now our present) and reports like *Labour in the Farm Economy* by Margaret Robert (1958), *African Farm Labour* by S.J. Du Toit (1959), *Farm Labour in the Transvaal* by Edith Rheinallt Jones (1945) were always prescribed to those who were interested in understanding the labour question or the shortage of labour in South Africa. These 'reports' focused on the question of how the Native is coping given that the past has changed and they have to offer services to the farmer, sometimes for a wage or for a place to stay. The propositions put forward were interested in making the Native stay on the farm and ensuring that they benefit from their labour.

This discursive making of the Black farmworker approaches us in twofold ways: through the present and the future. Firstly, the question of the present was how to make the Black workers bound to the soil instead of going to the city. We see here an important argument, that of fostering a different relationship that Blacks are supposed to have with the land. Secondly, the question of the future, which I argue in the next essay, was one in which violence aimed to secure and this expressed itself in what to do with the African children-the potential labourers. The past as we will realise does not feature unless called upon as a desire for the future (we reserve that for De Beers in the last section of the essay). In the past, as the previous essay has indicated, they [those dispossessed] were bound through their Black father, forced to labour on behalf of the 'debt' the father had to pay to the White farmer (Father with a capital F- the White Father is capitalised to indicate this assumed position of ideological paternity over the Native). The 'progressive language' came with the idea of education for both the parent and the child to reorientate their views about labour and industriousness. The language of education was a violence that no longer spoke of punishment but was one which emphasised the capital good of

education for the African child towards the contribution to the farm or the economy in general. We see here a law that aims to ensure a continuity of a violence which is not overt and at the same time, to ensure that a different understanding of work permeates the minds of 'lazy Africans'.

Docility and the Black Farmworker

On the 10th of June 1948, just 14 days in, when apartheid was merely an infant yet to wreak havoc in South Africa, Quintin Whyte the Director of SAIRR writes to various stake holders like the Principal of the Teko Agricultural School, Butterworth, The Principal of Fort Cox Agricultural School (CP), Middledrift, Flagstaff Agricultural School (CP), Tsolo Agricultural School (CP) Pondoland (CP), The Secretary of the Cape Province Agricultural Union, Middleburg (CP), The Secretary of the Transvaal Agricultural Union (Pretoria), The Secretary of the Natal Agricultural Union, Pietermaritzburg (Natal), The Secretary for Native Affairs (Pretoria), The Secretary of the Orange Free State Agricultural Union (Bloemfontein)… In the series of these letters he indicates that in their Executive Committee meeting (it is not clear that this demand comes from the Natives who had already expressed an interest in attaining some training through agricultural colleges) there was an interest in ascertaining whether there would be a:

> …demand among *progressive farmers* for trained, efficient and reliable Natives who could act as foremen, if necessary in the absence of the European farmer, or in other capacities. It was generally agreed, however, that the present training given by the Native Agricultural Colleges was not altogether suitable for this purpose, and that a course specifically directed towards meeting farming needs would be required, e.g. in animal husbandry and farm management [emphasis mine] (Whyte, 10/06/1948[AD 1947 25.1.1 General Correspondence from 1947-1950]).

The intention of this idea was to ensure that farm labour was attractive, especially for those Africans who were either educated or left for the cities or those Africans who were educated in Native Agricultural Colleges and still left for the cities since they felt that the pay was too little

for their qualifications (Whyte, 10/06/1948). This was one of the initiatives intended to solve the labour 'crisis' in agriculture; the responses from the farmers make an interesting case on how the Native mind is viewed. These kinds of suggestions were intended to appeal to the stifled Black 'middle class' who had acquired education and decided to go to the city. Whyte seems to be bringing to the attention of the progressive farmers the possibilities of exploiting this class.

Some of the responses from the different schools noted the scholarly and pragmatic interests put forward by Whyte in the letter and indicated that it would seem that the Native was not well understood by the institute since most Natives do not like farm work. The Principal at Teko indicated that such training would come at a cost for farmers since the educated will now have a Junior certificate and the farmers would be compelled to provide the following: minimum wages with regular increments, minimum standard of rations and housing, "and leave…" (Principal of Teko, 17/06/1948). This view was also supported by the Assistant Director of Native Agriculture at Flagstaff Farm (19 /07/1948) (in offering "purely and private remarks for what they are worth") who went as far as arguing that in the Transkei this school would not prove useful since the "student is trained in all branches of farming…" Such a trained Native would be costly, as some of his students were. Some farmers offered them £2 to £5 per month "which was too low to attract a good student. The best of the students are offered jobs as demonstrators and plantation foremen etc. with salaries ranging from £96 to £156 per annum, plus privileges and pension facilities, with prospects of being appointed to more responsible and remunerative jobs (Assistant Director of Native Agriculture in Flagstaff, 19/07/1948)." This form of farming impressed the Secretary of the Free State Agricultural Union (01/07/1948) who argued that in Transkei he had witnessed farm labourers who were farming on their own and this would be beneficial to the "European Farmer" and the nation. The Secretary added that the "most useful labourers are those who remain on the farm and have gained practical experience under the guidance of the farmer" (01/07/1948). The argument put forward by Whyte, in encouraging this, was also to ensure that those trained get a better wage since agriculture was not seen as a viable route for most Natives because of the low wages it offered when compared to jobs in the city like mining. As if to add insult to injury (the issue of low wages in agriculture), Mr. G.W. Meyer responded to Oliver Walker (Editor) after seeing an article in the *Farmer's Weekly* where it

seems Walker had advertised the call by SAIRR for the training of Natives in agricultural colleges. Meyer stated that he has been "on look out for a competent foreman for many months but have been unsuccessful" (Meyer, 1/09/1948). He was wondering if the editor would suggest one. He would employ such a Native for a salary of £7.10s per month with free food and quarters (Meyer, 1/09/1948). "It is essential that the foreman be a Zulu linguist and be able to control Native Labour" (Meyer, 1/09/1948). Walker (6/09/1948) responded by forwarding the request to the agricultural schools on Vuma Farm, Eshowe and Fort Cox King Williamstown "and asked them to contact him directly… [but] [a]special course for foreman would still be the ideal thing, I think." Other principals wrote to Whyte to indicate that it is difficult for one Native to accept another Native as their superiors and any effort to train them as qualified farm managers raises their eyebrows (this was expressed by the principal of Tsolo, 28/07/1948; Principal of Teko, 17/07/1948). While the principal of Teko called for Agricultural Unions to follow decent working conditions when acquiring such a native; the principal of Tsolo argued that "once a boy is trained in anything he [feels that he] is entitled to a soft remunerative job, together with the dislike and sometimes fear these people have for farm work; and secondly the Natives [are] suspicion of any one of their own people who may be put in control of them." (Principal of Tsolo, 22/07/1948).

What interested Whyte the most was that the Transvaal Agricultural Union wrote back and indicated that it would consider the proposal and invited Whyte to present in their next Executive Committee meeting "in order that …proposals may be fully put to and discussed by the meeting (Secretary 24/07/1948)." Whyte (02/11/1948) in turn indicated that he would send J.D Rheinallt Jones, "formerly Senator representing Natives for the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, was a member of the Labour Advisory Council, and formerly Director of this Institute. He and his former wife had acquired considerable knowledge of farming conditions particularly in this province." As you will see later for example, the South African Agricultural Union (SAAU) took to heart the suggestion put forward by SAIRR and it also called for a better treatment of farmworkers as 'humans'.

From these General Correspondences (AD 1947 25.1.1), we see different factions and institutions pondering on the question of how to get Blacks/Natives interested in farm work. We also observe the Native Affairs Department (NAD) coming in with different propositions. Therefore, these letters and a number of proposed solutions aim to come up with ideas of what is good for the Black person/Native. This is a conversation about the Native but without the Native being involved. With this came the subsequent misrecognition of the issues faced by the Natives. This is a classic case in any policy frameworks of the time (as Ashforth, 1990 reminds us). These letters seem to suggest that perhaps the problem is a problem of skill, meaning that with sufficient training those educated Natives would render their labour and help in the profitability of the farm. This idea the principal of Tsolo finds problematic as he argues that "[T]he labourer who has been brought up since childhood on a farm has a far better grounding in the general farm work than a student has a far better grounding in the general farm work than a student from one of our schools, whose introduction to good farming method is when he starts this course" (22/07/1948). The idea of training the Native in farm work, suggests that prior to European ways of farming, the Native never had any idea of how to farm efficiently (a myth dispelled by Bundy, 1979). What made other Blacks run away from the farm? This question is dealt with in the next essay. Interestingly, it is the principal of Tsolo who is suspicious of the ideas proposed by SAIRR and throughout his letter he indicates that the institution does not understand how the mind of the Native/Black person functions. He argues that it is difficult for any Black person to accept authority if it is not White/European. Therefore the ideas of modernising the agricultural sector by transforming the chain of command will create friction on the farm.

While the PhD by Du Toit (1996) on *Paternalism and Modernity on South African Wine and Fruit Farms* focused on the modernisation project that swept through the Western Cape Wine and Fruit Farms in the early 1990s, it would be interesting to deal with the different botched ideas during apartheid that aimed to modernise agriculture, especially ideas regarding how farm work ought to be done which Posel (1995) tries to allude to when dealing with the role of SAAU's conception of apartheid and how to deal with the labour problem. Such ideas, as Du Toit (1996) is aware, rested on the idea of how the mind of the Native is. In the Cape it was the coloured that was favoured more since the idea of paternalism, which can be traced back to

slavery, saw most of the coloureds as 'children' of the farmers (as was indicated in the previous essay on the *Problem of Land and Labour in South Africa*). Some ideas of modernisation did fail, as Du Toit (1996) indicates, because it was difficult to move from that historical past which entailed ideas of surveillance and discipline of the workforce. The principal of Tsolo seems to be moving with the belief that the project of modernisation is bound to encounter the 'natural' behaviour of the Native (you will see this is also one belief that the assistant Director of SAIRR subscribes to, that any planned change will have to bear in mind the behaviour of the Native).

This effort by SAIIR did not go unnoticed as *The Star* newspaper (11/10/1948) published a story titled: *Race Institute Suggests Plan to Train Native Farm Workers* and indicated :

> In an effort to strengthen the Native *ties with the land at the same time to solve the farmer's labour problems*, the Institute of Race Relations is trying to devise a training scheme for Native farm foremen. It envisages the co-operation of the four agricultural schools of the Native Affairs Department and of the farmers themselves who would be expected to pay satisfactory wages. Outlining the scheme to a representative of The Star to-day, Mr Oliver Walker, an official of the institute, said that a circular had been sent to the provincial agricultural unions asking whether they should support the scheme and, if so, what type of training should be given. They were also asked to stipulate an agreed scale of wages. He emphasised that one of the reasons for the low productivity of South African agriculture was because it was largely based on untrained and therefore, inefficient, Native labour (emphasis mine).

In the same newspaper (11/10/1948), under the title *Facilities at Four Schools,* the problem on South African farms was also seen as the problem of skill and education*:*

> Most of the 2,000 Native tenants and labourers on the farms were illiterate and inefficient. That was why the 62 per cent… of the Union's population engaged in agriculture produced only 12 ½ per cent of the national income. This and the drift of the Natives from the farms posed the question: would it not pay the farmers to give joint consideration to the possibility of making the conditions of farm labour more attractive-better paid and with a much wider range of responsibilities and duties than at the present? Training would be essential for this and use could be made of the Native agricultural

> schools at Flagstaff, Tsolo, Teko and Fort Cox and of the training facilities at Vuma Farm in Zululand. At these schools students who have passed standard six are given a two-years course embracing animal husbandry, sheep-shearing, crop rotation, ploughing vegetable gardening, pig farming, etc.

In this language of work, we also see the question of efficiency and skill tiptoeing in slowly. It tiptoes as the principal of Tsolo was aware that to acquire an efficient and skilled labour force meant paying them a higher wage and some farmers during this period were having difficulties financially; hence their continued call to the state for support. Thus, efficient and skilled labour force is an expensive labour force. As the study on *Farm Labour in the Transvaal* conducted by Edith Rheinallt Jones (1945) was at pains to show that the relationship between land and labour is one which is historical and that the Native's refusal to go work on the farm, despite them having skill, cannot be divorced from how they responded to their detachment from the land. Rheinallt Jones (1945: n.p) cites one Native who said:

> "my grandfather woke one morning at his own kraal and found a white man who said 'You are living on my farm and you must work for me'". Such families have now with changing ownership, with sub-division, with mere intense cultivation, little real security unless they make themselves good and diligent farm workers. Even when they have been in town work and worked faithfully and well for periods they dislike long days of farm work for anything but very short periods. "The farmer expects us to work from sunrise to sunset". "We have to go out and work even if it is raining".

Just as a parentheses to the above, we must remember that when talking of a farmworker on the South African farms, as the previous essay on the *Problem of land and labour* has illustrated, the debate has always been around the question of categorising the South African experience. As indicated, the most discussed forms of occupying the land are these three: labour tenancy, sharecropping ('kaffir farming'), and the third being squatting (paying rent and not working). I have discussed them in the essay on the *Problem of land and labour* and the response by the state in dealing with these conditions and ensuring that those dispossessed become fulltime labourers on the farm.

The Story of Kotsokoane: The Native who wanted to improve the Reserves.

A story that complicates the relationship with education, skills, efficiency, and the binding of the Native with the soil is one which is found in the series of letters between Whyte, Van Wyk, Professor Rob, Joseph Kotsokoane, and the NAD (01/03/1951-07/03/ 1951). This started with the letter which was first written by Professor Rob (04 /11/1950) who beseeched the Secretary of Native Affairs on behalf of Joseph Kotsokoane, who was registered in the Botany Department at the University of Witwatersrand and had pursued post-graduate studies with ecological field work done at Keiskama Hoek under his direction, to attain financial assistance or later in the letters by asking to be offered an appointment under the agricultural staff so that he can be able to fund his PhD studies. This series begins with Joseph Kotsokoane calling the office of F.J. van Wyk, the acting Director of SAIRR, asking for financial assistance to further his studies… Van Wyk (31/10/1950) writes to Professor Rob stating that he cannot give him funding (as discussed on the phone) but Rob should write on his behalf to the Native Affairs Department. On 31/10/1950 Joseph Kotsokoane writes to the NAD. In this letter he indicates that his thesis is going to deal with a matter of "national importance", the rejuvenation of soil in the Native Reserves. In this heart-breaking[30] letter where Joseph Kotsokoane tries to prove his worthiness for the bursary he indicates that:

> It is now my wish to spend two years (1951 and 1952) in the Ciskei collecting material for a PhD thesis at the end of the two years I should have a fairly sound knowledge of the ecological problems and I should then be ready to take up a technical post with the department of agriculture. *As I am no believer in long holidays and vacations*, I intend to prosecute research continuously and only return to university to prepare and submit my thesis." [emphasis mine]

For those two years he was requesting a total of £656 in funding. On the 12/1/1952 the Director of Native Agriculture (addressed to Dr Eiselen the Secretary of NAD) echoes the sentiments of the Secretary of Native Affairs that Botany is a pure science; unlike agriculture which is an applied science. Therefore, they cannot grant him a bursary and that he has basically wasted his time by studying botany. The fact that he possessed a B.Sc. Botany and Mathematics, B.Sc. (Hons) was not at all impressive to the Director. He indicated that the University of the

[30] It is heart-breaking because as a Black student from a 'disadvantaged background' interested in knowledge production and in a world were education is expensive, one can recognise this plea, and it is all too familiar!

Witwatersrand was not the best place to study agriculture; the best universities are Stellenbosch, Pretoria and Pietermaritzburg. On the 25th of February, the Department of Ecology wrote a lengthy letter addressed to Wits Principal H.R. Rakes expressing its disappointment with the NAD including the Director of Native Agriculture for their failure to employ Kotskoane and saw it as a form of gate keeping by Europeans who could use this Native for the benefit of his own people. What leaves a bitter taste in the mouth about this story is that here is a Native who appealed to the 'ethos' of a hardworking Native who is willing to serve the European as the letter shows : he was going to deny himself holidays! Kotskoane was willing to go to the reserves when most were leaving the area. Clearly, what Kotskoane does is expose the benevolence of White rule in South Africa which argued that the Natives can develop on their own in the reserves. While the reserves were suffering from overcrowding and soil erosion; here is a man who was willing to deal with such issues. Needless to say that the late Kotsokoane (who died in 2004) went on to be a prominent politician in Lesotho, dealing with matters of ecology and agriculture and obtained an Honorary Doctorate at Fort Hare University in 2001.

Strangely, Kotskoane was never one of those who Verwoerd described as part of a "class which has learnt to believe that it is above its own people and feels that its spiritual, economic and political home is among the civilized community of South Africa, i.e. the Europeans" (Verwoerd cited in Tabata, 1959: 15). In his book *Education for Barbarism: Bantu (Apartheid) Education in South Africa*, I.B Tabata (1959) tells of a destruction of the resilience of the Black nation, of how the education system was structured to ensure that Blacks remain inferior and to serve the European nations, a task which was first articulated in the idea of Native Education, which preceded Bantu Education. With Native Education those Blacks "who could afford secondary and university education did receive the same syllabuses as the Whites. Thus a trickle managed to reach the professions, holding the same qualifications as any other qualified people in the country" (Tabata, 1959:15). These were Natives like Kotskoane who Verwoerd despised, who according to him had notions of equality and rights for those oppressed (Tabata, 1959). Thus, the Bantu Education Act of 1953 was intended to curtail the growth of such individuals, 'an education for barbarism' according to Tabata (1959) since it ensured that Blacks were to remain inferior and servants to Whites. As Verwoerd (cited in Tabata, 1959: 40), in his speech in

parliament, indicated: “What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice? . . . That is quite absurd.” The question of education was a question of prospects for a different future for those deemed inferior and to Verwoerd, the Blacks in the South African economy were never intended to acquire knowledge that is similar to Europeans/Whites. Therefore, despite Kotskoane’s plea of being a hardworking Native, the conditions at the time saw such education as impractical.

The South African experience is interesting for the education that Blacks received and the manner of their separation from the land comes to affect the same White comfort that the architects of apartheid were seeking to construct since the figure of the Black criminal or the “criminal spectre” is always lurking in the shadows (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2017:97). Oh when the chickens come home to roost! As we will see later, this question of education was extended to the children of those who were dispossessed and it will become clear, education of the African child on the farm was for the benefit of the farmer.

If Work Can Be Decent; They Will Work

On the 23rd of August 1943, the Secretary for Native Affairs follows what Lacey (1981) saw as two major problems confronting the White population in South Africa regarding dispossession of Africans. One, as the Secretary shows, was the availability of labour for farmers:

> The Department has for example been asked to enforce the provisions of Chapter IV of the Native Trust and Land Act Section *thirty*-eight of that Act provide that it shall be the duty of the Government to make available land in a scheduled area for Natives displaced as a result of the operations of provisions mentioned… There is at present insufficient land available in the ownership of the Trust to enable the large numbers of Natives who would require to be accommodated to be settled, and the Department could not therefore carry out the obligation imposed upon it by law. Moreover, the application of the Chapter would merely force redundant squatters to move elsewhere without necessarily engaging themselves in *farm labour, and the position of the farmers would be alleviated*.” [emphasis mine] (23/08/1943).

In such a condition where Africans have been rendered landless and allowed to be squatters, as highlighted by the Nylstroom Correspondent in an article entitled *Farmers Act Against "Squatters"*, making land available for Africans is proving cumbersome for farmers who need labour. Hence they suggested a £10 tax to be levied on owners of farms who permit squatting and "a limitation on the number of families to a maximum of five per property, and no limitation on the number of "labour tenants" on any one farm" (23/02/1951). These recommendations came from the committee appointed by H.F. Bosman, Magistrate of the Waterberg, to investigate the idea of limiting labour tenants in the Waterberg district. This report showed a bias towards labour tenants since in its definition it indicated that a squatter "render no service but pays hire for the privilege of residence" and the labour tenant "renders a minimum of 90 days' labour in return for similar facilities" (23/02/1951). The labour tenant was good for the farmer who did not mechanise or lacked capital and needed cheaper labour, for in return of tenancy they attained labour. The squatter was not rendering any labour and would not render their labour to those farmers that needed labour. It was the landlord who allowed for squatting (23/02/1951). Rheinallt Jones (1945) was to reflect that the problem came when a farmer who had problems with attaining labour saw his neighbour's farm filled with Natives not working and also blabbered about the possibility of criminality:

> …neighbours, jealous of the amount of labour available to them, complain. I have never heard of the Department of Lands or Agriculture complaining of the deterioration of such a farm in a European area, but such complaints may have been made. Neighbouring farmers do talk of such farms harbouring thieves and ill-doers, I do not know with what justification.

Thus (secondly) the Secretary of the Native Affairs is aware of this quandary, it is argued that "relative to labour in towns and in industry, farm labour is generally not popular… The first essential is therefore to create on all farms certain minimum conditions so that no employer may affect the reputation of any district, or of the farming industry as a whole, and so that when the Native is recruited for farm labour he has some assurance in regard to the treatment he may expect" (23/08/1943). This is a long suggestion in South Africa, where it was argued that the farmer's reputation needed to be changed since most Africans would not go work on the farms. This debate went to questions of the paternalism of farmers, that is to say, how farmers treated

their employees by paying them in kind instead of cash and therefore Africans preferred areas that paid in cash (see also the report of the *Native Economic Commission*/NEC 1930-1932). The idea was a promotion of decent work (to use modern language) in agriculture. As the amendments to the Native Labour Regulation, which was put forward by the Farm Labour Committee indicated, there is a need for farmers to follow the amendments which allow the Department to do the following:

a) Appoint inspectors with various powers;
b) Prescribe particulars of housing, feeding and treatment of farm labourers wherever these are brought within the definition of "Native labourer," and cause the prosecution of those who did not comply with the requirements laid down;
c) Carry out a registration system and charge the employers therefor

If the farmers cooperated with the Department and the Labour Advisory Board it was suggested that the farmers' of different districts should try implement the following:

a) Minimum feeding requirements;
b) Minimum housing requirements;
c) Minimum wages;
d) Maximum daily tasks or hours of employment.

For these conditions to hold it was also indicated that the recruiter ought to be aware of them so as to also "advise the Natives concerned, should the recruiter insist on recruiting on this employer's behalf." (23/08/1943). The farmer could not refuse a labour officer access to their farms if they had made a visit (This is similar to the current steps proposed regarding inspection on farms (see Visser, and Stuart, 2015). These steps proposed an understanding of the labour problem on farms in South Africa through the liberal notions of legality and rights. The limitation of this was that dispossession had already rendered most South Africans illegal in the city and subjects of customary law (Mamdani, 1996, Lacey, 1981; Posel, 2001, Ashforth, 1990). The farmers' interests in what Wilson (1971) saw as a vested interest in crime was that which understood this state of affairs in South Africa that a Black person, whether in the city or rural areas, is a (potential) criminal. The domain of law expected that Blacks would be vocal if they were asked about the conditions on the farms. This expectation that in a coercive labour regime

that is linked to that which is described as the colonial encounter of dispossession, Blacks would be able to speak through legal channels was a dummy!

The language of progressive farmers or issues of other farmers not tolerating Natives and not treating them well (as the essay on Bethal will also show) was one which depoliticised the problem. Wendy Brown (2006:15) in her book *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the age of Identity and Empire* reminds us that tolerance of the Other is about power and discourse that depoliticises the problem of difference since it constructs "social injury as a matter of individual or group prejudice." Instead, she proposes that to be able to show the limits of the language of tolerance, we need to be aware that "it is strongly shaped by the legacy of the colonial settler-native encounter as well as the postcolonial encounter between white and indigenous, colonized, or expropriate peoples (Brown, 2006: 8)" It can be argued that in dealing with the letters and the outlook of SAIRR, we are dealing with a depoliticised colonial discourse of governmentality that did not reflect on questions of subject creation or subjugation and yet wanted to push for the protection of national interests or the welfare of the country. This liberal outlook, as it will be observed, is not divorced from production of ideas of racial superiority! The entire problem of difference is seen as a problem of tolerance. Brown (2006) argues that its foundations (tolerances) are not divorced from the modern liberal project that morphed from classical liberalism with the idea of individual autonomy; albeit now the problem is approached as one of difference, especially 'cultural' difference and yet this is not divorced from imperialism of the West and ideas of liberating the Other from the shackles of their culture. We also see this shock when we come to the case study of Bethal when SAIRR saw farm violence as a problem of a few individual farmers (we can say they were accused of not tolerating difference). This, of course, is that old problem of proximity between two different races, which I try to offer a different reading of in *Perambulating Towards Salvation* and see it as a problem of where salvation comes from for those who are suffering from the colonial wound.

Not as labourers but as people of South Africa

In a letter addressed to SAIRR's assistant director, Van Wyk (24/03/1952), Mrs A. Hoedemaker (from Eastern Cape in Scotts Bottom, Trappesvalley) is concerned as to how other farmers treat farmworkers as labourers and she indicates that she is trying to find ways to help them deal with social, economic, and health problems. She has tried to get the services of a social worker but the cost of the social workers is going to be £20 per month and she would not be able to afford such an amount. Her letter to Van Wyk is intended to find solutions to the three outlined issues faced by the Natives. In doing this she argues that she "do[es] not look on them as labour but as people of South Africa (Mrs Hoedemaker, 24/03/1952)" This line impresses Van Wyk whose response (3/3/1952: 1-2) is that such an attitude:

> …is a good starting point and if only your attitude could be generally accepted by South African farmers, farm labourers would, I am sure, benefit very greatly. I do think that the most important thing is that farmers should treat their labourers with courtesy, consideration and kindness and then the other things will follow naturally. At the same time, one must always bear in mind that these people are, generally speaking, very conservative, their views of what is important in life often differ very much from our own and I personally do not believe that we should aim at drastic changes and drastic reforms, provided our attitude to them is one of kindness and fairness. From a European point of view I think it is true to say that they are, generally speaking, backward, both educationally and in their way of living, but I am of the opinion if they are well housed, well fed and sympathetically treated, they are very happy people, something which, I am afraid, cannot always be said about the highly civilized and the well-to-do. Because they are backward they are not always able to grasp the full significance of reforms aimed at their own improvement and my experience has been that they often regard attempts to improve their conditions with the utmost suspicion and sometimes even with amusement at the peculiarities of the Europeans. One is, therefore, really forced to move slowly, the ideal being that reforms should take place without their being aware of them. This calls for the utmost patience and understanding and a willingness to carry on in spite of the lack of appreciation on their part. So often their attitude is one of UZUNGADINWA NANGOMSO (Please do not tire to-morrow) i.e. (Please continue giving us gifts, etc.)… Subject to the above remarks I give you the following "tips", none of which I am sure, will be "news" to you.

The language employed by Van Wyk is one which takes on a collective stance in the name of the European and how the European ought to perceive African life with its backwardness. The European is a benign spirit interested in the development of the backward African/Native, but the reforms should happen slowly given that Mrs Hoedemaker is dealing with an ungrateful bunch that always prefers gifts, even tomorrow. This language is a language that seeks to show the knowledge of the White nation in South Africa, of how Blacks are (barbarians/backward) and the burden of the Whites to modernise them; a topic that various literature has touched on, that the idea of modernity/civility is located in Europe/West (see Mitchell, 1991; Bhambra, 2007; Magubane, 2004; Brown, 2006; Ashforth, 1990). This is clearly an expert speaking here (also speaking on behalf of the knowledge gained by his friends) for he "grew up on a farm – in the Eastern Cape- and lived there for fourteen years, I have now lost touch with farm life. However, I shall try to give you the outline of a plan which I base on my knowledge of Xhosa farm labourers but especially on the experiences of farmer friends of mine who live near Pretoria" (Van Wyk, 3/3/1952: 2). Mitchell (1991) would remind us that it was not a mistake that this metaphysics of representation referred back to Europe; since it was in Europe that the colonised world was presented as lacking order and truth.

In the proposal, he is showing a number of "reforms" which Mrs Hoedemaker can consider, he mentions payment of fair wages, housing to allow labourers to build the houses they prefer like rondavels or round hut dwellings, farmers should ensure that their labourers "enjoy a well-balanced diet" (Van Wyk, 3/3/1952: 2). Later, Van Wyk (19/05/1952)[31] attaches the diet sheets prepared by the Department of Labour and Native Affairs as a guideline, and lastly he deals with the importance of education, which some Africans on the Free State farms and the Transvaal have begun to appreciate by sending their children to school. One important "experiment" he outlines, tells of a farmer who owns a farm near Pretoria:

> He is running his farm on a "shareholder" basis, all his farm labourers being "shareholders" in the farm. The labourers receive reasonable basic wages but, in addition, "dividends" are paid to them

[31] The Daily Rations per day for adult male Africans farm labourers are worked out as: 1) Mealie-meal-$1^{1/2}$lbs; 2) Meat-$^{1/2}$lb; 3) Potatoes- 6 ozs and Other Vegetables- 2ozs; 4)Fat 2-3ozs, 5) Sugar 2ozs. ; 6) Milk $^{1/2}$pint, 7) Dried peas, beans or lentels-2 ozs ; 8) Coffee- ½ oz, 9) Salt- 1oz.

> each year according to the farmer's profits. The whole idea was first explained to them very carefully and when I last heard from him, the experiment was producing incredible results. Not only had the labourers developed a sense of loyalty to the farmer and the farm, but the farmer also nearly doubled his income. Incidentally, this same farmer has erected a school on the farm for the children of his farm labourers, his wife teaches in the school, which is also used as a Church where prayer meetings are held regularly each morning and each night and services on Sundays.

If the above experiments were followed, the madam would have done much to aid her labourers; albeit she must bear in mind that she is dealing with people who respond slowly to reforms. In her response to the letter of March the 3rd she first enquires about the state of happiness of Blacks and then goes to the idea of gifts (through pineapples as an experimentation of shareholder ship) (Hoedemaker, 02/04/1952:1):

> Surely the Bantoe WERE a happy people, but don't you think, they have lost a lot of their natural happiness in the last years? More in the towns than on the farms, I think but even here: is there not a bitterness in the young people's hearts, when they see, how the old ones get old? Not in all of them, but some seem fanatic. But of course I am a European, and perhaps exaggerate redicilously. Therefore, I am afraid of my own ideals and will surely take your advice and go slow. The shareholders basis seems a very sound idea; I discussed it with my husband and we are busy to work out, how much we could put aside from each box of pineapples, leaving the farm to give the men an extra bonus just before Xmas.

She proceeds to indicate her inferiority when she compares herself to other farmer's wives (Hoedemaker, 02/04/1952:2):

> I myself feel very inferior to any farmer's wife, I am not a midwife, not even something like a nurse, I am not a teacher, I do not speak a word of Xhosa, I so feel it as a wonder I get on as I do. And I cannot start a school, as my neighbour has a school. I would love to start evening classes but I have to think that out very carefully first. Prayer meetings will have to be thought out well. I get the impression, they are proud to be "Redblanket kafirs" (their own words) and perhaps are a bit disappointed in what they call Christian people…

At the time she had not received the diet rations for Africans and believes if she had received them then they would do a great deal in ensuring that the "Native [becomes] health conscious and let them learn, how important it is, what they eat (Hoedemaker, 02/04/1952:2)." To this idea of pineapples, Van Wyk (19/06/1952:2) responded with praise and hoped that such ideas would "spread in the Eastern Cape." These conversations, as I have indicated, are clearly a mixture of paternalism and European guilt of 'what can we do for the poor Native?' This was an awareness of the injustice the Whites perpetuated, what Fanon (1986: 66) saw as a "metaphysical guilt." Is it not land dispossession, as I argued in the previous essay, which has allowed for such relations where the Native is seen as subject bound for eternal tutelage… incapable of happiness on their own unless given gifts?! This idea of paternalism is interesting for it seeks to obfuscate not only the symbolic violence behind the gift, but it also does not deal with what becomes the White woman/man's burden - that despite their 'powerlessness' they are still willing to help the poor backward Native. Notice that Van Wyk interprets the saying 'UZUNGADINWA NANGOMSO' as parasitism on the side of the Native, a means to continue with their laziness. As he indicates, "Africans are often accused of laziness and while it is probably true that, so far, many of them do not show the same interest in and love for sustained work…" and like a scientist, he goes on to indicate that "undernourishment may, in some instances, be a contributing factor with a consequent low labour turnover" (Van Wyk 19/06/1952:2). These remarks are part and parcel of the archaeological knowledge of the European episteme of how the conquered behave, especially in relation to wage labour (they are lazy!). Science came in and said it is a matter of nutrition! However, there is also the suspicion that the young Blacks, as Hoedemaker suggests, are not happy with the state of affairs… therefore she seems to hint to the political nature that is disturbing their happiness, especially about "how the old ones get old" (Hoedemaker, 02/04/1952:2); an idea which Van Wyk, in letters that follow, does not bother to entertain.

One farmer wrote to the *Rand Daily Mail* (8/8/1947) with views similar to those that Van Wyk expresses about experimenting with giving shares to Natives on the farm. He argued that one way of solving the labour problem is to give Natives a share on the farm, as well as a bonus

system. Below, I cite his experiment and why he saw it as important to solving the problem of labour and efficiency on the farm:

> Ten years ago I decided to try an experiment which represents a radical departure from the customary method of employing native labour. I gave my native employees an interest in my farming operations and let them share in the responsibility of running the farm. The three most obvious needs of farm labourers are suitable housing, sufficient food and reasonable wages. But even if these are satisfactory to the worker, there is no guarantee that he will be completely satisfied by them. Enthusiasm for the work must also be instilled into them. Thus to create a sense of pride in their work, one must add an incentive in their work… I have chosen… a bonus system, and a share for the running of the farm (Van Riet, 8/8/1947).

This experiment included ensuring that each family has a four room cottage, the children are able to attend school and attain free books, monthly wages that range from 14s to £2, paying poll tax for those who have worked for more than a year, and a food parcel for every worker, including half a bag of mealie meal for the month, "ten pounds of meat and half a pound of tobacco. Three times a week the farm's milk is skimmed and the skimmed milk is distributed amongst the workers" (Van Riet, 8/8/1947). The farmworkers are even involved in the process of hiring and firing. One can imagine the size of the farm that Van Riet owned, as he confidently indicates that he is able to accommodate every farmworker. He argued that the "reward [of] this policy has brought… [him] a satisfied staff and keenness in work. I have had practically no labour trouble since this scheme was inaugurated. Not only has the scheme proved a financial success, but it has also made my farming a great pleasure" (Van Riet, 8/8/1947). One can imagine the sort of praises that such a progressive farm(er) would receive.

As a response to the experiment by Van Riet (8/8/1947), Van Straaten wrote to the *Rand Daily Mail* displeased by the views that the paper shares regarding how the Native ought to be treated. As if a precursor to the violence we will discover in Bethal, he emphasised that the only

language that the native understands is the sjambok[32]. The views expressed by those who propose treating the Native more humanely merely reflect ""kaffirboeties"", those who love the kaffir but do not understand their mind (Van Straaten, 8/8/1947). You will find it interesting again that the knowledge of the Native's mind is one which is contested by Van Straaten who sees the kaffirboeties as not really understanding how the true mind of the Native is. He argued that:

> I have spent my whole life working with natives in factories, mines, and on the farms, and I can assure you that in these places your views are read with indignation and derision. The native mind cannot understand kindness. Since time immemorial he has been treated with bloodthirsty brutality by his chiefs and headmen: that is the reason why he regards kindness as a sign of weakness and fear. If you show consideration for the welfare of a native, he immediately becomes insolent. Let us face the truth. In the past we have been too liberal in our treatment of the natives and we are paying for it to-day in the wave of crime, robbery and assaults. To speak of better wages and housing is nonsense. All the wages and housing schemes will not change the native. He will remain dirty, lazy, and thoroughly dishonest. He does not understand decent civilised treatment but can and does understand a good hiding. If we want the native to be law-abiding, let us speak to them in the language they understand: the language of the sjambok, administered frequently and with vigour. This is the only way to make them into hardworking, obedient servants and teach them to respect the law.

The sentiments of this farmer are those we will encounter in Bethal, the kind of farmers who did not believe in a humane approach to dealing with the labour problem in the country and administered the sjambok to the point of death! This kind of farmer shocked SAIRR and yet it was no secret that the language spoken on most South African farms was that of violence. The usage of violence will be explored in the next essay.

If I were interested in dealing with how this metaphysics of representation mutes, then I would draw on Magubane (2004) who would indicate, by taking an extract from what Van Wyk claims, that by "regard[ing] attempts to improve their conditions with the utmost suspicion and

[32] This is a whip which is made from the hide of the hippopotamus, the rhinoceros, or plastic.

sometimes even with amusement at the peculiarities of the Europeans" the Natives were engaged in the politics of refusal. A refusal which expressed itself by not accepting their inferiority, which entailed the rejection of Christianity or ideas of superiority that the coloniser tried to inculcate in the minds of the colonised. Proud to be Redblankets Kaffirs! By reading Van Wyk in this way, this attempt may be construed as a "possibility of thinking about language, meaning, and political order in ways that are not governed by the metaphysics of representation" (Mitchell, 1991: xvi). Even so, I found the knowledge by Van Wyk hilarious, for it could be argued that the metaphysics of representation does not hear or see any form of speaking outside the language it seeks to represent. Even the suspicion that Hoedemaker has about the happiness of the Native, that maybe the young ones are not happy to see the state their fathers are in, falls to deaf ears. This Native has been thoroughly recognised to be misrecognised so that they can be spoken for or have been exhibited elsewhere (in Europe). If one was to ask of the question of the past and how the Native felt, it was seen by Rheinallt Jones (1945) as a sentimental attachment (involving cattle, women, etc.) by the Native. Now I hope you can also remember that voice of our Marxist in South Africa, Morris (1976), and his ideological past hubbub.

We are reminded that if physical violence was not used in the colony, "it was market relations above all wage employment that would civilize them and draw them into the capitalist modernity. Until then a "then" never fully realized, they remained racialized subjects…" (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2017: 16). Barchiesi (2011) gave a luminous account of this language of the disciplinary effect of work in 20th Century South Africa, especially its discourse of moving the African from laziness to dignity. The making of work decent performed a particular function that of dealing with this long history of refusal to capitalist work or silencing it (Barchiesi, 2011). He was to remind us that:

> …waged work with ideas of dignity and personal responsibility was central to the elaboration of the 'labour question' by the institutions of white rule in early 20th-century South Africa. Colonial work ethic sustained representations of the 'native' as a productive agent for whom promises of progress and modernisation (deriving from economic interdependence) contrasted with the deepening of political subjugation and racialized despotism (Barchiesi, 2016: 875).

The parabasis of this, where the Black actors are no longer present and the chorus of work now addresses the audience, is one which Barchiesi (2011) does well. He even shows to us the disciplinary effect of work that aims to bring about that elusive promise of citizenship post the period of oppression. We might have to investigate a bit further if indeed Barchiesi (2016) understands this Black subject despite his new presentation that has gone towards that bleakness of suffering of the Black actor who he now brings on to the stage through the language of ontology. Reminding us of destruction, yet not leaving any possibility of creation, oh whence does salvation lie then? If this subject is continuously read or intended to show its refusal of work as that which goes beyond the framings of citizenship and decent work, why is it through that problematic cry of work that he wants to locate the ontology? Why is not through the songs or the sorrow or even through that which sings of a better tomorrow, not attached to that formula that knows that: -land+labour=death. This particular violence of hard work was that which Du Bois (2007 [1903]: 75) saw as a question of the future of violence where he argued that:

> the question of the future is how best to keep these millions from brooding over the wrongs of the past and the difficulties of the present, so that all their energies may be bent towards a cheerful striving and co-operation with their white neighbo[u]rs toward a longer, juster, and fuller future.

It was the future that Du Bois (2007 [1903]) spoke to; hence, the project of the future was one that looks much deeper into *The Souls of Black Folk* for it was in this that we are to understand the project of salvation. My argument in this section has been that in looking at the question of representation we may discover that all those (re)presented in the archive as mute were actually able to speak back. It is only that the representative logic of this time, through the language of benevolence, was misrecognising those it spoke on behalf of. For I have argued that the difficulty of the past was to enforce a coming happiness in a world that was incongruent to the everyday experiences of those divorced from the land. If we read it this way, we may begin to be suspicious of the promise that the economic was said to be bringing to the farm. Who was this subject and what was their past, what was their present, and what is/was their future? This form of inquiry may help us entertain other ways of seeing- not interested in the correction of the past, but how the past has a conversation with our present (this is a logic carried on below).

Science, Hard Labour and the Role of Education of Children

If all else failed, science also came in and spoke of diet! In an extract of the State Information Office *Weekly Newsletter* of 22/10/49 (referred here as *Weekly Newsletter*) in a medical research presented to the African Regional Scientific Congress in Johannesburg on October 19, two scientists Dr. E.h. Jokl and Dr. E.H. Cluver argued that scientific evidence suggests that Africans have an "extraordinarily high capacity for physical labour, higher than that of any other human race." This high capacity for physical labour, it was argued, "was masked by continuous loss of work efficiency" (*Weekly Newsletter,* 22/10/49). The scientist research was that which intended to ensure how the African work standards could be co-related with those of the European standards of "regularity and efficiency." The role of science was to deal with issues of high birth rates, infant mortality, dietary regulations, and how proper clothing affected the efficiency of the Africans. The scientist went as far as arguing that there is a need for setting up an "African Institute for population research… [which] would study the races of Africa and prepare data on which a progressive policy could be based. Its first task would be to organize an inter-governmental population census for the entire territory south of the Sahara" (Weekly Newsletter, 22/10/49). They even went as far as arguing that statistical evidence also shows that in Olympic Games, Africans are far superior in performance. Such scientific evidence was crucial in making public opinion on how to exploit the endowments of Africans, especially in a country, that was riddled with complaints about Black labour not following orders; the 'scientific evidence' was therefore interested in tapping into the exploitable potential. It is interesting to note that this research was done in the period of apartheid where there were a number of 'scientific studies' on the behaviour of Blacks and what sets them apart from other races (Posel, 2001).

The South African Agricultural Union (SAAU), one of the institutions considered by SAIRR to be progressive, launched its *Native Policy for Agriculture* (AD 1947 25.5) and one can also see in it the language of treating the "native as human being." Posel (1995) therefore tries to show that the views of Afrikaners during apartheid were not always the same. In one of the sections, she focuses on SAAU and indicates that this union was formed to represent both the interests of English and Afrikaner farmers (Posel, 1995) and did not have a commitment to Afrikaner nationalism. Yet, as the farmers complained more about the labour question and argued that the

United Party did not have the means to solve it, it shifted more towards Afrikaner nationalism. One of the arguments it put forward was the separation of the Native into two, those who were going to work in agriculture-rural regions and those who were going to work in the urban sector-industrial regions. It argued that "[s]trict influx and efflux controls would be essential to enforce these regulations. In this way, farmers would stop losing their African labour to the towns and would gain the services of urban Africans 'surplus' to the requirements of urban industries" (Posel, 1995: 217). These ideas were not new, as the section of Bethal will show, for one of the methods proposed by the apartheid state in dealing with the labour shortage was to control the movement of the Blacks (efflux and influx control) to either making it difficult to leave the countryside or if they are found in the urban areas without any work they would be given jobs on the farm. The document by the SAAU has no date, but from its tone it is highly likely to have been written in the late 1940s. The recommendations and questions posed by the policy are similar to those raised by Rheinallt Jones (1945) and later by her husband J.D. Rheinallt Jones (first Director of SAIRR) (AD 1947/25.5 (2.5.5.10) in *Native Farm Labour Suggestion for Improving Conditions* and in these documents we can see the influences of SAIRR or commonalities with the recommendations put forward by SAAU. The policy discussed education and training, availability of health facilities on the farm for the Native, better Housing and Nutrition (we see the concern with questions of diet as if they had read the above report), better remuneration, and the improvement of working conditions. "The Union realises that the native male has a definite innate or cultivated attitude towards manual labour and feels that farmers should organise their labour in such a manner that the worker has certain free hours during the week for his own affairs for recreation" (SAAU, AD 1947 25.5). The Union argued that these questions of modernising agriculture need to be understood in tandem with the question of South African history of paternalism or the system of guardian and protégé and they argue that:

> …the relationship between employer and employee-particularly in the case of the permanent labourer and his family on the farm- will continue to be the traditional one of guardian and protégé. The farmer must provide the housing for his labourers as well as the water and fuel which automatically accompanies such accommodation. In times of sickness and death in a labourer's family, the employer is generally his refuge. The farmer must in most cases provide the necessary transport for his workers as well as a portion of their daily food requirements as

> part of their remuneration, and often, if the farm is far from shops, even supply other requirements such as clothes, footwear, etc.
>
> It is therefore in the light of this relationship, which is the natural outcome of geographical factors and a development of human relations extending over many years, that the Union has consistently formulated its policy in regard to Native labour.

The policy concerned itself with education as one of the important factors and argued that given the above history, it is advised that the farmer should build schools on their premises for the education of Native children (same recommendation made by SAIRR). This erection of institutions of modernity included clinics and later, as you would see, the farmers also became jailors as they erected prisons to deal with the country's overcrowding of prisons. The farmers had an interest in prisons for prison came to deal with that 20th century problem of labour or the labour question. Ultimately, the goal they argued is "Christianity, humanity and justice should always be the mainspring of the farmer's dealings with his labourer. In this respect every citizen, including the farmer, can make a great contribution to the creation of a happier community and to better racial relations in this multi-racial country of ours" (SAAU, AD 1947 25.5).

These ideals of Christianity, humanity, and citizenship were said to be very important and could be inculcated in the Native child. Hence, education was seen as an important capital good. Farmers were encouraged to have schools on their land and if not, the department of education should intervene and it was also urged that the old generation of farmers should "encourage their children, who will one day have to take their place, to learn the language of their Native servants from their earliest years." This form of education was to ensure a higher standard of production, as it went on to argue that "higher standard of performance generally follows when an employer has an understanding of his employees not only as workers but also as human beings" (SAAU, AD 1947 25.5). Duncan (1964:124) warns us that talks of education were not for the independence of the Native child; instead it saw him/her as a "future docile labourer". Citing a case of one farmer who told a teacher to release children during school hours, he said, "I want them now before they are exhausted. If you give them to me after school, I will first have to feed

them" (Duncan, 1964: 1927). Another example is that of Elizabeth Mkhwanazi who was born in the Komdraai farm:

> In [19]'67 when I started school, eh, it was clear on the farm that kids were not supposed to go to school. They must work together with the men. My father tried by all means that my younger sister and I should continue schooling. My sister and I are a few years apart. He sneaked us out through the back so that we could go to school. The school was at eNkundleni. The people on the farm were speaking about this until it reached the farmer's attention that Paulos' kids were attending school. Then one Sunday the farm owner and his son arrived. They were driving in a car. They stopped the car and called my father outside and said: "Yes, Paulos I heard that your kids were going to school". He said: "No, boss. My kids are not going to school". He [the farmer] said: "I have been informed!" They then got off the car - they even brought dogs. They beat my father up and eventually he conceded and said that: "Yes, boss I was just doing it unlawfully". He then told my father that he wanted us at work. My father told him that he would bring us with him. On that Monday he took us with him. We were then taken and placed in the fields and we started to work (Interviewer, Moloi 20/08/2008).

This, as the Union and SAIRR were aware, was the difficulty in modernising agriculture for the farmer as the owner of the land had power over the teachers and this granted them responsibility over their 'protégé' (master and his workers). In focusing on the children we see from the recommendations from SAIRR and SAAU that the distinction of gender remains, the awareness that if it is a girl she is usually involved in housework and if it is a boy then it is work on the field. We realise that they did not seek to change such conditions for the children could continue doing such work even after school. What use is the education they are getting if the only dreams they were supposed to have was the farm or the house of the farmer? It is such questions that instilled fear among farmers, that the attainment of education would then lead to those educated trekking to the cities to seek a better life. The task of both the institutions was then how to ensure that Black children attain education and still be bound to the soil in future. That is why this education had to be humane and had to see the Native as a human being and to entice them to stay on the farm.

We must remember that this form of education was intended for those who were labour tenants, those who resided on the farm and had to pay the debt through their children. The farmer, because of his 'ownership' of the land, was the Father of the father of the African household and could call on the service of the children of the father and this was the law. The system of labour tenancy was a system of familial subjugation, ensuring that the son pays for the sins of the parents (being landless). You will see that in the correspondences by V.S. Welsford to the Native Commissioner/ Office of the Magistrate (Carolina), then later on the 8th of December 1953, he begins contacting SAIRR. Welsford and his wife had employed a "boy" by the name of Hamilton Ncongwane to do general work (caretaker) at their Homestead and the Warehouse of the Mensana Book Publishers. Mr Ncongwane, father of Hamilton Ncongwane, was a labour tenant in the Eastern Transvaal, Bethal on a farm owned by Mr. Hendrick de Clercq. The farmer needed someone to herd his cattle and given that Mr Ncongwane had a son, he had to go get him to fill this gap (27/07/1953). In the different letters Mr. Welsford indicates that he will send someone to perform the task that Hamilton was supposed to perform, but Mr Ncongwane kept on insisting that Hamilton must come or they will face eviction (27/07/1953; 13/08/1953; 15/08/1953; 04/12/1953; 08/12/1953). Mr Welsford in his frustration writes to SAIRR and argues that, "de Clercq regarded the natives on his farm as an asset to be disposed of at his pleasure! Slavery?" Mr Welsford's benevolence fails and as it is revealed that the Magistrate had ordered Hamilton to go to Bethal (Welsford, 08/12/1953). This was because the "Roman Dutch Law and Native Customary Law favour the retention of the system" which allowed for control of parents over their minor sons (Van Wyk; 11/03/1954; 15/12/1953). No one could pay for Ncongwane's debt to de Clercq except his blood and that is Hamilton! This kind of treatment it would seem even extend to "squatters" sons as the chain of letters from 23/03/1954- 12/11/1954 indicate that the farmer in Andover and Leamington has served ejection orders to those families who refused to send their sons to work for him, despite them paying rent and the fact that the boys attended school. It was this refusal to go back to the farm by the children of those left in the countryside that worried the Father! Hence the need for the use of education and the 'humane' treatment as a means to draw in the children because of the awareness that many Blacks wanted their children to go to school. Now, I hope Hoedemaker's suspicion of the happiness of the Native on the farm can be heard!

This method of the Father to compel the father to use his son in the production process created animosity between the father and the son. The son did not only run away from the father but became aware of the impossibility to exist under the Father's domination. In the city they believed there was freedom, a possibility to recreate themselves. Was this not the life of Mzuzephi, our dear Jan Note or in the underworld of crime known as Nongoloza (van Onselen, 1982)? In the city he was to discover that the presence of the Father was still there in the form of the state, which suspected every Black person of being a criminal since they must have run away from somewhere to end up in the city. Therefore, their (Blacks) trek was treated with suspicion and the state, in its language of governmentality, needed to know where these bodies come from, what language they speak, under which ethnic group they fall under, do they owe any service to the Father back home, or do they come from those areas that are meant to supply labour for the city (the reserves). All this was done under the rubric of being in the city legally and this is the scope of the problem of criminality which we turn to in the next essay. *The Native Economic Commission* (NEC) and the 1937 *Farm Labour Committee* were aware of the possibility of there being a need to also point to the inability of the farmer to meet the needs of Blacks in rural areas, especially those farmers who paid in kind instead of offering wages. These farmers who paid in kind are seen as holding backward views (i.e. racist); while the farmers who paid in wages are considered progressive. These promulgations spoke of the importance of coming up with ways of binding the workers to the farm by means of written contracts and the failure to honour such contracts was to be punishable by law. This is seen, for example, in the 1932 Native Service Contract Act which came from the *NEC* (AD 1715), with the formation of the Native Service Contract Bill later passed into an act. There was then the question of how to bind the family of the labour tenant to the farm, to which the solution was to evict the whole family if one member refused their labour (Van der Host, 1942). Those who withdrew their labour were often burdened by the outcome, for even in the city they were never really free because they had to worry about the possibility of their families being evicted. Therefore, the desire to return home did not die when they were in the city.

The Past = Happiness

The modernisation of agriculture in the documents I dealt with was seen as attitudinal, since it was believed that if the attitudes of farmers changed to accommodate the suggestions there would be happier racial relations. These suggestions are for the future good (the happier racial

relations) and yet as indicated, they hardly deal with the historical and political question of dispossession, subject making, subjection, and subjugation. To expect them to, would be naïve. However, history and the reflection on history was also used as a method to remind the jailed Blacks of that collective memory that Whites and Blacks shared in the "national factory" of South Africa (Van Wyk and Ngakane, 21/09/1949). This time travel to those days when Natives were happy on the farm and had cattle is evoked in the prison cells in Fordsburg. What De Beer reminds us of is a different side of dispossession that in the present state, the prisoner desires those long gone days when they had the land and the cattle. That life in the city will not earn them that. As I have argued in the previous essays, perhaps this search for happiness was also that which presented itself as the question of "where will we die?"… Happiness was no longer possible in a land dispossessed of itself, of its ability to speak its name, in what was now known as the Union of South Africa. Thus, maybe it is that memory that is being evoked here in the prison cell that made many to detest the farm, for they had to work the land without the land (the formula: -land+labour=death). De Beer's formula is: Past =Happiness that is to say: in the past the Native was happy and the past can be realised again in the coming future. This Father, did he not know that to bring up the happiness that existed in the past, stolen by the present and might not exist again in the coming future, was to be a project of justice that was to escape that little prison cell? It was to come back as ghosts of those buried on unknown farms, possibly violently killed, coming back to demand freedom from the present future. The Father treats the present as if the present is not the future of the past. As if in that past and in that state of happiness those that found themselves in prison cells were not running away from the happiness that the Father thinks existed. We encounter De Beer as SAIRR's Van Wyk and Ngakane were conducting their investigation of the Native Commissioner's office in Fordsburg trying to understand if the Natives were being coerced to go work on the farms. As you will see, instead of coercion, the Natives were taken on a trip down memory lane! The investigation happens on the mornings of the 19th and 20th September, 1949, 2 years after De Beers had passed what morphed into the notorious *Petty Offenders Scheme* (which we turn to in the next essay). As you will see, he speaks against laziness and not working, which, he argues, are bound to lead one to crime (undertone: not working is a crime). Here is how De Beers, the Native Commissioner who they deem as a friend of the prisoners, is described:

> …Mr de Beer, who has been in the employment of the Department of Native Affairs for approximately 45 years and who has been at Fordsburg for 7 years, knows the Africans very well and seems to be highly respected by them. Those Africans who know him well- and there are many- call him- 'Oom Piet'. His whole attitude towards the Africans is very friendly and sympathetic, and both Mr. Ngakane and I were impressed by the friendly atmosphere which prevails in the hall in which he usually address the Africans (Van Wyk and Ngakane, 21/09/1949).

Let us hear the voice of de Beer and how he argues that he is part of those who are arrested because he was born on a farm… I will cite this talk in full so that when we enter Bethal, somewhere in the hippocampus of the reader, he may be recalled:

> I have come to talk to you, not as an official but as one of your own. I know you and have grown up amongst you. In my young days I was never taught not to play with you and I was frequently naughty with you. My father always said 'The Africans are our people'. We, (you and my father's people) were never poor. We had our land and our cattle. You and I know that life, but we cannot live that life in Johannesburg. We cannot keep cattle, and life is expensive here. What you should do is to go to places where you can work and save money. Here in Johannesburg you earn money and spend it all immediately. Here you never save money.
>
> Now I want to offer those of you who have no work and no passes an opportunity to work in our biggest national factory, by which I mean the farms, the factories which your fathers and my father's built and where you and I grew up. You can learn more today on the farms than before and become skilled workers as drivers of tractors or workers on thrashing machines. If you can drive a tractor you are a full-fledged driver of practically every vehicle and will obtain a licence which is valid in in any part of the country. In addition you will get comparatively high wages. In order to live you must learn different kinds of work. It is experience that counts. I don't want to discourage you but you must remember that machinery is fast ousting you for employment. I know of work previously done by 500 Native boys. The same work is now done by one machine and 8 boys. But you need not suffer as we have our own factories turning out goods which we cannot import owing to import restrictions. So we are building our own factories and in two or three years' time I am sure you will be able to choose your own employment. With the money which you can now save, you should also be able to build your own factories. The Government will help you, if you save the money.

We should not stay in town merely because of the bioscope.

In the Orange Free State, I saw several Africans driving their own carts and they had their families with them. I asked one where he was going and I nearly took my hat off to him when he answered he had been to his brother's. This is what I desire for all of you.

Some of the people whom I have offered work on the farms have been able to save money and buy their own carts and cattle. I give this advice particularly to the young men present here today. Some of those young men who work on the farms tell me that they are not anxious to send money to their parents, for fear it will be abused. This is the wrong attitude, and something which is foreign to your customs.

A man walking about Johannesburg is no good to anybody. You must remember the law which we call Section 29 (Act 25, 1945) applies to black and white alike. The African who won't work at all are sent to Leeuwkop and the Europeans to Swartfontein. We also have man who won't work amongst white people. If we do not work we walk about idly, get into mischief and eventually even cut other peoples' throats.

The conditions on the farms are good and our Union Africans never run away from them. It is the extra Union Africans who run away. I think you are all good enough for our farms.

"You have now heard what I said and I thank you for listening to me I now leave it to you to decide what is in your best interests." (Van Wyk and Ngakane, 21/09/1949).

6. These Potatoes Look Like Humans: In the House of God, Bethal- 1940-1960s

Southern trees bear strange fruit

Blood on the leaves and blood at the root

Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze

Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees

Pastoral scene of the gallant south

The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth

Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh

Then the sudden smell of burning flesh

Here is fruit for the crows to pluck

For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck

For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop

Here is a strange and bitter crop

Strange Fruit -Billie Holiday (1939)

The Dead and their Demand for Freedom: Ezintandaneni (The Place of Orphans)

In 2014 Gogo Bongekile Nonhlanhla "Mshanelo" Nkomo, a sangoma from eMsinga, details how she was haunted in her visions/sleep by ghosts who demanded to be set ""free as you have freed others""(Manda, 2015:N.P.) or to have their spirits released like she did with others (Khoza, 2015). In the dream, she would see scores of people who were burnt and without limbs stretching their arms towards her, demanding their freedom. She tried ignoring their call for freedom but they began manifesting through her body by tormenting her to the point where she became sick, having unexplained bruises, and losing her teeth (Manda, 2015). Who were those people who were so vicious in their demand for freedom? Their response was that they were souls wandering, searching for peace and freedom (Manda, 2015). She would later discover that they were all buried in Glenroy Farm. A farm in Dududu on the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal and owned by Illovo sugar. We must remember that Gogo Mshanelo is from eMsinga, approximately 253Km away from Dududu. The Sangoma tried different means to alert the government, she went to the MEC's office to relay this encounter with spectres, but to no avail (Manda, 2015). It was the Department of Arts and Culture that gave her an ear, so much so that in 2015, 100 dead bodies were discovered on that farm (Mthethwa, Savides, and Pillay, 2015; Pillay and Mngoma, 2015; SABC Staff Writer, 2015). The suspicion of the officials was that the bodies found on the farm were those of prison labourers who were transported from Umzinto near Newcastle to Dududu. Unfortunately, the owner of the farm had died in 1985 and had already sold the farm around that time. The community attested to him being an evil man known for torturing/killing prison labourers who were on the farm between late 1950s and the 1980s. These prisoners were likely to be victims of what was popularised in 1947 in Fordsburg, Johannesburg by P.J De Beers and later extended in 1954 as the Petty Offenders Scheme (POS). This scheme stipulated that Blacks who were offenders of the laws of the state (example: not having a pass) and were charged to serve time in prison for three months or could 'volunteer'[33] to work on the farm for 9 shillings (s) a day. Those who were buried on the farm were classified by that system as criminals. Willie Ndlovu, who worked on that farm and resides in the area, indicated that those who worked on the farm "were buried like dogs… There are many prisoners who died there. Once a prisoner had died, the workers would just dig a hole and bury them in an unmarked

[33] As the archive indicates, this was not voluntary as most Blacks attested to in court. The cases defended by Joel Carlson on habeas corpus also indicated that many did not volunteer, as suggested by the authorities. They were forced and given no option but to take farm work.

grave. We called the place where they were buried ezintandaneni [the place of orphans]." This farm was known as the place of the orphans because those who died on the farm were treated with disregard and buried as if they did not belong nor have parents, but also for the fact that those that died there left many as orphans. The pain of being buried like a dog is one that many prison labourers feared for it was to remind them of the brutality of being homeless or not belonging. 'Where will we die?' Similar to what Ndlovu says, in the archive of Bethal we also uncover ways of how the dead were accounted for, once the farmer killed them. As Timothy Moloke (23/05/1953: 2-3) wrote of the plight of his four friends who, when the farmer discovered that they paid membership to the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), were chased from one farm in the Belfast area to go and work for the same farmer in Bethal, he indicates that they suspect that:

> …their master or farmer's chief idea of ordering them to go to Bethal is to kill them by means of his plan because since he has known that they are members of the organisation, he is more against them.
>
> The way in which he does when he wants to kill an African, they say, is… He digs up a hole in his cornfield and takes his victim gently to it and orders him to get into it and then shoot at him and fills the hole with the sand goes to his local authorities and tells that the person left his farm without letting him know.

This letter written in 1952 collaborates the findings by Scott (1947:4) that to avoid prosecution "[M]any cases are concealed by means of burying the bodies of those who have been flogged and giving out that they have run away from the compound." As we will see in the essay, these matters were brought before the court of law and those who committed these atrocious acts were to be persecuted. Henry Nxumalo (1952:4), in his coverage of Bethal in *Drum*, argued that "… it seems clear that for every case that came before a magistrate there were many more that were never found out." One wonders if this is what the spectres of Dududu were trying to remind us of, the inadequacy of the language of legality to account for those who were landless, homeless, nameless, body and soul tortured. The officials in Dududu were digging up the past but needed tools to understand if indeed the dead were victims of an unjust past. Mshanelo was not enough; they requested a forensic expert David Klatzow (2014), author of *Justice Denied: The Role of*

Forensic Science in the Miscarriage of Justice, to aid them in the quest of making the past speak truth and justice. Klatzow indicated that the "scene - and the wider area around it [the farm] - will now need to be sealed off and frozen in time (cited in Pillay and Mngoma, 2015: N.P.)." This particular incident led the Arts and Culture MEC Ntombikayise Sibhidla-Saphetha to call for documentation of the ""the untold stories of KZN's history"" (cited in Manda, 2015: N.P.). This site of archaeological interest frozen in time was now that which demanded the past to speak of the unknown injustices. The ghosts for the Sangoma and the bodies for the forensic expert were to speak of their condition and allow us in the present to understand the past. The name of the Sangoma 'Mshanelo' which translates to 'broom' bears importance, for as a 'broom' she had the capability, which was recognised by the dead, to be able to sweep below and even beyond what can be seen. We recognise the unearthing ability of the broom as it goes beneath the surface and reveals things we had forgotten or never imagined to exist. Ugogo Mshanelo was not only to sweep and reveal, but was to allow for the freedom of these wondering bodies. They did not choose Klatzow, but those in government chose Klatzow to ascertain if they were victims of an injustice. Mshanelo had a different role, that of allowing the ghosts to enjoy their freedom and to find some rest/peace. Bodies/bones became an archival source; they were to speak of the violence inflicted on them and then allowed to rest, assuming that by ensuring that they rest they would have found their freedom. The difficulty was that all these dead were nameless, faceless, and without a family to be notified that they were at least found. The burden was now for the living to come claim them with the assistance of the modern language of forensics. This archive in the form of spectres spoke for itself using the body of the Sangoma as a medium and through her the discontent/ pain/ violence against the ghosts could be personified because they manifested through her body. The ghosts demanded freedom and could not be ignored until excavated but unfortunately the process of excavation has served the purpose of archiving, which is to remember the dead to be forgotten once again (to be buried once again as Mbembe, 2002 argues)! What kind of freedom is demanded by the dead, so much so that in their death they can still extend their arms to the living? Is this the impossibility of archivability? If for Derrida (1994:45) "[t]he future can only be for ghosts" then those that speak to spectres are already in the domain of inheritance, an inheritance that locates itself in the present that is yet to come again in the future. To me, inheritance is the last joke the dead play on the living for to inherit is to acquire a debt for being loyal to the dead! Clearly, those that were buried on that farm could

speak in the present, a present that demands accountability from the past, a project of justice. The present naively asks 'justice for whom?' By digging up the past, we resurrect a criminal! To speak of justice for a criminal sounds oxymoronic.

The above case makes one wonder how many spirits on South African farms are demanding their justice/freedom and how many more because of this demand are haunted by those ghosts. A librarian alerted me to the aforementioned case when I was looking at the case of Bethal, which the essay focuses on. The aforementioned case gives an impetus to the idea that the violence that happened in Bethal was not an anathema of the Union of South Africa, but was, that which happened on many farms even though there is no documentation of such cases. In the 1940s-1960s, there was a detailed investigation regarding the usage of prison labour on the farms of Eastern Transvaal (now Mpumalanga) and the violence inflicted on those that worked on those farms (Scott, 1949; Sampson, 1956; Nxumalo, 1956, First, 1959). From the previous essays, it is evident that coercion was integral to acquiring labour in all parts of the agricultural sector and based on the above testimony, it can be argued that many disappeared on South African farms without a trace. The farm is an interesting site in South African history. We can also recall that during apartheid a number of activists who were caught by the state also disappeared on state owned farms after long periods of interrogation. We can extend the argument to include the period of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) and the scorched-earth policy by Lord Kitchener which resulted in the death of many Afrikaners, a cause for severe trauma in their memory as they discovered scores of dead Afrikaners on farms and they swore that never again will they be separated from the land (Higginson, 2015). Does this long history of death on the South African land/farms mean that to claim the dead is to claim the land or to claim the land is to claim the dead? Can the dead be owned? Can the living speak on behalf of the dead (demanding their justice)? This essay continues from the cries about labour by the farmers and how this played itself out in Bethal. I will try to cover different arguments presented in the case of Bethal, but not exhaustively, for my intention is different. One is within the question of understanding what it means to belong to the land with a specific interest in the usage of violence to ensure that those

dispossessed from the land work the land[34]. It will be discovered that by going through the material, even my writing approach has had to suffer. If we are in the domain of the dead, we are, therefore, also in a space of mourning (*ukuzila*). To hour this period of mourning, the essay will therefore not be loud in advancing its points.

To make my argument, I continue drawing from the SAIRR archive which entails a collection of letters (communication) with the Native Affairs Department (NAD), farmers, Farmers Union, and those members of the institute who paid subscription and were interested in that which presented itself, to them, as a farm labour question and to the farmers, a farm labour crisis. This archival material, especially the letters, as I have argued in the previous essay, offer us a transcript of the language of the state officials, the farmer, the Black person who had lost the land and forced to work, and more importantly how the problem in the archive is constructed. I also draw from newspaper articles and some reports done by individuals like Henry Nxumalo, Rev. Michael Scott, and Ruth First who popularised the farm violence in South African media. Supplementing this material are six transcripts from interviews conducted by Tshepo Moloi in Bethal from 2007-2008 intended for the Gert Sibande project on behalf of the *South African Historical Archives* to commemorate the June 1959 Potato Boycott called by the African National Congress. The title of the essay draws from an interview with Mr Ngubeza Mahlangu who was born in the 1920s and worked as a 'baas boy' on one of the farms in Bethal and also delivered potatoes in Johannesburg. He recalls how during the potato boycott when delivering potatoes in Johannesburg:

> It was then revealed how on the potato farms, as they were digging potatoes using ploughs pulled by cows, a dead person - a human body - was discovered. Again when the lorries arrived in Johannesburg it was reported that in one of the potato bags appeared a human head instead of a potato. But I for one I never saw it. I just heard when I arrived at eGoli (Johannesburg). It was then that the quarrel began. People in Johannesburg started accusing us of killing people and planting them as potatoes. When we arrived in Johannesburg they would say "Yes, we saw a potato that looked like a human being from the farm you were working on. You are the ones who were beating up these people, you guards".

[34] If one needs to see a present blow by blow of the case of Bethal, they may wish to consult the Master's research by Muller (2011) on Coercive Agrarian Work in South Africa, 1948-1960:"farm labour scandal"?

These potatoes that looked like humans were not exclusive to dead people for even people who were alive, those that were prison labourers and 'ama joint' (as they were referred to), as well as those working on the contract system were stripped naked and given potato sacks to wear to avoid them deserting the farm. A natural assumption would be that inside a potato sack there would be potatoes; instead there were humans. Drawing from the variety of sources, I present how the problem of violence on the farm was read (as a crisis of attaining cheap labour on South African farms), also indicating the blind spot of the archive and literature on the question of the violence of dispossession, the anticipation of Black resistance, and why the 'farm' continues to be a terrain of violence even after the 1994 vote and a constitution enshrining human rights. For example, the South African press has published numerous stories on how farmers continue to kill their Black workers/tenants in the democratic dispensation.[35] Therefore, the farm in South Africa is known as a violent terrain where farmers in 'defence of themselves' on their 'private property,' do not hesitate to shoot an 'intruder.' Clearly, the farm is an archival space since Derrida (1995:9) also reminds us that the archive from the Greek word *arkheion/ arkhé* means domicile/house which the farmers are guarding in order for it not to cause chaos in the present with the fear of how the past might appeal to a memory that the present remembers only to be forgotten again, a spectacle that presents itself through public holidays commemorating events seen as bearing political significance. Hence, the current justice comes in the language of reconciliation, so that the past can remain buried. The farm is one of the scenes of domiciliation which is both visible and invisible. If read deeply, as the material in this paper shows, it is a scene of subjection (Hartman, 1997) where the pain inflicted on Black bodies also served as a

[35]Here one is thinking of the Black farmworkers abuse and the farm murders that are occurring in South Africa post 1994. This issue can be read as that which provides us with the contested nature of land in the current state as Johnny Steinberg (2002) has shown in his book *Midlands*. There are also common themes in the nature of the violence against farmworkers, including being mistaken for monkeys, baboons and other wild animals and as a result being injured, shot and killed cruelly. In 2017, a 47-year-old Limpopo farm owner has been arrested for shooting one of his employees whom he claims he mistook him for a monkey. The 55-year-old was shot in the head with a pellet gun while returning from the storeroom, suffering head injuries. (Patel, 2017). More tragic is the case a 23 year old man who was "accidentally" shot by a man and woman hunting for warthogs when they heard a noise in the bushes to which they fired at – only to find, at closer inspection, that "it was a human being" (Bosveld Review, 2017). On issues of land: a white farmer, Phillip Solomon, shot and killed Mothiwa Ngubane at a funeral service. The funeral had been held on a family homestead of the Lembethe family, situated on his Cramond farm. Solomon had seemingly tried to stop the burial which led to a heated argument and culminated in the death of Ngubane, who was shot three times. The farmer claimed that on the day of the shooting, he had heard a lot of noise coming from the homestead, and decided to investigate. On arrival there were between 50 and 100 mourners, many of whom he did not know. He said that he was assailed with a barrage of threats by the "hostile" crowd (Wicks, 2018).

form of pleasure/ spectacle to the farmer (hope now you can hear the protest song sung by Billie Holiday on Jim Crow?). While Foucault (1995) saw, in the modern bourgeois world, the disappearance of the sovereign power and its public display of violence applied to bodies in front of spectators and the emergence of a different kind of power which was disciplinary and dealt with what lay deep in the skin… others were to remind Foucault that in some parts of the world, even during the times of colonialism (Arnold, 1994) or even that of modernity, the sovereign force had not disappeared, and when dealing with the issue of crime as Comaroff and Comaroff (2017) indicate, it seems that the public in our current context is calling for the return of the sovereign force. In dealing with the application of this force we have to be aware that the colour, ethnicity and gender of the body that it gets applied to matters as those in American studies showed when dealing with the prison system (Smith, 2013; Gilmore, 2007)… This is what we have to be mindful of when dealing with this archive, that the criminal in this particular context is one who is always assumed to be Black.

In touching the archive, the hands, mind, and eyes are already dealing with a problem of representation, of making the forgotten remembered and the remembered otherwise to be forgotten yet again (Derrida, 1994, 1995; Moran, 2004; Mbembe, 2002). I argue that the value of the archive is in its silence(s), its (re)presentation of the presence of the past, of the preoccupation with the past which the present has demanded a future from. This reading is not pretentious, for it understands that the reading of the archive is not devoid of subjective experiences. One realises that the archive (EVEN for the historian) is that which speaks of a certain Other, in this case the violated Black who despises farm work. In dealing with the archive, we are already dealing with the problem of violence/ the violence of representation (Derrida, 1995, 1996; Mbembe, 2002; Leroke, 1998). In the previous essay, we dealt with a violence that was speaking to and constructing how the Other is and how the Other ought to be treated. In this essay, we shall meditate on the question of violence and dispossession, the kind of violence that is bloody. In turning to violence, we are broadening the scope of our understanding of the problem beyond the previous schematisation of land and labour in South Africa by the scholars discussed in essays 3 and 4. The schematisation was land+labour=future. This was the rationale of the farmer and the state where both parties argued that those who own land produce

the food of the country and aid the economy and it is therefore necessary that they get labour since this was pertaining to the future of the country. At the same time, this problem was also seen as important in shaping racial relations in the future to ensure that everyone is happy. I need not remind you of that dark calculation that those who worked the land knew: -land+labour=death. Here we are dealing with the anxiety of securing the future whether through state intervention/violence. I will not be discussing whether the representation of this problem was correct but my interest is this question of the future. The futurity of violence. Once more, the point that is being made is that private property conceals the anxious Father who uses violence not only to thwart resistance, but to conceal the illegitimate status of Fatherhood that rests on the idea of private property. I hope this intellectual contribution will be appreciated and I also hope that this critique of seeing the question of land through the idea of property as limiting our appreciation of what it means to belong to the land will be understood. What do I mean? Private property creates an ontological existence that always sees land as that which can be owned and if it can be owned then it means that it can be protected and that is done through violence. The futurity of violence is one that which aims to allow for private property to continue and to prevent any rebellion that might unmask the precarious position occupied by the Father. That is why even the silent are suspected and they get killed. No one is safe from the violence of private property since it is aware that the future is unknown and to allow for the current conditions to continue again tomorrow there is a need to use violence. The land is dead! In conditions of private property the land is indeed dead.

The House of God and the Broader Context

Bethal is a land donated by two farmers intending to create a dorp (town) for isolated farmers, naming it after their wives Elizabeth (Beth) and Alida (Al) (Rand Daily Mail, 1953). Compounding these names, it became known as Bethal and specialised in farming labour intensive crops like wheat, rye, maize, and potatoes. Bethal, to the early settlers/trekkers in desperate need for a place of convalescence, was seen as a holy place. They dubbed it ‘the abode of God’, from the name Bethel in Jacob’s dream in the book of Genesis 28:10-18 (Scott, 1947). White farmers in this land were like gods, but they did not have the power to decide the birth of Black labourers; otherwise, Ruth First (1957/8; 1959) would have not observed issues of labour

scarcity faced by farmers in Eastern Transvaal as the issue, but had the power to end the lives of those that worked the land. In the archive and the literature, the violent treatment of Black workers in the region is read within the interpretation of shortage of labour on South African farms, with the subsequent introduction of the Petty Offenders Scheme (POS) as a measure employed by the state to solve the problem. The literature seeks to show the coerciveness that came with state intervention and the effects it had on the lives of those who had to labour on the farm (Scott, 1947; Van der Horst, 1947; First, 1957/1957/8; 1959; Nxumalo, 1952; Wilson, 1971; Murray, 1997, Ainslie, 1977, Duncan, 1991, 1997, Jeeves and Crush, 1997; Posel, 1993; Muller, 2011).

Rev Michael Scott (1947) in his *Memorandum on Compound Labour Conditions in Agriculture-Bethal District* was one of the writers involved in the exposé of the cruelty of the coercive labour system that had modelled itself after the mining sector. In this report, he provided a detailed account of the conditions on the compounds, which were without beds and windows, with workers forced to sleep on potato sacks and use the sacks as dishes. Scott (1947:1) was to remind us of the hypocrisy of the early settlers that "reading their Bibles by the light of their fires as they watched over their womenfolk, their children and cattle, to guard them from marauding beasts, and the indigenous populations. Perhaps they hardly distinguished between the two." It makes it difficult to say, "autre temps autre moeurs!"" for those times and those customs went into the 20th century as Murray (1997:92) argued that the capitalist farmers and the recruitment system of 1910-1940 were to continue with this view, that the Natives "were not thought of as sharing an identical human nature, a common economic rationality, and a similar psychological outlook with their European labor. Born of an inferior race, they were best suited for certain types of manual labor." Bethal was a holy place indeed, for the Lord had granted to the superior beings who had subdued the land and all the beasts that came with it, fertile soil and 30 inches of rain. This house of God, in the area of Eastern Transvaal known as the maize triangle, was praised for its contribution to commercial agriculture in the Union. For example in the 1940s, this area accounted for about 60 per cent of the maize output in the Union (Murray, 1972). This area was also advertised as a peaceful holiday resort for those seeking to get away from city life (Rand Daily Mail, 25/05/1936).

The large-scale farming in Bethal was labour intensive and the farmers in the 1920s then began to experiment with methods similar to those of mining, like housing workers in compounds under strict contracts. The area also saw the implementation of the ticket system, which stipulated that workers had to work for 30 days a month. The wages varied and by the 1940s the set wage for those who were prisoners was 9 shillings. What the ticket represented was the idea of 'no work, no pay.' What was interesting about this area was that the large-scale farmers were experimenting with different methods of increasing efficiency and this included the usage of labour tenants on the farm, employment of contract workers, the recruitment of other/foreign workers from across the border like Mozambique, Nyasaland (Malawi), and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), the compound labour system, and later the usage of prison labourers. The modernisation of this region, as Murray (1997:82) argues, was driven by farmers like Israel Lazarus who was one of the largest maize produces in the world where in "1924-30, the average yield for the Bethal district was 9.24 bags per morgen and for the "maize triangle" as a whole was 6.35 bags per morgen. Lazarus used about twelve hundred tons of fertilizer a year and maintained two thousand oxen." The farmers in this region are described by Murray (1997) as very rational and enterprising since they simplified tasks using methods similar to the Taylorist factory with the emphasis being on piece work and the workers were divided into gangs that performed certain tasks and were paid using the ticket method to prevent absenteeism. The ones who had come to occupy the lands in Bethal also included immigrants from England, Lithuanian Jewish immigrants like Israel (Murray, 1997). Just like the Afrikaners, they knew the unsettling feeling of not having a home (we will turn to this later when dealing with violence). In the House of God, they were comforted, for in their father's house, there were many rooms and these rooms were heavenly for some but hellish for those who came from Nyasaland, Rhodesia, and the different criminals we will be speaking of. It is as if the sermon of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 14-31) was turned upside down in this House of God. Now Lazarus was in hell and in hell, he had to work hard to ensure that those in heaven are comfortable or maybe the hell was on earth for the Rich Man who had named the land, the House of God for they knew that one day they might not be in the Bosom of Abraham. That was perhaps their constant anxiety. As Wilson (1971:115) was to argue; "it is perhaps surprising that the early trekkers identified themselves with the children of Israel rather than with the Egyptians, so often were they plagued by pestilence." In his survey of South African farm life from 1866-1966, Wilson (1971: 158), based

on his figures, wrote: "white farmers' incomes, which varied considerably from farm to farm, but it seems certain that the majority of whites left on the land in 1966 enjoyed a far higher standard of living than did their grandfathers." In contrast, the majority of Blacks who worked the land in the same period did not experience a shift in their standard of life (Wilson, 1971). In such a place, there was a need to have law, to govern these rooms and Whites like Rev Scott, as one farmer made a comment, could not be trusted for they were not authorised to be in the house of God. In a public meeting held in Bethal and attended by the Minister of Justice, Mr. H.G. Lawrence, to discuss the implications of the brouhaha caused by the release of the *Memorandum on Compound Labour Conditions in Agriculture-Bethal District*, Mr Lotter was to argue:

> "The likes of the Rev. Michael Scott come in here unauthorised and entice *our natives* away to get them to Orlando [Soweto]…he eats and lives with natives. Is that a decent European? (Laughter and loud applause and trampling) (Rand Daily Mail 21/07/1947). [emphasis mine]"

Oh where will we die? Ingabe sizofelaphi na? This question was alive here for those who saw the dead bodies in potato fields or who had pushed their bodies to exhaustion fearing the possibility of not going home. Home was no longer feasible, to Lacey (1981) all these Blacks under the coercive labour regime were merely working for sleep! I wonder which sleep they were working for, the one which is eternal, or the temporary one which was leading to nowhere.

The fable of the contract: There is no going Back Home!

Upon arrival in Bethal, workers were to be categorised in the following manner (this extends to the late 1960s): full-time/long term worker (migrants) with contracts of up to five years. The system in Bethal was such that it tried to create this preferred category of workers, mainly recruiting people from Nyasaland, Swaziland, Rhodesia, and other surrounding areas. The term used for the abovementioned contract workers was 'ama joint'. To venture into this method of recruitment, as we saw in the previous essay, was because the farmers were trying to deal with the shortage of labour since it was argued that many born in South Africa were leaving for better pay on the mines. Labour Tenant (full time) - we have covered the different regulations that have dealt with this labour contract. These were families of 4-5 people who stayed on the farm and in

exchange were to render their labour to the farmer. Failure to do so would lead to their expulsion from the farm. They worked for 3-6 months depending on the agreement. They had a long history with the land and others would count their great grandfathers as having been part of the area they occupied (see Rheinallt Jones, 1945 on the different ways in which land was occupied (AD1947/25.5.9)). Although, as Wilson (1971) argues, by the 1960s they were fulltime labourers since many farmers complained of being incubators for industry, considering that many who had served their months would go seek work on the mines or work in the urban areas. The capacity of these families was not enough for large-scale farming; hence, the farmers had to draw on other sources of labour. Rheinallt Jones (1945: AD1947/25.5.9) notes that the issue in the countryside was an issue of transport causing labourers to walk for hours to the next train station or to a place where they could get transport to get to town after serving their days. Rheinallt Jones (1945: AD1947/25.5.9) recalls seeing a group of men walking for long hours:

> …when working at various schools in the Waterberg District for 3 days I saw the same walking group three times between Nylstroom and Hamanskraal; they took approximately three days to walk that 65 miles. They were from Pietersburg District bound for Johannesburg, say 250 miles.

These long walks would often be the cause for their delay in returning to the farm to render their labour and a missed curfew could land one in prison. Rheinallt Jones (1945) indicated that those who were labour tenants situated away from major transport routes were actually trapped on the farm since:

> It is therefore clear that a man has often very little time of his year left for paid labour. This naturally interferes with his getting good urban work, as most urban employers prefer long period workers. If he overstays his free period, the farmer can have him followed up by the Native Commissioner's office, prosecuted and returned. If he disappears (and with all our pass system this seems to be quite common) his family are liable to eviction (Rheinallt Jones, 1945: AD1947/25.5.9).

Seasonal Labourers - These were workers who like the long-term workers came from different areas. They included the foreign migrants who were called ama-joints, recruited by the labour agencies or later through the labour bureaus. Again, these included the people from Nyasaland,

Rhodesia, Swaziland, and the other Bantustans. Their contracts were based on the needs of the farmer so they would be hired to be part of the harvest teams, as it was the case with the Italian war prisoners brought on the farms during the Second World War (First, 1959; Jeeves and Crush, 1997). The issue of laziness is brought up by Rheinallt Jones (1945: AD1947/25.5.9) as she argued that the reason that Italians were employed is that "African farm workers do not put in the same strenuous days of work as English ones. It may be lack of stamina, or of training, or of incentive. I understand that Italian prisoners can put in a much heavier day."

Prison Labourers - these were also short-term labourers… They were mainly those who ended up working on farms because of POS, as well as migrants from other countries without proper documentation. The prisoner was paid a wage of 9d. per diem for the portion of the sentence they served, given food and kept in the prison built by the farmer with the supervision of the Department Of Justice, and the work included Sundays (these workers mostly worked for 30 days, excluding rainy days). Once released, the prisoner "is for all practical purposes free, and need not, therefore, be medically examined when he is brought back to the gaol by the farmer after the expiration of his sentence to collect his wages and to be formally discharged." (National Organiser of The Penal Reform League of South, 12/05/1952).

'Baas (boss) Boys' - These workers were either from the local community or migrant labourers from Limpopo, Orange Free State, Natal, and other various parts of the Union (Interview with Mkhwanazi, 20/08/2008; Interview with Nsibande, 21/08/2008). They were the favourites of the boss, they were 'induna' to use the language of the mines… They made sure that the teams were on the field on time and were to punish those who slacked since they were given strict orders to deal with laziness. In court, they were merely seen as the extension of the White owner.

Foreman/Manager - they were sometimes present in the field with the sjambok-carrying baas boy… depending on the number of farms that the farmer had, they would, employ a White man to oversee the running of the farm and they would be the foreman, but in the absence of the farmer, they then acted as the manager and the baas boy carried out the rules and laws. The

typical setup on every farm, as presented by the evidence so far, would be the farm owner who resided on the farm with his family. This was the case with Bethal, although they stayed in a house that would probably have electricity and running water…

Reports by Scott (1947); Nxumalo (1952); Ngakane (1952: AD 1947 25.3) found in the archive reveal that the use of the contract was an obligation resulting from a state-passed law requiring the farmers to have a clear contract that stipulates the duties the workers should perform, the food rations they should get and the wage they would earn. Regardless, many farmers had found a way of keeping the labourers bound to the soil, with workers being accused of breaking a plough and being required to pay for it or for owing the farmer for food they had loaned from the shop of the farmer (like tobacco, tea, sugar, etc). In documenting the plight of those from Nyasaland, Scott (1947) noted that "a single third class ticket for a Native male from Blantyre in Nyasaland to Johannesburg cost £ 3.1.6 (females £ 3.5.0) but a return ticket from the same place £ 7.13.0)." Therefore, the wage that many earned on the farms would not be able to cover the trip back home and they were forced to stay on the farm for many years and only depositing or sending money home with those that returned (Scott, 1947). It could be argued that the system was rigged to prevent them from going back home. Scott (1947) had interviewed a man from Nyasaland who had

> …bought a second hand overcoat, a few days before which cost him thirty shillings. It was already frayed at the cuffs and pockets. His toes were sticking through the toe caps of his boots and he also needed a blanket and various other oddments. But he dared not go back to his kraal without money. He had boasted of all the things he would bring back at the time he had been persuaded to sign the contract. He now wanted to go to Johannesburg but had no pass to travel, had no money to pay the poll tax and was told he might be put in prison or sent back to the farms.

In his commentary on the migrant system, White (2013) shows that the hope of many migrants was that they would return home with gifts and help in the improvement of the homestead. This, to Lacey (1981), was a dream that many would not attain, on the farm they had become broken people, who would not return home the same again or there was no longer home for many 'laws' were being passed and many people were being uprooted from the land based on many

interpretations of the law. A case that many in the *Drum* offices cited, is that of a man who went to Bethal lively and a few months later came back home looking like an old man. He later died of tuberculosis (Sampson, 1956). Through the typescript of the NEC 1930-1932, Lacey (1981:138) shows that farm labourers "did not leave simply because they were after better wages and conditions in town as most farmers claimed." Her main argument is that the violence experienced under the laws that the farmers were passing led many to leave the farm. These laws were based on the idea that they are the owners of the farm and they would do as they please with their labourers. She argues that desertion was the only tool available to resist this violence (Lacey, 1981). To her the reasons for leaving the farm were not economic and drawing from the same typescript;, she cites comments from the African Residential Association in Benoni that farmers used various ways to bind people to the farm as they argued that:

> The rule of the 'Bass is so arbitrary and merciless that he sometimes imprisons them for imaginary offences even for petty misunderstandings… To say that natives come in Towns, in order to obtain money for purchase of cattle for lobola is, to say the least, untrue. In fact the disabilities under which the natives are suffering are so many and varied (cited in Lacey, 1981:141).

Let us go back to the labour contract and how the farmers used it… Nxumalo (1952) made a note that a number of labourers had 'touched the pencil', a method that was employed in the NAD since a large majority of the workers were illiterate. Touching the pencil (the equivalent of signing a contract) meant that they agreed with the terms of the contract; regardless of the fact that the conditions of the contract were not read nor explained to them. Those that touched the pencil were Natives who were seeking work and often complained that they were duped by the recruitment officer that they were going to work in a factory instead of a farm (Nxumalo, 1952; Scott, 1947; Murray, 1997). The farmers knew of this and hence when many arrived on the farm they were able to use the 'law' to manipulate them into following orders. The language of legality was used to bind them, even though it was illegal to do so according to the laws of the state (as will be indicated below). This was also a plight of the prison labourers, as the National Organiser of the Penal Reform League of South Africa was to note that the prisoners were not given a free choice to go to work on the farms and argued that:

> It should be the *free choice of the prisoner*, and it has been pointed out that in quite a number of cases at the Fort, relatives of prisoners have arrived in good time to pay fines, only to find that the prisoners had already been despatched to farms as private labourers. In some cases the prisoners had been recalled at the instance of their European employers, but no Native would probably have sufficient knowledge or power to demand this re-call as a legal right [emphasis mine] (12/05/1952: AD 1947/ 25.3).

We begin with the contract so as to argue that it was merely a sitting duck. For example, imagine a Black person killing a White farmer or assaulting them - the penalty would be harsher than a fine. Secondly, the contract also drew on the implicit belief that those employed on the farms knew their rights and therefore could speak of their violation (we will see below that this was otherwise). Therefore, continuing from the previous essay about the cries raised that the farmers need to use contracts and modern industrial relations to attain labour, we learn that on the farm they were implemented, but in a different manner, according to the implicit belief that the law of South Africa favours the Whites. We can argue that this was not attitudinal, but a historical reading of the law which saw the law from the eyes of the dispossessor and the dispossessed merely being servants. On the farm, the farmer was the law!

The Work of Henry Nxumalo, Mr Drum

A number of newspaper clippings collected by Henry Nxumalo on farm violence may help set the scene and solidify that the 1940s-1960s was merely a continuation of that which began a long time ago (cited in Sampson, 1956: 38; Scott, 1947; Nxumalo, 1952; and *Rand Daily Mail*):

> 1929: a farmer in Bethal… was found guilty of tying a labourer by his feet from a tree and flogging him to death, pouring scalding water into his mouth when he cried for water.
>
> 1944: a labourer in Bethal was beaten to death for attempting to escape…
>
> 1947: a farmer assaulted two labourers, set his dog on them, flogged then and chained them together for the night.

> 1947: a farm foreman was found guilty of striking a labourer with a whip and setting his dog on him
>
> 1947: a foreman was found guilty of ill-treating African labourers…
>
> Judge Mr. J.R.A Leibrandt gave judgement on a number of assault charges. These included:
>
> "Paul J. van der Merwe, aged 51, a farm foreman, and Jacob Mknwena, a boss boy, both of the farm Zaaiwater were found guilty of common assault… [2] Hermanus van Niekerk, aged 55, foreman of the farm Rietviel [charged] of common assault…[3] Matthys Stufnus Ackerman, a foreman of the farm Zondagsfontein, was found guilty of common assault…" (Rand Daily Mail, 21 July 1947).
>
> A farmer, G.S. Lourens, found guilty of assaulting convict labourers, and was sentenced to a fine of £50 (or four months' imprisonment), a further two months' imprisonment being conditionally suspended for three years. (Rand Daily Mail, 28 May 1959).

In 1947 when Father Michael Scott, through the help of Henry Nxumalo who also published the story in 1952 in *Drum,* discovered what left them agape - Blacks who were coerced to serve their prison sentence in Bethal were stripped naked and given a sack of potatoes to wear so that they cannot run away from the farm. There were long lines on the field with backs bent, digging potatoes with their hands, living in conditions not fit for human beings, and terrorised by the "shambok-carrying farm "boss-boys"" (First, 1958: 14). This was a system of prison labour that had existed in the past through various schemes. First (1959) shows that the Petty Offenders Scheme of 1954 was that which tried to solve the farmers problem of labour shortage since it was well known amongst Blacks that the working and living conditions on South African farms were harsh. The conditions in Bethal were so appalling that they led Scott (1947:17) to argue that slavery was "more humane, than a system which ignores the fact that a man is a man, not such so much that he is a man with any very far cry from the present situation on many South African [farms]…" One might ask Scott (1947) in his hyperbolic moment that it might seem we are drawing from different historical registrars, which slavery was humane?

Nxumalo's commitment to exposing the injustices of apartheid can be seen in how he wrote about the effects it had on those who were oppressed… My encounter with Nxumalo through the different *Drum* exposé (1952a, 1952b, 1953, 1954a, 1955) shattered my ignorance about research by Blacks in agriculture for I was of the opinion that there was no ethnographic work done on farms where someone worked as a farmworker. Henry Nxumalo was born in 1917 at Mvutshini, Margate and after matriculation he worked in Durban as a kitchen boy then as a boil maker in Johannesburg (Rand Daily Mail, 12/08/1958; Sampson, 1956). As a young boy he had written poetry for *Bantu World* and in the 1950s ended up working for *Drum*. In 1956, he was stabbed to death by an unknown assailant inspiring different versions as to who killed him, but in 1958 Molotshwa appeared in court (we will return to this). Nxumalo used the pseudonym 'Mr. Drum' when he published the stories in the *Drum* since he was publishing sensitive topics.

Nxumalo worked on one farm (see below) and did a number of interviews on different farms (including Bethal), with a particular interest in ethnographic research. One would argue that this was the purpose of any journalist, but from the archive no one did what he did or was invested in farmworkers in the manner that he was. His passion for ethnographic work can be traced back to the research he did with Rev Michael Scott. The narrative developed from the research was that which emphasised questions of legality and human rights, similar to most of the archival material I have handled and dealt with. In his research on Bethal he discovered a certain "Prologue to Hell" which involved meat, where after eating meat those that worked the land would be thrashed and forced to work (Nxumalo, 1952: 7). Meat was a rarity, workers ate mealie meal with skimmed milk or potatoes, if they ate meat they would be woken up in the morning by the baas boy who would say in Sotho "Le jele nama ea kalajane, kajeno le tla e patella (You have eaten the meat of a cheat and today you will pay for it)." They paid for it through being hit on their backs if they worked slowly. The article in the *Drum Magazine* by Henry Nxumalo (1952) of *Bethal Today Farms and Prisons* revealed such realities and caused a serious 'scandal' in the public domain and the South African Institute of Race Relations tried, through their field officer Mr Ngakane, to ascertain whether the allegations by Nxumalo were true. This resulted in him producing the *Report of inquiry into the working conditions of prison farm labourers*. While the investigation went on, a letter dated 15/03/1954 was sent by Ngakane to the National Organiser

of the Reform Prison League of South Africa, Rev H.P. Junod to discuss a case of a smuggled letter from a farm in Leslie (Bethal) by a prisoner transported from Durban (I cite the letter as is without fixing any spelling errors). We can hear that Prologue to Hell here:

> That is a great opportunity to write you these few lines, there is a thing trouble us very much in this jail. We have transferred from Durban to Leslie Jail there were no cases we have got from Durban Jail but in this Jail plenty of our friends are dead and sum are sick because of assaulting by the chief and his warders Booysen and Hotsze and Venter some of our friends have loose their life. He do all this because he is alone no one would deprecate him, On sartady the some of prisoner work till the sun-set because of their charges of cutting one seed of beens or mealies they won get a diner he attack them ith a Hippos skin, chambok on Sunday there are not going to get their food the full days. No one would make any complain to the superintendent or Magistrat that one would be dead there for no one who want to die we have seen that we have transferred here to be killed please Sir send us a chief we dont want this chief here please. Wet there meals every Sundays no Hospital for the sick prisoners they dont gey any medicine they cured by God. They carry big stones on their shoulders attacking and assaulting them with bamboo cane or Knob Kerry up and down with chief and prisoner at the diner time we get one cup of mealies and full up with water on Wednesday and Sunday we eat meat which is dead for its self a dirty and smell we dont know where did they get this meat just like. But we cant make any complain to the new Supperitend because of we are going to be killed after he had gon. Address: The Head Office Prisonerment Priteria T.V.L.

We can see how many prison labourers ended up in places they never anticipated to be in and in this particular case, this prisoner would have preferred to be sent to the Durban Jail since it was far better than what they experienced in Leslie. The diet is one that is questioned by the prisoner, which The Penal Reform League of South Africa takes up as they write to the Director of Prisons. This letter poses questions in this issue of prisoners having rights to speak about the violations they face since they could not speak to the new superintendent for fear of being killed. This was a condition described in essay 2 as silenced silence. In 1959 The Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, M.D.C. de Wet Nel (*Hansard* No. 20-16/6/59), during the potato boycott and the rife coverage on farm abuses, emphasised that there should be an investigation to deal with the allegations and this investigation should speak to the victims as

well. The purpose of the investigation was "for the sake of the good name of the farmers" (Hansard No. 20-16/6/59). The hope that those abused will talk was one that seems to be existing outside of the times, for many workers knew that speaking against the farmer was like speaking against God (see Interviews conducted by Moloi 2008/2009). De Wet Nel in Parliament also eschewed the allegations of violence and argued that farmers are kind people with their wives knowing the family of the Natives and taking good care of them so the situation on the farms must be treated delicately (Hansard. 16/61959, col. 8199. AD 1947/25.4). The language of paternalism on this day took centre stage in South African parliament and on the farm many knew that they dared not contradict the god (silence meant consent)… As one worker told Nxumalo (1952: 8):

> One day the police came to the farm. We were caked together before them, and they asked us if we were satisfied with the conditions. For a moment nobody answered… then some said "Yebo Nkosi." My heart was filled with anger at this untruth; but I knew why they had said it. They hoped to carry favour with the white men. Nobody could dare to contradict [them]…

That is why Scott required the assistance of Nxumalo or the SAIRR required the assistance of Ngakane, so that the workers could see a Black face and be able to pour their hearts out. The question of race also affected how the truth was spoken and to whom it was spoken… Making it difficult then for the state to get the voices of those oppressed since many of the workers told Nxumalo that they feared speaking to the police. Let us delve into the cases that Nxumalo explored to indicate the thread which was grounded in the idea of restoring law and preventing toxic racial relations. The same year of the Bethal scandal, in June 1952, *Drum* released an investigation on the Tot System in the Cape where farmworkers were paid with alcohol and subjected to poor housing conditions. The increased consumption of alcohol, as well as diseases like tuberculosis became a cause for early deaths. This method was condemned by Nxumalo, arguing that the state must do away with this form of payment instead of trying to allow for it to exist in Transvaal. In February 1953, he investigated the Sugar Farms in Durban and found that the small wages that many farmworkers earned forced them to loan money from the farmer, who then used this to their advantage and drew up a contract that would bind them to work for them for longer. This was a vicious cycle since many owed the farmer for more than 10 years. In

March 1954, he published *Mr Drum Goes to Jail*, an exposé of the Johannesburg Central Jail (The Fort) to document the inhumane conditions that many prisoners suffer, using the example of the Tausa or the Zulu Dance where the prisoner strips naked in front of a White warder then jumps in the air to show that they are not concealing dagga or tobacco. The story was based on how Mr Drum on the 20th of January deliberately broke the pass law and was caught for not having a pass five minutes before midnight. He was charged for breaking the curfew regulations and was supposed to pay a fine of 10s (shillings) or face five days imprisonment (Nxumalo, 1954a). In May 1954 a follow up story was published indicating that because of the exposė, prison authorities were treating prisoners better (Nxumalo, 1954b).

In March 1955, three years after the story on Bethal broke, he returned to farm violence where he worked at Snyman's Farm near Rustenburg. He walked on foot wearing torn clothes so that he may be granted a job. He was hired and promised a wage of £4 a month which was later raised to £5 and a monthly ration for mealie meal. In this story, Nxumalo's interest was to discover if the violence on the farm had subsided after the owner of Harmoine farm, Mr Johan Snyman, had been arrested in 1954 for killing Elias Mpikwa a prison labourer. Snyman, in the trial, was quoted as saying "If he [the Native] does not know how to work, I will hit him for a week until he knows" (Rand Daily Mail, 23/09/1954). According to the evidence presented in court, Mpikwa was beaten by Mr Snyman and his son with the assistance of an African foreman (boss boy), Jantjie Thlome (Rand Daily Mail, 23/09/1954). In covering this story, Nxumalo was following different stories covered in the South African press about the violent treatment of prison labourers in the Western Transvaal farms, especially the area of Koster. Just like in Bethal, they slept on sacks, wore sacks, and used sacks as 'plates' to eat on. In this we can see that he wants to understand if the farmer is punished by the law does he stop the violent treatment of the workers? What is interesting is that in the archive every farmer has a name that the labourers give to them - some are called Madubula (the one who shoots), others Manyenye (Earthquakes), KwaMbawula, uMabhulala Umuntu (the one who killed a person- Snyman), Jy Moet (You Must) (see Interviews by Moloi 2008/2009 as well). The names were an indication to the labourers to understand what they were dealing with so that they could either avoid the tempestuous side of the farmer or for those seeking work to enter at their own risk. In the story of

Snyman's farm one labourer known as Picanin, a cook, claimed to have seen the ghost of Mpikwa "sitting on the box in the shanty where we have our food" (Nxumalo, 1955:31). It would seem that just like those in Dududu, the spirit of Mpikwa was still on Snyman's farm even though the body was not buried on that farm. In the different investigations conducted under the name Mr Drum, one can argue that the intention was to show the brutality that happens on the South African farms and one can see that Nxumalo's interests was trying to understand the different ways that farmers bound people to the farm, hence he looked at: the tot system in the Cape, indebtedness to the farmer in Durban, the issue of violent treatment of farmworkers, and the usage of the pass system to make people work. This last case of the pass, he discovered it when he was too tired to work at Snyman's farm, the farmer tore the pass up and said "Now you haven't got a pass… you can't leave without my permission: I can have you arrested and imprisoned. If you don't want to work fast like the others, I'll hand you over to the police and have you charged with refusing to work" (cited in Nxumalo, 1955: 33). Once this threat was said, the violence followed, but the farmer said he "*treated his workers well* and paid them well… he clapped me on the left cheek with his open right hand, and told me to face the wall. Then he kicked me between the legs three times with his hard boot… Then he told me he wouldn't stand any nonsense from me on his farm [emphasis mine]" (Nxumalo, 1955: 35). The labourers told him that he was lucky that he got a beating because if the old Snyman was present he would have undressed him and forced him to wear sacks so that he does not runaway (Nxumalo, 1955). Oh the sack of potatoes, who knew that it would be one of the ways to prevent desertion, for wearing a sack meant that one already had a stigma, indicating that whoever takes this person on their land (if they happen to runaway) would be dealing with a rabble-rouser, a cheeky kaffir! Mr Drum's conclusion was that nothing has changed in the farm and:

> …there are still many other farms like Harmonie. Unless workers are given freedom to complain or given leave, and until convicts cease being sent to farms without supervision, there will always be cases of labourers being seriously ill-treated. Not only farmers, but African foremen and labourers take part in these brutal assaults. Mr. Drum… appeals to the authorities to take steps to end this dreadful barbarism, *which has done such untold harm to race-relations* [emphasis mine]."

The Problem of Violence on the Farms: Through the Rational Logic of the State and the Interests of Farmers

Muller (2011) in his description of the conditions that led to the coercive labour system in Bethal identifies three important interventions made by the Nationalist Party which are: The formation of labour bureaus in 1951 working in conjunction with laws that dealt with influx and efflux control, the prison labour system, and the creation of reaping times during harvest times which can be traced to the beginning of the second World War. Nzula (1989:71), like others, also argued that despite the various attempts to deal with the problems in agriculture by the state, the "beggarly wages, bad food, poor living conditions and a working day lasting from sunrise to sunset Africans were forced to go anywhere but the farm to look for a wage." As indicated above, to Lacey (1981) the manner of intervention in agriculture by the state made it impossible for many who were in the countryside to find peace and going to town was not for economic reasons as many farmers argued. Did this resistance not have to deal with the nature of dispossession in South Africa? Those that made policies saw the problem from a narrow economic standpoint, as Posel (1993:413) argued that the Nationalist policy maker:

> …treated the African labour market as if it were undifferentiated, disregarded workers' previous training and skills, employers' prejudices and stereotypes as well as workers own choices. Treating African workers as wholly interchangeable units of labour, the economic 'logic' of the Nationalists' influx control programme rested on the assumption that if the prevailing demand in any urban area was for x number of African workers, and the size of the local economically active population was x+ n, then there was no good reason to bring more labour into the area until the growth in the size of the local demanded exceeded n.

Posel (1993) indicates that this system (labour bureau) did not go without contradictions, as the state classified those Blacks in the cities as tribalised and detribalised, arguing that industry should first give preference to the detribalised since they had permanent ties to the city. Many of those who resided in the township, it was argued, detested obnoxious work and the employers were forced to bypass the system and hire the tribalised. This was also to the detriment of agriculture since this method was drawing labour on the terrain of the farmers (the tribalised people). We can use Lacey's (1981) explanation to elaborate on this movement that the

acceptance of ‘obnoxious work’ was not because they preferred it, but because of a desire for freedom from oppression in the countryside. Research by the Pretoria municipal official found that “Zulus, make outstanding watchmen and police, the Tsonga are good cleaners and sanitation workers, the Transvaal Ndebele work well with picks and shovels” (Posel, 1993: 418). Perhaps it was this research or the ‘knowledge’ of how different ethnic groups thrive under certain occupations that also influenced who is hired. The apartheid system did not only aim to construct a homogeneous view of how the different races behave in South Africa but it also drew on its implicit assumption that it knew the desires of the Native, a paternalism we have also found in the letters discussed in the previous essay. Muller (2011 see page 65) indicates that in agriculture, despite the contradictions that Posel (1993) deals with, the bureaus were successful since from July 1952 to December 1957 the number of workers allocated to agriculture moved from 28 545 to 87 996.

Another form of intervention that is discussed is the system of prison labour. The usage of prison labour can be found in the archive of the Cape where Jan van Riebeeck had forced ‘prisoners’ to do public works or later in the 19th century where prisoners were tasked with the building of roads (Singh, 2005; Holdridge, n.d; Wilson, 1971; Ainslie, 1977). Arnold (1994) has argued that at the centre of the Empire was the prison labour system with the British East Indian Company being the biggest operators of the prison labour system. Therefore, to confront the prison labour system is to confront the question of how the Empire dealt with the question of labour scarcity or to make those deemed lazy to work. Deacon (1996), in the chapter *The British Prison on Robben Island 1800-1896,* focuses on the British Prison on Robben Island and the usage of prison labour where the system emphasised the usage of force or physical violence to attain the desired production from prison labourers. She argues that prison labour has always been linked to physical punishment, which was applied to those who were arrested, and doing the labouring and this was merely a continuation of that which began during the period of slavery in the Cape where it was believed that to get the most productive outcome from the lazy slaves, flogging was necessary. This history is useful, for at the back of the mind we can keep this: prison labour was always linked to the violence of slavery. We will return to this question of violence. It is then no wonder that those who wrote about Bethal equated it to slavery (Scott, 1947; First, 1959).

Through Coetzee (1988) we discovered that the question of agriculture placed in front of us the question of ownership and work, where work was a method used to separate the Hottentot from their laziness. He argues that this was to haunt the apartheid state where:

> The challenge of idleness to work, its power to scandalize is as radical as it ever was… we might wonder whether presented by idleness to the philosophical enterprise is any less powerful or subversive than the challenge presented by the erotic, in particular by the *silence* of eroticism… Two cornerstone measures of this programme were the so-called Immorality Act and Mixed Marriages Act. Laws whose primary intention and whose practical effect it was to take away from white men the freedom to drop out the ranks of the labouring class, take up with the brown women, settle down to more or less idle, shiftless improvident lives, and engender troops of ragged children of all hues, a process which if allowed to accelerate, would in the end, they foresaw, spell the demise of White Christian civilisation at the tip of Africa.

While the African woman is merely reduced to a figure that seduces White civilisation to idleness, there is an argument we can draw from the above quote that the apartheid laws were intended, as De Beers argues, to ensure that all men work especially to ensure that Whites do not fall into 'the African life'. The message which we get from Coetzee (1988) is that there was a strong possibility that African laziness was the prelapsarian life and the Europeans despised it since they had lost their relationship with the land and hence they had to use violence (being the sin that uprooted them from their mother country). For the prelapsarian had developed a harmonious relationship with the land that many desired, that is why the Boers began to call themselves Afrikaners since they saw themselves as the rightful heirs of the secret of relating to the soil. We must remember that poem cited by Krog (2015) titled *If I am man*, which discards the notion that the Afrikaner had any harmonious relationship with the land. To this historical time, to think that the African was without sin was sacrilegious. What I am suggesting is that the struggle as it will be shown below had to deal with the relationship with the land.

First (1959) did not entertain the above ideas, instead she argued that the genesis of the POS may well be traced as far back as 1932 where "African short-term prisoners were contracted out as

labour to farmers… [the scheme] was known as the "6d. a day scheme". Prisoners sent to prison for less than three months were handed over to farmers to serve their sentences on the farms" (First, 1959: 16). This scheme was compulsory to all prisoners, therefore their consent was not obtained and the prisoner lost "remission privileges which would have reduce[d] [the] sentence by one quarter if [they] remained in jail" (First, 1959: 16). In 1947 the Native Commissioner's Court in the area of Fordsburg under P.J De Beers who put forward a scheme where African men who were arrested for not abiding to the Urban Areas Act were not to be persecuted but were to accept work on the farms (van Wyk and Ngakane, 21/09/1949; First, 1959; Duncan, 1991). It would seem that De Beers made this announcement based on the interpretation of "the Section 29 (Act 25, 1945)" which to him applies "to black and white alike. The African who won't work at all are sent to Leeuwkop and the Europeans to Swartfontein. We also have man who won't work amongst white people." (De Beers cited in van Wyk and Ngakane, 21/09/1949). The report by Van Wyk and Ngakane (21/09/1949) found that De Beers with his partner Mr Morgan saw themselves as playing a pivotal role in solving the labour problem on the farms and helping those Natives who might find themselves in trouble with the law:

> They, therefore, felt it incumbent upon themselves to ensure the very best treatment for the Africans who go to the farms. Therefore, in front of the Africans and the farmers with whom employment is accepted they tell the Africans that if they have complaints these should be lodged with the farmer or local police. Quite frequently the farmers bring in employees with complaints which are then investigated. Mr. Ngakane feels that where a complaint is made to the police the probability is that the complainant's grievances will not be redressed because the police are members of the local community and will therefore avoid incurring the displeasure of the farmers.

De Beers was said to be a friend of the Native (as indicated in the previous essay), the report by van Wyk and Ngakane (1949) was trying to ascertain whether the commissioners were using any force to compel those arrested to work on the farms. They discovered that it was only the aforementioned speech that was used and compassion was shown to those arrested. The case of De Beers is interesting and following that speech of his, it was also discovered that he had keys to one of the trucks that transported farmworkers, and the truck belonged to one of the farmers in

Bethal (Muller, 2011). The Department of Justice investigated the scheme and it was found that compulsion was used since a number of the petty offenders did not appear in court; it was suspected that they were sent straight to the trucks parked outside the Native Commissioners office. It was argued that De Beers had threatened the prisoners that if they do not take farm work the ancestors would punish them and he was asked to step down (Muller, 2011). De Beers was charged with corruption for using the past and the beliefs of the Natives to compel them to go work on the farm. Despite a number of technicalities raised during this period, the scheme becomes extended in the circular of 1954 where the Secretary for Native Affairs in conjunction with the Secretary of Justice and the Commissioner of the South African Police, indicated that this was for the good of the Native for they could not engage in criminal activities. Below, I cite the scheme:

SCHEME FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF PETTY OFFENDERS IN NON-PRESCRIBED AREAS

1. It is common knowledge that large numbers of natives are daily being arrested and prosecuted for contraventions of a purely technical nature.

…

The Department of Justice, the South African Police and this Department have therefore held consultations on the problem and have evolved a scheme, the object of which is to induce unemployed natives now roaming about the streets in the various urban areas to accept employment out-side such urban areas.

3. This scheme aims primarily at assisting unemployed natives to obtain employment, but it is self-evident that one of its results will be that the number of unemployed natives in the urban areas will be greatly reduced and there would be less temptation for such natives to resort to crime as a means of livelihood.
4. The operation of the scheme is confined to technical contraventions amongst which the following offences may be classed:

a) Contraventions of paragraph (g) of section eight and section nine of the Native Taxation and Development Act 1925 (Act 41 of 1925) as amended;
b) Contraventions of section ten and twelve of the natives (urban area) Consolidation Act 1945 Act No. 25 of 1945 as amended;
c) Contraventions of regulations three, eleven and twenty three of proclamation No. 150 of 1934, and contraventions of Chapter II of Government Notice No. 1032 of 1949 (Registration Regulations framed under section thirty-eight (1) of Act No. 25 of 1945).

d) Contraventions of the Labour Bureau Regulations published under Government Notice No. 2495 of 31st October, 1952.

5. The scheme has now been in operation in the large centres for some time, and with certain exceptions necessitated by local conditions, the procedure described below is followed in dealing with natives arrested for the abovementioned offences:-

a) Natives arrested between 2 p.m. on Sundays and 2 p.m on Fridays are not charged immediately after rest, but merely detained by the Police.

b) Natives so detained are removed under escort to the district labour bureau and handed over to the Employment Officer, at such times as suits local conditions, daily except Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays. The times at which arrested natives are to be handed over should be arranged between the South African Police and the Employment Officer.

c) A nominal roll, as per pro forma attached, is prepared by the South African Police in quadruplicate in respect of all natives sent to the labour bureau and taken to the bureau by the escort together with the natives.

…

6. The Operation of the scheme has been extended to urban areas through the Union, and officers are requested to adhere to the procedure described in paragraph 6 as far as possible, having regard to variations in local conditions.
7. Employment Officers must render monthly returns in the form of the attached annexures to their respective Chief Native Commissioners, who will submit a consolidation returned for the area to the Central Labour Bureau in Head Office.
8. The provisions of this Circular will be incorporated in the proposed native affairs Code relating to Labour Bureaux.

Thus, POS is announced as the benevolence of the state, to save the Native from becoming a criminal in the city. The crisis of overcrowding in the city is that which also reflected itself in the prison system, where there was overcrowding in jails, and this resulted in farmers building prisons to help ameliorate the crisis and offer an alternative, that of working on the national factory, the farm. In the early 1950s, figures seem to suggest a relentless driving force behind the scheme when 40,553 prisoners were sent to work on farms in 1952, from a mere 25,000 – 30,000 in the years before (First, 1959). And considering the participation of all 165 jails in the Union, it

does not come as a shock that there is a sharp increase to 100,000 between 1953 and 1954 and an even steeper intake of 199,312 African men on farms between 1957 and 1958 (First, 1959). As Muller (2011) shows, a number of farmers praised De Beers and favoured the later scheme which was passed since it seemed that the state was attending to their labour needs. On 1957/03/13, *The Star* published an article called "Scramble for Labour is Root Cause" where it argued that the shortage of labour on South African farms is the cause of the violence that is reported to be occurring on these farms. It indicated that the Transvaal Agricultural Union (TAU) has "take[n] steps for closer liaison with the Native Affairs Department and the various labour bureaus to ensure that farmers get a larger share of available Native labour." From this, we also realise that farmers unions like TAU and the South African Agricultural Union (SAAU) influenced state intervention in agriculture. At the same time when the violence was occurring, they argued that it was not a common trend among farmers, it was only a few bad farmers, and if found guilty they should be punished by being delisted from the database. Yet, V.R. Verster (Commissioner of Prisons, 16/02/1960) commented that the state was under staffed and could not monitor all the jails on farms, my argument is that those that were caught were either unlucky or those closest to the Department of Justice where officials could easily access the farms. What I am alluding to is that given the South African terrain, it was difficult for an under staffed state to get to certain farms.

The pace of state intervention in the agricultural sector can be seen in the letter written by V.R. Verster (Commissioner of Prisons) to SAIRR Research Officer (16/02/1960) which details the number of prisons in the Union:

> a) There are 24 farm gaols in the Union [these where those built on farms] situated as follows:-
>
> (i) 13 In the Cape Province at Soete Inval and Koelenhof, district Stellenbosch, Staart van Paardeberg, Simondium and Klein Drakenstein, district Paarl, Rawsonville, district Worcester, Obiqua, district Tulbagh, Dwarsrivier, district Wolseley, Riebeekkasteel, district Riebeek West, Warm De Doorns, Hawequa, district Wellington and Bien Donne.
>
> (ii) 1 In the Orange Free State at Geneva, district Kroonstad.2

(iii) 10 In the Transvaal at Leslie, Kinross, Trichardt, Ongesien and Geluk, district Bethal, Davel, district Ermelo, Hendrina, Woestalleen and Bulfontein, district Middelburg, and Driehoek, district Witbank.

In addition, Marxist scholarship argued that this was the period of gold-maize where the state had to ensure that it not only attends to the needs of mining, but that capitalist agriculture is also supplied with cheap labour (Trapido, 1971; Wilson, 1971; Lacey, 1981; Duncan, 1991; Posel, 1993; Davies, Kaplan, Morris, and O'Meara, 2007; Higginson, 2015). Mafeje (1986) contended that the argument that looks at the contradiction in the period termed the existence of gold and maize suggests that there was a homogeneity of interests between the foreign capital, mostly in mining and the struggling Afrikaners. He argued that the Afrikaners were seeking to be the main benefactors of state policy and venture into other industries and therefore eliminate foreign capital. The only problem of the Afrikaners was that they did not have sufficient capital and that is why it took them time to modernise agriculture, but they relied on their political power to ensure that they emerge as the dominant force (Mafeje, 1986). Perhaps this struggle is visible in the Bethal region where the large scale farmers who were in need of labour established agencies like the Transvaal Farmer's Labour Agency which acquired services from the companies that recruited in mining and began to recruit foreign migrants who were mostly children, despite the state's disapproval of employing young boys. This form of recruitment was to encounter problems since most of the countries they recruited from had given the mining industry first preference. This forced the TAU to complain, in the 1920s, about this bias. During this period as the South African Party was removed post the cries of the state not caring for the Afrikaners, especially the poor Whites and the events of the Rand Revolt, Hertzog's Pact government came to power and emphasised the protection of the interests of White workers and halted any recruitment in agriculture from other countries and emphasised the employment of Whites (Yudelman, 1984, Higginson, 2015; Murray, 1996). The likes of Lazarus complained that the "poor whites were "too lazy to work"" (Murray, 1997:88). "What complicated matters was that farmers in the maize belt were located far from concentrated pockets of African settlement. The entire eastern Transvaal Highveld was "practically without Reserves'" (Murray, 1997:84). These problems prompted the farmers, it is argued to ponder deep, hard, and firstly as it is shown above, they relied on their resources through the recruitment agencies, but workers never

favoured agricultural work and they lobbied the state (given their influence) and their cries fell to the ears of the deaf Hertzog according to Murray (1997). Lacey (1981) argues otherwise, that it was during Herzog's tenure that the agricultural work became more coercive in South Africa and Hertzog always addressed the concerns of the farmers. It will be enquired regarding this rationality and the outlook that located violence from a perspective that aimed to show the relationship between the state's interests and the capitalist interests in agriculture, and will be asking: why did the farmers resort to such extreme levels of violence that they ended up killing the labourers?

One of the simple reasons is that the Native was not seen as a human being so the punishment and discipline was merely to change their relationship with work. As Murray (1997) argues, this was merely the microphysics of power, citing Foucault (1995). This was a view also supported by SAIRR that farmers, as indicated in the previous essay, should treat their workers like humans. After the release of the 1947 report by Scott, one reader of the *Rand Daily Mail* indicated that Whites in South Africa showed no sympathy about Bethal and:

> This comparative indifference (how different would have been the reaction were the roles of complaint and accused reversed) seems to be caused by the habit of regarding the natives not so much as fellow human beings entitled to sympathetic help in their upward climb, but as labour to be kept available for our profit.

Within the debate of state intervention in South African agriculture were those like SAIRR who saw the problem as that of racial relations in the country and having important bearings for the future of the country. Nxumalo (1952:4) shared the same sentiments in his *Drum* coverage of Bethal where he put a disclaimer that "We are all too aware of the damage to good relations between the races that the conditions at Bethal have brought about, and we wish to do all we can to prevent such happenings in the future." So, what was this future about, one wonders? Why was this future secured by violence? Was treating those that worked the land as humans enough?

It is argued that the National Party drew its base from the rural farmers, the above interventions were intended to appeal to these class interests pushing the state to act in their favour (Muller, 2011; Higginson, 2015; Lacey, 1989; Morris, 1977). The aggressive manner in which the different strategies which were employed by the state to attain labour on the farm, can be traced as far as the Hertzog regime as Lacey (1981) argues. She argues that Hertzog did not only try to ensure that Blacks do not have land (in dealing with the Native Question), but that they also have no option, but to render their labour on the farms (Lacey 1981). For that reason, Lacey (1981) surmised that the Reserves were always a threat to the farmers and an opportunity to the mining capital to attain cheaper labour. She shows how through different platforms farmers went on to disregard the creation of Reserves and the problem of indirect rule that denied them labour. If Blacks have land where they can return to, then they would not offer their labour to farmers and not entertain ideas of labour tenancy. Hence, one could also see in the archive the disregard for squatting by farmers. The decisions made by the 1940s state or the apartheid state are seen as "rational" since they were accommodating "the changing needs of the South African economy" (Lacey, 1981: 8).

Violence: The Problem of the Black Criminal and the Language of Legality

To First (1959: 2) that which becomes known as a scandal in this period is "not an isolated evil. It brings to the fore some of the worst features of the apartheid cheap labour state and gives them a more hideous form." Through these lenses, the thesis is the problem of shortage of labour in South African farms. The anti-thesis is the fact that this system is violent and will not yield any form of development in South Africa since it restricts "the farm worker from leaving one district for another in search of better work and high pay" (First, 1959: 20). This anti-thesis expresses itself in the form of slavery where she argues that "[t]he labourer is not owned bodily as were the slaves of the old, but the wretched wage paid him for his back-breaking work barely distinguishes him from a slave, and he is no freer than a slave to leave the farm…" The synthesis is that in South Africa "as anywhere else there is only one way to attract a flow of willing labour to the farms and that is to pay farm workers a living wage, to provide conditions fit for human beings and incentives to men to do farm work" (First, 1959: 20). Despite the citing of the history of dispossession in South Africa, First (1959) does not go deeper into the meaning of

dispossession in South Africa and why it took that particular form on South African farms. Why is it that "the ambition of every son of every farm worker is to strike away from this misery to do better than his father did" (First, 1959: 20)? The answer to her is that we also have to consider that Blacks have no land:

> The Land Act of 1913 robbed him of all but 13 per cent of land; the poll tax forced him to leave his village to go [to] the mines or towns to earn a cash wage to be able to pay the tax collector; the Land Trust Acts threw squatters and labour tenants off farms without giving them any other home on the land. Over the years hundreds of thousands of families became wanderers, without land, homes or work in the countryside. From being the owners of their own fields and grazing lands they became hirelings and disposed servants of the new owners.

She argued that the Nationalist Party with its desire to secure the interest of farmers was "plunging this country to disaster" (First, 1959: 20). For those who want to read the problem through the racial lenses and through the rational logic of the state (responding to solve the labour crisis on farms), a question that might present itself naively and yet intended to defamiliarise the familiar is 'why would the farmers go as far as killing their labourers if they complained about labour shortages?' This question, as it will be shown, debunks the rational logic of the state.

There was a popularised press statement sent by SAIRR in 1959, also sent to a number of people who enquired about the farm labour question. You must realise that this statement calls for government to intervene since this matter is a matter of race relations in the countryside. For the first time, despite the paternalistic discourse, which is touched on in the previous essay, here we also see how the problem is perceived. Farms, it is argued are not appealing to Black workers and such incidents of violence, as TAU indicated, make it difficult to attain farmworkers. The conclusion for the union, which was also supported by the institute, was the promotion (in the modern language) of decent working conditions in agriculture (good working and living conditions and better wages as indicated in the previous essay). What is interesting about this material, especially on calls relating to decent work and a respect of the rights of Black workers,

is that it draws on a discourse on rights; that even criminals have rights and most of the rights are violated by the particular system in discussion. What is missed in this discourse is how the state itself, through that which I read as systemic racism, was able to create a condition in which being Black in the city was a crime if one did not produce the necessary documents which provide one's domicile, employer's details, or the person that one is going to visit. The implicit knowledge of attaining the criminal was not based on a separate event. The historical event of many Blacks being uprooted from the land was one which expressed itself in the city with the rise of urban squatters in areas like "Vrededorp, Newclare, and Sophiatown" with 60 000 people and "Alexandra Township (60,000) Western and Eastern Native Township (20,000) and Orlando (70,000)." (Scott, 1947:10). The tragedy in all of this was that these Natives were needed for work in the city and yet they were never seen as citizens of South Africa, but as potential criminals. There was to be no family life or schools for those who worked in the European areas. "Under these circumstances … The moral sanctions and disciplines of tribal and family life are fast disappearing" (Scott, 1947: 10). Du Bois (2007 [1903]) had argued that during the period of independence in America it was therefore normal for the country to express concerns of crime; for example they had never imagined that they would encounter free man and one can imagine encountering them in large numbers in a slum! All these people in the aforementioned slums were similar to those who were squatting on farms who were always suspected of no good since they did not render their labour to the Whites.

Theoretically, we may deploy Agamben's (1993) philosophical use of potentiality in relation to Bartleby. In this usage of potentiality it was that which enmeshed to be and not to be, my argument is that criminality carried with it potentiality, for all those in the city could be seen as potential labourers as well as potential criminals. The state then believed that the not to be (criminality) was to be punished so that it can be (labourers). Violence was one of the forms of dealing with what was believed to be a nascent resistance. For to be a criminal was always seen as a refusal, not complying with the law (we will see this problem of the law that made every Black person a criminal). Criminality, to the farmer, was to be their salvation from the problem of labour. The not to be, which was not linked to work was seen as the potential threat of criminality, a suspicion by the state and those calling for labour (the farmer/ mine owner) of a

coming Black resistance that does not address itself to the civility of work. We must remember that in this notion of criminality there was no difference between a bag snatcher and a political activist fighting for the rights of Blacks, albeit the latter was treated to be more dangerous. I had argued that silence to power is seen as dangerous, for on the farm there was no movement that spoke for the criminal, except later, through the potato boycott, but can we argue that the violence was a result of a silent historical tension linked to land dispossession (this I will address below)? An innocent question may be posed again to strengthen the argument proposed: since we are told that the farmers had been experimenting with various 'scientific' methods of ensuring that large-scale farming in this area is efficient, why use physical violence? The notion of swart gevaar (Black danger) was that which called for White vigilance from the state (through policing) and including interpersonal relations, my argument is that every White person in this society became a police who was to deal with the criminality of Blacks or the fact that by being Black one was a criminal. The violence was an expression of a society where every White person despite the existence of the state (here I am moving in contradistinction to the work of Evans, 2009) had become a police officer.

Yet to be, the character of Blacks "must be vouched for by some white man" (Du Bois, 2007 [1903]: 104) or some document from the state. This was what Du Bois termed the unwritten law and we also find it through a focus on *Lynch Law in America* by Ida B Wells (1900) who provides a critical analysis of why it was justified to lynch Black people in the South. For, there was an unwritten law that a Black person is bound to commit a (sexual) crime! Therefore, this unwritten law was intended to thwart any possibility of Black resistance (seen as criminality) and justify White violence (protecting the White fragile woman against the savages). One Mrs M.L. Weston (11/06/1959) puts her finger on the problem that the farmers anticipated Black resistance to the scheme whether through desertion or by escaping while the convict was being transported to the farm. She indicates that through observing the behaviour of one farmer who developed good relations with a clerk police officer who would get him more labourers than he required in case they escape or decide to run away. This system to Horrell (12/06/1959) was "manufacturing criminals" for running away was a criminal offence. This vicious cycle went from arrest to farm labour and then arrest again! It seems the connection between crime and farm labour served a

long desire of the farmers that even if some Black workers escape the farm or prefer not to work on the farm, Blacks in South Africa were ipso facto criminals. Then, what POS did was render violence just, for the farmers were dealing with criminals! Not forgetting that particular history that linked prison labour with physical force. This vicious cycle can be seen through the 15-year-old Moses from Alexander:

> Moses, returned on demand from a farm where he had been digging potatoes. He had still been at school, but was told that he was 15 and so should leave and apply for a pass. He was given a temporary document which he lost and as a result found himself arrested and taken to Court. According to Moses he was classified as juvenile and sent to "S" Court, Johannesburg Magistrate Court where he waited all day without appearing and was then given four cuts and sent home. He walked to Alexandra. After a few days, during which he recovered from his cuts, Moses reported to the peri-urban authorities to try his luck again for a "pass". (He was too young for a reference book, apparently). The peri-urban official sent him home to get his sister to vouch that he was born in Alexandra, but before he could get his sister to the pass office he was visited in his home by a Non-European policeman. For the second time within a week Moses found himself in handcuffs and on his way to a police cell. At the police station a European police sergeant told him he was too young for farm labour and would have to go to "S" court again. A little later a Non-European policeman told him that the White sergeant was talking nonsense and that he had been "sold" to a farmer. He never appeared in Court and protested that he did not want to go the farm. He was placed in an open-air "cage" and eventually his name was called out. "I told the White official (not a police man this time) that I did not want to go to the farm. But he said I must go. He did not tell me to which farm or which district or how much I would be paid. Later that day I was taken away with seven others under the guard of bossboys.

The question which presents itself as the 'why' of violence in South African farms to Stevens (2016) is not enough; instead we ought to understand 'how' violence operates both at the micro-macro level in order to explain deeper the why. This framing proposed by Stevens (2016) is not sufficient, for it is still interested in the present logic of violence or the representative logic of violence. That is to say, this logic would rather look at the past and present- by focusing on how violence constructs certain modes of being and how those modes of being speak to the past. Or how the subalterns have managed to form different kinds of self from that violence, and how this

can be read as liberatory politics/practice (Scott, 1999, Hartman, 1997). Instead, one realises that violence's intention is that of futurity and the beauty of the future, it is believed, is that it is able to discard the yesterday so much so that when we seek to factor in the past in the future it becomes a futile exercise of the present. Violence then becomes that which goes beyond the present or the past; so that when it exists, it can no longer exist in the matter-form. Think of the vicious way in which different democratic institutions where the conditions of subjugation and domination take on a different expression institutionally where the oppressor responds ferociously when the oppressed ask for reforms (like the insufficiency of affirmative action in redressing the historical past). The answer is almost always that we forget about the past and its viciousness, especially considering that today 'your' people can occupy such positions. This is the futurity of violence for it only presents the past as something that is assumed to be dead or if we resurrect the past it may speak in the language of our dear commissioner Mr. De Beers (the past was always good for the Native and his cattle). Once the ugly side of the past has been erased or assumed to be dead in the present, it is argued that if the ways of this ghost are inherited then it becomes a dangerous way of looking at life/existing. The violence that exists through those that seek to speak for others in the present is that it forgets that ghosts can demand justice for themselves, was this not the case in Dududu? We will also see this with the torment that the murderer of Henry Nxumalo had to deal with. In constructing its future, we come to be aware that violence is a pervicacious lover whose preferred partner is docility. In its abode, it does not aim to encounter resistance. Unfortunately, like all lovers, it is always agitated by that suspicion that all relationships end at some point! So, it hopes that maybe its rule and the condition of life that it aims to create will be extended by its preferred offspring whose name is: Future. Future's task is that of muting all kinds of resistance. For violence knows that to keep the relationship going in the now, flowers of brutality will have to be delivered, for all that is done, it is for Future.

In simple words, if for Durkheim (1933) the manner in which crime is handled reflects the state of the common conscience of a particular society then we may have to ask about the manner in which crime was dealt with in the Union; what did it reveal about this particular society (a question that inspired Comaroff and Comaroff, 2017 in their book *The Truth About Crime*

although focusing on the neoliberal state)? The manner in which violence is deployed also reveals the law it seeks to create (see Benjamin, 1986; Lawrence and Karim, 2007; Zizek, 2008; Comaroff and Comaroff, 2017). Thus, in dealing with the law and violence we understand the type of social order that is being fashioned. The principal is violence+law= social order. We realise much deeper as it will be shown that violence also reflects the Future that each social order intends to secure in the now. The difficulty is that the Future is not always realised. Nonetheless, let us look at the matter of violence. It is the character of Marlow in Conrad's (1994:10) *Heart of Darkness* who comes to my aid when he alleged that:

> *The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only*. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretence but an idea; and an unselfish belief in the idea-something you can set up, and *bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to*…[emphasis mine].

Thus, by looking at the language of rights and the law, are we not merely prostrating to an idea of civility? And, in so doing, neglecting the nasty side of dispossession? As Benjamin (1986) was to show, we cannot touch on the subject of law without speaking of violence. The subject of law does not only seek to preserve 'law and order in society', but aims to have a monopoly of violence over certain individuals. If violence is not at the hands of the law, it not only poses a threat to order in society, but it also threatens the kind of society which the law through the usage of violence seeks to preserve. It is within this form of reasoning that Benjamin (1986:295) aims to launch a *Critique of Violence,* for this logic of law with its understanding of the means and ends of violence conceals the nature of violence itself:

> For the function of violence in lawmaking is twofold, in the sense that lawmaking pursues as its end, with violence as the means, what is to be established as law, but at the moment of instatement does not dismiss violence; rather, at this very moment of lawmaking, it specifically establishes as law not an end unalloyed by violence, but one necessarily and -intimately bound to it, under the title of power. Lawmaking is power making, and, to that extent, an immediate manifestation of violence.

The problem with the archive that one has dealt with is how it reads violence on South African farms. This is mainly because it zones in on the question of violence from one perspective, the rational perspective that argues that the state or the farmer is rational, that is to say, the usage of violence against Blacks was justified since it served economic reasons. It does not help us in understanding how law-making, as a means of power-making, reflects even the limits of the power of violence since the intention of violence, as argued, is one that aims to address the Future. The Future, for violence, is always in a state of precarity since today it may get its ends, but tomorrow remains unknown to it, hence the law aims to fashion a particular social order that justifies the usage of violence. If we go deeper, we then realise that every social order aims to conceal an anxiety about the unknown Future.

At the helm of showing that the legal system was filled with irregularities was the lawyer Mr Joel Carlson who brought forward a number of habeas corpus cases and showed that many ended up working on the farm without their families being notified. The following cases appeared in the media (SAIRR, 30/07/1959):

a) By Innocent Langa for the return of his brother, Nelson Langa, from the farm of Mr. Hirschowitz in the Bethal district (July 1957)

b) By Dorkus Sadika for the return of her husband, James Musa Sadika, from the farm of P.J Potgieter in the Heidelbeg area (1959);

c) By Maria Mahloane for the return of her son Daniel from the farm of B.Feldt in the Kendal District (1959);

d) By Andrew Morgan for the return of his brother-in-law Paul Anthony from the farm of B.Feldt (1959);

e) By Mary Mtembu for the return of her husband Jackson from the farm of S.P. Botha (1959);

f) By Jeckson Mtembu for the return of his friend Nelson Dube from the farm of S.P. Botha (1959);

g) By Usuman Adam for the return of his friend Samson Banda from the farm of S.P. Botha (1959);

h) By Violent Mamabola for the return of her son Andrew from the farm of S. Rubin in the Leslie District (1959);

i) By Esther Sonanzi for the return of her brother Alfred from the farm of S.Rubin (1959).

Mr Carlson was still within the language of law, his cases were popularised and influenced the outlook of movements like the ANC regarding farm labour, and also aiding in the boycott of the potatoes since it was argued that many workers ended up on farms against their free will, even though they could prove that they had jobs. It mattered not if they ended up on the farm against their will, for every Black is a potential criminal, a fact those policemen in the city known as Blackjacks (since they were tough and always applied violence) knew too well (Duncan, 1964). Du Bois (120-121) in looking at lynching in the South of America argued that:

> …the South had no machinery, no adequate jails or reformatories; its police system was arranged to deal with blacks alone, and tacitly assumed that every white man was ipso facto* a member of that police. Thus grew up a double system of justice, which erred on the white side by undue leniency and the practical immunity of red-handed criminals, and erred on the black side by undue severity, injustice, and lack of discrimination. For, as I have said, the police system of the South was originally designed to keep track of all Negroes, not simply of criminals; and when the Negroes were freed and the whole South was convinced of the impossibility of free Negro labor, the first and almost universal device was to use the courts as a means of reënslaving the blacks. It was not then a question of crime, but rather one of color, that settled a man's conviction on almost any charge. Thus Negroes came to look upon courts as instruments of injustice and oppression…

Drawing implicitly on the argument by Du Bois, Ivan Evans (2009), in his book on *Cultures of Violence* which is a comparison of the North American South and South Africa was to explain lynching and argue that in the South of the United States of America, Whites relied on lynching

since they had no state and in South Africa this was not the case since there was a state that could make use of the law. Still within the logic of the rational state (law), Evans (2009) argued that the difference between the American South and South Africa is that post the Anglo Boer war, the Whites created a bureaucratic state that could manage Blacks and this was visible in how it dealt with the labour question. Evans (2009) does not deal with the fact that the farm was an 'invisible' space since the farmers, as indicated above, relied on the fact that the Natives were on their private property and they should follow what they say. So on the farm, the farmer was the law and the law was violence, hence the argument by Mrs L Kraft (15/07/1957) (a friend of Carlson) that there were many cases that the law could not cover in South Africa, take the ghosts of Dududu for example. There are also individuals like De Beers who used the law to send many to the farms. That is why in their report van Wyk and Ngakane (1949) argued that many Blacks are suspicious of the law even though they may not fully understand it. Equally, they are also afraid of going to jail and if an opportunity presents itself to avoid prison they may choose it, and that was the farm. Yet, the farm took the form of a prison and the farmer being the law and to him the language understood by the Native was violence!

My argument is that if we shift our focus beyond law to violence then the usage of violence on South African farms reflected an anxiety about the Future in a country where Whites were a minority. It is no wonder then that the liberals saw the South African agrarian problem as a problem of race. Higginson (2015) in the book *Collective Violence and the Agrarian Origins of South African Apartheid, 1900-1948* argues that at face-value:

> People rarely risk their lives for abstractions such as colonialism, nationalism, or white supremacy. Rather such ideals become normative standards for continuously reassessing real needs and capacities. Can I insure my family's welfare now and in the future? Am I self-sufficient?... The most palpable expression of these questions and aspirations was rural Afrikaners' consistent demand for *boerestand*, an economic safety net out of which no rural white household could fall (Higginson, 2015:21[emphasis from the original]).

Higginson (2015) proposes that the violence of dispossession is also that which inscribes itself in what I would see as a collective memory of a nation. In his study, he focuses on the effects of the British colonial invasion and their brief encounter with the Boers in the South African war/Anglo-Boer war. Despite the privileging of White vulnerability in Higginson's (2015) work, one may draw a particular strand that might help explain why Blacks did not go to the farm, and that is what I see as the collective trauma of dispossession (imagine the things they saw as they moved from one farm to the next or as they walked to the city). He argues that because of the trauma of the war and the result being in a crisis in which a number of Afrikaners became landless (with the scourge of the poor white problem); their political struggle expressed itself through seizing the land to establish a boerestand. Hence:

> Despite deep and persisting economic divisions within the white population, they sought to create a political climate in which violence committed on behalf of a more parochial conception of private property- what was popularly known as a *boerestand*- could be joined to the task of resurrecting white supremacy. Moreover, they wanted to ensure that their conception of private property would not only be viewed as normal but as indispensable. (Higginson, 2015:90).

Higginson (2015) indicates that this collective memory/trauma created a race, which was always willing to use violence to defend the land/farm. Thus, one cannot understand why the farm is a violent terrain without an understanding of the possibility of a return of 'colonial invasion' which may render the Afrikaner landless or how Black resistance is potentially dangerous since it might mean they want to uproot them from the land (Higginson, 2015). This was an anxiety always reflected in the question of them making a home for themselves in this foreign land.

In his book *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, The United States, and Brazil*, Anthony Marx (1998: 82) argued that the "issue of how to construct a racial order was central to historical process of nation-state consolidation." In South Africa, after the Anglo-Boer war it would have been easy, he argues, for the English to side with the Blacks, but because of the ability for the Afrikaners to use violence against the English and the possibility of a violent revolt by the Blacks they decided to go for a White alliance. Racial "domination had worked to

diminish intrawhite conflict by bolstering the privilege and status even of poorer Afrikaners" (Marx, 1998: 270). This was not as easy as it is sounds, as Higginson (2015) shows that many Afrikaners felt betrayed by the alliance that led to the formation of the Union of South Africa. Mafeje (1986) also argued that political power was intended to secure what the Afrikaners constructed as a precarious future under foreign domination. The dream or the outcome was always that of the Afrikaners emerging as a dominant race. Wilson (1971:104) argued, "No one who wishes to understand the history of South Africa in the century that followed the discovery of diamonds can ignore the *platteland*. For the *platteland* was the cradle of Afrikaner life and nationalism". Politically there was that looming threat, that the Whites in South Africa were a minority and the Natives were a majority. To Marx (1998) all differences were set aside to attend to this problem.

One can hear that which Hertzog termed the White population's two fears- "firstly, the danger that there was of intermingling of blood, and secondly, the danger there was of being dominated (Herzog, 1936 cited in Lacey, 1981:72)." In the previous decade, he had indicated that:

> The time has arrived for a definitive policy, a policy which will remove all doubt from the native mind about the position which he will hold in political society… but he will have to be told in the most unequivocal language that the European is fully determined that South Africa shall be governed by the white man and the white man will not tolerate any attempt to deprive him of that task. In this connection there should be no false issue as regards the European (Hertzog, 1925 cited in Lacey, 1981: 52).

If we follow the thesis put forward by Ndi Sibiya's teacher in Lewis Nkosi's (2004) novel *Mating Birds* that South African history is about vulnerable White men who had to survive in an unknown territory, then the usage of violence becomes justifiable to protect oneself. This played itself out in South African history as the question of the Native problem. As if to support the thesis put forward by Marx (1998), Legassick (1973) and others show (see Lacey, 1981; Deacon, 1996; Beinart and Dubow, 1995) that segregation was not a policy that only began with the

Afrikaners (critiquing the liberal historiography as indicated in essay 3). Prominent English thinkers like James Bryce also saw it as problem of sexual reproduction as he argued that:

> … the native race is, on the one hand, numerous and strong enough to maintain itself in the face of Europeans, while, on the other hand, there is plenty of room left for a considerable European population to press in climatic conditions not forbidding it to speed and multiply (1897 cited in Leggassick, 1973: 50).

In such conditions, it is sensible to cite J.S. Mill (in Legassick, 1973: 51) who justified the separation of races and argued that:

> … the conquerors and the conquered cannot in this case live together under the same free institutions. The absorption of the conquerors in the less advanced people would be an evil, these must be governed as subjects, and the state of things is either a benefit or a misfortune according as the subjugated people have or have not reached the state in which it is an injury not to be under a free government, and according as the conquerors do or do not use their superiority in a manner calculated to fit in the conquered for a higher state of improvement.

We can read the edited book by Beinart and Dubow (1995) on *Segregation and apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, otherwise and argue that what we get from the book is not just a rational/irrational view of segregation (depending on which ideological lenses one decides to wear), but a question that presented itself as a question of how to survive in this unknown terrain, which prompted an alliance that resulted in a racial state that emphasised White Supremacy and Black subjugation as Marx (1998) argues (the social order being fashioned). This analysis prompted Patrick Duncan (1964) to collect various newspaper clippings and court cases and wrote a book that was banned called *South Africa's Rule of Violence*. His thesis was "that a special form of cruelty is produced when one group which is powerless is handed over into the power of another group, and when hostility exists between the two groups. This special form of cruelty cannot for obvious reasons be committed by Africans in South Africa against whites" (Duncan, 1964: 13). Duncan's (1964) characterisation of apartheid is that of a moral degeneration in the hearts of Whites who use violence to protect their interest. He covers issues

of genetics, love for the other, group areas act, education, immorality act, and religion to show how the violence of apartheid operated to create the belief that one race was superior and the other inferior and under such conditions, it was justified to use violence. To him this violence was irrational since it tried to conceal the moral degeneration of White South Africans. He argued that they "too are psychologically twisted by this inhumane system. Even when the white assailant comes out of the fight a physical victor, as he does nearly always, he comes out a spiritual cripple" (Duncan, 1964:96). The violence to him is a reflection of the fact that the anxiety of Whites had reached a level where it crippled them spiritually. If the problem of violence is a problem of the spiritual, where does salvation lie then for both races (a question I end up with in the last essay by focusing on salvation)? Yes, the project of White supremacy was not that smooth and my argument is that this anxiety was reflected in the question of land ownership, which according to Higginson was the one that drives South African politics resulting in the emergence of Apartheid to try to realise the dream of a boerestand. It might seem we have left Bethal now and have deviated into history; we have gone back to the debates of essay 3+4, through this question of land. Politically, the Afrikaners made a number of compromises, but by electing the Nationalist Party, it was believed that the Future was now!

The Futurity of Violence

On the farm, one might argue that the question was not only a question of labour but was a question of the Future of ownership. Hence, brutality at one point, is necessary in creating conditions of docility, where Blacks do not speak back even in the coming present/Future. It is Sartre in the preface of the *Wretched of the Earth* who reminds us of the importance of the usage of violence in the conquest of the world (at the same time its failure to exist in totality/futurity):

> Violence in the colonies does not only have its aim in the keeping of these enslaved men at arm's length; it seeks to dehumanize them. Everything will be done to wipe out their traditions, to substitute our language for theirs and to destroy their culture without giving them ours. Sheer physical fatigue will stupefy them. Starved and ill, if they have any spirit left, fear will finish the job; guns are levelled at the peasant; civilians come to take over his land force him by dint of flogging to till the land for them. If he shows fight, the soldiers fire and he's a dead man; if he gives in, he degrades himself and he is no longer a man at all; shame and fear will split up his

> character and make his inmost self fall to pieces… And yet, in spite of all these efforts, their ends are nowhere achieved: neither in the Congo, where Negroes' hands were cut off, nor in Angola, where until very recently malcontents' lips were pieced in order to shut them with padlocks. I do not say that it is impossible to change a man into an animal: I simply say that you won't get there without weakening him considerably (Sartre in Fanon, 1967: 13-14).

Yes, indeed the violence could not kill all the workers. In this essay, I did not deal with the question of the potato boycott of 1959 (even though I had collected material on it) where the ANC decided that it will launch a mass campaign where many would not eat potatoes as indicated above given that the potatoes had come back in the form of humans. The boycott was catalysed by the death of Cornelius Mokgoko who was 24 years of age and on the Legdaar farm belonging to R Meiring who asked Johannes Shumbo to help bury him (Rand Daily Mail, 9/07/1959). Many have covered the potato boycott (Grobler, 1988; Nair, 2001; Karis and Gerhart, 1977; Holden and Mathabatha, 2007; Britton, 2010; Muller, 2011). To Grobler (1988) the boycott needs to be located within the formation of the African political consciousness that was grounded in the basic tactics of the Congress Alliance, which the ANC was part of. The argument is that post the adoption of the Freedom Charter there was a need to "organize the Blacks around local issues which affected their daily lives, and then explain the interlinking of those issues with the basic problems confronting Blacks… to make people aware that their local grievances… The campaign led to improved conditions for the workers" (Grobler, 1988: 114). Nair (2001:170) a member of the Congress Alliance does not deviate from the view of locating the boycott within the formation of a political consciousness of the oppressed as he indicates that the boycott which also involved the South African Congress of Trade Union (SACTU) resulted in "60 000 people attend[ing] the… rally at Currie's Fountain in Durban." Others indicate the important role played by ANC member Gert Sibande who in the 1930s formed the Farmworkers Association, which aimed to protecting and serve the labour tenants against abusive farmers (Muller, 2011; Interviews by Tshepo Moloi, 2008, 2009). *The Star* (8/06/1959) ran an article titled *Farmers bring Natives back by lorry load*, which indicated that a number of farmers were bringing back Natives to the labourer bureaus. On 17 June 1959, the *Rand Daily Mail* wrote a story that the potato boycott was affecting the sale of potatoes. At this moment, we have not spoken about the different resistance politics that might have made the Whites/state anxious

about the Future. For Blacks were not docile; they resisted this violence as those who wrote about movements in South Africa showed. Therefore, one explanation of the killings could be that there was that fear of Black resistance as it was expressing itself in both the city and the countryside. That is why the usage of violence to deter any contestation about the Future. This is a plausible argument we can try also look at another way, below.

By not covering the boycott in detail, I felt I might not need to speak of the struggle that others had to wage for the dead. My interest is on the potato that came back looking like a human, the spectre that was haunting the living. It was argued during the boycott that "On the blood and bones of these bewildered prisoners and workers grew the potatoes on which the populace fed" (Nair, 2001: 170). It was believed during the boycott that these individuals had come back, no more to be consumed by other humans since it was only the land that had consumed them. They spoke of injustices in Bethal, as the potatoes came back looking like humans or some rumours that a head of the human was found in a potato sack. Yes, the farmers had to suffer as potatoes had to rot in their warehouses as many were rejecting these humans who were coming back looking like potatoes. The rot was to remind them of the dead! Does the Future not belong to those who were consumed by the land? Will they not come back to speak for themselves? The language of the political with the intention of showing that an injustice has been committed is not enough. We learn from Dostoevsky (1994) that those that seek justice may end up finding pleasure in revenge or get consumed by a feeling of hate and was this not our dear captain Ahab in *Moby Dick* who in his quest for his revenge for losing his leg to Moby Dick became so obsessed with his quest for justice that he became Moby Dick or the biggest admirer of the whale (Melville, 1992)? The boycott had to take the language of the oppressor; that is to say if you do not treat workers as humans this will have crippling effects on your farm/ your economy. Yet, it failed to look at the rationale of violence and behind it lay its biggest failures that umuntu akafi aphele (a person does not die completely) for they now had to live through the potatoes. The psychoanalyst has argued that "what haunts are not the dead, but the gaps left within us by the secrets of others" (Abraham, 1987: 287). To all the farmers in Bethal (in the Union for that matter) the dead were to always return to their consciousness through that rotten potato.

My grandmother used to use a particular Zulu word, *iqunga* (the urge to kill), where she argued that once one has killed or experienced a violent event their conscience would be burdened by the spirit of the dead. No matter how hard they may try to conceal it… the only option available to them is to kill again, go mad, or speak the truth (or consult inyanga for *intelezi*). Were all these killings reported not a product of that which could not be located in that present state, a product of a conscience that is haunted, a haunted conscience "is not only haunted by this or that ghost… but by the spectre of the truth which has been thus repressed. The truth is spectral, and this is its part of truth which is irreducible by explanation (Derrida, 1995:55)." Those who killed did not confess, they were forced under the court of law to speak the truth, in a show and tell, where the violated Native was to gain their justice. This justice was not to speak to the problem, for the farmer still kept the land and would return to their home. Yet we do not known what rested deep on the conscience of the farmer or the land, enter Dududu! It can also be argued that the ultimate violence that those who were dispossessed experienced was that of their deaths – the cruelty of the graves dug by other workers (buried like a dog) and the insult of not informing the families; instead reporting them as missing or having disappeared. That is the worst form of violence against the farmworkers, that they have been stripped of being returned to the land, the way prescribed by Black customs and tradition. This was a reminder that they will never be returned to the land except as foreigners, dogs! That is why many fled with a hope that they will find a better place to be buried and returned to the land peacefully. This question of peace or of not having peace was the language of those in Dududu. Here the land question was to take a different form: -land+labour= death. To the farmer, to employ violence was to secure the Future so that those who are alive and the dead do not have a claim to the land. Maybe that is why they went to other countries so that those who are not from the Union could be told to go back home, but even they were subjected to violence so that they do not have any claim to the Future of the land. Another problem facing those who had occupied the land and fearing to be homeless (claiming to be owners of the land) was always grounded in the potentiality of criminality. If the Blacks prefer not to work, then the Future might be in crisis since the issue will become an issue of ownership and on the farm, they (the owners) were indeed a minority. This, perhaps, was the silence that was punished, the silence that was dangerous, for we have not heard voices of resistance emerging through a collective movement by the dead for the dead. Does resistance need a language for it to be resistance? Does resistance need a shout for it to be punished as

resistance? We learned of the danger of silence, for the farmers were killing 'silent' people. Another danger were those who preferred not to and trekked with a hope that one day they will be returned to the land. For all those that went to the city had hoped, we are told from the literature, to return home… which home since there was no longer a home… Did it mean they would come back one day and contest ownership? This is the problem faced by the present state governed by Blacks in South Africa calling for the return of land… is this a cry for a home… a cry to belong to the dead? But can we own the land? Did we not learn that we belong to the land? Ownership always creates an anxiety, for all private property, as Proudhon (1970) argued is theft, for land cannot be appropriated and private property negates equality. He asked, "by what right man has appropriated wealth which he did not create, and which Nature gave to him gratuitously" (Proudhon, 1970: 88). The thief only sleeps with one eye open. To free the Future, I believe we need a different understanding of land as I argued in the previous essays. As Coetzee (1988) argued that peace between land and humans was destructed as soon as work was about accumulation and ownership. This led to the destruction of the prelapsarian man. By not being able to bury one's umbilical cord in the land signified a different way of relating to the land, and to not allow cattle to graze freely signified a different relationship with the land (the land was dead as the Xhosas called it). We are yet to investigate other ways of belonging to the land, not from a position of philosophical melancholia or an assumption of ontological wholeness, as essay 3+4 argued that is perhaps the struggle that dances with the past, present, and future (the question of the political, ethical, and eschatological).

What puzzles me about the phantom/the ghost/the spectre is: why did they reveal themselves to the innocent, take Gogo Mshanelo or our young Prophetess Nongqawuse for example? Why is it that they are the ones that saw the dead? We can accept that at one level, as the psychoanalyst Abraham (1987) suggests, the phantom is that which is buried in the unconscious of the Other. We can also argue that the non-innocent have kept the secret of those dead for far too long. You can haunt the perpetrator but no justice will come of it because they can continue to keep the crimes a secret even though they may be living a tormented life. It was then normal, psychologically, for the ghost of Henry Nxumalo to haunt Mlotshwa to a confession. When Henry Nxumalo was killed in 1956, Leonard Mlotshwa who was 22 years old appeared in court

in 1958 and it was said he had confessed to killing Nxumalo. He argued that he only confessed under the advice of Victor Dube who said if he confessed, "he would be taken away from the farm where he was being forced to work and where, he said, conditions were unbearable (Rand Daily Mail, 12/08/1958)." Remember that Nxumalo was against prison labour, was this his revenge, or truth? That I leave for you dear reader, since the case does not appear in the archives anymore beyond this article published by the *Rand Daily Mail*.

We must remember that at some point in history, the story of ghosts inspired an entire movement, at its helm being the prophetess, Nongqawuse. Why did the ghosts reveal themselves using the language of hope in a world that is coming back again, with those seeing the dead hoping the dead will help vanquish the problem of colonial invasion that the Xhosas were facing? If the living obeyed the commands of the dead, they were promised a new world to arise from below the sea and land. Then can we argue that the ghosts play a particular role (after the analyses by Derrida, 1994, 1995a), reminding us of the past that we think remains buried and of dealing with a disjointed time? If that is the case, then justice is a project that will reoccur, even if it is not shouted since the ghosts will always remind the innocent of the Future they must fashion on their own. That is the danger of this unknown Future that violence tries to silence. This reading of the ghost/phantom/spectre is a different role of understanding the ghosts beyond Abraham's (1987) proposal that the ghost is merely a product of the conscience. That is why in Derrida (1994, 1995a) we see the language of the ghost being that which exists as the past, the present, and the future all at once.

By way of conclusion: Ikusasa Alaziwa (The future remains unknown)

In this essay, I tried to deal with how the problem of violence was understood through the language that aimed to see it in totality. This was done by addressing the violent nature of dispossession on South African farms (with the different interventions of the state), then speaking to the entire capitalist system that demanded cheap labour on farms, then the issue of racism that has rendered all Blacks in South Africa as criminals which then resulted in overcrowding in South African prisons, prompting the farms to build prisons to 'ameliorate' the

conditions. In so doing then we realise that the problem is no longer a problem of rights or some section of the law, but we located it within the systemic causes. The aim was to reach a level where we can comprehend the problem from a position that tries to dismantle the totality of oppression. This would only be a solution that is interested in the immediate, as I have argued that in dealing with violence we are dealing with a question of the Future. For we do not know what we do not know, then the Future always escapes us as we address that which we know. Violence in its rendezvous with its lover docility sometimes does irrational things to ensure that the condition for their offspring Future is less tumultuous. Is it not Marx (2013) who reminds us that the capitalist is always orientated towards the future which is built in the now through the exploitation of the labourers, which must continue again tomorrow. In Chapter 33 of *Capital Vol 1* on the "The Modern Theory of Colonisation" we encounter a Marx who speaks of a separation of humans from the means of production as a condition that is carried by the capitalist to other countries so that which began in the mother country can continue again in the future. He then said oh "never mind, national wealth is, once again, by its very nature, identical with misery of the people" (Marx, 2013: 541). The Future in capitalism to Marx is always in crisis and therefore a revolution is a product of a future that is always coming and that is why the capitalist is never at ease for the spectre is always haunting them! Parents have a desired outcome for their offspring, but the conditions and the life of the offspring does not always move in the manner that the parent desires, that it is terrible part about Future! It is unknown and it may come to us in the language of ghosts whose truth may not be understood in the present. The ghosts of Bethal and many other South African farms are yet to speak (or they have spoken but the present has failed to understand them), maybe there are many Dududu's out there. However, at the moment the truth also torments those who are declaring themselves to be the owners of the land. They are no longer suffering in silence as the evidence on farming killings approaches us today. Can we own the dead? Can we own the land? Umuntu akafi aphele, umhlaba uyahlaba, iqiniso seli velile. Iqiniso lifana nelanga, liyaphandla! Sine khaya kulomhlaba esafihla inkaba kuwo (translation escapes me).

7. Perambulating Towards Salvation

While going through the notes I had made in 2012 for my Masters research, I came across a long note I had written during a farm visit to Dainfern, Johannesburg. I use that here as a reflection (and in addition, I bring to the fore some of the issues I encountered that day). From the reflection we then shift to the content of the essay.

Reflection: A trip to a White female farmer on the 19/04/2012

It was one of those days in autumn where her ways of communicating a tough season ahead was expressed through the falling of leaves. A time when I am usually agitated, as it is the case with every change in season. I usually wonder if I will be happy as each season brings uncertainty. We travel with Professor Edward Webster (Eddie) to a farm in the leafy suburb of Dainfern, Johannesburg. While he was driving he had mentioned that we are going to meet with a small scale farmer who focuses on "micro-greens" and that I should observe as they have a conversation and "be first careful not to ask questions about labour unless she brings it up." He was patient to explain that most employers when asked questions about labour before a rapport has been established may not continue to speak to us. At the time my interest was to investigate how the farmers treat their workers and what kind of difficulties they are faced with in ensuring that their business remains sustainable. This question was one I was particular to phrase to prevent the kind of fiction that Eddie alludes to, since it was mainly around the idea of how sustainable farming is in South Africa and how it would contribute to the growth of the economy. In retrospect, it was a naïve question of a student who had just moved to heterodox economics and had his own suspicions about debates on questions of small scale vs large scale farming (favouring the latter for its ability to employ a large number of people and diversify production and technology). This was a utilitarian and instrumentalist way of seeing the world, for my aim was that of contributing to ideas that will shape economic development and decent work was but one of the instruments I was interested in. I had to explore the history of agriculture scathingly -saw it as that which derailed the necessary modernisation needed in

agriculture and at the same time if this shift was to occur, my firm belief, at the time, it would happen through the investigation of the question of decent work. Instead I was in for a surprise because I was to be reminded of that very history. Hence this is the last essay, for it encapsulates one of the traumas I sustained in the visits to the different farms I went to between 2012 and 2016 (I still made farm visits during my PhD). One would see that my questions did get answered even though I did not speak much that day. What was interesting was the dynamic of the interactions in instances when Eddie was present with me. To be specific, most farmers preferred to speak to him (this was also the case when we visited the National Fresh Produce Market). At the time I did not want to confront the question of race throughout the interviews because they made me feel very numb and I feared I might be forced to look deep into the past and that was not the goal of my work. As if there was that voice that says, "[*F]orget the past. Don't only forgive it. Forget it as well. The past did not happen. You only dreamt it. It is a figment of your rich collective imagination. It did not happen. Banish your memory. It is a sin to have a memory. There is virtue in amnesia. The past. It did not happen. It did not happen. It did not happen*" [emphasis from the original] (Mda, 2000: 137).

On the other hand, Eddie was always keen to highlight issues that were linked to the past. For example, on one farm (following the interview with Joey* that was conducted on the 10/10/2012) while the farmer was going to show us his large impressive farm by car (bakkie/ double cab van), Eddie insisted that I take the front seat while he sat in the back. He then later pointed out that Blacks on farms usually do not sit in the front seat and asked if I saw how the workers were shocked. Even though the farmer did not speak of race, when Eddie asked him if the workers feel that they had it better in the past compared to the current labour legislature that insists on labour laws and the sectoral determination… A slip of the tongue occurred as he vehemently said "jah there is one boy who is 80 years old [he corrected the statement of the boy and later said man] who used to be employed by my father and now works under me and he can tell you that in the past we use to give mealie mealie and some food, but today he only gets a small wage."

As we got to what I thought would be a farm, we went through a residential gate and we were welcomed by the owner of the house/farmer, Joey*. She allowed us in and then took us to the back of her house where she did her “niche” farming of micro-greens. I did not understand what was meant by this term until it was indicated that she supplies restaurants and hotels and in my head I thought “with all these green leaves”. She mentioned that she employed twenty one people on the farm from Malawi, mostly men, as well as two domestic workers. She mentioned how the Malawians are so “gregarious” and they stick together like children, a trait she prefers unlike the South Africans who detest farm work. She prefers them since they know how to use their hands to handle the delicate leaves. After this, things began to take what I thought was a very toxic racial view that numbed me for the entire day.

She mentioned the tough times in South Africa and how she cares for her Black workers and feels that she needs to take care of them especially since winter is around the corner and is thinking about buying them warm underwear. Throughout this ‘conversation’ she was not looking at me but addressing Eddie having mentioned that he will understand and relate to her better since he is also White. She went on to mention how her business was less about earning a profit but rather taking care of her sweet workers who are like children who need to be fed properly and dressed. She indicated that she even stays with some of the workers and where they stay she had even installed warm water for them. This was a luxury for these Blacks who come from poor conditions.

We went into her house and she showed us her helpers… interestingly as I spoke to one of the helpers it became apparent that she had been listening to the madams bolstering of her humanness towards the childlike workers who, at some point, she compared to the White children she was fostering. She spoke to me in IsiZulu and gave me her contact details and told me that I should speak to her if I am interested in finding out the official stories (to which I did not follow up). What was interesting in my encounter with her is that I had greeted her in English and she was irritated and asked “hawu yini kanti awukwazi ukukhuluma isiZulu (What is wrong can’t you speak Zulu?)?” Inside the house, Joey continued with her magnanimity towards the

poor Blacks. The topic turned to South African men who do not prefer to work on the farm because the kind of work required "does not put some hair on their chest." At this point she looks at me to confirm this 'scientific' fact I assume [I found that to be very sexual… was this the language of the swart gevaar that Black danger… the imagined hypersexual Black who was always ready to rape and kill?]. Her sister (a Professor at the School of Science at Wits), who was also in the room, intervenes to call her to order about this racial language which may not reflect the "truth". Joey insists that it is true, Black South African men are known in the neighbourhood for committing violent crimes and beating up women, as was the case with one of the helpers who was in a relationship with a South African guy who stayed in a shack and did not work. She complained about crime and indicated to us the various measures she has put in place to protect herself and her workers. It was a strange conversation …. Despite the sister's interjections and embarrassment on her behalf especially given that a Black South African was in the room… She continued to speak of matters relating to sex and the number of children they have and as if she recognised my existence and once again went back to that blank look and she said to me "Is this not the case?" This made me numb mainly because it was my first encounter with a White female "farmer" and my first time being in a White person's house for such a long time. This was a strange world for me, in a White suburb I had never imagined to find myself in, albeit I was used to this kind of blank gaze, one which reminded me of that lecture room in Medieval History in first year. However, in this house, this proximity was one which was filled with a number of sexual innuendos. The idea of what constitutes 'manhood' was one which was referred to many times and I sometimes missed it because of my numbness. It is interesting that throughout the conversations between the Whites I was invisible even though Eddie would try to insert me into the conversation so that I could converse with Joey about my research. I only asked when we were in the house what makes her feel that this kind of care that she expresses is good for the workers. She never answered the question; instead she spoke of the importance of dealing with the current situation in South Africa and the eradication of the Black criminal and to ensure that "workers" work. She did indicate, however, that it was not always the case that foreigners find work as they did; there is the likelihood that we might find them in shacks as well without jobs. However, she turned to me once again, "you know how things are with the Black community right?"

I did not have any response. This essay goes back to that terrible moment and offers a response to a woman who spoke of violence, sex and employed mostly "gregarious" Malawian Black men to work the land. When we left the farm, Eddie was "disgusted" by her views and from my numbness I do not remember what happened to the rest of that day, except that I did not have a response.

A Poem: Strange Meeting by Wilfred Owen (1919)

It seemed that out of battle I escaped

Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped

Through granites which titanic wars had groined.

Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,

Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.

Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared

With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,

Lifting distressful hands, as if to bless.

And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall,—

By his dead smile I knew we stood in Hell.

With a thousand fears that vision's face was grained;

Yet no blood reached there from the upper ground,

And no guns thumped, or down the flues made moan.

"Strange friend," I said, "here is no cause to mourn."

"None," said that other, "save the undone years,

The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,

Was my life also; I went hunting wild

After the wildest beauty in the world,

Which lies not calm in eyes, or braided hair,

But mocks the steady running of the hour,

And if it grieves, grieves richlier than here.

For by my glee might many men have laughed,

And of my weeping something had been left,

Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,

The pity of war, the pity war distilled.

Now men will go content with what we spoiled.

Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.

They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress.

None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress.

Courage was mine, and I had mystery;

Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery:

To miss the march of this retreating world

Into vain citadels that are not walled.

Then, when much blood had clogged their chariot-wheels,

I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,

Even with truths that lie too deep for taint.

I would have poured my spirit without stint

But not through wounds; not on the cess of war.

Foreheads of men have bled where no wounds were.

"I am the enemy you killed, my friend.

I knew you in this dark: for so you frowned

Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.

I parried; but my hands were loath and cold.

Let us sleep now. . . ."

This Lack: Proximity, the Gaze, and Desire.

The above reflection and the words articulated about how Blacks are is one that is 'normal' on most South African farms and in many South African spaces, as seen in present day press where week in and week out, there is some racial slur speaking of the inferiority of Blacks. In this last essay, I offer an answer, not addressing itself to the current temporality, but an answer which comes from a reading of *Black Skin White Masks* by Fanon (1986) and it aims to tease out the importance of proximity and the gaze. This is seen in Fanon's interest on trying to understand "what does the black man want?" (Fanon, 1986:1). This analysis is within a Manichean view of a society divided by race, White vs Black. To speak to the matters raised by Fanon (1986), not exhaustively though, I use as an example the book *Mating Birds* by Lewis Nkosi (1982) which poses questions on the possibility of love and how the nature of proximity in the Manichean world, as described by Fanon (1986), is bound to encounter the unwritten law that the American Civil Rights leader, Ida B. Wells (1900), writes of. This unwritten law justified the lynching of Black people in America given that White society was almost always certain that the Black person (or the Negro) is always guilty of a crime (theft or rape) therefore lynching was a method of protecting itself (the White citizens) from Negro domination (Wells, 1900). In South Africa it was one that was written in the laws of the State through Acts like the Immorality Act of 1950 which prohibited sex and marriage between different races. It would seem that stubborn past is one that still confronts us, even though the domain of law states that all races are equal in the democratic dispensation. On South African farms this might not be the case for many farmers

continue to view themselves as lawmakers in their 'land'. In proximity emerges the question of 'how should I treat the Other?' Love is usually one of the ways that tries to fill this gap as I argued in the previous essay. However, in this Manicheanism "[o]ne must apologize for daring to offer black love to a White soul." (Fanon, 1986:39). If that love is reciprocated it is seen as blasphemous. This interest in proximity by Fanon (1986) is phenomenological since it seeks to show the limits of the Manichean world given that the two races are bound to encounter each other. However, what one finds within *Black Skin White Masks* is how this proximity produces a delirium. Once the question of proximity has been dealt with, I want to shift to the question of subjectivity which finds expression at the level of the political through the language of hate/violence, posing the question of whence does salvation lie in such a society?

Given how Fanon (1986) structured his analyses, one cannot miss how in a society split into two races, Black and White, the people within this society are bound to encounter each other at some point. Proximity can be read as a separation and an encounter of two races. In this society of two races there is one which is duped (the Black race made to believe that it is inferior) and the other duping (the White race which prides itself for being superior). Du Bois (2007 [1903]) had indicated five ways in which the question of proximity confronts us and that is: housing (who stays where), economics (work-who does what work), the exchange of ideas through conversation (public opinion), religion (who believes in what), everyday life through matters of encountering each other/loving each/ falling in love, education, political relations (who governs). As the two races encounter each, Fanon (1986) first focused on the question of the acquisition of the culture of the White race as an important stage (one of self-negation) and that was through the learning of the European's language (Fanon, 1986). Du Bois (2007 [1903]:138) had warned that the "price of culture is a Lie" and that is to say, for those considered to be inferior to acquire their dominators' culture they have to lie (act). Fanon (1986:9-25) argues that "it is implicit that to speak is to exist absolutely for the other" and to "speak a language is to take on a world, a culture." Given that the Negro is seen as a figure of lack (inferior) by the White race, she/he comes to take on a language so that this gap is closed. By mastering the language of the master he proves right that the Black person's desires is to be White. "Historically, it must be understood that the Negro wants to speak French because it is the key that can open doors which

were still barred to him fifty years ago" (Fanon, 1986:25). This desire to exist for the Other shows the fundamental tension in this society. White superiority for me through this reading of Fanon (1986) is an economic, social, and political project which intends to construct a subject who exists without any lack. Whose supremacy and totality is based on an inferiority of the Other race. This race which is 'inferior' is ontologically lacking since it cannot express its being without seeking to become the Other (the White race) and yet this Other does not recognise them. Here, lies the problem:

> The black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the White man. Overnight the Negro has been given two frames of reference within which he has had to place himself. His metaphysics, or, less pretentiously, his customs and the sources on which they were based, were wiped out because they were in conflict with a civilization that he did not know and that imposed itself on him (Fanon, 1986:83) .

This poses a question, can a Black person have an individual identity distinguishable from other Blacks? Philosophically, does the Black person possess a Self? To possess no ontological resistance we discover through the *Fact of Blackness* that it means one does not possess any being or self and therefore does not have any right to speak back, they are merely a thing to be fashioned by the White world. To possess ontological resistance is a space were one's self can be recognised for what it is or if it is not recognised the self can defend itself/ resist being represented otherwise (this is usually as Fanon, 1986 shows through the usage of violence). This lack of individuality and the homogenisation of the Negro can be seen for example through the fictional character of Richard who is falsely accused of robbing a store in James Baldwin's (1953: 231-232) novel *Go Tell it on The Mountain* and whose fate that night makes him realise that suicide is the only possible way of distinguishing himself and finding some peace in a world that has homogenised all Blacks, a world that hates anything Black. The fate of Richard went like this:

> He had not, of course, robbed the store, but, when he left her that Saturday night, had gone down into the underground station to wait for his train. It was late, and the trains were slow; he was all alone on the platform, only half awake, thinking, he said, of her.

> Then, from the far end of the platform, he heard a sound of running; and, looking up, he saw two colored boys come running down the steps. Their clothes were torn, and they were frightened; they came up the platform and stood near him, breathing hard. He was about to ask them what the trouble was when, running across the tracks toward them, and followed by a White man, he saw another colored boy; and at the same instant another White man came running down the underground steps.
>
> Then he came full awake, in panic; he knew that whatever the trouble was, it was now his trouble also; for these White men would make no distinction between him and the three boys they were after. They were all colored, they were about the same age, and here they stood together on the underground platform. And they were all, with no questions asked, herded upstairs, and into the wagon and to the station-house.
>
> At the station Richard gave his name and address and age and occupation. Then for the first time he stated that he was not involved, and asked one of the other boys to corroborate his testimony. This they rather despairingly did…And Richard tried to relax: the man could not say that he had been there if he had never seen him before.
>
> But when the owner came, a short man with a bloody shirt—for they had knifed him—in the company of yet another policeman, he looked at the four boys before him and said: 'Yeah, that's them, all right.'
>
> Then Richard shouted: 'But I wasn't there! Look at me, goddammit—I wasn't there!'
>
> 'You black bastard,' the man said, looking at him, 'you're all the same.'

Can the White world tell the difference? Can the White man see the Black man? In the case of Ndi Sibiya the question becomes: 'can a White woman see a Black man?' Is the White world so infused with hate and fear that one day the Black violent being will come after them- so all Blacks are the same because of this assumed desire to kill the Whites. *Mating Birds* relays to us the difficulty faced by the figure that is lacking ontologically and becomes delirious to believe that they can be loved and seen by the White woman. The novel which is set in the period of apartheid in South Africa, tells of how the protagonist Ndi Sibiya, after being expelled from University of Natal for being involved in protest action, develops an obsession for a White

woman. Without a future he goes to try and search for some form of freedom at the beach in which he encounters Veronica Slater, an English girl who enjoys the White side of the beach. He develops a deep sexual desire for Veronica (at some point he is convinced that it was love). He 'hounded' her until the day he 'raped' her. He writes his life history in prison while waiting to be executed. In presenting his account of what happened he argues that Veronica did return his gaze, she was aware that Sibiya was following her and they shared a number of encounters before the event, even though they did not touch each other. One is here reminded of Fanon (1986) on the desire of the man of colour for the White woman. In this chapter, Fanon (1986 see page 45-60) reminds us that the sexual encounter between the Black man and a White woman is also a political act. At the same time it is an act of recognition that he is "worthy of White love… loved like a White man… Her love takes me onto the noble road that leads to total realization." With desire being that which seeks to go beyond, the proximity (the White man or woman is near and yet so far) is the struggle then not that which aims "to touch the other, to feel the other…" (Fanon, 1986:81). However, this is not possible in a world that separates the races, that is why it is difficult even for love to find expression. In Sibiya's words:

> From the very beginning Veronica and I were deprived of what lovers the world over are permitted to enjoy at the burgeoning of an affair. We could not indulge in an exchange of names or even enjoy the lighthearted banter of a budding friendship. We could not part with a few well-chosen compliments or make an odd suggestive remark about clothes, looks, feelings, emotions, hungers and longings… Right up to the climax of this affair, which was the union of two bodies, we were technically strangers to each other… In short we could not declare ourselves (Nkosi, 2004:89).

Momentarily in that segregation were bodies of White and Blacks did not touch on the beach, to Ndi they achieved sexual copulation without penetration (Nkosi, 2004). Isaga sithi: Iso liwela umfula ugcwele, indeed the roving eye driven by desire encounters no difficulties! In this distance if they did "not use words [they] could use looks. Eyes… With our eyes, we could make love as it soon became apparent. With our eyes, we could tell each other stories. With our eyes, we could protest each other's infidelities and the misery of our separation, our being artificially kept apart (Nkosi, 2004: 112)." This particular moment suggests that Ndi could be seen by

Veronica, albeit they could not touch, but despite the distance they could see each other and desire each other. Hence, in this particular chapter he suggests that they "defeated apartheid" (Nkosi, 2004:115). An interesting fact is that in all of this drama, Ndi always recalls his childhood (which irritates the European criminologists Dufree). He was born in a village called Mzimba, an interesting translation of the Zulu word for Mzimba means body, and he recalls how Mzimba (the body) goes through dispossession and the best places being reserved for Whites. He notes that this conflict causes a split in his family and later when his father passes away, all familial relations in this polygamous household were destroyed. Is Nkosi (2004) trying to tell us something about dispossession, about how it affects the BODY? This I leave to those who will read *Mating Birds*.

Seeking Salvation in the White Body to be met by Salavinization

One argument that comes out poignantly in Fanon (1986) is that sex is one of the bases of racism or the basis that fuels separatist nation-building… it fuels ways of avoiding the proximity between those deemed inferior and superior. We shall call such existence partitioned proximity. For the Blacks it seems that their entire salvation lies in that moment when they are naked with a White body. Of course, to achieve this they must first acquire the lie and that is why "[t]o speak a language is to take on a world, a culture. The Antilles Negro who wants to be White will be the Whiter as he gains greater mastery of the cultural tool that language is" (Fanon, 1986: 25). This lie of language is expressed in that terrible accent of Blacks that aims to show panache, but also aims to hide the nervousness of how this façade of having an acquired culture might be exposed. It is in that process that Fanon (1986, see page 125 and 145) terms Salavinization where the Negro in their search for salvation in the White world exists as a being who is neither here nor there, neither White nor Black, a victim of their own "chimeras" of their own "hypnagogic hallucinations". One is tempted to add that this figure is like Hermann Hesse's *Steppenwolf*, a figure of nonsensical dualities that are destructive in the long run (Hesse, 1955). We might, however, be reminded that the occupier of such conflictual souls was a White man (human being) with inclinations to the bourgeoisie world. Du Bois (2007 [1903]: 8) had earlier argued that the Negro has "no true self-consciousness but" only "see[s] through the revelation of the other world". This he termed double consciousness, "a peculiar sensation… always looking at

one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contemplated pity" (Du Bois, 2007 [1903]:8). In this particular moment (Salavinization/Double Consciousness) we experience a duality in the dance of self-destruction which has not discovered whence its salvation rests (duped to believe that it will come from the White world). First, it places so much hope in the gaze of the Other that it will be recognised for what it is, a human worthy of being noticed and loved. If this fails, it may go to the second phase where the first phase gets to be understood and justified. In this phase, this torn being has destroyed too much of whatever it believes in and believes it cannot go beyond this destruction/violence. Instead, it seeks the Other knowing that the Other will finish this job of destruction/violence. At least it will get to write its own obituary: Herein lay a woman/man who tried to love a White man/woman in a world that prohibited it. This duality found here where the one wounded seeks to show that they have been victims of an injustice to a people who have been indifferent to their cry can be heard in the following words:

> What! When it was I who had every reason to hate, to despise, I was rejected? When I should have been begged, implored, I was denied the slightest recognition? I resolved, since it was impossible for me to get away from an inborn complex, to assert myself as a BLACK MAN. Since the other hesitated to recognize me, there remained only one solution: to make myself known (Fanon, 1986: 87).

Even this attempt of being recognised or being known fails, then enters the *Invisible Man*… "I slip into corners, I remain silent, I strive for anonymity, for invisibility. Look, I will accept the lot, as long as no one notices me!" (Fanon, 1986: 88). This invisibility is one that is not a preparation for something or a hibernation as is Ellison's one (1952); but one that is battling with self-destruction and now wants to hide from the world. What I find important when reading this destruction is that despite all the efforts for this torn figure to destroy itself, it always reaches a point of surplus, once it no longer appeals to the world that treats it as lacking. At the same time to accept invisibility, we learn from the *Invisible Man* reflects the desire of a man who aimed or thought that he was once visible in a White world (Ellison, 1986). Once he understood his invisibility, he found it hard to accept it, he wanted to defile every White woman yet knowing that even with such acts he was still not visible. He was still playing into that hypersexualised

being who is violent and is known for rape, a sexual phantasy of the White woman, a shame of the White world which the White men lynched the Blacks for (see Plaatje, 1976 *The Mote and the Beam: An Epic on Sex-Relationship 'Twixt White and Black in British South Africa*)! To accept invisibility away from the gaze of this Other, who is duped by their superiority, was a work of salvation no longer fixated in a gaze of the duped Other, but was aware that invisibility is a surplus of salvation yet to be realised. A space of a possibility of knowing that the future belongs to those who have accepted it, as his grandfather said on his death bed that they cannot be swallowed up (Ellison, 1952). These stages, we must remember, were set before us in 1903 by the preacher and prophet of *The Souls of Black Folk* Du Bois (2007 [1903]) who reminded us that the response to this problem moves in three ways, that is: through seeking revenge (still destructive); assimilating to the status quo (still destructive); lastly, the less travelled road of critical self-reflection which is an important stance for the race coming from oppression… How does this play out? What do I mean?

Let us turn our eyes to *Mating Birds*. What is interesting in the novel is that Veronica becomes Ndi's salvation. After being expelled from the university he has no other option in life. On the beach, that particular space where the sea allows for dreaming of a world not yet explored as T.S. Eliot (1941) writes in the *Four Quartets* poem number 3- *The Dry Salvages* that to encounter the river or the sea is parallel to an encounter with the gods and the future. It is no wonder then that even beaches become segregated with the best being reserved for the race that assumes itself to be superior so that maybe they can dream in peace, far from the inferior native. In this penchant encounter, through Ndi whose world is falling apart, we meet on the other side of the world an immaculate figure who represents freedom and salvation for Ndi. Maybe on that day Ndi saw birds mating, the birds representing freedom and the mating representing a world yet to be born again in the sea. The proximity that requires the skin to touch another skin for freedom to be heard. We must, at the end when the verdict of guilty is pronounced, lay blame on those mating birds and the weather in that unbearably hot day. Salvation in this regard means a possibility to enter into a different world, a universe not of the now, where the one in reveries can be touched and penetrated and no longer protected by the laws that seek to partition proximity. At the same time Ndi reminds us that he is "certain [that] what [he]…felt for [Veronica] was not exactly

sexual desire for a body I must have known I could never possess, the race laws being what they are in South Africa; no it was something more, something vaster, sadder, more profound than simple desire. Mingled with that feeling was another emotion: anger" (Nkosi, 2004: 15).

Is it love, is it obsession, is it an anger that is directed at the conditions that make it difficult to love, is it a lack that is too much for the lacking figure that it needs the superior to carry it, is it hatred mystified in sexual desire so that the White man's pride (as Malcom X (1973)[36] put it) can be defiled? Why does he continue to go to the beach? Why is it that ontologically this non-being figure assumes that to be is to be what White being is… if the White world has violated their society that much? Ndi believes that perhaps it is through sex that his freedom lies and that on the Other side of the beach he is visible for Veronica to see and desire. We remember a younger Ndi who after getting lost in the marketplace, known as Mzimba market place, the bodies got to touch that day and even though he had to lose the hand of his parent, he falls and is touched by a little White girl -here is how this encounter is described:

> For a moment, I was down on my knees, sweating and breathing like a steam engine before I scrambled quickly back to my feet in order not to oblige the two girls to have to step over or around me. And now came the first surprise. One of the girls, the elder of the two, who was coming up a few steps behind her mother, paused at the very moment when she was almost on top of me. Glancing around her, she seemed to hesitate while I crouched nervously before her; but there was no sign of anxiety in her own face. She was nonchalantly twirling a bonnet in one hand. Was it a calculated gesture? I cannot tell. Was it a momentary feeling of dread in the middle of a black crowd? I do not know. For an indefinable moment, and those moments can be like eternity, the girl gazed down at me, her blue eyes pools of wonder and speculation, almost like the startled expression of a person recognising someone she knew or remembered vaguely. Her face was framed by a wild name of flaxen blonde hair so soft and thin it looked like the wispy strands on ripening corn. The girl smiled what was not really a smile, but a simple twitch of the lips, then before I could step back onto my feet she put out her gloved hand as if to raise me up from the unbearable indignity of my prostration. Her body, which was slim and firm and immensely

[36] Malcom X (1973: 96) saw it in two ways that "The white woman with a Negro man would be with him for one of two reasons: either extremely insane love, or to satisfy her lust." Therefore he did not reject the possibility that Negro could be loved by a White woman but it was usually difficult in a world that has subjected the Negro to a status of being merely a thing or that for the Negro to receive the love they have to reject their being.

> White, was so close to me I could smell it. Then she did something so unexpectedly curious and inexplicable that to this day I can find no explanation for it. In order to offer me her hand, to restore my balance as it seemed, the girl pulled off her White glove so that it was a small naked hand she placed on my bare arm. A moment of wordless panic like a sudden seizure of the heart overtook me. I tried to move backward but without much success and I felt the hand, so soft yet strong in its grasp, lift me to my feet, and whether from the glove or her own person I shall never know, came a strange, fragrance I had never smelled before, a scent stronger than the perfume of a rose, yet sharper than the bouquet of the freshest blossoms I have ever smelled. I looked up into her face. The girl who was neither ugly nor pretty, but whose face was something strange, unexpected, and luminous, was smiling down at me with the gentlest of expressions (Nkosi, 2004:49-50).

This above passage is particularly interesting since when Ndi gets charged for rape later and he sees his mother frail, one might argue that it was that fateful day that he lost his mother's hand and got raised to his feet by the hand of a White girl that he was bound to always seek the White hand. It was this hand that was also to separate him forever from the hand of his mother when he hangs! The Xhosas in their encounter with the colonialists had said that the White hand was a hand that came to help to kill (Peires, 1981). To answer the many questions posed above, we must remember that this was before Ndi was about to enrol at school for the first time as a child despite his father's protestation against his child getting a White education. There is a warning that would haunt Ndi throughout his life uttered by his father during this moment (when he was going to school) - ""[N]ever lust after a White woman, my child… With her painted lips and soft, shining skin, a White woman is a bait put there to destroy our men. Our ways are not the ways of White people, their speech is not ours. White people are as smooth as eels, but they devour us like sharks" (Nkosi, 2004: 46). Perhaps warnings or prophecies are not meant to be averted but are meant to prepare the one warned of the road they will have to travel alone in that indeterminate date set by lady fate. Ndi was destroyed that day and as we might be reminded, salvation means that we do not have a hand in our own fate. The hand that brought Ndi to his feet was White and it was to seal his fate later on. Maybe what Nkosi (2004) aims to show is that Ndi was already set to fail. For example there is nothing more encouraging to a child than saying: 'do not touch a hot stove it will burn you'. That is perhaps the unfortunate role of the

parent, since to the child they come across as beings who always have an energy to thwart their curiosity. Wilde (2000 [1891]: 65) was to remind us that "[c]hildren begin by loving their parents; as they grow older they judge them; sometimes they forgive them." As soon as the warnings come, the parent is judged, that is perhaps the nervousness of the father or any parent that once children have observed their nervousness they may not reconcile with them or accept them. The rebellion of the child it seems is inevitable! Another Irishman was to add, in James Joyce's *Ulysses* (2000 [1922]) through the protagonist Stephen Dedalus we arrive at that teaching that paternity does not exist. "Fatherhood, in the sense of conscious begetting, is unknown to man" (Joyce, 1922 [2000]: 266). Fatherhood conceals an anxiousness of the father and fathers are usually judged by what they seek to avoid and have created in order to avoid what they are-nothing! The father has to deal with many ghosts as the protagonist explains. This is an important warning, for those of us who are still keen on describing the South African situation of partitioned proximity on the farms as that of paternalism (in the case of Joey it can be a mother) should be aware that one day the children will rebel and reconciliation might not be possible! That is perhaps the anxiousness of the Father for they know that the particular position they occupy is a precarious one (merely fiction!) since there is a ghost that continues to hover in their relationship with their children, and that is history, that even their fathers father acquired this status of Fatherhood illegitimately (this status of fatherhood is illegitimate! Stephan added that "Paternity may be a legal fiction" (Joyce, 2000 [1922]: 266).

To seek salvation on one's own terms is a path that always leads to a confused state of existing. To seek salvation in the name of paternity is delusional. Salvation is waking up in heaven and realising that one had nothing to do with it. Salvation is meeting that enemy that one had killed in hell and the enemy says, "let us go to sleep my friend". To be in this particular state of existence is realising that the gaze of the other cannot penetrate into the parts that one has already created. If, for example, Blackness is regarded as lacking in a society that has constructed it as such and those that take on being Black move as if the condition of being Black is indeed one of lack, then one will always participate in their salavinization and that salavinization becomes a state of being captured in a destructive existence in that particular relationship of misrecognition. Where the saviour who is White misrecognises the burden of the

Black person and the Black person assumes that the saviour is always right. We realise that one cannot be a saviour if they themselves are figures of lack. White supremacy as a project that propagates violence and hatred seems to hide the precarious future of the White race under the ideology of superiority. That which is superior has to realise that to be superior it must ensure that its inferiority is presented as absent so that the idea of superiority can hold. To be absent does not mean it does not exist. Hence, salvation of the White race or the Black race, as Black Consciousness reminded us, only comes when each of those societies have to deal with their problems (Biko, 2004). Du Bois (2007 [1903]) had earlier pleaded that in such conditions the race that comes from a situation of domination cannot be assumed to enter into a race with the one that dominated it. The only possible way of existence for those that come from the condition of racial domination is through collective critical reflection as a race. Moving forward then we realise that table that Biko (2004) spoke of shall be constructed by those who had to transcend the burden of inferiority and those who had to assume superiority will have to accept the possibility of moving into an unknown world (not having a hand in the construction of the table). We do not have a hand in our own salvation, those that have to construct the table also have to find different ways of constructing the table and even to them it is unknown, their construction rests on the unknown, but with the hope that at least in the future we will be able to sleep peacefully. To be asked what is an alternative in a world where nothing is new under the sun is to demand that tomorrow speaks today. Salvation is a future that is not known.

The burden that Ndi had to bear is that he aimed to offer love while he had not seen himself first. Burdened by salavinization, he did not realise that the obsession was the result of the fact that all that he had to give was only coming from lack and that is why those that love while knowing that they have no conception of THEMSELVES or who they are, are bound to obsesses. Obsession is a lack that is worried about what would happen in the future when the object which is read as its salvation is no longer present? Obsession[37] wants to have a hand in tomorrow, but it only looks as if it is interested in the today with its existence being 'get us much as possible of the object that brings pleasure.' However with obsession, as Ndi knew, that in the long run he will die and in his death he will have to confront himself and that is why we get to be approached by Ndi in

[37] It can also be argued that no perfection is achieved without obsession.

prison telling his life story. Ndi has difficulties in understanding if he was visible to Veronica as she rejected seeing Ndi (when questioned in court) or the idea that she encouraged him sexually. Ndi accepts before the verdict is out that he will be hanged, for being in the courtroom for him reflected a game that did not want to show the ugly face of South African law/racism. As he argued that given that the South African state did not want to lose favour in the international community- the police usually refrained from assaulting Blacks when other Whites were present in public. For example on the beach the police did not assault the Blacks hence Ndi viewed it as a safe place from the brutal violence of apartheid (Nkosi, 2004). In the courtroom, the violence of hanging a Black rapist had to be 'reasoned' by evidence, facts, and laws. If that is the case with the law reflecting the society and the beach reflecting what the society aimed to conceal, clearly Ndi was delusional to believe that in a place like the courtroom that is aimed at prosecuting the Black criminal, Veronica was going to say: 'Yes I know this Native and have seen him numerous times.' That is the misfortune of the one marked by salavinization for sometimes they are not aware of their destruction or that they are delusional! In the end, the melody that emanates from the depths of Ndi is still disturbed by political/ freedom songs like *Thina Sizwe* (a song about Whites leaving our land alone); at the moment when he was about to hear much deeper about himself before he hangs… the songs and voices of other prisoners he argues kept him company:

> …I couldn't ask for a better send-off to the next world than those voices announcing the near-dawn of freedom, and then, of course, the unruly birds, which I see daily mating in the sky! (Nkosi, 2004: 140)

In this analysis I have treated Nkosi (2004), who is our author, as an invisible figure and gave life to the fictional character- our Ndi. It is no secret that Nkosi was influenced by modernist writers and in conversation with them, hence he spoke of the importance of Joyce, Kafka, Faulkner and Dostoevsky. He was accused of emphasising the aesthetics of writing while those engaged in protest literature in South Africa during apartheid were pondering what to write about (Gunner and Stiebel, 2005). He accused those writers of protest literature of writing "as though Dostoevsky, Kafka or Joyce had never lived" (Nkosi, 2005: 246). However, one can see that Nkosi was unconsciously affected by this debate of what to write about. The modernist language

of which we get from writers like Joyce or Wilde is one where the character seems to struggle to come to see their face while the reader travels deeply into the murky parts of their unconscious to marvel at some beauty yet to be understood by the reader and the protagonist. In this literature the protagonist is merely the author wearing the mask of the protagonist, for example Stephen Dedalus is James Joyce, and Dorian Grey is Oscar Wilde before *De Profundis* (1913). In *Mating Birds* this schema is abandoned for the political; maybe to indicate how Nkosi was vexed by the political problem of race in South Africa. Hence he addresses himself to the collective consciousness of a desire for freedom of the oppressed collective instead of a battle of the individual for beauty and the unknown freedom that the protagonist in modernist literature usually desires. The last part on *Mating Birds* (see above) makes Nkosi and Ndi a product of their time, individuals seeking to speak to the collective consciousness and a desire of a coming freedom (as the political songs suggest). The modernist project in the beach is abandoned for a desire for salvation in the language of the political collective- hence this question of the collective is expressed through the court, apartheid police/warders/lawyers and hence even the story is told within the confines of the apartheid prison! This is different from the man who gave us *Notes from Underground* about a man who only found pleasure in speaking about himself (Dostoevsky, 1994)… or the *Invisible Man* where the hole he is in can signify his individual consciousness away from all the political/collective consciousness of his present, which he indicates that he might attend to in the future (Ellison, 1952). The kinds of questions that he was to face in his invisibility... the desire to see his face as his literature teacher once taught that:

> " Stephen's problem, like ours, was not actually one of creating the uncreated conscience of his race, but of creating the *uncreated features of his face*. Our task is that of making ourselves individuals. The conscience of a race is the gift of its individuals who see, evaluate, record... We create the race by creating ourselves and then to our great astonishment we will have created something far more important: We will have created a culture. Why waste time creating a conscience for something that doesn't exist? For, you see, blood and skin do not think!" (Ellison, 1952: 354).

Hate as a Political Project that Aims to Have a Hand in Its Own Future

We must first recognise, as many Black thinkers came to be aware of the fact that we are dealing with a political problem that has expressed itself through hatred/violence. Those that seek to address this hatred in the now will have to like any political project, rely on the idea of collective subjectivity, where those oppressed come together to reflect on their oppression and the way forward. In this formation of the collective political subject there are many mistakes as many thinkers have reminded us. This difficulty is one of understanding how to deal with the past. When we go back to that past and try to wake our ancestors urging them to fight with us and for us. They might be singing the Brother Moves On- Bayagoloza (2015):

Bayagoloza (They are unhappy)

Bayagoloza (They are unhappy)

Bayakhala (They are crying)

Bathisenzenina (Asking what did they do)

Senzeni na X 2 (What have we done)

Bayakhala (They are crying)

Bathisenzenina (Asking what did they do)

This might be read as trite for Marx (1851/1852) reminded us that each generation, in their struggle, usually resurrects the dead as their heroes, but they must fashion their own future. This is the leitmotif of any political struggle. Our heroes and ancestors never sleep in peace, cursing martyrdom, wondering what they have done not to be afforded that peace they thought they will earn in death. They are resurrected in empty political songs and slogans/ byword. This is the domain of politics in the now, in its search for salvation it must even disturb the dead, those who tried to earn a right to sleep. The unfortunate part about the attention that the dead receive is that they are accessible to everybody. Even those they fought can claim them. It seems the can be resurrected by anybody. This is a joke played on the dead, that in a dispossessed land there is no

restful sleep (remember those who died in Dududu and their protest for freedom and that poor Sangoma Mshanelo who had to suffer all in the name of freedom for the dead?). In the case of Dududu we realised that the present is haunted by tortured Black ghosts and yet they even assault the ones in the present as they speak of their demand for freedom-the future. The ghosts, just like those in the present, are seeking to wake up from the nightmare called history, like the protagonist in *Ulysses*. Those that live bring back the dead to live as they live, to speak as they speak. In search of salvation with them, in need of salvation with them, in desire of salvation with them and in song with them. Unfortunately, even the Christians are still waiting for Christ in the material form, maybe only to kill him again to get their salvation. The language of this movement is that it wants to show that an injustice has been done and to make it visible to a people who are suffering from a wound of hate that has metamorphosed into indifference. Is it in murder and hatred that we move towards salvation? Wonders the White supremacist. It is in violence that I will claim my recognition, at some point Fanon (1986) suggested and yet later once he had encountered the liberation movement in Algeria in the *Wretched of the Earth* (2005) he warned us of the psychosomatic issues that stay on the minds of those that have killed in the name of nationalism and he shouted leave Europe and its conception of man…! Fanon is known as the theorist of colonial violence and at the same time he is also a theorist of the post-colonial psycho-effective violence, the violence that leaves the body and becomes internalised if it does not go through the right channels. He is aware that violence liberates and also serves as an encumbrance. That which one confronts, one sometimes may become. It is a warning that we may read in the Manichaeism of Fanon for there is convergence in the two worlds. For the Manichaeism goes through repudiation as soon as the contradiction can no longer hold and it is violence that leads to that point. It either leads to self-destruction or the creation of the unknown to both parties involved in this making. If colonialism is an apparatus of the construction (constructing its subject through violence) of a subjectivity that later leads to its destruction; then we observe what I would like to call salvation for both parties involved in the making. A making of a world confusing to both parties, this chasm of nothingness is a possibility of salvation.

Is it in hatred that we are satisfied? How can I love the Other, one wonders, once they have encountered the last pages in *Black Skin White Masks*? The Philosopher reminds us that:

> Hatred does not always desire the death of the Other, or at least it desires the death of the Other only in inflicting this death as a supreme suffering. The one who hates seeks to be the cause of a suffering to which the despised being must be witness. To inflict suffering is not to reduce the Other to the rank of object but on the contrary is to maintain him superbly in his subjectivity. In suffering the subject must know his reification, but in order to do so he must precisely remain a subject. Hatred wills both things. Whence the insatiable character of hatred; it is satisfied precisely when it is not satisfied, since the Other satisfies it only by becoming an object, but can never become object enough, since at the same time as his fall, his lucidity and witness are demanded. In this lies the logical absurdity of hatred (Levinas, 1969: 239).

Hatred is so full of itself, it is for itself that it needs to make the Other itself. It needs the Other to be hated so that it becomes justified (yet the Other does not become the object of hate enough) (Levinas, 1969). So that it can say: "the Other is dangerous… that is why I did this…" Was this not the language of the swart gevaar? For any political movement that will resurrect the dead still embodied by hate, will never yield any success or achieve any movement towards salvation. Instead it will resurrect its dead to become subjects of hate once again or if that movement kills in the name of liberation it will suffer from psychosomatic issues. These issues manifest spiritually- iqunga! Iphi intelezi? Hates insatiability also reflects its failure and anxiousness for if the Other tries to move beyond this destructive existence, it infantilises them so that it can have a hand in the grooming of the infant, so that it can groom its own salvation, which is more hatred (I hope now you understand what Joey was trying to do that younger me). "In examining the structure of oppression, we must not only look at what the oppressors project into the oppressed… but we must also take into account a refusal to recognize the actual existence of this other" (Bollas, 2004: 5-6). Hence, if this Other seeks to destroy the categorical homogenisation the oppressor employs (all Blacks are dangerous) to appeal to a different understanding of the world, the oppressor may return to a negative hallucination that is to say 'what a cheeky kaffir who do they think they are to assert themselves?' Bollas (2004: 6) reminds us of the role of the oppressed in the hate infested mind of the oppressor when he argues:

> The oppressed exists in this respect, to contain unwanted destructiveness in the oppressor who insists at the same time that the oppressed be like a fecal entity that is so odious that it cannot be recognized, except if and when it is out of sight, and finally eliminated.

I would like to take a different posture to that of Bollas (2004) because the oppressed also occupy a position that is not one that only exists to assuage the self-destructiveness of the oppressor (anyway the oppressor is never fully autonomous since he relies on oppression to exist). The oppressor goes for the oppression of the oppressed so that it can bulwark its precarious project of hatred, for it fears that its salvation may not be in its hands in the future. It aims to keep the oppressed so that it may feel how it is to be saved whether through reforms or assimilations ideas/ it seeks to conceal its anxiety. Did Christ not teach that no individual will have a hand in their salvation? It is possible for the political struggle of the oppressed to reach that unknown future only if it moves towards self-critical reflection. In that way it will be possible to lose those categorical conceptions that aimed to homogenise all Blacks under the rubric of hatred, violence, and danger. To attain self-pride is a movement towards salvation, but it does not end at that point. For self-pride is no longer interested in the shout- that an injustice has been committed, but moves into the unknown yet knowing that at least it has attained itself without hatred (beyond a dispossessed mental state that is the purpose of this political (collective) subjectivity-what it aims to arrive at)!

Perambulating Towards Salvation

Even Ndi Sibiya had to discover the futility of resisting "the anarchic nature of the human libido" (Frederickson, 1981: 94) that makes proximity a question of lust and hatred instead of love. That while in the West, the European man had become a confessing animal speaking of sex, the African man was one to be hanged if he dared to desire the freedom that the European attaches to sex. The subject of sexuality, as Foucault (1978) has reminded us, has always been a subject of freedom and Freud (2010 [1899]) might add of a secret life that we all live hence it expresses itself in dreams. In sex lay the salvation that two bodies recognised from each other, that it was possible to defeat apartheid. Who is this other that Fanon (1986: 181) aimed to love "to touch the

other, to feel the other, to explain the other to myself?" It was indeed through sex that the notion of nation building and racism were founded because through sex the vulnerability of the constructed supremacist project is destroyed... however this will not lead to salvation as long as one body is still constructed as lacking and hyper imagined to possess unknown characteristics. Then salvation is a spiritual project that transcends the material basis, but may arise from them. We cannot arrive at salvation without speaking of the political and sociological that has allowed for certain social orders to continue in their destructiveness - making it impossible to arrive at a condition of a surplus of character in a society torn by race. You fool (cries the one who wants to save him)! Ndi Sibiya, did you not understand your father? Did you not get satisfied by the Star of hope, always shining in your presence that you still desired a White woman? His defence: 'I desired a salvation from a world that despised me and aimed to control proximity between humans.'

Is salvation not the musicality in Du Bois's (2007 [1903]) *The Souls of Black Folk* which reminds us of a musical soul yet to tear the Veil of Race beyond? That soul whose sorrowful music contains a surplus that enmeshes the past, present, and the future into an acme of possibilities. Indeed the assimilationist progress is ugly. It contains no sorrow but only a destructive glee that tears away the souls that are seeking to move towards Salvation. Oh beyond the veil, what did I do to be so black and blue sang the musician. Oh I have discovered my invisibility said the activist. Oh I need to love the other said the Black philosopher. We need self-critical reflection reminded the preacher who addressed *The Souls of Black Folks*. Indeed, the Black is a future whose time is always misrecognised said the novice seeking to get a PhD. One day we will wake up without wounds... I feel for the man who had to get hanged!

Ndi Sibiya is a victim whose victimhood exposes a melancholy of the fragility of both the White and Black world. That a White woman is off limits and a Black woman is exposed to two kinds of violence, Black and White and that the White man is a god. In their *Eyes Were Watching God*, Janie's grandmother reminds us that in this particular layout the Black woman is the mule of the world (Hurston, 1986). Oh remember Nonkanyezi, the Mother of Stars, whom in the end Ndi

realises was no longer that star that shone beyond and could express itself. The burden of the Black woman is one that they carry on their own like Christ in the garden of Gethsemane without any grievance. This is where the lead for salvation is going to emerge… when the lover who is diseased, like Tea Cake, gets killed so that the woman in the end finds peace as she gets reunited with the land on her own terms, with the packet of seeds to plant for the future (Hurston, 1986). In every visit I make to see Mam Winnie and seeing her hands brown (and the many women whose hands are brown in Buhle Park) because of the constant interaction with the soil, I think: "Black woman who knows the secret of birth and death… you who knows the secret of the soil… the secret of the future and the burden of toil!" We who have been speaking for many years are not going to have a hand in this coming salvation and that is why I accept the inadequacy of this present time! Agitated, confused, incoherent, but towards salvation I perambulate.

In the end, let the music play, let the autumn leaves fall. The master of the tenor saxophone and in his supplication in the spiritual and equinox is gone. Allow the sorrow to remind you of a surplus not yet accessible to many, but only to those who heed the silent demand. The parts we had created in conditions unfathomable. The parts we have created in conditions meant to destruct us. The transcendence of those who have managed to lead a political life otherwise, whose sounds echo and echo; whose generation weeps in the surplus created by sorrow. It is here, that moment has been realised. Look through the eye of the needle to realise the greatness that lies in big things assumed to be small. When all is said and done, let the music play! Mama is the only protector of her children in a nation whose men have been violently wandering to nowhere. Mama is a creator of multiplicity, for her womb is shared! When all is said and done, let the music play, let us drink the undeserved salvation. Let the music play. I hope we will dance like we did in the womb. Let the music play. Let us free the tombs so that we may return to the womb! Not to be irked anymore about where will we die! Still, misty as it, towards salvation it perambulates… One wonders what is this salvation? It is that which is promised in the unknown, let the music play! *Nzulu yemfihlakalo! Nzulu yesimanga! Ezalise umhlaba, Nesibaka-baka*. Let the music play!

Silly Boy!

Once the music has stopped playing, I can hear the words “in order to understand yourself and your project you have to study me. It is through your relationship with me that you will begin to understand the truth about yourself and your study” (Mam Winnie, 7/03/2015). These words, oh, these words! I did not have a research question, I did not have a way to study the here and the now. Yet, I still had my theory; I still had my world to go back to... I still had theoretical scores to settle. Therefore, I still had certain tools to hold on to in my study. Did I not learn that we do not have a hand in our salvation? Still, I wandered violently, seeking to be adopted by a violent Father, all in the name of trying to understand the oppression that Mama has had to carry. If you do not appreciate the Mother of Stars then you will hang like that dear friend of yours Ndi. You silly boy! “Ukubona mina njengo mama wakho ukuzibona wena” (Mam Winnie 9/12/17). To see me as your mother is to yourself. This statement was difficult to grasp. Was my struggle not to see myself away from the society, away from the noise of politics that did not reflect me, in my little hole like the *Invisible Man*? Oh salvation? I did not understand uMama ukuthi uthini (what she was saying) and I even said it to her. How is it possible? That to see her for who she is was to see myself? She was to be my salvation because she had to speak to the core of who I am, the values that I am taught at home as the first thing to consult if I were to see myself. I, too, am Black! Then suddenly, I had no theory to hold on to. In this face and in this voice and accent that says "Mbuso" in a funny manner, there was a demand that I did not understand and a sense of being thankful that I cannot give back. Yet, I despised the conditions they were in. I despised that educated as I am; it seems I am incapable of doing anything except write the PhD to show that, indeed, in research there are contradictions. In my Marxist theories, I was in a process of my salavinization, just like Mafeje who tried to argue that there is a need for Marxism to factor in the subjectivity of the oppressed and the vernacular... Why did he not opt for that last step of critical reflection, that after being wounded we come to salvation? After a period of being wounded we realise that deep down, there is a surplus because in hearing the conversations about the possibility of fighting one day, I realised that the fight will not occur on my own terms. Silly boy, did you not learn that salvation was not in your hands? She was to ask me in 2012, “What is the reason that brought you to where I stay to ask me such questions?” She was to repeat it again in 2016, “Yini lena ekuletha lana (what is that brings you here)”, (Mam Winnie, 24//09/2016). Which I could not answer and I still cannot answer. There is something beautiful about all those

that know the secret of the land and yet there is a lot of pain that I see in their eyes and I imagine what if it was my own mother? But she is your mother, did you not argue that the womb is shared? Others would argue that perhaps I am only appealing to affect... the question is, what is that drives revolutions in the world? What is that feeling that leads people to resist? Why does the spirit resist? In their 'silence', I did not see a silence; instead, I saw a moment that transferred the silence to me and that perhaps this world will not be able to swallow. Even I cannot understand it. You silly boy did you not hear your Mother? You silly boy, you are guilty! Guilty! Guilty! Then I was paralysed by this guilt, where is my salvation? Then the words came back again, ukubona mina ukuzibona wena (to see me is to see yourself)! Clearly, it means I will be going back to Buhle Park for many times, for we look in the mirror many times... That is why I perambulate towards salvation because I still do not understand my face, the face I see when I am in Buhle Park. Perhaps the lesson is that the problem is not the problem of my face, maybe the problem is that in all the faces in Buhle Park, I see myself or parts of myself! Towards Salvation, I perambulate! To the Other, distant to me, to the Other that is in me, the Other who is me. Still, I perambulate to a salvation that seems impossible and is demanding, for its language speaks to the hearing eye - with the aim of freeing the Soul so that it can dance once again. However, the limitation is that I still had a lot to hold on to. Even this paragraph reflects that doubt. Will it be said that this is not academic? You silly boy, did you not say that your interest was changing the world? You silly boy did you not say you found fascinating the idea of changing the world? Then still I perambulate...towards salvation!

Wait a minute! Wait a minute! Clearly this is not it! What about the set of problems you have presented so far? What about your response to Joey and her treatment towards you? What are you contributing to in this work? It cannot end in this manner! A voice shouts! To that voice: it seems a lot has been missed throughout this journey. The beauty about silence sometimes is that its justice cannot be had or heard. If the work is appreciated, then you will discover that Joey's being draws from the historical and as we have learnt, such being which rests mostly on the side of the ontological is always violent. What was I supposed to say to her? If I had responded, I would have taken the burden of the living, those who seek to wake up from the nightmare called history. At the same time, I would not be speaking as an individual, but for the collective. A

demand for justice from a present gaze whose eyes are already seeing the present through the past. Therefore, I would be seeking to correct the past in the present and subject myself to a trauma of speaking and not being understood. A trauma of seeking to correct and not being recognised. Did we not learn the impossibility of correcting history, a project of justice never to be had by our present? She was pushing me towards my salavinization and in such a way of being, its ontological shout, as we discovered in Fanon (1986:87); is "What! When it was I who had every reason to hate, to despise, I was rejected? When I should have been begged, implored, I was denied the slightest recognition?" In the course of this work we discovered others like Joey, the likes of the SAIRR (and acting director Van Wyk) a paternalism that misrecognised the 'Native' and was convinced that its benevolence was for the good of the backward Native. In the very same essay we discovered the benevolence of the one doing the misrecognition through the Native Commissioner, De Beers, who invoked the shared ancestry between Blacks and Whites in the national factory, the farm. Despite the talks of how Blacks had been killed on the farms, De Beers still sent them to work that violent land. You silly boy, did you think that you as an individual could 'correct' history?! To whatever Spirit that held my tongue that day, I was blessed. The response in this last essay is one that perambulates towards salvation because it is aware that to succumb to the current temporality and its shout for a correction of an unjust past misses the point of the works of salvation. We discovered that even the ones that were seeking to correct the historical injustice suffered by the many Blacks that trekked without a place of being buried, they too had to misrecognise their faces and lampooned their plight as a cry for an ideological past. You silly boy! In the end, I did not move towards violence, I did not work for the farmer, I was suspicious of the present shout of the return of stolen land to be administered by a different Father, this time Black! Did the argument get missed? Let me repeat it "the present call for the return of the land repeats the old problem of seeing the land question as an issue of private property. Failing to investigate what it means to belong to the land rather than the violent notion of what it means to own the land. The work does not make a call for 'justice' instead it argues that the people working the land without the land understand the secret of land that it cannot be owned."

Towards salvation it perambulates because of an awareness that all that comes from my being is that which is geared towards the many faces in my community. You silly boy!? What about your face? Well, I remember seeing my face and the smile it carried when I was with those that I called mother, father, brother, sister, uncle, friend, the many I did not know. 'Then you are speaking for the WE!' The voice comes back (hear hear)! Well, I cannot speak for the WE, I did not intend to speak for the WE. I am speaking of a face that recognises the many faces. I am speaking of a face that called one to a responsibility that was not understood by the many faces. That is why it perambulates towards salvation. For the works of salvation are spiritual and its fruits are always recondite! If you appreciate this, dear voice… Then know that appreciation is always mysterious! *Yebo ngiyavuma*!

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