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Structure, Subject and Colonialism: Tracing black and white subjectivity in South Africa

MA dissertation in Political Studies

University of the Witwatersrand

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters of Political Studies (by research) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree in any other University.

_____

Signature of candidate

_____Day of_____2012

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Abbreviation List

AMP - Asiatic Mode of Production

ANC - African National Congress

BC - Black Consciousness

CdB~ - Negativised black colonised

C/L - Capital/Labour

CMP - Capitalist Mode of Production

CR - Colonial Relation

CrW+ - Positivised white coloniser

CST - Colonialism of a Special Type

DA - Democratic Alliance

HSS - Hegemony and Socialist Strategy

IFP – Inkatha Freedom Party

ISA - Ideological State Apparatus

ND - National Democratic

NDR - National Democratic Struggle

NP - Nationalist Party

RSA - Repressive State Apparatus

SA - South Africa

SACP - South African Communist Party

SV - Surplus Value

TRC - Truth and Reconciliation Commission

UP - United Party

Introduction

This dissertation has as its objective the application of a theory of colonialism to the South African case. This theory is itself, firstly, articulated via the bringing together of post structuralism and Frantz Fanon. An interpretation of Fanon's concept of the colonial relation as itself a differential/structural relation is thus put forward and at the same time colonial forms of subjectivity are understood in terms of interpellation (in Althusserian and post-Althusserian senses). This deepens our understanding of colonialism as understood by Fanon – who is our point of departure with respect to the theory of colonialism. In other words, conceiving colonialism as a differential relation – one which is moreover at the same time asymmetric, that is, as overdetermined and asymmetric, takes forward our understanding of both coloniser and colonised and the structure of their historical trajectories as political subjects. We map this out in South African history and propose an overview of the specific forms colonial subjectivity has taken in South Africa up to the present (post 1994). This includes discussions of 'black consciousness theory' in South Africa – both of Steve Biko and of Andile Mngximata – as well as Samantha Vices intervention vis-à-vis *"Whiteness" in South Africa Today* (2011). In all these cases we try to show what the conceptual schema we propose can bring to the analysis of these forms of consciousness. We look closely at the effect of the introduction of democracy in South Africa on colonial subjectivity, that is, how the latter although expelled, keeps on returning to interrupt the politics of democratic egalitarianism.

Woven into the above is an argument to the effect that, unlike its main adversaries in liberalism (for example, William Hutt and Merle Lipton) and (standard) Marxism (for example, Harold Wolpe), the conception of South Africa as a Colonialism of a Special Type (CST) has the important advantage of being able to grasp the role of colonial-national domination as, firstly, the principal antagonism in South Africa and, secondly, as irreducible to any other social logic (that of homo economics or of class). It is a *sui generis* social relation that does not express or rest on any other level or logic. As such it has to be understood as symbolic or overdetermined. So, to CST we bring a (post) structuralised Fanon. This is the conceptual framework we put forward – it focuses on South African society as colonial (while clearly recognising it is simultaneously capitalist) and sketches the modifications that have taken place in the dominant forms of subjectivity driving the history

of modern South Africa, drawing mainly on the conceptual resources of Fanonian and post-structuralist theory. It is only a sketch but it does propose a set of conceptual markers to orientate the analysis of (colonial) subjectivity in South Africa. And, as already mentioned we engage along the way with some other conceptualisations of colonial subjectivity in South Africa – Mngximata and Vice in particular.

In addition, although we take as our departure point (in our analysis of South Africa) the concept of national-democratic antagonism, we are also at pains to point out how this concept can in itself can get caught up in the logic of fantasy and – like 'Whiteness' itself – interrupt the egalitarian democratic process.

Chapter 1: Structure and Interpellation

So Chapter 1 commences with an explication of the concept of structure in Louis Althusser itself drawing from Ferdinand de Saussure's conception of the differentiality of the signifier. There is no resting point in a structure where self-sufficing can be reached – no point where identity - to - itself is finally achieved. A structure just is *sui generis* – it is not the expression or the extension of any identity whatsoever, internal or external to it. How does it hold up and reproduce itself then? Here we turn to the other dimension of Althusserian theory that interests us, viz the theory of ideological interpellation: Here the objective is to account for precisely this capacity for reproduction of a set of relations and the conceptual resources of structural causality again comes into the picture, via the 'absence' and 'metonymic causality' of structures: the very structure that is the proximate cause of consciousness for Althusser viz that of everyday discourse, effaces its own presence and is invisible or absent in virtue of its very structurality. What is left is an effect – the subject of consciousness – which takes itself to be *causa sui* – its own cause: that is, the subject of ideology is itself the product of the absent structures that constitute it.

Interpellation

What Althusser terms ‘concrete individuals’ are interpellated – summonsed and inducted into places in the structures. These are only ‘relational semi-identities’ but when concrete individuals are transformed into subjects via interpellation they live these contingent and inconsistent identities as if they were self-sufficient and autonomous, that is, full ego subjects. And the ‘subject-form’ is precisely what frames all interpellation and identity formation according to Althusser. When later we turn to the colonial context, we make use of the concept of the full interpellated Althusserian subject in trying to pin down the specificity of the colonial subject.

Chapter 1 ends by identifying the impasse in Althusserian structuration and Chapter 2 deals with Laclau and the ‘Return of the Subject’. Here the focus is on Laclau’s distinction between the subject ‘before’ interpellation and the subject ‘after’ interpellation.

Chapter 2: The Return of the Subject

As will be explained in the chapter the distinction between the subject ‘before’ interpellation and the subject of ideology (between the subject of enunciation and the subject of statement) is conceptual before referring to distinct temporal moments in the constitution of subjectivity. And it does not refer either to the distinction between the concrete individual and the subject (of ideology). The subject before interpellation refers to the moment in the practice of signification when a different meaning could have been produced. We have to factor in this subject, that is, the subject of lack who does not (yet) have an identity (but is not extra-structural rather referring to an infra-structural dimension that Althusser misses). A ‘successful’ interpellation thus depends as much on the decision by the subject of lack to identify as it does on the interpellation with which he identifies. By conceptually carving out a space – within the parameters of structural-differential-causality – for a subject that can disidentify from existing interpellations and reidentify with new ones, Ernesto Laclau (and Slavoj Zizek) make it possible for us to account for transformations in the structure of social identities and subjectivities – and that is why we invoke this ‘subject before identification’/‘interpellation’ in our account of the trajectories of white and black

subjectivity in SA today. Without the possibility of drawing on this concept of the subject the shifts in colonial subjectivity in SA that we identify could not be accounted for.

In line with this reconceptualization of the subject, Laclau develops a series of novel conceptualisations of the ways in which structures are decomposed, undone and put together in a new way – including the concepts of articulation, dislocation, antagonism and hegemony. The subject *stricto sensu* is located, then, between the indeterminacy of the social (revealed via antagonism and dislocation) and the determinate sedimented forms it has to assume, 'between' dissolution and reidentification.

Chapter 3: Towards a theory of South African society

Chapter 3 is concerned, firstly, with clearing the way for an analysis of South African society which recognises that the colonial relation still dominates South African society and politics, and that has to be considered in itself, that is, as irreducible to capitalism, with which it nonetheless, of course, intersects. Having worked through the main liberal and Marxist theories of South African society we turn to CST as coming as close as possible to such a conception of the *sui generis* character of colonial domination as well as that of the National Democratic Struggle (NDR) aimed directly at the colonial (much less than at the capitalist) structure of South African society. Part 2 of chapter 3 does several things – it maps Fanon onto CST and then, shows that this Fanonian conception of colonialism, the colonial relation, is best grasped (and strengthened) by being understood as a differential symbolic relation (see chapters 1 and 2). In chapter 4 we develop this concept of the colonial relation and start using it in relation to South African society.

Chapter 4: 'Black' Subjectivity

In chapter 4.1 we take as our point of departure Fanon's presentation of the colonised as "inexistent" (1952: 139) in the eyes of the coloniser, as offering him "no ontological resistance" (Fanon, 1952: 110). We then develop this conception of the colonial relation via an analysis of it qua Symbolic, Imaginary and Real (which is taken from Zizek's (political) reading of Jacques Lacan *How to Read Lacan* (2007). It is from this basis we go on to

address the conception of the colonised as having to be 'thingified' and the structural tendency for the colonised to unconsciously identify himself as 'white'. In other words, what we start to do in this chapter is already use the conceptual resources we have thus far put together in order to throw some light on the figures of the subject and the forms of politics found in South Africa. In 4.2 we examine the first displacement in the elementary position of the colonised viz when he unconsciously identifies with whiteness as a way to escape his extreme (ontological) destitution. We try to unpack what is involved here with help from Zizek.

Chapter 4.4: Steve Bikos Black Consciousness theory

In chapter 4.4 we examine the Black Consciousness (BC) theory of Steve Biko, as well as the 'subject of black consciousness' itself. We do this using the conceptual tools elaborated earlier, that is, the theory of signification and of the subject. Black consciousness, the subject of black consciousness, is only intelligible on condition that we recognise that it involves the resignification of both white and black by the subject 'in the colonised'. We argue further that the positivisation of blackness that defines it is an indispensable moment in the constitution of black subjects as non-racial, that is, as autonomous generic human subjects. But herein, as we point out, lies the crucial problem with BC. Is the subject position of black positivity and plenitude an end-point or part of a process 'that goes further'? Does it result in a fetishism of race leading to a corresponding anti-colonial racist totalitarianism or, is it to be understood as creating the condition for its own disappearance in the "new humanism" (1952) to which Fanon refers? We conclude that this ambiguity around the signifier "black consciousness" goes some way to accounting for the ascension to hegemony of the non-racial 'national democratic' discourse of the Congress tradition.

Chapter 4.5: Andile Mngxitama's 'new' black consciousness

In chapter 4.5 we examine the "new" black consciousness of Mngxitama and its relation to the black consciousness theory of Biko discussed in 4.4. In summary we make two points about the new black consciousness theory. Firstly, its novelty derives from the fact that it confronts a new political landscape in which significant numbers of black subjects have shifted unconsciously to a position where 'whiteness' is dominant in their identity (and not

their own ‘blackness’). Mngxitama does not himself however develop a conception of the subject able to perform and sustain this shift: in Chapter 4.2, we set forth such a conception of the subject able to carry Mngxitama’s important claim and to which reference is made in this chapter 4.5. Secondly, we make the same criticism of Mngxitama as we did of Biko’s Black Consciousness viz that it is marked by a failure clearly to distinguish two senses of ‘anti-white’ – one in the name of black plenitude, the other in the name of generic humanism for which all substantial predicates, such as race, are irrelevant.

Chapter 5.1: Tracing white subjectivity in South Africa

Here we take off by reiterating something introduced earlier – the specificity of the position of the white coloniser in the colonial matrix. Enclosed in an imaginary self-sufficiency, the coloniser, the colonial master, is as far removed as it is possible to be from the lived experience of the colonised which is structurally punctured by the real (contingency, non-meaning). The first Dutch colonisers brought the colonial symbolic with them – all that was lacking - and the colonisation of South Africa solved this - were black subjects who could fill their “place” in the colonial symbolic. The process of colonial interpellation is then sketched with a view to throwing light on the specificity of the white colonial subject, to showing how the white coloniser comes to be “like the Althusserian Big Subject”, that is, self-referential and maximally self-sufficient. In the late nineteenth century however, the signifier ‘coloniser’ and ‘English coloniser’ split as a consequence of the discovery of gold and diamonds.

Chapter 5.2: Pre-apartheid (late 1800s-1948)

In this section we examine the impact of the development of capitalism on white colonial subjectivity. On the one hand the position of the coloniser becomes split into English and Afrikaner, and, on the other, significant elements of those falling under ‘Afrikaner’ fall perilously close to the abyss of (black) colonised subjectivity itself. These are the co-ordinates of the structural collapse out of which apartheid eventually emerged.

Chapter 5.3: Apartheid

In this section apartheid is considered both from the point of view of its historical emergence (referred to already) as well as that of its relationship to the elementary form of the colonial relation. Drawing, on particular, on Aletta Norval, David Howarth and Yannis Stavarakakis, it is argued that apartheid – because it involved even more destitution (if that was possible!), even more ontological devastation for the colonised – was in the end unable to establish the specific boundaries needed for its reproduction. By deepening what it is to start with the Achilles heel of colonialism, that is, the way the Real and its effect of 'undoing' saturate the place of the colonised, Apartheid in effect opened itself up to being antagonised by the discursive exterior embodied in the signifier 'non'racialism'. And "1994", in this perspective, is the 'third moment' referred to earlier when colonial ('white' and 'black' colonial) forms of identification are publicly (at least) jettisoned for the discourse of generic humanism (equality of citizens). But this, we conclude by pointing out, should not be thought to mark the extinction of such colonial forms of identification. Repressed, but not destroyed, they maintain their pressure on democratic egalitarianism and this issue is taken up in the remaining sections 5.4 and 6.

Chapter 5.4: Samantha Vice

We lend our tracing of white subjectivity by considering what Samantha Vice's recent intervention on 'whiteness' in SA today, in the 'here and now'. In her *How Do I Live in this Strange Place* (2010), the very fact that what she had to say elicited such a widespread and passionate outburst (mostly directed at her) shows that she has touched an important 'nerve point' in contemporary white subjectivity in SA, a point where whiteness (colonial whiteness that is) is still valorised and sustained notwithstanding the fact that 1994 outlawed it. Vice's diagnosis is on the spot – our only caveat being that she neglects the unconscious as a concept – but her real novelty lies in what she calls upon whites – still, she insists caught up in whiteness – to do in order to break free from this straight jacket (which of course does not feel like one). She goes further perhaps than anyone has – further than the Congress tradition at least ever seems to have gone – in the exacting process of reflexive (self-caused) destitution that whites, in her view, need to pass through. In our terms, whites have not yet 'gone through' the fantasy of the colonial plenitude and Vice plots a strategy to help them on their way.

Chapter 6: Colonialism and Democracy

In this section we begin by outlining Claude Lefort's conception of democracy which is constructed out of the concept of the social as itself 'Symbolic' in the sense frequently explained above. This explains why we focus on Lefort's theory of democracy to investigate the impact of the democratic symbolic on the colonial symbolic and vice-versa. It is from this conceptual platform that we then turn to the South African political landscape and its discursive struggles, looking at both (empirically) 'white' and (empirically) 'black' subjects. Our main aim here is to bring out the complexity of the effects produced when democracy is 'coupled with' colonialism - as occurred, we argue, in 1994 -: In other words, we begin to sketch the configurations of subject positions in contemporary South African politics with a focus on both the "white" fantasy (of plenitude) as well as that attached to the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), that is, NDR as unconscious fantasy.

Chapter 1: Althusserian structuralism

What does Althusser have to offer when it comes to a theory of South African colonialism and its systemic mutations? What is the objective, then, in examining Althusser's structuralist theory? For the moment (before this point is more fully developed later on) we can say it is the anti-essentialist and relational social ontology to be found in the work that is important to our project. We use this theory of the overdetermined (differential) constitution of social identity in our attempt to understand colonialism and the coloniser-colonised relationship. There is some warrant for construing colonialism as understood in *Black Skins White Masks* in strictly relational terms although a humanist-essentialist problematic is also at work in the closet (see Hudson, 2012c). Be that as it may, Althusser's concept – structural causality - is the take-off point of the analysis of the colonial relation undertaken below.

Secondly, we make use of Althusser's theory of the imaginary and of ideology which is developed in the relation to the symbolic or structural causality of the social referred to above. This is, as is well-known, where the concept of interpellation fits in. Use is made of Althusser's account of the constitution of the subject of ideology in the analysis of specifically colonial forms of subjectivity undertaken later. Here again, just as is the case with respect to the analysis of the colonial relation itself, Althusser provides us with our point of departure, that is, when you examine the subjectivity of the coloniser and that of the colonised.

But there are limits to the conceptual equipment Althusser can provide, in particular, a conception of the subject of transformation or emancipation (as opposed to the ideological subject of repetition and reproduction) seems foreclosed in Althusser. Hence we turn to Laclau for the distinction between the subject *stricto sensu*, that is, before interpellation and the ideological (Althusserian) subject of ideology. We need this in order to be able to account for the determinate shifts in the colonial relation that we examine in the course of our analysis of South African society – to account for the emergence of new forms of subjectivity – of the coloniser and colonised – that punctuate South African history. This is why in addition to Althusser, we also make use of the post-structuralist critique of Althusser (for example, Laclau).

Structuralism developed in France in the 1950s and 1960s through the work of intellectuals in the various fields of anthropology, literary studies, intellectual history and Marxist cultural theory (Gilles, 2002). Structuralists consider how the structures of which we are unconscious – such as language, the psyche and society – operate and how they influence culture and, by extension, us (Culler, 1982: 89). Although he refused to be labelled a structuralist, Althusser is noted for influencing structuralism by not only providing a "symptomatic reading" (Hudson, 1995: 243) of Marx's early and later writings but also for discovering an "epistemological break" between the two (Hudson, 1995). Whilst Marx related all aspects of human life to the base or superstructure of economic production, Althusser envisaged a tripartite base composed of economic, politico-legal and ideological practices. Focusing on ideology, which is defined as, "the lived relation between persons in the world, in other words, the way that relations are pre-reflectively experienced." (Hudson, 1995: 282), Althusser in *Essays on Ideological State and Apparatuses* appropriated and transformed the notion of ideology established by Marx and endeavoured to develop a systematic theory of how a supposed abstract system perpetuates itself through its occupants, and demonstrated how it operates within a capitalist society. This chapter will focus on how through the combinatory effects of structure and ideology a concrete individual is transformed into an ideological subject and in doing so ensures the stability of society. This will be achieved by initially tracing the origin of structuralism followed by an explication of the mechanisms involved in the operationality of ideology.

Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* was instrumental in establishing and showing how and why language is one of the primary structures which are fundamental to how meaning is generated and shaped. This, he achieved, by firstly distinguishing between the synchronic and diachronic strands of linguistic theory. The former perspective considers language as a system of related terms without reference to time whilst the latter perspective refers to the evolutionary dimension of language over time (Saussure, 1974: 81). Privileging the former, Saussure second major contribution can be captured in his proposition: "Language is a system of signs expressing ideas" (Saussure, 1983: 15). Language as a system of signs or *langue*, alludes to the set of linguistic rules that the speaker needs to adhere to in order to communicate successfully. This "sum of word-images stored in the minds of all individuals" (Saussure, 1983: 13-5) is contrasted with speech or *parole* which refers to the act of speaking. Coherent writing and speech is only made possible through the primary/basic

element of language, namely, the sign. Signs are composed of the linking together of a sound-image (signifier) to a concept (signified) (Saussure, 1981: 65-7). The third key aspect of Saussure's development involves the 'arbitrary nature of the sign' by which he denotes there is no natural relationship between the signifier and signified thereby allowing different sound-images to be attached to a concept. To illustrate this point, Levi-Strauss (1972: 17-22) uses the French word *bricoleur* and *bricolage* to account for the way myths are constructed as will later be discussed. The fourth aspect of Saussure's theory concerns the 'differential logic' that establishes coherence within the linguistic system. "A system is made up of relations. The sounds, or written images, and the meanings of a language exist only in their relations to each other." (Macdonell, 1986: 9). What this means is that each sign gains its identity through its difference to other signs, that is, what the sign is not. For example, the colour green gets its identity from its difference to blue, to yellow to purple. Thus all identities within the linguistic system of signs are conceived in terms of its relational and differential negative values. Thus, "the value of a word is not determined merely by the idea that it represents, but by the contrasts inherent in the system of elements that constitute language (*langue*)." (Howarth, 2000: 21).

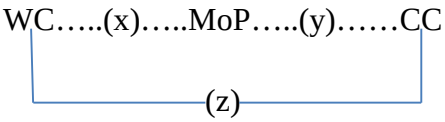
Althusser's innovation lies in his having taken this concept of differential identity and recast the Marxist conception of the relations of production, as capitalism as a system of relations. Casting aside theoretical humanism in which determinate social forms or totalities express the essence of Man, the Marxist equivalent being Species Being, Althusser instead proposes a conception of capitalism as a differential relation, that is, a symbolic or overdetermined relation, the terms of which only acquire any determinate 'value' in the virtue of their reciprocal determination <u>in relation</u>: none of the terms of the capitalist relations of production (capitalist class; working class; means of production) has a determinate identity until and unless locked together in a specific way. None is self-sufficient, including the working class which thus barred from becoming 'avant-garde' of the species. A symbolic relationship is thus without foundation and hence faces the problem of in stabilisation or sedimentation. And here as is already hinted is where Althusser's theory of ideology becomes relevant – for that is what it is, viz a theory of how this inherently unstable structure achieves sufficient stability to be able to reproduce itself. No element in a differential relation is itself self-sufficient; neither the elements or the relations is thus necessary – such a 'relational semi-identity' is <u>contingent</u> and <u>*sui-generis*</u> (that is, it is not an epiphenomenon or something else). It is

precisely this complex tension between ‘interdependence’ and ‘independence’ that Althusser means by “structural causality” and “overdetermination” as will be discussed below.

1.1 Thesis I: Ideology is a representation of the Imaginary Relations of Individuals to their Real Conditions of Existence

Like Marx, Althusser believes that ideology can only operate through the capitalist system of production because it is within this system that antagonistic relations of production are produced between the capitalist and working class respectively (Althusser, 1971: 137). Two fundamental characteristics of this class relation is the infrastructural (economic) and super-structural (legal-politico and ideological) (Althusser, 1971: 137). The former characteristic pertains to society’s determination in the last instance by the economic, which as will later been seen, holds several problems for Althusser and his endeavour to emancipate his thought from the Marxist clutches of the economic, whilst the latter ensures the perpetuation of the system. It is therefore through ideology that the class struggle and the conditions of exploitation and reproduction are maintained (Althusser, 1971: 137).

What Althusser does is attempt to conceive the social in these differential terms rather than in the essentialist terms of theoretical humanism. Employing Saussure’s theory of structure, within the capitalist system of relations, the capitalist class (CC) and working class (WC) obtain their identities through their difference to one another (z). Or in notational form:



Neither the working class nor the capitalist class exist outside of their respective relations to the means of production. Nor do they exist outside of their relations in which they stand vis-à-vis each other as a result of their respective relations to the means of production.” (Althusser, 1971: 261). This is further enabled through an attribute of metonymic causality – structural causality.

No element in a structure is self-sufficient, meaning, no element is able to transcend the system since its identity is constituted and is part of the interconnected whole. “All elements exist in a state of tension and incompletion in which they are simultaneously independent of and dependent on one another.” (Hudson, 1995: 244). Structural causality or “the effectivity of a structure on its elements” (Althusser, 1970: 129) ensures that all elements are expressions of other elements within a specific faculty/instance (economic, political, ideological). The structural cause has no existence outside the relations defining the elements themselves, but this existence is “non-localisable” and invisible (Hudson, 1995: 266). The combined effects of structural and metonymic causality - of which the latter is derived from the term metonym -“the substitution of the name of an attribute for that of the thing meant, for example, crown for king.” (Hudson, 1995: 266). Metonymic causality is thus defined as “the cause is invisible by virtue of its relation or structure.” (Althusser, 1970: 188-9) - produce the misrecognition effect**.**

But to ensure the system runs effectively and antagonistic relations are maintained between the capitalist class and the working class ideology creates the illusion that the capitalist and working class identities are produced in relation to the means of production (MoP) (x;y)

WC…....(x)..…..MoP…….(y)…….CC

Ideology is able to make invisible and distort the true definite identity of its subjects through the mechanism of metonymic causality. To ensure the ‘naturalness’ of the effects of ideology, ideology never presents itself but acts through metonyms. Inferring from Saussure, same-natured elements obtain their identity through differences to one another, within the capitalist system, the capitalist class acquires its identity by virtue of its difference to the working class and the working class acquires its identity through its difference to the capitalist class (z). Despite the cause being invisible or absent and ideology inducing its subject to think their identity/position is defined according to the means of production (x;y), the effects are present in an entity which is forced to (mis)represent it (Althusser, 1970: 188-9). By giving individuals the notion that he is the cause of himself ideology is able to remain hidden and be

effective. Thus, metonymic causality of the relations of production is part of the ‘mechanism of social illusion’ (Althusser, 1976: 52).

Metonymic causality can be further understood through fetishism of commodities and fetishism of man. Regarding the former, “the natural attribute of a thing are considered the source of its economic value as commodity.” (Hudson, 1995: 263). For example, a consumer judges a product on the basis of the material elements used to produce it. What passes under the radar, and what actually gives a commodity its value, is the social labour used to produce it (commodity form). The economic identity cannot be reduced to its material entity with physical and biological properties, although the latter functions as the support or bearer of the former (Hudson, 1995: 263). Similarly, with fetishism of man, who is actually only the material bearer or support of a system of relations, namely the concrete individual, is taken as the source of the effects produced by these relations (Hudson, 1995: 263). “What is represented in ideology is therefore not a system of real relations which governs the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to their real conditions in which they live.” (Althusser, 1971: 125).

The misrecognition effect is “a deforming and mystifying representation of the reality in which males and females have to live.” (Althusser, 1976: 29). Through the effects of misrecognition the subject is understood as the cause of himself, as an autonomous entity and an independent self-sufficient centre of thought and action. It produces a slave who thinks himself a master and in doing so reproduces his position as a slave. It provides individuals with an imaginary understanding of their relationship to their real conditions of existence (Althusser, 1971: 123). The working class and capitalist class view their positions in relation to the means of production, they understand themselves as autonomous and as the cause of their existence. The misrecognition effect hides the structure, hides the real cause of their identity, that is, their existence is dependent upon each other. This is symbolically notated as

$$\{x;y \rightarrow z\}\ S/O \text{ or } I =_d \{D\}\ S/O$$

The working and capitalist class view their positions according to their invisible relations to the means of production and thereby feel as though they are the autonomous authors of society (Subject/Object). This is the primary effect of misrecognition. Althusser insisted "When 'left to its own devices, the proletariat is unable to acquire the knowledge (of the mechanisms of its exploitation and subjugation) indispensable to its constitution into a revolutionary force." (1990: 35). Although the identity of the subject does not inhere in the concrete individual but is rather a function of its occupation of a determinate place in the ideological system, this is hidden from it by the structural or metonymic causality of the system. The result is that, to the subject itself, it seems obvious that it is, and always has been, an autonomous subject (Althusser, 1971a: 171-2). According to Althusser, this effect is required in all societies to ensure the stability of identities and thereby providing the longevity to the system without which there would be on-going radical fragmentation (1971a: 170; 1976: 95).

1.2 Thesis II: There in no ideology except by the subject and for subjects

Saussure established two branches within synchronic linguistics - paradigmatic and syntagmatic. On the one hand, paradigmatic shows the stability and tradition of language and its inability to radically change with time. On the other hand, syntagmatic refers to the changes within language (Saussure, 1974). Like language, the structure of society contains traditions and every change to the system has ramifications. The traditions/practices of the social totality and system are present in what Althusser termed 'Ideological State Apparatus' (ISA) and 'Repressive State Apparatus' (RSA) (1971). The development of ISA and RSA resulted from Althussers response to Marx's view of ideology having a spiritual existence and being an imaginary concept. Being dismissive of such notions Althusser argues that ideology has a material existence (Althusser, 1971: 126). This second thesis demonstrates and explicates the materiality of ideology and the vantage point is the class struggle.

Marx's analysis of capitalism laid out how wage-earners, to support themselves, are obliged to sell their labour and through their surplus (unpaid) labour generates the capital which reproduces their exploitation. Drawing on this Michel Pecheux in *The Mechanism of Ideological (Mis)recognition* (1994) states that there is a constant struggle of power between

the ruling and subordinate class. This entails, subsequently, that the ISA is *simultaneously* and *contradictorily* the site of the ideological condition of the transformation of the relations of production (reproduction/transformation) (Pecheux, 1994: 142). It is contradictory because the conditions are constituted by the complex set of ISAs (political, religious, ethical, legal) contained in the social formation (Pecheux, 1994: 143). The forces of these elements are constantly tugged at and simultaneously employed thereby producing "contradiction-unevenness" (Pecheux, 1994: 144). It is the relationship between the unevenness-subordination between the regions that constitutes a stake in the ideological struggle as within each region there are a specific set of practices that are adhered to (Pecheux, 1994: 144).

Ideological State Apparatus is defined as "Ideological instances in its concrete materiality exists in the form of ideological formations." (Althusser, 1971: 125) and the "instances" mentioned include the church, mass media, education system which together expands the 'instrumentalist conception of the state' (Torfing, 2006:18). These mechanisms are utilised by the state to ensure that ruling power is maintained. ISA is thus a mechanism used by the ruling class to impose its belief system and ideology on to other classes. In this way the ruling class is able to exercise its hegemony and totalise thereby ensuring any possibility of historical change becomes extremely reliant upon class struggle at the level of ideology (Torfing, 2006: 18). Aiding the maintenance is power and influence of the RSA.

The police and/or army generally fall under RSA as they have the duty of ensuring that boundaries are maintained between antagonistic forces. This ensures that 'ideological formations' stay intact so as to avoid revolts and uprising that could undermine the hegemonic power (Kotsko, 2008: 23). The ISA and RSA or alternatively phrased, the 'soft power' and the repressive 'state power' work in tandem to guarantee the smooth application of the ruling ideology (Kotsko, 2008: 23). There is thus a superstructural link between the ISA and the RSA which "assigns-verifies-checks identities" (Pecheux, 1994: 147). The ISA and RSA are thus two sides of the superstructure that work together to ensure the longevity and existence of the dominant mode of production (Kotsko, 2008: 23). Longevity is maintained if the dominant ideology can subsume and/or override opposing ideologies (see chapter 2).

Althusser (1971) held that even the identity of one ideology is characterised by its difference to another ideology. "...an ideology, however dominant it may be in an ISA, does not exist without some opposing ideology and that opposing ideologies are shaped by each other." (Macdonell, 1986: 35). The ISA is a structure, a material structure, which contains the practices of different sections of the state and human life that the subject naturally is part of and interacts with. Through these 'evident notions' the subject does not question, or rarely does so, the structures that not only he enables but is enabled by. As Etienne Balibar points out "The class relation is concealed in the operation of the state apparatus by the very mechanism that realises it, such that society, the state and subjects in law are produced-reproduced as 'naturally evident notions'." (1994: 341). In so far as ideology exerts its influence on its subject, without the subject ideology itself will cease to exist.

Not only does ideology exert its effects on the subject, but the subject is the reason and bearer of ideology. Ideology thus does not exist without the concrete subject and the stability of society and identity of the concrete subject is dependent upon the effects and apparatuses of ideology. By creating the illusion that the subject is the cause of himself ideology is able to prolong its existence, as Althusser holds,

1. There is no practice except by and in an ideology
2. There is no ideology except by the subject and for the subject." (Althusser, 1971; Pecheux, 1994: 128).

The 'category of the subject' is the constitutive category for all ideology (whatever its determination (regional or class) and whatever its historical date - since ideology has no history (Althusser, 1971: 125).

"*The category of the subject is constitutive of all ideology, but at the same time and immediately I add that the category of the subject is constitutive of all ideology only in so far as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of 'constituting' concrete individuals as subjects. In this interaction of this double constitution exists the functioning of all ideology,*

ideology being nothing but its functioning in the material forms of existence of that functioning." (Althusser, 1970: 129).

A concrete individual becomes an ideological subject through, what is the crux of Althusser's argument, interpellation, which will be discussed in the following thesis.

1.3 Thesis III: Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects

Thesis III makes thesis II explicit - there is no ideology except by the subject for subjects. Meaning, ideology's existence is dependent upon a subject and the subjects' existence is dependent upon the effects of ideology (Althusser, 1971). The latter relationship is enabled by the process of interpellation or 'hailing'. "Ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing" (Althusser, 1970: 130). Interpellation is made effective via three processes: Recognise ourselves according to what people label us; the supposed autonomy of individuals; and the process through which concrete individuals become ideological subjects.

1.3.1 Recognise ourselves according to what people label us

Althusser in remarking that an individual is "always-already" a subject designates that even before an individual is born he is already a subject. From inception the subject is the object of a plethora of pre-existing forces and notions which include the subject's family name, race, and gender, one's social standing in society, one's nationality and the complexity of the familial matrix (Althusser, 1971: 132). This configuration is 'stamped' upon the subject even before his birth, so much so that it becomes a 'natural-given' once he is a fully existing member of society. This subjectivisation is compounded through speech and writing.

“Speech is the primary dialogue of discourses: all speech and writing is social.” (Macdonell, 1986: 1). Through language the subject posits himself as the cause of himself, not as a subject/victim of an ideological system of control. By the mere usage of I, him, her, me, you, one announces their position as an ideological subject. In Lacan’s words: “The subject is caught in this network - common nouns and proper names, shifting effects, syntactic constructions…such that he results as the cause of himself.” (Pecheux, 1994: 149-150). The continued usage of the pronouns symbolises the magnitude and semblance of the effects of ideology.

1.3.2 Autonomy of individuals

As mentioned earlier, through the combined effects of metonymic and structural causality the misrecognition effect is produced. Yet despite the same structural forces acting on the individual interpellating him into an ideological subject, each subject ‘becomes his own’ so to speak. Indeed there are common threads between individuals but how does ideology account for the differences among its subjects? Are these differences an effect or deformity of the system?

Interpellation which is responsible for constructing and maintaining the identities of subjects is not accomplished by a single ideology but rather by several ideologies exerting their forces simultaneous which causes the subject to represent a matrix of a plethora of ideologies, existing and acting on different planes. Furthermore, idiosyncrasy can be attributed to “play and space” within the structure (Althusser, 2006: 241). The individual has at his freedom that which prevents stifling and questioning of his identity a “‘play of manoeuvre’ (*jeu de manoeuvre*)” (Althusser, 2006: 241). Owing to this play he can “develop’, or even...‘chose’, determine his course (*se determiner*).” (Althusser, 2006: 241). It is under these ideologies and freedoms that the individual “lives and acts his practice” (Althusser, 2006: 241). In spite of the subject being given lee-way, the subject is nonetheless heavily embroiled with the system that it cannot easily realise its escape.

1.3.3 Process through which concrete individuals become ideological subjects

Concrete individuals are made into ideological subjects through the interpellation of structure and ideology. It is owing to the misrecognition effect and even more effectively the 'ideological effect' that subjects are under the illusion that they are the cause of their own actions, that they are free, autonomous and self-centred self-making entities or in the words of Saint Paul,

"It is in the 'Logos', meaning in ideology, that we 'live, move and have our being'.... the category of the subject is the primary 'obviousness' (obviousnesses are always primary)...like all obviousnesses, including those who make a word; name a thing' or 'have a meaning' (therefore, including the obviousness of the transparency of language), the 'obviousness' that you and I are subjects- and that that does not cause any problems- is an Ideological effect, the elementary "Ideological Effect"." (Althusser, 1971: 129).

Within a capitalist system one might observe that by working hard the worker is making the capitalist richer and not gaining much for himself besides the means for his survival. In this situation ideology does not tell the worker to abort his occupation as the surplus generated increases the wealth of the capitalist and keeps the worker in the same position with the same occasionally higher wage. Instead ideology says, 'Those who work hard are rewarded' or 'A strong work ethic is an important virtue.' (Kotsko, 2008: 25). Owing to the misrecognition effect which creates a false representation of workers relation to their real conditions of existence the worker never questions his position. It is because of this that Althusser paraphrasing Aristotle says 'man [sic] is an ideological animal by nature' (Althusser, 1971: 127). Both the capitalist and working class recognise their ideological beliefs as more or less true and live in such a way as though ideology is the most natural thing in the world (Kotsko, 2008: 25). The subject is therefore the result of a process of metaphysical phantasy. The phantasy effect ensures that the individual is a subject to the Munchhausen effect - baron who lifted himself into the air by his beard/footstraps. The Munchhausen effect thus posits the subject as the origin of the subject, that is, by positing the subject of discourse as the origin of the subject of discourse. By creating the illusion that the subject is the puppeteer, ideology conceals the fact that the subject is actually the puppet (Pecheux, 1994: 146).

Chapter 2: Return of the subject

Althusser argues for the importance of ideology in interpellating an individual into an ideological subject, such that society will be able to reproduce and perpetuate itself but insists that this ideological subject lacks agency. Laclau critiques Althusser on this basis and simultaneously acts as an impetus for the establishment of a subject that has agency in addition to the ideological subject which is equivalent to Laclau's 'subject-position'. Laclau argues that the subject in Althussers theory is absent. Laclau is able to create a clear differentiation between the subject and subject-position. He declares that, "Once we accept that history is 'a process without a subject' we end up with not being able to account for history of this process itself, that is, its twists, turns and, above all its transformation." (Hudson, 2006: 299). This chapter will investigate the manner in which the Laclauian subject is established. This will be conducted by initially explicating discourse, its relevance and significance to post-structuralism. Secondly, the birth of the subject which occurs when disarray, or antagonism, on the social terrain between dominant and dominated powers causes the fading of the ideological effect culminating in the dislocation of the structure itself. The failure of the social sees the onset of the political field, or the field wherein the subject is free of an ideological and interpellative force and has agency in articulating its decisions. Thirdly and within this paradigm the subject constructs or imagines a future involving myths and imaginaries. If these myths and imaginaries are strong enough, they actualise to produce frontiers between the dominant and antagonistic powers. Fifth, once a strong frontier is established the subject articulates or chooses a new identity. It is through articulation or articulatory practice that the empty signifier attaches itself to a new signifier and in doing so sutures/stitches the political terrain and establishes a new hegemony.

What Althusser overlooks is that the articulatory practices which produce his ideological subject are contingent – in no way necessary and that thus forces on us the distinction between the empty subject of possibility and the fixed ideological identity (albeit that of 'free subject'). As myths, the imaginary and frontiers are also part of the process of identity formation (and used in the chapters on SA) their role in Laclau's theory is also discussed. Back to the subject – Laclau defines the subject as "the distance between the undecidability of the structure and the decision" (1996: 54) which later issues in an identification with a full identity. In Zizek's terms what we are dealing with is the distinction between the subject of

enunciation and the subject of the statement, the enounced. ‘Subject’ refers to the vanishing moment just before the statement locks it down into an identity. It is subject barred, the empty Lacanian subject. For Zizek what the subject lacks is a foundation, there is a ‘lack of the subject’ which entails we recognise the ‘subject of lack’.

Focusing on this immanent dimension of signification and identification underlies the contingency and political character of any socio symbolic system, hence, retaining Althusser’s subject of ideology but seeing that it implies itself as barred subject – makes revolution and transformation thinkable (which it is not in Althusser). It also makes it possible to understand (the possibility of) shifts in subjectivisation-identification that occur within the parameters of a determinate system. It gives us the concept of such a subject which has to be supposed even if never present ‘in person’. In our case – see below – the shifts occurring within – and in relation to – South African colonialism: The Althusserian subject, on the other hand, is locked.

2.1 Critique of Althusser

All these achievements notwithstanding, Althusser’s structuralism suffers at the end of the day from these main problems. Firstly, his absolute commitment to Marxism results in the economy being essentialised (unwittingly); secondly, his commitment to structuralism is such that he considers structure to have done away with any real explanatory role for the concept of the subject – for Althusser the subject is always an effect of structure and nothing more. The practices that knit together in a symbolic relation are in no way necessary – they are contingent, could be different, because this is a symbolic construct and therefore the agents interpellated as identities and who act in terms of such identities precisely because they are symbolic constructs, are free to disidentity and reidentity even if they remain stubbornly unaware of this. They are unaware of this because they are in thrall to the master signifier that has interpellated them, given them an identity. But, these agents are simultaneously ego’s (who believes strongly in themselves, that they are what they are and that they ‘master’ in control of themselves anyway) and subjects of lack, that is, lacking a full identity and thus able to assume a very wide range of such identities: this dimension - of the subject - is a necessary feature of any overdetermined symbolic relation. But as we have seen, in order for

the structure to function it has to be covered over by the Imaginary, that is, the 'subject' has to stand in a relation of 'misrecognition' to his real conditions of life – the ego is necessary if the 'holes' in the structure are not to 'jam' it from the start, but the ego itself cannot be thought independently of the subject, that is, the subject of lack. This is the reason behind the seminal distinction introduced by Laclau between the subject before interpellation, before subjectivisation, and the subject (ego) that results from such identification – that is, the distinction between the subject *stricto sensu* and the 'subject-position' (a determinate social identity).

There are several criticisms launched at Althusser's theory of structuralism and ideology (Whilst much of Althussers work was both applauded and criticised the following criticisms are pertinent to the emergence of the subject and therefore necessary to the discussion). These include Althusser's creation of a new essentialism; inability to break away from determination in the last instance by the economic; inability to create a subject resisting interpellation; and resistance against the excess of symbolisation.

One of Althusser's aims whilst advancing the materialist dialectic as overdetermined was to shy away from all forms of essentialism characteristic in and off Marxist theory. This he desired to achieve through furthering economistic evolutionism and theoretical humanism (Hudson, 1995: 273). "But what emerged from Reading Capital was the possibility of another form of essentialism, neither evolutionist nor humanist but, structuralist." (Hudson, 1995: 273). Incidentally, Althusser introduced the notion of structural causality which he believed to be the "cornerstone of Marx's whole work" but the result is "a regression to the very essentialism from which Althusser initially strove to emancipate Marxism." (Hudson, 1995: 245). Thus secondly, according to Althusser, the thesis of determination in the last instance by the relations of production stipulates that the political and ideological structures of a social totality obey a logic that is only intelligible when understood through the determinations of the relations of production (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). For Laclau this thesis poses two problems. Firstly, Laclau argues, this thought process shows that "a symptom of a residual theoreticism or idealism" was never eliminated from Althusser's thought (Hudson, 1995: 274). Secondly, and more importantly, this determination reveals that not only will all societies have the same form, but also, this determination in the last instance, is exhaustive of

all possible societies (Hudson, 1995: 277). The ramifications for such a rationale is the elimination of contingency as everything is determined a priori (Hudson, 1995: 277). Or in the words of Laclau, history is a "conceptually graspable object" (Laclau, 1990: 83). "Althusser's adhesion to the thesis of economic determination in the last instance results in the suppression of both the complexity and the contingency which Althusser considered to be the distinguishing traits of structural causality." (Hudson, 1995: 245).

Thirdly, "The function of this centre was not only to orient, balance, and organise the structure- one cannot in fact conceive of an unorganised structure – but above all to make sure that the organising principle of the structure might limit what we might call the play of the structure." (Derrida, 2001: 352). Play of structure can be understood through the terms gram or difference. What these terms designate is that no element can function without referring to another element which is absent. Therefore each element is intertwined into the system and this results in each elements being constituted on the basis of the trace within it, a trace of the elements constituting the chain or system (Kristeva, 1991: 26). Diffèrance is therefore defined as "the systematic play of differences, of the traces of differences, of the spacing by means of which elements are related to each other." (Kristeva, 1991: 27). This spacing is concurrently active and passive and this indecision is denoted by the 'a' of diffèrance (Kristeva, 1991: 27). This play within structures, according to post-structuralism provides enough space for the subject to resist interpellation and re-decide his positioning within society. When this rupture occurs the signifier and signified detach and signifier becomes transcendental, that is, no longer a part of the chain of signs and "free from interpellation" (Kristeva, 1991: 19-20). Althusser's structural Marxism is discredited for not accounting for "the specificity of the political." (Torfing, 1999: 18) or the subject free of interpellation. Owing to this absence of the political, the Althusserian subject never has access to what lies beyond interpellation. It therefore exists in a linear, monotonous manner and is devoured by the gravity of ideology (Kotsko, 2008: 28). The Althusserian subject can only ever escape 'itself' and its relation to the world through the realm of knowledge (Hudson, 1995: 281). "There is no 'space of the subject' in Althusser because history is reduced to expressing the logic of the relations of production, to being the expression of an essence albeit one that has the form of a structure." (Hudson, 1995: 281).

Lastly, Zizek in Contingency Hegemony and Universality argues that Althusser does not take into account the "remainder/excess" that resists symbolisation (Zizek, 2000: 115) and as Mladen Dolar adds that this excess is responsible for the emergence of the subject/political space. "The subject emerges as a correlative effect to some traumatic objectal remainder, to some excess which, precisely, cannot be subjectivised, integrated into a symbolic space."

2.2 What is the subject, how does it emerge?

The cohesiveness of a structure is maintained when the illusion of self-identification and self-sufficiency is still operative, but in the face of the subject-position thinking itself, the influence of the ideological effect weakens and the structure begins to collapse. With the collapsing of the structure emerges the subject, defined by Zizek as "The name of that unfathomable X called upon, suddenly made accountable, thrown into a position of responsibility, into the urgency of decision in a moment of undecidability." (1989: 189). There is thus a positive correlation with the failure the social subjectivity/'subject as object fails' and emergence of the subject (Hudson, 2006: 299-300) that is the subject appears when "the structure cannot ensure its own structurality" (Laclau, 1990: 60; 1996: 92). The subject-position thinks itself to be the ultimate controller of his actions and being, but the position of the subject reveals that he is not the dictator but is being dictated. This revelation as well as having the 'responsibility' of mending the structure (finding a new signified to relate to) results in the subject feeling vertigo/dizziness (Torfing, 1999: 57). This sensation is overcome, and the rupture is mended through the process of articulation or articulatory practice.

During articulatory practice there is a de-identification and re-identification of the subject-position by the subject. The former occurs through the signifier being stripped of the signified, for example, the signified worker has no meaning and needs to be attached to a signified for a new authenticity and identity - a worker who belonged to a capitalist system now has the freedom to choose if it would like to remain on the capitalist path or it can choose a communist, fascist or socialist regime and in making a decision chooses new interpellatory forces. The worker is thus a 'signifier without a signified'; the subject can also be described as a 'floating signifier' or an 'element' due to its evanescent/ephemeral nature.

Articulatory practice thus transforms 'elements' into 'moments', 'floating signifiers' into determinate meanings (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 113). How does this transformation occur? How does articulatory practice convert an 'element' into a 'moment'? Moments are created when the floating signifier reflexively attaches itself to another signifier thereby producing a sign. In theoretical terms, "…we are dealing with a reflexive articulation in which one signifier, 'worker', joins to itself qua signifier, another signifier, 'revolutionary communist', thus producing itself qua moment, i.e. as 'revolutionary communist worker'." (Hudson, 2006: 300). The subject qua moment needs to have enough identity to perform an act of articulation that will transform it into a moment (Hudson, 2006: 302). More concretely, the floating signifier, with enough identity articulates itself to a privileged master signifier, a '*point de capiton*' (Laclau, 1990: 122). The fusing of the signifiers creates a 'nodal point' or a *bricolage*. "As Levi Strauss argues, the *bricoleur* 'interrogates all the heterogeneous objects of which his treasury is composed to discover what each of them could "signify" and so to contribute to the definition of a set of which has yet to materialise…'. In a way, *bricolage* is society thinking itself. The *bricoleur's* task is to provoke a confrontation which is so forceful that a new form of thought, of classification is released into the world." (Poole, 1973: 52; Norval, 1996: 64-5). This nodal point bears the paradox of the subject.

"The subject who takes the decisions is only partially a subject; he is also a background of sedimented practices organising a normative framework which operates as a limitation on the horizon of options." (Laclau, 2000: 83). The above statement encompasses the paradox of the subject. On the one hand, the subject is free from all interpellatory forces and is deemed to have freedom in determining its future course but on the other, the subject is unable to shake off primary identifications that influence the trajectory of its decision. These primary identifications are termed 'constitutive attachments' - the agent's most deeply sedimented practices of social self-identification, which cannot just be shaken off." (Laclau, 2000: 83-84). In *Emancipations* Laclau demonstrates how each particular identity is never completely free to achieve self-determination. Every identity is tied to a specific identity such a race, gender, class, ethnicity which cannot be subtracted or dissociated (Butler, 2000: 30). Constitutive attachments are signifiers, examples include, worker, Christian, and do not possess an intrinsic meaning. It is an empty shell. The meaning of signifiers is derived from its linkage to other signifiers (the set of synonyms, paraphrases and antonyms defining them in determinate discursive formations), thereby showing that its meaning is derived from an

exterior source that is simultaneously the interior. “There is a structural commonness that all these identities share and that is a “constitutive incompleteness.” (Butler, 2000: 30). This process of finding a signifier that is both part of the exterior and interior is known as suturing.

In Laclaus terms, ‘suture’ means “external difference is always an internal one, that the external limitation of the field of phenomena always reflects itself within this field, as its inherent impossibility fully to become itself.” (Zizek, 2000: 237). On the other hand, although the subject is conditioned “It is nevertheless ‘tropological’ and ‘catachrestic’, that is, what the subject identifies with qua social identity is not pre-determined by either the structure or its dislocation.” (Laclau, 1996: 103). If the subject were determined in such a manner, like Althusser’s ideological subject, Laclaus subject will face the same downfall. The subject would lose the features of contingency, indeterminacy and agency and would be unable to produce social objectivity. The beliefs, values and demands from which the subject cannot dissociate itself provides the co-ordinates for its possible future identities (Hudson, 2006: 307). Furthermore, the integration of specific subject-positions will determine the individual orientation towards a certain hegemonic system and will simultaneously erect the limitation of the range of hegemonic interventions whose initiation the individual will be able to participate in (Hudson, 1995: 13). “Individuals will only identify with those hegemonic interventions with which their currently dominant subject-positions, they currently dominate “interests”, allow them to identity. It is therefore the existing structure of (dominant) subject-positions which both delimits the range of effectivity of determinate hegemonic interventions and determines the identity of their possible initiators.” (Hudson, 1995: 12-13). The limitation defined here is intra-discursive and still within the realm of discursive practice. The level and depth of “structural rigidity” and “causal directionality” can be identified without exiting from the domain of the discursive (Hudson, 1995: 14). Within this realm, once the floating signifier has linked to a privileged master signifier, once it has made a decision and fulfilled its responsibility, the attenuated subject, that is, the subject that is dependent on the failure of the structure to emerge begins to vanish and disappear.

After shouldering the responsibility of suturing the broken space the subject begins to vanish and it is on this action it is known as a 'vanishing mediator'. 'Mediator' in the sense that the subject is stitching the gap between one structure and another, 'vanishing' because during stitching, the gap is closing (Hudson, 2006: 280). This demonstrates, furthermore, the reflexive nature and role of the subject in amalgamating two structures. Articulation is therefore reflexive, contingent and not pre-determined. The subject is in summation is, "that which is not exhausted by any specific social identity or interpellation, it refers to a lack of intrinsic identity, the 'ontological void'... and revealed via the experience of subjective destitution produced by dislocation and antagonism." (Laclau, 1990; Hudson, 2006: 280). With this new order, a new subject-position, subject qua element, with its own set of responsibility emerges.

The subject must be eclipsed so that the subject-position, defined as "The individual as a site or bearer of a social identity (an interpellation) which is experienced as natural or 'objective' and which issues in a repetitive practice." (Laclau, 1990) can emerge to produce the "society-effect". How is the "society-effect" produced and reproduced? The social is produced through the intersecting of two occurrences and constitutions, that is, on the one hand, the subject reflexively sacrifices its agency to produce a subject-position that provides coherence, stability, transparency and obviousness and on the other the social is differential and antagonistic (Hudson, 2006: 307). Through the establishment of a new hegemony, the occupancy of the empty place of power, that new ideological and repressive apparati are effective and the subject-position falls under the illusion of the ideological effect that the social is maintained. The role of the subject/political is constitu*tive* (ontological) whilst the bearing of the subject position/social is constitut*ed* (objective) (Laclua, 1996: 103). "The concept of the subject is political while that of subject position belongs to the social – the misrecognised product of the political. No (political) subject is ever entirely free of objective social determination, while subject-position, as an objective social identity, is the crystallisation of an act of the subject." (Hudson, 2006: 304). Howarth iterates this point by stating that social relations are shaped through political struggles but these cease to be political when they erode into an institutional ensemble of rules, norms, traditions and regularities, which become part of the agent's everyday life (Howarth, 2000: 70).

Furthermore, Blumenberg is right in claiming that "the primacy of politics 'does not consist in the fact that everything is political, but rather in the fact that the determination of what is to be regarded as unpolitical is itself conceived as falling under the competence of the political'." (1986: 91; Howarth, 2000: 70). The subject-position is just as dependent upon the subject as the subject is dependent upon it. Thus, it is via articulatory practice, through which elements have crystallised into moments, that hegemony is produced (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 134).

2.3 Discourse

Hegemony and Socialist Strategy (HSS) is one of the seminal texts upon which post-structuralism is developed. The theoretical premise of HSS is the theory of language advanced by Saussure in his *Course in General Linguistics* and the subsequent developments by Emile Benveiste, Lacan and Jacques Derrida respectively (Hudson, 1995: 3-4). Saussure inferring and developing the syntagmatic strand of linguistics argues that society is structured like a language. Language, he argues, is composed of signs – an arbitrary attachment of signifier and signified – standing in relation to each other (Saussure, 1974). Despite the arbitrary relation language is not a nomenclature wherein names are randomly assigned to concepts but the linguistic structure is posited as a system of difference where every sign gets its meaning from its relational position vis-à-vis other signs. "Without language, i.e. apart from its expression in (spoken or written) words, our thought", argues Saussure, "is only a shapeless and indistinct mass … a vague unchartered nebula." (Saussure, 1974: 111).

Saussure's theory comes under fire by Derrida in his *Writing and Difference* (1976) in which he objects to Saussure's creation of a 'transcendental signifier'- a signifier which surpasses the differential logic of the structure thereby causing the structure to become closed and fixed and thus negating its initiative. In addition to Derrida's critique Laclau and Mouffe argue that Saussure gets caught up in himself causing his relational configuration to become fixed and in place for establishing an open-ended contingent system Saussure endorsed essentialism. Saussure recognized this problem and introduced the time-factor in an attempt to rectify it. He postulated that linguistic change can only come from something as undefined and un-theorized as time itself (1974: 73-74).

Taking their cue from Lacan and Derrida, Laclau and Mouffe address Saussure's problem by dismissing the transcendental signifier and introducing the notion of discourse and the discursive/"field of discursivity" (1985/2001: 111). The field of discursivity alludes to the attempts by a plethora of different meanings to institute themselves as 'the center' and achieve actualization and fulfillment in doing so. The field of discursivity or the discursive encapsulates this surplus of meaning and provides the condition of both possibility and impossibility of a partial fixation of meaning (Torfing, 1999: 92). This partial fixation of meaning is termed discourse and is attained through empty signifiers. The emergence of an empty signifier is co-eval with the dislocation of a structure. "'[I]n a situation of radical disorder 'order' is present as that which is absent; it becomes an empty signifier, as the signifier of this absence." (Laclau, 1996: 44). An empty signifier is a signifier stripped of its interpellative force. It is an empty shell surrounded by a plethora of articulatory elements attempting to bring complete and transcendental identity and closure to the structure and society, that is, produce a discursive formation or hegemonic position. For the structure to suture itself or to re-establish order, the empty signifier needs to choose a respective signified from the competing political forces attempting to occupy the lack. The joining of the signifier and signified produces what Lacan calls a "nodal point" or "*point de capiton*" (Lacan, 1977).

In spite of the impossibility of a signifier and signified amalgamating to produce fixture, the "sliding" of the signifier is arrested at certain junctures and meaning is temporarily fixed to produce a nodal point. The process of this construction is defined by Laclau and Mouffe as "articulatory practice" (1985: 113). These nodal points are established as specific social identities that the subject position is inducted into. In his life, a subject-position confronts several identities from which it recognises and identifies with, "How these are structured, i.e. whether or not they are in contradiction with one another and which is dominant vis-à-vis the determination of the subjects political identity, is determined neither by "experience" nor some "originative" subjectivity (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 115) but by the matrix or articulatory practices to which the individual is exposed." (Hudson, 1995: 7). For example, a child learns to identify with boy, girl, worker, citizen, black, adult, female and so forth, and in doing so constructs an identity which is individuated and idiosyncratic. "To the extent to which articulatory practice establishes subject-positions as nodal points, it imposes regularity on the relationships between specific signifiers. And any such ensemble of signifiers is defined by Laclau and Mouffe as a "discourse" or "discursive formation." (1985: 105). Thus

the nodal point signifies the establishment of a new hegemonic project or a new discourse. “Emptiness is now revealed as an essential quality of the nodal point, as an important condition for its hegemonic success.” (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 9).

Beniveniste, in his *Problems of General Linguistics* (1966) develops, on the basis of Saussure’s theory of language, an analysis of the relationship between language and self-consciousness - subjectivity. He states that there can be no subjectivity/awareness of self, which is made possible through the usage of personal pronouns such as “I” and “you”, if there is no differentiation made between oneself and others. This being said, no element or identity can ever transcend the system of relations or achieve full totalisation. This is due to, firstly, during the discursive formation all demands and particular elements could not be absorbed into the system and, secondly, the suppression of these forces continuously act as antagonistic forces thereby preventing the full structuration of the structure. According to Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 125) antagonisms are thus the “symbol of my non-being”, that which keeps the political project from realizing itself/obtaining a positive identity. Through antagonistic forces an Other is created that creates the illusion that the fulfillment of an identity (of the One) is possible but there is an exogenous force preventing its realization. Using Torfings wording: “… the outside is not merely posing a threat to the inside, but is actually required for the definition of the inside. The inside is marked by a constitutive lack that the outside helps to fill.” (2004: 11). According to Laclau, the only identity we can obtain is the antagonistic version of being kept from Oneself. Thus once a discourse has been established, its stability is both kept intact and fluctuates owing to the constitutive lack of identities as well as the One-Other relation maintained through antagonism (Laclau, 1996). This linguistic “polarity of persons” (Beinveniste, 1966: 261) is thus the basis of the self-reflexivity constitutive of subjectivity per se (Hudson, 1995: 5).

The discursive field and discourse both contribute to the disruption and longevity of society. They are responsible for society’s meandering nature and it is only by a thorough investigation of each notion can society erratic nature be monitored.

2.4 Social antagonism

Social antagonism was initially defined by Laclau and Mouffe in HSS as "The subversive presence of an identity in another, thus prevents any social identity from being fully identical to itself." (1985: 125). This definition illustrates two points. Firstly, no entity or discourse can transcend the system as each element is defined in relation to every other element of the same nature in addition to each element containing a partial signification of every other element. A discourse becomes dominant not by transcendence but through subversion of competing discourses or elements. And secondly, social antagonism dictates the limitations of the symbolic as it is external to it (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 125). Thus social antagonisms not only constitute the limits of social and political objectivity but also prevent entities from becoming fully constituted. This subversion and limitation can be depicted as A ← anti-A, that is, A can only achieve its identity through anti-A, that which it is not. This definition was later revised after criticism by Zizek who in *Beyond Discourse Analysis* (1990a) argued that social antagonism should not only be responsible for the impossibility of society but should also be understood as a discursive response to dislocation. Laclau, heeding this criticism, later, in *New Reflections of the Revolution of Our Time* defined social antagonism as "The presence of a constitutive outside which, at the same time, constitutes and denies the identity of the inside." (Laclau, 1990a: 17). In a 'differential relationship' the exterior provides conditions of existence of the interior identity. Likewise, discursive formations establish its limits through excluding a radical otherness that has no similarity with the differential system from which it is excluded and therefore poses a threat to that very system (Laclau, 1995a: 151). Inspired by Staten (1984: 19-9), Laclau calls this 'excluded' the constitutive outside. The constitutive outside is co-terminus with social antagonism which, once again, is the condition of possibility and impossibility of the discursive systems of identity (Torfing, 1999: 124). "The constitutive outside has the capacity to put into question the very identity which is constituted through its externalisation." (Norval, 1994: 122). An antagonism is seen to occur when the presence of an Other prevents an identity (the One) from being totally itself. When the One fully encounters or realises its impossibility of fully totalising because of an Other, antagonism takes one of two forms." (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 125).

Laclau and Mouffe classify social antagonism into two categories - popular and democratic. The social space and emergence of either type is dependent upon and determined by the logic of equivalence, "the more predominant the logic of equivalence is, the stronger and the more important becomes the particular social antagonism for the structuration of the social." (1985: 131). Popular antagonism involves the infinite expansion of a chain of equivalences, establishes and compounds political frontiers which by definition dichotomises the social space into friends and enemies (1985: 131). Examples of popular antagonism include genocides in Rwanda, Bosnia, Chechnya where the social space was rigidly divided into opposing camps. Democratic antagonism has the opposite effect – complexifying the social space by dividing minor social places. But regardless of the type of antagonism at play there is always an impossibility of fully articulating and representing the fullness of society.

Preceding the onset of antagonism, and that which determines the predominating type of antagonism is 'antagonistic fights'. Zizek argues that one should guard against the merging of antagonism and antagonistic fights as the latter is responsible for resisting symbolisation and lays the path for the initiation of the former (1990a: 253). Zizek holds that there is a force of negativity or the Lacanian Real which constantly resists Symbolisation; the peak of its resistance precedes social antagonism. It is during these periods that ideological effects or illusion of the status of beings begin to dissipate and consciousness changes from "latent" and "theoretical" to active" and "practical" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 11). "Hence the constitutive outside of a discourse A, which is discursively constructed by the expansion of a chain of equivalence, is neither B nor non-A, but anti-A." (Torfing, 1999: 124-5). The working of the ideological illusion that structures our identity and guides our political struggles for emancipation is illustrated/below. A-barred becomes the illusory 'A' as a result of the annihilation of the negating Other (Torfing, 1999: 129). The bar through the A signifies the traumatic effect of the Real. A-barred is negated by anti-A, and the result is the negation of a negation (Torfing, 1999: 128).

~~A~~ ← anti A

OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

'A'→ ~~anti A~~

The illusion of emancipatory struggles is that after the elimination of the enemy who was deemed the cursor to the achievement of the One's full identity, full identification and fulfilment will finally be achieved. But this illusion acts as 'sinking sand', in that, after the elimination of the enemy 'the self' confronts the truth - that embodied within its identity - is its very own self blockage. The moment of victory is what Hegel calls 'the loss of the loss', that is, that we never had what we were supposed to have lost (Laclau, 1990a: 252). Thus the ideological fantasy is not simply the fantasy of the impossible fullness of society as neither is society able to achieve fullness, but impossibility is positivised within the ideological field thereby creating the illusion that fullness is an attainable goal (Zizek, 2000: 100). The ideological illusion is made possible by the externalisation of the constitutive lack of the subject to the antagonistic forces that negate it (Laclau1990a: 252-3; Torfing, 1999: 52). Antagonism shows the holes within the fabric of ideological illusion; where identity no longer subscribes to a differential order but is contested by external forces that stand outside or limit the order (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 9; Howarth, 2000: 274-8). In doing so, social antagonism is the deconstructive and reconstructive force of the social and political subjectivity - "Social antagonism constitutes a double-edged sword: they both contribute to the stabilisation of a particular discursive formation, and provide a source of destabilisation and disruption." (Torfing, 1999: 53). Laclau thus incorporates Zizek's constructive criticism of his initial definition of antagonism and in doing so it is revealed that, "'The limit of the social must be given within the social itself as something subverting it, destroying its ambition to constitute a full presence. Society never manages fully to be a society, because everything in it is penetrated by its limits, which prevent it from constituting itself as an objective reality." (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 127). The starting point of this disruptive force is dislocation or the failure of the structure.

2.5 Dislocations

Alongside the development of post-structuralism and post-Marxism was the definition and meaning of dislocation. Althusser together with Cohen, Elster and Giddens occupied a shared belief in structural determination and it is within this ambit that dislocation was seen as a "conjectural disturbance" that did not affect the fundamental aspects of a structure (Torfing, 1999: 148-9). Laclau contests this view and conceives dislocation as a permanent phenomenon that fundamentally and significantly affects the structure as there are always

forces of symbolisation and resistance that reveal the incapacity and contingency of a discursive system. It is within this trajectory that Laclau defines dislocation as "An emergence of an event, or a set of events, that cannot be represented, symbolised, and in other ways domesticated by the discursive structure - which therefore is disrupted." (Torfing, 1999: 148). In *New Reflections on the Revolution of our Time* the concept of dislocation acts as an indicator to the 'limits of the social' reserved earlier for antagonism. Dislocation continuously prevents the full structuration of the structure; it reveals the limitations of objectivity, and, in doing so, becomes a traumatic event of 'chaos' and 'crisis' for the social. Dislocation encapsulates the impossibility of structural determination. As Laclau (1990a: 41-3) puts it, "Dislocation is the very form of temporality, possibility and freedom." There are two consequences that naturally follow the fall of a structure.

A dislocated structure does not possess the means of its own rearticulation (Laclau, 1990a: 50), it cannot determine its reconstitution, precisely because it is dislocated. This dislocation gives way to the knowledge of society never having the ability of fulfilling itself. Through permanent and repetitive changes society attempts to close off and complete itself but this attempt is always futile, always in vain. There is thus "The impossibility of the full structuration of a structure." (Derrida, 1978: 282) as society is always trying to symbolise itself. However, dislocations are not only traumatic occurrences, they also have a positive side, "If", as Laclau puts it, "on the one hand they threaten identities, on the other, they are the foundation on which new identities are constituted." (Laclau, 1990: 39). Inasmuch as dislocations disrupt identities and discourses they, through suturing the dislocated space, also re-institute and assert a new social subjectivity (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 13). Society manages to re-symbolise through the emergence of the subject. The subject is internal to the structure and cannot be domesticated by the broken structure. The subject though is not stripped of all identifications and all historical attachments, as existentialists hold, but is a seen as a 'failed structural identity' (Laclau, 1990a: 44). The incompleteness of the structure posits the subject as the locus of the decision-making process. The subject is given the freedom to re-signify a new symbolic order, one that is always-already dislocated (Laclau, 1990a: 30), meaning, in the absence of a centre, of a cohesive unitary fulfilment causes the subject to constantly find a pseudo centre that acts as a unifying mechanism, but which is bound to reveal its absence and throw the subject into disarray once again (Torfing, 1999: 189). Derrida therefore states that, "It is necessary to think both the law which somehow

governed the desire for a center and the constitution of structure, and the process of signification which orders the displacements and substitutions for this law of central presence - but a central presence which has never been itself, has already been exiled from itself into its own substitute." (Derrida, 2001: 353).

Dislocation of the dominant power and the collapse of the structure thus gives way for the subject to think its position within society but furthermore to fantasize and materialise a society that meets its needs, demands and desires. This fantasizing is not restricted to the dominant or subordinate class but both become disillusioned and reallusioned in the process. The second step in the procedure of reallusionment, is the process of creating a new hegemonic order.

2.6 Hegemony

Hegemony as a form of rule pertains to the manner in which subjects accept a new form of power and governance that they may have previously resisted or opposed (Howarth, 2009: 321). This transformation, according to Antonio Gramsci occurs through a threefold process. Gramsci was revolutionary in his ability to establish a form of hegemony that was free of any forms of class reductionism. He argued, firstly, that political subjects cannot be identified within defining social strata or classes but instead have 'collective wills' which constitute the political expression of hegemonic systems created through ideology (Vemi, 1981). Secondly, accompanying the formation of 'collective wills', is the erosion and disintegration of the ideological terrain which opens up a way for an 'intellectual and moral reform' and which rearticulates new ideological elements (Vemi, 1981). Thirdly, the intellectual and moral form should endeavour to form a collective will with a 'national-popular' character. Articulation of the national-popular elements is what allows a particular power to express the interests of the nation and in this way the ruling class represents the majority faction of the population (Torfing, 1999: 29). There are two compository connected aspects of hegemony.

"*On the one hand, hegemony is a kind of political practice that captures the making and breaking of political projects and discourse coalitions. But on the other hand it is also a form of rule or governance that speaks to the maintenance of the policies, practices and regimes that are formed by such forces. This second aspect of hegemony concerns the various ways in which regimes, policies, or practices grip or hold a subject fast, or fail to do so. It also concerns the affective dimension of politics*." (Howarth, 2009: 310).

Hegemony is no longer understood as an exemplar of paradigmatic ideals and practices that an entity endeavours to attain but as developed by Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 7) is a "response to a crisis". As mentioned earlier, this crisis is the dethroning of an old hegemony due to the failure of the structure and its response includes the opening of the discursive field - linking of signifier and signified - and through this articulatory process a new hegemony and discourse is instituted. It is through this process that hegemony is defined as "The expansion of a discourse, or a set of discourses, into a dominant horizon of social orientation and action by means of articulating unfixed elements into partially fixed moments into a context crisscrossed by antagonistic forces." (Torfing, 1999: 101). This definition will be elucidated by analysing four dimensions that constitute hegemony and will be followed by an analysis of the two types of hegemonies that develop as an outcome.

In *Contingency Hegemony and Universality* (2000) Laclau outlines and elaborates four aspects that constitute the development of hegemony. These include: power as a constitutive force; the relation between universality/particularity; the role of empty signifiers; and how relations of representation are constitutive of the social order. The act of institution of power is always accompanied by a contestation of force and resistance as argued by Foucault (Norval, 1996: 3). Even in its elementary stage of establishing a new hegemonic order, power is contested, and the outcome - victorious or suppressive - of competing forces continuously has an impact. According to Gramsci an outcome is reached through two means as hegemony denotes both a type of political relation and a substantive achievement. The former instance pertains to the type of articulatory practice whereby persuasion predominates over the use of force whilst the latter alludes to whether or not a particular force has managed to achieve supremacy by imposing its will on the rest of society through the creation of consent and the incorporation of interests of rival forces." (Norval, 2000: 229). The second point is in tandem

with Robert Dahl's intuitive concept of - power A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise consider do (Dahl, 1957: 202-3). Supreme power, and the occupation of it, is determined by the second dimension of hegemony, namely the interrelationship between the universal and particular logic of equivalence and logic of difference.

The argument concerning the supersession of the universal over the particular or particular over universal was made null and void when it emerged that the relationship between the two is crucial in formulating or articulating a new hegemony (Laclau, 2000: 193). As discussed earlier, the rudiments of a new hegemony are predicated upon the sediments of the preceding hegemony, the outcome of which uncaps particularistic demands that once vied for institutionalised power. The suppression of some and assimilation of other particularistic demands into the universal thread is integral in the rendering of new power relations. In order to understand the maintenance of the equilibrium between the universal and the particular it is crucial to understand that the universal emerges from the particular and the particular from the universal. There is thus a cyclical relationship between the two demands. In Butler's words, "What emerges is a kind of political claim which … is neither exclusively universal nor exclusively particular; where, indeed, the particular interests that inhere in certain cultural formations of universality are exposed. And no universal is freed from its contamination by the particular context from which it emerges and in which it travels." (Butler, 2000: 40).

According to Laclau the universal is an empty space that, one, produces a series of structuration and destructration of social relations and, second, insofar as it is empty it is always-already filled in that it is the battleground for the hegemonisation of contingent particular content (Laclau, 2000: 5-9). But the question is not which particularistic content has to be hegemonised to temporarily occupy the universals space and in doing so excludes other possibilities, the question is which demands have to be excluded so that certain particular demands can become institutionalised (Zizek, 2000: 110). Such a question is imperative, as; in the words of Butler (2000: 24) "The assimilation of the particular into the universal leaves its trace, an unassimable remainder, which render universality ghostly to itself." The fact that the universal will always be occupied by the particular and that the universal is the grounds of which the particular can fight for institutionalisation reveals that

suppression of some particulars lay embedded in the social structure and emerge on the political terrain. This contamination of the universal will always result in hybrids in which particularism and universalism become indissociatable. Thus, as far as 1985, in HSS Laclau and Mouffe, as understood by Butler discern that democratic polities are constituted through exclusions which at some point return to haunt the polities built on their absence (2000: 11). Within the prism of a liberal democracy this haunting becomes politically effective as the place of power is empty and temporarily occupied by a dominant power.

The dominant power emerges from a plethora of multifarious demands all vying for power by anchoring an empty signifier. No one demand can completely trump all other demands. Demands of a similar nature are assimilated and form an equivalential chain which later result in the formation of collective wills. One of the major aims of the hegemonic project is to construct and stabilise a nodal point so that it articulates as many floating signifiers as possible (Norval, 1996). But if the equivalential chain extends to a large variety of demands it becomes a surface for inscription or a social imaginary, the heart of which are empty signifiers, the equivalential chain reaches a climax in terms of the extent of the demands it absorbs, as it is possible that if the equivalential chain absorbs several demands of differing discourses it negates its appearance and function (Laclau, 2000: 191-2). That is, in the end, they become signifiers of an absent fullness of society, or what was initially lacking (Laclau, 2000: 191-2; 210). But there is a mixture and contamination of the concrete and abstract. Firstly, the social or historical context has to be understood so that a clear juxtaposition is reached; secondly, the degree to which this emptying of the signifier occurs is contextually dependant; and thirdly, despite being context-dependant the empty signifier has a genealogy of its own – "Its historical actualisation depends on conditions that are not derivable from that possibility." (Laclau, 2000: 192). It is the empty character of the nodal points or *bricoleur* that universalises a discourse making it the surface of inscription for a plurality of demands beyond particularities. A gap between concrete content and the set of equivalential meaning associated with it need to be maintained (Laclau, 2000: 210). Thus, it is through anchoring and filling the empty place via an equivalential chain that a dominant power emerges. Historical context is thus imperative to filling the empty signifier as social transformation occurs not through rallying mass numbers to reach a goal but through the way social relations are rearticulated (Bulter, 2000: 14). Hegemony will allude to "An absent totality, and to the diverse attempts at recomposition and rearticulation which, in overcoming this original

absence, made it possible for struggles to be given a meaning and for historical forces to be endowed with full positivity." (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 7). Hegemony and discourse are strongly tied in that the dearticulation and rearticulation of hegemony shapes discourse, which in turn; provide conditions for the possibility of a new hegemonic order (Howarth, 2000).

"For discourse theory, *hegemonic practices* are an exemplary form of political activity that involves the articulation of different identities and subjectivities into a common project, while *hegemonic formations* are the outcomes of these projects' endeavours to create new forms of social order from a variety of dispersed or dislocated elements. This notion radicalises Gramsci's concept of hegemony." (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 14). According to Gramsci (1971: 55-9; 106-14; 129-33) it is possible to distinguish two different types of hegemony: transformism and expansive hegemony. Transformism is a defensive type of politics pursued by the hegemonic force in a situation of political and economic crisis. It involves the gradual but continuous absorption, of the active elements produced by allied groups – and even those which come from antagonistic groups and seem irreconcilably hostile (Althusser, 1971: 59; Torfing, 1999: 111). Expansive hegemony involves the formation of a collective will with a national-popular character, which is able to promote the full development of particular demands and lead finally to the resolution of the contradictions they express (Gramsci, 1971: 132-3; Mouffe, 1979: 183; Torfing, 1999: 111). Mouffe develops a third type of hegemony, namely, democratic hegemony.

Whilst social antagonism posits a partition between friends and enemies within the political field and the constitutional outside of the social terrain differentiates between the One and Other, democracy converts this 'friend-enemy' distinction into a healthy relationship between adversaries. "'Breaking with the symbolic representation of society as an organic body…a democratic society makes room for the 'adversary', i.e. the opponent who is no longer considered an enemy to be destroyed by somebody whose existence is legitimate and whose rights will not be put into question (Mouffe, 1995: 107; Norval, 2000: 230). Adversaries deliberate over the running of society but pledge allegiance to liberal democratic ideals that creates a bond of solidarity and transforms 'us-them' into 'we'. A pluralist democracy, Mouffe argues, "Supposes that the opponent is not considered as an enemy to be destroyed

but as an adversary whose existence is legitimate and must be tolerated.'(Mouffe, 1998: 16; Norval, 2000: 230). But, it must be noted and stressed, that an opponent is not superseded and extinguished from the framework of hegemony. Democratic hegemony thrives on the temporary occupation of the empty seat of power and for the purposes of efficacy of the democratic order any entity that opposes the democratic ideal is not considered an enemy (Mouffe, 1995: 107). But unlike a stark relationship between enemies, those who challenge the social order and dominant power not only increase the solidarity between adversaries but also consolidates legitimacy and transparency as its forces the dominant power to constantly check their position in society. As Fiske puts it, "Consent must be constantly won and rewon, for people's material social experience constantly reminds them of the disadvantages of subordination and thus poses a threat to the dominant class." (1992: 192-3).

The erection of a new hegemonic power is to temporarily occupy the empty place of power and create the illusion of the fullness of society. Hegemony is articulated through balancing universal and particularistic demands and depending on the social context that preceded dearticulation a certain hegemonic form will hold precedence. Hegemony thus emerges from the political terrain and structures and maintains the social field until it is contingently dethroned. In theoretical terms, ontic content incarnates the ontological function thereby bringing closure to that which was structurally open. Hegemony is thus "The fullness of society is an impossible object which successive contingent contents try to impersonate through catachrestical displacements." (Laclau, 2000: 79). There are two faces of hegemony that are interrelated and, as ascertained from above, the first face of hegemony discloses the manner in which regimes are formed out of disparities and demands, but in order to maintain its position and lustre within society it constantly needs to win the active and passive consent of the subjects. "This means that it must offer points of attachment and identification that can grip subjects in particular ways, thus proving benefits and enjoyments that affectively bond them to certain set of actors, while causing them to shun and demonise others." (Howarth, 2009: 321). In this way solidarity or the 'we' is maintained in addition to being defined by an extraneous force. Thus hegemony emerges out of ontic content and establishes an ontological function. This function is maintained through two mutually reinforcing facets, the demise of either causes radical change in society.

2.7 Myths and Imaginaries

A mythical space is "A space of representation through which an attempt is made to provide a principle of reading of a given situation which is experienced as a dislocation." (Norval, 1996: 66-7; Laclau, 1990a: 61). The subject is given the power to decide its location, to decide its new identity, but the paradox of the situation lay in its bearings. The subject is situated between the failed structure and the newly envisioned society that is a manifestation of its desires, but several of the rudiments of the new structure have to be based on the sediments of the broken structure. "In the case of structural dislocation 'there is a temporalisation of spaces or a widening of the field of the possible, but this takes place within a determinate situation.'" (Laclau, 1990a: 43). In other words, despite the disruptive forces of dislocation, there is always a relative structuration of the social which might block the advancement of a certain hegemonic project. In addition, the form of social and political institutions might influence the fate of political strategies. This has been described by Jessop as "the strategic selectivity of institutions." (Torfing, 1999: 153). Nonetheless, the operation of the myth is nothing other than an endeavour to reconstitute the absent and fulfil the symbolic order (Norval, 1996: 66-7). The plausible completion of a new hegemonic power and thereby a new subject position is only made possible if two pitfalls are avoided.

If on the one hand, a myth remains fixated to the dislocations experienced by a particular group it will not be able to extend its reading to other spheres of social life. Whereas on the other hand, if a new imaginary or vision could be imposed, unequivocally, the possibility of hegemony would be voided as society would be transparent to itself. Neither regressive fixation nor smooth implementation allows for a new hegemony. But if these processes do not lead to a refreshed hegemony what does? Laclau believes that hegemony can only be instituted through struggle - "Indeed, the whole process is one in which struggle is central, both attempts to impose a new order, and its resistance to such impositions." (Norval, 1996: 106). Laclau thus argues that the role of myth is essentially hegemonic as "It involves forming a new objectivity by means of a rearticulation of the dislocated elements." (Laclau, 1990a: 61). But a myth does not stay a myth and if the desire for fullness prevails it becomes the horizon for unlimited demands. This brings forth the relation between the dominating myth and its concrete content as all breaks in the structure are not of the same magnitude.

Subsequently, the content of a myth is dependent upon the size and scope of the dislocation (Laclau, 1994a: 9-10).

Depending on the nature of the dislocation there is the option of *the filling* and *the filling function* (Torfing, 1999: 152). When dislocation penetrates the very bottom of the social, the need for order multiplies and expands exponentially and the need for the filling function overrides that of the filling. For example, following the collapse of communism, regardless of the regime instituted, be it, fascism, reformed communism or democracy, what mattered was the restoration of an order, any order. By contrast, in advanced industrial societies where the dislocation is not as deep, the role of the filling is heightened. Consequentially, debates concerning resolution of the socioeconomic crisis are intensified. Regarding the former scenario, the mere *availability* of a structural restoration project overrides that of *credibility*, whereas in the latter instance credibility is of central importance (Laclau, 1990a: 66). "To be counted as credible, the political project should not only ensure its consistency with the norms and values esteemed by the portion of the population interpellated by the particular project but also a willingness to discard unsustainable and discredited principles." (Torfing, 1999: 152).

But a myth does not stay a myth and if the desire for fullness prevails it becomes the horizon for unlimited demands. In order for a new structure to be constructed, myths needs to be transformed into imaginaries and the distinction is important as it allows one to understand and analyse the construction of hegemony (Norval, 2000: 227). The transition from myth to imaginary is successful when, the myth which functions as a surface for the inscription of a myriad of social demands neutralises social dislocations and incorporates majority demands. (Laclau, 1990: 61; Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 15). "A collective social imaginary is defined by Laclau as "'a horizon' or absolute limit which structures a field of intelligibility.'" (Laclau, 1990: 64; Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 15-6). Laclau thus argues that the role of a myth is essentially hegemonic as it involves forming a new objectivity by means of rearticulation of the dislocated elements (1990a: 61).

2.8 Frontiers

The utilisation of political frontiers is defined as, “A dichotomization of the local political spectrum through the emergence of an equivalential chain of unsatisfied demands.” (Laclau, 1996: 74). Frontiers becomes increasingly important when political identities, emerging in a social terrain, begin deviating and do not “correspond naturalistically to pre-designated elements” ensconced unto them by an agent(s) attempt in maintaining their constructed social identities (Norval, 1994: 120). This deviation which will be discussed in further detail ushers in the logic of difference and equivalence as well as the emergence of a homogenous whole - the people - responsible for superseding and reinstituting a new dominant order. The discursive system initially faces dichotomisation when identities cannot be integrated into the existing system of differences (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 11). This can be explicated through the following example.

A dominant power within a regime will tend to accumulate a large number of demands from various groups citing various problems they deem need to be met. This juncture is reached through single isolated demands (democratic demands) which emerge at various points in the social fabric, at some point collecting, and forming a broad social subjectivity (popular demands). The movement from democratic to popular demands is predicated upon the presupposition of a plurality of subject positions seeking to establish an equivalential bond between them (Laclau, 1996: 186). It is important to consider Zizek’s warning about the dangers of pure particularism at this point. The more particularised a demand the easier it is for it to be absorbed and satisfied; but if the demand is equivalential to a variety and plethora of demands, no partial victory will be considered a feat in a protracted war of position (Zizek, 2000: 209). Thus, if the government continuously denies appeasing the demands posed by various groups, they will share a common experience of a threat to their specific identities as well as a shared sentiment of something equally present in all of their demands, namely, they are in opposition to the regime. They will eventually, in principle, have shared a fantasy and ambition to construct a new social order premised on the particular identities they have built-up (Laclau, 1996: 108). Once democratic demands become popular demands, which embody the absent fullness of society, through an endless chain of equivalences, the relation between the populous and plebs become central in deciding whether or not demands are either absorbed or expelled.

Following Carl Schmitt, Mouffe argues that political discourse "Attempts to create specific forms of unity among different interests by relating them to a common project and by establishing a frontier to define the forces to be opposed, the "enemy"." (Norval, 2000: 221). There are two dimensions in this regard, that of universality's dependence upon particularity and that of the particulars dependence upon the universal. Remembering Marx's model of political emancipation, if the project principally employing the logic of equivalence seeks to divide the social space by condensing meaning around two antagonistic poles, that is, for a particular group to representatively present the demands of the community at large there needs to be another sector which is perceived as a general crime (Torfing, 1998; Howarth, 2000: 107; Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 11). This is the first dimension of power inherent in the universality's emancipatory project: the very condition of universality presupposes a radical exclusion. The logic of equivalence thus functions by splitting of differences and instituting a frontier between two opposed camps (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 11). In the logic of equivalence, if the terms a, b and c are made equivalent ($a \equiv b \equiv c$) with respect to the characteristic d, then d must totally negate a, b and c ($d = -(a\ b\ c)$), thus subverting the original terms of the system (For example, during the fight against apartheid, the ANC, SACP and IFP had equivalential positions in regard to fighting the NP – the embodiment of apartheid (and its ideology). The NP, however, for several decades were able to maintain their footing and thereby negated the jabs by the three political parties). This means that the identity of those interpellated by a discourse would always be split between a set of particular differences conferred by an existing discursive system a, b, c and the more universal threat posed by the discursive exterior (d) (Howarth, 2000: 107).

In contrast to this, the second dimension of power concerns the predomination of the logic of difference. The building of strict, rigid polarities between two antagonistic forces is inhibited when the logic of difference is employed (Norval, 2000: 221). The logic of difference seeks to destabilise the chains of equivalence by incorporating disarticulate elements in the growing order. This is achieved through the ability of a specific group who presupposes that it is in a better position that other groups to assume the function of universal representation. This causes an uneven distribution of power within the social sector (Laclau, 2000: 207-8). The logic of difference "Attempts to displace and weaken antagonism while endeavouring to relegate division to the margins of society." (Torfing, 1998; Howarth, 2000: 107; Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 11). "These two dimensions of power – unevenness and exclusion –

presuppose a dependency on particularity: there is no universality that operates as pure universality, there is only the relative universalization created by expanding the chain of equivalences around a central particularistic core." (Laclau, 2000: 207-8). Thus insofar as the logic of equivalence and difference strongly endeavour to predominate, both forces are important in the construction and establishment of a new hegemonic project. The third step pertains to the partiality of the universal.

Not all groups are equally capable of becoming hegemonic. The unevenness of the structural positions in society prevents this: not by determining once and for all which among the various political forces is capable of becoming hegemonic, but rather by constraining and facilitating the formulation and realisation of the political strategies of those (Laclau, 1994b: 174-5). But what this entails is that,

"Whatever ontic content we decide to privilege in an ontological investment, the traces of that investment cannot be entirely conceal…the partiality we privilege will also be the point that universality necessarily inhabits…. The particular has transformed its very partiality in the name of a transcendent universality. That is why the ontological function can never be reduced to its ontic content…. But because this ontological function can be present only when it is attached to an ontic content, the latter becomes the horizon of all there is – the point at which the ontic and the ontological fuse into a contingent but indivisible unity." (Laclau, 1996: 225-6).

There is a circular relation between the universal and particular. The universal emerges out of the negation of particular identities, but its content is fixed in and through political struggles for hegemony in which particular demands are universalised and others are marginalised (Torfing, 1999: 175*).*

The fourth point emphases the importance of naming. The unity of the social agent, once it sees the coming together of a plurality of demands, solidifies this unification through the naming process which amalgamates the entire process and directs its final trajectory. Because

the boundaries of equivalence permanently fluctuate, the naming process is crucial in reigning in and giving meaning to certain concepts which in other paradigms have different meanings and significations (Laclau, 1996: 227). Lastly, historical conditions make the emergence and expansion of popular identities possible. This is due to the multiplication and heterogeneity of social demands which sees unity through "equivalential political articulations." (Laclau, 1996: 228). The successful attempt by a social group to embody and occupy the empty signifier that signifies the unfilled universal has important ramifications (Laclau, 1994b: 177).

"It might help the particular political force to become hegemonic, but the hegemonic victory would be achieved only at the expense of a loss of identity, the direct result of the universalization of the particular content of the project and demands of the hegemonic agent. As such the hegemonic agent seems to be constitutively split between the particularity of the particular project and demands and the universal function of the latter, which requires the transformation of its very particularity into a surface of inscription through which all political struggles will be expressed." (Laclau, 1994b: 177).

The various groups will aim to hegemonise the empty place of the universal. The particular identity that succeeds in filling the empty space of the universal has established 'hegemony' (Torfing, 1999: 175).

2.9 Why is Laclau a post-structuralist?

Because with the introduction of the subject before subjectivisation or interpellation, displacements and shifts, the mobility of identity and meaning (always a feature of symbolic systems) can now be accounted for. In a sense the 'structure' is not what it was, hence 'post-structural', but, more importantly, both 'structural mobility' and the subject *stricto sensu* were always necessary features of structure – it just needed the post-structuralist to bring this out: thus post structuralism is best understood as the coming to terms with the full import of 'differentiality' or structurality' itself.

2.10 Why is the distinction between subject and subject-position important in the analysis of colonialism?

In the first place – and this is another important charge against Althusser – unless such a distinction is made and unless the subject (of lack) is distinguished from the occupant of a subject-position, it becomes impossible to account for shifts, displacements and transformations in the configuration of subject-positions, social identities themselves. When such shifts occur we have to suppose that what is happening is that the subject of lack is turning against (some (or all) of its inscriptions in identity and searching for others, more able to satisfy its need for stability and identity. Even if as Laclau and Zizek point out, the subject that performs this 'loop' or 'spin' never appears 'in person'. We have to suppose its intervention. In our case we are interested later on in trying to throw light on the shifts occurring in specific forms of colonial subjectivity which, as explained above, necessitates recourse to this concept (of the subject *stricto sensu*).

Secondly, we need anyway to suppose such a subject in order to render interpellation itself intelligible (and this points to a gap in Althusser's theory of interpellation), in our case, specifically colonial forms of interpellation. But in any case (colonialism aside) all interpellation – this induction of concrete individuals into their symbolic places and identities – depends on the subject insofar as the subject, as "want to be" or subject of lack, itself needs to be interpellated (in order to acquire a socially recognised identity). So, distinguishing 'subject' from 'subject position' is necessary to understand what actually takes place in the process of (Althusserian) interpellation. What as 'want to be' the subject needs, interpellation offers him, that is, the illusory belief that he is a self-centred source, an identity offers him, that is, the certitude of the Cartesian cogito understood as reflectively and reflexively in total grasp of itself.

When it comes to interpellation we have to bear in mind this "dialectic" between 'empty subject' and 'full identity' in order to get the proper measure of what is going on in specifically colonial interpellation. The significance of the colonised social identity, his Symbolic and Imaginary inscription is negative, in that, he does not really give a full identity

and can only be conceptually calibrated, measured, if we already have in place this distinction between subject (subject barred) and ego (S) (full subject).

So the distinction introduced post-Althusser into the discourse-theoretical or structuralist problematic between subject and bearer is very important in carrying out of one of the most important objective of this dissertation viz to contribute to the analysis of the forms taken by colonial subjectivities especially in the post-apartheid period.

Chapter 3: Towards a theory of South African society – Part 1

My objective in this chapter is to begin to make use of the concepts (of structure, ideology and subject) explained in previous chapters (chapter 1 and 2) in the construction of a theory of South African society. However, before doing this, we need to clarify what sort of society South Africa is, and we need to examine existing theories of South African society. Once we have identified what we argue is the most coherent and explanatorily powerful of the existing theories – and the argument forward is that the CST theory (of the Tripartite Alliance) stands above its Liberal and Marxist adversaries then we will set out to (re)cast this theory in the terms of the structuralist concepts referred to earlier. In the course of doing this we explain what the advantages of casting CST in the terms we propose are, how doing so deepens CST's grasp of South African society itself - as well as its analysis of the current political terrain.

3.1 Liberal theories of the South African society

This is not put forward as a comprehensive survey of liberal theory in SA but is rather an attempt to cast light on the specificity of its conceptual problematic and then to show how weak this is when it comes to trying to account for the structure of South African society. To anticipate, our conclusion is that the liberal analysis of South African society is hamstrung from the start by its reduction of the social to the economic logic of free market exchange and the corollary which is that whatever falls outside of this logic is identified as 'irrational' with the implication that in the long run it is unable to secure its reproduction – precisely because it is deemed not to have a logic of its own – it is 'irrational'. The most enduring and significant feature of South African society the colonial relation between whites and blacks, is thereby just defined out of existence.

We examine two liberal theorists in order to show how the liberal problematic operates viz William Hutt and Merle Lipton. Hutt, because his is a very robust liberalism that makes no concessions at all to the (Marxist) view that racial domination in SA possessed an economic (that is, capitalist) rationality. Lipton because her's is a more flexible liberal analysis and she, unlike Hutt, does appear (at least) to make some 'concessions' to the Marxist view. In spite of

this difference we try to show how both exemplify the inherent limits of the liberal analysis of South African society.

3.1.1 Hutt

Hutt in his *The Economic of the Colour Bar: A Study of the Economic Origins and Consequences of Racial Segregation in South Africa* (1964) insists that the logic of free-market capitalism comes down to its exclusive concentration on improving productivity: this occurs under the pressure of free competition over resources (goods, services, positions and so forth) and only under this pressure. This for Hutt is economic rationality and 'economic rationality' is 'rationality' – any social practices that operate according to a different logic – are irrational, do not really have a logic and cannot sustain themselves over time.

Hutt shows how under colonial and apartheid conditions, legislation and policy imposed such an "alien" logic on the capitalist economy in South Africa. Job reservation, influx control, 'border areas', all these prevent the logic of the market from expressing itself. They have nothing at all to do with economic rationality because they impede productivity, output and revenue (for example, wages and profits) (Hutt, 1964).

These racial practices are not explained at all – beyond the circular positing of racial essences which such practices are said to "express". But even these are 'irrational' in that they violate the (putative) iron law of the economy – they are wasteful of resources and are therefore irrational in that in the long run they must collapse (under the pressure of their own irrationality). This is not the conceptual status assigned by Hutt to racial practices in South Africa. They are a 'left-over' of rationality, that is, they do not have a *sui generis* rationality of their own – we cannot explain them, perhaps, but it does not really matter because they do not really exist in the strong way that pure economic practice (market practice) exists.

There is thus a contradiction between capitalism and racial domination in South Africa – the latter can in no way whatsoever be seen as falling under the logic of capitalism. And because of the internal 'logic' of this articulating which rational and irrational practices are counter posed to each other, liberal theory is conceptually committed to the eventual collapse of racial domination under the pressure of the rational. And what liberal theorists (like Hutt) would say is that when apartheid 'disappeared' in 1994 it was because the rationality of the market logic finally prevailed. For a robust liberal like Hutt, the South African economy was fettered from the start by racial practices of domination and the collapse of the latter was long overdue – (Note that from the liberal point of view what has happened in SA is that capitalism has prevailed, that is, racial practices no longer structure social relations in South Africa. In other words the issue of whether or not CST stills exists in SA is conceptually foreclosed by Hutt's liberalism (as well as Lipton's, as we will see shortly) it is precisely this that *inter alia* sets the Tripartite Alliance apart from its principal liberal antagonist, the Democratic Alliance (DA). For the Alliance (see the Polokwane Statement) "*Colonialism of a Special Type*" still exists and the National Democratic Struggle is therefore far from over.

3.1.2 Lipton

In terms of Lipton's liberal analysis it is only since the 1970s that the South African economy has found racial domination a fetter. This is because, up until then, the centre of gravity of the South African economy was mining and agriculture both of which involved forms of production that found racial domination congenial. Here the Capital/Labour (C/L) ratio is low and the proportion of 'skilled' to 'unskilled' workers low. Profits depend not on increases in productivity (mechanisation is not sufficiently advanced) but in keeping wages as low as possible: this is where racial domination meshes with the interests of agriculture and mining: Once manufacturing and services dominate the economic structure matters change however. Here profits are dependent on increases in productivity and thus a smaller more skilled and better paid labour force emerges (mechanisation in agriculture and mining has the same effect of changing the basis of production). Racial domination is incompatible with the logic of this specific form of economic production (in which both C/L and skilled/unskilled ratios are higher).

Before the conclusion is reached, what is going on here is a massive surrender to Marxism it needs to be stressed that according to Lipton, agriculture and mining cannot themselves be characterised as 'capitalist' – employment relations in these sectors for the period under consideration were not properly capitalist for Lipton and thus the contradiction between capitalism and apartheid is maintained, as in Hutt. But it is at the same time conceded that for a period, under certain conditions (of the C/L and skilled/unskilled labour ratios), racial domination did have a certain (even if not capitalist) economic rationality. This is the weak point in Lipton – it looks very much as if what has happened is that in order to block the strength of the Marxist argument she by fiat declares agriculture and mining 'non-capitalist', leaving them it has to be said 'untheorised'. Be that as it may, at the end of the day the conceptual problematic at work in Lipton is the same as that identified in the case of Hutt. There is a superior economic rationality and, that is, capitalist rationality – anything falling outside is either (like mining and agriculture) 'about to become' capitalist, therefore really 'inside'; or, concerning practices that are really recalcitrant, these have, as their own in built *telos*, their own eventual demise: and this is just what eventually happened in SA in 1994. Once their economic logic is gone, their fate is sealed. Note again, that in the terms of this logic colonial relations of domination are not *sui generis* and do not have a reproductive logic of their own. Once their external causal prop (low C/L and skilled/unskilled labour ratios) has gone, they eventually have to cave in on themselves. If however, as we propose, colonial domination is seen as a *sui-generis* relation with its own reproductive logic, then, whatever the specific state of the capitalist economy, it can continue to exist (in new forms, perhaps, see later) and secure its own conditions of reproduction. It is only, we suggest, on this perspective that we can begin to get a handle on post 1994 SA (see later).

To conclude (and this refers back to the previous chapters) liberal theory is "essentialist" – it recognises only one social practice as really existing, all others are more appearance with no reality of their own. They have gotten no independent grip and in the end (whenever that occurs) must give way. We, on the other hand, want to approach South African society as compromising distinct relations and practices, all interacting but all irreducible to any other at the same time, that is, as an overdetermined totality. And each level too is internally organised relationally, that is, differentially or structurally – with the implication, the question we face later on is "What is the specific difference that characterises the colonial relationship?" (See later on this).

3.1.3 Wolpe

We can now turn to what we suggest is conceptually the strongest of the Marxist analyses of South African society viz that of Harold Wolpe (and what we are referring to here is primarily his *Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power* paper, his *Internal Colonialism* paper and his 1988 book, *Race, Class and the Apartheid State*).These want, at all costs, to be able to account for colonial, racial relations of domination exclusively in terms of capitalist class interests. There are other Marxist approaches, viz that of Nolutshungu and orthodox CST, which while never erasing class gets all the way when it comes to signalling the irreducible *sui generis* structure of the colonial relation, Of course, as has already been made clear, we intend to defend the orthodox CST theory against Wolpe so we will have to be very careful to distinguish his Marxist analysis from the Marxism of CST.

A good way of getting a grip on what Wolpe wants to say is by comparing him with Hutt. Against Hutt, Wolpe is saying that capitalism cannot be reduced to/identified with/one determinate mode of capitalism. The pursuit of profit through on-going increases of productivity which Hutt identifies as capitalism itself is only one possible form of capitalism. There are other ways in which capitalism can function – that is, the category of capitalism is broader than Hutt (and Lipton too, by the way) can acknowledge. Wolpe identifies one such other way in the South African case. Here, up until the 1940s profit did not depend on productivity increases but on pushing and keeping down the cost of capital of labour, the wage bill. And here, this was achieved through the specific articulation of two modes of production, the Capitalist Mode of Production (CMP) and the indigenous kinship-based mode of production. Through migrant labour a significant portion of the wages bill, that capital would otherwise have had to be responsible for, is covered by (unpaid) labour in the indigenous African mode of production. Maintaining migrant labour requires a very specific and specifically ‘racial’ apparatus of coercion. So, Wolpe is not reductionist in the narrowest sense, because he stresses the contribution of racial domination to capital accumulation in South Africa, but, on the other hand, racial domination only figures on the Wolpe conceptual radar screen insofar as it contributes to capital accumulation. This is going to be our main point against Wolpe.

Against Hutt, Wolpe wants to maintain that capitalism (that is, private ownership of capital, the dominance of profit and the existence of exploitation) does not only take the form of, in Marxists terms, 'relative surplus value' production. Pushing down the costs of labour – even without any productivity gains – is another possible embodiment of capitalism (that is, absolute surplus value production). So, against Hutt and Lipton, Wolpe maintains that South African capitalism was always capitalism – (not some "inbetween" category as in Lipton, nor never really capitalist as in Hutt) and that this capitalism, for a long time, (for Wolpe (see *Race Class and the Apartheid State*) until the 1970s) found racial domination functional for it.

This capitalism, as we have seen, is only possible on condition that the other mode of production (the one it 'articulated' with) is reproduced. Once this condition is no longer met the sources of profit has to shift – to relative surplus value production, which in SA only became hegemonic in the 1970s.

The problem is conceptually the same as in the case of liberalism. Wolpe may well have, firstly, "expanded" the concept of capitalism – against both Hutt and Lipton – and, secondly, shown that economic conditions in SA (from the late (nineteenth century to the 1940s) fall under the concept of capitalism, and thirdly, shown how colonial racial domination was functional for the Asiatic Mode of Production (AMP) in SA. But the fact remains that colonial racial relations of domination are only intelligible to him insofar as they can be shown to be functional for the AMP, that is, for South African capitalism. They are not acknowledged as being a type of social relation at the same level as capitalist relations, that is, as being *sui generis* in relation to capitalism, with their own internal logic of reproduction irreducibly distinct from that of capitalism.

For all his conceptual sophistication with respect to (the concept of) capitalism, and for all his insistence on the "relative autonomy" (Wolpe, 1990: 17) and "specific effectivity" (Wolpe, 1990: 60) of colonial racial relations of domination, when all is said and done Wolpe ends up, like liberalism, demanding colonialism of any content of its own. Thus, its demise was inscribed in it from the start – as soon as it ceased being functional for capitalism that writing

was on the wall – from this perspective it is not that apartheid collapsed that really needs explaining as much as how it was possible for colonialism to run 'on an empty tank' for as long as it did (approximately twenty years, "1940s → 1970") (in Wolpe's analysis, this period, after the possibility of continuing to follow the absolute surplus value (SV) route was closed – and before the production of relative SV had become dominant in the economy).

Turning to Wolpe's criticism of CST from which he wants to distance himself (see *Theory of Internal Colonialism* and *Race Class and the Apartheid State*) – His two main points of criticism are, firstly, that the colonial racial relation remains "vague" and, secondly, that in CST, capitalism and colonialism are something presented as feeding-off each other, sometimes as incompatible and in contradiction – in other words CST is "contradictory" on the capitalism/colonialism relationship and vague on the colonial relationship itself.

3.1.4 Reply to Wolpe

Firstly, the colonial-racial relation seems "vague" to Wolpe insofar as it falls outside his conceptual scope: but that is precisely the point, that it falls outside his conceptual scope. Secondly, the appropriate response here is that CST wants to keep open the way capitalism and colonialism articulate, and that once the *sui generis* nature of colonialism is recognised whether capitalism supports it or not becomes less important.

3.1.5 Why CST? Distinctive features of CST qua theory of South African society

What distinguishes CST (although the same can probably be said of Nolutshungu) is that it does not start of looking at the colonial-racial relation from the point of view of some other social relation – as do both liberalism and Wolpe's Marxism. It starts of by accepting the structural on-going effects of colonial conquest – in the form of the coloniser (white) – colonised (black) relations of domination. This is the spine of South African society, with its own logic of domination (cutting across the social sphere including the economy) and reproduction. This, according to CST theory, pre-existed the advent of capitalism in SA and has survived the "mutations" in both the economic sphere (the emergence of advanced capitalism) and the political sphere (transition to democracy in 1994). It is for this reason

that, firstly, according to CST the national antagonism is the one that defines South African society, and, secondly, the class struggle for socialism – remember CST is originally communist – has in the first place and for the moment – to take the form of a struggle against colonial national domination – this is the dominant contradiction on/South African society, and before attention should be focused of capitalist domination, national/racial/colonial domination has to be dealt with first. Hence for the South African Communist Party (SACP) the division between the first 'national democratic' phase and the second socialist phase (of the struggle for socialism). For non-communist ANC members the point of intersection is the NDR which they also consider a priority. Afterwards they must part ways, but for the moment, as long as the NDR is itself unfinished the Alliance can hold.

CST does not deny the capitalist class relation or its importance vis-à-vis political subjectivity. It claims that only in SA, now and in the past, the relation of colonial mastery is the principal. Structural antagonism in SA, and that in this light, the appropriate political strategy for here and now has up until now, and including now, the present, been the National Democratic Struggle. Precisely how capitalism and internal colonialism are related is open-ended and can change overtime, as it has in SA, without this undermining the dominance of the National Question (This is why Wolpe's criticism of CST is off the mark).

3.1.6 Althusser theory and CST

Let us pause to comment on the relationship between the Althusserian concept of overdetermination (see chapter 1 and 2) and CST theory. The whole point of introducing the concept of overdetermination, according to Althusser, is to widen the range of contingency in Marxist theory. We cannot specify in advance just what social relations will be found to be dominant, even in capitalist societies. And we cannot specify in advance (that is read-off from capitalism) what the specific hierarchy of effectivity will be amongst the social relations compromising the conjuncture in question. Class struggle is for Althusser a de-essentialising type of cause that in fact opens up this range of distinct and different social relations with which it can be combined and the different effectivities they can have vis-a-vis the social totality. Althusser's 'anti-essentialism', that is, his conception of the 'overdetermination' of

the class struggle, provides the meta-theoretical or philosophical endorsement, that CST, with its insistence on the dominance of the national antagonism – has always needed.

3. 2 Towards a theory of South African society continued – Part 2

What still remains to be done? We want to carry this attempt to construct a theory of South African society further by, firstly, introducing Fanon's conception of the Colonial Relation to deepen this concept of colonialism in CST and, secondly - which we have already begun with the reference above to Althusser – use structuralism and post-structuralism to bolster Fanon's own conception of the colonial relation. This eventually leads us to an examination of different colonial subject-positions and how these configure the political terrain in which we still live.

3.2.1 Why the Cr-Cd relation is a differential structural relation and why it is important that it be recognised as such

Fanon's conception of colonialism, is composed of two elementary identities, that of the (positivised white coloniser) CrW+ and (negativised black colonised) CdB~ (Fanon 2001). This is a differential relation in "the practical state" (Althusser, 1976) in that it is not explicitly conceptualised as such by Fanon. But bearing in mind our earlier discussion of 'structure' and 'difference', we can confidently identify the colonial relation as a differential relation, as a differential relation in the strict sense. The elements compromising this relation, CrW+ and CdB~, only exist, only have any existence at all insofar as they are related – We will elaborate on this and its political consequences later – for now this point is to maintain that, firstly, by taking the colonial relation seriously (CST); secondly, by conceiving it in Fanonian terms – CrW+, CdB~ and; by thirdly, constructing it as a differential symbolic relation supported only by the correlative subjectivities it installs (its Imaginary (see earlier) we have cleared the way for fresh analysis of colonial subjectivity, in particular that of the Colonised.

Neither of these elements has any 'value' outside of their relational co-constitution. Neither is it a self-sufficient essence, but only a "relational semi identity", overdetermined, that is, penetrated by, its Other. What this means (see above and below) is that 'colonialism' as a symbolic system, because this is what we have just establishes it is – can never, in principle, be considered a totalised totality that secures its own conditions of necessary existence. It is a

contingent relation, that is, *sui generis* and without a foundation. It has to strive to reproduce itself via the correlative subjectivities it sets up (CrW+ and CdB~) but its lack of a foundation can never be completely eclipsed. Like any symbolic system colonialism is limited, that is, it encounters, at some point, its own limits – its symbolic narrative breaks down and does so in a way that is specific to colonialism (at least things work differently under capitalism). Under colonial conditions the breakdown of meaning occurs more immediately and more directly than is the case with capitalism – the CdB~ is not provided with a full Althusserian subject-form and his identity and experience are destabilised *ab initio*, unlike the worker, who starts off (at least) with a full ego.

Only by grasping the colonial relation as differential is it possible to defend its status as *sui generis*. As a symbolic differential relation it is not reducible to any exterior or foundation: It is just a specific symbolic configuration that ultimately depends on itself for its reproduction. One consequence is immediately the coloniser's representation of colonialism as rooted in universal foundations – human nature - is undermined. This is just a symbolic overdetermined relationship – it is not immutable or necessary, but contingent and susceptible therefore of radical transformation (involving its maximum eclipse).

As a symbolic relationship it does not rest on or express anything external to itself – in other words, it holds itself up. But it can never do so as if it were an essence – but because it is not one. It holds itself up but never with absolute success: Its own lack of a foundation finds expression in its malfunctioning, in its incoherence – it can never be totalised and yet it 'rests' on nothing else but itself, where 'itself' compromises a relation, in the strict sense, that is, with its elements not being self-sufficient essences but 'relational semi-identities'. This symbolic relation, like the capitalist symbolic, both secretes, and depends, for whatever identity it has, on a specific Imaginary or Ideology in Althusser's sense. These determinate forms of consciousness which screen off from the subject is his mere "relational semi identity" and provide him with a sense of plenitude and innateness, are what for Althusser (and Lacan and Laclau) stabilise the subject making possible the reproduction of the symbolic relation itself.

But this “screening off” by the Imaginary (by the self-image and sense of identity into which concrete individuals are interpellated in Althusser’s sense) can never in principle be complete. The ultimate lack of foundations and the necessarily incomplete nature, of any differential symbolic relation always makes itself felt within the Symbolic itself, via disturbances in the homeostasis of the imaginary identities into which individuals are interpellated. When this occurs, and to the extent to which it occurs, we refer to the intrusion of the Real – this latter refers to the limits of the Symbolic (it is not a totality), that is, to what happens when the Symbolic bumps up against this internal limitation, viz that qua differential it can never attain full identity to itself. So the Real refers to the effects on the Symbolic of its (the Symbolics) *sui generis* character, of that fact that it compromises a determinate differential relation. In the case of capitalism, following Althusser’s treatment of ideology and the imaginary, what happens (with respect to the intrusion of the Real) is that the capitalist Symbolic, in its Imaginary, ideological, self-representation, cannot totalise the specific void at its core, the point where capitalist meaning breaks down, viz the antagonism between capital and labour. Here is where meaning reaches its limits in the symbolic relation of capitalism because the capitalist system of names just cannot stabilise the experience of the proletariat – here, in the experience of the working class is where the Real of capitalism breaks through this, its imaginary representations and destabilises capitalism as a symbolic system.

The focus of our analysis is how colonialism produces its own Real, that is, how the limits of the colonial symbolic, how its inability to achieve totalisation and self-grounding, penetrates the colonial relation itself. Our argument is that the Real on the one hand, the Symbolic and Imaginary, on the other, do not articulate in the same way it does as under capitalism – this is what frames the analysis in what follows if the subjectivities of both Cr and Cd, leading us to our argument concerning the fragility of the identity of the colonised.

And, to anticipate, it is around this original ontological deficit marking the ‘identity’ of the colonised, that many of the political identities currently ‘organising’ South African politics need to be understood. Around this specifically colonial void the search for plenitude is particularly intense. Hence the colonised flight into (unconscious) white plenitude (see later) into (conscious) Black plenitude (Negritude and BC) as well as into ‘thingification’ as a way

of getting by on what colonialism offers him as an ‘identity’. This ‘original laceration’ of colonialism on the identity of the colonised can also be seen at work in the way many in the Alliance turn the NDR itself into a narrative of plenitude and inevitable success – (instead of the highly contingent process it always has been and remains). Here the NDR becomes a (more or less conscious) fantasy of necessity and guarantee (the ‘historic mission’ of the Alliance). This, we suggest, needs to be understood in terms of the original Cd subject-position, which is one of anxiety (see later) – as a reaction to the ‘trauma’, the permanent trauma of the colonised subject-position and subjectivity. This still radiates out into many of the political identities at work in SA today – identities that do not have to be conscious (as we will explain) but which still ‘steer’ political decisions and practices. Later on we sketch some of these identities and explain them as defensive gestures of the subject in the face of its specifically colonial destitution.

Chapter 4: Black Subjectivity

In this chapter our objective is to outline the elementary or fundamental 'subject-position' of the colonised: the primary identification or interpellation of the colonised. It is on the basis of this elementary position of the colonised that we develop its secondary identification (from 'thinghood' to BC – see later section on BC and Biko). The procedure followed involves, as has been explained above, bringing together Fanon and the (post) structuralist conceptions of structure and subject.

In this perspective the colonial structure is built upon the co-constitutional relationship between the coloniser and colonised. The specificity of each identity is not attributed to something innate but to that what it is not. This negative differential relation entails that neither white not black has an identity value independently of the Colonial Relation (CR) itself and that neither is anything irrespective of each other. The CR is a discursive symbolic relation – which means their poles are constituted by its relationship to each other and nothing else. Each pole (Cr/white – Cd/black) is penetrated by the other – the interpenetration and overdetermination of identities is what marks their differential co-constitution. This is what Fanon is getting at when he states "The Negro is not any more than the white man." (1952: 225-31) – both are products of colonialism as a symbolic system and their identities are intertwined in their very definitions. "This relation is differential, i.e. neither pole is a self-sufficient essence, their very interpenetration bearing witness to their contingency. That this relation rests on nothing but itself (it has no positive terms, only negative differential ones)." (Hudson, 2012).

Importing Western ideologies of race, the Dutch coloniser interpellated the black native colonised via a process that can be understood through Fanon's "Look Mama" experience. 'Look Mama' alludes to the experience of the never ending shattering and rendering asunder of any incipient quest for identity on the part of the colonised and demonstrates the nature of the black body (that is, it is a nothing) from the point of view of the little girl, her mother and the whole colonial system of meaning.

We then take from Fanon, the colonial definition of whiteness – in Western discourse - as embodying value and full identity with 'blackness' embodying 'less than' whiteness. And we take from him also the idea that – and he makes this point vis-à-vis Lacan – the Other confronting the colonised subject is above all else a 'White-Other' which means that the process of identity formation with respect to the colonised is not going to follow the 'normal' process of interpellation and it is not going to issue an identification with the Althusserian subject-form. Precisely because, defined from the point of view of the Other as white, black identity is constitutively deficient - necessarily failing (in relation to white normativity). And this is borne out by our reading of the Look Mama scenario in Fanon – what is staged here is the experience (of the colonised) – who is left with something "splattered" (Fanon, 1952) whenever he aspires to identity.

In the colonial mirror of recognition what is offered the colonised is not a schema of corporeal coherence, an integral body image (able to support an integral image of self) but a "body manqué" (Gordon, 2011: 11) a body that is always '*de trop*', in excess, an identity for which to fit in is not to fit in (Gordon, 2011), an identity constitutively and irreparably (as long as one moves within its structural orbit) 'out of joint' with itself. "In the white world the man of colour encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema. Consciousness of the body is solely a negating activity. It is never a way of attaining a sense of self and identity." (Fanon, 1952: 110). The black body is not and thus cannot play its normal role in stabilising subjectivity. Thus the black body cannot contribute to the sense of self certainty, that one is who one is – instead "The body of the colonised is surrounded by an atmosphere of certain uncertainty." (Fanon, 1952: 111).

4.1 Black subjectivity - CdB~

The colonised is not interpellated into the subject form outlined by Althusser as constitutive of all ideology because the identity offered is not one in which it is meant to feel 'at home', in full possession of itself. On the one hand, what is offered is an identity which is not really an identity at all. The Look Mama gaze fluidifies and pulverises the ego of the colonised right from the start and all the way through. Paige Arthur in *Unfinished Projects: decolonization and the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre (*2010) maintains Satre's argument - the colonised "has no core". The effect of Look Mama is then to shatter any pretentions to agency on the part of the colonised.

The colonial relation is one of ontological subordination – the colonised is prohibited from existing in the same way the coloniser exists and this ontological relation cuts through all the sectors and levels of colonial society. The colonised must be nothing to the colonial master's fullness. The master can only be the master insofar as the slave remains 'a nothing' and this absolute differentiation is the site of the colonial antagonism. Maldonado Torres in *On the Coloniality of Being* (2007) argues that the colonised is pinned down to a non-identity; his nothingness (which anchors the 'absolute' fullness of the master) is the constitution of the colonial relation. The crux of the colonial interpellation is that the colonized is not offered an identity at all; he is not even offered an inferior or subordinate identity but is instead defined in full contrast to the absolute being of the master. Colonial difference goes further than its capitalist counterpart where the bourgeois and working class share a common ontological status even if their projects, capitalism and communism are incommensurable. Coloniser and colonised do not, in that, the colonised by definition is not permitted to exist in the way the coloniser does; and this ontological deficit is thus inscribed in his place and is constituted by the colonial relation.

What is offered the colonised by way of Imaginary and Symbolic identity is not identity at all, but, precisely, its 'failure' or lack. The Imaginary and Symbolic scaffolding of the colonised negates itself, as it were, offering the colonised only the identity of 'nothing'. In contrast with capitalism, where the 'subject of antagonism' (Zizek, 1989) is sheltered by its

imaginary ego from the void of the Real, under colonialism the void is directly inscribed in the imaginary dimension, the lived experience of the colonised.

From our perspective (and informed by Stavarakakis, *Lacan and the Political*) by Symbolic is meant the ungrounded differential texture of the social; Real, according to Zizek in *Tarrying with the Negative*, the Real "designates a substantial hard kernel that precedes and resists symbolisation and, simultaneously designates the left—over, which is posited/produced by symbolisation itself." (1993: 36). 'Real' is precisely this underside of the Symbolic, where the fact that it is not grounded but arbitrary' (Saussure) resting on nothing, comes to the fore - it is "non-substantial" (Zizek, 1993: 129) it is a product of unsuccessful efforts to assimilate and integrate into the Symbolic. Imaginary refers to the ways subjects live their place in the Symbolic and is the subjective dimension responsible for the 'illusion of identity' which covers over and protects subjects from exposure to the contingency on which it depends.

In other words, the Real, Symbolic and Imaginary axes seem, under colonialism, to overlap directly, unlike under capitalism. For the colonised, the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary are "stacked up" in a specific way: here the Symbolic and Imaginary negate themselves because all they offer the colonised, is the real of non-meaning.

It is as if Zizek's (1989; 2004, 2005) subject of antagonism stood alone without any orthopaedic support from the Imaginary and Symbolic: for the colonised the Imaginary and the Symbolic cancel themselves out, leaving pure subjective destitution:

Cd -----→ I S R

Cd←----- R S I

The colonised suffers, in other words, from 'too much of the Real'- the effect of which is 'anxiety'. Here 'anxiety', the effect of collapsing Symbolic and Imaginary structures (Badiou, Lacan), is built into the constitution of the colonised from the very start. The colonised "lacks

the lack", in that the lack making possible effect of meaning no longer functions as the "absent cause" of the latter. Here the repetition of the collapse of meaning is the 'normal' subject-position (Imaginary and Symbolic) of the colonised.

It is thus the very construction of the ego of the Cd that marks this latter as 'nothing', as not having a determinate identity but always being at odds with itself, always frustrated in its effort to achieve full (social) existence. It is the emptiness of the Cd qua ego, that then, accounts for his plunge into thinghood; this is not the primary identity of the Cd qua Cr but has to be understood as a consequence of the construction of the Cd as a specific form of consciousness deemed incapable of achieving self-determination. It is only because the Cd is constructed as a special sort of subject that the former (the Cd) pursues the project of becoming a thing. It is to flee the anxiety built into the very construction of his body that the Cd pursues thinghood – it is not thinghood that defines him.

And it is only from this highly unstable starting point that one can hope to explain not only the attempt at 'thingification' but also those transgressive projects for white and black subjectivity that so concerned Fanon. This is what accounts for the excess in the pursuit by the Cd for identity - whether this be through seeking the fullness of white subjectivity (with the result that the colonised subject ends up unconsciously identifying himself as white) or, through identification with blackness as fullness: (this is an inversion of the CR – see Biko's BC).

On the other hand, the coloniser is defined by a super hard identity (*Tracing White Subjectivity*) which feels to him, however, (in the context of his lived experience, the dimension of the Imaginary) as if it did not exist – he feels no boundaries or limitations just excess mastery.

Returning, in conclusion, to the elementary position of the colonised we wish to stress two main points. Firstly, the reproduction of the colonised qua bearer of a deficient identity is not somehow predetermined to continue forever. It depends on practices of signification which

are not grounded in any extra symbolic substantial Real: (in fact the Real as has been explained refers to nothing more than the internal limit of the Symbolic, its impossibility of totalising or essentialising itself) but is contingent. The colonised subject has the capacity to not repeat its elementary identification, to disidentify and reidentify – and in later chapters we examine such 'shifts' in black subjectivity. The second point that needs to be underlined is that the 'fluidity' in the identity of the colonised causes anxiety which has to be overcome before any politics of anti-colonial emancipation can become possible. This 'incoherence' built into the 'normal' 'steady state' of the colonised subject is as much an obstacle as a condition of possibility vis-à-vis resistance to colonialism. This is the issue with which we are concerned in the later chapters of Biko's Black Consciousness, Mngxitama and new Black Consciousness, Colonialism and National Democracy.

4.2 Black Subjectivity – CdB~/CrW+(un)

What we have here is a result of the colonised subject's desperate search for a way out of the impossible structure in which the colonial relation holds him. He does not however directly challenge the white colonial signifier; instead he tries to identify with it: the places of the colonial relation remain the same; all that happens is that a black colonised subject switches places. So, there is evidence here of a colonised subject seeking to step out of the suffocation of his colonial place, but this does not involve a challenge to colonialism in the way the emergence of Black Consciousness or the Congress NDR tradition did.

Here then we have an agent who at the level of consciousness denies he is "white" but whose conduct towards whites and blacks involves slippages in which he treats whites as his equal and blacks as if he were white. Of course this is not tolerated under colonial conditions and he is always checked and punished for such transgressions. In other words, he is constantly 'reminded' of what, according to the logic of colonialism, he really is, CdB~ and 'identity' just not able to give him the degree of stability and identity he longs for. This throws him back into the same cycle, of fleeing blackness, of (unconsciously) attaching to whiteness, being repressed into blackness and so on.

It is not insignificant that Fanon stresses, more than once, that this is what the black man wants – he wants to be the white master but has to repress this from consciousness (under the threat of colonial punishment) which splits his identity. Note that this can only be a major figure of colonised subjectivity because of the instability and lack of identity that characterises the original place of the colonised in the colonial relation. It is this vacillation of identity that the colonised is responding to when he tries to attach himself to the white signifier. What we have here then is the primary identification of the colonised pushing him into a secondary identification CdB~/CrW+(u) in which his identity is split into what he thinks he is doing – being a colonised subject – and what he is really doing, that is, acting as if white.

The model for the analysis as has been pointed out in Zizek's (*Bodies Without Organs*) analysis of anti-Semitism (2006). On this, the anti-Semite sincerely believes he is not anti-Semitic but his actual behaviour belies this. Hence, we are forced to suppose that without consciously being aware of it he has attached himself to anti-Semitism. Here what is called the 'unconscious' is not 'hidden away' but is on display for everyone but the agent concerned that is.

Now, as discussed above, the colonial system is a symbolic system and therefore there is no causal necessity maintaining it: the colonised subject is free to change the meaning of his identity even though he is not aware of this (Laclau, 1990). The point is that his initial inscription into the elementary subject position of the colonised does not have to merely be repeated – there are several ways in which this subject can 'act back' viz-a-viz its structural interpellation and inscription and none of them is predetermined by either the colonial relation or anything else. They are all contingent and therefore supposing the non-causal intervention of the subject in order to be able to account for the emergence and formation. And, in the case we are considering, the elementary identification is not just repeated – what gets repeated is the split between the elementary identification and the unconscious identification with the white signifier.

Under colonialism the subject, CdB~, is denied identity and in a desperate endeavour tries to imitate the identity of the colonial master whom he is being interpellated by. But he is forced to suppress this identification into the unconscious. What do we mean by unconscious? We take our cue from Zizek who postulates that the unconscious is not unavailable, not hidden, but enacted in everyday social practices (2006). In Zizeks analysis of anti-Semitism the anti-Semite denies and is consciously not aware of his anti-Semitic conduct. But his conduct is anti-Semitic and this can only be accounted for, (given his denial) if we suppose the agent to be unconsciously in thrall to a certain "fantasy of the Jew" (2006). Here the unconscious is not a hidden reservoir of meaning but is instead "adverbial" – it refers to a specific modality of social practice – Thus as Zizek points out, it plays havoc with its standard subjective/objective distinctions – here the unconscious is objective (it is a modality of social practice) and subjective (it has to do with the subjects identification) at the same time.

What happens here is that the subject does not resignify race – its meaning in the colonial semantic register – but instead places himself (CdB~) in a place he should not be, in the place of the master: now our CdB~ also has the identity of wanting to be white – whereas only CrW+ should desire to be white. He wants to be white but cannot allow himself consciously to acknowledge this. The CdB~ is forced to repress his desire into the unconscious. What happens in our case (something that Hegel "overlooked") is that the subject just – unconsciously – switched places: swaps his place in the spectrum of colonial being for that of the white master. He does not resignify race of the colonial order itself – both the meaning of white and black and their asymmetrical order is ignored.

The CdB~ places himself in a position, that is, firstly, foreign, and, secondly, strictly prohibited to him. The Law of the Colony, the asymmetry of the Colonial Relation, does not allow such an identification and the Cdb~ is forced to repress it into the unconscious. "…now our CdB~ also has the same identity of wanting to be white. He wants to be white but cannot allow himself consciously to acknowledge this." (Fanon, 1952). This intervention of the subject is the one Fanon argues. [Fanon in *Black Skins White Masks* dedicates a chapter to Hegel's 'master-slave dialectic' (see the *Phenomenonlgy of Spirit*) entitled, 'the Negro and Hegel) Hegel has omitted in his analysis of the master-slave dialectic]. Hegel overlooks in other words, the possibility that the slave, CdB~, identifying with the master CrW+. To

identify with the master, is however, for Fanon what the 'black man', the colonial slave does. For Fanon the CdB~ desires to be CrW+. Thus he, insists, is what the black subject actually wants. Here what happens is that the CdB~ grasps more identity by aiming at the signifier 'white' itself. He wants to be/become white but the qua CdB~ is prohibited by the law of the colonial symbolic from even wanting this identity. This desire persists but as the "collective unconscious" (Fanon).

This particular position of the colonised subject, to which colonised subjects are particularly prone according to Fanon, constitutes a large part of the political landscape produced under colonial conditions. One of the problems confronted by any project that seeks to eliminate the colonial relation thus involves wrenching the colonised subject – this subject wrenching himself – away from his unconscious identification with whiteness, that is, not only away from his conscious identification of himself as a colonised subject.

At this point we need to tie up with the theme of Section 4.5 (post-apartheid black subject) where we examine the approach of what has come to be called the "new black consciousness". What we suggest is that the conceptualisation of the colonised subject as unconsciously in thrall to the white signifier is what is conceptually required by this approach. Mngxitama, for example, maintains that the leadership (at least) of the ANC behaves in ways that shows a "hatred" of blacks in areas such as service delivery, schooling, housing and health. But what he does not do is provide a concept of the subject able to sustain such conduct whilst, on the other hand, profusely denying it. One can always relent that they are conscious of what they are doing, cynically pretending not to be what they are, and to be what they are not. But the much more interesting (and likely) case involves not assuming such cynicism but not denying the conduct either, and this leads us to CdB~/CrW+ with the very important difference that today in post 1994 South Africa it is the non-racial signifier – enshrined as Master signifier in the constitution itself that everyone – including the leadership of the ANC – defers to. So in the current structure we have, then, agents who now consciously define themselves as non-racial but, if we stick with Mngxitama's argument, are still unconsciously striving for whiteness, hence their politics vis-à-vis other blacks. What is shown here is then just how sticky and recalcitrant colonial identification can be, how, in a surprising way it resurfaces under democratic conditions still steering the conduct of the 'previously' colonised.

As we said above that in this identification the colonial subject does not directly challenge the colonial matrix but seeks refuge under “whiteness”. At the same time it needs to be recognised that what is going here is not the repetition of the elementary position of the colonised but that of a split identity – and this perspective by the white master as transgressive. So here we have an “oblique” challenge to the colonial master one which although oblique succeeds in making the antagonism of the colonial relation penetrate the Imaginary of the Master – whose response is to ‘ratchet up’ the colonial injunction and the repression that goes with it. The master’s plenitude and transparency have been distributed for the first time, then, by this secondary identification of the colonised subject.

There are other ways of using the schema of the Colonial Relation and its forms of identification to throw light of the current politics of the ANC, ways that invoke other unconscious identifications also in tension with democracy, and will bring these up in a chapters 5 and 6 respectively.

4.3 Steve Biko’s Black Consciousness theory

Another way for the colonised subject to deal with his “destitution” (imposed on him by colonial interpellation) is this time, not by ‘obliquely’ sliding into the position of the white coloniser, but by confronting directly the way colonialism invests ‘whiteness’ with positive value and plenitude and blackness with their absence. Now, the colonised inverts this colonial binary, investing ‘blackness’ with the positive ethical existence and ‘whiteness’ with the predicates previously marking ‘blackness’. Here the subject does not seek to occupy the position of the white master because what he does is challenge what it is to be a white master, he challenges, in other words, the very meaning of ‘white mastery’ itself. Here, there is a resignification of colonial racial predicates such that what was previously negativised is now positivised.

Note how this operation of resignification of the signifier’s whiteness and blackness illustrates the ‘arbitrary’ nature of the signifier and the sign as accounted for by Saussure. Neither whiteness nor blackness has an intrinsic imminent meaning but rather their meaning

is dependent upon the relations of equivalence and synonyms established between them and other sets of properties: their meaning, ("whiteness" and "blackness") depends on their relations with other signifiers which over-determine or co-constitute them: that is, they are differentially constituted. What we see in the case of Biko and BC is then that in this theory and practice colonialism is treated exactly according to its nature as a discourse, a symbolic practice and system. Against the fetishism and naturalisation of identity promoted by the coloniser and the colonial relation, BC asserts that 'things do not have to be like that', that these meanings (of "blackness" and "whiteness") are the contingent effects of determinate practices of signification which possess no internal necessity of their own. In calling for their transformation, BC is, thus, not only implicitly recognising their contingency but also implicitly identifying the subject itself as distinct from its existing identification (subject-positions). In the semantic transformation called for by BC what is going on is that the colonised subject, the subject 'in the colonised', withdraws from "blackness = negative" and attaches himself to "blackness = positive" – this is his new 'subject-position', the 'subject-position', that is, of Black Consciousness.

Unlike the colonised subject who takes refuge in the white signifier, here the colonised subject in fact declares open war on the white signifier: He positions himself so that from now on it is impossible for these to co-exist, that is, the white signifier and BC are in on an intractable relationship of antagonism – it is the one or the other, it cannot be both at the same time. This is to be contrasted with the colonised subject who unconsciously 'thinks' he is white – of course as we explained, there is friction here but precisely because this identification is beneath the level of the agents consciousness and already repressed, in other words, it can and does co-exist with colonialism from start to finish: (see section 4.5 on Mngxitama and the new BC), but the decision to invert colonial predicates makes a claim to the whole space of colonialism and cannot co-exist with it. This is why we propose that the assumption of the BC subject-position involves a degree of subjective courage, absent when the colonised subject seeks to hide under the white signifier.

Be this as it may, the main point that we wish to stress in connection with Biko's BC thought and practice is that it constitutes under colonial conditions a necessary moment in the process whereby the colonised pulls himself out of the position of destitution and anxiety on the way

to an identity that does not depend on any essentialist notion of identity, that does not depend on the fantasy of plenitude which both coloniser and colonised seek to realise: (see chapter 6 on the Natioanl Democratic and Lefort). On the way, in other words, to a non-racial identity in which racial predicates have been completely, that is, de (and not just re) signified: democratic non-racial universalism of the sort embodied in the constitution (is the destination point if we want to see emancipation from colonialism). The BC subject position is a necessary stage on the way to such a political identity because there is no short-cut from the anxiety ridden colonised subject to the self-confidence required of the subject under democratic conditions (see later chapter 6). When BC, as a crucial moment of the formation of an identity for the colonised, is short-circuited, what happens is that the subject although participating in the democratic system still hankers for the sort of full identity that is incompatible with what is expected of a democratic subject. The subject position of BC, on the other hand, gives the (colonised) subject stability thus helping him claw his way out of the 'void' of his colonial inscription, and this is why we propose it is a necessary moment for the colonised subject seeking to escape colonialism.

But, having said this, we must immediately point out the ambiguity of this BC subject position, an ambiguity linked to a danger. The ambiguity is this – is this BC subject position an end point, does it bring to an end the process of designification and resignification – or it has to be understood as belonging to a process that 'goes further', so far as to be completely designifying race – making it irrelevant, beside the point when it comes to the definition of the human subject? Only the latter really gets out of the grip of colonialism, as the former, if it remains at the point of signifying blackness as positive, just inverts, that is, stays within the logic of colonialism. At the same time, the colonised cannot get directly to the desubstantialisation position of the democratic subject, but in order to reach this, must go through, feel the identity-effect of, the BC subject-position.

The ambiguity is that the BC subject-position is at the cross-roads of two trajectories. One leads from colonial destitution to democratic subjectivity, the other from colonial destitution into the cul-de-sac of another substantialisation or essentialisation of identity, this time 'Black' as 'plenitude'. It is a cross-roads that cannot be avoided if the objective is democratic universalism, but it is one that harbours a serious danger, that is, the refetishisation of race, an

inverted binary rather than an escape from the confines of the binary. This is why we suggest that the BC position is itself also a secondary colonial identification - that is, inseparable from CdB~. Matters become even more complicated when one tries to look at this situation ('the crossroads' referred to above) as closely as one can from the point of the view of the colonised subjects (struggling for emancipation) themselves. This issue, it should be remembered, is the one that so sharply divided Sartre and Fanon. Fanon objected to Sartre's insistence that 'negritude' can be seen as a particular, feeding into and being transformed by the universal of communism (Paige, 2010). For Fanon, this way of seeing things did not really do justice to the experience of negritude, subordinated it to, what at the end of the day, for Fanon, was just another example of Western rationality (the forward march of the Species Being towards communism – just another 'White Mythology'). At the same time this complicates matters even further (as elucidated by Torres). Fanon endorsed as a political objective, a new humanism – New, because for the first time generic, and not implicitly modelled on a particular (Western) figure of the subject and thereby truly universal. The sensitive point is just how 'Blackness' is to be understood in relation to the constitution of this new humanism – to say it gets 'subsumed' under it might seem to deprive it of any permanent effect of emancipation and this seems to be the sticking points between Fanon and Sartre, and may well also be the Achilles heel in Biko's thought.

BC is, then, from this perspective, to be understood in the following way - a new frontier was created "Which requires the production of empty or master signifiers serving as points of condensation or 'quilting together' ('*bricolage*') of a series of floating signifiers into a discursive structure." (Howarth, 1997: 54). 'Blackness' was first 'emptied' of its colonial content which made it available as a master signifier able to make sense in a new way of the black experience. It is thus argued that BC is an empty signifier which articulated and signified a new meaning to the term 'blackness'. BC sought to re-define what it meant to be black and through introspection ("the inward looking process" (Biko, 1987: 48) and "self-realisation" (Biko, 1987: 50) blacks would dissociate themselves and negate the value of all things associated with whites and whiteness, including whites themselves, and re-institute Africanism as the locus upon which identity formation and society is predicated upon. "The constitution of BC ideology involved the production of blackness as the master signifier - defined in opposition to 'whiteness' – which functioned to institute and organise a new radical political frontier in South Africa." (Howarth, 1997: 54-5).

Drawing on Fanon, Biko argued that the dominant element in the composition and reproduction of white domination is the "Dehumanisation of blacks, their reduction to pure form, which induces an attitude of fatalism and the internalisation of their oppression… All in all, the black man has become an empty shell, a shadow of a man, drowning in his own misery, a slave, an ox bearing yoke of oppression with sheepish timidity." (Biko, 1987: 16). Barney Pityana, another BC theorists (1997: 56) notes, "The bulk of black people…have accepted their degenerate status. The pride of peoplehood in them has been shattered."

As far as the articulatory mechanism of BC ideology is concerned, BC ideology was developed from the borrowings of Black Power in the USA, the 'Third Worldist' writings of Fanon and Cesaire, as well as the existentialist and phenomenological ideas of Sartre, Jaspers and Merleau Ponty. These borrowings were not a mere transposition of concepts, but the repetition of ideas, which in the case of South Africa, resulted in modifications to the 'original' discursive articulations (Howarth, 200: 69). What also contributed to the schema of BC was the development of 'Africanisation' as a discourse. A strong element of BC rhetoric drew on the Africanist myth of a truly man-centred society preceding colonial intervention (Howarth, 2002: 69). It is within this schema that Biko articulated what it meant to be black and what it entailed to have the consciousness of a black man.

For Biko, the signifier 'black' became the chief mean for representing and registering resistance to the apartheid and colonial order. "The mobilisation of 'blackness' became a condition of possibility for voicing protest irrespective of a particular enunciative position from which protest emanated." (Howarth, 2011: 175). The basic idea, as Noltushungu explains, was to expunge the negative identification of the oppressed as people falling short of the white norm. Thus, for Biko, 'being black' was not an 'anomaly' or 'deviation from whiteness'(Biko, 1987). Furthermore, not all non-whites are blacks because 'black' pertains to a realisation of the deep rootedness of white domination and a strong willed desire to eradicate it (MacDonald, 2003).

Under BC discourse the racial identities African, Indian and Coloured were condensed under the signifier 'black' (that is, they reciprocally overdetermined one another which made them equivalent and equivalentially defined in opposition to white identity and logic (Ramphalile, 2011).

Thus 'black' needed to be re-defined to give it positivity. Black and blackness came to represent opposition to white racism (Howarth, 1997: 60) and this precisely is the definitive of social antagonism. An antagonism is seen to occur when the presence of an Other prevents an identity from being totally itself and when it realises the impossibility of fully totalising because on an Other. A condition of the anti-colonial struggle is to successfully convert "anxiety" into "courage" (Badiou: 2005). What this latter requires is that the subject wrench itself – out of 'anxiety' – its 'normal' 'steady' state and reposit itself into courage, out of the CdB^{-} and into CdB+ or U (universality). CdB+ is the result of the subject this time resignifying the content given to the poles of the coloniser. Here we turn black from negative to positive, and white from positive to negative. It is within this paradigm that the mission of rescuing African heritage and ideals from colonial intervention, as expressed in Biko's article *Some African Cultural Concepts*, came to life. It is here that Biko contrapositions European and African culture, identities and lifestyles (Howarth, 1997: 69) and where he sought new conceptual resources by employing the discursive logic of equivalence and inversion: of 'Europeanness' and 'whiteness' (Howarth, 11: 174).

In 1971 at the Black Peoples Convention, Biko emphasised the need of a revival of authentic African culture, but more importantly, emphasised that this need needs to be realised by Africans themselves. Biko was therefore strongly dismissive of the help of white liberals in assisting the struggle for freedom and 'quest for a true humanity'.

Biko was relentless in pursuing the notion of blacks 'self'realisation. He pushed blacks to reject their 'lack of self' and 'absence of wholeness' and located their position as a result of white colonial supremacy and hegemony, that is, as a political form of construction rather than being rooted in something more fundamental. Biko was aware that psychological freedom and self-awareness held precedence over physical freedom as expressed in his

famous dictum “The greatest thing in the hands of the oppressor is the minds of the oppressed.” (Biko, 1987: 49). He endeavoured to pull blacks out of their “pathetic nihilism” (Fatton, 1986: 73) and stop the Othering and negation blacks were subject to vis-à-vis whites and whiteness which were normalised and hence privileged (Kumashiro, 2000: 35).

Blacks “Will be useless co-architects of a normal society.” without BC (Biko, 1987: 51).

According to Biko there were two forms of integration – good and bad. The latter form, consists of blacks eventually penetrating into white society and absorbing and assimilating their “established set of social relations.” (Howarth, 997: 59). Good integration on the other hand consists of “free participation by all members of society catering for the full expression of the self in a freely charging society as determined by the will of the people.” (Howarth, 997: 59). Biko extended this to define good integration as entailing a recognition that the majority of the people are African and that a society determined by the will of the people will exhibit and exemplify African notions and ideals (Biko, 1970: 17). Biko was of the belief that if any frontiers are established with non-racialism as the empty signifier around which society is constructed without BC the freedom struggle will be worthless as colonial relations and stratification will remain intact even if disavowed.

Now, through the above runs the question – as pointed out at the beginning of the chapter – concerning the status of the black signifier – BC discourse; is it a transcendental signifier, that is, is it to be understood as a final stopping point, self-sufficient and, self-referential and from which vantage point whiteness becomes secondary, and forever so: or is it a necessary but, by itself and as it is, insufficient basis for the new ‘normal’ society Biko refers to? And this ambiguity around the signifier “black” is thought by some to go some way towards accounting for the eclipse (in the struggle for hegemony within the forces of anti-apartheid) of BC by Charterism, the NDR discourse of the Alliance headed by the ANC. Thus for Howarth,

"*Although both discourses can be characterised as populist, the clear limitations on BC becoming a collective imaginary did not pertain to Charterism. Whereas BC stressed racial exclusivity, Charterism was avowedly nonracial; while BC was ambiguous about who constituted the South African nation and people, the UDF stressed that all South Africans who were against apartheid could be part of the South African nation, and they drew a set of equivalences along these lines. Moreover, while BC was unclear about its overall political programme, the signifier 'democracy' in Charterist discourse was able to include all social classes, and was able to accommodate numerous concrete interpretations of the nature of democracy*." (2000: 185) (emphasis original).

Hence, despite the constant reiteration that BC's 'blackness' was a political one it could never quite shake off the suspicion that it harboured a radical identitarian logic ultimately irreconcilable with non-racial universalism (Ramphalile, 2011). What this shows is "the limits of blackness as an empty signifier" (Howarth, 2000: 175).

What happened in the case of BC was that it was not able to function as a surface of inscription of a multiplicity of – most – social demands. BC remained fixated to the dislocations of too specific a group and could not extend its reading to other spheres of social life (Norval, 1996: 106).

As Howarth and Stavrakakis (2000: 8) state that "Even if the full closure of the social is not realisable in any actual society, the idea of closure and fullness still functions as an (impossible) ideal. Societies are thus organised and centred on the basis of such (impossible) ideals." For BC, the development of a radical blackness was intended to be that which was to fill the lack of closure of the social, in other words the absence of a black identity was what characterised the lack of the apartheid social. It is an empty signifier exactly because it signifies the symbolic emptiness of the social (Ramphalile, 2011: 28).

But as it transpired “blackness” was not sufficiently “emptied” in BC discourse, it was always haunted by a residual essentialism which finally prevented it from becoming ‘hegemonic’ under either apartheid or post-apartheid conditions: another way of putting this is to say that BC never succeeded in thinking non-racialism, because, and to the extent that it failed, to develop the concept of a non-antagonistic (universal) relationship between white and black.

4.4 Post-apartheid black subjectivity – Fanon, Biko, Mngxitama and the “New Black Consciousness”

Mngxitama and the new black consciousness approach take over where Biko left off but do so under conditions, and confront forms of identification, not considered by Biko and earlier black consciousness theory. On the one hand Mngxitama repeats the message and imperative of Biko viz blacks are still caught in an identity – a way in which they identify themselves as well as how others identify them – according to which because black they can never exist or be in the same way as they believe whites can.

Mngxitama is thus arguing that even at a conscious level – in spite of the advent of democracy in 1994 - a very significant number if black SA citizens - have not rid themselves of the subjectivity of the colonised (2011). Here the landscape is the same as that portrayed by Biko, whose “black consciousness” message was aimed at those caught in what they have called the original or elementary subject-position of the colonised - those who cannot consciously get away from feeling as if whites are superior beings – here the force of the message is focused on the semantics of race, on the way colonialism constructs ‘whiteness’ as superior and ‘blackness’ as correlatively inferior and then imposes this identity onto (empirically) black colonised subjects. Here the message, as in Biko, is that whiteness does not mean what the colonial world says it does and neither does “blackness” – in other words a practice of resignification of colour predicates.

But Mngxitama has to deal with a different political landscape from that of Biko. In post 94 SA the signifier of universality of non-racialism, is entrenched as a master signifier both in

the constitution and the institutional apparatus of constitutional democracy – the consequence that today at a conscious level a very significant number of black citizens have succeeded in moving beyond the elementary or original colonial definition of who they, as blacks, are, and have enthusiastically embraced the identity the constitution offers them. But as we will see in a moment, it would be a mistake to think that this development signals the eclipse of colonial forms of identification - what it really means is that today it has novel and often surprising ways of returning and resisting the universality of democratic citizenship. All that we propose to add to Mngxitama is a conception of the colonial subject able to bear the weight Mngxitama's argument puts on it. Mngxitama is saying that what we have today in SA are blacks who because of the way they behave towards other blacks, must "at some level" believe they are white (2011). Consciously (they are empirical black agents who) define themselves in non-racial universalist terms but without realising it, they themselves as in the earlier case discussed – desire to be white, identify with whiteness which they cannot avow today for different reasons from previously.

With respect to the first message of the new BC Mngxitama is quite correct to stress as he does, that the Most significant of the dispossessions (of colonialism) was that of 'African Being' which lent it a condition of 'unpeopleness'. Without BC, blacks "Regardless of the constitution, voting rights, liberation - will still have the mind-set of a slave (whose) thinking remains that of a happy hunting dog who fights for bones thrown down by the master." (Mngxitama, 2011).

White supremacy is understood as a multidimensional practice of white domination that transcends formal political power and extends to law, economy, culture even the "cognitive-evaluative" and the metaphysical. Like Biko but in a more contemporary idiom, Mngxitama calls on blacks "To move towards a more ethical existence, which is not *overdetermined* by whiteness (Mngxitama, 2011 – emphasis added) from "the status of 'sub-human' without a sense of self" (Mngxitama, 2009): an existence where "Blackness is not an amputation, a lack that can be filled only by white acknowledgement." (Mngxitama, 2011). As far as the second message of the new black consciousness goes, as Mngxitama puts it.

"*The managers of white supremacy are Black people. In the 21st Century, whiteness needs a bit of melanin. A little bit of melanin to reproduce itself. So in South Africa in 1994 you have Nelson Mandela. In the United States of America today you have Obama, right? …Now in South Africa it's the same thing; the ANC are the managers of the white supremacist system and we vote for them year in and year out.*" (Mngxitama, 2010).

Similarly, the "… the ANC has worked hard to sustain the apartheid status quo instead of ending white supremacy to render whites irrelevant so that we may all live in peace. It is constantly reproducing new forms of black denigration and marginalization while a layer of the politically connected gain access to some white privileges." (Mngxitama, 2011).

The main point we wish to trace viz-a-viz Mngxitama is the same one discussed previously in connection with Biko and the BC of the late 60's to late 80's. This has to do with whether the BC being proposed is just an inversion of the original colonial relation which now attaches 'being' to Black – in which case it has not really escaped the reach of the colonial matrix at all and its promises of liberation are bound to end in repression and closure. Here we might ask –what does Mngxitama mean by "rendering whites irrelevant" (see above): first we need to distinguish empirical whites from whites who identify with "whiteness" and even them rendering it "irrelevant" could mean inverting the colonial relation or it could mean getting rid of any reference to colour predicates whatsoever.

The ambiguity we are identifying here is the same one we identified in connection with Biko's BC – is it an inversion of colonialism, is this all its resignification of blackness amounts to? Or is this resignification of blackness as positive to be understood as the necessary beginning of the opening out, that is a necessary stage in the process of identity formation of putting together an identity on the way out of colonial destitution? Two different ways of 'getting the colonised out of the colonised' are thus both compatible with the resignification of race.

Remember the Fanon-Sartre dispute in this connection. Although we are not arguing that the postivisation of blackness is a particular that has to be subsumed under the communist universal – as Sartre did against Fanon (who did not want to have let go of an experience that to him seemed irreducible) – we are suggesting that unless the resignification of blackness does open out a new generic humanism, (which Fanon also embraced, we must emphasise) unless it moves beyond substantialising a determinate racial particular, it offers no promise of authentic liberation.

Chapter 5: White Subjectivity

5.1 Tracing white subjectivity in South Africa

"The past has shown that the assertion of a single national identity has precluded the assertion of others. National identity is invariably defined by the dominant group which excludes others from the locus of power." (Baines, 1998: 2).

Colonialism is built upon the direct negative relation between the coloniser and colonised. The colonial structure is not epiphenomenal but is instead *sui generis*. The latter makes possible the continuity of colonial relations. Colonialism managed to split the Cartesian Cogito positing the black colonised *subject* stripped of all value and plenitude, who is existing facing the Real against white coloniser *subject-position* existing in the Imaginary and saturated with fullness. "What colonialism shows is that all symbolic places are not ontologically equal: the place of the colonial Master offers Cartesian self-certitude and self-possession, the place of the colonised does not." (Hudson, 2012). Fanon's "Look Mama" encapsulates the articulation of the Colonial Relation and Colonial Interpellation where the message to the black colonised is "be what you are, *nothing*!" and to the white coloniser "look at this nothing that you are *not* and be what you are, which is everything!" (Hudson, 2012).

This section of the paper will analyse changes in white subjectivity by focusing on four 'moments' or events. The first of these events is the arrival of the white Dutch coloniser (and later the white English coloniser) already interpellated into dominance and supremacy and seeking to 'civilise' the black Natives. Second (that which first ruptured intra-white relations but later managed to ensure white dominance) was the discovery of gold and diamonds in the late nineteenth century. The third event and the first 'structural dislocation' resulted from the Great Depression and weakening economic and social position of the Afrikaners. Apartheid which was a response to the dislocated structure saw not only the crystallisation of the Afrikaner *volk* but also the passing of the baton from one coloniser to another. The last and most significant change was the surrender of the colonial project – 1994 - with non-racialism

(generic humanism) being the main ideological and interpellative discourse. Whilst from the start the black subject faced an array of subjective tensions, the white subject was always 'sheltered by' and offered 'orthopaedic support' by the Imaginary. It is imperative that we understand the Althusserian theory of interpellation before the specificity of colonial interpellations and identifications can be addressed.

Colonialism in South Africa started in 1652 with the arrival of the Dutch who were responsible for establishing a refreshment centre for ships on the trade route. As the white Dutch settled and the establishment grew slaves were imported to help meet the demands and slowly Natives were colonised via conquest. Central to our project is how the colonisation process affected white subjectivity. We need to begin by pointing out once again that colonialism is a relation, specifically a differential relation in which the coloniser and the colonised are co-constitutive of each other. We arrive at this conception of colonialism via Althusser's theory of society as "structured like a language" (Saussure, 1974). While Althusser develops this in the terms of Marxist theory, that is, the class relations are themselves constitutive of capitalism; we apply this structuralist principle to the colonial relation. To reiterate what Althusser takes over is Saussure's argument in *Course in General Linguistics*, Saussure privileges the syntagmatic strand of language in which language is a structure that is constructed relationally, that is, every element is posited as an expression of every other element. What this means is that each sign acquires its identity through its difference to other signs – what the sign is not. All identities are conceived in terms of its relational and differential values. "The value of a word is not determined merely by that that it represents but by the contrasts inherent in the systems of elements that construct language (*langue*)." (Howarth, 2000: 21).

Remember that no structure – precisely because it is Symbolic, relational – can achieve full totalisation and become an essence a substance able to rest on itself: on the contrary because no signifier can signify itself but is always propelled outwards, centrifugally, a structural relation can never ground itself. It is at this point we need to clarify the terms Symbolic, Imaginary and Real (see Stavarakakis). The Symbolic refers to the overdetermined differential character of social relations and social identities. The Real refers to what has been discussed above, the impossibility for the Symbolic to ever catch its own tail and achieve a

final perfectly grounded identity. Whenever a symbolic system reaches its limits and is internal gap emerges, whenever, that is, there is a breakdown of identity, the Real is making its presence felt. The Real, if you like, refers to autonomy of the signifier (in Saussure's schema), the fact that it does not rest on and reflect any substance external to it is nothing but pure difference as such is always ungrounded and susceptible to the intrusions of the Real. (In the analyses of colonial subjectivity advanced here these distinctions are crucial as will become clear). The Imaginary refers to ways in which subjects actually perceive and experience their symbolically incomplete and decentred identities. The role of the Imaginary and fantasy is to provide agents with narratives of who they are which conceal their contingent and symbolic construction, leaving them with a feeling of innateness. This is how the Symbolic, the Real and the Imaginary are understood in post Lacanian political theory (Stavarakakis, Zizek) and one of our objectives is to make use of this schema in understanding colonial society where, we argue, it is possible to identify novel configurations of the Symbolic, the Real and the Imaginary. To anticipate, it is argued, that these registers are "stacked up" in different ways in the case of the identities of the coloniser and the colonised.

What has emerged then is that no subject can do without a certain (minimum) degree of 'certainty' of feeling stable and in control of himself. According to Elisabeth Roudinesco (2004: 43) "The inherent tendency of human subjectivity is to look for a centre, the fantasy of a centre" - this centre is created through the process of Othering. Through antagonistic forces an Other is created that creates the illusion that the fulfilment of an identity (of the One) is possible, but there is an exogenous force preventing its realisation. Using Torfings words, "…the outside is not merely posing a threat to the inside, but is actually required for the definition of the inside. The inside is marked by a constitutive lack that the outside helps to fill." (2004: 11). How does this differential logic and constitutive lack aid us in understanding white subjectivity and the nature of the Colonial Relation?

The Dutch arrived in South Africa already interpellated into believing and propounding their dominance and supremacy. They brought with them, in other words, the colonial relation itself. All that was missing was a concrete figure to occupy the place of the colonised. Here we need to refer directly to Fanon who is very clear on the role of the colours 'white' and

'black' in Western thought which provided the colonisers with their self-understanding and their understanding of the colonial encounter itself, that is, the encounter with the Colonial Other.

If we want to understand the conceptual apparatus the colonisers brought with them some extracts from Fanon *On Colour*; Hegel *On Africa*; Maldonado Torres and *Post Colonised footnotes* tells us a lot.

The specificity of the colonial relation resides in the interdependence – for their very identity – of the coloniser and the colonised. This is a differential relation (although Fanon does not draw this out and make it explicit (because that definition of what the coloniser is depends internally on what the colonised is, and vice-versa. Torres is helpful here, his argument is that the colonial relation has to be understood as a specific relation of domination, different from other Western modes of mastery in which the Other is transformed, assimilated, or annihilated. The colonised is for Torres the "ballast" of the colonisers own feeling of superiority and power and as such has to be maintained in its colonial subordination in order for the master to be a master (2007).

The Dutch arrived in South Africa already interpellated into their identities as white masters which they proceeded to actualise via their control over economic, politico-legal and ideological infrastructures. The symbolic definition of white colonial master as fully in control of and transparent to himself, that is, in full possession of himself, cognitive and practical is one in which we can identify a specific articulation of the Symbolic, the Real and Imaginary: for the coloniser is entirely wrapped up in his Imaginary identity which is also 'more extreme' than in the standard situation. The misrecognition effect of ideological fantasy in terms of which the subject believes it is self-sufficient and is thus screened-off from its own incomplete and precarious symbolic (relational) identity is here taken further. In the case of the white coloniser his Imaginary relations to his real conditions of existence (Althusser) is as far removed from his identity as mere relational effects as is possible. Moreover that such a differential relation rests on nothing and is thus always open to disrupting and lack of cohesion – the dimension of the Real – is also maximally closed-off to

him. He lives entirely in Imaginary self-sufficiency, with the Symbolic and the Real safely screened-off.

Quickly turning to the colonised, remember the coloniser and colonised are internally related – what the coloniser is is what the colonised is not. That the white place (in the colonial relation) is a place of maximum self-mastery and presence is only intelligible on condition that the place of the black colonised be one of minimal self-possession. The colonised (see chapter 4) is defined as not existing in the same way as the coloniser, it is his very being that is deficient as defined in the colonial relation. He is denied access to any sense of full being, his self-image is not whole but "splattered" (Fanon –Look Mama). In other words the identity offered to the colonised is not a full identity – the colonial Imaginary interpellates him as "always falling short", always failing, in other words. Here the lack of identity (the dimension of the Real in the Symbolic-Real-Imaginary trio) is part of the Imaginary, unlike in the case of the master. The negativised black subject is thus the occupant of a Symbolic place in which the Symbolic and Imaginary scaffolding needed for a sense of identity are not provided – the symbolic definition of the colonised is such that he is without identity and stable mooring – he experiences "too much Real" and this induces effects of anxiety. So, with one hand for the colonised we have a direct exposure to the Real, with the (colonised ←RSI) imaginary security of identity pushed away: on the one hand, for the coloniser we have the Real and its effects of meaning collapse at the furtherest possible remove (Cr ←ISR).

This relation between coloniser and colonised can be further elucidated through an example provided by Mullen (1994) (Although the example provided is an American one it nonetheless is sufficient and apt in explaining the Colonial Relation).

In a reading of Ralph Elllison's *Invisible Man*, Mullen (1994) takes interest in a black male character named Lucius Brockway. Brockway is employed at the Liberty Paint Company which produces a paint named "Optic White" whose pure, untainted and perfect whiteness is, according to Brockway, a result of his unique and masterful mixing skills and knowledge of the machinery (Mullen, 1994). Mullen (1994: 76) notes how "Brockway has something to teach the narrator" through how the "elder worker correctly points to the unacknowledged

contribution of black men and women to the production (and reproduction) of white America." What this example shows is the subversive presence of one identity in another and that the construction and domination of one identity requires the subordination, sometimes nothingness of being, of another. These relations are maintained over time in order to sustain the "society effect", that is the cohesiveness of society and its preventing from crumbling (dislocation) through subject-positions into free fall and destitution. The 'society effect' is upheld through ideology. Ideology is thus the conditions under which subjects live and act their practices. What are these practices? Where do they come from? And who controls what practices are practiced? Stavrakakis (2000: 106) holds "Ideologies do not emerge like mushrooms, or according to any plan of predestination, but constitute responses to particular crises that cannot be known in advance and cannot be administered within the previous ideological configuration." The Master-Slave/coloniser-colonised dialectic existed in SA for several centuries and ideology perpetuated the Colonial Relation. This was made possible through the control by the Dutch of the economic, political and the ideological. Whilst the economic and politico-legal are important in creating a structure that the subject lives in, the 'non-thinking' or misrecognition of the subject of itself is achieved through ideology as discussed in Chapter 1.

Under colonialism, the CrW+ created an 'identity' for blacks in complete opposition to their own. For the CrW+ to retain their domination, they had to ensure that the CdB~ was kept in place - a place of nothing, stripped of all plenitude. This was achieved through the Church and missionaries (ISA's) who engaged blacks in the thinking that whites were pure and supreme and that they were impure and nothing; through the education system where at an extremely low level blacks reached a ceiling in being allowed to develop their intellectual, creative and physical selves, so that whites would always surpass them in every sphere. As long as blacks were kept at nothing, whites would have everything. The systemic positivisation and negativisation of the whites and blacks had to be strictly maintained at all costs. In order to progress to a deeper understanding of white subjectivity and white interpellative logic Althusser's three theses of interpellation will be discussed.

According to the first process of interpellation – we recognise ourselves according to what people label us - “speech is the primary dialogue of all discourses” (Macdonell, 1986:1). “The subject is caught in this network – common nouns and proper nouns, shifting effects, syntactic constructions etc – such that he results as the cause of himself.” (Pecheux, 1994: 149-150). As Althusser remarks, an individual is “always-already” a subject. Because interpellated by their familial matrix/configuration before they are even born. In the case of the coloniser how does this function? Yes, the coloniser is born into a family of colonisers and domination over the colonised is expected of him but for the Dutch (and later British) coloniser he was “always-already” interpellated into believing that the CdB~ was lower than him (a feature of the Western Big Other), a failure and by virtue of this he elevated himself as the master of himself and others. By language such as I/you, One/Other, we/them the coloniser sees himself as the cause of himself and others and is interpellated accordingly.

The second process of interpellation in which the subject sees himself as an autonomous entity, is a result of the effects of misrecognition. The misrecognition effect has been discussed earlier so will not be analysed at this point. The third process represents the crux of interpellation. As previously mentioned, the coloniser, the CrW+ is the result of phantasy (or Munchhausen) effect. In terms of which he is under the illusion that he is the cause of his own actions. He does not see that it is because of the subversive presence and position of the CdB~ that he is CrW+ and in doing so sees himself as free, autonomous and a self-making self-centred entity.

Through interpellation - through speech and writing the coloniser differentiated himself from the colonised; through the misrecognition effect he sees himself as autonomous and wholly responsible for himself; and it is through these processes, which hardened and over time, that the coloniser comes eventually to be like the Althusserian Big Subject, that is self-referential and self-sufficient to the maximum possible extent.

The relations of the Dutch and British were tested over time but in spite of differences over land and power they always maintained their positions as coloniser, the position of CrW+. But in late nineteenth century with the discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa the

signifier coloniser was split into ‘Afrikaner coloniser’ and English coloniser’. The next section of this paper will analyse the effects of this discovery and how it affected the subjectivity of the CrW+ as well as its significance for colonial discourse.

5.2 Pre-apartheid (late 1800s-1948)

The colonial relation is a differential overdetermined relation as we have seen. It does not have a ‘foundation’ upon which it rests but is a precarious self-supporting symbolic relation. Neither pole is anything but the difference between it and the other pole, that is, neither pole is a self-sufficient essence with its own intrinsic attributes. Taking this perspective is important because it immediately deflates all the coloniser’s claims to inherent superiority and shows the colonised is a symbolic construction of colonialism. The place of the coloniser, the Master, is one of absolute autonomy and identity, whereas that of the colonised, as we have seen, is marked by an ontological incompletion and instability. The colonial relation and colonial interpellation continue as long as the colonised does not attempt to subvert it by climbing out of his deficit of being and as long as the Master is able to repeat his performance of mastery.

In what follows I trace the pressure experienced by the Colonial Relation, that is, the pressure exerted on the colonial relation with the advent of capitalism in South Africa. Pulling together the analyses of Norval, Torfing and Howarth – I try to describe the precise nature of this tension and the dislocations it produced. I also adumbrate the way the colonial relation was affected and how it changed its form as a result.

The early twentieth century witnessed a threat to the Colonial Relation, not by a surge of energy by the colonised, but by the Afrikaner beginning to slide to the position ‘of lack’. This was a result of an increase in industrialisation, urbanisation and proletarianisation owing to the discovery of gold and diamonds and the advent of capitalism as the dominant mode of production (Norval, 1996). The transition from one economic-styled base to another had deep changing ramifications which untowardly led to a structural dislocation in the early 1930s within the coloniser Afrikaner community. The Afrikaner began sliding to the position of the

black colonised, but the Colonial Relation does not allow this and in response to the changing circumstances, the Afrikaner retreated to that which he knows best – his *volk* roots. It is here that he is the master, full of plenitude, buffered from the Real, the place he knows best, and in doing so the Afrikaner does all within his power to ensure his superiority and comfort is maintained even if it means pushing the black colonised into deeper destitution although this never goes so far as to physically destroy the colonised. It needs to be borne in mind that the coloniser needs the colonised as a "ballast" (Torres, 2007) for his superiority. Thus colonialism does not strictly speaking involve genocide or the transformation of the other to the same (that is the colonised into coloniser) but the establishment and reproduction of what we have called the colonial relation. This response showcases the acute dimensions of colonialism and pre-apartheid logics - addressing intra-white relations via the establishment of a homogeneous African population.

The initial three decades of the twentieth century wrought great change in South Africa. The discovery of gold and diamonds, the rapid expansion of secondary industry during and post the war years as well as massive urbanisation of both Afrikaners and blacks led to economic and social tectonic changes. Changes to the economic base, one of the three fundamental structures inherent to the functioning of society, resulted in changes to the politico-legal and the ideological. The onset of capitalism, the new economic form, was the cause of a structural morphology in colonial and segregationist discourse respectively, by introducing a novel and additional form of antagonism – class antagonism. Under colonialism, antagonism which is responsible for the maintenance of frontiers and the placement of the lines of inclusion and exclusion is concentrated in the figure of the colonised (Hudson, 2012). According to Nolutshungu, the colonised is in a permanent state of insubordination as he is constructed as an enemy of the coloniser. The coloniser protects his position and supremacy by subordinating to the greatest degree possible the identity and position of the colonised. Remember that the Colonial Relation does not offer the colonised a place in the same way the master is offered a place: he is not just allocated a subordinate and inferior identity but is rather defined in negative contrast to the full being off the master. Furthermore, colonial difference goes further than its capitalist counterpart (Hudson, 2012). "Bourgeois and working class share a common ontological status even if their projects, capitalism and communism, are incompossible and incommensurable. Coloniser and colonised do not, in that the colonised by definition is not permitted to exist in the way the coloniser does, and

this ontological deficit is thus inscribed in his place is constituted by the colonial relation." (Hudson, 2012).

According to Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) initial definition of antagonism, antagonism is understood as the accusation of an identity not achieving fulfilment because another identity is blocking or inhibiting it from becoming what it really is. "As soon as I recognise myself, in an ideological interpellation, as a 'proletarian', I am engaged in the social reality, fighting against the 'capitalist' who is preventing me from realising fully my human potential, blocking my full development."(Zizek, Butler, Stephens, 2006: 251; Norval, 1996: 63). Furthermore, the proletariat believes that through the annihilation of the capitalist - the external enemy - antagonism will be abolished and he will arrive at an identity with itself. This proposition of antagonism is correct when understood through the effects of ideological illusion, but when stripped of the illusion, the effects of ideology, when the situation is laid bare, the inverted relationship holds true, that is, it is not an external enemy preventing the subject from achieving plenitude, the subject himself is responsible for his lack. This lack is attributable to the structure being symbolic, that is, to the arbitrary nature of the sign, and the subject deals with the impossibility of achieving and attaining itself by projecting its incapacity onto an external enemy - the Other – "the external enemy is simply the small piece, the rest of the reality upon which we 'project' or 'externalise' this intrinsic, immanent impossibility." (Zizek, Butler, Stephens, 2006: 252; Norval, 1996: 64). Thus an antagonism is seen to occur when "'the presence of [an] "Other" prevents me from being totally myself. The relation arises not from full totalities, but from the impossibility of their constitution."(Laclau and Mouffee, 1985; Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 10).

The capitalist and working class mutually share "a common ontological status" (Hudson, 2012) despite their initiatives being incompossible and incommensurable. What this implies that, unlike capitalism, within Colonial Relations, antagonism does not emerge in spite of the Symbolic and Imaginary covering up the Real (of class antagonism). Under colonialism the antagonism for the colonised as lived as fully as it possibly can be short of identity breakdown *tout-court* (Hudson, 2012). The central axis of the colonial relation is the built-in mechanism which forcefully holds the colonised in his position and restricts access to subjectivity, that is, denies the colonised any transformative ability. This is the tension and

antagonism that inheres in the colonial signifier, the specifically colonial system of signification - the master can only continue to exist as Master on condition the colonized suffer a deficit of being. Although the dislocation produced by capitalism did not, at the end of the day, undo the colonial relation, the Afrikaner community underwent traumatic experiences which brought it and South African society as a whole, close to the brink of fundamental upheaval.

Upon the discovery of precious metal in South Africa, British, American, German and Dutch investors flocked to South Africa to set up and benefit from the mining industry. To meet the demands of the investors thousands of Africans were drawn from the Reserves to cater to the needs as well as to fill the labour gap created by the upsurge in secondary industry. These new demands for labour led to massive proletarianisation and urbanization of Africans and Afrikaners alike. For the latter urbanization came to mean much more than a relocation to the city, it entailed a loss of the volkseie, a loss of one's own religion, spiritual, moral and social values, and even one's own language (Norval, 1996: 20). A set of equivalences were drawn between "The city, Englishness, amorality, relativism, artificiality and atheism, while the platteland (countryside) was associated with a close communion with nature, God, a rounded humanity, simplicity and resoluteness characteristic of the Afrikaner life." (Norval, 1996: 20). Whilst the Afrikaners accepted modernity and sought to create a positivised image of Afrikaner identity at the same time that industries grew, Africans began occupying semi-skilled positions and posts previously reserved for whites only. The labour process became a site of major antagonism as newly urbanised whites lacked experience and had difficulty working with blacks (Norval, 1996: 15). These circumstances circumvented the existing lines of inclusion of exclusion. According to the colonial relation, there is an incommensurably gap between the signifier black and the signifier white. The occupation of 'top-spot' by one requires the nothingness of the other and the rising positions of Africans and the downward spiral of Afrikaners, challenged and put into question this relationship. Lefort argues that "Any society, in order to relate to itself, and to exist as a human society, has to forge a representation of its unity." (Lefort, 1986) and the creation of such representations of unity occurs through the drawing of boundaries, political frontiers articulated in discourse. Hence, the question of social division is, from the outset, a question of limits, of the 'outside'. In addition to the changing racial demarcations were a series of disputes between industrial unions which generated acute intra-white struggles (Norval, 1996: 15). These changes

resulted in the erasure of the spaces and identitarian logics of the white coloniser and the black colonised.

Segregationists attempted to address intra-white relations by way of a discourse that called for white unity and in establishing a solid frontier where the identity of Africans would also be kept in place and colonial interpellation could resume its 'normal' functioning. In the end this was to be achieved by the fostering of new modes of identification brought into being by the Afrikaner Nationalist movement. This supplemented South Africanism with a novel, narrower conception of Afrikanerdom, and, through this supplement, intra-white distinctions would be subverted and a homogenous 'white capitalist coloniser signifier' would define South African discourse. "It is crucial in this respect (to note) that the homogeneity of 'the other', the Native, could only be produced by assuming an equally unified white identity opposing it." (Norval, 1996: 34).

Although a frontier still existed between white coloniser and black colonised, on the side of the coloniser, economic changes caused a deep split between the English and Afrikaner coloniser and Afrikaner subjectivity faced a series of difficulties in re-finding its colonial equilibrium.

"*To understand segregation, as a principle of reading which articulates elements in an ideological unity, one has to take account not only of the particularity and diversity of strands of discourses informing that unity, but also of the unity that is produced as a result of the condensation of those diverse and separate strands…. To locate this source of unity, it is important to recognise that all the constituent discourses of segregation, however different in the minutiae of their analyses, were in the agreement on the fundamental need to exclude the black South African population from the centres of political power, and thus depended on the establishment of a relatively clear-cut political frontier between white and black. The articulated unity thus did not arise from a natural, common subject-matter, either in the form of a given 'white' subjectivity or in the form of an existing black identity. Rather, as Dubow remarks in a different context, segregation initially emerged as a defensive strategy*

developed by English-speaking liberals to consolidate white supremacy. This could only be done by excluding 'the Native' as other." (Norval, 1996: 29).

And as Foucault argues, "The processes through which reality is constructed and dissimulated are always acts of power and will always be resisted and contested." (Norval, 1996: 3). Despite the white governments attempts at creating a homogenous white identity, economic differentials between the English and Afrikaner were growing. This endeavour was halted by the Great Depression at the start of the 1930's which (combined with other economic and social events) caused a structural dislocation. "The reading given to these dislocations was intimately related to the perceived failures of segregationist discourse: the inability to resolve the 'Native question', and its failure to construct 'white' unity." (Norval, 1996: 4-5).

Laclau defines dislocation as "An emergence of an event, or a set of events, that cannot be represented, symbolised, and in other ways domesticated by the discursive structure - which therefore is disrupted." (Torfing, 1999: 148). A dislocated structure does not possess the means of its own rearticulation, it cannot determine its own reconstitution, precisely because it is dislocated (Laclau, 1990a: 50). Rearticulation therefore always requires some intervention able to make new distinctions and establish new connections in the politico-discursive field in question. However, dislocations are not only traumatic occurrences, they also have a positive side, "If", as Laclau puts it, "on the one hand they threaten identities, on the other, they are the foundation on which new identities are constituted." (Lacalu, 1990: 39; Stavarakakis, 1999: 68; Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 13). Inasmuch as dislocations disrupt identities and discourses they also re-institute and assert a new social subjectivity (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 13). Dislocation of the dominant power and the vacillation of the structure thus give space for the subject to think its position within society and furthermore, to fantasize and materialise a society that meets its needs, demands and desires. In the process of subjective withdrawal and fantasy there occurs first disillusionment, and, then, secondly, reillusionment, the process of creating a new hegemonic order, that is, the creation of mythical space(s).

The mythical space creates a chalkboard where ideas and notions of the possible dominant power and functionality of society can be considered. The dislocated structure does not offer space for 'outrageous' demands instead a decision is taken based upon the rudiments and sedimentation of the broken structure, that is, a certain repetitiveness is always present. The specificity of this repetitiveness can be elucidated by firstly the work of Foucault and his theory of discontinuity and secondly Derrida for his theorisation of the notion of iterability.

Thus, to argue that apartheid is synonymous in thought and function with segregation is misleading but, at the same time, certain elements of the previous hegemony are maintained. "…in short, their continuities as much as their discontinuities have to be taken into account, for the same, the repetitive and the uninterrupted are no less problematic than the rupture." (Norval, 1996: 97). Here the logic of fantasy aids in creating a smooth and seamless transition from one hegemony to another. The role of fantasy in this context is not to set up an illusion that provides a subject with a false picture of the world, but to ensure that the radical contingency of social reality remains firmly in the background (Glynos and Howarth 2008a; Howarth, 2009: 322). Put more fully,

"*The logic of fantasy operates by providing a fantasmatic narrative that promises a fullness-to-come once a named or implied obstacle is overcome, and which foretells of disaster if the obstacle proves insurmountable. The first element might be termed the beatific dimension of fantasy and the second the horrific dimension of fantasy, which work hand-in-hand (Stavrakakis 1999, pp. 108–109, 2007). The beatific side, as Žižek (1998, p. 192) puts it, has 'a stabilizing dimension, which is governed by the dream of a state without disturbances, out of reach of human depravity', while the horrific aspect possesses 'a destabilizing dimension', where the Other – a 'Jewish plot' or the lazy/overzealous immigrant – is presented as a threatening or irritating force that must be rooted out or destroyed. Our subjective desires and identifications are thus sustained by the threats posed to our ideals and dreams*." (Howarth, 2009: 322).

In South Africa the passage from fantasmatic to social logics was made possible through the erection of the signifier of 'Afrikanerdom' into a master signifier able to resolve the widest range of demands. The signifier of Afrikanderdom (apartheid) competed with a series of other discourse attempting to suture the dislocated structure of segregationism. The signifier apartheid was elected from those of continued racial segregation and, of non-racialism as posited by blacks for example. As Levi Strauss argues, the bricoleur "Interrogates all the heterogeneous objects of which his treasury is composed to discover what each of them could "signify" and so to contribute to the definition of a set of which has yet to materialise." (Levi Strauss, 1966: 18). The fact that apartheid won the battle for signification was not according to some hidden influence or pre-determined essence but "The results of contingent historical, symbolic practices, and not of underlying, a priori interests." (Norval, 1996: 56).

Under such circumstances, the myth becomes an imaginary surface of inscription capable of accounting not only for the 'experiences' and demands of a particular group, but for all possible demands that may arise (Norval, 1996: 67). The *volk*, acted as an 'empty signifier' – a surface of inscription uniting all the positive elements together, and giving them their meaning, a meaning which, nevertheless, only arises out of a fundamental negativity. This mythical horizon is what enables one to account for the unity of the discourse of the intellectuals in a non-reductionist fashion, for it designates a space of inscription marked by its own constitutive impossibility: in other words the *volkseie* is that which is 'ours and ours alone', inaccessible to the 'other', and that which is threaten by 'theirs'. In this sense, the *volkseie* points not simply to the terrain in which an overdetermination of elements associated with the *volk* is constituted – the enumeration of the theological, cultural and racial 'values' – but to the ultimate impossibility of the very identity of the community (Norval, 1996: 96). Owing to the fact that it just cannot get away from what it is not – it cannot get away from the fundamental negativity that constitutes it qua relational identity.

"…the production of new modes of identification for the subject involves a determinate relation to the other: I can be myself only to the extent that the other no longer prevents me from being so. The identity of the self is thus given, constituted, by the 'other'…. Thus 'Afriknerdom' did not gain its identity merely from the positive contents of the discourse of the organic intellectuals…but it did so from the exteriorisation of a series of 'others'. An exclusive Afrikanerdom was what was left once communists, English-speakers, imperialists,

Natives, Asians, coloureds, Jews, traitors are all shown to be foreign, alien. Of course, as is clear from the extreme, 'wonderful and weird', proliferation of 'others' throughout the 1930s and beyond, the moment in which 'Afrikaner identity' in all its bareness, stripped of all its exclusions, is visible, never arrives. Hence the continual production of 'others'." (Norval, 1996: 54).

"This movement from myth to imaginary involves, as Laclau argues, "the metaphorisation of the literal contents of particular social demands" (1990); that is, a retreat of the concrete demands informing the myth such that it starts to function as a general surface of inscription of any social demand. This is what occurred once the logic of the volkseie – initially associated with the experience of the /Afrikaner volk – began to act as a general principle for the organisation of all social relations. The fact that political frontiers, as a result, were forged around both a 'colour frontier' and an ethnicist axis – neither of which can be separated from or reduced to the other - introduced a core area of undecidability into apartheid discourse, it was produced as a result of the political grammar of apartheid discourse; as a result of its formal and syntactical composition and articulation, which were embedded in material practices…. Apartheid, thus, did not operate through logics of exclusion, nor simply through differential forms of inclusion, but through the simultaneous retention of both those logics. Attempts to reduce apartheid to either of those dimensions will, thus, fail to grasp what constituted one of the strongest mechanisms of its hegemonisations." (Norval, 1996: 9-10).

The battle for the heart of 'Afrikanerdom' or as Jessop expresses "the strategic selectivity of institutions" (2008: 36) was thus a battle for hegemony, for the occupation of the terrain of moral and intellectual leadership from which sense could be made of economic changes and other contingent events which disrupted sedimented and naturalised forms of identification. It is in that context that dislocation as a theoretical category has to be understood. Apartheid is thus understood as a response to the dislocation caused by the "Upheavals associated inter alia with the increasing capitalisation of agriculture, the concomitant rapid rise in rates of urbanisation, and events such as the Second World War – which characterised the South African political landscape during the 1930s and 1940s." (Norval,1996: 5) - as the evolution of a myth into an imaginary and with it the passing of the baton from one coloniser to

another, a crystallisation of the hegemony of the Afrikaner volk as a specific modality of the colonial relation in South Africa.

5.3 Apartheid

"The struggle for order feeds upon its other, chaos." (Norval, 1996: 274).

The institution of a new objectivity, the undertaking of a new decision come a period of instability and insecurity where the privileging on one decision connotates the suppression of alternate possibilities is, in the most fundamental sense, a power relationship (Laclau, 1990: 30; Howarth, 2009: 317). All social identity is an act of power (Howarth, 2009: 317). Power, in this understanding, firstly, involves the drawing of political frontiers via the establishment of multiple lines of inclusion and exclusion and secondly this differentiation is institutionalised via the production of practices, policies and regimes (Howarth, 2009: 309; 310). At this point, the glazing and mystification of the logic of fantasy is helpful in that it aids in concealing the contingency of social relations as well as naturalising the relations of domination in discourses and other pertinent practices (Howarth, 2009: 326). The third most necessary and fundamental act of power regards the positing of the Other. "'Others' are produced in and through discursive, symbolic processes, which present that production as if it is natural, and it succeeds to the extent that it provokes the subject to respond to those productions in the form of mis-recognition." (Norval, 1996: 54).

The investigation of apartheid discourse undertaken here seeks to explicate and enunciate the composition and operationality of the manner in which 'social reality' was produced and reproduced, that is, how Afrikaners rationalise their everyday existence (Norval, 1996: 7). The chief concern of the Afrikaner community was the purification and preservation of their culture and identity that had been "polluted" in the early part of the century and this new articulation was to be achieved through dissociating Afrikaner from English and separating black from white. The transposition of the apartheid discourse onto the *volk* resulted in the "Recasting of political frontiers – a re-ordering between Afrikaners and English-speaking whites, and between 'whites' and 'blacks' – took place." (Norval, 1996: 7-8). Thus, "…initial

articulation took place in terms of the division within Afrikanerdom, and how a true Afrikanerdom was produced by delineating true from non-true Afrikaners by reference to a specific Afrikaner principle of ordering which only was brought into being by distinguishing it from other principles of ordering, and it was only later that this logic was spread and extended to other groups. (Norval, 1996: 7). It is important to point out the caveat: what holds for the production of Afrikanerdom also applies to the formation of its others. It should not be taken that the production of others was born from "natural and given, 'pre-discursive' identities" (Norval, 1996: 8) but what is politically relevant is the occupying of the category of the Other within precise historical circumstances (Norval, 1996: 8). Taking the lead from this point, it is of utmost importance to locate apartheid within the mega or overarching structure of colonialism.

Whilst most theories of apartheid view apartheid in isolation of colonial studies, choosing to focus of the race/class dynamic and criticising theories of continuity, I argue for an analysis of apartheid through the thesis of internal colonialism, that is, apartheid entrenched colonial political frontiers and operated within an already constructed functioning symbolic overdetermined system. In the context of this system as has been noted already white is value (the value of all that has value) and this is strictly inseparable from the non-value, the subjective deficiency, of black. Apartheid discourse will be examined against this backdrop. This will be undertaken by firstly defining and analysing apartheid discourse, secondly, examining how CrW+ interpellated others and in doing so ignored the blind spot that ended in its demise, and, thirdly, the surfacing of the signifiers of blackness and non-racialism and their impact on apartheid discourse.

Theoretically, the movement from myth to imaginary entails the solidification of lines of inclusion and exclusion, the process in which binaries become distinct and necessary. The phantasy effect maintains these binaries or 'social logics' so that society can perpetuate itself. But, if these binaries are steadily increasing and political frontiers have no time to set in and take root but are constantly planted and replanted, how does this instability and change affect the nature of the system? If undecidability is the logic and essence of a system, what are the ramifications? The logic of apartheid can be understood in this way, that is, although it transformed a myth into an imaginary, it never consolidated the pursuance of identitary logic

to the utmost degree. What then are the logics of apartheid? Firstly, apartheid functioned within the logic of colonialism or the colonial megastructure and therefore depended on the colonial relation. Secondly, apartheid understood as a discourse, maintains itself through specific political frontiers and forms of Othering, and thirdly, these political frontiers come with a certain degree of uncertainty and undecidability that ultimately superseded the regime.

Discourse theory addresses, "The way social practices systematically form the identities of subjects and objects by articulating together a series of contingent signifying elements available in a discursive field." (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 7). Discourse theory thus not only emphasises the contingency of structures but also focuses on partial fixations of meaning or nodal points that are necessary in creating social identity (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 7). In this way neither does discourse theory reduce all discontinuity to an essential logic or principle nor does it deny continuity and fixity of meaning (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 7). I have traced the emergence of the imaginary – the reactionary exclusive Afrikaner nationalism - to the dislocation of the 1930s and 1940s where rapid urbanisation, eroding of the Afrikaner community and culture and their subordination to the English imperial culture, social, economic and political hegemony, made a homogenous and continued identification no longer achievable. Disturbed intra-white relations caused a disjuncture and acted as an impetus for the reconstitution of the *volk* (Norval, 1996: 1969-70). In formulating a response, that is, during the articulatory practice the new structure is built upon the sedimentation of the old regime leading the new social formation to be based on the discourse of continuity and discontinuity. Apartheid was clearly continuous insofar as it maintained the colour frontier, and was dedicated to upholding the CrW+ - CdB~ colonial relation, but novel in that it instituted a new nationalist cultural frontier in its pursuance of the idea of the volkseie (Norval, 1996: 5-6). The prominence of these new frontiers caused a discontinuation with segregationist discourse that had far-reaching consequence for both the apartheid and colonial structures (Norval, 1996: 5-6). The discourse of apartheid was constructed on the burnt bridge between the English and Afrikaner community. The economic base continued to serve the dominant position of both English and Afrikaner and ensured the subordination of the black colonised, but the nodal point of apartheid saw the transference of politico-legal power and ideological hegemony from the United Party (UP) to the Nationalist Party (NP). These bases and relations informed the trajectory and power-hold of apartheid. In this way, through specific and novel practices of Othering (directed at

specific Others) and through the establishment of novel political frontiers, the fundamental colonial relation was maintained. Here we see the way continuity and discontinuity characterise hegemonic shifts and the recomposition of the social in which dislocation is central.

Classificatory logics are both inherent and imperative to the functioning of any symbolic system. These logics are actualised through two separate but "inextricably intertwined" moments – creating systems of difference where distinct identities can emerge and produce a series of entities that will oppose and combat the difference, creating systems of exclusion. This notion is clearly expressed by Norval who states:

"*The establishment of and changes in political frontiers result from complex processes of interaction of different and opposing discourses; in Gramscian terms, from wars of position. Moreover, then, if any identity is necessarily constructed with reference to another, that other cannot be regarded as merely passive - otherwise our reading could only reproduce the type of silencing of the other for which liberal histories written in the South African context have been criticized.29 Rather, the constitutive outside - brought into being through the drawing of boundaries - functions as both a condition of possibility and as a condition of impossibility of identity and objectivity. That is to say, the constitutive outside of any order has the capacity to put into question the very identity which is constituted through its externalization.*" (Norval, 1994: 122).

Apartheid discourse worked with this logic. The architecture of the system of difference could only be upheld through the logic of exclusion. The logics of inclusion and exclusion stand in relation and opposition to one another and is characterised by, as mentioned above, 'a war of position' where neither logic can gain an upper hand in the final sense. But this is not to say that a dominant position never emerges, but on the contrary, and as illustrated by apartheid, by the end of the 1940s, when the Fagan Commission had accepted the permanent occupation of cities by blacks, a war was declared against 'integration'. In addition to all that apartheid encompassed, it also prioritised the fight against integration. By the time of the initiation of the regime in 1948 the frontiers of 'colour' and 'integration' were 'inextricably

intertwined'. "In its articulation of the 'colour question', apartheid both continued the frontiers already in existence under segregation and instituted a novel form of social division." (Norval, 1996: 170). The consolidation of frontiers is imperative for the dominant hegemony to maintain their stance and power. As will be discussed later, the proliferation of opposition logics caused a continuous redefinition of the fundamental frontiers that apartheid was premised on and resulted eventually in its dissolution. Resistance projects were able to assert themselves as apartheid was founded on the logic of undecidability, which meant, in the end, that it could not control its 'outside'.

For a resistance project to succeed it needs to fight for a very different logic from that of apartheid, a logic that will result in not a simple reversal of the regime and also one that will not be reabsorbed into the already-existing system of functionality, including its system of exclusion and difference. Under apartheid, for the CdB~, this endeavour became doubly difficult as the CdB~ was subordinated twice over, objectively and subjectively. Remember that under colonial conditions as Fanon stresses the black subject is prevented from forming a sense of self as coherent unity out of "residual sensations and perceptions primarily of a tactile, vestibular kinesthetic and visual character." (Fanon, 1952: 111). The "normal" pattern of ego formation is barred to the colonised subject – "In the white world the man of colour encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema." (Fanon, 1990: 109). The colonised is forced to form a sense of self from the elements provided by the coloniser "a thousand details, anecdotes, stories" (Fanon, 1952: 91) which impose on the Cd a very specific body, one 'sprawled out, distorted' – a body that is always '*de trop*' because by definition it does not fit in. To be black, as Gordon says is, "To be <u>too</u> black since to be just right is not to be black at all.".

The discourse of apartheid not only reflected 'pre-discursive experiences' (colonial relations, colour frontiers, economic frontiers) but also showed its contingent nature (Norval, 1996: 3). The ideology of the NP was informed by the Calvinist and culturist intellectuals who encouraged the notion of sovereignty of areas, the notion of nationhood and the colour policy. As De Wet Nel argued, "Apartheid was not simply an ideological facade; but was a philosophy, a deeply held belief system which was rooted in three hundred years of South

African history (Norval, 1996: 160). As discussed earlier an ideology asserts itself and interpellates subjects through legal tactics, mass media, the church and so forth.

In an extremely condensed and redolent phrase, Laclau (1993: 546) contended that power can be grasped as "the trace of contingency within the structure". Although perplexing and open to a plethora of interpretations, here it will be taken to mean that all social practices are the resultant of political decisions and although acts of power are sometimes windswept and forgotten they leave institutions, norms and practices and policies open to contestation and deliberation. When interpenetrated with the logics of politics and fantasy they open a path for understanding 'the trace of contingency' that critically aids in explaining regimes and the symbolic relations that determined them. This section seeks to analyse the state of the apartheid regime and how the CrW+ handled the overdetermination of economic and social issues as well as the CdB~'s claims at 'having a go' at signification through the signifiers of 'blackness 'developed by Black Consciousness and non-racialism. Through analytically charting the apartheid hegemony, the interpenetration of social, political and fantasmatic logics, we can locate the loopholes that allowed for the occupation of a new power and as Foucault suggested, "we could then speak of 'an agonism – of a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle; less of a face to face confrontation which paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation'." (1982: 222).

Howarth (2009: 321) contends there are two forms of hegemony that reinforce the continuation of a symbolic system. The first face of hegemony emerges from disparate demands and identities and the second requires the development of new projects and coalitions that enable its reproduction and overdetermination, in other words, it needs to win the favour of active and passive subjects or even at least secure the connivance of a wide range of social actors and differing dispositions. This entails that on the one hand, the hegemonic order and dominant actors need to offer points of identification that gives the subject an illusion of benefits and enjoyment, it needs to wrap the subordinated subject in a sheet of Imaginary so that it (the dominant actor) can continue its reign of plenitude. "Hegemony as a form of rule speaks in general to the way in which subjects accept and conform to a particular regime, practice, or policy, even though they may have previously

resisted or opposed them." (Howarth, 2009: 321). This is achieved through the amalgamation of three logics – social, political and fantasmatic.

As previously mentioned, social logics allow us to 'characterise' the rules and practices of a regime; political logics open the landscape to alternate hegemonic and identity possibilities once the "ignoble origins" (Howarth, 2009: 326) of the practicing regime are contested; and fantastmatic logics which reveal the manner in which subject identify with and are gripped by discourse (Howarth, 2009: 326). These *maneuvers* are useful in understanding "positive ontopolitical presumptions" (Howarth, 2009: 327) but how is this achievable and under what conditions? Although the social dimension of a practice and ideology predominates, the underside of it reveals and involves the movement of political exclusion (Howarth, 2009: 326-7). Still, Howarth (2009) draws on Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 153–154) to iterate the complexity of the social space. He does this by drawing on three related aspects of the social practice, the relations of subordination, domination and oppression:

"Relations of subordination point to those practices which do not invite or need the public contestation of social norms…Relations of domination, by contrast, provide the conceptual means for an analyst to claim that a subject is dominated, though the norms so judged are not explicitly challenged by those absorbed in the practice. Here interpretation may focus on those practices which appear to actively prevent the public contestation of social norms from arising in the first place…relations of oppression indicate those features of a practice, policy or regime that are challenged by subjects in the name of a principle or ideal allegedly denied or violated by the social practice itself. Here the experiences of dislocation are symbolized in terms of a questioning of norms, which may be accompanied by political challenges to the practices or regime of practice examined. But equally they may be met with renewed efforts to offset challenges and maintain the existing social relations, which can be captured with the logic of difference in its various manifestations." (Howarth, 2009: 327; Hirschman 1970; O'Donnell 1986).

"An antagonism is seen to occur when 'the presence of [an] "Other" prevents me from being totally myself. The relation arises not from full totalities, but from the impossibility of their

constitution." (Howarth and Stavarakakis, 2000: 10). All process of identity formation presuppose a moment(s) of exclusion and ousting and if this exclusionary practice is the premise of the identity formation the excluded other has the potential of subverting and subsuming the constructed social division (Norval, 1996: 8-9). Under colonialism (and hence under apartheid) antagonism is constantly present between the Imaginary of the coloniser and Real of the colonised. The colonial relation is the site of antagonism and this is magnified under the apartheid regime which ratcheted-up the degree of colonial domination. Resistance to this relation, to the black/white, ethnic, denationalisation, detriblation/retribalisation, urban/rural binaries, eventually begins to gnaw away at the apartheid imaginary, meaning it was unable to successfully inscribe all the demands put forth and was consequently "re-literalised (Norval, 1996: 4). As argued by Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 139), "A discourse can be said to be hegemonic insofar as it succeeds in instituting and maintaining such a horizon." Apartheid was not able to continue performing its role as a master signifier, able to make sense of and absorb a wide range of experiences and demands – in other words its metaphoric dimension collapsed and it was reliteralised making it no longer a surface of inscription.

The coloniser as we have seen is caught up in the fullness of his identity as self-possessed master. He is oblivious to the way in which colonialism continually produces its own antagonistic exterior, to the way in which his identity as master depends on the 'non-identity' of the colonised, to the way in which the colonised is barred access to identity and is forced to exist in a 'zone of non-being'; in other words inscribed in the very identity of the colonised is the collapse of identity. This is the 'outplace' of the colonised, the side of his identity hidden from the master. What the master fails to see is that this 'place' of the colonised exceeds itself, making the colonised immediately and forever "out of joint" – the identity of the colonised is from the very start a 'disturbed' identity and herein he is the Achilles heel of the system. It cannot, by definition, absorb what it itself creates, that is, the colonised as a subject position which is simultaneously (and constitutively) inside and outside the colonial relation. As long as the mega framework of the colonial relation is maintained it continues to generate an antagonism which no discursive strategy, segregationism or apartheid, can recuperate. Of course how the colonised subject deals with or reacts to his colonial positioning is not predetermined, either by some putative 'human nature' striving for inner reconciliation in some, or other, figure of identity, nor by the colonial imbalance itself. At the same time what needs to be stressed – and this is highlighted in our discussion of Apartheid,

is that colonialism is inherently precarious, inherently and 'exceptionally' prone to collapse because its most fundamental mode of interpellation (of the colonised) cannot in principle, recuperate the outside (of identity and meaning) that its 'normal' functioning necessarily involves: this is the 'blind-spot' than apartheid could not in the end absorb and which nourished a variety of forms of resistance.

Recognizing that colonialism is a system of signification, a symbolic system in which there is therefore an overdeterminned interpenetration of identities, in no way by itself smudges the poles of the CR as they are "lived" by the Cr and the Cd. Similarly, acknowledging that meaning, and therefore colonial meaning is not just given, not achieved once and for all but involves every time specific practices of enunciation and articulation, and is thus 'open to' inflexion and resignification, does not mean that the colonized subject simply confronts an open field of possibilities in which he is 'free' to signify himself as he chooses – in which his identity becomes the product of a series of 'discursive transactions'. The Cd may well be involved in the practices that structure his identity but this does not mean he is 'always-already' outside the colonial antagonistic binary – No, this is what constitutes the lived world in which he finds himself, which he finds himself inscribed in, the context in which he may – or may not - struggle to redefine his identity – and struggle is the operative term here because he just is going to have to confront the violence of the master's desire for him 'not to be'. His 'desire to be' and the Masters desires are antagonistic, that is, incompossible (not capable of a joint existence) and he, the colonized, is from the start, caught in this structural tension – structural because so sedimented that is not going to dissolve by itself, or give way just because the colonized begins to undertake the process of its resignification (that is, does not get just dissolved in the play of difference). The transformation of the CR, just because of what it is, is only thinkable within a context of implacable struggle. The desire of the Cd subject 'to be' is not thinkable outside his location in the CR; here the subject is located not just within signification, but within colonial signification. On the other hand, as has been explained above, the grip of the colonizer over the colonial relation is never fully secured because the 'identity' of the colonized is itself indeterminate and always on the brink of slipping away.

As mentioned earlier, what would weaken the logic of identity in a far-reaching stroke is an element which cannot be categorised into the dynamic and complex logics of inclusion and exclusion of apartheid discourse, that is, an *indeterminate* element. The "horror of indetermination" (Norval, 1996: 70) has the capacity to put the regime into crisis – to question the identitary logic of the social, when society begins thinking itself (Norval, 1996: 71). In the apartheid context, the signifier 'non-racialism' which condensed 'democracy', 'justice', and 'equality for all' became the signifier that broke and negated, piece by piece, the inherent characteristics of the apartheid system since it had been instituted in 1948. Several central signifiers circulating around reform became available for rearticulation, and the language of 'justice', 'democracy for all', 'normalcy and reasonableness', foreign to apartheid, became prominent (Norval, 1996: 272). Among these signifiers, the discourse of non-racialism, centred on the Freedom Charter, became the dominant political dialogue in black communities supplanting the language of Black Consciousness (Norval, 1996: 272). (the signifier Black Consciousness has been discussed above under black subjectivity and will this not be re-examined at this juncture, but what is necessary to note is that it articulated a new discourse around the term 'blackness' and encouraged CdB~ to convert the negative identity into a positive one (CdB+)).

All of these elements of the new discursive configuration, as well as the concrete demands and strategy for struggle, were given programmatic expression in the reactivation of the Freedom Charter as the binding and leading force of the new movement (Howarth, 2000: 183). In Kliptown on the 25-26 June 1955 the Freedom Charter was adopted as the guiding and leading document in the fight against apartheid rule. Whilst at that time apartheid was facing its golden period of consolidation and such logics were easily suppressed, it once again came to light in a big way in the 1980s. Its preamble stated that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white', thus signifying the multi-racial spirit of the campaign, which was aimed at establishing unity where apartheid divided." (Norval, 1996: 152). According to the Theron Commission, resistance implied fighting for a 'free', 'non-racial', 'democratic' future (Theron Commission, no date: 513). Non-racialism created equivalence between different racial and economic groups to foster a common opposition to apartheid logics, and, as a result, the figure 'black' became drastically overdetermined "at once a homogeneous race" (Norval, 1996: 139; 295); "simultaneously noble savage and barbarous

other, tribal leader and militant savage." (Norval, 1996: 139; 295), undoing its colonial and apartheid 'fixation'.

The signifier non-racialism was 'radical', that is, different and new for both the CdB~ and CrW+, but insofar as it ate away the premise of apartheid, it forced pressure on the NP such that by the 1970s the discourse of Afrikanerdom/*volkseie* was absent and it subverted the rural/urban divide and demanded equality for all citizens regardless of race. It opened up a way for a re-thinking of society and, to an extent, succeeded. The signifier non-racialism was successful in resignifying a new form of society but the question is, and we will return to this – Has the collapse of apartheid caused the collapse of colonialism in South Africa?

Skinner (2002: 186) proposes that the more one group succeeds in persuading people that "a given evaluative term" can be applied in a scenario that was never thought applicable, then the more broadly and inclusively the given term gains appraisal in social and political life. The NDR condensed and reflected the demands of all those resisting domination and the logics of apartheid were beginning to be undermined. Resistance began to undo the apartheid imaginary: it could no longer act as a surface for inscription and the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion had become so smudged and distorted that a new order was the only possible solution, it is in this context that the social was "re-literalised." (Norval, 1996: 4). The assertion of the logic of non-racialism took form on the 2 February 1990 wherein De Klerk, who occupied an enunciative space, took the step that placed South Africa on the path to democratisation. Norval argues that "'De Klerk' is nothing but a signifier around which irresistible pressures form reform coagulated, a space which would be marked by all the tensions of a project of radical change in conditions open to articulation in a variety of directions." (Norval, 1996: 270). With this step forward the fight against racial discrimination was almost won - 'Whiteness' could not be taken neither as a justification for privilege and domination, nor as a basis for humiliation and vengeance. Indeed, it is only once white supremacy is destroyed that the true interests of whites as <u>citizens</u> can be protected. In this manner, the ANC has attempted to eliminate race as a defining feature from the political terrain, while keeping open the space for expression of cultural – rather than racial or ethnic – diversity (Norval, 1996: 294). Non-racialism was the signifier which won the fight for signification and informed post-apartheid South Africa. This dislodging of apartheid by non-

racialism while changing the political terrain of SA and embodied in the constitution, does not necessarily however entail the final eclipse of colonialism and the colonial relation. It is, as has been stressed earlier, important to keep open the question of whether, to what extent and precisely how the colonial relation might still exist in post 94 SA – in subsequent chapters we address this question.

5.4 Samantha Vice and whiteness

The take off point for this section on Samantha Vice and her treatment of whiteness is the end of the chapter on Apartheid. There we examined the signifier of non-racialism and what this, embodied in democracy, meant for the whites. We noted the view that whites still seek colonial plenitude although they may be unaware of this (see Polokwane Document). It is against this backdrop that we need to approach Samantha Vice's intervention, in particular her call for whites to withdraw into self-reflection.

Vice calls on whites to withdraw into self-reflection because they have not 'come to terms with' or 'grasped' just how deep and on-going their white colonial identities still are. How do we know they continue, albeit unconsciously, to pursue 'whiteness'? This comes out in all sorts of ways, most sharply when, in everyday life and politics, whites clearly distinguish white from black in their social interaction in ignorance of "having offended anyone". Whatever whites say about themselves does not therefore reflect their deeper – hidden from them even – identities. These are there for us to see however whites must step back, pause and reflect on these matters; put themselves in a position where they too can see how their current privileges depend on them unconsciously repeating what they say they are wanting to get away from.

They deliberately need to try to peel off the non-racial appearance – perform what Torres terms the 'colonial reduction', that is, even if it spontaneously feels right to whites they need to shake themselves out of taking things for granted and adopt the position of their colonial other. Only then will such a subject feel the shame they ought to feel – 'I must make myself

feel the shame I should feel'. It is not as easy as white subjects think it to slide, seamlessly, out of their white identities. This will only happen if they allow the destitution of the black subject to become theirs, 'feel' the trauma of colonialism and the shame (for whites) that goes with it. All this requires a period of withdrawal when the subject spends as much time as possible reflecting on who she really is, engaging with the voice of the colonised black subject, and not just carrying on as before – it is this that has got to be put into question. Whites need to grasp how assumptions of superiority and distance still operate in South Africa, how they are actualised in structural patterns of privilege that – if life goes on as normal – just get more and more entrenched. The present, she insists, is saturated with whiteness (and therefore blackness) even if not exactly the same 'full-throttle' way as previous to democracy.

Vice's contribution to the debate over whiteness obviously touched a nerve in view of the reactions it produced. The main aim here is to show how Vice's analysis dovetails with, and is in fact supported by, the analysis of white colonial subjectivity that has been sketched above. In this way we try to bring out the undeniable novelty in Vice's argument. She goes further than any other analysis in her self-reflection on the meaning of whiteness in South Africa today. For her 1994 and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) were false starts or wasted opportunities, when whites could have, but failed to, engage in the kind of self-reflection that whites as the colonial master must, she insists, undertake in order to distance themselves from this identity – and this she insists is a necessary precondition for authentic and legitimate political involvement by whites. 'Whiteness' has yet to be thoroughly designified by whites themselves and until it has their participation (and investment) in post-apartheid democratic South Africa has to be put into question. Whites, she maintains, have not yet grasped the degree to which their current positions in the social order still depend on whiteness, both historically and in the present. She gives content to this designification in that she sketches a phenomenology of what happens when it takes place. Whites she maintains must actually feel shame at what has been done to blacks in the name of whiteness before they can distance themselves from 'whiteness' itself. Whites have, in other words, to undergo something of an 'identity crisis', something traumatic, before emancipation from the grip of whiteness can take place.

She is right to insist that 'whiteness' is not easily gotten rid-off and that it is a deeply rooted identity – so deep, as we argued in chapter 4 and earlier sections of this chapter, that it has become unconscious or invisible to whites themselves. In this perspective, the identification with non-racial universalism on the part of white subjects has been – no matter how sincere – superficial and has not touched them at their core. They have not felt the trauma of colonialism, their colonial 'comfort zone' has not been touched; this is what the process of self-reflection that Vice calls for aims to achieve – viz the feeling of guilt and shame which is what all whites even those from after 1992 – should feel when confronted with what they have done – that is, occupy the subject-position of the coloniser with the valorisation of whiteness and denigration of blackness that is integral to this symbolic identity.

In South Africa much of the colonial identificatory infrastructure has been left intact and unchanged leaving the master to unconsciously maintain his grip over the colonized as the imposition of colonial interpellation continues. Under the pseudo name of universality the norms of colonialism are unconsciously or semi-consciously repeated. This both interrupts and overdetermines the meaning of their practice as "universal democratic subjects". Vice in *How do I live in this Strange Place* attempts to critically analyse what it means to be 'white' in South Africa presently. Vice attempts to unfold and discover what it means to be white in South Africa emerging from such a background "What is it like to live here as a white person? What is the morally appropriate reaction to one's situation of privilege? Is it possible to live well?" (2010: 323).

The response preferred by Vice is similar to Biko's "inward looking process". Vice argues that for whites in South Africa "Now that at least *de jure* power has been removed from them, the personal project might be the most exigent and the most difficult. If *we* are a problem, we should perhaps concentrate on recovering and rehabilitating ourselves. I shall suggest that because of peculiarities of the South African situation, this personal, inward-directed project should be cultivated with humility and in (a certain kind of) silence." (2010: 323-4). Moreover, Vice supports the view that the white identity, coming from a destructive legacy which continues to shape the subjectivity of South Africans, should feel moral guilt and shame, and should adopt humility and a particular form of silence (Vice, 2011).

Implied here is that CST is still in play. 1994, as mentioned earlier, signified the barest breakdown of the colonial relation and interpellation. So, although it might be correct to label whites 'hard-working', 'law-abiding', 'enjoying the comforts of their labour', the colonial structures of interpellation are still very much at play and still reproducing the colonial relation. In the hype of 'equality', 'freedom' and 'universality' the vast symbolic infrastructure inherited from colonialism gets side-lined. For Vice, the above argument concerning 'hard-work' and 'diligence' can only go so far. To ignore or forget "that we (whites) did not develop in a vacuum or create ourselves ex nihilo." (Vice, 2011) and that apartheid was a "dubious gift to whites, the chance to live comfortably, securely and with opportunities for creative development and worldly success." (Vice, 2011) is a sign of moral arrogance – "The refusal to acknowledge one's luck is a manifestation of the careless complacence and arrogance that make whites feel entitled to these advantages -- and convinced that their own efforts alone made their success possible." (Vice, 2011). It is now normalised to think of whites as occupying "a social location of structural privilege in the right kind of racialized society," (Taylor, 2006: 229) as well as the epistemic and ontological position of seeing the world "whitely" (Vice, 2010: 324).

The term 'whiteliness' encapsulates the normalisation and unremarkability of the social, political and economic benefits that are amassed as the resultant of being white (Vice, 2010). Paul Taylor defines "whiteliness" as involving "A commitment to the centrality of white people and their perspectives"; "The way they [whites] see the world just is the way the world is, and the way they get around in the world just is the right way to get around." (2006: 230). The effects of colonialism, as seen with black subjectivity and the black post-apartheid subject, is that it makes 'white' the only way (to political economic and social recognition). The advantages that accrue to being white become so normalised, so 'un-thinkable', invisible, and just 'the way things are' (Dyer, 1997; Rasmussen, 2001). Drawing on Althusser, these effects of misrecognition are a product of metonymic and structural causality. The colonial structure is hidden under the cover of democracy and the occupation of the place of power by the ANC. Both democracy and the ANC, to a certain degree, are metonyms that uphold the colonial structure.

In *Revealing Whiteness* Shannon Sullivan puts forth the view of white privilege as "unconscious psychical and somatic habits" (2006) constituted by "mental and physical patterns of engagement with the world that operate without conscious attention or reflection" (2006: 4). White privilege "comes to constitute ways of 'bodying' as well as ways of thinking" that implicate both coloniser and colonised (Taylor, 2004). Biko emphasized this point when assessing the role of white liberals during the struggle against apartheid: "It is not as if whites are allowed to enjoy privilege only when they declare their solidarity with the ruling party. They are born into privilege and are nourished by and nurtured in the system of ruthless exploitation of black energy." (Biko, 1987: 66). Vice in *How do I live in this strange plac*e argues that whites cannot pretend they are ignorant of the ramifications of their privilege both to themselves and to the colonised. "Under conditions of oppression, both the oppressed and the oppressors are morally damaged, although of course in different ways, and even if this damage is not their responsibility." (Vice, 2010: 325). Vice focuses on the moral damage produced by habitual white privilege and the appropriate moral response. Aware that centuries of privilege and authority cannot be undone easily, and that the entrenched psychic and somatic nature of whites will be difficult to eradicate, the level of difficulty should not dissuade whites from recognising they are the problem and therefore the solution to institutional change (Vice, 2010: 325; Sullivan, 2006; Alcoff, 2000: 24).

Vice initially proposes that the white subject should feel guilt and shame about who they, where they are at, and how they got to that position, and employs Bernard Williams notion of "agent-regret" in probing further (Vice, 2010: 326). Regret, according to Williams is a "moving forward verdict" and occurs when one was causally accountable for something negative inspite of having no control over the situation. William analogously illustrates this feeling by a careful driver knocking over a child that randomly and unexpectedly ran across the road. The driver is causally implicated in a situation that very rightly and naturally causes him to feel bad (Vice, 2010: 330). For Vice, agent-regret is an appropriate emotion and response for whites to feel. Once one feels self-regret it transforms into feelings of shame - "But once we admit the possibility and appropriateness of *self*-regret, we are back in the realm of shame: once we regret *who we are*, regret seems to collapse into shame. Responding only with regret at one's privileged situational luck fails again to realize the saturation of the self by such a situation, and it fails, too, to recognize just how brutely defined one is by the human and natural landscape of one's country." (Vice, 2010: 331).

Vice's initial focus was on feelings of guilt but later moves to feelings of shame which corresponds better to the history, legacy and current feelings of whites and whiteliness. In general accounts of moral sentiments shame differs from guilt in being fundamentally tied to the self rather than to the outward harm – "perhaps even more than guilt, the suggestion that shame might be appropriate cuts very close to the bone." (Du Bois) (Vice, 2010: 328). Shame as a feeling, is appropriate firstly, when falling below the standards one set for oneself, and secondly, is a reaction to what one has *done* more than who one *is* as a person (Vice, 2010: 328). For Vice, "Shame is the recognition that one ought not to be as one is, and it does not, I think, depend on the claim that one could be different to how one is." (Vice, 2010: 329). Shame is thus an indication of a wrong performed and also recognises that one is not what ought to be and desires to respond (morally) appropriately to rectify the wrong-doing. "More than any other emotion, shame reveals our painful distance from our own standards of excellence or perfection." (Vice, 2010: 330). For whites, according to Vice, it is morally correct to live with feelings of shame as it is a sign that one is aware of the past and it also connotates that one is neither ignorant nor apathetic to the past and sedimentation of it (Vice, 2010: 329). Vice therefore emphasises,

"*That while the emotions of guilt, regret and shame are appropriate emotions for white South Africans to feel, shame better captures the identity and phenomenology of the white South African self than the others. Given the present inescapability of white privilege (barring enormous structural and psychological change), and given the peculiarities of the South African situation, it is unlikely that a white South African will be in a situation in which shame is not called for*." (Vice, 2010: 332).

Vice investigates three responses that seemingly materialise the feeling of shame. Firstly, one could become morally and politically active in social causes either financially supporting causes that uplift the position of the colonised or join/work for an organisation that makes reparations to the harm whiteness has caused and maintains. But according to Vice this is more guilt than shame which she favours, and argues has "*metanoia* as a proper end" (Vice, 2010: 333). The second response is that which would create a dialogue so that whites can recognise and censor their whiteliness. But the danger here, as agued by Vice, is that the trajectory could easily slant towards "a morbid egocentricity and perverse fascination with

our faults." (Vice, 2010: 334). To be morally successful Vice endorses the third response which involves a certain degree of restraint and which needs to be thought of in terms of a humility and silence.

Humility and silence seem like the most appropriate response as it indicates the recognition of ones morally troubled situation and a determination to prevent further harm. "Whites have too long had influence and a public voice; now they should in humility step back from expressing their thoughts or managing others." (Vice, 2010: 335). Vice believes that whites should work on their damaged selves before offering advice in a public forum. By commenting and offering 'support', whites kill the feeling of shame and posit themselves as the perfect and absolute knowing subjects of society and how it should be run. This type of attitude perpetuates the colonial relation and closes the gap for both blacks and whites to find their own way in a new society. "One would live as quietly and decently as possible, refraining from airing one's view on the political situation in the public realm, realizing that it is not one's place to offer diagnoses and analyses, that blacks must be left to remake the country in their own way." (Vice, 2010: 335). In order for society to change into something all South Africans can be proud of the call for humility and silence on the part of whites has never been louder. But humility is not really a willed emotion that one can instantaneously morph into but it's a process that requires mental (and environmental) habitual changes. Complementing humility is a virtuous silence.

Silence here does not mean and should not be taken as a sign of ineffectivity and inactivity (Hill, 1979). Silence according to Vice, and adopting Taylor's argument, is understood as a complement to the others voice- "It signals one's willingness to receive the other's struggle to find words both for his or her experiences and for the self that those experiences have conspired with the act of expression to create. Silence . . . is part of listening for a voice." (Taylor, 2004: 239).

"Self-reflective silence is an appropriate recognition of the compromised nature of our white identity: perhaps we should get our own house in order before criticising others." (Vice, 2011). Silence does not mean an absence of conversation, but in this context the pertinent

form of silence is political silence (Vice, 2010: 336). Political silence in finding and repairing oneself trumps and holds precedence over professional silence or a stifling of all dialogue related to race and privilege for example (Vice, 2010: 337). “I am not calling for apathy or withdrawal from all public life. Whites ought to work together with blacks to make the country better -- we have plenty to contribute -- but we should do it quietly and in the background, working on the selves that are cause for shame before we judge others.” (Vice, 2011).

For Vice political silence is “the morally decent policy” (Vice, 2011: 338) as it is mechanism that stops whites from causing further distortions in political and publics forums and contexts especially when issues of whiteness are highly charged and contested. Political silence is a sign of humility and humility reinforces political silence. This positively reinforcing dialectical relationship is the essence of change for the oppressor - it is morally healing and gives the oppressed play and space to come into their own. “Thought of in these terms, silence is… an expression of humility….I do not think that white South Africans can in good faith feel attached in a “socially coherent” way to either their pasts or their futures when they realize themselves as an ongoing problem.” (Vice, 2010: 338). Once whites are sufficiently self-reflective there is no more appropriate a response then feelings of shame and the accompanying feeling and reaction of humility and silence. “The best moral response is to accept shame as both appropriate and troubling, and to turn one’s attention to the self with silence and if possible, humility.” (Vice, 2010: 337-8).

The TRC and Nelsons Mandela’s original conciliatory speech both appealed to whites to take up the burden of “reparation and moral rejuvenation” (Matthew, 2010: 74; Vice, 2010: 338). For Vice this has not happened yet, and she argues furthermore that it is inappropriate for whites to view themselves and constituting a part of having a stake in the post-apartheid narrative (Vice, 2010: 338). It is imperative that whites feel ashamed for for so many centuries enjoying a privileged position of “colonial mastery of self and other” (Hudson, 2012). This process and period, according to Vice, was morally damaging not only to the oppressed but also to the oppressor who suffers from a complex “A morally damaged white self, constituted by psychical and somatic habits of privilege” (Vice, 2010: 338) and which can only be overcome through an introspective process the true outcome of which is feelings

of shame, humility and silence. If the self was only constituted by habits of white privilege there would be no space for shame to get a grip/latch itself. “Shame works with a concept of a self that is oriented toward some vision of the good and which it acknowledges itself to have fallen short of.” (Vice, 2010: 339). “For white South Africans, work on the self, done in humility and silence, might indicate the recognition that any voice in the public sphere would inevitably be tainted by the vicious features of whiteliness. It might also be one way of saying that I am not merely a product of what is worst about me and a refusal, finally, to be fully defined by it.” (Vice, 2011).

Chapter 6: South African black and white subjectivity and democracy

In 1994 however the structure of South African society underwent a very significant change – the only question that remains – and here there is a dramatic division in South African politics – concerns just how significant the advent of constitutional democracy has been in the South African context.

The politico-ideological was no longer (from 1994) appropriated a priori by the coloniser – as colonialism – but now shared on an equal basis with the previously disenfranchised colonised subjects: the 'place of power' (Lefort, 1986) was thus 'emptied' and then contested via elections based on universal suffrage. What happened is that the ANC democratically won the right to occupy the 'place of power' and henceforth pursued its 'national democratic' strategy against colonialism in all its forms and dimensions. Whilst the ANC, and the Alliance as a whole, including the Communist Party, stress the significance of 1994, ("the democratic breakthrough"), and consider it a threshold marking a substantial shift in the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised, it is at the same time adamant that CST still exists in South Africa. The racial distribution of wealth and poverty in SA that existed in 1994 and still does exist, is understood by the ANC and the Alliance, to indicate that the fundaments of the colonial relation still exist, the 'democratic breakthrough' of 1994 notwithstanding. And it is this insistence that CST still exists in SA – and not only in the way its allocation of economic resources still seems to operate, but also in the subjectivity of many white citizens, that separates the Alliance from its liberal opposition in the DA. One of the issues that is examined in this chapter is the relationship between the NDR, which is as deep-rooted as it ever has been in the framework if the Alliance, and the structures of democracy as embodied in the Constitution.

6.1 Democracy - Lefort

The theory of democracy is advanced from the understanding of society as a socio-symbolic system premised on the absence of an essence or fixed cause, an 'absent cause' (Hudson, 2009; Lefort, 1988). "Modern societies are constructed when it is realised that there are no essential needs and no unity founded a priori positive note of reference. The primary terrain on which democracy emerges is the terrain of social dislocation." (Stavarakakis, 1999: 124). The social system is constructed and erected upon a lack and the place of power which is ontologically empty and intrinsically incomplete – "Whatever the determinate form assumed by the symbolic structure, it is never predetermined (inscribed in some necessary order of things), but the effect of a political construction, of the political qua 'principle which generates the overall configuration' (Lefort 1988: 16). Under democracy, which is defined by the dissolution of the markers of certitude and which leaves people with a sense of indeterminacy, the empty place of power becomes temporarily occupied creating the fantasy or illusion that society is structured on a core and essence and consequently provides traction for the suspicion and fear of the people. Democracy provides the "phantasmagoria of liberty, equality and power…" (Lefort, 1988: 106).

Under pre-modern conditions unity was given a priori but with the advent of modernity and democracy the unity of the social is constantly contested and is given a form through a "political hegemonic struggle" (Lefort, 1986: 279). Unity is now dependent upon the establishment of a platform for political competition. Democracy is established by the "dissolution of the markers of certainty", "Now unity depends of the erection of a stage of political competition. Thus unity is constituted on the basis of recognising division." (Stavarakakis, 1999: 124) Lefort (1988: 19-20) states, "Under democratic conditions, the exercise of power is subject to procedures of periodical redistribution – which implies an institutionalisation of conflict. The locus of power is an empty place, it cannot be occupied – it is such that no individual and no group can be co-substantial with it – and it cannot be represented." This phenomenon implies a state of permanent conflict that is governed by permanent rules. The place of power becomes an empty – it can no longer be occupied and represented (Lefort, 1988: 17).

“The mechanism through which the recognition of the *real* is achieved is the democratic election. What Lefort terms ‘the democratic intervention’ introduces a break in the history of institutions in that democratic society can ‘be determined as a society whose institutional structure includes, as part of its “normal,” “regular” reproduction the moment of dissolution of the socio-symbolic bond, the moment of irruption of the Real: elections’ (Zizek 1989: 147). Thus, to quote Zizek, at “The moment of elections the whole hierarchic network of social relations is in a way suspended, put in parentheses; as an organic unity society ceases to exist; it changes into a contingent collection of abstract units and the result depends on a purely quantitative mechanism of counting.” (1989: 148).

The paradox of democracy can be seen through the institution of universal suffrage. Voting is a mean through which popular sovereignty is assumed to manifest itself, the people are assumed to actualise it by expressing their will (Lefort, 1986: 303). Social interdependence breaks down and the citizen is abstracted from all networks, in which social life develops and becomes a mere statistic: “The idea of numbers is opposed to the idea of the substance of society. Number breaks down unity, destroys identity.” (Lefort, 1986: 303). Therefore democracy through instituting conflict and establishing the ‘public stage’ of elections, tries to establish unity in a society as a whole, but it results in the fragmentation and atomisation of its individual voters (Lefort, 1988: 19). As Lefort maintains: “The People is sovereign under democracy, but the identity of the People mutates.” (1988: 211). The entire social symbolic framework is put into parenthesis and the fundamental social is suspended.

Democracy attempts to combine the contradictory principles/demands/ it combines the rule of law with the representation of particular interests, ensuring observation and respect for the presence and practice of human rights whilst at the same time ensures society is organised in a manner that it is viewed as just (Touraine, 1994: 2-5) in (Stavarakakis, 1999: 122-3). To cover-up this ambiguity is to de-democratise democracy. William Connolly terms this “ontologies of concord” (Stavarakakis, 1999: 123). These ontologies project a conception of harmony to negate the threat of contingency. Democracy then ends in disappointment as it is revealed that there is an antithesis between the ‘ontology and ethics of concord and harmony’ and the ambiguity of democracy – the inherent and institutionalised disharmony of democratic arrangements (Stavarakakis, 1999: 123). Individuals appear only in aggregation in

interest groups or as isolated voices in the situations of conflict, (Lefort, 1988: 341). Thus modern democracy is "inherently indeterminate" (Jenkins, 2009: 112) since power is perpetually contested. As Lefort comments, "Democracy inaugurates the experience of an ungraspable, uncontrollable society in which the people will be said to be sovereign, of course, but whose identity will constantly be open to question whose identity will remain latent." (Lefort, 1988: 304).

Lefort's notion of the subject during elections and under democracy comes under fire based on his argument of elections dissolving or suspending the entire socio-symbolic system. Laclau and Zizek argue that during liberal democratic elections the symbolic is not dissolved but there is a substitution of one symbolic set-up citizen-individuals in free and equal zones) for another (prevailing class and power differentials) (Laclau, 2005; Hudson, 2009). Furthermore, for Lefort liberal democracy is absolute, meaning, there is a 'meta-appropriation of the place of power': 'society doesn't exist but liberal democracy does'." (Hudson, 2009: 402). It is worthwhile quoting Zizek at length to illustrate this criticism,

"*The articulation of the symbolic and the real achieved by (liberal) democracy is very specific and requires careful delineation. It is important to underline that the institutions of liberal democracy, including elections, do not really involve the periodic dissolution of the entire socio-symbolic order. Liberal democratic elections themselves involve determinate symbolic procedures and standards – they are more a 'staging' of the real per se. Elections of this sort recognise the historicity of the social and institutionalise this recognition via the sovereignty of the people. In this sense, they seek to 'make present' the constitutive moment of the political, but they do so via a determinate staging or representation of the real. These means of representation of the will of the people are not neutral or transparent, but have their own specific effectivity vis-à-vis the constitution and actualisation of the will of the people. To believe they are transparent, and thus allow for the emergence of some unalloyed 'people', is to fall victim to the 'democratic illusion*'." (2007a, p. xxvii).

A second criticism of Lefort is related to his fantasy of the People-as-One. He argues that disunity that ruptures forth is due to a disembodied society, that is, modernity leaves those who are disillusioned by it with nostalgia for the unity of the body. The danger lying at the heart of modernity is the temptation to fill in the empty space created by democracy with a new type of embodied unity. In this sense, for Lefort the persistence of religion is modernity is a permanent feature of it and people become enchanted by the phantasy of the People-as-One. Lefort thus takes a wrong turn in assuming that the subject always hankers and longs for plenitude and fullness (the People-as-One) when democracy does not meet its demands. Stavarakakis offers an explanation to the agitated democratic populace, he argues that what democracy needs is a post-fantasmatic' subject – "which identifies with an 'ethics of the real' and is not tempted by fantasies of plenitude when confronted by the 'disharmony' of democracy." (1999).

This said, Lefort has still made a breakthrough in political theory with his conception of democracy. Although the emptiness of power may be able to be institutionalised in ways other than liberal democracy – something his critics say he does not take seriously enough, he provides us with important insight into what democracy implies with respect to how we understand the social – for him this latter is a symbolic relation, that is, it does not have an essence and does not rest on universal foundations: Lefort also provides us with a way of understanding this relationship between democracy qua institution and the determinate forms of social subjectivity which it requires in order to exist and be reproduced over time. That he does not himself adequately theorise the conditions of existence of a democratic subject that has freed himself from any longing for the security of foundations – this is the essence of Stavarakakis' criticism on this score – is thus of much less importance.

6.2 The Cr, the Cd, and democracy in South Africa

Thus, related to the South African case where the CdB~ and CrW+ emerge from polar opposite backgrounds, does democracy facilitate the integration and equality of society by structurally placing everyone regardless of race, colour, religion and so forth on an equal platform and with equal rights? Elections are the mean through which the people can exercise their (popular) will, where they can feel equality as citizens. Whilst elections do reduce the

voter to a number, to a single one, in South Africa it is ‘beneficial’ to the CdB~ who is accustomed to feeling like a negative 1. But when the highs of elections wear off, democracy is just an ideal, an abstract system, and the colonial infrastructure continues exerting its force and interpellatory attraction.

Universal suffrage and the correlative regime of numbers (see above) have different effects on the colonising and colonised subjects. From the point of view of the colonised, what is important is that he is no longer defined as being of less value then the coloniser. Under the conditions of universal suffrage everyone is assigned the value 1 – this means that acquisition of at least some socially recognised identity for the colonised. Democracy, in this sense, helps to lift the colonised out of the ‘zone of non-being’ into which the colonial relation casts him and this is one of the most important, but often passed-over, reason for the democratic enthusiasm of the colonised. On the other hand, the situation of the coloniser vis-à-vis democracy is (at least at first) very different.

The democratic subject is then one who has acknowledged the symbolic nature of the social, that it is a construction and not an absolute. Consequently the democratic subject is on who has relinquished all claims and desires for an absolute identity – he acknowledges that it is impossible to “have it all”, to realise ones interests in an absolute and permanent way and is satisfied with the ‘not all’. The identity of the coloniser, as we have seen, is one of ‘surplus identity’ - his is the ‘superhard’ identity if a Master:- under conditions of universal suffrage itself (and this does not necessarily extend immediately throughout all social institutions) the coloniser faces an ontological demotion – whereas the colonised welcomes the 1 that democracy assigns him, the coloniser has to confront being taken down, from ‘more than 1’ to (just) 1.

Let us consider this a little further – what is clear is that democracy, because it invokes the “de absolutisation” of the subject, is always going to be very difficult for those sedimented into the subject-position of master to swallow. Thus, under democracy one only, and we will clarify this in a moment temporarily gains access to the place of power and only remains there if this is the outcome of actual universal suffrage – rather than claiming power on the

basis of some a priori claim. Based on the structural incompatibility of the subject position of the coloniser and the subject position called for by democracy – and this has nothing to do with the sincerity of white citizens, like Samantha Vice (see chapter 5.4) what we are calling attention to here is just how difficult this transition is and just how much work it calls for to be performed by the subject on himself.

What this structural argument leads us to is the existence of a transitional subject, that is a semi-democratic subject which, on the one hand, endorses democracy and its "limitations" but, on the one hand, still longs for the absolute identity that colonialism gave him. Now it is important to stress that this relationship between a longing for absolute plenitude and an acceptance that it is not possible is variable – what defines a semi-democratic subject is that his inscription in the democratic symbolic outweighs his identitarian longings. His desire for absolute fullness – which, under democratic conditions will always be, if not unconscious, then *sotto voce*, does not lead him to attack the institutions of democracy although his identifications with these latter is incomplete. At the same time this unconscious desire for plenitude, which remember, in this case, involves his self-identification as white (and therefore a master) should not be considered to be in a state of mere "idling".

Non-racialism entails the complete designification of colour whereas what we are suggesting is that in the case of white South Africans this is incomplete and that although silent (which it has to be!) a residual identification with colonialism and its subject-positions is still at work. (Note that this is precisely what Fanon in *Black Skins White Masks* argues is the trajectory of colonial racism under democratic conditions, the only difference being that this "repression into the collective unconscious" (1963: ii) occurs, much later in the South African case). This (unconscious) identification still 'steers' white conduct in ways whites themselves might will be unaware of (see earlier discussion of the unconscious in Zizeks analysis of anti-Semitism). It is this that the Polokwane Statement is getting at when it proposes that,

"In terms of practical experiences especially in the private sector, public discourse and voting patterns, it seems that many in the white community still have to realise that the poverty and inequality spawned by apartheid are not in their long-term interests, and that black people are as capable as anyone else to lead and exercise authority in all spheres of life. This derives in part from the historic socialisation based on the false ideology of racism, which needs continually to be combated." (Turok, 2011: 242).

All that we have "added" to this excerpt (which, it should be noted, is a core element of contemporary ANC discourse) is the more thoroughly worked out conceptual vocabulary that has been developed throughout this dissertation. The issue of post-Apartheid white subjectivity is touched on in the chapter on Vice but for the moment we turn our attention to the ANC and the Alliance and the relationship between democracy and the NDR.

In chapter 4.5, "The New Black Consciousness" we considered Mngxitama's argument concerning the anti-blackness of the ANC government and proposed that the way to make sense of this is by starting with the elementary position of the colonised and see how its extreme lack tips the colonised towards an unconscious desire to be white (in answer to the question "What does the black man want?" Fanon is unambiguous – "to be white!"). What occurs on the basis of the primary identification of the colonised is not predetermined and a variety of responses are always possible – this is because (see chapter 2) of the dimension of the subject – as 'non-causal operator of connection' never totally pinned down in any of its identifications. But as Fanon stresses the "cards are stacked up" (1952; 1963) in a specific direction, one leading, firstly, to identification with the white signifier and the other, more arduous path, towards identification with the black signifier as guarantee of full existence (Black Consciousness). Of course the designification of colour is also possible and few would doubt the penetration of the non-racial signifier in South Africa today – to a very large extent the product of the anti-colonial struggle led by the Alliance. However, as was discussed in the chapter on the "New Black Consciousness" the erection of "non-racialism" into a Master Signifier may not be as deep as many of the protagonists of this struggle believe it to be. There we considered Mngxitama's claim that the actual conduct of the ANC government towards South Africans blacks itself shows that the former must hold anti-black values. Note that this has exactly the same structure as the Alliances own criticism of the liberal opposition

and its white support base; viz their actual conduct towards Blacks shows that they are still 'colonised' – their failure to embrace transformation and the full eradication and designification of race manifests an incomplete separation from the colonial signifier. In both cases all that we have added is a broader and more structured conceptual framework able to sustain claims of this kind rather than attempt any empirical adjudication.

In this chapter our focus is on another "Fanonian unconscious," this time the NDR itself as doing the same for its protagonists as the colonial signifier does for its white and black protagonists.

We left off at the point where universal suffrage by giving everyone the value of 1 starts the process of eliminating the ontological deficit of the colonised and in this way explains the enthusiasms of the colonised for democracy. But this analysis is incomplete, because in much the same way that for the coloniser their colonial identity does not make easy the assumption of a democratic identity, so does that of the colonised – remember the colonised seeks security of identity, which he cannot get from his primary identification. It may at first seem to him that being 'counted for one' according to the logic of universal suffrage provides him with this: however, as we have seen, the 'deeper' logic of democracy goes in just the opposite direction, that is, it demands of its subjects that they in fact embrace the emptiness of the social and let go of all absolutist identity aspirations. Given the starting point of the elementary primary identification of the colonised, it would be surprising if their integration of the logic of democratic openness were to go smoothly. Until this subject has let go of his longing for some absolute realisation of his identity and interests, his investment in democracy will be that if a semi-democratic subject, as in the white case (discussed above) although their starting points are different.

But the question remains – what specific 'object' plays this role of unconscious point of identification? For Mngxitama (and the new black consciousness school) it is, in this case, that is, that of the Alliance, "whiteness" – but other 'objects' can perform the same function of stabilisation, produce the same effects of identity, which respond to this subject position's ongoing compulsion towards plenitude; for example, the NDR itself can play this role: In this

mode the NDR ceases to be 'anti-colonial' (appearances to the contrary) because it is reducible to an immediate effect of the inherent instability of the place of the colonised in the colonial relation.

What happens in this case is as follows: At the level of conscious awareness, the protagonists of the NDR define its legitimacy as a political project in terms of its being the free expression (via universal suffrage) of the popular will and they thus strive in their political practice to follow the rules needed to ensure that universal suffrage does throw up the actual will of the people (defined as it must be fundamentally in majoritarian terms).

However, the impulse to totalitarianism, rooted in the elementary subject position of the colonised, although more or less inconspicuous, is still operative and latches on here not to whiteness or blackness but to something that seems really to be 'anti-colonial' in a way 'the switching of places' (CdB~/CrW+) or the inversion of colour values (CdB+) obviously are not.

Here we have a 'semi-democratic subject' in that his identification with the NDR as a fantasy of absolute plenitude is in tension with his specifically democratic investment. As long as in fact he defends democracy more than he undermines it we can call him "semi-democratic". At the same time, what is evident is the way in which this 'NDR as a narrative of totality' interrupts the democratic practice of its protagonists. Unless one is prepared to say the Alliance is purely cynical, pretending consciously to be democratic – which seems a very simplistic conceptual solution to the problem at hand – one is compelled to introduce the distinctions that have been made use of in our analysis. The only novelty here, as we have already explained, is that it is now the NDR itself – not 'whiteness' or 'blackness' – that fills the "void" at the heart of the subject-position of the colonised. But this is no more a real break with the logic of colonialism that the other two because it is an unreflected panic reaction to the ever present insecurity that assails the colonised. None of this, (that is the fact that the colonial relationship has been shown above to be able to "return" in unforeseen ways and in this way 'takes its revenge' on anti-colonialism) means that the struggle against colonialism, that is, for the complete designification of colour, race, as a value, and the

destruction of the pull towards plenitude exerted by the subject-position of the colonised, is out of reach. All it means is that the dimensions and reach of the colonial signifier exceeds what may have been expected to be the case – its degree of sedimentation may protract its life but cannot render it immune from the fact that it is contingent, that is cannot control its own outside and is therefore always open to contestation and elimination.

Conclusion

Let us recall by way of conclusion the major steps we have taken along the way, that is, in the construction of this dissertation, and try to show how all the elements hang together. A useful way of constructing the argument of this dissertation is to cut into it at the point where the dominant liberal and Marxist analyses of South African society (Chapter 3) are rejected on the grounds that they fail to do justice to the *sui generis* presence, historically and today, of colonial identities and relations in South Africa. Both cut-off the very possibility of raising any questions about the continued presence of colonialism in South Africa because of the way both dissolve it (colonialism) into (one or another) economic logic. But colonialism as understood in CST theory needed recasting to incorporate Fanons major contribution and innovation vis-à-vis colonialism, namely the 'ontological split' that runs through all sectors and institutions of colonial society and which drains the colonised of any claim to full subjectivity and agency. Fanon in turn stood in need of conceptual clarification (he does not really have a concept of the subject both irreducible to the colonial binary/matrix and able to account for the shifts and displacements which this latter goes through). It is here, in this clarification and development of Fanon, that the turn to (post) structuralism - running from Althusser to Zizek – finds its place. By this stage the basic conceptual elements – involving a cross of Fanon (standing for CST) with Althusser/Laclau/Zizek – were assembled in the form of the 'elementary colonial relation' with its correlative subject positions (CrW+; CdB~). This is then further developed and put into use in adumbrating the trajectories of both white and black colonial subjects, locked into the antagonistic political field that is colonialism itself. What happens to 'whiteness' and 'blackness' as signifiers (constitutive of social identity itself) in the course of these trajectories? Fanon himself underlines the importance of the concept of the colonial unconscious and, leaning on Zizek's presentation of the unconscious, we use this concept in the exploration of the twists and turns in both 'black; and 'white' subjectivity up to and after the introduction of democracy (1994). It is in this context that we engage with a variety of theoretical and political perspectives, including Black Consciousness Theory – (Biko and Mngxitama), as well as NDR and CST. In this latter connection we contend, in conclusion, that even the (very self-conscious) anti colonialism of the NDR is not exempt from the gravitational pull (around which political space in South Africa is still organised) of the colonial unconscious.

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