

https://dspace.org/

On being black & being Muslim in South Africa: explorations into blackness and spiritualism

Nkuna, Thabang

2016

http://hdl.handle.net/10539/21886

Nkuna, Thabang (2016) On being black & being Muslim in South Africa: explorations into blackness and spiritualism, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, <http://hdl.handle.net/10539/21886>

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Department of Political Studies

University of the Witwatersrand

ON BEING BLACK & BEING MUSLIM IN SOUTH AFRICA: Explorations into blackness and Spiritualism

Masters of Arts Thesis (2016)

Thabang Nkuna

418603

Supervisor: Dr. Ahmed Veriava

ON BEING BLACK & BEING MUSLIM IN SOUTH AFRICA: Explorations into blackness and Spiritualism

Thabang Nkuna POLS7013

A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters In

Political Studies

Faculty of the Humanities University Witwatersrand 2016

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Introduction 1

Chapter One: Blackness and the encounter with modernity/Anthropology 11

Chapter Two: Black Muslims and Indians Muslims: The struggle for a black identity 31

Chapter Three: Sufism as a defence: Epistemologies of the 'heart' *44*

Conclusion *63*

Reference List *67*

Allah The Exalted said:

"Sanction is given to those who fight because they have been wronged and Allah is indeed able to give them victory.

Those who have been driven from their homes unjustly because they said: 'Our Lord is Allah' – for had it not been for Allah's repelling some men by means of others, monasteries and churches, temples and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is often mentioned, would surely have been pulled down. Truly Allah helps one who helps Him. Allah IS Strong, Powerful.

Those who, if We give them power in the land, establish worship and pay the zakat, and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And to Allah is the sequel of events.

How many a township have we destroyed while it was doing wrong, so that it lies in ruins? How many deserted wells and high towers?

HAVE THEY NOT TRAVELLED IN THE LAND? And have they hearts to feel with and ears to hear with, for truly it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts within the breasts that grow blind!" (Surat al-Hajj).

""Then from the bottom of my heart I wish for you to rediscover the feeling of anguish in the face of the dying sun. I ardently wish that for the West. When the sun dies, no scientific

certainty should keep us from weeping for it, no rational evidence should keep us from asking that it be reborn. You are slowly dying under the weight of evidence. I wish you that anguish like a resurrection"" (Kane 1962:77).

"Strange, Lacroix was thinking, this fascination of nothingness for those who have nothing. Their nothingness-they call it the absolute. They turn their backs to the light, but look at the shadow fixedly. Is it that this man is not conscious of his poverty?" (Kane 1962:78).

Introduction

Blackness has become a right to death that sees in death its almost essential property. The essence of blackness, its origin or its possibility, would be this right to death; but a death denuded of that ...sovereignty that gains from death its own sacrificial mastery ... and maintains itself in it. This is life as the work of death, a work born of fidelity to death, but death without transcendence (Marriot cited in Sexton 2015: 132).

The advent of colonial modernity in South Africa marks the rupture of identity and being of Africans. That is, after the emergence of colonial modernity Africans cease to be Africans only but however they become black. Blackness becomes an object exclusion in the encounter with modernity. Blacks and by extension Africa is seen as being outside modern temporality inhabiting a zone of non-being and fungability. The encounter with modernity, without any doubt causes doubts in the Africans modes of existence or being and it is here that liberation and emancipatory movements/projects that have been initiated by blacks have sought to steer their lenses to try and liberate as well as understand how blacks can best live in modern conditions of racism or should there be any alternative to modern empty time. This study seeks

to make an intervention, especially in South African Political studies, with concern to alternative political strategies that have not been take into consideration.

My concern is with regards to a Black Muslim identity, that I believe can contribute to a new political culture, a black vernacular identity that has not been taken seriously. Of course, what is of interest is how we finally get there. It will be very important, as this study makes a range of arguments concerning racial identity, the place of ontology in trying to construct a different mode of being via Sufi spiritualism. The study then becomes important in that it looks at the experience of blacks in modernity and how they are formed as blacks, it looks at how South African history of Islam has side-lined Black Muslims, which we shall argue its symptomatic of the black mode of being. Furthermore, this exclusion causes a problem for a black political culture; hence we have to look at the practices of otherness that will help liberate the black identity. Lastly it then becomes important to look the dislocation of the African mode of being in the colonial situation an argue foe a black mode of being rooted in Sufi spiritualism.

Relevance/Research Questions

By steering our lenses to one of the most ignored group of black people, that is black African Muslims in South Africa, this study tries to look at the conditions of possibility of a Black Muslim identity that can help chart a different strategy of black emancipatory politics. If Black liberation Theology was appropriated by movements such as the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in South Africa, this thesis seeks to understand centrally what it means to be Black and be Muslim in South Africa post colonialism. An effort is made to interpret a black Muslim identity for blackness and since this theme has not been explored in much South African academic writings and politics this study seeks to offer a novel understanding of black identities and ontology in order to constitute a different politics and practices of the self for an alternative ethics of blackness.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer questions such as:

What does it mean to be Black and be Muslim in South Africa today?

How are blacks constructed as an Other in western epistemologies of discursive and non-discursive practices?

How have Black African Muslims been incorporated in the Islamic community in South? How do they consolidate their blackness an Islam?

Why have Black African Muslims been side-lined in the history of Islam in South Africa?

How can Black African Muslims contribute to a new form of self-styling that can contribute to a black political culture? What do Black African Muslims contribute to a black identity in South Africa today?

What does Sufi spiritualism contribute to a black-mode-of-being or black ontology?**Literature Review**

What is difficult about initiating a novel study is also the lack resources that will fully enable one to present a full study that will yield positive results. Central to my concern about the lack of sources is the ambiguous position black African Muslims occupy in the history of Islam in South Africa. Hence Ebrahim Mahomed Mahida (1993) can write a *History of Muslims in South Africa: A Chronology* without even mentioning black South African Muslims. As a result this seeks to address the root of erasure of black Muslim in the historiography of Islam, however because of the issues such space in this thesis we do not aim to provide a archaeological history of black African Muslims in South Africa but what we aim to do is to take this unfortunate erasure and claim that it is as a result of undermining blacks itself.

What does it mean to be a Muslim, theologically being Muslim mean taking the *shahada* (declaration of Faith), *llaillaha 'illalahu (None is worthy of worship besides Allah/God).* It also means one that one has to believe that Muhammad is the Last Messenger of Allah. It is to pray five times daily the ritual prostrations. It is to fast the month of Ramadan. It is to pay the zakat tax of wealth. It is to take, if possible, the Hajj to the pure House of Allah and the plain 'Arafat. Whilst theologically it might seem as easy to appeal to the universality of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunna* (the teachings and practices) of the Prophet Muhammad, what is crucial for us is whether blacks Black Muslims see Islam as particularly speaking to them as a marginalized,

humiliated and alienated group (Curtis 2006). If Islam is the foundation of an Arab civilization (Huntington 2002; Lewis 2002) that has been recognized in the West, albeit an inferior civilization then we are led to the erasure of Africa and its history, as an entity that didn't have any civilization, to a point where Africa is seen as having not contributed to world history (Buck-Morss 2009).

If the Orient is known in the West or acknowledged (Said 1978), Africa unfortunately has been the land of the unknown. The question what does it mean to be a Black African Muslim is significant if we begin by seeing the difference between the Orient (possessing a civilization) and the African Other (not possessing a civilization). Hence being a Muslim is not only about the taking of the Shahada rather a difference in understanding modes of being becomes important when considering that the Qur'anic law, that the *Shari'ah* is based upon Arab culture and civilization. Robinson (2004) in his study of *Muslim Societies in Africa* has correctly observed that much of the West seems not to view Islam as compatible with African's way of life, for Africa is not seen as professing any of the Semitic religions. The lack of attention to Islam as an element of the African personality (we will expound more on this notion in the second chapter) in sub-Saharan Africa is precisely because of the notion of Islam as a cultural property of Arabs who usurped African lands, partook in slave trading and imposed their religion at the point of a sword. Thought in this light, Islam as an 'Arab' religion and as giving birth to an Arab civilization cannot be seen as indigenous to Africa. However, this is not only story of conversion to Islam by black Africans, as in our case, Black South Africans embraced Islam in the post-Colonial without any contribution from Arabs, rather Indians and Malays.

As we can see, being Muslim is crucially a matter of the Law (the *Shari'at*) which for us is synonymous with Arab culture. Others like Amin (2005) and Mirmortahari (2011) see Islam as not only based on Arab culture, however they argue that Islam is appropriated differently by different cultures. So Islam is not only theological but has different spheres ranging from Politics, Jurisprudence, art and culture. However what these two authors fail to see is that by following the Shari'at one is certainly embedded in the Arab is asked to participate in Arab civilization, we can think of the Christian Missionary project in South Africa with the advent of colonial modernity and how Black Theology sought to appropriate Christianity according to

the ways in which blacks African people can identify with. Like Black Theology in South Africa and the role that it played to constitute a political identity, the same has not occurred with Islam in South Africa and this is where we seek to make an intervention to black political culture. The nineteenth century Jihads (we need to make a distinction between Jihad of the heart, which is a struggle to achieve oneness with Allah and Jihad of the sword, which is about instilling the word of God and teachings of His Prophet Mohammad) were mainly about vexing question of how to be African and be Muslim, was syncretism the option or an intervention can be made in another facet Islam where what is permissible in one's culture and Islam can only be as far as one go to merge the two? Indeed these questions become more exasperating when it comes to blackness and Islam especially in South Africa.

Another interesting observation to make, however not interrogated here, is whether there is a difference in how African people pre and post colonialism relate to Islam, and to what extent and degree. In Cheikh Hamidou's *Ambiguous Adventure* (1963) the plot is set in an already African Islamic community. What is relevant for the novel is the "[T]he whole colonial existence appears as one long piling of the self, an Ambiguous Adventure as C.H Kane puts it. A man divided between two worlds, his overriding aspirations thus became, in the words of Kane's tragic hero, Diallobe, 'nothing but harmony'" (Irele 1965). Whereas in Kane's case African-Islamic modes of being are disturbed by Euro-colonial Christian thought, in South Africa we have a case where African modes of being were destroyed by Colonial Christianity in the encounter, the case of Black African Muslim becomes a third element which we could say, in line with Ali Mazrui, constitutes a triple heritage (1986).

Methodology

The object of the interdisciplinary approach in this work is to abandon disciplinary barriers, so that lived reality is reflected in its wholeness. In this sense this study takes on different knowledge fields such as critical Islamic studies, Black studies, African studies, Afro optimism/pessimism, Political studies, Anthropology, Phenomenology, psycho-social studies and Sufi spiritualism. The range of this disciplinary approach shows not the novelty of the work however also the difficulties that one had to go through in order to come out with a

range of conceptual/theoretical frameworks that will assist in clarifying the arguments being made, the aims and objectives of this study.

Conceptual Framework and Chapter Outline

The study consists of three chapters that speak on different aspects of blackness and Islam; however these essays are interrelated as an attempt to try and seek the source the encounter between blackness and modernity, a Black Muslim identity and an attempt in looking at the possibility of an ontology of blackness that is inspired by Sufi spiritualism. **Chapter one** begins by looking the encounter between blackness and anthropology/modernity, using theories of time and temporality "showing how the concepts of time and temporality are imagined from the place of those who exist outside of the boundaries of human existence, that is from the zone of non-being occupied by those marked by modernity as the wretched of the earth" (Maxaulane 2016:1). This we will by focusing on Johannes Fabian's *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (1983). For Fabian this encounter is marked by the denial of coevalness between Africa and modern Europe. In this regard Africa and by extension blackness inhabits another time not the modern temporality of time. This lets us interrogate the discursive/epistemic construction of the black constituted as an Other. What becomes of interest however is the how these discursive constructions are applied non-discursively. This is where the Anthropology debates of the 20th century enter the field, Magubane's polemic with Liberal Anthropologists helps us understand the how blacks as a result of these discursive practices have responded to modernity. These debates are of interest to me because they seem to have been forgotten in academia and they present atleast one of the closest intensive counter conversation in how to understand the black experience in modernity, this is what Michael Hanchard calls Afro Modernity (1999), that is "[D]ialectically, Afro-Modernity can be seen as the negation of the idea of African and African descent peoples as the antithesis of modernity" (247). It is interesting how one can extend Magubanes's project; let us not get ahead of ourselves.

If blackness, as I argue, has been constructed as Other by the western discursive (time and temporality) and non-discursive practices (Social Change, Christianity, Political violence,

alienation) the **second chapter** outlines my main argument. That is, the appropriation of Islam by black native South Africans, demands us to unpack the debates centering on black as a political identity. For the Black Consciousness Movement being black was not a matter of pigmentation rather could be used to rally of the oppressed groups in South Africa, from Black, Coloured to Indians (Biko 2002). I want to read to read this political strategy as a way of unburdening blackness, that is to say, Black in this sense can be understood ontologically and politically. I see black African Muslim and their encounter with Indian Muslim racism as symptomatic of the fact that black is taken for granted to include all of those who have been oppressed. When blackness is used as an umbrella to mobilize the politically disenfranchised, often it is forgotten how blacks suffer post struggles, socially and otherwise. Indian racism towards black particularly in Islam allows us to see that the elasticity of blackness (Magubane 2003) is used no more than to continue pressuring black as an identity making blackness unbearable (Sexton 2015).

Perhaps it Nathaniel Mackey (1992) who best allows us the space to conceptualise the idea of being Othered in the position of Otherness. Mackey who allows us to consider the movement from the noun 'black' to the verb 'blacken', that is, the "privileging of the verb [which could result in] linguistically accentuat[ing] action among people whose ability to act is curtailed by racist constraints"(1992: 53). To blacken, which means to perform blackness allows is what should be capture what it means to be black in the position of otherness. "Performing blackness therefore refers to particular instantiations of blackness, of particular gestures towards blackness, of knowing and bringing about blackness in particular ways" (Ramphalile 2015: 5). This is where the essay seeks to argue that a Black Muslim identity is important for black political and vernacular cultures as it has not been explored before (as we have seen with the nineteenth century Sufi Jihads in other parts of Africa) and argue against racial authenticity. Black Muslims presents a case where they occupy ambiguous visibility (Baderoon 2015) in a country where being Muslim is attributed to Indians and Malays (because of the erasure of Black Africans in South Africa Islamic historiography and discourses) mostly and whilst we know about Black Muslims it is an identity that has not been taken seriously as Black Muslims are a minority group.

By insisting on this distinction between black as political and black as ontological, gives us an idea on how to conceptually and theoretically approach the complication of blackness in the politico-cultural space and ontologically black as a mode-of-being-in-the-world. If the second chapter shows the many detours and cases one has to make in order to understand it means to black and be Muslim, then **chapter three** solely focuses on black as a mode of being that appropriates Sufism as an existential categories. Approaching the chapter in a phenomenological and psycho-social spiritualism, allows is to read the black ontology in a novel and interesting way. Here we will once again make the effort to trace the dislocation of African-modes-of-being during the encounter with modernity qua colonialism, the missionary project, 19th century social change, the discovery of diamonds resulting in industrialisation, labour migration and post-industrial societies. By reading Harriet Ngubane's *Body and Mind in Zulu Medicine: An Ethnography of Health and Disease in Nyuswa – Zulu Thought and Practice (1977)* together with Chabani Manganyi's *Being-black-in-the-world* (1973) and Sufi spiritual texts, the chapter deliberates on how practices of the self can be achieved in the current state of blackness, and whether these practices of the self that take the 'heart' as a critical epistemic and point of social conceptualisation could derive new ways of being that will allow for the creativity of blacks and ultimately practices that will inspire a counter culture to modernity's epistemic and non-discursive practices.

Limitations of the study

Any work that seeks to make an intervention, presupposes that there has and is something that has not been said with regards to a certain topic. In our case, Black African Muslims in South Africa have been ignored in the social, cultural and political life in South Africa. That is, because many South African people are considered Christians, because of our colonial history with the missionaries, it then becomes easy to fall into the trap of seeing black South Africans as always already Christians. The issue is made worse, by the fact that those who are considered to be Muslims i.e. Indian, Malays, foreign Africans from Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Ethiopia, Somalia and do not consider Black South Africans as having Muslims communities. Our study is borne out of the above frustrations and as a result one wanted to cover a whole range of aspects that contribute in any way to the ignoring and side-lining of Black African Muslims.

Therefore, one is bound to be ambitious and there are bound to be somethings that miss our analysis. In stating this, I cannot but help to be aware of some of the limitation of this study, which I also appreciate and hope the reader will also considering that this I aim to continue this study and develop new arguments.

I have not focused on the complexity of the foreign African Muslims in the constituting or help build a Black African Muslim identity in South Africa. I wanted my focus to be on Black African South Africans specifically. I wanted to show that this group, as much as it received influences on Islam from different ethnic and racial groups but still failed to be noticed in the history of Islam, I wanted to show how relations between these different racial groups in Islam have sought to undermine Black African Muslims as not authentically Muslims. Hence the complication in the main chapter, chapter two, arises because (1) of our inability to give a full account of the history of Black African Muslims in South Africa, (2) the difficulty of accounting for Indian racism towards Black African Muslims and hence we have to go to the political and make a distinction (that has been ignored or misread) to one of the most important political categorisation by the Black Consciousness Movement, to try and give a clear analysis. Furthermore (3) the distinction concerning the category black, helps us to see how a black political identity is overburdened and needs to be *freed* (4) however, whilst this maybe the case, some may suggest that we are led into politics of racial purity and falling into the Apartheid trap, whilst this is not true, we note that we are not excited by the politics of authenticity. Merely what we seek to do is to look at blacks themselves without being associated with any notion of *black being an umbrella for the oppressed to rally around* and this is where we challenge Homi Bhabha through Zine Mgubane and Nathaniel Mackey.

Originally we had sought to account for a Black Islamic subjectivity; however it presented a problem, for to do that one will have had to look at the impact of the Orient and the Subaltern to the Black mode of being. It seems as though that problem did not fully escape us, if to be Muslim has to include Islamic doctrines–the Shari'ah, the Sunna– then we have not interrogated enough how an Arab civilization has had an impact on Black Muslims. We hope that as the study goes further we will deal with this problem sufficiently and begin to look at impact of slavery in Islam, the issue of time and temporality and the Black diaspora in the

emergence of Islam. Lastly, on the practice of Sufi spiritualism a black ontology maybe doubtful to those who think that blacks have appropriated enough existential strategies and that Sufism and blackness will not necessarily be compatible. True, can blacks appropriate Sufism in its entirety to make sense of themselves, or to construct new models of self-practice and self-mastery. Can, as we call it, 'epistemologies of the heart' become enough to craft a different temporal structure and creativity in constituting a politics of not only emancipation but a form of being that is not just idealistic. Moreover how are Black African Sufi Muslims supposed to cultivate this politics, what space will they claim? We urge the reader to take these grievances to heart, for these limitation and problems that the study presents are exactly part of the problems of being a Black Muslim in South Africa.

Blackness and the encounter with Anthropology/Colonialism

Perhaps it may appear on enquiry, that blackness and darkness are in some degree painful by their natural operation, independent of any associations whatever. I must observe that the ideas of blackness and darkness are much the same; and they differ only in this, that blackness is a more confines idea.

Mr Cheselden has given us a very curious story of a boy who had been born blind, and continued so until he was thirteen or fourteen years old; he was then couched for a cataract, by which operation he received his sight… Cheselden tells us that the first time the boy saw a black object, it gave him great uneasiness; and that sometime after, upon accidentally seeing a Negro woman, he was struck with great horror at the sight (Burke, Edmund 1987)

Bernard Magubane crucially observed that any study of black identities must obviously begin with the image of Africa in the western world (1994: xi). The manner of representation of the African world from slavery moving into the colonial modernity enterprise gives us a distinct rupture in the mode of representing of the 'other' in the western world. Africa, in the recurrent well known colonial modern mantras on race biology, is caricatured as the 'dark-continent', the hallmark of 'primitivity' and 'backwardness' (Peterson). Whilst in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries represented Africa as exotic and possessing uninhabitable zones. Central to colonial modernity was to mark Africa with absences, from history to economics and politics,

with the aid of evolutionary theories emanating from Darwin's racial eugenics works around the 1870s. Thus we can begin to anticipate the complicity of Anthropology in initiating the latter discourses, modes of representation, and in the epistemic constructions of the black other.

Indeed the mid-century crisis of anthropology was central to showing how the discipline was a central feature of the colonial enterprise. Whilst not denying the fact that anthropologists were the handmaiden of the colonial governments, Hooker (1963) depicts the anthropologist as a reluctant colonialist who sympathised with the people he/she studied. If we take seriously the objectives of anthropology, namely; the study of other cultures, systems and thoughts from the outside, it then becomes easy to identify with Hooker's sentiments in relation to the position of the anthropologist him/herself. Others like Jacque Maquet (1964) predicted that with the breakdown of the colonial relationship and disappearance of the primitive world, Anthropology would lose its *locus standi*. Kathleen Gough (1968) in an attempt to deconstruct Anthropology went as far as declaring Anthropology as 'the child of western imperialism'. By 1966, all of a sudden Levi-Strauss did not want to write about the savage, seeing the relationship between Anthropology and the colonised world as one of the dominant and dominated. Instead he propounded that Anthropology would have to die in order to be reborn again, not only that Anthropology must become a study of society from the inside, breaking down a number of disciplines. However this essay will contend that Levi-Strauss's suggestion has yet to be realised.

As we have noticed thus far, the responses that sought to critically assess Anthropology's status were mainly initiated in the metropoles, with British Anthropology and American Anthropology the standout schools of Anthropological thought. However there were two responses from Africa, who based their response on the misrepresentations of African's "social change" by colonial Anthropology. Magubane's article (1971) can be read as an Africanist reaction to western and intellectual imperialism (Mafeje 1996: 5). Mafeje's (1971) 'The Ideology of tribalism' was an attack on European ethnocentrism and a spontaneous call for indigenization of social scientific concepts. Central to this essay is the invigorative analysis/polemic that Magubane and Mafeje initiate against Anthropology and anthropologists. Put differently, this essay will interrogate the relationship between western epistemic

constructions of the 'other', 'primitive', 'savage', 'black' through colonial Anthropology and Magubane's (1973) critique which is central to understand the stereotyping of blacks as we read in the opening epigraph..

Phillip Marfleet (Asad ed 1973: 279) summarizes the two African responses thus

The two articles by Mafeje and Magubane have been among the most interesting studies of the anthropology/colonialism relationship. Each is concerned with the way in which one area of anthropological theory has been related to specific part of the colonial system. Each makes an analysis in terms of the legitimacy that functionalist categories have had for the subjected sector of colonial society. An attempt has been made to expose ideology 'from the inside'. Hooker and Levi-Strauss among others had made an appeal for such a form of analysis. It is worthwhile noting that of all contributors to the recent debate only these two authors have been in a position to draw on the indigenous African experience.

Following from the spirit of these two African responses this essay seeks to do three things. Firstly, to look at the epistemic construction of the black, how conceptions of time in anthropology have been used to create a binary between 'west' and the 'rest', the latter being anything but progress, civilized, developed, human and so on. Central to this will be the conception of time applied to functionalist-structural anthropology to show how these theories of time were important in displacing blacks as outside of modernity. Secondly, and most central to the penning of this essay, we will – instead of doing a mere review of Magubane's polemic against "Meyer and his associates" *The Xhosa In Town, Revisited Urban Social Anthropology: A Failure of Method and Theory (2000)* – do a close reading or symptomatic reading of Magubane's text with regards to colonial anthropology and how it constructed black African subjects. Alsica and consequently the migration of Africans from the ruo to show how modernity/colonialism were important in the industrialisation of South Africans to the towns which had a disastrous consequences of black Africans' mode of being. Lastly, we will survey the consequences of Magubane's polemic in the current debates about the status of Anthropology in South Africa. The question that concerns this essay is: Following Magubane's declaration that "anthropology was the hand-maiden of Imperialism" we ask ***how did/does***

anthropology construct it's other/black as an object?

Lest I be misunderstood, it is important to note that Magubane's text discusses three works entitled *The Xhosa In Town* (Meyer 1961; Reader 1961; Pauw 1963). The critiques Magubane fires at these authors cannot be understood outside of western representation of Africa; hence I begin the essay by looking at how the image of the other was created. Similarly so, the critiques Magubane (together with Mafeje especially in South Africa) launches impact on the practice of anthropology in South Africa with regards to race. The question that can be posed in relation to the latter is whether it is sufficient for the Westerner ("whites") to do an Anthropological study of African ("black") cultures and vice-versa. Indeed there is nothing controversial about this question if one considers the development of racist colonial modernity in South Africa and the mid-century crisis of Anthropology. By arguing that there is no colonialism without Anthropology, this essay, as I will show, seeks to question those who have seen the problems of Anthropology and failed to cut the umbilical cord – to appropriate Mafeje's vocabulary.

Time and Temporality in the epistemic construction of the other

Time is a key category with which to conceptualise the relationship between the subject (western Man) and it's Other. Time makes it possible for anthropology to constitute its object (the savage, the primitive, the Other) as time is a form through which we define the content of relations between the self and the other (Fabian 1983: 28). By understanding the use of time in anthropology, we are able to inquire into the dialectical constitution of the Other and recognise concrete temporal, historical and political conditions of this dialectic relation. Here I can think of natural time or spatial time on how it has been used to give meaning to the distribution of humanity across space & time and has/is used to distance those who are observed from the time of the observer. If we go further, I can think of ethnographic knowledge and how it has been affected historically by the dominant relationship between the anthropologist and the society that he studies. Time becomes of the essence in the literal epistemological sense in the construction of the other as an object.

Following Fabian (1983: 22) it become possible to think of types of modern time that have been used to construct taxonomy and allachronic difference that is how time has informed anthropological discourses. Physical time serves as a parameter or vector in describing sociocultural processes. It appears in evolutionary, prehistoric reconstructions over vast spans but also in objective or neutral time scales used to measure demographic or ecological changes or the recurrence of various social events (we can think of economic or ritual instances and phenomena). Physical time is a part of system that includes space, bodies, and motion (the rule of physics that, it is impossible for two bodies to occupy the same space at the same time).

Colonial and apartheid South Africa becomes a crucial example of how the idea of physical time, rationalized legal sanctioning of controlling the other's body, to monitor its movement so it could not share the same space with the western/white body. These ideas of physics when applied to actual societies produced instances of racial genocide in South Africa and in other colonies, for if the black/ African body could not share the same space and time with the white/western body then the former ought to be removed by whatever means. However in South Africa as much as it extended to the legal domain it became merely impossible for the black body to be removed completely rather it was kept in a **constant state of unsettlement.** Equally I contend that "social change" in Africa presented a contradiction in colonial Africa in terms of implementing ideas of physical time by the colonializers. The contradiction was that capitalism and rising industrialization demanded wage labourers to occupy the *Town* for the sake of modes of production, which demanded that the ideas of physical time be written into statute. What is interesting to me is the shift from discursive ideas about physical time to the non-discursive practices where the politics and law intervene to actualise colonial racist totalitarianism and the continual distancing of or the validation of the other's objecthood.

Typological time or mundane time remains related to physical time although it tries to do away with chronologising. Instead it indulges in grand-scale periodising; it manifests itself through typological time. More precisely typological time signals a use of time which is measured in terms of socio-culturally meaning events or, more precisely, intervals between such events. It underlies such qualifications as preliterate vs. literate, traditional vs. modern, peasant vs. industrial, urban vs. rural. It divests time of its vectoral and physical connotation (ibid: 23). As I

have already noted in the introduction, conceptions of Africa as traditional, as an uninhabitable zone, 'discovered' to be inhabited by a people without history, and in the post colony the introduction of discourses about developed vs. underdeveloped states are informed by the western image of Africa cultivated through the ideas of typological time.

Intersubjective time has its sources in phenomenological thought. It signals an emphasis on the communicative nature of human action and interaction. It conceives time as a specific way in which actors create and produce beliefs, values, and other means of social life, it has to be recognised that time is a constitutive dimension of social reality (ibid: 24). Intersubjective time is what Fabian's work is contending for, what he calls coevalness. Coeval theory seeks to recognise that all human societies and all major aspects of a human society are of the same age. However it has been argued by the black radical tradition that modernity is modernity precisely because it denies blackness, it sees blackness as outside time. For, Anthropology imputes motives, beliefs, meanings and functions to the societies it studies from the perspectives of outside and above. If blackness is denied space in modernity coeval theory becomes unattainable. It is thus Gilroy (1993) who argues that we cannot think of modernity outside the *black Atlantic* tradition, therefore we ought to think of an alternative afro-modernity as blackness seen outside modern linear time. Hence blackness cannot take coeval theory serious as it is a humanist discourse that has always been propounded by the western world.

Let me go further, it is crucially significant for us to look at the **Judeo-Christian influences of modern time** and the idea of a universal history, the transition from sacred to secular time that is the emergence of a temporalizing ethos of anthropology. Sacred time is from the Judeo-Christian values and the idea of a history of salvation, time is viewed as medium of sacred history, there is a linearity of events. These ideas of linear time still continue to influence the conceptions of modern empty homogenous time. The idea of linear time also evoked the idea of time as epoch. Secular modern time emerged in the attempts to secularise Judeo-Christian time through universalising it (universal time). In the medieval paradigm the time of salvation was viewed as inclusive (in a sense that even pagans and savages were candidates for salvation). However the naturalisation of time defines temporal relations as exclusive and expansive. So if the savage was ready for salvation he is not yet ready for civilization (Ibid; 26).

However "Enlightenment thought marks a break with an essentially medieval, Christian (Judeo-Christian) vision of time. That break was a conception of time/space in terms of a history of salvation to one that ultimately resulted in the secularisation of time as natural history" (West 2002:102). It then follows that "one certain is that Enlightenment was *bourgeois* and that it sought to make its own anthropological viewpoint universal" (Mafeje 1976; 310). Just like the Christian tradition of the saviour and saints travelling to foreign lands in the form of pilgrimages or crusades, travel in the 18th century became the source of philosophical secular knowledge about human history and the other. This lead to the building of literature of travelogues, collections and synthesis of travel accounts and it is precisely at this juncture where we can locate the development of ethnography as an anthropological methodology.

Hence the need in anthropology to use maps, charts, and tables signals convictions deeply ingrained in copsular, atomic theory and knowledge information which encourages quantification and diagrammatic representation which makes the ability to visualise a society synonymous for understanding it (this is called visualism -in taking the pictorial aesthetic tendency mitigated by the precepts to approach culture not as a picture but as a text- and it seeks to deny coevalness and temporalisation). The visual-spatial presentation of the other as a model of knowing is intrinsically linked to the political hegemony of western thought. I think it is valuable for us to think of ethnography; ethnography is described as observing and gathering (a visual and spatial activity), it's an enactment of power relations between the society that send the fieldworkers and the field itself. We can then deduce that visualism as an ideological current in western thought is heavily implicated in the allachronic discourse of anthropology.

The idea of topoi in the Greek rhetoric and art of memory signifies the moment when modern anthropology sought to construct its other in terms of topoi implying distance, difference, and opposition, its intent was to construct ordered space and time for western society to inhabit rather than understand other cultures (Fabian 1983; 111-112). Thus enlightenment philosophical history and the modern origins of the social sciences is the foundation of some of the traditions of visualised, spatialized and cosmological thought of topoi and art of memory.

Briefly, I want to look at how the naturalisation of time (evolutionism and western linear time)

and we shall see that what makes the savage significant for the evolutionist's time is because he lives in another time. It is true that the theory of Darwinian evolutionism (his theory of the origin of species) has been put to both biological and sociocultural applications in the anthropological uses of time. Darwinian Theory of evolutionism applied evolutionary laws in the history of mankind, in order to allow a periodization of modernity. It enabled the theorisation of the qualitative change from medieval to modern time. We now know that Darwin praised the principles of geology that lead to the demise of a simultaneous creation (coevalness) or repeated acts of divine intervention (messianic time, sacred time). "Sacred time did not contain enough time for natural history, so biblical chronology was abandoned because it did not contain the right kind of time, it only relayed significant events, mythical and historical, and as such chronicle as well chronology" (Ibid;13). As a sequence of events it was linear rather than tabular, i.e. it did not allow for time to be a variable independent of events it marks. Hence time enabled the social evolutionists to analyse the stages leading to civilization.

Functionalism, as a special paradigm within the social sciences, is our natural starting point (Mafeje; 1976:310) in gesturing towards Magubane's polemic with the "Anthropology of social change". It has to be noted that Malinowski, simply rejected evolutionism on the grounds that it was armchair historical speculation. Functionalism sought to explore societies, by using synchronic analysis (meaning which presupposed a freezing of the time frame). The introduction of functionalism to anthropology came as an attempt to disregard time, although it tried to condemn the time distancing discourse of evolutionism, it failed to abandon allachronic discourses. Functionalism was also presented as a rejection of the historicism (time as historical continuity), it attempted to make anthropology a discipline of explanations (which were sought through the use of a present, synchronic set of relationships) of systems or structures (logical and sociological relativism).

As I and Magubane will show later, the idea to abandon theories of time for the study of timeless theory in functionalism also in-itself led to the circumvention of history. The functionalist sought to study the culturally different conceptualisations of time, recognisable in language, symbols and norms of behaviour, and material culture. They wanted to establish contrasts between western linear time and primitive cyclical time, or between modern time

centeredness and archaic timeless. Functionalism studied the contradictory uses of time by a given society (Fabian 2014; 41). The radical functionalism of Durkheim and Radcliff Brown tries to address the problems that structural functionalism had with explaining change in societies by asserting the system relative nature of categories of thought (social determination of concepts). However this attempt fails to show the universal translability of cultures if someone can only speak from within them. Radcliff, like Durkheim, emphasized the autonomy of social institutions and sought to discern how different social elements and institutions contributed to the maintenance of the whole (Mafeje 1976;312).

The radical functionalist sought to establish fieldwork as the practical basis of theoretical discourse. Time is still allowed as a condition for producing knowledge in the practice of fieldwork and how time is used in the writing monographs (in the synthetic and analysis. Those who argue that conceptions of time are socially determined argue that there are perceptions of time that are closer to nature and those that are removed from it (through the use of reason and rationality). This is Durkheim's distinction of a profane and sacred reality, where he argues that time close to nature is found in a cultural knowledge which organises practical and productive activities. Time removed from nature is involved in ritual communication. This theory however compartmentalises human praxis.

I think, following from the above, we can agree that western epistemes have failed to ignore time and temporal relations as the affect of political relations between cultures. The limitation of the functionalist approach has shown that sensibility to time alone does not at all guarantee awareness of the problem of coevalness. Sure, Durkheim looks at the creation of ritual and sacred time; the problem is that *objectivity still remains tied to temporal distancing*. The use of time still perpetuate the denial of coevalness in the sense that there is still a "persistence and systematic tendency to place the referents of anthropology in a time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse" (ibid; 31). Cultural relativism is stuck in comparing how the other uses time and the European self uses time. They believe that the study of time in culture is important because it reveals what is hidden beneath the spoken word (the unconscious). Anthropology has been constructing its object (the other) by employing various temporal distancing, negating the coeval existence of the object and subject of its discourse.

I have shown how western bourgeois anthropology used conceptions of time to construct the image of the other to validate its scientific status. Let us not think that the scientific consequences of anthropological investigations have no relevance non-discursively, i.e. politically that is. These theories of time are consequential to the exclusion of blacks in the formation of modernity. The theories of coevalness are nothing short of a denial of the status of humanness for blacks.

Let us now turn quickly to Magubane's confrontation with anthropologists in colonial South Africa, it is important that we take into account what I have demonstrated above as it will illuminate the practice of anthropology that Magubane is against.

Colonial/Anthropological Modernity in South Africa: *The 'Xhosa' in Town, Revisited Urban Social Anthropology: A Failure of Method and Theory- The Black Anthropologist Speaks.*

The fact that individual civilization has for a long time originated from the European center has maintained the illusion that European culture was, in fact and by right, a universal culture. Its superiority over other civilizations seemed to provide the experimental verification of this postulate. Moreover, the encounter with other cultural traditions was itself the fruit of that advance and more generally the fruit of Occidental science itself. Did not Europe invent history, geography, ethnography, and sociology in their explicit scientific forms? (Ricoeur, 1965: 277).

Let us take Peterson (2014: 217) seriously when he contends that colonial modernity in South Africa (whether under Dutch and British imperialism or internal colonialism of apartheid) manifested itself as violent and exclusionary. From the beginning, Magubane treats us to the historical validity of the formation or causality of Urban South Africa. If we take seriously the discovery of diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1886 we can gradually try to think of how rural communities were transformed into an urban-industrial society in the space of a few generations (Magubane, 2000: 149). The town developed as a result of colonial socio-economic factors heavily relying on a migrant labour force from the communities. Indeed it

was an ideological formation that forced the blacks from rural communities who were seen as primitive, backward, and uncivilized to be incorporated in capitalist-imperialist modes of production. However it becomes crucial for us to bear in mind the that Africans did not just emerge as the defeated, if we look at the time when agriculture and cattle farming were the dominant mode of production amongst the Africans it becomes crucial to see the pervasive character of the Dutch and English settlers who wanted to extend their landed property, which ultimately led to a conflict between the Africans and the foreign white colonialists. Despite the contrary argument that rural African communities were developing on their own path towards industrialisation, the lie becomes evident as we begin to contemplate the tension in the urban areas between the whites and blacks. In fact, it cannot be argued otherwise, that is, the urban capitalist sector was mainly reserved for whites while the traditional blacks were called upon to harness their manpower.

Precariously, as much as the rural Africans were forced into the capitalist mode of production in the urban socio-economic formation, there were deliberate or organized asphyxiating legal repressive structures (Magubane 2000: 150) to exclude the Africans from permanent residency in the "white" town. Let us listen to Peterson's insightful analysis again:

The movement and stay of black people in urban areas was regulated through influx control laws such as The Native (Black) Urban Areas Act No. 21 of 1923, the Native (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act of 1950 and the Promotion of Bantu Self-government Act of 1959.

(Peterson, 2014: 219)

We do not need to blame Manganyi (1973) when he observes that the sociological schema of the black is unwholesome and the white body becomes the standard wholesome body precisely because the black body has been marked as outside of history and time. Earlier on we made interesting observations on how the idea of topoi in anthropological discourses implied distancing and opposition of the other and how physical time (again the idea that two bodies cannot occupy the same place at the same time) was instrumental in creating the other. Are we beginning to postulate the relations now? To understand this process (the history of the transformation of the rural African communities into an urban town setting) Magubane wants

to say, one must grasp the objective socio-economic historical process to which man is subject in society and the effects of these objective facts on the consciousness of the individuals in their everyday existence (2000: 150). Put in another way, how should we give a sociological, an anthropological, or social, psychological analysis of the existence of blackness in "social change" situations?

Magubane is clear; he explains to us that he wants to discuss three works entitled *The Xhosa in Town* (Meyer 1961; Reader 1961; Pauw 1963). Furthermore, "some of the concepts", he tells us, "popularized by these books will here be critically assessed for their practical, ideological, and theoretical meaning. This I will do by focusing on the method and on the models of social structure or units that were constructed and analysed" (Ibid). Thus we see that Magubane wants to challenge the scientific and ideological status of *The Xhosa in Town* works.

The Xhosa in Town is a coordinated study of the city of East London in the Cape Province written in 1961-63. Magubane reminds us that "Phillip Meyer (the senior member of the research team) calls East London a "White town" despite its 60,000 African population" (Ibid:154). He then goes on to describe or summarize the three volumes for us thus:

"The Blackman's Portion" (Reader 1961), the first volume to be published, gives a historical survey, the demography of the town, the struggle for subsistence and problems of accommodation. The method adopted is sociographic, and where sociological themes are pursued, they are made to serve the sociographic picture. "The Townsmen or Tribesmen" (Meyer 1961), the second in the series, is the most important, in the sense that it is here that the theoretical concepts that have become part of the conventional wisdom are discussed. It shall receive most attention in this review. Briefly stated, it deals with "becoming urban (or resistance urbanization): The Second Generation" (Pauw 1963), the third volume, is a socio-cultural study of the end result of African urbanization" (Ibid).

We can see that what is of interest for Meyer and his associates is the "process of urbanization" and indeed Meyer is aware of the regulations obscuring the smooth drive towards urbanization, so much so that it then becomes suspect when these regulations are not investigated further. He goes on to use subjective criteria as an explanation for these processes

of urbanization, that it is a man's intention remaining in town and/or of bringing his family to join him there (ibid: 155). Still, the reasons why the man decides to go against the repressive laws that only allow a man to stay alone and not with his family in town are not scrutinised. However, here is what is important for us: Meyer divided the African population in East London into three "ideal types": the "town-rooted," the "country-rooted," and those who are in between, the "double-rooted." The latter are the individuals that are simultaneously town rooted and urban cultured and country rooted (ibid). Meyer is definitely interested in the social division between those two groups in town, but for whom we are not told (for the government perhaps?). Furthermore if Meyer was interested in the differential adaptation then it begs us to ask why (again can we gesture towards the certainty that anthropology was the "handmaiden of imperialism"?) He goes on, Meyer, to tell us that there are two types of responses by Africans to urbanization: "Conservative" and "Progressive" (ibid). The reason why there emerges the latter two separate responses we are told is because Influx Control accentuates the divisions between "Red" (country) and "School" (town) categories and that they have divided the Xhosa for centuries between those who converted to Christianity and those who have resisted civilization and chose to hang on to Paganism.

One needs not to be naïve; we can thus see where these studies are taking us. That is, the two responses to urbanization are driven largely by a mysterious ideology of those who are progressive, who attend to the demands of formal school, who approve of Christianity and westernization "School"; And that of "Red" who prefer "real old Xhosa ways" including the pagan religion which forbids or compels the "Red" to stay in town (ibid; 156). Such sociological descriptions are symptomatic of the failure of method and theory in a way that it seeks to *misposition* the positionality of the subjects investigated. What is it that compels even the school to succumb to some of the ideologies of "real Xhosa ways" such as "*lobola* and circumcision rites?" We are not given any explanation as to why those who are seen as "progressive" cannot seem to escape the practice of certain pagan rituals; indeed Magubane does not interrogate this move also.

The manner in which the concepts are deployed and how methodology is put into use clearly reflects a certain misinterpretation of the subjects of investigation. For when one does research

it is important, and Magubane emphasises this point rigorously, to state for whom and for what the purpose of the research is for (ibid; 157). The manner in which one undertakes her/his investigation should be symptomatic of the structure of the society that the individuals being investigated are situated in. Not only that, the historicity of the structure is of critical importance to how the structure functions and constitutes/shape subjects. What Meyer and his associates do is to continue to entrap the African to "his situation" that is the African does not have any form of past (although it is mentioned as being of tradition), however the very conception of tradition belongs to a certain time framework that is incompatible to anthropology as western episteme. We learn from Mafeje when he tells us (and rather cynically as well) that "the absurdity of the situation", that is anthropology's fixation with social change in the fifties and sixties made "clumsier by functionalist *ahistoricism*", is revealed by the preposterous proposition once made by Gluckman in 1959, namely, that when an African leaves the countryside and enters the city, he is simultaneously "detribalized" and "urbanized" and that when he leaves his tribal area, he is correspondingly "de-urbanized" and "retribalized" (1976: 324). Even today there those who claim Gluckman's work as a *breakthrough;* to what specifically, the question is left unanswered. What we have here is a failure to communicate with the historical processes of the socio-economic formation that I and Magubane outlined at the beginning of this section. How can one assess the colonized without giving them agency of some sort? For instance, during the colonial period labour was highly regimented and migrant workers fitted themselves well into that pattern. "Equilibrium" in any society, least of all a colonial one, is purely notional. Traditional societies had their own contradictions, which could not have been absolutely contained at any point in time (Ibid).

I hope we have enough grounds to now dismiss Meyer and his associates' project. Can we impose a "one way" analytic projection on how the black responded to colonization, urbanization and humiliation? Can we move forward to side-line the response of the black African to his defeated culture? Is there such a thing as "detribalization", "retribalization" and so on? How are the colonizers also affected by the structural change of the society they are cultivating? These are just some of the questions that are meant to illuminate the failure of these studies we are investigating.

To study social changes requires one to go beyond a descriptive analysis of the oppressed but it becomes crucial to analyse strictly the distributive technologies of power deployed by the oppressors. What is the *raison d'etre* of the mode of oppression, where does it stem from, and how is the epistemic violence contributive to these technologies of power? Meyer and his associates, and indeed anthropology in general, forget the ontological burden being placed upon black in situation of a clash of civilization. In fact, we can argue that central to the reason- of- being of the epistemic and technological inflicting of violence upon the black body is an absence of coevalness. It then becomes absurd and awkward indeed when there is a "stubborn refusal to go beyond obvious "facts" so as to throw light on the real cause of the social types then observed" (Magubane 2000; 161). Is it not obvious enough that in the process of "social change" in the process of "contact of different cultures" there are bound to be transmutations that occur because of the exchange of ideas (whether wilfully or arrogantly) in both cultures that are involved.

The buttering of ideas especially in a colonial situation will impact both the oppressor and oppressed. As we have learnt from Fanon (1952), attempts by the conquerors to strip the colonized of their identity, which leaves them with two choices' to imitate a "White" identity or to search in vain for the earlier identity which circumstances have forced them to abandon . The social types of school and Red are a manifestation of the latter processes. The School category that is celebrated by the anthropologist as an "ideal native" conforms to western civilization because of the structural conditions of the society. I am against the view that Africans were thrown into the world and decided to wear civilization in their social outlook (let us remember Magubane's polemic with Mitchell and Epstein). Without giving a history of how black Africans came to appropriate western civilization one's project becomes null and void. Not to mean historical determinacy is the only element in the formation of black subjectivity, I am saying it becomes important through its dialectical relationship with the subjects and technologies of power. The problem of culture change is dissociated [by Meyer and his associates] from the socio-economic changes and is examined as something which exists in the consciousness of the people (ibid; 168).

What I find most interesting is the status the "Red" is given in the currency of "social change".

The Red Xhosa are seen as uncivilized of course, for they resist succumbing to "westernization" but I argue that this is a false representation of the "unconverted" Red Xhosa. This is so because structural changes in a society are not limited to a particular social formation only, the Red are as impacted by urbanization/colonization/anthropologisation as much as the school Xhosa are. If the Red is drawn back to the country because the urban is too "uncultured", so to say, it does not necessarily imply that the socio-economic changes in the country are to continue unhindered. The major thing to realise here- and I want to be adamant about this- is that Africans' mode of being in the world *have been transformed by the capitalist mode of production.* Thus these divisions that are presented to us are merely speculative to the least.

Magubane alerts us to the manner of representation that Meyer and his associates apply to the Africans by uses of archaic concepts to describe the African. Let us listen:

The designations "Red" and "school", tribesmen and "townsmen," "Christian" and "Pagan," "Westernized," "civilized," and "tribal," and worst of all "native" and "Bantu" are not only ideological, but *are racist terms* (ibid; 164 my emphasis).

The African is described in primitive and non-secularization concepts, these concepts are derived from the epistemic tradition of anthropology that we have described in the previous section. Politically the concepts function to circumvent, deny and entrench the status of the black as a *non-human citizen.* Indeed even the concept of citizenship does not account for the black in a nation-state, whilst whites are clearly granted the autonomy of their modern existential categories. These concepts freezes the black subject in the public sphere-private sphere (should we even make a differentiation?), they allow not the African to represent herself; indeed the African begins to see herself in the mirror of the westerner just like Said's Orient (1978). The social scientist tends to imitate the naturalist and compresses social behaviours and human cultures into "scientific paradigms (Mudimbe 1988).

In actual fact, Mafeje, stresses that European colonialism, like any epoch, brought with it certain ways of reconstructing the African reality. It regarded African societies as particularly tribal (1971:253). This process is what might be called the ideology of tribalism which the colonizers imposed upon the African peoples helped mainly by anthropologists who were

obsessed with "tribes" and making distinctions upon them. When we argue that anthropology and colonialism are mutually exclusive we mean precisely this process. We can therefore add that the ideology of tribalism is a European construction because in South Africa the indigenous population has no word for 'tribe'; only for 'nation', 'clan', and 'lineage' and 'traditionally, people were identified by their territory (Ibid; 254). At this point in the essay it will be naive of us to think that the epoch of colonialism gave birth to these prejudices. Rather, as we have been arguing (if it has not been prevalent so far), anthropology's conception of time, that is, epistemically, informed the non-discursive practice of prejudices thus reducing the black into an other and an object. Thus we can reprimand Magubane for not extending the argument further in light of what I have outlined thus far.

However Magubane is correct to view these concepts as transcending ideology and in fact as Zine Magubane (2003) also shows when studying the empire, that is how blackness or the black condition has been used to dramatize the problem facing an unrelated community (west). That because of these epistemic constructions, deployed by colonial anthropology in Magubane's will continue to inform the figurative uses of language with regards to blackness in the post-colony in the empire. Thus when Magubane analyses Meyer and his associate's works, it then becomes clear for him that racial bigotry and ideological biases can be well articulated under the guise of "scientific analysis" in the social science (Magubane 2000; 171), as I have also tried to show. Perhaps crucially, Magubane notes that human beings, the African included (here we need to disagree with Magubane because he does not take seriously the fact that he is engaged in a polemic precisely because the black or African is anything but human, anthropology and colonialism deny blackness the status of coevality), respond to demands which are placed on them. The so-called "urban/tribal" antithesis must not be studied apart from its social content, but rather its economic, technological, and political setting (Ibid;170). Magubane thus forgets to add that history and the genealogy of epistemic construction of the African/black as an other/object which informs the non-discursive practices such as imperialism and colonialism should be central to studying the anthropology of "social change".

Concluding remarks: What to do with Anthropology?

It is worth noting that virtually no European anthropologist has been won over personally to the subordinated culture he has studied; although countless non-Europeans, having come to the west to study its culture, have been captured by its values and assumption… (Asad 1971:17).

Inasmuch as we would like to sympathise with Asad, history has taught as well as this essay that the western "man" had/has nothing to learn from the non-western world, it is precisely why sciences like anthropology emerged not because it is concerned with understanding other's culture rather to understand the peculiarities of the other when faced with "European civilization" and to subdue the object as process of understanding the western self. Indeed the call for anthropology's suicide (Rigby1996; Mafeje 1997) continues to make clear for us that anthropology is unsustainable and should be abolished. For, although white racism affects *all* "non-white" people, Africans and the people of African descent are the particular targets of the resurgence of a neo-scientific racism, as well as continuing forms of distorted anthropological and popular representation (Rigby 1996:3). As I have illustrated, it becomes difficult for one to even propose new methodologies of anthropology for, what we are faced with is a discursive epistemic construction that has a long genealogy coupled with the intensification of non-discursive practises that have solidified the status of the black other.

Thus concepts such as "savage", "primitive", "tribe" and black are scientific constructions emanating from the ideology of the European bourgeoisie class, it then becomes merely impossible to disentangle blackness out of those power relations (both discursively and non-discursively). Anthropology/colonialism, whiteness, European racism, capitalism are thus mutually exclusive and cannot be dissociated from each other. Indeed those who claim to change the methodologies of anthropological investigation miss the opportunity to view the impact that whiteness has on the other/black. Concepts do change however it certainly does not follow that attitudes towards the world will. For, various schools of anthropology developed models and techniques to describe the "primitive" in accordance with the changing trends within the framework of western experience (Mudimbe 1988:30). To change anthropology's

methods or to claim that what is central to the practice of anthropology is precisely because it evolves its methods, does not stick to one method, this view falls-short mainly because anthropology as well as human sciences are just one part of the wider problems of whiteness (a mode-of-being-in the-world that has caused distraction upon non-western societies) in the world.

Hence we do not have to believe (as I have illustrated tirelessly in this essay) John Comaroff (2010)-speaking of anthropology-when he tells us that "[O]urs has a long been an undisciplined discipline, whose heterodoxy has always made its future hard to predict. And ultimately to its great advantage, irrepressible (2010:527). The "undisciplined discipline" that Comaroff speaks about alludes to the supposedly 'methodological creativity' that anthropology has charted in times of crises, its re-emergence in the non-western world despite it being despised, "despite it having no new ideas, and none on the horizon" (Marcus 2002:2). Yet it then becomes evident as one has argued that human sciences are a construction of the western bourgeoisie class and perpetuate certain ideologies that have created the world in binaries, in the last instance. Indeed anthropology is not irrepressible; in order to destroy anthropology one would have to do away with the dominance of the west in the world today. So, Comaroff is not only deceiving us, he lacks the understanding (maybe not) of the totalizing structure of the world that has been created by the west since its expansion.

I am also arguing against Mafeje (1997) and those who have called for the end of anthropology, for if anthropology misrepresents non-western societies and western societies, then it does not follow that anthropology should be the only head that should be rolling, *rather the world as it has been created by all western sciences*. Having said this, we then recognize that the problem of anthropology should not just be relegated to the studying of non-western societies by the west rather -as is the case in South Africa- whiteness should by extension be barred from studying blackness, for anthropology must be a study of culture from the *inside*.

What is emblematic in Fabian's conception of time that we have exhaustively discussed in this paper is the idea of placing blacks outside of time, history and consequently modernity. The black becomes an Other as a result of the epistemic construction of time which creates the

conditions for practising the politics of difference rooted in a Manichean binary structure. By studying the in the imago of the black in western epistemic and non-discursive practices we find that black emancipatory politics will have to look elsewhere for its sources of strength against western modernity. What happens when we look at the black experience in the cross roads that intersect between the Western modernity and Islamic civilization? Without any doubt we see that the question is vexing however the need to look at the black identity in Islam can offer us a way of conceiving of an emancipatory political culture that can also serve a contribution to black vernacular cultures. Thus the next chapter will look Islam in Post-colonial South Africa and how blacks have appropriated it and what it means to be black and be Muslim. If this chapter has shown that the black is constructed as other/black through theories of time and temporality in western epistemic discourses and practiced through non-discursive practices the next chapter will show the politics of defining blackness in a society where those who share the same religion have been colonised however still find the ability to separate themselves along racial lines, that is blackness becomes a contested terrain.

Black African Muslims and Indian Muslims :The Struggle for a black identity

> "Perhaps the most important thing we have to remember about the black tradition is that Africa and its diaspora are much older than blackness. Blackness does not come from Africa. Rather, Africa and its diaspora become black at a particular stage in their history
>
> It sounds a little strange to put it this way, but the truth of this description is widely acknowledged. *Blackness is an adjunct to racial slavery*. No doubt, we will continue to discuss and disagree about the factors that made blackness imaginable as well as the pacing of their influence. That process is quite complex, mixing legal doctrine from ancient slave systems with customs from the history of enslavement between Christians and Muslims to produce *a new amalgam that would become foundational to the modern world*." (Bryan Wagner cited in Sexton 2011:37).

The history of Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa has been met with the same critical response as that of Christianity by African intellectuals who have gone through a Euro-Western Christian education. Islam, like Christianity is seen as having invaded the social fabric of African cultural

cosmologies. Seen in this way there has been a strong enthusiasm to see Islam as being foreign to African life. Foremost in this fight has been the likes of Sembene Ousmane, Wole Soyinka, Awi Kwei Armah, and Chinweizu, to name the most prominent who sought to think of self-contained African values.

Needless to say, the conversion of Africans to Islam has been seen as superficial and incomplete (in a sense that Islam is not wholly compatible to blackness and Africanity), however Bangura (2000) has, however emphasized that these kinds of ideas developed in the colonial scholarship of Islam in Africa. Robinson (2004) in his study of *Muslim Societies in Africa* has correctly observed that much of the West seems not to view Islam as compatible with the African's way of life, for Africa is not seen as professing any of the Semitic religions. The lack of attention to Islam as an element of the African personality (we will expound more on this notion later in the essay) in sub-Saharan Africa arise precisely out of the notion of Islam as the cultural property of Arabs who usurped African lands, partook in slave trading and imposed their will at the point of a sword (and of course this not wholly truthful). Thought in this light, Islam as an 'Arab' religion and as giving birth to an Arab civilization cannot be seen as indigenous in Africa. Put in another way, Africans were assimilated by the Arab-Islamic culture as they have been under western colonialism. Like the torrents of the sun that strike at the hearts of the grass and wild plants and drain away their sap, these intellectuals will do anything to speak of a homogenous Africa prior to colonial modernity as well as conceiving of a unique African essence.

I am sure we can find a different perspective amongst other African intellectuals. Albert Hourani (1991: 7) notes that "from the time it first appeared, Islam has been a problem for Christian Europe", and it then follows that the same African intellectuals who have received Euro-Christian education and who operate on western disciplinary and intellectual premises, are no exception to these sentiments, draining away any 'foreign' element in order to define the African essence (Pan Africanism/Negritude). It is often forgotten that Islam has been appropriated or articulated in African societies. Indeed there is nothing peculiar about the Africanization of Islam. We shall come back to the consequences of this later.

Taking note of the above mentioned debates in terms of the history of Islam in Africa, this chapter will not solely be engaged in the outlining and validating the history of Islam in Africa, rather it becomes crucial to understand that the history of blacks in Islam has often been sidelined and South African Islam does not represent an exception to this erasing project. However, this chapter deals with the identity that black Muslims in South Africa are and have been constructing in order to make sense of how they are represented and the possibilities of engaging in a politics that contribute to black political cultural expressions. The arguments that will be surveyed in this essay tackles the two fold mode in which black African Muslims identity is and can be considered as important for the idea of racial authenticity and creativity. Creativity in a sense that identity should be understood not as fixed always already, rather identity becomes suggestive and helpful if seen as a continuous invention, and a processes. Hence the foremost important question that will be surveyed is what does it mean to be a black African Muslim? Part of the problem facing the formation of a black and Black Muslim identity in South Africa has been the ambiguous category of *black*. Seen in light of the apartheid regime's racial seriousness/profiling and the response by liberation ideologies, black has meant all of the oppressed in the 'post-apartheid' South Africa.

This essay seeks to contribute to the understanding blacks in Islam, a tradition that has been silenced or undermined or simply erased. Seeing black South Africans as Christians and Islam as alien to them does little and next to nothing if we want to understand blacks in the world, blacks as appropriating different strategies in order to make sense of their world. The history and tradition of Islam together with black Christian theology in South Africa has done much to underestimate the role of blacks in Islam and as a result this essay will briefly address these shortfalls.

What concerns us here is the foreclosure of the possibilities of self-invention and styling in constituting a political culture as a result of the overdermination of a black identity by political discourses that shy away from the reality black's face in South Africa. Stated more clearly, if black is a category that is supposed to offer a political strategy for Indians, Coloured and black themselves then the realities would prove otherwise as we will show. In the case of black Muslims, it becomes immensely difficult to construct a meaningful identity and a politics as a

result of Indian racism and attitudes. Therefore being Muslim and being black in this case becomes two separately antagonistic processes whereas as we are arguing should be complementary for the sake of contributing to the constitution of a black Islamic identity. If part of the importance of Islam for blacks in South Africa is to enable a counter culture to modernity and the construction of a different kind of politics that has not emerged then this process is made difficult by black Muslims not being able to consolidate their blackness and Islam as a consequence of antagonisms inside Islam in South Africa.

I

During the early eighties Soweto became home to a Masjid in a small suburb called Dhlamini. With its walls struggling for completion for a decade, Dhlamini Mosque became the center stage for developing (minority and or Black Muslim converts) Muslims (Fakude 2002:1). The number of Muslims in the township has increased with much help from *da'wa* organizations, the Indian Muslim community and particularly from the efforts by African Muslims. As in parts of Africa, the question of being African and Muslim formed one of the most crucial questions in the black African communities in South Africa. The question becomes more vexed taking into consideration–unlike in other parts of Muslim Africa– that almost all of the black Muslims converts in South Africa were once Christian owing to the history of colonialism. Although there is another history that sees the advent of Islam in South Africa as preceeding the mainstream history of Cape and Natal Islam, Ebrahim Moosa notes that

Islamic penetration from the north into the regions of beyond the Soutpansberg may have occurred sometime between the fifteenth century and possibly the late eighteenth century. It is also claimed that Swahili- speaking traders may have reached as far south as the St. John's river on the Pondoland coast in the Transkei and accounts of "Islamised" Africans, members of different ethnic groups living among the Shona in southern Zimbabwe and the Venda, Sotho, and Thonga peoples in the Transvaal, called by various names, Lemba, Varemba or Balemba seem to confirm it (Moosa quoted in Valhanova 2006:64).

Indeed this history is interesting for those who are concerned with the history of black African Islam in South Africa. However for us this history takes us no further in our quest to find a coherent black Islamic identity. How do African Muslims engage in a process of self-crafting and self-styling? A source of frustration for some black African Muslims in South Africa was the role Indians came to play in shaping their identity. We have already alluded to the role played by the Indian Muslim community in helping to propagate Islam in the township. From this influence most black African Muslim came to associate being Muslim with being Indian. As Mphutlane wa Bofelo and Cajee (2006: 215) have noted unfortunately some of the empowerment schemes that came from these organizations sought to entrench racial stereotypes, the culture of dependency and entitlement, perpetuate unequal power relations and to breed more tensions, mistrusts and suspicion.

Tensions between black African Muslims and Indian Muslims reached a peak in 2002, when black African Muslims boycotted Indian Muslim mosques. The grievances by African Muslims ranged from, racism, exploitation, and an unfair distribution of wealth (Fakude 2002:2). Whilst black African Muslims embraced and converted to Islam in part to fight oppression of the Christian colonial and apartheid state, and as a way to find closure and comfort in another system of divination, black Muslims sort to find the possibilities of freedom in Islam. The Indian question (that is, the status of the relationship Indians have towards the black Africans as a result of apartheid and prior) soon became part of the forest of questions they had to answer, how is it that Indians were so racist and exploitative towards black African Muslims (who according to Islam should be treated with a common brotherhood spirit), how is it that they have replaced the Christian liberals or the White oppressors? It seemed there was no escaping from oppression and exploitative regimes. The status Indians had-during apartheid- will form a crucial lynchpin in making out an identity that is African and Muslim.

Important to this is the African Muslims' search for an identity and address the Indian question of the 'post-apartheid South Africa'. As the earth hardens beneath the harsh suns of the dry season, the heart also hardens in the flames of unhappiness, and it is this unhappiness that has plagued black African Muslims particularly as a result of their encounter with Indian Muslims, who constantly act like "they own the religion in South Africa" as it is oftenly heard from black Muslims. Worse still the confabulation of Indo-Pakistani cultural and aesthetic values with Islamic values result in Africans feeling they have to de-Africanize themselves and adopt Indian culture; clothing, language and mannerisms to be accepted as Muslims. This concern with aesthetic values continues today where an African Muslim introduced to Islam by an Indian Muslim will be given Indian clothing, will be taught Indian mannerisms and be assisted financially as a means to seal the assimilation.

It is important to highlight the development of the Indian community in South Africa so as to understand where these attitudes and behavior towards black South Africans and Muslims might stem from. The majority of Indians arrived between 1860 and 1911, either as contract indentured workers or traders who came of their own accord from Gujarat on the western coast of India (Jeppie & Vaheed 2005:260). It will not be useful to regard these groups as homogenous as they had different class, religion, language, ethnicity and culture background. However, what is crucial to us and to take note of is the formation of a common 'Indian consciousness' despite background differences. It was the collective experience of domination (from colonial and apartheid discriminatory policies) and being constantly lumped together as an undifferentiated group that laid the basis for what was later to become a recognizably Indian Identity and social category (Lushaba and Hendricks 2006:124). It then follows that having been lumped in one identity of 'Indianess' that was further perpetuated by Mahatma Gandhi's political discourses, Indians did not identify with the more oppressed black majority for, as one could imagine, it would make sense to unite and fight oppression.

In the colonial/apartheid race discourse Indians came to occupy a second position below the

whites in the constructed racial hierarchy. Hence it is no coincidence that Indians were to relate with blacks not as another oppressed group but as the 'Kaffir other' whose condition bore no semblance to their own, thus a line between black interests and Indian interests was drawn (Lushaba and Hendricks 2006:125). However, in the 1960s with the development of the Black Consciousness movement (BCM), the political strategy was to take a turn. For Steve Biko and the BCM being black was not a matter of pigmentation, black referred to the entire oppressed groups in the South African political/social-economic structure (Biko 1978: 97) and or those who saw themselves as oppressed. Indeed as a political strategy it was viable to unite and fight a common enemy, for the oppressed to be divided would be a clearly self-defeating strategy. Thus for the BCM the Coloureds and Indians were oppressed and would be rallied to fight a common enemy. Thus even in the 'post-apartheid' era the cry that "black is not a matter of pigmentation" has often been invoked to legitimate senses of suffering, the question that is pending is whether black can still be said not to be a matter of pigmentation?

It seems an intervention needs to be made in order to assess the validity and a distinction needs to be drawn between black as a political and black as an ontological category of analysis. Needless to say the definition of black given by the BCM has lost its ground in the material realities of the 'post-apartheid era'. Like the crackling of an old man's joints, stiff from rheumatism, from trying rise for a particular occasion, the category of blackness takes a turn even for the BCM if we try to consume in heavy silence the narratives that rallied the black women and men to political freedom and an emphasis of the 'African past' to make sense with modern demands. Following Manganyi (1973: 40) we should be content to remark that there is what is called a "more specifically African mode of being- in- the-world; of dialogue, of relating to objects, to others and to time and space". What forms this African or black mode-of-being-in the world is the multiplicity of force relations in a matrix developed through the encounter with the West? Manganyi is content with identifying this mode-of-being with Negritude (African personality), observing that as a result of a number of historical (e.g. colonialism) and socio-cultural contingencies such as the missionary effort, most of the valuable aspects of African ontology were undermined (ibid: 40). The results of these

contingencies precisely encouraged ideologies such as Negritude and the BCM amongst others to seek the African ethic as Mafeje (1975: 136) puts it. It then would follow that seen in this direction, the path to political emancipation for the BCM could not lump the political and ontological categories in the same basket of liberation tools. Instead a political strategy would be sufficient to hold water against structures of the colonial/apartheid state that crushed the oppressed. We can thus safely say that being-black-in-the-world is to be separated from the definition of *black* given by the BCM which was a sophisticated political strategy.

Black identity has often been in trouble of not being able to make sense politically since it has been viewed contra to suffering, oppression and humiliation. Black identity then becomes nothing that helps in constituting practices of being, never mind authenticity, but rather it is called upon to rally the oppressed groups. It is not for certain whether the BCM theorists were aware that Indians willingly participated in the crushing of the Bambatha rebellion as well Gandhi's racist slurs, indeed any attempt to study the 'othering' of blacks by Indians, therefore has to incorporate theories of race (Lushaba and Hendricks 2006:127). One should not be in a rush to invalidate the BCM's political strategy regarding the definition of black- although it needs to be questioned. To question the vulnerability of the black identity, and in no way claiming an authentic black identity, rather it becomes important for us to understand why blackness is such an elastic signifier, able to be appropriated to mobilize the poor, oppressed and so on. Stated differently, together with Zine Magubane we must then ask what is it that makes blackness such an elastic signifier? (2003: 2) I think we can find the answer in Homi K Bhabha (2008: xxxvi)

....today, as a range of culturally and racially marginalized groups readily assume the mask of the Black not to deny their diversity but to audaciously announce the important artifice of cultural identity and its difference....As political groups from different directions gather under the banner of the Black, not to homogenize their oppression but to make of it a common cause, a public image of the identity of otherness....

Read closely, we need to continue to ask what entails a "public image of otherness"? Is it not these practices of considering black as a rallying point for the oppressed- that constitute the black an Othered other? What does it mean to be in a position of otherness and be othered? Gilroy is correct to point out that "[B]lack identity cannot is not simply a social and political category to be used or abandoned according to the extent to which the rhetoric that supports and legitimizes it is persuasive or institutionally powerful (1993:102). Unfortunately blacks have continued to be politically impoverished as a result of these othering from the place of otherness strategies (Mackey 1992:51). Perhaps it is Nathaniel Mackey who best allows us the space to conceptualise the idea of being Othered in the position of Otherness. Mackey who allows us to consider the movement from the noun 'black' to the verb 'blacken', that is, the "privileging of the verb [which could result in] linguistically accentuat[ing] action among people whose ability to act is curtailed by racist constraints"(1992: 53). To blacken, which means to perform blackness allows what is captured to move (albeit underground), and accentuates what it means to be black in the position of otherness. "Performing blackness therefore refers to particular instantiations of blackness, of particular gestures towards blackness, of knowing and bringing about blackness in particular ways" (Ramphalile 2015: 5). Moreover, these othering practices from the place of otherness are initiated by the other, that is different groups that has been othered by western discursive and non-discursive practices as we shall briefly see with the case of Indian Muslims and Black Muslims in South Africa.

What Bhabha suggests is what needs to be defended by blacks, not as a way of defending an intrinsically authentic identity however to allow for the expression of blackness that is free of suppression. We cannot help but disagree with Bhabha as Magubane has shown that other scholars have looked at how people have historically pointed to aspects of blackness or the black condition in order to dramatize or highlight a problem facing another unrelated community (2003:1). The attitude Indian Muslims have towards black African Muslims can be seen in this light, and it is this attitude that hampers the attempt to find a coherent African Muslim identity on the part of blacks. By coherence we mean an experiential sense of self, a certain kind of inventiveness that is constitutive of creative self-practices, politically and

otherwise. In a talk given at a conference on "New Muslims" Sidi Aq argued that "Native South African Muslims face a problem of identity crisis, that has been initiated by the apartheid regime" (2015). Thus, it becomes important for black Muslims to try forging relations with other African Muslim communities (instead of being assimilated in Indian Islamic culture) in order to devise strategies of how to forge a coherent African and Islamic identity. The identity of black Muslims is important if we think of the ways in which it provides differing strategies of constituting a politics that is useful in continually evolving and emitting a multiplicity of expressions, giving evidence to the black cultural differences.

Being Muslim for blacks does not only rely on the universality of Islam that is the Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet, these two legal sources are important for ones' relationship with the divine. However, what is of issue here is how this black Muslim identity is overdetermined by an Indian consciousness, so to speak, that has made it its project to regard blacks as an other, yet able to appropriate the very same black identity for political gains. Indeed, what we are faced with here is most complex and interesting. Whereas on the one hand we are arguing that a Black Muslim identity is important to expressing different black vernacular cultures that are crucially in constituting a varied range of political strategies. On the other hand, it is evident that an Indian Muslim identity – which cannot be separated from the larger Indian identity–, is a burden in terms of trying to understand blackness on its own that is of giving blackness the space to constitute its own politics. What are the odds of releasing the concept of Black as a rallying point of uniting all of the oppressed; I think this is the most urgent question to answer.

It is Gabeba Baderoon who argues that to assign a race to Muslims is to accede to apartheid's fantasy of racial separateness (2015:14). Yet she also concedes that doing so should ignore the fact that the lives of Muslims in South Africa are crucially influenced race. Which is symptomatic to the fact that Muslims in South Africa inhabit different environments and ways of being that it becomes impossible to see them as homogenous? To the extent that Islam is represented by different groups then Islam is experienced differently by various racial groups. We need not refute the formation of race tropes under slavery, colonialism and apartheid

rather as results of these events Islam has been appropriated differently and therefore has found its significance in the same difference. Furthermore, it is interesting how the "racialization of Muslims as "Colored", "Indian", or "Cape Malay" (Ibid: 16) still perpetuates the idea of an erasure of a Black Muslim identity. By invoking these categories as evidence of a painful past, by seeing Islam as being "considered" "Malay" or "Indian" is suggestive that these racial groups assigned a position of authority and the exclusion of blacks within histories of Islam in South Africa.

Unfortunately, Baderoon for instance also fails to do justice to the Black Muslim identity although she seems concerned with erasing them from the broader history of Islam. For us we see these tendencies as evident of how a Black Muslim identity is refused and erased through acts of side acknowledgements. I argue that this constant effort to sideline blacks from the history of Islam is emblematic of the tradition of Islam against blacks in South Africa. Inasmuch as Islam is considered universal. In can be noted, as Ernesto Laclau's words regarding any tradition that sees itself as universal, it has no "necessary body and no content; different groups, instead, compete among themselves to temporarily give their particularisms a function of universal representation" (1996: 48). Hence different groups will fight exclude one another as the sole proprietors of a tradition. Speaking of the double oppression of blacks, Sidi Aq is quick to notice how blacks have found in Islam another oppressive "regime", for after apartheid blacks sought Islam as way of making sense of themselves but they continued to face "subtle racism", where there was a fallacy of a "common brotherhood" by Indians.

Interestingly enough even in the face of such racism black African Islam in South Africa has continued to appeal to the universal to validate (that is the Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet) their Islam. Curtis IV tells us that "African- American Islamic universalism has been a remarkably idealistic expression of the hope for human equality and dignity" (2002: 13). However, in the face of tensions with Indians and Malays particularism becomes a way of making sense of the need to account for black suffering through Islam. Islam serves as a

counter to the modern experience of being in the world for black Muslims, as it the case with African American Islam, hence it becomes nearly impossible not to connect the influence of the black Atlantic on black Islam in South Africa and the USA. The need for a black Muslim identity is important for black politics and black vernacular cultures to point out the profits of continuing to style (ala continuously different) black cultures for the conditions of the possibility of resistance.

It seems there is no need to defend Islam against racialization for it is already racialized; however, what is of interest is how to allow different racial groups in South African Islam to express their own particularity that does not collapse the ideation of universalism. If as we have identified, a black Muslim identity is important for the conditions of the possibility of resistance against western modernity and as a way of giving expression to the differing black vernacular cultures in a way that we begin to understand what Stuart Hall meant when he saw identity as an "invention which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within...representation" (Perry 2005: 87) and following Gilroy against the purity of a black identity instead of seeing it as a result of encounters that create different expression.

Without wanting to cause confusion in our arguments let us state that one can argue that placing blackness under the banner in which the oppressed rally around maybe as a result of the same identity that we are arguing for, that is constantly invented. However, my argument that black as other, as othered in the position of otherness by the other is insightful in order to show the bareness/vulnerability and manipulability of a black political identity. Here a political identity has a possibility of not emerging precisely because it is undermined (in its already undermined state) and therefore cannot signify any meaningful representation –at least for the benefit of black political cultural strategies. "This notion of being othered in the position of otherness by the other attests to the fact the black life is not lived in the world that the world lives in, but it is lived underground, in outer space" (Sexton 2011:31). It then becomes difficult for black Muslims to think that looking east is the only solution to purify oneself of their

blackness. Indeed looking east as we are arguing has its own problems, in fact looking east supplements the violence of western modernity in its own terms.

This is not to suggest some sort of refusal to the benefits of wanting to belong to the Islamic civilization as a strategy to form or participate in counter modernities. To be a black Muslim is to be in a perpetual state of *wanting* creative ways of living in the public sphere world (constantly reassuring oneself of the plausibility of ones Islam), taking seriously the idea that Islam cannot fully make sense of the private, the purely ontological (this will be the subject for the following chapter). However to inhabit a Black Muslim identity comes with a lack, of clarity, of language, of a relationship with the world, with one's community, it is to inhabit an ambiguous visibility par excellence. To be a Black Muslim therefore cannot be dissociated with blackness, with a precarious living, an underground being of some sort. However we should insist that Islam is beneficial to blacks as a way of enabling blacks to constitute their identity in difference, to the advocates of black racial purity and those who undermine and foreclose the possibilities of a black Islamic Tradition in South Africa.

Sufism As A Defence: Epistemologies of the 'heart'

I

"The Sufi is universal. He has reduced and then eliminated the marks of selfhood to allow a clear view of the cosmic reality. He has rolled up the cosmos in its turn and obliterated it. He has gone beyond." (As-Sufi 2004:1).

"...the second idea was of equal power: that one must never, in one's own life accept these injustices as commonplace but must fight them with one's strength. This fight begins, however, in the heart and it now had been laid to my charge to keep my own heart free of hatred and despair. This intimation made my heart heavy...." (Baldwin)

"New Black Music is this: find the self, then kill it" (Baraka quoted in Mackey 1992:60)

"...I need to change my ways/show me the new religion" (Black Milk feat. Black Thought "Codes & Cab Fare" in *No Poison No Paradise* 2013)

One of the unresolved mysteries of the past two centuries -since the point of the encounter- is how black people have continued to survive in the modern world. Cornel West has also

remarked that the notion of black people being considered human beings is a relatively new discovery in the modern West (2002: 90).. Precisely meaning that blackness is a category of dispossession, vulnerability, of a lack to a point where we have to deduce that blackness is an impostor to humanity.

My aim in this chapter is to show how blacks and their bodies have been constituted as points of fungibility, as a negative latency through their encounter with the modern world. Crucially important is the fact of space/environment and how it has been used as a field to subjugate blacks and their bodies. I want to try and look at what social change, the disruption of black societies has meant for the spirituality of blacks and their understanding of cosmology, I want to closely look at the points where alien spirit diseases disfigured black societies and how blacks have since struggled to make sense of their being black in the world (*E'tre Noir*).

I shall argue that insofar as there has been a disturbance in the capillary structures of black societies -and as a result, blacks themselves- in terms of their "harmony" and "balance" it would be equally beneficial for blacks to take seriously the idea of new/different forms of self-practice, self-mastery to reveal their "potentiality". It then becomes crucially important to suggest that a new ethic can be found in Sufi practices in order to cultivate, to nurture new subjectivities and epistemologies that would take blackness as its central point of reference. However, this is not to suggest that discursive and non-discursive forms of resistance are enough for us to liberate blacks from modernity/evil spirit possession (see Ngubane 1977), in fact what is interesting is the idea of black as an anonymity, as that which is unknown, and it will then become evident as I will capitalise on these ideas to make sense of the mystical/mythical paradigm of how blacks can hold their own against othering practices (see Fabian).

What is also of importance for blacks is to appeal to the unknown in order to make sense of themselves. Sufi/mystical practices are important for blacks as they include music & dance as a form of worship and we learn that in slave culture for the African, dance and drums were devotional like (a) prayer (Stuckey 1987:25-33). Not only are Sufi practices important as a form of religious and artistic expressions that are integral to the black mode of being and that

blacks identify with, however I want also to suggest that Sufi practices are tantamount to producing a desirable "balance" between the individual and sociological schemas of the black body for competence and self-steering behaviour (Manganyi: 1973: 30). Moreover, I will show that in the realm of mystical epistemologies the mind and the body are not the central priority that constitutes a point of reference however the 'heart' - for us- will be the zero degree of social conceptualisation. If we take seriously this my/th/stico-psychosocial analysis of blackness then we are in a position where we can privilege the heart and the black bodies as spaces where we can be creative about the reconfiguration of the black mode of existence.

Recoils to the heart is not something unknown to the black radical tradition for if- as I will contend- the black body has refused to die even in the face of the terror of death (JanMohamed 2005: 10-13) then recoils to the heart as the axiological ground for rearticulating black "life" provides us with a further conceptual point to analyse blackness. It is James Baldwin who seems to take seriously the role of the heart as a vehicle to launch any necessary form of struggle, to come to terms with the relationship between the world and the self. What is most important for our task is the animation of the black Sufi Muslims as constituting a *transcendental praxis* as we have seen with the nineteenth century Sufi *Jihads* (struggle for Allah, through the heart or arms means) in North, West and East Africa. What will heal the black body is a matter of how blacks take care of their hearts, through acts and rituals of purification as I will show with black Muslims.

II

Adapting a formula from the eve of decolonization, we might say that *blackness indicates a situation where you are anonymous to yourself.* Reduced to what would seem its essential trait, blackness is a kind of invisibility (Bryan Wagner cited in Sexton 2011: 37).

At the turn of the century, we are told by Harriet Ngubane, there emerged a new type of spirit possession amongst black African peoples that was associated with social change and industrial development, known as Indiki and Ufufunyane (1977:144). These alien spirit possessions are

said to be different from morally acceptable spirit possessions of the diviners that were acceptable and could be remedied in the society. Indiki and Ufufunyane are as a result of "a spirit that was never given necessary sacrifice of the integration with the body of other spirits" (1977: 143). People with Ufufunyane are said to be possessed by a horde of spirits of different racial groups in the towns, where usually there would be thousands of Indians and Whites (ibid). To a large extent we are able to gesture towards the idea that for blacks social change, that is the encounter with colonial modernity, with changing social circumstances implied not only the political subjugation however a dislocation of their spirituality and a dislocation of their cosmic world

Not only did blacks begin to fail to cope with their social change in South Africa under colonial conditions however the discovery of diamonds in Kimberly and growing industrialization meant blacks needed to settle in alien environments without the protection of their ancestral spirits. Hence Garuba (2002: 87) notes that colonialism's physical containment was necessary to circumscribe the natural mobility of the body (in space) and discursive containment served to define the limits of the cultural (identity) mobility available to the subjects. Insofar as blacks were constricted in their bodies and spaces meant that the escalation of these alien spirit possessions manifested themselves in high proportions of psychoneurosis often associated with failure to cope with new environments and changing ways of life.

What is at stake here is not only the incommensurability to cope with changing ways of life however what is of central concern is that these disruptive social forces threatened the very existence of African societies. It has become an open secret how African societies have been disintegrated, meaning that the remedy that Ngubane seems to be suggesting, that is "mentally disturbed people (in African cosmology are handled) in such a way that they do not feel responsible for their condition, but merely that they are victims of external forces –the intruding alien spirits– which must be removed". Ngubane's suggestion is not only true but also insufficient considering that the whole community and those who "handle" their situations were themselves victims of these alien intrusions. Which leaves us with a situation where the society as a whole falls defenceless as alien spirit possession results in depression or nervous breakdown which may be coupled with hysteria and suicidal tendencies It then comes as no

surprise to notice the special relationship between colonialism and madness (Garuba 2002:102-103).

As a result blacks cannot rely on their pre-colonial methods of dealing with alien spirit possessions, and here Chinua Achebe becomes relevant when he states that "the world is like a mask dancing" (1964:46), as a consequence, dealing with their new environments demands them to appropriate other modes of being (whether it be Christianity or Islam or other African religions) in order to consolidate or make sense of their existence. Thus the birth of blackness becomes its exposure to death, spiritually, politically, socially and culturally because polluted people are said to be accident prone and vulnerable to all sorts of misfortune. As a result of the people being affected by pollution (being affected by social change and alien spirits symbolizing death) "balance" becomes a diminishing reality.

The notion of "balance" is significant if we must take it to mean a ""moral order" in the symmetrical sense in relation to the position of people vis-a-vis other people, the environment, the ancestors and the other mystical forces that produce pollution" (1987:27). Balance thus becomes important not only in health matters only but it becomes a central point of figuration or as a dialogue with ones' existence, lack of balance results in nausea.

The result of social change imply that blacks were forced by modern/colonial conditions to try and build new communities in different townships, and because we have already noted that as a result of changing social situations blacks find themselves with an incoherency in their cosmos, their societies are dislocated, their sense of balance has already diminished and the result cannot but be a high rate of psychic morbidity in the townships. High morbidity rate is a result of alcoholism and other forms of over indulgence, crime (Manganyi 1983:10) and mental instability which means these communities become unhygienic. Manganyi and Ngubane seem to be gesturing towards the idea that psychological health matters have an orthogonal relationship with socio-mystical understanding that have resulted in blacks losing their balance. The first major victim of these mystical and psychological health issues are the bodies and their loss meaning. The black body thus becomes estranged from its holder for it now belongs to an alien environment (mystical), where it is suppressed, where technologies of

control in the form influx control (politico-legal), in the form of labour (economy), the black body belongs to those who know the world and their bodies, "marking a theft of the [black] body" (Spillers 1987:66).

As a result of the unhygienic or polluted lived-space of the black community and as consequence of blacks not being able to relate to their bodies as a corporeal structure we find that violence and death becomes the central defining element of the individual and sociological schema. Indeed one of the legacies of European imperialism and evolutionary theories of progress encouraged and fed on, the detailed description and classification of types of European and non-European bodies. Seen in this light we are able to identify a relationship between black suffering and its intentionality. I mean, the plague of blackness, the inhibition of violence and death, lack of an individual and sociological schemas, the atavistic sense of being are as a result of a long tradition of discursive and non-discursive epistemological practices. Furthermore, we should not be able to lose of the detailed understanding articulated by Ngubane that is, the dislocation of the African cosmos is as a result of the evil/alien spirit possession that resulted with the encounter and social change by colonial modernity.

In this train of thought, we are able steer our lenses towards the idea of black suffering -as associated with the negative bodily schemas- as foregrounding the township as a sight where balance cannot be attained. We had said earlier that because of dislocation and pollution of African communities under colonial conditions, spirit possessions that plagued these communities resulted in their misidentification with African cosmos which meant alternative strategies of existence had to be developed. One of the consequences of the encounter with modernity meant an encounter with Christianity, which according to Mafeje (1975: 173) "[C]hristianity in South Africa has meant an encounter between very divergent systems of belief, an African pagan cosmos governed by ancestral spirits and shades [pollution] and a very ill-defined 'High God'". It is this "ill-defined High God" that has since constituted a median-point between blacks and the modern world that is vis-a-vis their communities and themselves.

Whereas Mafeje seems to believe that the European middle-class Christian ethic has

consciously denied the African ethic (Ibid) in the townships and rural areas, it then comes as no surprise that relations between African and Christian ethic has not been enough in preventing or give meaning to black lives in their townships community. True, essentially most townships have a Christian influence (Wilson 1979:488) in some way however it becomes important to note why and how black communities are still affected by a loss of self-esteem. To be fair, we should not suggest that Christianity as an existential strategy of blackness has reaped no results at all (although to some extent we can agree with the idea, for we have seen those who were dissatisfied with Christianity opting for Islam or African traditional religions), however what is of crucial importance is how severe the place of blackness has been rendered infertile or has been the fertility of morbidity.

Needless to say the disfiguring of African cosmologies has meant the loss of identification with ethics, the loss of ethics has been the primary result of nausea in black communities. African ontology would assist in a sense that what is central to it "is a recognition that in order to understand the status of an individual at any given time (be it in areas of interpersonal relations, health or disease) attention should be directed at his existential situation in its totality" (1983:39). However as we have continually stressed even when this conception of African cosmology is coupled with ideologies such as Negritude or Black Consciousness (two of the most discoursed about black existential strategies) there seems to be a privileging of the body as a site of exploration. As we have remarked following Manganyi that a desirable balance between the individual and sociological schemas of the body it is mandatory for an individual's psychic balance, competence and positive self-steering. We do not have to go far in order to see that one of the initiative that will help in steering positivity to the black bodily schemas for Manganyi would have to be the idea that

The White man will never be a negro for
beauty is negro
and negro is wisdom for
endurance is negro and negro
courage for patience is
negro and negro is irony

for charm is negro and
negro is magic (Damas
1956:)

Apart from Damas' poetry, in short, African experiences of space, time and life were to be mediated via the new social forces that drew alternative links between time, space, the body and consciousness in ways that seemed to pronounce powerfully on the differences between European and African polities, cultures and epistemologies (Peterson, 2000: 21-31). We understand that inasmuch as colonialism's obsession with bodies is anchored in the fact that the body is the ultimate sign upon which racist and sexist discourses are founded (Garuba 2002:105) and as Hilaal says in Nurridin Farrar's *Maps* (1986:236) "Truth is the body". Without the knowledge of existential fact of the body, it becomes immensely a futile task to reach self-hood because the individual relates to the body as if it were ill, as if it were distant for her, in the very same way that the environment and world are distanced from herself. It is then that we have come to understand that the existential strategies that are employed to appreciate the fact of improving our individual and sociological schemas, and that the recourse to African ontology cannot be but one of those existential strategies that can deal with being-black-in-the-world.

III

Dealing with the body as an existential fact very much implies being fixated with man's outward reality, as quickly as we can come to realise that the problems of blackness, that is of blacks as objects in the world would have to transcend the status of the body and environment in order to build alternative existential strategies that will not only be a product resistance however of at the very sometime practices of self-mastery. This is not to suggest that black body and the environment would have to side-lined but I want to suggest that there is "something" that should be taken as priority over the body and environment. We have noted on several occasions how the body has been a site of abuse and object; therefore it seems unlikely for me that in order to find balance recourse to the body as the centre of consciousness will yield positive results.

However, what we have seen in the history of blackness is the importance of the "heart", if for Hortense Spillers "before the body there is the "flesh"" which is the "zero degree of social conceptualisation that does not escape concealment under the brush of discourse" (1987:67). We can take the argument further in arguing that the heart has been the crucial lynchpin in sustaining and revitalising the blackness of blacks against all sorts of violent and humiliating strategies that have helped shaping blacks into objects, as non-humans. Clearly it becomes evident that what I am gesturing towards is the idea of a practice of the self that does not take into cognisance the constitutive elements that shape blackness in "this world" only.

As a result of the encounter, blacks lacked contacts with spirits during changing social conditions. Which informs us that more catastrophic than a *rupture* took place, the inability to enter into communication with a higher being, Spirit or God meant a relinquishing of their being? Black emancipatory, has side-lined that importance of the divine, the taking seriously the idea of the divine in favour of discursive and non-discursive modes of resistance. It is here that we can learn something from the black Sufi Muslims in terms of taking seriously practices of the self that do more than shielding blacks against the violence of modernity/themselves and their environments. We should not lose site of the fact that black Muslims, just like their fellow blacks appropriate Islam as an existential strategy of dealing with precarious existence under or after slavery and colonialism. Especially under and after colonialism and apartheid Islam becomes not only a liberation tool of the self against what Ngubane has called alien spirit possession, but we have seen how black townships and blacks themselves become in a state of psychoneurosis-failure to cope with the changing ways of life in the colonial and post-industrial society- as a result of these evil spirit possessions, moreover Christianity as it is appropriated by blacks becomes a materialist façade that fails to deal with high levels of morbidity affecting the communities or lack of therefore. As a result we see that western modernity coupled with Christianity or black Christianity is and has always been based on material rewards that brushed aside the importance of rituals in acts of worshiping. To a large extent we understand that the "Africans who embraced Christianity received education and had the relative access to the good things of life" (Mafeje 1975: 173) and as a result we learn that even those independent African churches that were as a result of dissatisfaction with the

missionary control of services aspired to more or less the same material gains which prevented them to launching a critique against middle-class tendencies (Ibid). Both the latter and the former can be seen as initiating a politics of accommodation than an epistemological or ideological break (Ibid). The point is not to suggest that Islam as appropriated by blacks has distanced itself from materialism, however it is important that we show the inadequacies of the strategies that fail to confront the constitutive elements of heart. Of course one can simply launch a critique against materialist discursive and non-discursive ideologies and epistemologies that have been employed by blacks in the name of liberation and inasmuch as we know their failures we have no need of surveying them. Religion, as the most importance structure in the colonial and post-industrial enterprise, and here Christianity is the focus, has displaced African ways of being with its own alterity. It is this alterity that Black Theology has appropriated and failed to make it meaningful for blacks and black lives and hence religion more than anyone of the materialist strategies have been employed by black post slave societies must come under hard criticism.

It is time that we see black theology as a failure to the project of black emancipation as it cannot be dissociated from materialism and hence we begin to see that blacks who have appropriated Christianity/Islam/African religions under and after colonialism and post-industrial society have failed to learn from slave culture. Up to far, slave societies have provided probably the only viable of how blacks can deal with alien environment, terror of death, death labour and a new religion in the attempt to constitute alternative ways of being, of resistance, of culture and art. The failure of post-colonial subjects in constructing existential strategies of life, of self-mastery of joy in the midst of pain, of being seeing and being seen of escaping concealment is partly due to learning from the tradition. I do not want to suggest that slave societies provide a perfect blue print for post-slave societies; however I want to suggest that slave societies provided coils and recoils that gestured towards salient practices that can be known only if there can be a *going beyond*.

It is this 'going beyond' that should still inform existential strategies of being in the world for blacks. It is thus that for black Muslims more than just Islam, Sufism provides us with the essential conditions for creative ways of existence. Already Sufism and blackness have a

relationships that stretches back to the nineteenth century colonial and local resistance Jihads (As-Sufi 2005:46-7), especially in West Africa which is closely connected to transatlantic slavery. Here the heart becomes of vital importance as a site of resistance and finding meaning being that has been foreclosed by the Christianity and western modernity. Speaking of the biological functioning's of the heart Shykh Hamza Yusuf states that

The physical heart, which houses the spiritual heart, beats about 100,000 times a day, pumping two gallons of blood per minute and over 100 gallons per hour. If one were to attempt to carry 100 gallons of water (whose density is lighter than blood) from one place to another, it would be an exhausting task. Yet the heart does this every hour of everyday for an entire lifetime without respite. The vascular system transporting life-giving blood is over 60,000 miles long- more than two times the circumference of the earth. So when we conceive of our blood being pumped throughout our bodies, know that this means it travels through 60,000 miles of a closed vascular system that connects all parts of the *body* –all the vital organs and living tissues- to this incredible heart (my emphasis 2007: 7).

The biological process of the heart is significant for the spiritual, sociological and phenomenological priority of blacks. The body should and is constituted via the heart, therefore it is vital that we come to appreciate the heart as that which has been concealed with the by the events of the encounter. To liberate the heart would be to open-up the gateways to a spiritual existence that foregrounds the any project of emancipation.

We are told that "Sufism is the purification of the heart and safeguarding" and because Sufis have chosen to "address themselves to man's inner problems" therefore they have "developed the science of the self" (Haeri 1990: 14). If the Sufi starts by purifying the inner self one ends up with the outer self, which the former should not be seen as a means to an end, however by taking care of the inner-self for its own sake and conditions that leads one to be concerned with the outer self. If one begins by purifying the inner self one ends up being concerned with the outer and with society. It is important to stress that the outer situation is conditioned by the inner conditions, whereas the outer progress can be measured materially and otherwise the same does not apply to the inner. Hence Sufism is an "art of beingness through the attainment

of divine knowledge" (Ibid: 22).

According to the ways of the Sufi a person who has "attained the state of outer and inner awareness" has managed to "reach a point of balance and centrality, is in a position to assist others" and we can definitely see how this idea of balance and centrality relates to Ngubane's suggestion of balance as a moral order that positions the individual to reflect and be able practice self-mastery. For Manganyi this balance and centrality is important for the individual and sociological schemas of black for self-steering behaviour. However the difference between Manganyi and Sufi ways of being is that whilst Manganyi thinks that a self-steering behaviour will be spearheaded by psychic balance, the Sufis believe that knowledge of the inner self (the heart, the Oneness of God) triggers all necessary components of one's body to be illuminated. To a point that one cannot measure the progress spiritual progress externally, for it is based on the 'heart' and its willingness to abandon attachment (we will later address the idea of attachments and norms) "as it depends on the seeker's submission to the divine", a Sufi master/shykh is able to "assist" his close follower "to discover the Truth within the self and be enlightened about reality" (35-6).

The role of the shykh is as important as Manganyi's role as a psychologist in the in the black community, the shykh should be a true to teacher who is not only aware of the history of environment of the seeker but the history of the seeker and his interpersonal relationships. The shykh and the seeker should be aware of the heart in its spiritual form contra the history of the heart in the field of society. The role of the society upon the Sufi cannot be the priority and it cannot be disregarded, it is when the Sufi master has accepted the progress of the seeker that we will find the Sufi's emerging in our societies.

Before we can talk about the emergence of the Sufi from our society let us stress again the relevance of the practice of the self in Sufi ways of being. For the self is the enemy for the Sufi, hence the importance of *Tariqat* (being out of the safe place of ordinary existence into the alien existence of search) which means the Sufi has to abandon "the public project which is the society and its promise of future rewards for slavery to it" (As-Sufi 2004: 3). "The future reward" we are reminded is now in the Unseen and after death, not the end of life" hence "the

self is an enemy until it is transformed in to luminous reality which is spirit, ruh" (Ibid). The Sufi has noted how the society is beyond corruptible; the Sufi has to rely on the notion of "after death" not associated with physical death however dying from the existence of societal living and norms. In fact "breaking of norms *is* the path" (Ibid: 4-5) that is assured to lead the Sufi into a place where there will be a rupture in the meaning of life as it is known in the black world. The essential causes of all dissatisfaction is rooted in the transgression of limits, waywardness, desires, expectations, fears, anxieties, and other aspects like lack of understanding the nature of Reality (Haeri 1990: 35). Coupled with Ngubane's insight we learn that what led to psychoneurosis in the African communities during colonialism was the lack of coping with changing social situations, whereas for Manganyi the cause for nausea is as a result of, amongst other things, high levels of morbidity. It is here that we can begin to see incessantly the weakness of the black society as a matter of weakness of character and the heart according Sufi doctrine.

Death is importance not only as a façade through resistance but as encompassing the critique of societal mode of being. It is very interesting to see that the Sufi cannot reach the status of being without the breaking of norms whether it be politically, socially, psychologically, economically or otherwise. The practice of the inner self cannot but have as its end goal the death of meaning instead of sensory death, sensory death means the Sufi will be illuminated only in the inner self and fails the outer. The dialectic between these categories of existence are an important step away from the theories of ideology (ala Marx, Althusser, Zizek etc.) for the place of the Sufi after dying the death of meaning cannot be comprehended by theories and critiques of ideology. The purpose of the inner and outer practices is to enable the seeker to recognise the art of abandonment, submission and the unitive power behind everything in order to reach the pinnacle of the self, overcome the barriers of the mind and intellect.

The seeker of knowledge and gnosis has to follow the path under the guidance of the teacher until comes a point when he has to be left alone (Haeri 1990:38-9). Until then, the seeker is able to see that what had begun as an autobiographical search to find the meaning of her historical existence has now been swept away, she "is no longer able to see herself as narrative figure" (against Stuart Hall?) rather her "'life' could be said to have come to an end as her

knowledge begins" (As-Sufi, 2004:26). Inasmuch as what sustains modernity, according to phenomenological studies of blackness- is the denial of blacks/Africans co-humanness *ala* Sylvia Wynter (2003) after Fanon (1964) that is blackness inhabits another time not modern temporality. The thus attests to the idea of inhabiting a different temporality, and it is this temporality that brings out the *potential* of the seeker, that enables the seeker to experience the Real.

Let us pause to think about idea of potentiality, insofar as we have learnt from Manganyi that in a situation where the sociological and individual schemas have been undermined, respectively, individuals and their communities fails to reveal their potentiality. Let us listen to Manganyi

Under ideal conditions of the 'good body', the body becomes for the individual, a point of view (Marleau Ponty). This means that the individual schema predominates over the sociological schema. In black communities on the other hand, through artificial and unnatural predominance of the sociological schema, the individual has become traumatised and ceases to be a point of view; of telling the world who one is (1986: 29).

It is important to note that in black communities, individuals become a danger upon themselves, as a result of the ideological totalism that has plagued the community. It is this ideological totalism that has done more than damage to the respective schemas of the body in the black community; it is this ideological totalism that has broken the 'hearts' of the communities, spiritually and socially speaking. Petersen is correct in also pointing out that "the land and the 'native body' were seen as quintessential markers of the distance between the colonial rhetoric of 'civilization', 'progress' and 'racial superiority' (glossed as modernity) as against the supposed African incarnations of 'barbarity' and 'racial inferiority' (glossed as primitivity)" (2012:7). This ideological totalism is manifested in the violence that blacks inflicts upon themselves as result of not relating to the world, or better yet as a result of not being able to enter into communication with the self and the other. As much as blacks have known violence and death (and not the Sufi conception of death) in their communities but it is the lack of transforming the meaning of these existential elements that turns the community against its

individuals, therefore destroying all possibilities of potentiality to emerge? I am reminded of Levinas (1979: 13) making a brief commentary on violence, he says thus

…violence does not consist so much in injuring and annihilating persons as in interrupting their continuity, making them play roles in which they no longer recognise themselves, making them betray not only commitments but their own substance, making them carry out actions that will destroy every possibility for action.

It is this conception of violence that floats in the black communities that we suggest constitutes a kind of ideological totalism. That is, it submerges the individuals into the technology of unpotentiality that makes "them betray not only their commitments but their own substance." The lack of recognition of the importance of looking inwards, taking seriously the rituals of the inner self. It will not be careless of us to think of these obstacles as a creation of blackness, as a product that comes with the package of being black that interrupts the "continuity" of blacks. Therefore we able to notice the importance of the idea of potentiality and the need to go beyond the body as a site to rehabilitate the blacks as object in and of the world.

It is interesting to note that the Sufis believe that if a person is "brought up in a clean, natural and healthy environment, then his chance of discovering the truth and the way to freedom is better than that of others who are caught up in within adverse environmental, racial or cultural constraints (Haeri 1990: 54). As we see that Sufi practices take into account the state of society, hence it is significant for black Muslims to die a death of meaning, to discover the inner self and to see the self as enemy because of the influence of the preoccupation of the self with worldly issues. The self is an enemy in the sense that it distracts the seeker to focus not in experiencing the Real, but to abide by societal norms. As we see in the third epigraph, Baraka testifies through black music how the self can be used as a vehicle of transformation for to find the self and kill 'it' thorough new black music "is to show it (the self) to be fractured, unfinished" (cited in Mackey 1992: 60). We have noted the type of environment black Muslims come from and it becomes of vital importance for the Sufis to experience the heart as the centre of being. To return to the original state of innate nature, of purity in the midst of unhygienic

and violent communities, the Sufi "needs guidance of the outer code of divine law" (Ibid: 55).

It is the outer laws, the *Shari'at* (literally meaning a path) that the black Sufi has to follow in order to be at a place where the beginning of purifying the heart should begin. It is with the *Dhikru'llah*, the remembrance of Allah of God that helps the seeker of gnosis to attain the strength to reach the pinnacle of the self, the experiencing of the Real. Dhikr is the most important practice of Sufism- the journey to the King, the science of the self, the art of being- that enables the seeker to recognise the Essence of Allah, the source of manifestations and attributes. Along the spiritual path, remembrance relates to that which is in one's innate nature, to "dis-remember everything concerning other than Allah, in order to return to the original remembrance" (60). The aim is forever always to reach unicity of the divine through the heart.

For blacks, dhikr is a means to do more than socialising the body but this becomes an opportunity to go beyond the body and set up the heart as priority for communicational purposes. Moreover, as a result of blacks Muslims inhabiting unhygienic communities, where there a lack of potentiality dhikr is directed at revealing the potentiality of the seeker. Insofar as practices of dhikr are concerned circles and gatherings of remembrance of Allah are held to help purify the self by means of "abandoning thought and concern with mundane affairs, hence much help comes by concentrating on specific sounds repeatedly". It is the energy that emanates from the circle of remembrance of Allah that creates "openings to the heart and produce light-heartedness in the seekers".

The importance of the circle in African spirituality is one that is of interest to me concerning Sufi dhikr, concerning slave culture for we learn that "the use of the circle for religious purposes in slavery was so consistent and profound that one could argue that is was what gave form and meaning to black religion and art" (Stuckey 1987:11). The importance of the circle, dance and music are crucially importance as act of worship, as an act of an expressive totality of one's being, because one is vulnerable to and in a strong-hold position. The importance of the circles, dance and music for the slave peoples and the Sufis- as a form worship- is expressive of the importance of rituals in black religious ideals.

Furthermore, Shykh ibn al-Habib has said:

""Oh you who desire nearness to Allah immediately you must perform dhikr of Allah openly and secretly. Fill the times with it and you will swiftly ascend to the pinnacle of gnosis with pure contemplation. Through polishing the mirror of the heart, the veil is drawn aside, and lights appear to it from the purity of the dhikr."" (quoted in As-Sufi 2005: 56).

Most Sufi orders practice remembrance of Allah by chanting or singing, with occasional use of musical instruments, especially drums, and the importance of drums in African religious expression is well articulated by (see Stuckey 1987: 16-17). For now what is of interest is the meaning of art as a religious spectacle in both Sufi (dhikr) and slave society (ring-shout), and as result of the functioning of the circle of culture as an expression of blackness. As an instance of "a resistance available to the colonial Caribbean, Wilson Harris cites Limbo dancing as a practice stemming from Africa and reinterpreted on the slave ships of the middle passage" (cited in Perry 2005:85). He goes on to note that "Limbo was rather the renascence of a new corpus of sensibility that could translate and accommodate African and other legacies within a new architecture of culture" (Ibid). Inherent in the limbo archetype, from this perspective, are patterns of death-rebirth, disintegration reintegration, and dispersal-connectivity. This "dislocation of interior space" (Harris 1995:381). It could be argued that the experiencing of the Real in these circles, the performativity of the players, the energy emanating from the people, the instruments, the dance (whether in counter or clockwise movement, that is what Stuckey is most concerned with) is what can be confirmed -following Afro-optimists, with different reasons however- that the history of blackness is testament to the fact that objects can and do resist (Moten 2003:1). As objects that occupy a different and appreciated temporality Africans in this religio-cultural and artistic circle enter into the realm of the possibility that cannot be accessed in materialist conception of worship.

Indeed it is these objects, that have bred the slave revolts, that have constructed a nationalism out of different ethnic backgrounds in the sight of an alien environment and alien spirits and it these objects that have launched jihads of the heart and of the sword against their own communities and the alien forces to construct what may be called a *transcedental praxis* that is ever so visible in communities of object hood led by the spiritual as an existential strategy. It is also importance to see how both these practices- have transformed blacks from the position of

object hood into selfhood that is understood in a different temporality- have taken as their starting point the tradition of music that can be associated with "the civilization of Mali" that "included a rich musical culture" that has survived throughout the Black Atlantic.

Throughout history, we find that every now and then, whenever the outer aspect, the physical and material has been developed and stabilised, then man's attention has been drawn more towards the inner aspect of life as such is the case for blacks, "this is what gives rise to the periodic emergence of the Sufis and their influence in society" (Haeri 1990:89). For when the outer circumstances of society become intolerable, and its people re in confusion and suffering privation, and are in dire need of understanding the purpose of life (here we need to think of Ngubane and Manganyi) then again we find "man's attention turning towards knowledge and the search for a way out of such an intolerable situation" (90).

It is here again that we find that the intensity of dhikr, or ring-shout constitute an ideological and epistemological in attempt to construct epistemologies of the heart as a site of resistance against one's own community and what has led the community into such disrepair. Thus we see the relevance of rituals not as just a way of episodal coping; however as a practice that is and forms the heart of the community. It would seem, I hope at this stage you can agree with me, that is the failure of post slavery black African religions (existential strategies) was/has been unable to learn from the tradition of resistance of how religion can be appropriated and utilised. For if "spirituals were born as the religious vision of the larger society was caught, as by centripetal force, drawn to the innermost regions of black spiritual consciousness and applied to what blacks were experiencing in slavery", there is no conceivable notion of why black societies should not utilise such practices, and it is interesting that black Sufi Muslims have chosen to address themselves to acts of "spiritual consciousness" that is undermined by modernity's spirituality. Let us once again be careful of being misunderstood, without suggesting that we encompass the sociological understanding of slave societies however what is of interest is the place of "suggesting", which can be said to be mythic. That is, the significance of myth as a traditional or legendary tale suggests an obscure relationship to the past that exists outside of a historical reality but which nonetheless bears on a dynamic understanding of ancestral behaviour (Hunte 2007: 58).

However we do not want to suggest that learning from the slave culture or 'Negroes of the New World' is the only ultimate strategy to make sense of Sufi Islam's impact on the black ontology as we have tried to show. However what is important and what we have tried to demonstrate is that it can be done, with complications of course.

Conclusion

The question of what it means to be a Black African Muslim in South Africa is as complicated as we ever thought it. That is, it is not a matter of taking the declaration of faith and it is not just about practising the religion. There is something about being black in the world which offers one an extremely pessimistic position about, and justifiably so as we have tried to show. The encounter with colonial modernity is our starting point, where we aimed to give an account of the category black. However it is not just a category as we have shown, being black is not being able to relate to the temporal structure of the world, it is to be seen by the world as outside it. One can be treated and killed with impunity, without any remorse what so ever. To be killed we mean existence in the black mode of being.

Hence to appropriate Islam, which in itself has been held mby colonialism, for blacks, gives them a way on how to fashion their politics and culture in an alternative sense. This alternative of politics which we have not given a name is not to be merely appropriated especially in South Africa. What we have shown and I hope there has been some confusion there so we can resolve it with immediacy. One probably has read the opening of the chapter (chapter 2) as trying to discard any sense of an identifiable African essence; for as I show Islam has been treated with contempt amongst African intellectuals who see it as an imposition on an African identity. Furthermore, it has been worth our efforts to try and show that African Islam, cannot be seen as an anomaly, as incomplete, for this is mostly attributed to sub-Saharan Africa.

Then we had to go on probing, that if black Africa, that is sub-Saharan Africa is seen as sufficiently black unlike North Africa, then we are dealing with a situation that has a particular notion of blackness. It is by this qualification that a black identity in South Africa is conceived, more specifically by looking at the BCM politics of that time. If black was a means of rallying all of the oppressed, and those who saw themselves as oppressed- and remember this is Homi Bhabha's stance too, taking from Fanon-I argue that this is not sufficient for South Africa today. By calling on Zine Magubane to introduce the notion of an elastic signifier, that is blackness as always been used in territories that do not relate to it, as a metaphor for the dehumanised, oppressed, the poverty stricken. In this sense being black in political sphere overdetermines blackness itself or is blackness itself. What happens after such struggles have been taken forward?

Blackness does not have a concept and history of regressing to an above status than its own; blacks are left helpless in their own skins. Nathaniel Mackey then becomes important for a fight back, so to say, for if, for example the Orient, the subaltern, the indigenous communities are an Other just like the black in the eyes of western modernity, and then blacks are Other from the position of Otherness. That is the performativity of blackness can only be sought-after in this space, from Noun to Verb, to blacken, the verb gives us the possibility to account for blackness in politics, this performance (literally so) gives a space to trace blackness and its steps.

I am aware of the troubles that this can give way, this place is not to be celebrated, that is it will not be sufficient to claim this place as completely knowable therefore to be overwhelmed by it. This space does not guarantee a different temporality that can be considered on its own for a political culture. This space is to be used as a vehicle to build creativity. If we look at Black African Muslims in this sense then we are able to enjoy the creative performance of a political culture that has not emerged in the history of black resistance in South Africa. It is here where the self-crafting and styling should impress upon us with the ways identities that are rooted in defeat (Islam just like blackness has suffered under the conditions of colonialism) and struggles can.

Furthermore, the spaces of blackening are also important to understand the erasure of blacks in the history of Islam in South Africa. The experience of being Muslim in South Africa is rooted in seeing the black as non-existent, further perpetuated by Apartheid racial ideology, the origin and remnants of those ideas are not absent in Islamic practices in South Africa. Hence we went as far as showing that the influence of a Black African Muslim identity by Indian Muslims is such to a point where Black culture was undermined. These trials are only symptomatic of the fact that being an African Black Muslim seems to have a certain incoherency for the wider Muslim community in South Africa. This is why it is difficult not to see that Black African Muslims have been integrated albeit with antagonism in the Islamic community. Therefore the experience of being Black and being Muslim has to be incoherent in some ways that is because it is important for the whole community to embrace difference under the Islamic universal *ummah* trait.

This unacceptance leads to the ways in which Black African Muslims can develop ways of existence in Islam without relying on the larger Islamic community. That is, if what is salvaged, or what is considered of major importance during the process of conversion by Black Muslims is the spiritual aspect of Islam. Therefore Sufism gives us a way in which we can account for black spirituality and ontology. Sufi practices for the self are important as we have shown to constitute not just political practices or self-practices but also for how we can build an epistemology that is rooted in non-material conceptions. If the sociological schema of the black is unwholesome as we have learnt from Manganyi, it follows that the bodily schema of the black, because it has been undermined, subjugated, emptied its content then I argue that the black body is not enough to give us a conception of an epistemology and politics that can help black emancipation sufficiently.

The heart is important for crafting a different temporal structure/epistemology that is rooted in the mystical/mythical. By taking lessons from slave culture on the use of rituals and religion, through art, music, and dance the heart provides a critique of western rationality. This has implications for the practice of politics and knowledge especially. As we have warned, these Sufi practices are not to be used as a means to an end and they not be taken for tool for 'results' however they are to be appreciated for what they are, which they are first and foremost a means of achieving Oneness with the Higher Being/Allah/God.

These practices should be taken to make sense of the Black-African mode of being that was dislocated by colonial modernity as we have been shown by Ngubane's work. We also find similarities between the African modes of being and Sufi practices which enables the Black Sufi Muslim not to be completely alienated in his practices. By privileging the mystical/mythical it is because there is not unknowable about the "potentiality" of blackness that we aimed to unearth and Sufi practices have helped us to take note of how spirituality can help in light of a community that has/is plagued by high morbidity rates. Sufi spiritualism is important to give blackness a sense of the higher mystical, a new form of politics and episteme that is rooted in the heart, which besides the emptying out of the black bodily contents has remained more vibrant as a result of the denigrating environment that blacks find themselves in. In order to take seriously the need for an black ontology that is rooted in Sufi spiritualism, to defy the sense

of rationality (this gestures to political and epistemological strategies) and mode of being that of the blacks, Ngubane was not shy point out that the dislocation of the African cosmos was as a result of the alien spirit possession, this seems to be a gesture to me that healing can only be done through spiritual means not materially or ideologically.

Reference List

Achebe, Chinua. (2000) "The African Writer and the English Language." In *The Routledge Language and Cultural Theory Reader*. (ed) Lucy Burke, Tony Crowley, and Alan Girvin.

London:Routledge.

Asad, Talal. (1986). Occasional Papers Series in *The Idea of An Anthropology Of Islam.* Georgetown University.

Bangura, Ahmed. (2000) *Islam and the West African Novel: The Politics of Representation.* Boulder, CO: Lynne.

Bruinessen, Martin van (2009) *Sufism, 'Popular' Islam and the Encounter with Modernity* in Islam and Modernity: Key Issues and Debates. ed Muhammad Khalid Masud, Salvatore Armando and Bruinessen Martin van University of Chicago Press.

Biko, Steve (2002) I Write What I Like. University of Chicago Press.

Chinuweizu. (2006) "Why Black Africa Should Resist Arab Domination of the AU," *Vanguard.* http://www.ncobra-intl-affairs.org./Africa_resist.pdf

Curtis IV, Edward E (2002) *Islam in Black America: Identity, Liberation, and Difference in African-American Islamic Thought.* State University of New York Press.

Comaroff, J., (2010) 'The End of Anthropology, Again: On the Future of an In/Discipline'. *American Anthropologist,* 112, 4.

Diop, Cheikh Anta. (1974) *The Origins of Civilization: Myth or Reality.* New York: L. Hill.

Fabian, Johannes., (1983) *Time and the other: How Anthropology Makes its Object,* New York, Columbia.

Fanon, Frantz., (1952) The Fact of Blackness in *Black Skin White Mask.* London: Pluto Press.

Fakude, Ebrahim. (2002*) Muslims in the Townships of South Africa.*

Farar, Nurridin (1986) Maps. London Picador.

Garuba, Harry (2002) Mapping the Land/Body/Subject: *Colonial and Post-Colonial Geographies in African Narratives.* Alternation 9,1.

Gilroy, Paul. (1993) The Black Atlantic: *Modernity and Double Consciousness.* Cambridge, MA:Harvard University Press.

Goolam Vahed, and Jeppie, Shamil (2005) "Multiple communities: *Muslims in post-Apartheid South Africa*", in John Daniel et al (eds.), Sate of the nation: South Africa (Cape Town: HSRC Press,)

Harrow, Kenneth, ed. (1991) *Faces of Islam in African Literature.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Haron, Mohammed and S. Essop, Dangor. ed (2004) *Islamic Civilization in Southern Africa.* IRCICA.

Hooker, J. (1963) 'The Anthropologist's Frontier: The Last Phase of African Exploitation' *Jmas,* 1.

Hymes, D. (1974) *Reinventing Anthropology,* NY, Vintage Books.

JanMohammed, Abdul R. (2005) The Death-Bound-Subject: *Richard Wright's Archaeology of Death.* Duke University Press Books.

Kane, Cheikh Hamidou (1963) *Ambiguous Adventures.* Oxford: Heinemann.

Koran. Translated by J.D. Rockwell. London: Phoenix 2003.

Leach, E. R. (1954) *Political Systems of Highland Burma: A case study of Kachin Social Structure, London, Bell.*

Levitzion, Nehemia, and Randall, Pouwels, (2000) *History of Islam in Africa. Athens: Ohio University Press.*

Levi-Strauss, C. (1966) *'Anthropology: Its Achievements and Future', Current Anthropology.*

Mackey, N. (1992*). Other: From noun to verb. Representations.*

Mafeje, A, Monica Wilson, (1963) *Langa: A study of Social Groups in an African Township, Cape Town, Oxford University press.*

Mafeje, A. (1970) *'The Ideology of Tribalism', JMAS, 9,2.*Mafeje, A., 1975, *'Religion, Ideology,*

and Class in South Africa' in M. West and M. Whisson (eds.), Cape Town, Jonathan Cape.

Mefeje, A. (1976) *'The Problems of Anthropology in Historical Perspective: An inquiry into the Growth of the Social Sciences', JMAS, 10, 2.*

Mafeje, A., (1991c) *The Theory and Ethnography of African Social Formations: the Case of the Interlacustrine Kingdoms, Dakar, CODESRIA.*

Mefeje, A., (1996) *'Anthropology and Independent Africans: Suicide or End of an Era?', CODESRIA.*

Magubane, Bernard. (1971) "A Crtitical Look at the Indices Used in the Study of Social Change in Colonial Africa" in *Current Anthropology.*

Magubane, Bernard. (1973) "*The 'Xhosa'* in Town Revisited: Urban Social Anthropology: A Failure of Method and Theory, " *American Anthropologist.*

Magubane, Z. (2004). *Bringing the empire home: Race, class, and gender in Britain and colonial South Africa*. University of Chicago Press.

Manganyi, Chabani, N.C. (1973) *Being-Black-In-The-World.* Ravan Press.

Malak, Amin. (2005) *Muslim Narratives and the Discourse of English.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Marquet, J., (1964) 'Objectivity in Anthropology', *Current Anthropology,* 5.

Mazrui, Ali. (1986) *The Africans: A Triple Heritage.* Toronto: Little, Brown and Company.

Mirmotahari, Emad. (2011) *Islam in the Eastern African Novel.* Palgrave Mcmillan

Moosa, Ebrahim (2009) *Colonialism and Islamic Law* in Islam and Modernity: Key Issues and Debates (ed) Muhammad Khalid Masud, Salvatore Armando and Bruinessen Martin van University of Chicago Press.

Mudimbe, V.Y. (1988) *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Ngubane, Harriet. (1977) *Body and Mind in Zulu Medicine: An Ethnography of Health and Disease in Nyuswa – Zulu Thought and Practice.* Duke University Press.

Peterson, Bhekizizwe (2000) Monarchs, Misssionaries and African Intellectuals: *African Theatre and the Unmaking of Colonial Marginality*. Witwatersrand University Press.

Peterson, Bhekizizwe (2012) '*Dignity, Memory and the Future Under Siege'* in Okoth Opondo and Michael J. Shapiro (eds) The New Violent Cartography: Geo-analysis after the aesthetic turn. London Routledge.

Said, E., (1978) Orientalism. London Penguin

Said, E., (1989) 'Representing the Colonized: *Anthropology's Interlocutors. Critical Inquiry.* 15, 2.

Sexton, Jarred (2011) The Social Life of Social Death: *On Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism. InTension,* York University, Issue 5.

Sexton, Jarred (2015) Unbearable Blackness. *Cultural Critique, Number 90*, University of Minnesota Press.

Soyinka, Wole. (1976) *Myth, Literature, and the African World.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sembene, Ousmane. (1962) *God's bits of wood.* Heinemann.

Sterling, Stuckey. (1987) Slave Culture: *Nationalist Theory and The Foundations of Black America.* Oxford University Press.

Tayob, Abdulkader (2009) *The Shifting Politics of Identity* in Islam and Modernity: Key Issues and Debates (ed) Muhammad Khalid Masud, Salvatore Armando and Bruinessen Martin van University of Chicago Press.