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On the Poetics of Death and the Theory of Anti-Colonialism

By

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A dissertation submitted to the Department of Political Studies

of the University of the Witwatersrand

in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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To the memory of

my Mother Fungayi Gladys Mlambo-Maxaulane (1968-2002),

my Father Zephania Mongezi Maxaulane (1959-2003),

my Sister Nosipho Irene Maxaulane (1998-2005).

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Many thanks to Peter Hudson for reading and giving comments to this thesis. And a thousand-fold extension of gratitude and assurance of loyalty to those who, in the ‘Black Philosophical Posse’ we have, sought of unintentionally, constituted over our graduate years, have chosen the path of doing theory and thinking through the political and aesthetic categories of Blackness. It was mostly through the religious 8am-10am Friday meetings with Peter Hudson that my interests in qualifying psychoanalytic theory, semiotics, mathematical logic, epigenetics, and neuroscience through the theoretical and philosophical lenses of the Black Radical tradition was heightened and sharpened. Through his incisive and constructive criticisms I still remain with many unanswered questions which shall continue to occupy me for the rest of my academic life; acknowledging my current limitations in poetic methods, mathematical logic, or music theory, only to mention a few of the areas one needs to have a good command of in order to address the set of questions that the thesis itself poses. But most importantly, I was forced to venture into unchartered terrains in order to prove, like all the avant-gardists of the Black Radical tradition, that there is something called Black Theory or Theory in Black (after all, why not call it Black Theory if there exists Greek philosophy, German Idealism, or French philosophy, lest we are asked to apologise for calling ‘Black’, theory as such). So, this work, like the Freemason ‘Seeker’s’ initiation into the ‘Order of the Brotherhood’, marks my quest towards the fulfilment of the circle of knowledge. A circle of points without an ending. Indeed the activity of thought is a worthy vocation. And with that said, to Death and Infinity, Life, we shall sacrifice!!!

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work, it has not submitted before any university or academic committee, and I have acknowledged all sources cited by means of references.

---------- April 2018

Signature

Abstract

To describe this work by way of the Fanonian logic, in its materialist quest, one can say, it tries to establish the conditions necessary for a theory of anti-colonialism which finds its expression in the experience of death, the realm of nonbeing, nonmeaning, and the unnameable. It enquires into the nature of a revolutionary 'political act', 'guerrilla action', or a aesthetic struggle against settler-colonialism which is constituted in the moment or political economy of death. To put it in the words of Fanon himself, it signal a regression or recursion into the "zone of nonbeing, an extraordinarily sterile and arid region, an utterly naked declivity where an upheaval can be born" (Fanon, 1952:8). We conjure the spirits of the dead, in their materiality or as material categories in order to avoid the usual mistake of locating revolutionary and emancipatory practices within the categories of self-reflexivity or Ideality or transcendence. Hence, the thesis takes it that, through an awareness of the psychotic and deathly formations which constitute the concrete historical reality of the colonised black subject under colonial modernity, one should see that, it is only from 'the place of that which is not' qua the '*not-all*' or the unnameable substances of the historical-material-past which informs our understanding of the present stratum of socio-political reality with all its antagonisms and contradictions that we can develop a comprehensive theory of a revolutionary and emancipatory liberation subjectivity. Taking into consideration the tensions, contradictions, and antagonisms manifest at the level of the material and social 'real' qua the present earth we habitat, the condition of the colonised black subject cannot be theorised from the domain of reflexivity or self-reflexivity, transcendence, truth, ideality, knowledge or science, gnosis or logic, because there is no unified singularity for such a subject to reflect upon or to subtract from. The material realm or 'womb of space', as per Wilson Harris' notion of underground fictitious imaginations, in which the colonised black subject is forced to subsist – as a site of (deathly and non-objective) drives, energetics, desires, and anxiety – is what enables it to function as the foundation or operative medium for all forms of transgression and transformation that can help us overcome the present structures of subjugation and the phallocentric notions of human emancipation that they prescribe. Hence, as a materialist insight, the thesis, through the concept of death, tries to establish the conditions for a theory of the subject of resistance and liberation that can take up the project of anti-colonialism by considering the centrality of colonial antagonism and how its structures are still reproduced in our present situation. In its extensive form, the project draws from complementary, although at times opposing or contradictory theoretical and philosophical

traditions, namely, Black Radical thought (what we can refer to as the avant-garde of social theory today) and Continental philosophy in Western social theory, in order to re-assert the importance of the theory of colonialism and the theory of anti-colonialism in our evaluation of the present forms of coloniality. With that said, we argue that colonialism, although mediated by democratic practices and principles, it is still immediate to our present real conditions of existence. In the same manner, the historical or mythical African past, the realm in which the limits of colonialism continued and still continue to be stretched in various political and aesthetic forms is retrieved to support our call for a theory of anti-colonialism that draws its paradigms from the perspective of a materialist logic, or rather, materialist alogicity. Thus, through a reading of the black aesthetic tradition, myth, which is a property of the 'the living-dead-unconscious', is read as a category of materiality or the conflict-ridden ground or the historic past which is central to our understanding of the present and conceptions of strategies for a revolutionary form of '*political* action' and '*guerrilla* action'. Hence, to qualify the grounds for a reading of the theory of anti-colonialism through the concept of death, the thesis moves through the contours of what can be identified within neuroscience, epigenetics, mathematical logic, mythical logic, or psychoanalysis as either a speculative-materialism, a dialectical-materialism, a historical-materialism, a Real-materialism, or a logical-materialism, but which ever angle it may be read from (which however should never be a positivist or reductive or deductive one), the concept of materialism as *groundlessness* still remains a key conceptual category. That is, the thesis takes the subject as immanent in the kinematics, drives, or energetics of the Real material conditions of its existence: which means that, and as we mentioned above, the subject it imagines is a subject who is neither of the nature of the self, nor reflection, nor consciousness (in both their scientific and transcendental terms).

Prelude

The Ante-Sophic Moment: Death in the Black-Synaes(thetic)

"Why should one believe in anything, when one could live, when one could live gentlemen, at 212 degrees Fahrenheit? The trouble is, gentlemen, for me, human nature stinks; but that is all the material we have to work with" (Can Themba, 1972:109-110).

To put it in the manner of Nathaniel Mackey, in its "elliptical" movement[1] and abstract nature of analysis, or in its "straight reptility" as MF DOOM (an Afro-British hip-hop artist) has it, the thesis reads mostly from scholars in Black Radical Thought and Continental philosophy, who in their works aim for or hint at a materialist theory of the subject which is not based on Transcendental-Idealist models of political action or a subject who is not a "Resistant by *Logic*" (Peden, 2014:20) in the mathematical function of the concept. The work, as mentioned in the abstract to the thesis, comes out of the influences drawn from a neuro-scientific, epigenetic, and psychoanalytic reading of Fanon's theory of anti-colonialism through an analysis of what Peter Hudson refers to as the "relationship between Nature and the Symbolic" or situation and structure or existence and ontology, and their implication on the "status of the subject" (Hudson, 2018:1). Far from merely extending into blackness the models of subjectivity supposed in these theoretical frameworks, it interrogates and qualifies them with a materialist notion of the death drive which determines the structure of the colonised subject or those who live-life-in-death. The set of questions it raises are dealt with at both the conceptual level (if the 'black-substances' [or things of 'dark *genus'* and 'dark *species'*] we are dealing with accedes to the logic of *concept* after all), the methodological level (in the movement of 'substances' black) and the political level (the social-historical point of contradictions, antagonisms, and conflict) with death in its sociality functioning as the paradigm for our conceptualisation of an anti-colonial revolutionary and emancipatory model of political action

[1] This idea of ellipsis is adopted from the serial poem of Nathaniel Mackey, '*Song of the Andoumblou'*, in which the narrator N, as a subject of '(anti-)phonal' materiality, of "Lost habitation. Lost bodily solace …", of "molecules bruited about", of "Sophic chill", of the Limbo dances "outside Lisbon one moment, outside Harare the next". This notion expresses what, through Fred Moten can be referred to as the 'neither-here-nor-there', fugitivity or fecundity of blackness and the abstract nature of the thesis itself (Mackey, 2015:10,21, 31, 33, and 39). Or rather, one can say the presence of Lisbon and Harare is not a coincidence, taking into consideration how Mackey seriously takes the issue of black ghostly presence or Moorish presence in Portugal and Spain prior to the period of the Inquisition. So, the streets of Lisbon, just like the streets of Harare were once black populated, hence the simultaneous presence in these two assumedly distinct geographic entities, as per the modern discourse. Such are the poetics of the 'phantom limb'.

– one that does not relapse into a scientific humanism and transcendental-Idealist models like those of the postmodernist postcolonial subject, the messianic subject of negative theology, the working-class subject of Marxian scientism, or the self-reflexive subject of the Cartesian cartography. Since the present we are said to be inhabiting is regarded as a 'present of post-colonial time', the prophets of hope or the Isaiahians of postmodernist postcolonial theory have sounded the dereliction of the theory of anti-colonialism or the Fanonian logic of revolutionary violence, reducing its proponents to the position of mere Jeremiads or the wailing prophets of doom who do not want to partake in the moment of jubilee that postcolonial time inaugurates. What these postcolonial theorists say is that colonialism cannot be used as a paradigm to examine the paradoxes of the postcolonial situation and the nuances through which the structures of the colonial socio-symbolic are reproduced within liberal democratic practices.

However, what they fail to realise is the fact that, even in postcolonial time colonialism still constitutes the 'practical state' of black subjectivity and subjectvisation. In other words, they forget that colonialism is causa sui to the current concrete situation of the postcolony. Hence, to signal the return of the theory of anti-colonialism, we start with a theory of colonialism in order to examine the structures formative or constitutive of the 'practical situation' of blackness – as a status of propertyhood conditioned by the social history of colonial modernity – and we shall immediately leap into an exposition of the main theoretical and philosophical positions of postmodernist postcolonial thought to expose its limits and therefore launch a critique against its failures through a retrieval of the major tenets of the theory of anti-colonialism. With that task in mind, some of the questions central to the thesis are: What is colonialism as structure? What is colonialism as antagonism? Or, to put it in linguistic terms, what is colonialism when we look at it as a failure of a differential relation or as a non-relation? How does the subject confront the constitutive void inherent to the colonial structure qua colonial relation or colonial non-relation? How does the colonised-black subject as the 'irreducible remainder' or 'part-of-no-part' translate into a condition of impossibility for colonialism? How are the strictures of the colonial structure punctured and pulverised through antagonism and the deepening of the fissures of contradiction inherent to it? When does the system of colonial symbolisation reach its limits and collapse? Or, how do we think social meaning through non-meaning qua death or through the concept of antagonism in the drive economy?

In an attempt to give a profile of what it precedes, the title to this prelude tries to read through a bit of a punning and a poetic licence of a word in order to bring out the threads of the theses

that a *word* or a *concept* may contain, or rather tries to read the semiotics of a word with what may seem like a 'Seeker's'[2] intervention in the reading of myth, poetics, neuro-science, symbolism, mathematical logic, linguistics, psychoanalysis, epigenetics, semiotics, etc., in Black Radical Thought and Continental philosophy. So, as an attempt at the adaptation of Nathaniel Mackey's geometrical mythopoetics and black avant-gardist philosophical endeavour in the Preface to his anthology *Blue Fasa*, I shall try to read the purpose of the work at hand from the two words used in the title to the prelude – the words '*Ante-sophic'* and '*Synae(thetic)'*.[3] To start with the adjective *Ante*; implying a beforeness, I have chosen to use it as a prefix to the noun *Sophic* in order to denote the idea that Death is prior to Life, or the political and the asethetic are prior to science and philosophy (qua the Imaginary-Symbolic order in Lacanese). The Sophic (gnosis and knowledge qua the 'philosophic moment'), as both a category of metaphysical inquiry and of scientific inquiry, is adapted from an actual reading of the use of the word in Nathaniel Mackey's poem, 'Song of the Andoumboulou: 91', in the same anthology, *Blue Fasa*. The sophic moment, in blackness, as definitive of a recursive, a genitive, or a refractive political process, designates a break away from or a rupture with (rather than a rapture within) the teleological movement of time. Or rather, it denotes the alogical nature of black modes of subjectivity and subjectivisation. Hence, the retreat into death (is an ante-sophic exercise) that the work at hand takes, like the "bend" that the narrator N (who is a

[2] In Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, a seeker, like the character Pierre, is someone who is being initiated into the Freemanson brotherhood, Pierre is referred to, "sometimes as 'the seeker' sometimes 'the sufferer' and sometimes 'the postulant'" (Tolstoy, 2005:388) in ways that describes the uncertainty of the ritual process for the unacquainted initiate. In my case, as a seeker, it is to the tylers, in the name of the scholars to whom I defer my thoughts that I seek guidance for my analysis of the logic of death – "the source of all bliss"

[3] Mackey also uses the word 'synaesthetics' in one of his poems in the *Blue Fasa* and it is also related to the word 'synaesthesia' which refers to a poetic device which (like the process of anasthecia in medical practice as designating the in-between moment of death and life) is used in the 'attempt to fuse different senses by describing one kind of sense in words normally used to describe another'. Or to put it in the Nietzschean sense, synaesthetics, like "anaesthesia", denotes the nothingness of death as the ultimate real within which life takes formation. That is, the realm of the historical past into which the colonised journeys in order to try make sense of the nonsense present in which he exists as a cartographic absence because as Nietzsche says, "every sufferer instinctively seeks a cause for his suffering" (Nietzsche, 1989:127). And, again as Nietzsche further notes, although, hoping "that pain is bound to vanish as soon as the error in it is recognised; but behold! It refuses to vanish" (Nietzsche, 1989:131). It vanishes because, death as a nothingness, an empty void, fails to provide the sufferer with the positive value he seeks in order to deal with his pain, therefore sending him off into spaces unimagined, into a whence of violent acts, tactical acts, guerrilla acts, for that matter. Or rather, death as "his own hell", will continue to provide him with the power to build "a new heaven", because with its heat turned at "212 degrees Fahrenheit", there is no moment of forgetfulness and nothing but activity occupies his animal existence, otherwise at the turn of that heat he might become flesh which can easily be turned into meat (Nietzsche, 1989:115 and Themba, 1972:109).

member of a band on tour) takes in the poem, 'Song of Andoumboulou: 91', designates a 'Moment's Gnosis'[4], (or a death gnosis) an "introspection …, inward retreat, a certain recoil or repercussion having to do with failed extension" of blackness (Mackey, 2015: xiv).

Mackey defines the recursive nature of his poetry as an art whose "lower limit is check, upper limit enchantment" or the art of both check and enchantment, in the sense that, as check, it behaves like the Indian instruments – the sitar and the sarangi – which have a "sympathetic string" which "vibrates in response to a note played on the corresponding main string, sounding, by way of sympathetic resonance, the same note in unison or an octave above or below, at an interval such as a fifth or a fourth away" (Mackey, 2015: xi). The vibrational nature of this sympathetic string for us symbolises the psychopathological role of the scene of death and the act of dying in 'black' political, aesthetic, and mythico-philosophical forms of existence. Death as the conflict-ridden or antagonistic plane of unity for all the co-ordinates of existence does not function as an ethical category and does not translate to the subject a sense of wholeness, rather, as a realm of anxiety it jolts or quilts the subject from the material Real which is never at one with itself, forcing it to gravitate towards a social Real[5] dominated by the

[4] This is the title of a poem just before the '*Song of the Andoumboloulou: 91'*.

[5] We make the distinction between the material Real and the Social Real in order to draw a separation between the differential articulations of the elements of existence within the realm of myth (the underground of inexistence and inconsistency) and the realm of the colonial socio-symbolic (the surface-ground of experience or what in Althusserian terms is referred to as the realm of concrete social formations in which the colonial-capitalist mode of production dominates the forces of production). The material Real in this sense designates the real of the mythical (i.e., the 'unknown-knowns' of blackness) and the social Real designates the realm of political practice or the field of possibilities (the science of social formations where struggle is "expressed and exercised in ideological forms" (Althusser, 2014:246)), or rather, it refers to the hard surface of the concrete social situation in which the colonial delirium plays itself out, whilst the material real designates the field of the potential, the realm within which the absurdities of political action or revolutionary violence find the capacity to be transferred into forms political practice. That is the social Real is the place where the politics of colonialism and anti-colonialism "in their contradiction determine the abject status of the (colonized) subject", or, rather, it is the realm of contestation in which the submerged material substances of the black subject are utilized for political ends in the attempt to rupture the continuum of modern time (Badiou, 2009:314, additions mine). Such a separation helps us to account for the models of (il)logical transference or to account for the movement of the ruptural epigenetics of the elements of existence between the material, the social, and transcendence: both as supposed entities which are without any form of substantive existence. But most importantly it will help us to show how myth in the materialist sense (since, unlike metaphysics it has no history of its own) is determined in the last instance by the revolutionary struggle or concrete historical reality in its contradictory and antagonistic nature. In other words, to invert Althusser (2014:255 and 256), it helps us to understand myth not as a category of transcendental imaginary representation or of "a non-historical reality, i.e. an *omni-historical reality*", but as a category of "real conditions of existence" or an eternal of the unconscious. That is, it helps us to understand myth not as an "ideal of spiritual existence, but … (as an ideal of) material existence" [both in its religious, political, aesthetic, and ethical forms of expression] (Althusser, 2014:258). Myth is for us neither a scientific nor a theological function of "a subject with consciousness which contains the ideas of his belief" (Althusser,

ontology of the colonial socio-symbolic order which again frustrates its desire for different forms of life. The material Real as the realm of myth or the unconscious is prior to the social Real which represents the realm of transference – a realm dominated by the colonial socio-symbolic. This is how for us death as a scene of the '*Synaes(Thetic)*', functions as a void, a black-hole, or an '*empty*' rather than a '*full*' hole where both the political, the aesthetic, and the philosophical can be simultaneously articulated before jolting the subject up into the search for freedom: the impossible point of plenitude qua the Imaginary-Symbolic order. To reference Adelaide Morris to length, it is "a divine world that manifests through disembodied oracular enticements and summations: and under and throughout it all, the '*beat and long reverberation, /[the] booming and delicate echo'* of the … [underground], the matrix from which sounds emerge and into which they subside. As characters from different planes meet, interact, recede and reminisce, the [death-]epic takes its form as a kind of Einstein for … [all the elements of existence]: an acoustical collage, a superimposition or montage, a fading, a clashing, and blending of sounds" (Morris, 1997:45).

2014:259). It is rather an extension of an underground imagination which informs the practical attitude and political actions of the subject of revolutionary emancipation. That is, it is not of the function of its conscious-idealist schemas but of the eternity of the unconscious which is "either 'inconsistent' […], or perverse" (Althusser, 2014:260). It is not a function of "an external verbal discourse (belief) or an 'internal' verbal discourse (consciousness)", but of material existence (Althusser, 2014:261). This logical domain of myth, to us Althusser's conclusions in his analysis of the domain of ideology, is a still poorly explored domain. We say that we are inverting Althusser's two theses on structural causality because he himself, contrary to our position, believed that myth is a metaphysical category. Perhaps we should expressly make it clear to anyone who might be an Althusserean that, for us, myth is neither of the '*mechanistic* type' nor the '*hermeneutic* type' although it is of the generics type. Within the course of the thesis, it shall be seen that, we use the Lacanian matheme to read myth as the inarticulable (w)hole within which all the elements of existence subsist – i.e. the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic. The material qua myth, we can say, is in this sense the (w)hole within which the real and the symbolic are dialecticised in order to produce the imaginary. Or, to use Badiou (2013a:47), it is the realm within which "principles differentiated by Lacan may be remarked therein: that of the real (there is) and that of the symbolic (there are some distinctions)". In that manner we are able to account for the various modes in which the semiotics of myth provide the paradigms for an anti-colonial revolutionary political act – by maintaining its immanence rupture of the real or by maintaining its position as an excess of the real rather than the symbolic. So, the myth as a category of the material – the '*nothing*' which is not a '*point*' like the elements it contains – is the realm within which, due to the failure of a (black) morphology or (black) epigenesis or (black) transcendence or (black) transference, the elements of desire and freedom are made to subsist – although ruptural so. Or to refer to the theory of natural numbers in mathematical logic, it represents the failure of that which is not – the Zero into One. So, unlike Althusser in his two thesis on ideology, myth in the moment of the struggle for liberation, for us expresses the "material actions" of the subject more than its "material practices". That is, unlike in Althusser's structural dialectics of ideology, for us, myth retains the notions of: non-subject, death, the unconscious, action. Not the notions of: "subject, consciousness, belief, (ritual) actions (and ritual practices)" (Althusser, 2014:261, additions mine). Or, we can say unlike Althusser's Pascalian-Spinozian-Marxian theory of ideology, myth for us does not 'interpellate' the subject, but its 'ruptures' or 'divides' it. And it also does not denote an ascertainable semiotic system.

The word synaesthetic, is also adapted from a reading of another of Mackey's poems, 'Song of the Andoumboulu: 93'. Since his poems are in serial form, this poem is a continuation of 'Song of the Andoumbolu: 91' which is mentioned above. If we are to give an analysis of the semiotics or phonetics of the word 'synaesthetic', we can come up with three separate words: the first, *Syn*, only consists of consonants; the second, *aes*, has a diphthong which consists of two vowels; and the third, *Thetic*[6], consists of two diphthongs, with the first vowels coming after two consonants. Let us for now leave the phonetics of the word and go to the meaning of the parts constitutive of it. The word 'Syn', in this case, refers to the unity, the coming together, or the coagulation of the elements constitutive of a whole which is "chaotic, fragmented, alogical, deprived of the beautiful unity"[7] i.e., death; the word 'Thetic' like Thetis who Adelaide Morris (1997:45) says "lure Helen from the temples of Egypt with a promise that a forest tree's 'whispering … holds subtler meaning/than … (the) written stone" in Hilda Doolittle's *Helen in Egypt*, refers to the ruptural realm of death, the underground ancestral realm, the economy of energetics, the night of the world, the 'theatre of death', 'the abyss of freedom' – the libidinal economy of the death drive; and the diphthong in the vowels, 'ae' (without the consonant – s), refers to the pulling or situating (or the tossing back and forth) of the material (in)corporeal elements of existence into the 'Thetic' realm, or rather, accounts for the failure of extension and transference of the categories of existence in what may seem to be a counter to the suppositions of epigenetic formulas. That is, the word 'ae', as a diphthong, is here used to designate the pulling or the regression of the energetics produced in the 'thetic phase' into an antagonistic unity or the *suture* of '*enchantment*' (the 'upper limit' qua the Symbolic-Imaginary order) by '*check*' (the 'lower limit' qua the order of Real-materiality).

Materiality in this sense, as we mentioned above, is the place of myth (the void or black-hole) in which all the elements of existence are indistinguishably articulated: the Lacanian psychoanalytic categories of the Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary – the earth on which air, water, and fire take formation. It is not a materiality which is beyond the power formations of the colonial socio-symbolic since the recoiling into it is itself due to the expulsion from

[6] The *thetic* phase, in Julia Kristeva's psycho-linguistic theory refers to the existence of a *death drive* economy which she uses in her poetics to analyse the dynamics of the semiological *chora* – that which resists signification, evades meaning, or rather, prior to meaning.

[7] Luc Ferry, 2010, pp. 156.

humanity that the colonised subject faces under the colonial situation. The determination by the colonial symbolic is what turns the expressions of black mythology into expressions of suffering and containers of history which are capable of inducing a revolutionary subjectivity: this is what we see in what Bhekizizwe Peterson (2000) refers to as the remembering of the iconography of the past in B. W. Vilakazi or H. I E. Dhlomo's 'Black aesthetics'. Thus making myth articulable as a paradigm of anti-colonial resistance – a death gnosis in the latter two's retrieval of the 'anti-heroic' figures of Nongqawuse, Cetshwayo, Hintsha, Maqoma, or Tshaka. This is because myth as a function of the Real, is what unites the differential elements of existence, and as a category of the *past*, help inform our understanding of the *present* and *future* aspirations. It has the correlate of what in Lacanese is referred to as the 'empty set' or the '*not-all*', the void which is with elements but not substances since it is of the repetition or inscription of an inexistence. It is not a category of the system of monads (the structure of the complete element in itself) because it both contradicts and antagonises logic. This is how, in a sense, myth, the articulation of death, functions as a logic of negation and rupture capable of inducing the subject into revolutionary action or can be retrieved as a model for an anti-colonial struggle. And this is also how the category of myth enjoys similarities with both the symptoms of psychopathology, i.e. derision, hysteria, neurosis, or schizophrenia. This is why myth under the psychopathology in anti-colonial discourse functions as an expression of resistance, conflict, struggle, suffering, and pain. And, this is all despite the fact that, myth tends to turn towards the infinite or tends to map its inversions on celestial bodies: at least this is what the modern scientific episteme want us to believe of it. So, the challenge with regards to myth for both the guerrilla-philosophers and the guerrilla-theoreticians of the anti-colonial struggle is one of avoiding to read it as a metonymy or metaphor of the Symbolic qua logic of Life.

Hence, we say the thesis is an attempt to read from the concept of death, the impossible possibility of an emancipatory politics which when enacted, like "trance-inducing chants" pulls the structures of existence to the ground – in order to make them anew.[8] That is, as a political and a philosophical vocation, it contends that an emancipatory process initiated from or through the experiences of social death can be read as a 'refractive/regressive anti-philosophical' exercise (which is opposed to a 'reflective/topographic philosophical' exercise), or rather can

[8] According to Mackey (2015:xii), "pull is a mix of rapport and alterity, the call of dispersed or distended identity, perturbations attendant on feeling-with".

be read as a diffracted-refraction which forces the subject to internalise or turn towards a 'total internal reflection'[9] which take seriously the value of materiality (to use Derrida's idea of the

[9]The intention here is to move away from the logical and onto-theological notions of *reflection* as a category of abstract/absolute transcendence and the self-movement' or 'self-referring' of an alienated/infinitised subjectivity which is capable of positing a concept which it subsequently turns on itself through the process of what Hegel (2010:347) refers to as a "sublated negation and sublated return into itself." So, 'total internal reflection' qua a diffractive-refraction, as opposed to an original reflection or the turning back of logic on itself or the notion of a 'first cause', in geometric optics takes place when a reflected light wave is defracted by the angle of incidents back into (immanence or the lower world or geometrical shadow) the dense materiality of the ground-surface and underground it is refracted from. It is a concept which describes the alogical nature of subjectivity under the conditions of colonial modernity. Or, we can say it denotes the "moment of regressive subjectivisation" or what JanMohamed (2005) refers to as the return into the natutralistic socio-political conditions of creative imagination or the primacy of the asymptote that Badiou (2009) explains through Pythagorean mathematics. Describes the alogical movement of inanimate things or the regressive process or genitive process of a matter with substance (in the quasi-Sinozist), which do not necessarily point towards a vertical thrust ike the Leibnizian monads or which like Natahniel Mackey's mythico-geometrical potetics use the processes of "violation and restoration, entropy and and conncetion" in ways that aggravate logical movement (Finkelstein, 2008:25 and 26). In other words, it helps to account for the structures responsible for the inability of the colonised black-subject to "fulfil" its "symbolic function", choosing therefore to find "redemption in death" rather than life (Zizek, 2002:5). So as a process of diffractive-reflection or 'reverse anthropomorphism' or an infractive-reflection the process of subjectivisation within blackness entails a process of poetico-natural orientation or the internalisation of the quasi-transcendental or mythical categories of the black subject and the failure of the 'exaltation' of existential reality into transcendence or the upper world within blackness. That is, it refers to the failure of eternalisation of its mythico-socio-symbolic constructs, it's imaginary assemblages – the frustration of being denied the chance to become a "positive matter" or constitute themselves as "material individuals materially producing their existence" (Althusser, 2014:175). This refractive, or rather diffractive moment in the case of the colonised black subject takes place due to the failure effected at the angle of incident or the boundary condition which is represented by the colonial socio-symbolic which forces reflections back into the medium/prism of the material-real. it is a refraction because there is no moment of indexing or logic of iteration or the return in the sense of the symbolic or 'count-as-one' for the colonised subject who is negatively produced as refuse and the unnameable by the colonial socio-symbolic. So, in this case there is no moment of extension into the (lighter) medium of infinity because the density of the reflected medium is maintained at all stages. I use the concept of diffracted-reflection (not in the sense of a structural retroaction) to show the materiality and failure of the black imaginative or reflective dimensions. Reflection is defined by Harris as a "passive order" of inquiry which designates a flight and departure from the plane of experience into the realm of transcendence. Although the terms reflection and defraction are geometrical concepts which refer to the conquest of space by time or "physical expedition", for Harris, "reflection is built into a passive order of the imagination which possesses its own marvels of exactitude" and is presented as the "code of sensibility" (Harris, 1981:83). So, if philosophical reflection and refraction aim for the transcendental truth-Idea, for us, what we refer to as diffracted-reflection is a process of inquiry which aims for the truth of the concrete, i.e. the truth of the real. Diffraction as a forced return of the incident ray to the real or a moment of regression, tends to frustrate inquiry because it does not turn towards the vertical or the infinite in its transcendental form, rather, it denotes the curving of a ray back to the surface it is reflected from – forming a circle. Perhaps it is due to this failure of the 'black light' to escape the prism of materiality, the nameless void, the Harrissian 'womb of space' which compels Fanon to say, "on the unconscious plane, colonialism therefore did not seek to be considered by the native as a gentle, loving mother who protects her child from a hostile environment, but rather as a mother who unceasingly restrains her fundamentally pervese offspring from managing to commit suicide and from giving free reign to its evil. The colonial mother protects her from itself, its ego, and from its physiology, its biology and its own unhappiness which is its very essence." (Fanon, 1967:168). So, for the colonised black subject, the potential to translate or split into transcendence/ or infinity through the refractive index is forced or frustrated into a diffracted-reflection – a ruptuarl total internal reflection. That is, the moment of transcendence or externalisation, the splitting, the breaking or passing into a "new medium", or rather, the "change in medium"

function of the pictographic script differently) in the establishment of liberatory subject positions. Or, can be read as expressing the "failed extension" of blackness under the phenomenology of a colonial ontology or colonial socio-symbolic order which acts like "the Heavy side layer …, a shell of charged particles that covers the earth at about the same altitude as our communication satellites fly" and because "of the strong charge, radio (or black) frequency signals often cannot penetrate are reflected back – 'skip' – to earth in places continents away from their transmitters"(Canor, 1997:29), and thus enabling it to generate the spirit of revolution in territories unknown and unfamiliar to it. That is, it examines the political and aesthetic liberatory articulations of blackness "in all their constant flux like the coils of (heaven-in-)hell"[10]: which due to the hold of gravity cannot be translated into transcendence. Hence, as a semiological work, it is death (in blackness as *pure-chaos*) "whose codes" that this thesis "seek(s) to unloose" in its theoretical and anti-philosophical quest. A journey in which the subject of emancipation loses itself in the materiality and sociality of Death in order to bring out the potential of Life (or human freedom) in the very same conditions of this death. In other words, it examines how "the volume on … (the) 'low frequency amplification' signal" of black-sounds, heavy-black-matter, black-moans, black-groans, black-creaks, black-anguish, black-pathologies, the black-hell-raiser "is turned up" and "manipulated" (Conor, 1997:22).

That is, the intention of the thesis is to make a theoretical contribution to the materialist theory of the subject of anti-colonial struggle by bringing to the fore the categories of (non-)sociality and materiality which constitute the black liberatory subject. This, we shall do from the place of 'the Black Synaes(Thetic)' or from the perspective of a subject constituted by and in the experience of death: in the same manner that the myth of Nongqawuse sought to articulate a discourse of salvation through the logic of death. By implication this makes the thesis a theoretical and (anti-)philosophical intervention informed by the realisation that most of the analysis on the semiotics of death, both in Black Radical Thought and Continental philosophy, end with a reading of an ethics of death, and therefore, remove from death its revolutionary function. To take from Nathaniel Mackey (2015), like the "cthonic lament" or the rhythmic

(Derrida, 2001:270) does not come to take effect. If it does, it is only as a diffracted-reflection of a verticality turned into the reflecting surface – the medium of density – the contradictory and conflict-ridden Real-ground of foreclosure. Or, as Lacan (2005:54) puts it, it shows that, even an infinite line or the "ray of light" has its limits in the real, or rather, "curves" or "bends" to form a complete circle, or an 'absolute zero' – i.e. it diffracts.

[10] Conor, p. 20.

duende exuded by the voices in the choir which sings the 'Song of the Andoumboulou', this thesis develops a materialist theory of the anti-colonial subject by taking a detour into the 'thetic phase', the realm of death or into the zone of non-being, a place where everyone thinks there is no life because its inhabitants seem to have "grown immune to it" (Mackey, 2015:31 and 39). Death, in our case is the '*groundlessness'* or the '*cut'*, the realm from which sound splinters or *splits* into uncoded chords. With that said, the intention is to build a conceptual and theoretical lenses within which we can analyse the social conditions of post-Apartheid South Africa and their embeddedness in the colonial historical past.

Introduction

Towards a Materialist Theory of the Subject

"But perhaps only the dead can strive for the quickening power that animates what has been relegated to the pathological. Perhaps the dead are alive and escaping. Perhaps ontology is best understood as the imagination of this escape as a kind of social gathering; as the world's auto-interruptive, auto-illuminative shade/s. seen in this light, black(ness) is, in the dispossessive richness of its colours, beautiful" (Fred Moten, 2008:212).

Death as the void of contradictions and antagonisms for the non-living or the psychopathological subject who dwells in it potentially produces meaning from the non-meaning that it is constituted as under the conditions or discourses of life or of the living which characterise the history of colonial-modernity. The *empty* rather than *full* meaning that it produces is not of some posited or presupposed 'future anterior' or 'external reflexivity' but of the material or the concrete situation it resides in. A situation whose materiality is not of a nature at one with itself but of a nature that is always ruptural and antagonistic because it is an extension of the vibrations or the kinetic rhythmicity or economy of the death-drive qua the quasi-substances of death that are generated from it. And, nature in this sense, is not of what Adrian Johnston refers to as "the theological idea of God or the cosmological idea of Nature-with-a-capital-N (i.e., the monistic One-All of a seamless tapestry of entities and events bound together by mechanical relations of efficient causality": which are all conceptualised as categories of limit and eternity.[11] What we are delineating as the purpose of these meditations on the dialectical-materialist-logic or poetics of death is an attempt to examine the outlines of a materialist theory of the subject, which is not "altered by the denaturalising mediation of symbolic-structures"[12] whether through the mediatory qualification of an episteme. That is, our task, is as Abdul, R. JanMohamed says, "not just a description of a dead being, but an illocutionary act …, to the extent that it constitutes a ritual killing of the already dead, it is also an act of deep mourning" (JanMohamed, 2005:144). A deep mourning in the form of a *forced* regression or retrogression to the antecedent void of the natural: that which the realm of the dead is. The materialist theory of the subject we seek to develop may be referred to as one of the 'generic type', an alogical genericity for that matter because of the failure to transcend or transgress materiality: since it always carries with it ghostly substances. Or rather, the most

[11] Johnston, A. 2013a, p. 321.

[12] Johnston, A. 2006, p. 35.

determinant moments for it are those of struggle and resistance, thus, denoting an impossible imagination which is muddied with the categories of the material Real.

Hence, our materialist subject is to some extent different from JanMohamed's death bound subject or Johnston's metapsychologically determined transcendental materialist subject or Badiou's subject of the 'ontology of the void' and subject of the 'void of mathematics', who becomes located at the level of the 'break' or consistency or comprehension or syntax, the one after the 'cut' or who "primarily owing to intelligence and tenacity" or the translation of the finite into the infinite, unbind themselves or leap from the position "of the socially dead human being" to "an 'area of living'"[13] qua transcendence or the realm of fictitious imaginations[14]. To the contrary, our subject, as an effect of the unconscious-Real, or rather as an effect of the psychopathology of the colonial symbolic order, is always contingently caught in the attempt to break away "from its corpo-Real-material substratum".[15] Or, as a subject forced into the underground or the material Real "plagued by rottenness, by decay or defect", death is not "a historical chapter in life" that it closes through an act of choice modelled on some scientific notion of 'will to truth' or categories of extension which make possible the leap into the realm of the Symbolic qua ethics. That is, in the case of blackness, due to the phenomenology of the colonial socio-symbolic order, it is difficult to account for what Fred Moten refers to as "black aesthetic-social-life"[16], or 'the break', or the "jettisoning of the drives" into sequence, or the *dialectical* relationship between "the unconscious dimension of psychic subjectivity" and "the initiation and execution of decisions and deeds"[17] qua choice, or the *logic* of the motion from the former to the latter as an act of *(dia)gnosis* and *cure*.

[13] JanMohamed, A. R. 2005, p. 144.

[14] By Transcendental-Ideality, to use Althusser (2014:173), I mean a positivistic-mechanistic conception of ideology" or metaphysical and imaginary constructs which are regarded as full with an a priori meaning, i.e. a transcendental Truth-Idea which is presented as a function of phenomenology, the function of a 'determinant in the last instance', or to render the 'splendour of Being' in the Kantian sense of the beautiful. It is here related to what we can refer to as the 'life-gnosis' of logical positivism or negative theology which both aim for the category of the beautiful – to use the Kantian theory of aesthetics – and we contrast this with what we can refer to as the 'death gnosis' which implies the foreclosure of the material (w)hole characterized by chaos and rupture.

[15] Johnston, A. 2006, p. 34.

[16] Moten, F. 2008, p. 192.

[17] Johnston, A. 2006, p. 42.

In other words, contrary to the logic of the reflexive Subject or 'subjective desire' or the logic of the transcendental Truth-Idea, the main categories within which the phallocentric postmodernist-postcolonial subject, the working-class subject, the Cartesian self-sufficient subject, or the messianic subject might believe human freedom to be imaginable, this thesis is intended at developing a materialist theory of the subject of revolutionary violence or a model of political practice rooted within the libidinal economy of the death drive.[18] This is a subject which is without or is prevented from effecting a reflexive ontology or is barred from indexing its categories of existence and cannot therefore, as Fanon says, 'leave existence by the way side'. In trying to think the consequences of colonialism and by way of proposing a way out of the political impasse which we currently find ourselves in, the thesis looks into the potential of a political practice created through black modes of subjugation and resistance or experiences of colonialism and coloniality – i.e. the death gnosis. And, it takes the ruptural nature of the energetics initiated by this experience and the kinetic rhythmicity it engenders as the genesis of a logic of resistance and liberation.[19] That is, it investigates how the black subject functions as an engaged subject of the revolutionary struggle against the (re)production of colonial structures in postcolonial time through an actional process that heeds to the energies of the unconscious realm it is forced to subsist within.

To add on to the set of questions outlined in the prelude, amongst the set of questions it seeks to provoke and address again are: how do we think praxis and revolution through the through the economy of the death-drive? In the attempt to reconcile subjectivity with experience, how

[18] I take the category of 'Black' as an invention of Western modernity or a category of subjection rather than identity, with the Middle Passage as the primal scene of this subjection and invention only for conceptual purposes alone because the presence of the category of 'Black', in the Western episteme, precedes the Middle Passage. Taking from 'New World' black studies, the Middle Passage is the Anthropocene of modern humanism (in a rather non-determinsitic way) which takes scientific rationality (as though it were separate from all other modes of rationality) as the definitive conceptual framework for understanding experience.

[19] That is, death as both a category of the sociality (or historicity) and materiality of black existence, but not in the last instance because, it bears the inscriptions of an energetics which does not allow it to be at one with itself, and we refer to these energetics as the drives or manifestations of the mythical which punches holes onto it, thereby depleting it of its groundedness through contradiction, and thus preventing it from being an absolute whole expressed by the thing-in-itself (like the Leibnizian *monads* which are self-enclosed totalities). For our materialist theory of the subject, it is the repression within death (as a *chaotic-accidentality* or *contingency*) of all the categories of sociality and materiality which enables it to inscribe onto the subject body, the energetics proper to physics or movement. That is, death as the *whole*, denotes an *aggregate* in which all the elements of existence are set into contradiction, thereby creating the conditions necessary for the *necessity* of freedom qua Life.

do we use mythical narratives of the pre-colonial African past and black revolutionary narratives as unconscious registers for the critique of our current practical situation? How do we question the frameworks upon which the modern principles of human freedom and action or the principles for the contestation of the political, the social, and the economic structures of domination are premised in modern social theory? In this attempt to analyse the black experience as a theory in and of revolution or the psychoanalytic theory of the death-drive as a paradigm and a practice of revolutionary praxis, the thesis confronts the scientific and humanist underpinnings of modern social and political theories of freedom and liberation. To refer to Lacan (2005:48), it contends that, since it is "marked by death" there is "no progress" or translation into a 'transcendental condition', or rather, there is a 'departure' but no 'arrival' for the black subject, because death as the real of its groundlessness is made to exhaust all efforts towards a first order logic qua life itself.

So, the death-drive as a function of the real, in the case of the black subject, helps us to think how transcendence, reflection, or refraction through the medium of space is always "thought of as impossible …, that every time it (the black subject) peeps the corner it is unthinkable" (Lacan, 2005:48). It designates the subject's position in the division between the real and the symbolic (reflection and refraction) – with the colonised black subject being more closer to the former than the latter. This may contradict Peter Hudson's (2016)[20] reading of the concept of the drive from Adrian Johnston and Jacqueline Rose's notion of epigenetics which we can say, does not make use of Lacan's supposition that "what signifies death for the somatic subject has its place in drives" rather than in the consistency of the drives which is a prerogative of structure and a structural dialectics (Lacan, 2005:59). Drives for the materialist Lacan (or the Lacan of the Real 1 as per Bruce Fink's distinction) and as they are for us "have to do with relation to the body" or the relationship between body and sound in so far as the body is the 'excessive lack' or 'excess of lack' which escapes any efforts towards signification (Lacan, 2005:59). Hence, we say, contrary to Hudson who here seems to be moving from the place of a structural dialectics or the place of the effects of the 'barred Symbolic, the 'vanishing cause', the 'absent

[20] This article, as Hudson himself says "identifies the standard conception of the relationship between nature and the symbolic and contrasts it with that developed by the neuro-sciences, epigenetics and psychoanalysis" and it argues that "Nature requires 'completion' by the Symbolic and vice-versa" (Hudson, 2016:1). Although not necessary his intention, one may read this statement as suggesting a structuralist dialectic which seeks to surbodinate the real to the functions of the symbolic.

cause', the 'third element', or the 'empty cause', like Frank Wilderson, we believe that, for blackness there is no 'subjective vertigo' which allows for the "transcendental condition" or the leap from the "axis of iteration (of consistency or reflection)"[21] to the "axis of alteration (of variation or refraction)" to take place (Hudson, 2016:3).

With that said, attending to the central questions that the thesis addresses is both a philosophical and theoretical engagement which simultaneously draws from and problematizes the methodological and epistemological paradigms of Marxian analytics, phenomenology, psychoanalysis, semiotics, mathematical logic, or structural linguistics – and their extension into critical philosophy and critical theory, especially postmodern postcolonial theory which still relies on Western theories of the subject and all its baggage of a Cartesian phallocentrism. In other words, it investigates the philosophical and political implications or paradoxes of the concepts of the Subject and Truth-Idea in postmodernist and poststructuralist emancipatory politics and it juxtaposes these with the concepts of the material and antagonism in the theory of anti-colonialism. Or rather, it outlines three problems about the problematic of the logic of the self-reflexive subject and the logic of the Truth-Idea in reflection theory: the first being methodological; the second being philosophical; and the third political. It is a theoretical problematisation of these analytic categories in contemporary political discourses or modern social theory and the nature of the political practice they envision. In some instances it verges on a meditation toward the abandonment of these categories as it tries to stretch the postcolonial imagination beyond an imagination that is determined by these very categories of inquiry. That

[21] What Hudson here refers to as the 'transcendental condition' of the subject corresponds with his Zizekian notion of the 'barred Symbolic' or the 'third element' which denotes a reading of subjectivity from the failure of structure or the subject's withdrawal from and suspension of all symbolic links. However, for him, this failure is not accounted for through the 'excess of the Symbolic/structure' supposed in negative theology (or any other science of ontology) but is accounted for through the 'excess of the real', so in similar psychoanalytic terms, we try to read our materialist theory of the subject from the perspective of the 'barred Real' in neuroscientific and psychoanalytic logic which denotes the subject's plunge into the night of the world qua the concrete historico-socio-political conditions of existence. The notion of the 'barred real' in psychoanalytic neuroscience supposes the dividedness or kinetic rhythmicity of nature which is embedded in its capacity to bear the contradictory and antagonistic elements of existence. In our extension of Johnston's neuroscientific formula of subjectivity, it is through this category of the barred real that we try to read the function of ritual-myth in black political and aesthetic modes of resistance from, because it suggests the plunge of the subject into deadly-substance of the conflict-ridden material realm of dead spirits. Ritual-myth, as the bearer of both the animate and the inanimate, like the Real of Lacan or the unconscious of Freud functions as the *void* within which both the categories of the past, the present, and the future are simultaneously articulated. It helps us to think the political actions and political practices of our subject because ours is not a subject which disavows symbolic proclamation, rather, it is a subject which is denied symbolic affirmation by the nature and function of the colonial structure.

is, it stretches or regresses into notions of human freedom (from the unmediated 'depths' of nonbeing) which can be said to be only discoverable through the lenses of colonial subjection and subjugation and the lenses of anti-colonial subjectivisation and subjectivity closer to but different from the indexing paradigms and structure of the interior-exterior dimensions of Kierkegaard's (1992) '*escritoire*'.[22]

Whether read from the place of the self-reflexive and self-sufficient subject or that of the Truth-Idea, postcolonial thought either take it that liberation is reducible to the articulations of the self-sufficient subject of Cartesian classicalism or is reducible to the realm of the infinity of transcendence in the Kantian sense. The realm of current concrete situation in these instances is either reduced to the articulations of the scientific subject or to the subject's dialectical relation to the Truth-Idea. Although not directly concerned with analysing the structures of both the scientific subject and the subject of the Truth-Idea, the thesis operates as an examination of what Zizek (1991:145) apropos Althusser's theory of ideological interpellation, refers to as the four modalities of subjectivity (which for us shall be discussed in relation to blackness). These are the modalities of: the ideological subject; the subject in art; the subject of the Unconscious; the subject of science. With the concept of the material-social-Real and the category of death as our key conceptual frameworks, we shall try to give an outline of a materialist notion of subjectivity and subjectivisation which has not been subjected to the laws of the Imaginary-Symbolic, or rather, a subjectivity which is neither pre-discursive, extra-discursive, nor non-discursive. It is a materialist theory of the subject which relies on the energetics released from or contradictions of the conjuncture between the different elements of materiality and sociality. Unlike in the logicism of the Subject and of the Truth-Idea where the meaning filtered through the Imaginary is that of the Symbol – the nameable *void* in the political economy of the drives, the meaning filtered through the Imaginary of our subject of resistance and liberation is that of the Real Material– the unnameable and interminate void.

In other words, the thesis looks for an idea of the subject or subjectivity that is of a stratum below and before the Symbolic-Imaginary, or as mentioned above, the level beneath meaning,

[22] To use Lacan, it is different from Kiekergaard's 'escritoire' or his notion of Original sin which is of logical representation or which acts like a coding system, because the black existential condition as a category of the real, is not necessarily structured "by the absence of a subject, but by the absence of a relation between interior and exterior" (Lacan, 2005:63). That is, there is no telling of difference or choice between the either/or of existence, or rather, the good/evil dichotomy does not subsist in its moment of rupture.

the level of kinetic rhythmicity or the level of the energetics of the death drive. That is, it looks at the stratum of the 'material Real' as the genus, the zero-degree of subjectivity or it takes the 'barred Real', the Real of materiality as the elementary position of the subject of revolutionary practice. This subject is one that survives, or rather, it is of the logic of the Fanonian subject who makes the descent into 'further hell' – the unconscious-Real where conflict and violence takes precedence over ethics and Eros. It is a subject without a substantive destitution or an 'absolute cause' because it is a subject of the irreducible spontaneity of the ruptural and kinetic energies of the death drive. As mentioned above, a subject whose origin is that of the Real natural, is not that of 'Nature-with-a-capital-N or of a reductionist biologism.[23] The Real natural is set as a condition of this subject because it is in-itself empty, a void, a lack, or a fragmented whole, and not a harmonious whole like the Symbolic order of pre- or post-Copernican cosmology. The barred Real or the Real natural is not fully represented in the structures of this subject because it is of the drives which are in their nature ephemeral and phantasmatic. A materialist theory of the subject is a (il)logical theory of the subject which takes the biochemical and the neurobiological qualities of the of the human as the locus of subjectivity. Hence, the thesis presence death and the death-drive with their idea of shifts as challenges to the notion of a reflexive subjectivity which for us is bound up with symbols of colonialism or the colonial modernity.

For us, the fecundity of death enables the colonised-black-subject to be nothing more than he/she already is – to be the 'something' of the 'lower world' or the 'lower limit': and like a black hole, it constantly emits destructive electromagnetic radiation. It is of the stratum in which a subject exists without a symbolic identity, and to move from or within it, it is not driven by reflection but by the field of drives and kinesis or the genitive process of diffractive-refractions: because all the energy it produces keeps bouncing back into the void that it is. Unlike what we see in the Cartesianism and theocentrism of postmodernist postcolonial theory which sees human essence as being involved in the process of liberation, our materialist theory of the subject, as an anti-colonial theory, takes antagonism and contradiction, not human essence as the genus of subjectivity. The antagonistic social structures are the ones which throw

[23] Nature is as Badiou (2013a:123) says "not a region of being, a register of being-in-totality. It is the appearing, the bursting forth of being itself, the coming-to of its presence, or rather, the 'stance of being' … Nature is thus not objectivity nor the given, but rather the gift, the gesture of opening up which unfolds its own limit as that in which it resides without limitation".

the subject out of joint. But instead of being caught in an upwards movement, it regresses or spirals into the moment of madness after being forced into the unconscious or Real materiality – which in itself is still not independent of the power formations at the level of the socius. That is, they force the colonised subject to go through 'the night of the world' or into the 'abyss of freedom' without making him to accede to the Truth-Idea through reflexive mechanisms: or without making his/her expressions attain to the level of *concepts*, *codes*, *axioms*. This is a subject which is de-centred in the true sense of the word, because as a subject of materiality or the 'barred Real' (the antagonistic socius), it is a subject which behaves as though it were without a centre: and without the centre does not hold because it functions as an insurance for the humanness or self-validation of the coloniser. And the only thing that enables it to be imaginative is the fact that, as that which is without *limit*, it has built within itself the drives for freedom which forces it to always want to create the new. That is, it is the drives which jolts it out of its colonially determined or interpellated difference – but not interpellation in the Althusserian sense of structural dislocation which takes structure itself as the determinant in the last instance. As a matter of fact, the colonised-black subject is not like the working-class subject of Althusser which is interpellated into the structure of the capitalist-symbolic – which as a 'model' of transference can function as a 'prescriptive norm' or a means of mapping processes and configurations of political functions – like Marx's species being.[24] Rather, it is a subject who is repelled by the colonial socio-symbolic order because since it is reserved for elimination not assimilation. Therefore, allowing us, more than the working-class subject, to re-think dislocation and dismemberment or re-think the relationship between social death and symbolic death from the field of potentiality qua the field of resistance and revolutionary violence.

The thesis opts for the colonised-black subject as a category for the theory of resistance, because the colonised subject ('as part-of-no-part') is more unstable than the working-class subject. The colonised-black subject, as shall be seen in the length of the thesis, is not given any head start by structure or truth when engaging in the process of resistance and liberation. Trying to give the subject a head start by substantialising it or trying to read emancipation as a system of signification, as postcolonial theorists do, is to blare or downplay the effects of

[24] That is, for the working-class subject, the colonial capitalist socio-symbolic can come to function as a system of reference that can translate it or mold it into a human profile or human existence compatible with it.

colonialism and its Manichean antagonisms. In anti-colonial theory, unlike in postcolonial theory, colonialism is Real and antagonism is regarded as neither pre-discursive nor extra-discursive but is regarded as the body of discursivity itself. It is of the body not fully incorporated into structures but of the drives emanating from the empty-barred Real. Antagonism, as logically prior to all symbolic forms (of either death or life), is unsymbolisable and falls outside the realm of meaning. Its logical a prioriness – or as a death gnosis, as we shall see – does not necessarily mean that antagonism is something natural or is of nature as a "monistic one-All"[25], rather, it implies the fact that nature as structured by an ontological tension plays a role in the construction of the colonised-black-subject as a figure of *suture* and *negation*. Which is to say, antagonism as a necessary condition of emancipation, sutures the colonised-black subjects and transforms them into categories of breach and interruption in the (re)productive mechanisms of the colonial structure. The colonised-black subject, denotes a subject bounded in the materiality of death, and as we shall see, through the works I defer my thoughts to, this is a subject whose behaviour, as I warn you, is erratic, ruptural and violent because it is not a subject of language, but of sound which bears no meaning.

So, this thesis informed by the geography of the concepts of the Real, Death, and the Subject, shall try to conceive of the different strata constitutive of colonial subjectivity and subjectivisation. In such an archaeology, we are not looking for the object-cause of desire, but we are looking for the conditions necessary for the transfiguration of the contradictory Real through the energies of the death-drive economy. For us, the subject, before becoming in the 'second-place' designated by the 'count-as-one', to contradict Alain Badiou's theory of number, is of the 'not-all' zero, or the inexistent, or the 'multiple without-One' of Real materiality. In other words, it is a subject with no necessary or sufficient conditions of existence – a divided subject of the void in Galilean science. It is a subject different from the postmodernist postcolonial subject, which is a subject which emerges independently of the antagonistic Real. Hence, we argue that there is no causal genesis to the emergence of the subject because, to do such, is to think the subject as necessary and sufficient in-itself or through some external Substance. That is, in our mythoi-poetic reading of the relationship between the Real-social (i.e. the 'socio-symbolic) and the Real-material/natural, the latter is a necessary condition of the former – not some celestial or eternal force such as the Truth-Idea

[25] Johnston, A. 2013a, p. 321.

supposed in the theological notion of the Original Sin and the Fall. From that reading, we pose the question: What is the nature of the relationship between the colonial-symbolic and the Real-materiality of blackness? Or, what is the relationship between struggle and the history of social formations as they are discursively conceptualised? Under colonialism, the black subject lives between these two Reals, i.e. the material and the social Reals, because, to it, they are more foregrounded than they are in the case of the working-class subject who lives under the capitalist socio-symbolic which recognises his role as the substance of its suture therefore limiting its potential to engage in any meaningful political action.

Differently from the functions of the capitalist socio-symbolic for the working-class subject, the colonial socio-symbolic for the colonised black subject forces it, through a regressive process, into the underground, the realm of the Real-material, the realm of Flesh which brings Life-in-Death. Hence we say, where the black subject subsists, the Symbolic, the Imaginary, are not articulable over and above the Real, or rather, are sometimes not put into expenditure. In other words, where contradiction and antagonism subsist, there is no place for an external force that can be said to allow for the full potential of human relations. These two categories denote the impossibility of achieving an ideal structure that can ultimately fix colonial relations. So, with the psychoanalytic concept of the death-drive, we shall present our meditations on the political economy of death as a conceptual framework for our analyses of an anti-colonial emancipatory subjectivity. This, we shall do without conceptualising death as either Spiritual or biological, but, like JanMohamed's philosophical and theoretical meditations on the death bound subject which are of great influence to this thesis, we shall try to conceptualise death as a social category – a function of the unconscious-real. That is, in a quasi-epigenetic form, death as that from which 'spiritual negativity' generates, helps us understand the materialist genesis of the subject. So, the psychoanalytic theory of the drives that we use for our meditations on the logic of death or the political economy of death is, as JanMohamed (2005:285) observes, what allows us to examine the structures of social death and how they produce the death-bound subject as an aporetic being. Or rather, to contradict JanMohamed's extension of Derrida here, one can say it is what helps us to account for the failure of aporia (i.e. the process of 'unbinding or splitting) in the structure of the subject of social-death. For aporia, as a category of extension and transference, to use Aristotelian logics or the theological notion of transubstantiation, is what allows for the birth of logic through the separation/splitting of being from non-being, the phenotype from the genotype, the animate from the inanimate,

the possible from the impossible, etc. The category of the Spirit more than that of biology, as a discursive category cannot be read into the structure of the death-bound subject because the phenomenology of the colonial socio-symbolic order forecloses the possibility of a reflexive transparency/subjectivity. It is for these reasons that we say, the emitions of black-ghostly materials do not succeed in attaining the level of the symbolic under the conditions of coloniality. That is, the formations of the Black-Unconscious, due to the phenomenology of the colonial socio-symbol, fail to make it beyond "the first fail" of the double negation. To put it in the psychoanalytic terms of Jacques Alain Miller, what I am hinting at is the idea that, the Black-Unconscious, is forced to remain "in its primitive state" and its symbolic models under colonial conditions, fail to attain to the level of "analytic domestication" or "clinical transference" or the "break" in the "ideological re-presentation of mathematics" which Badiou (1969:20) says is responsible for the "actual construction of formal systems that represent historical arithmetic". But, because of that, not all-hope-is-lost in the Black-Unconscious, since by remaining at the level of the 'first fail' qua the field of the potential, the political project it enacts continues to follow the "a-temporality of the moment (instant), the sudden flash" – the poetics and politics of the cut – what we would like to refer to as the poetics and politics of the death gnosis or underground imaginations.

With death conceptualised as both a cause and an effect of the kinetic rhythmicity of the drive economy and the energy it produces, is in these meditations, regarded as prior to the formation of the subject of Science or the subject of philosophy. As an element of 'substance past' or of the 'eternal past', to adapt Adrian Johnston's extension of the Schellingian notion of 'reverse entropy' or what we have in the footnote above referred to as a process of 'reverse anthropomorphism' (not in the humanist sense), death is here conceptualised as a category of a "time before linear time" or a category of empty space (Johnston, 2006:40).[26] It designates the 'empty set', the 'spatial schema', or the 'mythical mapping' of the Real or practical situations of the inexistent that the colonised black-subject is under modernity. What subsists, in the Badiouean sense, as the 'multiple without-One' – the zero degree of subjectivity, as we shall see in the foregoing conversation, shall be read as though it has no teleology built onto it

[26] The time before time is the very same time which is repeated in the linear movement of time. Even in mathematical logic, as Recanatti says, it is the "0 that is repeated in the series of whole numbers …, the absolute 0. (which) is in general the order of the potential" (Lacan, unpublished).

because, marked as failure, it escapes all efforts towards ontological affirmation and Universalism. In other words, ours is not a subject of an absolute cause or a subject of the Truth-Idea, rather, it is a subject whose logic is functional to the disruption of teleo-poetic conceptions of being. Death, the fate of all flesh, the realm of finite mortal beings not that of Life, the Spirit and infinite Being[27] or the transcendentalist condition of possibility, is the realm within which colonial-modernity forces blackness into. Hence, we say, the epistemological purpose of Enlightenment discourse and colonial theory was to categorise the colonised-black subject as property or as the in-existent and eliminable Other. Such a thingification of the black subject was necessary to the constitution of the Western subject as Man qua the subject of plenitude. It is for these reasons that, both the concept of Blackness and the notion of the European subject or modernity have no historicity nor any genealogy. In other words, since Western modernity understands itself through its opposite, there is nothing empirical about it or there is no thereness of modernity, rather, it is an absence which exists in the imaginations of the Western mind. And in the face of that ahistoricity, the site to which black critics of modern time trace the Anthropocene of the human and races is the Middle Passage, because

[27] This 'infinite Being' is that of transcendental qualification in eternal truths or in the Symbolic order which – like God – functions as the 'logical regime of being' and denotes deductive knowledge, rather than that of immanent qualification in the Real which designates the place of the denumerable Zero of groundlessness. Or, in Lacanese we can say, infinite Being represents the 'discourse of the Master Signifier' or the Platonist-Heideggerrean notion of Being and ontology, the unfolding of a totality which is posited in the "imaginary of the on- infinity" (Badiou, 2013a:148) of metaphysical and theological monotheism. We are here aware of the meaning that the concept of 'infinite being' in Badiou's matheme of infinity carries a particularistic or immanentist outlook of knowledge – as a category of what he refers to as the 'generic truth' or the natural order. This 'being' of Badiou, is that of a small letter 'b' while that which we are critiquing is of capital letter 'B'. That of the latter for the sake of convenience we shall say refers to transcendence whilst that of the former refers to immanence in the materialist sense (although for Badiou it designates the immanence of science). To extend on this point by way of Badiou (2013a:340), we shall say the "infinite productions" of '*Being*' (with a capital letter – B) are said to be discernible because they constitute a metalanguage or eternal truths, whilst the "infinite productions" of '*being*' (with a small letter – b) are "indiscernible" – and perhaps to follow Badiou further, although with some reservations, we can say, "*they do not coincide with any part nameable according to the (the ontology of the State*), being nothing more than changes of political subjectivity within the situation; and finally its enquiries consist of militant organized activity". We are aware of the Spinozist turn in Badiou's theory of the state, as it, like the Heidegger of infinite Being, to justify the existence of the state, returns to the Sartrean notion of the practico-inert or structural causality to define revolution as "the retroaction of the one-effect", "an infinite oscillation between the inconsistency of individuals and the consistency of the singular thing" – the multiple singularities being themselves "infinities in infinite modes" or what he says "Spinoza terms the attributes of substance"(Badiou, 2013a:113). This kind of a reading in and out of Badiou shall characterize most of our extensions of his work throughout this thesis, as challenging as that may be, especially with regard to his dense and confusing work on mathematical logic – i.e. theory of natural numbers.

with the race politics it inaugurates, scientifico-theological notions of Man which required the exclusion of the 'black' Other, were mapped onto the scientific paradigms of Man.

The relations of propertyhood and commodityhood it helped set in motion allowed for a social process that was to put black-being or being-black under erasure. Or, rather it enabled the production of classification models that were intended for the administration of persons through the regime of propertyhood and commodityhood. This is why the category of blackness or colonialism cannot be included into modern social theory without causing a rupture because it sets asunder all the truth claims of the modern epistemology. We acknowledge how the scientific invention of Man, under the Enlightenment episteme, cannot be the genus of the 'black' Other, since as Mudimbe (1994) notes, the textual violence and thematisation of Otherness predates Africa's contact with Europe in the fifteenth century. For Mudimbe, it is also traceable to the Greek classical works and Islamic texts of the medieval error. But the fifteenth century as the onset of European Renaissance and the birth of political modernity, marks the event where blackness came to be associated with primitivism and savagery qua the categories of propertyhood. That is, the fifteenth century pseudo-scientific discourses mark the invention of the African-Black subject as property – the Other of European Man – an Other whom it had no intension of reducing into the order of the Same, but an Other it intended to identify, subjugate, and eliminate in order to realise the full enjoyment of the surplus-value it produces.

The concepts of blackness and that of Man are regarded as Enlightenment inventions because modern theory has tried to pin them down to the scientific humanist celebration of the European Man as a rational, self-individuating, self-conscious, self-actualising, and interiorising being. And, with Man's Other, the "inferior or degenerate races"[28] being identified as deserving of domination and subjugation through imperial conquest, the whole political and intellectual machinery of Empire was devoted to its total (cartographic and physical) elimination. Whilst the political regime focused on conquest, the intellectual regime focused on the constitution of discourses that would make domination and subjugation after conquest justifiable and effective. The aim of this discourse, and as a constitutive aspect of colonial theory, was to relegate the black subject to the category of the non-human by uprooting it from its material

[28] Ceasaire, A. 2000, p. 38.

and spiritual world – therefore, making it to subsist as an ontological void or a subject with no ability to turn on itself – thus making it a non-subject par excellence. By both participating in conquest missions and relying on accounts of conquest voyagers, Western intellectuals, from the Enlightenment period through the classical era to the modern period worked on producing knowledge systems that compared and categorised the human species. That is, putting them in orders, classes, and groups according to names representing similarities and difference – to use Mitchel Foucault's method of discourse analysis.

The disciplines of anthropology, history, literature, philosophy, linguistics, biology, physics, or chemistry, in other words, both the human sciences and the natural sciences, were engaged in an effort to eradicate the history of Africans by placing them outside of time and place. The disciplines relied on the accounts of conquest voyagers, travellers, missionaries, and adventurers. And whilst others like Joseph Conrad relied on their direct experience of the 'tropic', Elizabethan writers like Shakespeare or Milton and philosophers of the Enlightenment like Descartes, Hume, and Kant, and modern philosophers such as Hegel, relied on the accounts of conquest voyagers for their suppositions on blackness. As we shall see in the first chapter, through the metaphorical use of the concept of 'black' in theatre and prose, Shakespeare's Caliban in *The Tempest*, is portrayed as a "thing of darkness" and an "image of man at his lowest, half-merged with the animal" (Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, V.1.275 and Righter 1968:42). To use Zizek's (1991:155) Lacanese differently, in colonial literature, blackness is referred to as "the monstrous '(un)dead' object libido" which "is no more than that, a disgusting liquefaction, something for which no language has a name, the naked apparition … beyond all qualification." This is how the conceptual spaces that these epistemologies opened helped inform the colonial imagination of European Man and were essential to the constitution of the colonial archive within which blackness was compelled to subsist. That is, they helped destroy the black subject's sense of the unities of time and action – the essential existential modalities of subjectivity.

The unity of time on one hand, refers to the ontological structure within which subjectivity is articulated. It constitutes the realm of past (history) and futurity in the process of subject formation. And the unity of action on the other hand, refers to the performativity of subjectivity within time. In the case of the black subject, such a performativity is rendered in-operative by the problematic of the colonial socio-symbolic, hence, the thesis condemns the approach to both the pre-colonial and colonial registers that is adopted by postmodernist postcolonial

theorists – since it wants to clutch on to the structures of textual performativity. In the attempt to analyse the nature of the dialectical relationship between subject and history, or rather, the imaginary structure and the historiographical operation of the subject, most postmodern-postcolonial theorists, in psychoanalytic terms, by giving primacy to the Symbolic-Imaginary structure, end up foregoing the role of some speculative aspects of history in the formation of subjectivity. In other words, in their attempt to resist the role of the colonial register in any aspect of a revolutionary subject formation process, they end with the expression, 'resistance of the subject', which for Lacan (1981:68) "implies the existence of a supposed ego." Although they have been successful in making problematic "the distinction between evidence and imagination, or history and historiography" (Lalu 2009:11), they end up doing away with the paradigm of historical narrative and all its speculative realist formulations and functions. Even if there are those who have tried to reconcile the postcolonial register with the colonial register and the demands of anti-colonial memory, there still remain some who maintain that the potential for a materialist theory of the subject has been rendered derelict in postcolonial time.

Most postmodern-postcolonial theorists are concerned with developing a theory of a subject working towards an epistemic rupture or a break of the subject with the systems which structure it through the notion of a future anterior qua fantasy and imagination – i.e. the flights of fancy which are intended at escaping historical formations and determinations. They are concerned with the question: how do we theorise the possibility of a future that transcends the vicissitudes of the colonial register or a future without its (over-) determination by the colonial register? To address this question, they deploy deconstructionist and poststructuralist concepts that limit their analysis to the same universal humanism which they are trying to escape from. For them, the retention of the colonial and anti-colonial registers signifies the failure of the 'postcolonial' subject to displace the conditions of subjection. And to support their position, they deploy the concepts of 'historical uncertainty', 'the gift', 'figurative-signification', or Foucauldian poststructuralist notions concerning the disciplinarity of power and the dynamics of the interstitial and in-between moments of subjectivity. Since the most part of their debate derives from an engagement with the rationalism of liberal scholarship and the intellectual inheritance of scientific Marxism, their intention is to differentiate between "history as a system of subjection and history as a system of production" (Lalu 2009:13). They identify their main task as one of calling into question, what they refer to as 'the limits of dialectical thinking' in the former, and therefore opt for the latter.

Amongst the postmodernist postcolonial theorists, there are those like Premesh Lalu who in the attempt to reach for an epistemic rupture with both the pre-colonial, colonial, and anti-colonial registers, identify the dynamics of an emancipatory subjectivity in the moment of 'flight' or distancing by the self-reflective subject.[29] For them, history must be conceptualised as a system of phenomenological production, not as a system of subjection and subjectivisation. But on the other hand, there are those who although still holding on to the idea that both the colonial and anti-colonial registers must be displaced, believe that the demands of these two registers can be done away with or can be devalidated through a retention of the pre-colonial register. And unlike the former, they are not intent on displacing dialectical thinking, since they remain faithful to the theory of causality and scientific notions of subjectivity without foregoing their mythological efficacy. Drawing from various debates in the field of hermeneutic interpretation, they try to counter the limits of Cartesian scientific notions of the subject through a retention of the pre-colonial register in an untainted or essentialist form. And, instead of situating the subject in the order of its practical situation, in a neo-Kantian way, they regard subjectivity as an effect of some external force. They draw influence from pre-colonial systems of thought in order to suggest a model of subjectivity which relies on a linguistic system which (although scientific) functions in a pre-subjective way. They use semiotic, psychoanalytic, and phenomenological methodological and epistemic assumptions to examine how subjectivity emerges in the connection between the symbolic law of myth (culture) and the desire of the thinking and self-reflexive subject since for them subjectivity is locatable in the infinite order of Being. That is, being and becoming are, for them, determined by the structures of the logic of Being in its transcendental form.

Their notion of exegetic hermeneutics does not suppose a subject capable of eluding the totality of historical discourse qua historical ontology, hence, they end up reducing revolutionary action to the thetic order of being. In other words, they reduce the unity of political action to the unity of time. This amounts to a theoretical humanism which hints at a redemptive promise structured in the form of an 'event still-to-come' – to use the deconstruuctivist terms of Derrida. Their notion of redemptive emancipation is undecidable and circular because it is a system that

[29] Most of these theorists draw their influence from the poststructuralist debates that emerged within French structuralist and poststrcturalist philosophy and they invoke the theory of the subject developed within the Subaltern Studies Collective (SSC) in south Asia.

is only possible as an interpretative hermeneutics or logical positivism. Systems of knowledge – understanding, reflection, and meaning – are, in this sense, given precedence over the thinking and self-sufficient subject of Cartesian scientism. They may not be working towards locating subjectivity between thinking and imagination, opting to rather locate it within language, but the fact still remains that, they reduce action to the process of naming, that is, to the order of infinity or the absent cause and that which it affects. The infinite in this case, as the 'One-All multiple', acts as a mirage to which every reference is attached. This One-All multiple is said to act like a force which turns the unconscious into an opacity or it behaves like the linguistic structure which makes the elements of the unconscious both accessible and objectifiable. Since the order of the One-All is for them inaccessible to the subject, it is said to be only partially accessible through the economy of desire, a desire which however has no relationship to the unconscious. This is because, for them, the One-All qua Spirit introduces lack into the economy of desire, setting in motion the processes of transformation. Theirs is not a subject which takes flight from the particularity of history, like the subject of the imaginative creations of the ground, a subject we are trying to introduce through our analysis of the theory of anti-colonialism through the concept of death. This kind of a subject, relying on both ritualistic and scientific functions of subjectivity, it is a subject which is able to transform particularity, through the ritual performance or presencing of a celestial myth or cosmology, into a form of universality.

In these models of hermeneutic interpretation, which are usually suggested in the philosophy of negative theology or the theory of language, the subject is said to be reliant on the combined resources of subjective desire and manifestations of the Truth-Idea or of Image and Structure. Rather than being caught in the movement from the pole of unfamiliarity or the unconscious-(in)corporeal-materiality qua Death, this subject as an infinite being or a subject of the Symbolic, oscillates between imagination and structure, with the Real material, the concrete, situation or the particular reduced to an ontology of a universalisable transcendental Truth-Idea. The Real is in this sense apprehended and comprehended through the imaginary qualities of infinite Being. The act contained in these emancipatory subject formation processes is regarded as an element of structure. Hence, we say, the transcendental Truth-Idea, is, in this sense, introduced into desire qua the subject through the process of transformation. The transcendental Truth-Idea as a Signifier is here treated as the cause of both lack and desire. The proponents of this hermeneutic interpretative model see the subject as an effect of the Absolute

Cause or the absent cause in all its transcendental forms. For them subjectivity is only acquired through a productive distancing or detachment from the Truth. Thus, for hermeneuts like V. Y. Mudimbe or Wole Soyinka or Henry Louis Gates, Jnr. as we shall see in the fourth chapter of this thesis, the realm of the Symbolic-Imaginary, forms the 'mythical locale' which the subject sustains through ritual performance. For them, to use Deleuze and Guattari's (1983: 85) idea of epigenetics and Bergsonian vitalist ontology, the pre-colonial African systems of thought are enacted into real-practical situations through ritual-myth which signifies the subject's process of becoming through the ascension and descension of Time. Unlike them, for us, myths are not categories of the cosmos although they may allow for the apprehension of the cosmos as a supposed model of salvation, because, if thought as such, they may be viewed as cultural or ontological categories rather than as models of political practice.

The mythical locale, as ontology or the space of meta-politics is, for them, like a cause with an effect, an effect which manifest on the in-existent Real and formless matter. Although they identify aesthetics or poetics as the modes through which the meaning contained in myth and symbols is transferred, for them, these categories are only helpful in so far as they are regarded as processes of ontological affirmation. That is, in their conception of the dialectics of Life and Death, African models of aesthetic expression and performance or tradition and religion are regarded as syntheses of Truth in its transcendental form. Like postmodernists who identify their task as that of deconstructing metaphysical concepts, for these postcolonial theorists, myth and symbol in African aesthetic and religious traditions are treated as phenomenological models of productive formations. Which are productive formations of the scientific subject of thought and knowledge who is himself a bearer of the categories of extension and transference qua truth. That is, these productive formations, whether social or historical, are seen as the creations or artefacts of the desiring subject in its reflexive form or as an externalising entity. Desire, as a category of transcendental and subjective reductionism, is as we mentioned above, regarded as the motive force through which all elements of existence find expression. And for them, the expression of the death drive in (or through) the economy of desire implies the subsumption of Death (mortality) by Life (immortality). Although for postcolonial theorists (of hope) like Mbembe, the existential category of Death still retains political efficacy, it only does so in so far as it is read as consubstantial with Life as a *gift*, or rather, it is as an affect of Life – the determinant in the last instance – that Death still gains theoretical traction. That is, like Mbembe, although they recognise the centrality of death in the formation of the colonial

register and the anti-colonial register, its 'political valences and functions' are subordinated to the meta-politics of Life. Hence, they read in the pre-colonial register (African mythical, aesthetic, and religious traditions) the figures of a transcendental Truth-Idea or an ethics which neutralises all forms of contradiction and which turns antagonism into agonism.

Instead of making a priority, the "ideological and political functions of death" or its "practical and theoretical knowledges" (JanMohamed 2005:2 and 3), for them it is the Death of the Father or dying in the Name-of-the-Father (effected through ritual processes) that breathes Life into the Mother-Son relation (qua materiality, the dead, or the unconscious). With regards to the concept of death in the theory of blackness, amongst the set of questions I intend to address through the retention and repetition of both the colonial and anti-colonial registers in my critique of postcolonial time, with the help of sympathetic readings of theoreticians like, Abdul R. JanMohamed, Peter Hudson, Frank Wilderson, Fred Moten, Nathaniel Mackey, Wilson Harris, etc., are; what are the epistemological and ontological functions of death? What is the nature of the structure of the semiotics of death? How can we examine the value of the epistemological sublation of death? How do we theorise the energy of the destructive instinct of the death drive? How does the subject of the dialectic of death endure death and maintain life and freedom within it? How does the subject of the dialectic of death transform its Life-in-Death from use-value to exchange-value and still be able to retain its surplus-value? How does the subject of the logic of death get to a position where he/she can comprehend life as a potentiality structured by death?

A materialist analytic approach to African models of aesthetic, religious, and political expression[30], which is first posed by Abdul JanMohamed, as Hortense Spillers (1977:53) says, can enable us to understand how black modes of practice shift the angle of politics or aesthetics to the "theme of alienation …, the dehumanisation of art …, (and) an avoidance of living forms." That is, an avoidance of living forms in so far as Life as an aesthetic category of existence should not be regarded as a theodicy or an absolute entity, but an effect of concrete

[30] This is an approach which Bhekizizwe Peterson (2000) explores in his materaialist analysis of the retrieval of the iconography of the African past in B. W. Vilakazi and H. I.E. Dhlomo's "narratorial strategies" in their poetry and drama. These are some of the themes which we intend to explore beyond this thesis, but one has to lay out the geography of the conceptual categories that they intend to use in that endeavor: without doing so they may end up just doing an archival recording of the works of these Black modernist writers without any attempt at giving them a theoretical appraisal – a mistake which Notongela Masilela makes.

historical and social situations. And, for Spillers, these political and aesthetic modes of expression, should be read as "strategies (psycho-political configurations) of African survival, evinced on a hostile landscape of social and political praxis" (Spillers 1988:86). They suppose, as Dreyfus and Rainbow (1982:138) notes, an ethics not "founded on so-called scientific knowledge of what the self is, what desire is, what the unconscious is, and so on." In other words, what a materialist analytic approach to the pre-colonial, the colonial, and anti-colonial registers reveal is a new discursive order where expansion and destruction become the mortars of universal history. In such a discursive order, "there is no longer any external principle or limit that can be imposed, so there is no inherent limit to the possible strength of the" status quo, and "power unmoored from the limitations of nature and theology, enters into a universe that is capable, at least in principle, of unbounded expansion" because it is unlimited and indeterminate (Dreyfus and Rainbow 1982:138). It is an unbounded expansion, at least, insofar as the demands of the rules of engagement are not grounded in some onto-theological, a priori, or scientific limit.

The articulation of the economics of the death-drive within the black experience, is what signifies the rupture that blackness inaugurates into modernity. Death as the 'Other-Life' within which blackness is constituted under colonial modernity allows for a subjectivity capable of causing a disengagement with either rationalistic or theologico-political conceptions of redemption and revolutionary emancipation. An adherence to these two latter principles and practices is responsible for the postcolonial impasse that defines black 'time' in the present situation qua the postcolony. A retrieval of the tri-dimensional sites within which blackness is constituted is what would help us overcome this impasse. I mean here, a retrieval of the three registers of blackness as groundlessness or as marked by an absence, i.e., the pre-colonial, the colonial-slavery, and the anti-colonial registers. It is only through the improvisation of these three registers of dismemberment that we can gain insight into the futurity imagined in the time of the postcolonial present. These registers enable the black subject to maintain a material trace with the elements within which its subjectivity is constituted or the elements of the realm from which it is quilted. They constitute the structure of the libidinal formation of blackness or the economy of ghostly formlessness. As Fred Moten (2003 and 1997:218) would say, they reveal to us how blackness dialectically constitutes itself as a phonic matter or radical exterior aurality which resists and disrupts formations of identity or denotes "the absence of the '*break*'" from the moment of the '*cut*'. That is, it is a trilogy which reveals what Fred Moten through

Nathaniel Mackey refers to as the "wounded kinship" and the "broken claim(s) to connection" which marks blackness. These broken claims to connection, as Moten further notes, "suture corrolality, asymptomatically divergent ruptures – maternal estrangements and the thwarted romance of the sexes" (Moten, 2003:6). It constitutes the imaginative restorative figure of the mother as the 'not-all' and shows how blackness links with an "exteriority … an always already unavailable and substitutive origin" (Moten, 2003:6).

The universal history it endeavours to configure is not that of a circular hermeneutic or secular logic which suggests a system that is only possible as an interpreting intervention. Rather, it supposes an Event deduced from historical Situations not from the Nothingness of Being and its colonising extensions. To use Zizek (1991:137) differently again, it proposes a historical materialist notion of the struggle for liberation, a struggle which "emerges when a victim, from his (or her) present catastrophic position, gains a sudden insight into the entire past as a series of catastrophes that led to his current predicament". This is a past marked by a history of subjugation, erasure, and displacement, hence the first chapter of this thesis, as an outline of the theory of colonialism, examines the epistemological frameworks within which colonial discourse sought to constitute the figure of blackness within the political economy of propertyhood or sought to confine it into the category of an eliminable rather than an assimilable 'Otherness'. In other words, the chapter investigates the epistemological foundations of the discursive formations which informed the colonial imagination. So, as we stated above, without trying to settle for a genealogical analysis of blackness within colonial or Western discourse, it examines the literature concerned with investigating the colonial register for the purpose of understanding how blackness was stripped of its being and ontology under the conditions of modernity. And how these discourses justified the cartographic claims to space and bodies or things and objects by legitimating both slavery and colonialism – as social relations based on the ownership of property.

The second chapter questions the limitations of the attempt, within postmodern-postcolonial theory, to downplay the role of the colonial and anti-colonial registers in the formation of revolutionary or resistant modes of subjectivity. It argues that in the attempt to downplay these two formations of the black-unconscious-real or by privileging the elements of consciousness, agency, Will, or imagination in the articulations of the subject of liberation, postcolonial theorists fail to surpass the limitations of the modern Cartesian theory of the subject. That is, in their examination of the components of colonial discourse, they fail to offer a sufficient

theoretical analysis of the historical materialist determinations of colonial subjectivities. With that said, the main focus of my critique in this chapter is Homi Bhabha's *Location of Culture*. My main contention with Bhabha's postmodern-postcolonial theory has a lot to do with his failure to acknowledge how the colonial symbolic order continues to (re)produce black subjects as nonbeings and nonpersons who are to be expelled from the realm of human citizenship. And in that case, my aim is to show how the structures and paradigms of the emancipatory epistemologies he proposes are insufficient for providing a critique of liberal democratic practices in postcolonial time. In other words, the need by postmodern-postcolonial theorists such as Bhabha to do away with the historical representations of the colonial past allows for a mistake that weakens their theoretical intervention in the analysis of (post)colonial subjectivities. The colonial historiography, as shall be seen from the first chapter, must be read as a system which intended to destroy the ontological and epistemological structures of the black subject and replacing them with an alienating and repressive system which cannot necessarily be undermined by categories of metaphor and metonymy – theoretical humanism.

The third chapter examines the phenomenological and psycho-linguistic models of the theory of hermeneutics in modern philosophy. This is because, the conceptual frameworks of the theory of hermeneutics have been extended into the critical reading of African systems of thought within postmodernist-postcolonial theory and critical philosophy. The structuralist underpinnings of the emancipatory suppositions of these theories of hermeneutics has not been without their controversy, as shall be see in our criticism of Mudimbe's extension of them. That is, as shall be seen in the fourth chapter, through our engagement with the critical philosophy and semiotics of V. Y. Mudimbe, and the literary theories of Wole Soyinka or Henry Louis Gates, there are limitations to these attempts to analyse African, Afro-American, or Afro-Caribbean mythology and symbolism within the theoretical paradigms of exegetical hermeneutic interpretative models. This is because, the exegetical hermeneutic interpretative model reads the meaning inscribed to things and objects from a pre-supposed system of signs which is said to render the human subject capable of language through reflexive mechanisms. In the last sections of the fourth chapter, with the help of Wilson Harris, we lay the groundwork for our materialist theory of the subject of the anti-colonial struggle through a reading of black aesthetic and political forms of expression. The fifth chapter, moves away from the postmodern-postcolonial neo-Kantian scientific notions of the subject and together with their hermeneutic reading of symbolism in African mythology to an analysis of subjectivity at the

level of political action in the 'concrete situation' of the subject. This we shall do through a critique of the political functions of the working-class subject and the messianic subject in modern social theory. In this chapter, we rely on the philosophical and theoretical purchase of those works, which from a mythico-poetic perspective, take the materiality or the *groundlessness* of the unconscious as the genus of a revolutionary subjectivity. The chapter brings into read or into conversation, works from different traditions, i.e., works from the black radical tradition and Continental philosophy. And, this is besides the fact that some of these works and their themes are at variance and in contradiction with each other. However, with little focus being paid to their points of contradiction and difference, we try to read through them a materialist theory of the colonised subject in order to think through a revolutionary politics which draw from the registers of the pre-colonial, the colonial, and the anti-colonial registers – what we shall refer to as the trilogy of the black experience or the avant-garde theatre of blackness qua the black 'theatre of death'. The conjuring of this trilogy as the field of the potential – not an appeal to the field of possibilities or to some a priori structures of human freedom, i.e., those of fantasy and imagination – can provide us with a revolutionary emancipatory epistemology which relies on the black critique of colonial time. The works to be consulted in this chapter – especially those which concern themselves with the theory of anti-colonialism in Black avant-gardist writings, unlike those of the postcolonial thinkers mentioned above – do not limit all forms of conflict and rupture or contradiction and antagonism which the colonial symbol is borne with to either the continuity or the totality of structure.

In the sixth chapter, we show how the theory of anti-colonialism can help us surpass the limitations of scientific and onto-eschatological or apocalyptic conception of revolutionary redemption in postcolonial time. The chapter examines the means through which the myth of democracy veils the perpetual reproduction of colonial relations in postcolonial time. That is, it examines how the need to rid society of antagonisms and contradictions through democratic principles and practices works against the processes of revolutionary emancipation for the colonised black-subject. Democracy as a now socius instituted in postcolonial and post-Apartheid time, without doing away with the functions of the colonial socio-symbolic order, to use Deleuze and Guattari (1983:175) who are also the subject of our criticism, is given "the role of a matrix … or … a structural function ensuring the mediation of personages and the ground of their relations: or at the end as an eschatological determination". Together with

Deleuze and Guattari vitalist ontology and notion of the commodity (or money) form, we problematise Derrida's onto-theological meditations on the concept of democracy and theory of friendship. This problematic may also be extended to Johnston's 'transcendental materialist' theory of the subject and Badiou's notion of the 'ontology of the void' in his mathematical logic, yet besides, we keep our focus on the trio. Our contention, being that, for the trio, democracy is made to function as a metapolitical paradigm, a transcendental structure, or a utopian framework to which the subject of emancipation "plays out its own destiny".[31] With the former two's meditations, as Zizek observes, still based on the assertions of the 'Substantial-One', the latter's reading of the articulations of the Paulinian militant figure, to borrow from Badiou (2003), remaining within the paradigms of the '*discourse of the sign'* and the '*discourse of totality'*, also fails to develop a materialist outline of the militant theory of truth which can be compared with the discourse of the pathological in Fanon's subject of the liberation struggle.

Although Badiou, as Zizek again observes, shares similar views or a similar hypothesis with this trio, due to its materialist underpinnings, we separate his militant theory of the truth from that of Derrida which *ab initio* supposes an onto-theologico-political understanding of the concepts of democracy and friendship. The political sphere, is in Derrida's notion of the messianic-militant figure, *mediated*[32] by the ontology of the primordial One, whilst that of Badiou is not mediated, but seen to be always immediate. Even though in this chapter we try to read the colonised subject in the same category with the militant figure in the Badiouean sense, we acknowledge the fact that, the logic of the of the pathological or neurotic subject of Fanonian logic is different from that of Paulinian universalism which remains functional within an onto-phenomenological paradigm, whether posited or presupposed, or as a posited-presupposition. What attracts us to Badiou's meditations on the universalism of the Paulinian militant figure, is the idea that, the messianic subject inhabits the 'kernel of the Real'. Hence, taking it that, democracy functions as a mask for the reproduction of the colonial symbolic and postcolonial time, although briefly so, we take the debate to post-Apartheid South Africa,

[31] Deleuze and Guuatri, 1983, p. 62.

[32] Mediated in the Sartrean sense of the word. For a further exaination of the Sartrean notion of mediation refer to Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy, and other Essays*, Ben Brewster (Trans), London ad New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971.

where, after the "Democratic Revolution of 1994" a rationalistic liberal constitutionalism, with the support of the "theoretical resources of post-marxism"[33] was instituted. With the help of Peter Hudson's criticism of "the quasi-transcendental conditions of possibility of hegemonic construction"[34] that these kinds of meditations create in Laclau and Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (HSS), to which these post-marxists owe their allegiance, we evoke an anti-colonial critique of post-Apartheid time. Thus said, the thesis, in an anticolonial fashion, uses a materialist theory of the subject to meditate on the political functions of death or the 'low frequency amplification' signal of 'black-echoes', 'black-creaks', 'black-groans', 'black-sounds', 'black-pulse', 'black-substances', 'black-bodily-movement'.

[33] Hudson, P. A. 2016, p. 1.

[34] Ibid.

Chapter One

Black Figures in the Age of the Anthropocene

"They are outsiders … and they are going to be self-conscious; they are going to be gifted with a double vision, for, being Negroes, they are going to be both inside and outside of our culture at the same time … Negroes will develop specifically unique and specifically defined psychological types. (Richard Wright, The Outsider*, p.118-119).*

Introduction

As stated in Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*; all identities are differentially related and therefore not full, self-sufficient, pre-discursive, spiritual, ontological, or of a natural phenotype, but empty and non-discursive, that is, no identity identifies as an in-itself capable of self-sufficiently extending into a for-itself. Hence, in the theory of colonialism to be espoused in this chapter, it is argued that, in order for the Western subject to gain the level of plenitude or to enjoy surplus-value or to enjoy both property and flesh, it had to constitute itself in relation to an Other which it had to reduce to the category of propertyhood, an Other which did not necessarily need to be subsumed but an Other which had to be eliminated, and sublimated or substituted. That is, this Other could only be integrated into the economic lives of modernity rather than its social lives. To an extent, we can say, the colonial relation may even defy the Saussurean model of structural linguistics because the form of dependency which defines it is based on subjugation and domination rather than a differential relation between substantive elements at the level of structure and it structures blackness outside the purview of an ethical struggle. Under colonial modernity, all the categories of the social that the colonised-black subject believed its subjectivity to be imaginable or articulable within were erased in order to constitute it as a productive unit which is only functional to the self-indulgence of the colonial Master. And that Other as an anthropological category (and less of a linguistic category since colonial relations are not only producible by virtue of dependency) has – since the Enlightenment era – been the 'Black' figure. That is, the black subject, as Other, was constructed for the purpose of representation and elimination because it was said to bear an anatomy and attitudes which can function as artefacts upon which the Western 'Self' projected and reflected its own skewed reality or negative images of the Same – all for the enjoyment of the right to property.

Differently from the totalitarianisms which emerged in Europe under the guise of modernity, colonialism did not intend to transpose the Other into a single identity or into the idea of the Same. That is, colonialism had no intention of absorbing the African Other into the structures of the Same, rather, as antagonistic and contradictory, it was forced to remain as a fractured non-being which helps maintain the irreducible split between the Same and the Other. It is for these reasons that it has been functional to the reproduction of the colonial-capitalist mode of production and the different regimes of accumulation it has so far been able to invent. Yet, however, throughout the history of modernity, not only has the black figure as the Other of the (Western) Same only evaded elimination but it also has in a form of an antagonistic denial refused the role assigned to it as property reproducible across different regimes of accumulation. This, it has done through revolutionary political struggles as history itself can testify to the multiplicity of these events. That is, the abyss of non-being within which it has been forced into, has been turned into an abyss of contingency and necessity in the sense that it now functions as the only space from which a revolutionary emancipatory project can be launched. And contrary to the Cartesian belief we can argue – in Hegelese – that it has throughout proven that nothingness does not necessarily mean nothing or a non-thing and what is implied by blackness as empty is the fact that it is a something or substance without an a priori meaning. That is, its meaning, as alogical, evades all teleological conceptions of freedom or being-qua-being.

Thus said, in this chapter, using the theory of colonialism, we shall analyse, within the register of colonial discourse, the methodological and epistemological models that were applied in the processes of sublimation, substitution, or elimination of the black-subject: identifiable under the category of the Other and difference in the Western epistemology. That is, what we seek to do in this chapter is to give an account of these processes of sedimentation of deathly forms of life at the material and the social, corporeal or phenotypical and ontogenetic levels/planes/phases/stages/points of black existence. As Moldonado-Torres informs us, the conditions of alterity (or non-existence) for the colonised-black subject as "sub-alter" are different from those of the 'sub-altern' subject. To quote lengthy from a footnote in Moldonado-Torres' text;

> "the colonial Other is not so much an Other, as a sub-alterized or sub-alterical Other, that is, a subject whose being and meaning have been altered to such an extent that his alterity only works in the function of a system of subordination. This is not exactly the same as the one conveyed by the recognised and the most used term,

subaltern, which refers mainly to questions of class and status. Sub-alter, rather, focuses on the existential and ontological dimensions of subordination, as well as the very conditions of possibility for there to be sub-alterity in the first place" (Moldonado-Torres, 2008:282).

In other words, the Other that was produced in the Western episteme after the post-1492 'conquistador' doctrine in a manner that sought to reduce him/her "to a level below the Same" or as an insurance policy on the colonising subject's humanness. That is, to the level of what Fanon metaphorically refers to as "hell"[35] or to what Hortense Spillers refers to as the level of meat, the level below the flesh, the zero-degree of existence.

With that said, since the black figure is a construct of the Enlightenment epistemology, our task in this chapter is to give an account of the symbolic and scientific modes of representation that informed knowledge about this figure. It takes the Enlightenment as the Anthropocene of modern universal reflection on man and the foundation of philosophical discourses on the African Other as a figure of revulsion which can be disposed, coerced, and subjugated or eliminated. Relying on the archaeological and genealogical models of Sylvia Wynter, Michel Foucault, and Valentine Y. Mudimbe, the chapter takes the discourses of modernity as the register or archive that informed the discursive and political attempt to constitute and situate the black figure at the level of the animus, the in-existent, or non-being. Although as Mudimbe (1988) tells us that there is no genealogy of blackness, or rather, the genealogy of blackness is not only traceable to the history of modernity, the intention of this chapter is to account for the philosophical discourses that were contemporary with the event of slavery and colonialism. The invention of the black figure as Mudimbe tells us can be traced to the Mediterranean world, or as Wynter (1995:13) says, to the medieval "symbolic representational system of Judeo-Christianity."[36] In other words, it is also traceable to the three monotheisms of the Western epistemological order: the Greco, the Judaic, and Christian monotheisms. But it is the Middle Passage as a marker of modern scientific notions of being human that they both identify – in a non-deterministic way – as the event that marks the Anthropocene of race.

The event of the Middle Passage was a "product of the intellectual revolution of (a) humanism" which relied on scientific models to classify the human species. Its historical a priori lies in the

[35] Moldonado-Torres, 2008, N. p. 305.

[36] Wynter, S. 1995, p. 13.

discourse of Monism and philosophy of nature that informed the Greek, Medieval, and contemporary Western epistemologies on the human condition. That is, it relied on half-empirical and (+) half-philosophical (=scientific) reflections on man. In their scientific mode, these reflections relegated the black subject to the material world of things and objects. They deemed him or her devoid of rationality and essence, and incapable of transcending the mundane materiality of his or her biological nature. In every way possible, these reflections sought to remove the black subject from the "catalogue of *onta*, of things having being,"[37] and place it or locate it in the genus of the animal. The genus of the void or the nothingness that is incapable of producing existence. They were intended at generating the negative representation of blackness to the extent of destroying both its phylogeny and ontogeny. As an extension of both the theocentric and biocentric descriptive statements of the human, these reflections instituted a "mode of sociogeny" that still to date dictates the manner in which modern epistemology represent and know the African Other. It was a sociogeny imprinted onto a new paradigm of phylogeny based on the Aristotelian categories of being.

The inversion of what Wynter refers to as the Greco and Judeo-Christian theocentric conceptions of being from the 17th century to the 19th century initiated the epistemic shift to the models of representation that associated blackness with the debasement of human capacity. In that era of heightened colonialism (imperial and settler colonialism) the "space of Otherness"[38] identified as lack came to be mapped on phenotypical difference with varying degrees of rationality and irrationality coming to be attached to each race. The matrix of monotheistic conceptions of the human was replaced by the Aristotelian philosophy of nature and idea of order. In that matrix, blackness was to become identifiable with the genotype, the "iconography of irrationality," that is, it was to occupy the place "between rational humans and irrational animals" (Wynter 2003:301 and 304). It helped constitute the structures and paradigms of a Manichean delirium which made Negroid physiognomy to be experienced as aesthetically ugly or a symbolism of "evil, sin, wretchedness, death, war, and famine" (Fanon 1952:147). That is, it constituted and transformed the black figure into a symbol of lower

[37] Lawson-Tancread, 2004, p. xxiv.

[38] Wynter, S. 2003, p.296.

emotions, a gap from the norm, the baser inclinations, and the dark side of the soul (Fanon 1952:142).

As a new mode of sociogeny, it sought to reduce blackness to the level of the natural, rendering it incapable of constituting an ontology (of human freedom). As Wynter (2003:325) tells us, in this new master code of symbolic death and life, "Negroid physiognomy," reduced to a "metaphysical dread," could not formulate its own "order of existence."[39] No longer governed by its own ethno-astronomies, the black figure could not formulate its own "imagined ends or postulates being, truth, freedom" through ontogeny or forms of life. Structured by a mode of symbolic death. That is, under modernity its modes of being, were to be created and expressed through a process of diffractive-refraction rather than reflection. It was through death that it could echo the word or attempt to make the journey towards impossible life. Constituted as flesh without the potential of being, the option left to it was to take death rather than life as its zero-degree of subjectivity. In answering the question: What were the socio-systemic conditions that made such a subjectivity possible? Relying on a number of sources, especially Wynter, Foucault, Said, and Mudimbe, this chapter examines the philosophical discourses or epistemic conditions that made blackness a "life unworthy of life" (Wynter 2003:318). It follows their analysis of the system of knowledge about the Other in scientific, scholarly, missionary, trader, or soldier colonial discourse.[40]

The Invention of the Human and the (Non-)Human "Other"

As stated by the scholars mentioned above, the European Western scientific epistemology or the colonial cartography used orality, spatiality, Otherness, and consciousness as concepts for indexing difference and identity or constructing a modern taxonomy. Everything was done in the effort to create and represent the black figure as a negative paradigm or sign of evil, sin,

[39] According to Wynter (2003:271) all human species relied on a supernaturally determined criteria of being and "recent and still ongoing scholarship on archaeo-astronomy has shown that all human orders – from the smallest society of nomadic hunter gatherers, such as the San people of the Kalahari, to the large-scale societies of Egypt, China, the Greeks, and the Romans – have mapped their 'descripve statements' or governing master codes on the heavens, on their periodicities and regular recurring movements." However, as Mbembe (2001:26) tells us, comnstituted as a "prototype of the animal," colonial discourse deemed it impossible for the black subject "to discern any power of transcendence," since, like the women imagery, it was regarded as "a bundle of drives, but not of capacity." That is, as an animal relegated to the impulse of the Natural, the black figure was regarded as something that "could never accede to the sphere of human possibility" (Mbembe, 2001:28).

[40] Said, E. 1979, p. 7.

misery, death, and famine in the unconscious of the homo occidental (Mudimbe 1997:55). So, since the fifteenth century, colonial discourse has been concerned with the expression of Otherness through theological and scientific programmes in order to prove the truthfulness of its pre-supposed paradigms and notions of the human species (Mudmibe 1997:45). In commitment to the Enlightenment pact, its doctrines and paradigms with their "Christian politics, conscience, and progress," sought to create docile bodies through an Aristotelean grid that appealed to the substances of the individual's mind, body, and purpose (Mudimbe 1997:50). As docile bodies, black figures were actualised in space through monastic divisions of time as alienated beings. The master code of symbolic death and life that these discourses instituted, at the sociosystemic level, followed the Roman military model which had a double role, a republican and a military one: the former protected liberty and was reserved for the European subject; and the latter, with its actualised ideal schema of discipline, was reserved for the African Other who had to be eliminated instead of being invited to join the republic (of Humans) (Mudimbe 1997:52).[41] It was a master code which sought to bring the African Other into the continuum of European civilisation and history through the destruction of his or her own civilisation and history by describing his or her systems of thought (idolatry, fetishism, or animism), as necessary shapes and forms of error, or rebellion against God (Mudimbe 1997:58).

Such epistemological and ontological abstractions of 'Otherness' acted as the precursor to the perils of subjugation and exploitation that were to befall African peoples under slavery and colonialism. They provided the discursive frameworks that enabled the constitution of the African Other as subject race to be colonised and enslaved. They are configurations of the scientific knowledge system that emerged after the Copernican leap. And they ushered in the generation of narratives and texts in which knowledge about being and species being was to be classified. These formed the narratives and texts which constituted what Fanon refers to as the 'sociogenic principles' within which the black figure was to be known and know itself. So as

[41] According to Mbembe (2001:28), in colonial science or discourse, the native was combined into both an "object and subject of commandment," that is, the natives were forced into a regime known as the indigene (an administrative system or a caricature form of inscription applied to the natives). Existing as a nothingness, the colonised subject was only "envisaged as a property and a thing of power" (Mbembe 2001:26). It was forced into the "sphere of objects" which could be "destroyed as one may kill an animal, cut it up, cook it, and if need be eat it" (Mbembe 2001:27). In other words, the commandment was a classificatory mode of exercising power which used attribution and assignment of value on things and beings.

Edward Said (1979:15) intimates, it is then imperative for us to understand how "colonialist discourses developed within philology, lexicography, history, biology, political and economic theory, novel writing, and lyric poetry … contributed significantly to the projects of slavery and colonialism." Hence, an archaeological and genealogical analysis of the colonial archive would help us understand how the European Western variant of modernity led to the epidermalization and reduction of black bodies and souls into flesh so that claims can be laid upon them. That is, it would reveal to us the modes through which the black figure as the 'Other' of the Western 'Same' was discursively constituted through scientific models of knowledge about being and things. A model of knowledge and representation which was created with the Western Man acting as the centre of its devices of colonial extension.

This scientific model of knowledge and representation were effects of the "classical biocentric model" of the Human which emerged in the wake of the Enlightenment era. A model which allowed Man to displace God as the centre of knowledge. Or, an epistemological shift which made possible the leap from the subject of mysticism (or theology and scepticism) to the subject of economics, with the primitive man (who by the end of the seventeenth century is represented by the native, the colonised) lying between the two. It turned the black figure into an artefact of the Other for the European Same, although an Other which did not have to be reduced or absorbed to the order of the Same through assimilation but one which as a thing-with-a-small-letter-t, rather than the Thing-with-a-capital-letter-T, had to be eliminated. This is an idea contrary to the one held by either Mudimbe, Foucault, or Said who believe that the Other (in the colonial context) had to be reduced to a normative paradigm of the Same, functional to its scientific configurations of power, domination, and "varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (Said 1979:5). This is besides the fact that, as Mudimbe says, from the late eighteenth century, at the height of colonialism, as an idea of the Same, the Other was described, through textuality, as a deviant from the norm and had to be "mastered in its very contradictions and absolutely converted to the ideas of one's truth" (Mudimbe 1994:15). From this period, we witness a shift to an autocentered discourse and "egocentric foundation of experience" that is at the heart of the apocalyptic message of the Christian missions and (settler) colonial missions (Mudimbe 1994:15).

As mentioned earlier, the aim of this chapter is to understand how images of Africa and its peoples were constructed in the Western episteme through an archaeological and genealogical analysis of the foundations of discourses about Africa and Africans in the Western

epistemological order. Since the coloniser/colonised relation, as Mudimbe (1988:11) and Said 1978) observe, was discursively constituted and empirically institutionalised, the intention is to find, in the colonial register, the presence of "knowledge and power in and on Africa." This is, however, as Foucault says, with the understanding that, the modernity which constitutes "the sequel to the Enlightenment" was an "attitude" or "a mode of relating to contemporary reality" rather than "a period of history". Although pitched in the language of postcolonial thought, most of the works which have tasked themselves with these themes find the post-Enlightenment model of "liberal monohumanism homo economicus" as still informative and functional to our "just, existence as a specie" (Mckittrick 2015:10). Their archaeological and genealogical analysis of blackness allows us to see Africa, the site of the missing link in the great chain of being, "as the origin of the human as a hybridly auto-instituting, languaging cum storytelling species" (Mckittrick, 2015:31). It provides us with knowledge about how Man was invented through a parallel invention, that of the great expeditions and voyages of discovery during colonialism, which enabled "the creation of a new form of binary opposed Otherness to Man, one that would re-occupy, in secular terms, the place that the True Christian Self-conception of the Untrue Christian Self that had taken in the matrix of the religio-cultural conception of the human, Christian" (Wynter 2001:43). In a sense, it helps us understand how history was divided into two types; the sacred (Western) and the profane (primitive).

As a discourse that precede – but most importantly that proceed the year 1492 (which birthed the Middle Passage qua the primal scene of blackness or the Anthropocene of race) – reflections on the colonial register enable us to identify the processes through which colonial relations are (re)produced in post-colonial time. As a marker to an event, the year 1492 signifies a "moment of arising" for modern Europe and the genesis of darkness for the African continent and its diaspora. A moment where in the Western episteme the black figure came to be associated with primitivism, savagery, irrationality, depravation, and came to be as fit for slavery whilst its prototype, the European Man, was to be associated with rationality, maturity, and virtuosity and was designated to inherit the earth. And as the onset of the European Renaissance qua the birth of political modernity and its coloniality, the Middle Passage symbolised the triumph of technology through Columbus' voyage to the New World. A voyage which gave impetus to the spirit of colonialism and raised the mercantile capitalist system of Europe to unprecedented heights. Columbus' voyage was to be followed by other multiple voyages, such as Vasco da Gama's 1497's four fleet of ships with 170 men on a voyage from

Lisbon to Africa. These voyages were made possible by the ideas of extension i.e., "the ideas of substance, duration, and numbers" or "position and motion"[42] which were borrowed from the geometry, algorithm, and theology of the Copernican era.

According to Wynter (2003:296), the fifteenth century voyages of Vasco da Gama and Columbus, and the astronomy of Copernicus enabled Europeans to launch "one of the most sustained intellectual campaigns to assault the integrity of the African and to prove that humanity was divided into two species."[43] Such campaigns were not new to the Western epistemic order, since as Mudimbe (1994:xii) tells us, they can be traced to the "Greek contacts with the continent." Or, as Said (1979:3) also puts it in his study of Orientalist discourse, it was a campaign which "can accommodate Aeschylus, say, and Victor Hugo, Dante and Karl Marx." From the Greek modes of imagination and politics of memory to the post-Enlightenment scientific mechanisms of classifying beings, Africa and the African Other has always been produced as a paradigm of difference and alterity. The presence of classificatory paradigms in the Greek mythical story of Hercules and Pygmies is, for Mudimbe (1994:4), an example of "a legacy of knowledge" on Otherness that goes back to antiquity. The Pygmies, in Greek mythology, is an embodiment or a sign of savagery, barbarism, and primitiveness which is used to signify the African Other. And, as mentioned above, it is a testimony to the impossibility of a genealogical or archaeological analysis of blackness in the methodological sense. It is a term which signified the textual violence and thematisation of the black figure in Greek Classical works through three approaches, which are of: "mythic representation, from the time of Homer to sixth century art; anthropological reflection, from the mid fifteenth in iconographic data and from the Hellenistic period in literary texts; (and lastly) the representation of the African as unknown Other to be feared" (Mudimbe, 1994:24 and 71).

In his study of the presence of black figures in Greek Classical works, Mudimbe (1994:88) identifies concepts which were used to refer to the African Other, for an example; agriori (savages), barabaroi (barbarians), and aiorpata (women killers of men). Their imaginative models also used and passed on to modern Western European epistemologies the idea of geographical distance as a criterion of measurement and classification in the attempts to

[42] Descartes, R. 1998, p. 38.

[43] Magubane, Z. 2004, p. 15.

topologise and metaphorise the African Other. This kind of observation is testimony to the objection that racial ideology, in the Western episteme – without downplaying the significance of the 1492 event – predates Columbus' expedition of the Americas. It shows that the notions of Otherness that were rigidified in the post-Enlightenment era owe their roots to the ancient world and the new sciences that informs the modern episteme on Otherness. That is, whether located in the sixteenth century (the age of slavery) or between the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the modern scientific order of knowledge merely reinforced old ideological notions of Otherness. Furthermore, in a parallel analysis, the roots the of modern episteme on Otherness can also be traced to African slavery in the Islamic world that dates as far back as the eighth century.

Hence, as we stated in the introduction, it is only for conceptual reasons that the Middle Passage, in Black Studies, which was a result of the great expeditions is usually regarded as the loci or the Anthropocene of blackness. The Middle Passage and the opening of the New World provides fertile ground for conceptualising the ways in which modern black subjectivities and modes of coloniality are a result of the epistemological rupture that occurred in the sixteenth century. Slavery since the fifteenth century and settler colonialism from the eighteenth century have structural connections with both the Western Will to knowledge and power, and the inventions, whether humanist or technological, that proceed the Copernican leap. Wynter makes the observation that the idea of the Human in Western modernity was a result of the notions of scientism and new modes of cognition that were introduced by the Copernican revolution. Due to the Copernican leap, new codes which lead to the invention of binaries in the Western category of the Human were formulated to create a division between the living and non-living. These codes were formulated under the modern "secular biocentric descriptive statement of the human" (Mckittrick 2015:29). Or, as Foucault (1970:xx) notes, through "the fundamental codes of … (Western) culture, that is: the codes governing its language, schemas of perception, its exchanges, its techniques, its values or the hierarchy of its practices." These modes of observation and understanding provided the abstract and empirical orders or paradigms within which the Same had to deal with its Other. The new scientism which was enacted in the post-Enlightenment era lead to a shift in the epistemological and ontological contemplations of "being". As Wynter says, it shifted from a theocentric descriptive statement of the Human and the Human Other to a biocentric descriptive statement. That is, a new epistemology of the subject which was informed by a metaphysics of possession i.e., the self-

possessed and possessive individual, was introduced. In other words, an autocentric experience of the self "based on the new description of the human as a purely biocentric being" was introduced into the Western episteme (Wynter 2003:310).

Foucault and Wynter's archaeological model follow the shifts in the Western epistemologies of Man or the history of thought, from the "medieval, classical, to the biocentric model of Man" that informs modern thought (da Silva 2015:95). Wynter's account of the epistemological transformations that constituted modern thought in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, respectively, Like Mudimbe's, follows very closely Michel Foucault's chronology. However, her work, as Mckittrick further observes, "corrects Michel Foucault's description of the post-Enlightenment onto-epistemological ascension of Man, as an empirico-transcendental figure" which emerges in the period between the eighteenth century and nineteenth century (da Silva 2015:91). Wynter identifies the transition from the medieval understanding of Man1 to the secular rational Man 2 in the Romantic era as a translation of the theocentric model of being into the biocentric model. For her, the modern understanding of Man is rooted in "the religious ethics of Scholastic thought; and, the civic ethics of early programmatic and philosophical accounts of the modern juridical-political region, namely, the register of the state and law" (da Silva 2015:91). That is, for Wynter,

> "with the invention of man in two forms, (one during the Renaissance in the contexts of the intellectual revolution of civic humanism (Man1), the other in the context of liberal economic humanism (Man2) which took place at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century) Europe was to invent the Other in two parallel forms. And because Man was now posited as a supra-cultural universal, its Other had logically to be defined as the Human Other" (Wynter 2001:43).

As mentioned above, her version of the secular ontological argument of Man, traces the contours of Man differently from that of Foucault, because for her Man emerges in the interstices of the theocentric model which the biocentric model claim to have surpassed. That is, for Wynter Man emerges in the age of conquest and 'great voyages of discovery', the age which resulted in the space of Otherness, that is, the place of non-being, irrationality and unreason which informs the Western notion of interiority and exteriority being mapped on to the inhabitants of the 'newly' discovered lands of the Americas and Africa. The great expeditions of discovery and colonialism helped retain the boundaries of the Same and the Other that characterised the modern epistemologies of non-thought and non-reason. And differently from the dialectical logic of European totalitarianism which Foucault analyses, this

Other had to be eliminated rather than absorbed into the idea of the Same. According to da Silva (2015:94), "in linking the emergence of a secular ontological account of Man to the "voyages of discovery" that instituted the colonial modality of power, Wynter fractures the glassy depiction of the classical thought" that Foucault offers. Unlike Foucault, she is interested in "colonial power beyond its juridical-economic architectures" by acknowledging the influence of colonial contexts in the Eurocentric writing of difference that precludes any external reference (da Silva 2015:97). Foucault also fails to do the kind of work that Wynter does with his archaeological method because he is too invested in the categories of a "Kantian interiority," hence he fails to recognise how "colonial power may have played a role in setting up the epistemological arrangements that compose modern representation" (da Silva 2015:97).[44]

According to da Silva (2015:96), although Wynter and Foucault agree on the selection of the markers that constituted the epistemological transformation of modern thought, for Wynter Man emerges earlier than is the case for Foucault. That is, for her Man is already degodded in the Classical age and came to be defined as the homo politicus and Rational self from that period. To support her ontological account of Man, Wynter, recalls Hobbes' and Locke's version of Reason, which predates the nineteenth century epistemology of Man within which Foucault locates the genus of Man. On the other hand, for Foucault, Man emerges in the nineteenth century as a self-determined temporal thing and he views the Classical episteme as a system of mathesis, a taxinomia, and a genetic analysis which relied on the notions of resemblance, and could not therefor have been the qualities of a scientific Man. It can be intimated that Wynter's anticipation of Man in the Classical age fractures Foucault's identification of the table of difference and identities as models of resemblance rather than those of scientific knowledge. However, the difference between their conceptions of Man does not present a significant rift in their archaeological analysis of the Western epistemological order. Following Wynter's outline, after the inception of Cartesianism into the Western epistemology, Man started to be imagined as the Rational self (Man2), in the reoccupied place of the True Christian Self (Man1). These are the categories of Descartes pre-schema of the

[44] For Foucault, the history of madness in Western discourse is the history of the Other, however unlike the colonised Other, who is identified as an external danger, the subject of madness is an interior danger. It is a manifestation of the history of the Same dispersed, related, and imposed on things.

subject which was pre-modern or typological (not yet modern but not still Medieval) and although geocentric or self-sufficient was still to some extent dependent on God or was still a determined being.

It is on the idea of Man as Man2 that the element of desire[45] which characterise the dialectic between subject and object came to be at the centre of the Classical order of tables and the rational grids and charts (measurement and taxonomy), which were used to classify beings and species into different identities. Under the Cartesian epistemology, attributes of the substance of spirit, through existence, became predicates of the subject. In the 'radical dualism' of Cartesian ontology, Man, could translate into a thinking entity that can deny the being of anything external to it. With this shift to the Cartesian subject of *res cogitans*, there was a promotion of the philosophical importance of humankind's mastery over nature. That is, Man as corporeal substance, a thinking-thing, or a thing with its necessary and sufficient conditions of existence, his thoughts came to provide the controlling notions of modern discourse, i.e., the primacy of the subject and the pre-eminence of representation. Like in the Greek modes of imagination and politics of memory, it "associated the scientific aim of predicting and explaining the world with the philosophical aim of picturing and representing the world" (West 2002:94). Its deductive method formulated representation from immediate awareness to extended substance, from consciousness to things in space, and from doubt to certainty. And as a new paradigm of knowledge it proposed that observation should become the necessary condition for the advancement of knowledge. Hence, we find in Cartesian scientific paradigms the notion of knowledge as inner representation governed by an ideal value-free subject engaged in observing, comparing, ordering, and measuring things and objects in order to make valid inferences, confirm speculative hypothesis, deduce error-proof conclusions, and verify true representations of reality (West, 2002:97).

[45] However, this desire has not been functional in the Same mode as the desire for the 'Big Other', whom, if without, the subject perceives itself as a lack and an imperfection. Of all the catogories of the Cartesian subject, the one most significant to colonialism was the geocentric one, for although it has its roots in the Platonian theory of forms and Classical conceptions of the subject as dependent on God, it constituted the formative grounds on which it came to understand itself as *res-cogitans*. As *res cogitans*, the subject came to understand itself as a thinking-thing or a substance with its own necessary and sufficient conditions of existence. It is from these notions of the subject that the colonial totalitarianism of Europe emerges. That is, it was the understanding of the modern subject as a totality which gave rise to the politics of colonial totalitarianism. Colonialism was modelled on res cogitans because it functioned through both discourse and action.

The scientific notions of the Cartesian cogito were deployed to presuppose man as master of the external world and science as the triumph of evidence. And, this is how the Cartesian subject becomes the root or gives rise to the politics of totalitarianism. It is a subject which is fully present to itself or in control of the Self and the Other, i.e., represses all other forms of subjectivity. In its epistemic paradigms, the encounter with the African Other was seen as the achievement of Occidental sciences which were precipitated by the invention of a subject who could master the ability of distanciation and differentiation. Thus, the Western epistemology, relying on the Cartesian theory of the subject sought to represent "social reality as a pre-given image of human knowledge" (Bhabha 1986:xxiv). Its theory of the subject signified the irruption of the Other within European consciousness through the notions of techne, visualism and spatialisation. Such notions of techne were based on the deductive methods of representation and the modality of *res cogitans* which enabled the Cartesian cogito to mediate on his/her being and that of objects.[46] Synchronically, colonialist discourse is actualised in the efforts of active subjects and move from "place-knowledge" (Europe) to "space-knowledge" (Africa, through a process of socialisation). This kind of analysis gives more credence to Wynter's idea of the colonial-juridical-economic grid, as a formula which brings into focus the question of ideology, in the emergence of Western Man, a factor which Foucault fails to take into consideration in his genealogy of the philosophical discourse of Otherness in the Western episteme (da Silva 2015:94).

Again, as Hegel (1988:6) observes, under the Cartesian ontology, representation shifted from being solely the realm of transcendental Spirit to one in which the self-conscious subject, in possession of Thought, Rationality and Reason, approaches historical material or content via the Spirit. That is, the subject could partake in Spirit and knowledge came to be understood

[46] Under Cartesianism, knowledge was no longer regarded as a quality of things or Real-things but as an extension of thought which is subject to falsification. That is, the value of things was assigned to them as an effect of a cause which is of the subject's substance. And, the meaning of things was said to be originating from Man as a thinking-thing which is capable of extending its thought: an idea which in itself contradicted Decartes notion of the subject as an 'unextended thinking thing'. The only positive that remains in this instance, in this sense, is the thinking and self-reflexive subject. The Subject however first came to think of itself "as a substance" and a thinking thing capable of giving rise to extensions, and physical things and objects become "modes of a substance" in so far as the itself was "a substance" (Descartes, 1998:38). It was identified as substance par excellence because the infinite was said to occur in its experience "in some way prior to that of the finite" (Descartes, 1998:38). In a sense, it was said to be the thinking subject who transforms the infinite or "potency to act" (Descarte, 1998:39). That is, the subject behaves as some kind of intermediate being between God and nothingness" (Descartes, 1998:45).

under the tri-dimensional typology of Consciousness (spirit), Reason (logic), and Object (nature). The notion of a self-conscious subject, determined by reason, rationality, logic and thought became the grounds on which knowledge and will were to be produced in the categories of Cartesian ontology. These notions of the unity of the subject, as mentioned above, shifted from the theocentric structural frameworks or the "spirit/flesh code" on which the idea of the subject has been premised on since the sixteenth century cosmology to its quasi-transcendental formulas of the modern political or "rational/irrational code" and the biocentric subject or the "eugenic/dysgenic" code.[47] This is why, for Foucault, although Renaissance 'humanism' and Classical 'rationalism', were able to allot human beings a privileged position in the order of the world, they were never able to conceive of Man outside his Other (Foucault 1970:318).[48] The notion of the unity of the subject, under modernity, as Foucault would go on to observe, signified an epistemological consciousness of Man, where Man acts as a "primary reality with his own density, as the difficult object and sovereign subject of all possible knowledge" (Foucault, 1970:310).

One of the primary elements of Cartesian ontology or the Classical episteme, which is regarded as crucial to the subject's ability to name and represent alterity is that of perceptual experience which is necessitated by positive-logic. It supposes the act of perceiving and the idea of an object being perceived through movement. As a dialectical exposition, sense-knowledge is said to belong to perception and consciousness is said to be determined as percipient in so far as" the "Thing is its object" (Hegel, 1977:70). In the Cartesian epistemology, the criterion of self-identity is what is said to enable the subject to comprehend the object as self-identical. The universal principle as that which informs perceptual experience and "transcends the singularity of the object" is that which enables the object to be apprehended (Hegel, 1977:70). Sensuous-being, in order to infer meaning to an object, has to rely on the perception of the Thing as a universal. Prior to the Classical age, it was continuity that enabled the object to be apprehended, but after that, an object could be apprehended through the universal common medium. Hence the subject became the "universal common medium" in which all moments of difference could collapse into and it became the universal medium in which all things could and should subsist.

[47] Scott, D. 2000, pp. 182

[48] Contrary to our view, Foucault here identifies Man, or rather, the scientific subject, as an emancipatory figure.

Built onto the Cartesian epistemology of perceptual experience, was the notion of the analytic of imagination which played a role in the philosophy of judgement. This power of imagination, as we are told, is engendered by a Spirit which is projected upon Man in his corporeal form or substance. According to Foucault, it is;

> "upon the projected surface of biology that man appears as being possessing functions-receiving stimuli (psychological ones, but also social, interhuman, and cultural ones), reacting to them, adapting himself, evolving, submitting to the demands of an environment, coming to terms with the modifications it imposes, seeking to erase imbalances, acting in accordance with regularities, having, in short, conditions of existence and the possibility of finding average norms of adjustment which permit him to perform his functions" (Foucault 1970:203).

In this Cartesian influenced notion of philosophy of judgement, resemblance is "situated on the side of imagination (which is rooted in the biological idea of Man) or can be manifested only by virtue of imagination, and imagination in turn can only be exercised only with the aid of resemblance" (Foucault 1970:68). Under the Cartesian epistemology, perceptual experience turns representation into "a non-actual but simultaneous table of comparisons" that is, "the analysis of impressions, of reminiscence, of imagination, of memory" (Foucault 1970:69). The analytic of imagination emerges as a positive (mathematical and geometrical) power that "transform the linear time of representation into a simultaneous space containing virtual elements" (Foucault 970:70). It presupposes the idea of a 'genesis', Spirit, or Truth, which attributes a double function to imagination. The power of the imagination thus exists within man as the suture of body and soul in so far as it prevents man from directly perceiving the identities and differences of things. It is where for Descartes and Spinoza the power of imagination becomes the locus of error, doubt, and power of attaining Truth.

The analytic of finitude man whom Foucault associates with the nineteenth century idea of man as an empirico-transcendental doublet was informed by two kinds of analysis which include that of transcendental aesthetics and that of transcendental dialectics. The analysis of transcendental aesthetics "operate within the space of the body, by studying perception, sensorial mechanisms, neuro-motor diagrams, and the articulation common to things and organisms" (Foucault, 1970:319). It led to "the discovery that knowledge has anatomo-physiological conditions, which are formed gradually within the structures of the body": thus

taking forward the medieval idea of transubstantiation in a new scientific spirit.[49] The second analysis, that of transcendental dialectics, showed that "knowledge had historical, social and economic conditions, and it was formed within the relations that are woven between men, in short, that there was a history of human knowledge which could both be given to empirical knowledge and prescribe its forms" (Foucault, 1970:319). Man as "the locus of an empirico-transcendental doublet is (perceived as) the paradoxical figure in which the empirical contents of knowledge necessarily release, of themselves, the conditions that have made them possible" (Foucault 1970:322).

For Kant, whose notions of interiority Foucault extends upon, one of the characteristic elements of modern Man is purposiveness, which "expresses the way the figure lends itself to the production of many proposed figures, and it is cognized through Reason" (Kant 1952:190). Reason in the form of meaning, perceiving and understanding which apprehends what is meant and what is perceived. To borrow from Kant again, in the age of empiricism which Wynter associates with the emergence of the subject in the Classical episteme, or that of transcendentalism in the theocentic notions of the rational thinking subject, things and objects were no longer defined as mere representations of a priori principles in order for purposiveness to become an episteme which depended on the conception of an end. In the Kantian epistemology, the representation of an object is not only possible and does not exist as a quality of the things outside the subject but is a mere mode of representation existing within the subject, which requires things, only for the mere production of an end. The empirical instruction of purposiveness is not externally driven and does not reside in the object, rather, it relies on a critical use of Reason. Reason which Kant says the African Other is devoid of since, for him, it cannot even produce what could potentially be universalisable aesthetic categories of the beautiful and the sublime. This was the case under modernism once when "understanding became the faculty of concepts and imagination" or when understanding became a function of perception in the period that witnessed the end of metaphysics in Western thought (Kant, 1952:194).

One of the scientific methods of attaining Truth that was introduced in the post-Enlightenment era, and essential to the constitution of the knowledge of living things and beings, was the idea

[49] Foucault, M. 1970, p. 319.

of speculative reflection. This idea had a significant role to play in the manner in which the Cartesian subject approached historical material and content. According to Hegel, speculative reflection which is rooted in reflective history regards imagination as a means of achieving reality in history, in other words, it puts subjective notions in the place of historical material. As a quality of a rational subject, speculative reflection shows that "Reason is the substance … whereby and wherein all reality has its being and subsistence" (Hegel 1988:12). This is the case in the situation of colonial relations where the existence of the colonising subject and the colonised subject not as an inert or historical fact. Both identities are elements of a supposed rational imaginative capacity which gives reality and presence to the external. Reason is according to Hegel, the element through which the Idea, Truth, God, or Spirit and the existence of things and objects is manifested or revealed in the world. It presents itself as capable of attaining the level of plenitude and acts as a scientific method of attaining the Truth. Although linked to the Truth, as Hegel would assert, it maintains its independence from it, and returns to it through speculative reflection. For Hegel Reason does not also emerge from self-consciousness or the mind per se; rather it is a representation of the Idea and "is immanent in historical existence and fulfils itself in and through it" (Hegel, 1988:28). In this sense, immediate actuality is only relevant in so far as it enables the realisation of the Idea or the Spirit, Spirit which produces its work in the form of thought, for it to be able to realise the principle of rationality.

Amongst the many characteristics of Spirit is that of Freedom (as logico-positivism and a category of negation) and it is this characteristic which allows Spirit to have the centre in-itself. A centre which it can make expendable within matter. Unlike matter qua non-being, Spirit does not find its source of support outside itself; it is rather autonomous and sufficient in-itself. For Hegel, Freedom, as a quality of the Spirit arises through the knowledge and Will of the subject. And, such a Will, is not found in societies living outside of history and movement. The societies of those who Kant says cannot "exit from … self-incurred immaturity." It is a characteristic of aesthetic subjectivity that is beyond the realm of the so-called primitive as he would like us to believe through his notion of representation. The primitive is excluded by both Hegel and Kant in the realisation of world history through space and time by virtue of them not possessing these characteristics of the Spirit; Reason, Freedom, and Rationality i.e., the constitutive characteristics of the human in the Cartesian scientific model. The Spirit is realised in the world through the human subject, human needs, and subjectivity will or rational will, which has the

essential as the goal of its existence. For Hegel, it is Spirit and the processes of its development that is the substance of history. World history is the process by which the uncontrolled natural will is disciplined in the direction of the universal, the direction of subjective freedom by the Spirit. History begins at the point where rationality enters into consciousness (i.e., the Imaginary phase) as is the case with the inception of scientific reason in Western epistemology. Viewed as an effect of rational capacities, the Western episteme assumes that, primitive cultures are devoid of pure thought, so they cannot participate in history or the making of history. This is so because, history is regarded as a development of the idea of human freedom which is realisable through logic. Within the development of history, thought intervenes in the relationship between form and content, unlike in the era of resemblance (theocentric view of the world) where form and content are inseparable.

In the Hegelian notion of anthropomorphism, species being goes through a series of stages in its development until it reaches the universal stage of its Spirit. So, in the modern Western episteme of Hegel, it is assumed that Spirit manifests itself as an actively existing people and the final stages of its transition are what define the peoples. The peoples, in this case are Man represented in the European physiognomy. In other words, Hegel assumes that Spirit emerges in specific geographic regions and manifests in a specific people, so it cannot be found within the historically primitive peoples for they are still immersed in nature. Since for Spirit to manifest, "nature ought not to be rated either too high or too low" (Hegel 1988:84). Man is able to emerge above nature through science, because he possesses Reason, self-consciousness and logic. In Hegel's idea of the Spirit, besides the European Man, any other species being is regarded as primate and immature in the level of its development within Spirit. In the case of the inhabitants of the New World and Africa, Hegel asserts that it is impossible to reach the full development of the Spirit because they are "physically and spiritually impotent" because they exist in a "natural condition of barbarism and savagery" (Hegel 1988:85).

Such assertions were based on the categories of the Cartesian system which acts as the foundation of the Classical episteme. To return to Foucault again, it is a system of analysis which relied on the notions of identity, difference, measurement, and order in order to classify beings and things. In other words, nature had to be explained according to Reason which functions through general law or an idea of mathesis. This idea of mathesis presupposes the emergence of empirical fields which are constituted by a *system of signs* i.e. general grammar, natural history, and wealth, that is, "all sciences of order in the domain of words, beings, and

needs" (Foucault 1970:57). As categories of the Cartesian system, these categories are used to suggest that the principle of order as the centre of knowledge and the means of organising this knowledge were the discourse, the table, and the exchange. The task of the field of general grammar was to ascribe a name to things and in that name to name their being. And "natural history or a theory of nature is understood as the characterisation, ordering and naming of the visible, in order to establish a general and complete table of species, general and classes." (Mudimbe 1988:37). The system of natural history brings in the principles of the organic structure that become the basis for taxonomies and thus separates the organic from the inorganic, the animate from the inanimate, the mature and the immature: with the first of these categories referring to the living, and the second to the non-living. These taxonomies of mathesis are effected through the scientific tradition of charts and tables to encourage the quantification and diagrammatic representation of things and beings.

The elements of mathesis and genesis were central to the structure of scientific knowledge within the classical episteme. Mathesis is "the science of calculable order" and *genesis* is "the analysis of the constitution of orders on the basis of empirical series" Foucault (1970:73). It involved the "utilisation of the symbols of possible operations upon identities and differences" and genesis, on the other hand, entailed "an analysis of the marks progressively imprinted in the mind by the resemblances between things and the retrospective action of imagination" (Foucault 1970:73). Foucault further states that "between mathesis and genesis is the place of the signs or the area of the table, which span the domain of empirical representation, but never beyond it" (1970:73). Under the ideas of mathesis and genesis there is the allotting of a sign to perceptions, thoughts, or desires. This is how the table of identities and difference that we encounter in natural history, "the science of the characters that articulate the continuity and the tangle of nature" is drawn up and "the region where we find general grammar, the science of the signs by means of which men group together their individual perceptions and pattern the continuous flow of their thoughts" (1970:73. In a sense, for Foucault, this shows how "the three notions of mathesis, taxinomia, and genesis defined the general configuration of knowledge in the Classical age" (Foucault 1970:74).

The relation that the Western episteme maintained to *Orde*r was "essential to the Classical age as the relation to Interpretation was to the Renaissance" (Foucault 1970:57). In other words, "just as interpretation, with its superimposition of a semiology upon hermeneutics, was essentially a knowledge based upon similitudes, so the ordering of things by means of signs

constituted all empirical forms of knowledge based upon identity and difference" (Foucault 1970:57). The sign became an object of knowledge and both an element and instrument of analysis. In other words, it became a grid, since the mind analyses, and the sign appear. But the invented or artificial signs owed their fidelity to natural signs, and this is how the Classical episteme maintained the dual theory of the sign. But from the seventeenth century, resemblance was pushed to the boundaries of knowledge where it links up with imagination. It moved from a "science of interpretation" to "the great tables of knowledge according to the forms of identity, of difference, and of order" (Foucault 1970:71). Following the arguments formulated within the Sausserian linguistical system, in the Classical age, the binary theory of the sign in its relationship with a general theory of representation, explains the general connection between what signifies and what is signified. Under the Cartesian episteme, signs became tools of analysis, marks of identity and difference, or keys for a taxonomy and "the empirical resemblance of things became the unreacting similitude that lies beneath thought and furnishes the infinite raw materials for divisions and distribution" (Foucault1970:58). That is, on the one hand there is the general theory of signs, divisions, and classifications; on the other, the problem of immediate resemblance of things, of the spontaneous movement of the imagination, of nature's repetitions.

The Evolutionist Epistemology

The systems of general grammar and natural history and their notions of identity, difference, measurement and order also influenced developments in palaeontology and the Darwinian evolutionist theory which replaced "the cosmogony or Origin Narratives of Genesis and its model of Divine creation or Design with the hybridly scientific and cosmogonic Narrative of Evolution together with its model of natural selection" (Wynter 2001:43-4). In order to establish the conditions of nature and discover the categories within it, the evolutionist epistemology adopted the method of comparison, the system of taxonomies, and the idea of visualism in the theory of places from the Cartesian scientism as its own classification systems.[50] The Darwinian epistemology, maintained comparison as an element of rational

[50] This shift towards an evolutionist perspective of species, owes its generation to revolutions in other disciplines such as zoology, geography, the whole gamut of the natural sciences, and the standing ideas in theology. The turn to an evolutionsit geneaology in paleonotology led "to questions about an origin of species in time" (Toulmin and Goodfield, 1965:209). This shift was more due to the influence of geologists on the naturalists and the Aristotelian theory of categories and substances because prior to it the "classification of things into distinct groups was an arbitrary operation" since organisms were regarded as non-living and was therefore reduced to

thought and universalised it as a form of knowledge. It was an anthropological model which biologized history by dividing humanity into different species. And its aim was to place the black subject at the nadir of the Chain of Being and consign him to the "missing link" position in the chronology of Western civilisation. It placed the black figure between rational humans and irrational humans. Under the Darwinian anthropological model, form, extent, and movement came to be defined by means of comparison. As an extension of the Cartesian epistemology it assumed that knowledge about human species is attained through a comparison. More so, like the Cartesian knowledge system, the Darwinian evolutionist epistemology posed that knowledge is attained through two forms of comparison: the comparison of measurement and the comparison of order. As a functionary of the order of time, the method comparison was regarded, even by Darwinian anthropology as essential to the understanding of movement of things and beings. It enabled differences to be thought in the order of inferences. This is because, the Darwinian evolutionist epistemology, as a knowledge system, was not concerned with "the being of things but rather the manner in which they can be known (Foucault 1970:54). It relied on the assumption that could now be accomplished by thought, which when moved from the simple to the complex becomes necessary to thought and arbitrary to things.

Within the evolutionist epistemology, comparison also helped in the establishment of a "taxonomy which helped in the construction of colonial difference or the Manichean delirium that structures modernity. Comparison functioned as a system of knowledge of beings by establishing a table of visible differences. As mentioned above, according to Foucault (1970:74), taxonomy helped define "the general law of beings and the conditions under which

"an unstructured multitude, with no definite species either to 'originate' or to 'evolve'" (Toulmin and Goodfield, 1965:209). It was actually between the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century, at the hight of colonialism, that Nature was regarded as constituted by different kinds of species and things. So, it was the new developments in geography, which had to work symbiotically with the imagination of empire, that evolutionary theory makes its stage in Darwinism. Through colonial voyages, paleontology was able to use evolutionary theory to look into "the reality of organic species, their geographical distribution, the temporal sequence of fossils, and the mechanisms of inheritance and embryological development" (Toulmin and Goodfield, 1965:210). That is, modern taxonomy, after the sixteenth century Scientific Revolution, came to emphasise the "immutability of organic species" and through a natural classification criterion, "they hoped to mark off each knid of living creature by reference to a combination of characters which reflected its inner nature and reality" (Toulman and Goodfield, 1965:211). This doctrine of systematic classification was supported by people like Comte de Buffon in France. Buffon believed in the idea that nature's process "always take place by gradations", that is, he believed that "it is possible to descend by almost insensible degrees from the most perfect creature to the most formless matter" (Toulman and Goodfield, 1965:212 and 213).

it is possible to know them". They are used in natural history in order to make an "analysis of the characters of living beings" and they are the basis on which the idea of the ordering table manifests itself in the theories of language and classification (Foucault 1970:66). As systems of classification they are deployed through scientific knowledge in order to attain an exhaustive ordering of the world and things in the world. That is, they are used as methods "to conceive the project of discovering in all the concrete domains of nature or society the same distributions and the same order" (Foucault 1970:76). The taxonomies of ordering tables developed in the sixteenth century were similar to those that informed the nineteenth century Darwinian mode of classification through observation. According to Mudimbe, when applied to the black figure, both these tables propose "a classification based on the observation of

> "(1) the stature of the natives, as to their shape, colour, length of life, Original Meat, and Drink, etc., (2) Their traffics and Arts in which the inhabitants are employed, (3) their Virtues, Vices, Learning, Wit, etc., (4) Their Customs in Marriage, Christenings, and Burials, etc., (5) Their Speech and Language, (6) Their State-Government, (7) Their Religion and Church-Government, (8) Their cities and most renowned places, (9) Their memorable Histories, and (10) Their famous Men, Artifices, and Inventions of the Natives of all Countries" (Mudimbe 1988:204).

Classification tables were created in order to identify signs of 'pathological deviation' in the black figure or the African Other. Furthermore, for Foucault, the descriptive order provided through taxonomies enabled beings to be viewed through a grid of knowledge, and it followed "the following plan: name, theory, kind, species, attributes, use, and to conclude, literature" (Foucault,1970:130). Methods of drawing up catalogues, indexes, and inventories were invented in order to establish an order of the same type between beings. More so taxonomies, in their nineteenth century modifications are seen as methods to enable things to be analysed according to their common features. The evolutionist episteme, as an extension of Cartesianism, was not driven by the desire for knowledge, but with developing a new strategy to connect things to both language and speech.

The system of taxonomies ignores all identities and differences which are not related to the selected structure. Although the system is arbitrary, yet once after it has been defined, it is no longer possible to modify it, add or subtract even one element, but as a method it is open to the trial and error method in mathematics. It sought to establish order in nature and to discover general categories within it, through a pattern produced by imagination. Under the Classical episteme, any natural being was believed to be characterizable through a taxonomy; any

representation was signifiable and could find its place in the order of identities and differences. The taxonomic system assumed that all objects are representable, are also objects of desire and marked by necessity, or utility, or pleasure, or rarity as qualities extended unto them by the subject as a thinking thing. It sought to reveal squares of identities separated by differences that exist among species and beings. Characters were "the groups of identities selected to represent and distinguish a number of species or a number of genera" (Foucault 1970:189). In natural history, "the theory of character unites the possibility of giving things a sign, or representing one thing by another, and the possibility of causing a sign to shift in relation to what it designates" (Foucault 1970:200). Signs and words are to "taxonomia: a constitution and evident manifestation of the order of things" (Foucault 1970:205). And it establishes a system of science for denoting beings and makes it possible to know things by means of the system of their identities.

The ordering tables, maps, and charts that assigned "things and beings both their slots and social mission" were influenced by organised taxonomies developed within discourse to construct models and systems of values which had epistemological significance within the West (Mudimbe 1988:30). As mentioned above, they were used in the naming and analysis of alterity, by looking at signs in terms of the arrangement of identities and difference into ordered tables. Social behaviours were compressed into scientific paradigms and evolutionist differences were used to render other forms of life as categories of non-being qua death. In trying to imitate the naturalists, social scientists under the influence of evolutionist epistemology, compressed social behaviours, human cultures and human beings into scientific paradigms which marked the failure of coevalence. The models of classification used in colonial canon were purely nominal and represented no more than the needs and limitations of the Western epistemological system. These orders and classes or classification systems were brought into existence by the so called imaginative subject and were influenced by the need to distinguish and formulate differences and identities in species. They emerged as a result of the concern with similitude within the Western episteme in its processes of establishing links between beings and things. Thus, with the advent of Darwinian notions of evolutionism, human beings were classified "as *naturally selected* (i.e., eugenic) and *naturally dysselected* (i.e., dysgenic) beings" (Mckittrick 2015:17). In a sense, they led to the establishment of discourses of the selected-by-Evolution status of the One, and those of the dysselected by-Evolution nature of the Other.

The classification systems developed through charts, maps, and ordering tables were also based on the idea of visualism which made the post-Enlightenment subject to concern itself with the terror of naming what is out there. As mentioned above, this idea which is central to the spatialisation of consciousness is borrowed from a Cartesian rationalist thought based on the distinction of *res cogitans* and *res extensa* and the idea of geometry which allows for spatial conceptualisation. Visualism in its pictorial-aesthetics "approaches culture not as a picture but as a text" (Fabian 1983:107). As the basis for knowledge on Otherness, it regards observation as a means to lift oneself above immediacy and is used to deny contemporary continuity between the knower and the known. Since the ability to subjugate and colonise the Other did not only rely on political power alone, but also on knowledge of the Other shown in the ability of the Western subject to rise above immediacy, beyond self, and into the foreign and distant. Visualism is an Enlightenment theory of places, it modifies the Greek and Roman traditions of the "art of memory" which seeks to join parts of a speech to objects in space. It was applied in the Renaissance era when colonialist discourse sought to construct its Other in terms of *topoi* implying distance, difference; in order to construct ordered spaces and time for Western society to inhabit rather than understand. The theory of places or *topoi* was used in post-Enlightenment philosophical history to identify cultural traits, patterns and configurations, and evolutionary stages. And the use of the Greek method of "art of memory" in post-Enlightenment theories of places or imaginative geographies also shows the hermetic-magic origins of Western sciences. According to Yates in his text, *Art of Memory*, visualism led to the development of the nominalist tradition out of which empiricism emerges. It also forms the basis of cosmological thought to which we can trace post-Enlightenment philosophical history.

The theory of places claims to possess exclusive knowledge conceived as manipulation of an apparatus of visual-spatial symbols removed from ordinary language and communication. Visualism and spatialisation as a political cosmology signal emphasis on the knower as an individual. It entails the idea that the Other, as object must be separate, distinct, and distant from the knower, in order for it to be either transformed or eliminated. It regards primitive societies as ephemeral. The savagery of the savage or the primitivity of the primitive, in visualism, is rather posited to maintain distance between the living and the non-living. The visual spatial presentation of the Other in Western scientism became the point of departure for a theory of knowledge. It designated an ideological current within Western thought and it was used as an ethnological practice which assumed that primitive cultures are synchronic objects

for visual aesthetic perception. It used a topical logic and was applied in the construction of spatial images, maps, charts and table. The movement from ontogenetic to polygenetic visualism under the Cartesian system turns pedagogical principles into political programs. And it is shown by the distinct qualities of the modern subject, to comprehend and transcend its object. That is, in the capacity of the modern subject to put its object of analysis into ontological fixity, by dominating it and having authority over it. As Said (1979:40) notes depicts the Other as something one judges, something one studies and depicts, something one disciplines, and something one illustrates.

The evolutionist theme was both philosophical, cosmological, and biological, and it expressed its discourse through this triad. As observed by Cornell West (2002:97), in the book, *History of Ancient Art*, J. J. Winckelman uses this evolutionist triad to express the notion of the "normative gaze". Winckelman uses the notion of the normative gaze to make the assertion that, within art and aesthetics what should govern the size of the eyes and eyebrows, of collarbones, hands, feet, and noses are the Greek ideals or standards of beauty. For him, these should also act as the ideals and standards against which other peoples and cultures are to be measured. These artistic and aesthetics forms of Othering preceded the rise of phrenology and physiognomy within evolutionist anthropology which epitomised the pseudo-scientific rationalisation of colonialist discourse. Within the themes of evolutionist anthropologies expressed by paleonologists, phrenologists, and polygenists, physical characteristics of human bodies were linked to the character and capacities of human beings. Phrenologists held that human character could be read through the shape of the human head (West 2002:103). Whilst polygenists favoured the concept '*species*', used in the bogus science of ethnology to show the diversity of human beings. For polygenists, "species were fixed, immutable and did not have to naturally cross with other species, except under artificial conditions" (Magubane 2007:24). The concept of species was important for these scientists because they drew their scheme of the universe from arrangement of the Great Chain of Being and treated their objects of study as passive targets of various structural explanations.

The classification of humanity into separate superior/inferior species in evolutionist anthropology, derives from polygenism paradigms with which to disqualify the African Other from the human fold. The polygenists believed that blacks were in some way an intermediate between white people and the apes. Polygenism developed into a theory in the 1650's under Isaac La Peyrre. Proponents such as Josiah Clark Nott and George R. Gildon, as Magubane

continues to relate, in their work, *Types of Mankind; or Ethnological Researches*, lament that the Negro's plight was anatomical, rather than man-made, and education could not improve the servile status mandated for Negros by science. They argued that those Negros who cannot read and write are more moral, more pious, more honest and useful than those who had been made more vicious by education. Samuel George Morton's book, *Crania American, or, Comparative View of Skulls of Various Aboriginal Nations of North and South America* (1839), dedicated to the theory of polygenesis or multi creation and schools of ethnology intimated that the configuration of various skulls of all human race types had been constant over millennia.[51]

The logic of craniology used by polygenists was "founded on the fundamental axiom that the human head was not transmutable in different races" (Magubane 2007:11). Craniology was used by anthropological scientists to report on the physical peculiarities of the Negro race. According to Samuel Cartwright's scientific report, the Negro is said to have a deficiency of red blood, which when conjoined with the smaller brain of the Negro and excess nervous matter, constituted the cause of that debase of mind in black people.[52] Hence, under slavery, blacks were supposed to work in order to vitalise the red blood sent to the brain, and liberate their minds under the white man's control. This argument was used to support the idea that freedom was the cause of physiological illness in black people and slavery was the cure. The pejorative critiques of African aesthetics and genius presented in colonial discourses were taken up and elucidated by the slave owner, the missionary, and the colonial administrator. This shows how cynical ideologies of rationalisation tried to pass for objective social science whenever discourses were invoked to support the argument of pro-slavery apologists.

Time in the Evolutionist Epistemology

As noted earlier, natural history as an epistemology developed out of the need to socialise the cogito and its metaphoric influences. It influenced the anthropological notions of biological and social Darwinism in the study of the Other.[53] Evolutionism also influenced the introduction

[51] Magubane, B. 2007, p. 63.

[52] Magubane, B. 2007, p. 11

[53] As mentioned above, the evolutionist epistemology or the humanist categories of analysis focused on the biological or material properties of the human. And as Foucault (1989:40), tells us, "in the nineteenth century, the evolutionist theme concerns not so miuch the constitution of a continuous table of species as the description of continuous groups and the analysis of the modes of interaction between an organism whose elements are independent and environment that provides its real conditions of life." That is, in the "nineteenth century …,

of the idea of historical hypothesis in Western episteme. By maintaining the use of natural history as an epistemic paradigm for understanding history and time, the evolutionist discourses interpret and classify human cultures according to a scale and present history as a theoretical and abstract vocation, which refers to various civilizational achievements through time: with the African Other being excluded from both history and time themselves. These ideas first took form in the field of general grammar where the quest for the roots of language first developed. And, this modern quest for the roots of language led to the assumption that "the further away one moved from the primitive roots, the more complicated, and no doubt more recent would the language defined by any transversal line become" (Foucault 1973:109). Through the notion of the politics of time which emerged under the Classical episteme, temporal concepts were projected at the level of the Chain of Being and they comprised of differential/hierarchical degrees of humanness. These discourses failed to acknowledge the contemporaneity between subjects and their objects of study. They used time and historicism to assume distance, spatiality, and temporality between subjects and objects in order to construct the identities and subjectivities of all non-Europeans encountered in the colonial world: as difference. Temporal concepts were tools with which to construct Eurocentric hypothesis, prejudices, subjectivities, and epistemological categories as paradigms and architypes by which African experiences were to be shaped and described.

As an extension of the philosophy of History or history, the theory of time presented in the evolutionist epistemology posited a rational line of succession of events and stages in the organising of societies and creates the idea of a universal history. It conceptualised the African experience as only finding expression or sense in the chronological determinations of European historical sequences. In the European history of ideas, the African Other was constantly discursively constituted out of time and history in order to make his humanity unintelligible both to him and the world. According to Foucault, History dominated the age of empiricism and was deployed in a temporal series and was used to develop "analogies that connect distinct organic structures to one another" (Foucault, 1970:219). The Western theory of modern time was imposed on the analysis of organically structured beings and gave place to analogical

(the) grid of reference were: the soul as a group of hierachised, related, and more or less impernetrable faculties; the body as a three dimensional volume of organs linked together by networks of dependences and communication" (Foucault 1989: 46 and 48).

organic structures. It supposed that, all beings emerge into existence through History. From the nineteenth century;

> "philosophy was to reside in the gap between history and History, between events and the Origin, between evolution and the first rending open of the source, between oblivion and Return, whilst in the Classical metaphysics, History resided in the gap between order and Order, between classifications and Identity, between natural beings and Nature; between men's perception (or imagination) and the understanding and will of God" (Foucault, 1970:219).

During the period of heightened colonialism, the nineteenth century, evolutionist discourses were at the centre of anthropological knowledge which sought to create a material basis for the production of knowledge about Otherness and was created in order to immobilise the historical development of the African Other.

Adhering to the doctrines of racial determinism, social Darwinism developed models and techniques which sought to describe the black subject in accordance with changing trends within the framework of the Western experience. These models of evolutionary temporalisation used the concept of physical time as a parameter of vector in describing socio-cultural processes by using objective or neutral time scales to measure social or ecological changes. Evolutionary theory occupied the space of an epistemological status of scientific chronologies. Its temporal models were influenced by allochronic discourses which regard naturalised time as a way to order an essentially discontinuous and fragmentary geological and paleontological record. It was used to obscure the theory of coevalness which emphasises the radical commonality of all science or their contemporaneity. Evolutionary theory is influenced by the Cartesian system which regards time as an independent variable of the events it marks, thus allowing the scientist to place a multiple of uneventful data over neutral time. Socio-cultural evolutionists believed that time accomplished things in the course of evolution. They spatialized time in order to look at stages leading to civilisation or for the placement of human development into linear empty-homogenous time. The epistemological stance of evolutionism was that of the naturalisation of time with a taxonomic approach to socio-cultural reality. And for its proponents, modern time or Copernican time is a mechanism of analysing nature in motion: a motion where the African Other is always lagging behind.

Under the principles of evolutionism, the table of identities and difference is linked to the series of successive events, showing the continuity and distribution of beings in a taxonomic system that is subjected to time and affected by a temporal index. This temporal index is what gives

effect to the chain of being in the Classical age, and shows how evolution came to be defined "as nothing more than the interdependent and general displacements of the whole scale, from the first of its elements to the last" (Foucault 1970:151). The chain of being was meant to establish that "the relation between God and the least defective of his creatures is still infinite" (Foucault 1970:151). It was used as "a way of generalising the principle of continuity and the law that requires that all beings form an uninterrupted expanse" (Foucault 1970:152). From the eighteenth-century evolutionism used time "to move the classifying table as a whole along the finite or infinite line leading to perfection" (Foucault 1970:151). It also moved to a system that revealed the squares that form the continuous network of species. The sequence of time was "the line along which all the possible values of the pre-established variables succeed one another" (Foucault 1970:153).

The evolutionist epistemology used the concept of time to fashion chronological reckoning and distinguish humans in order to curve out an epistemology of the Self. The messianic European sciences, whose victories included failed revolutions, wars, oppression, were the results of an unteachable appetite for putting grand, bookish ideas quixotically to work immediately under the imperial matrix. Hence, the Western epistemological order provided evolutionist discourses with the power to perpetuate a "myth of Africa that represents a Hobbesian picture in which there is no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society" (Adjaye 1994:3). In other words, not only was the black subject placed out of time and history, but was also regarded as devoid of the intellectual intuition that enables one to delineate temporal relations. Africans were regarded as unhistorical people and were denied a sense of historical consciousness. It was assumed that they had no ability to associate time with change and progress, hence they could not envision events as falling in a unilinear sequence. Instead of seeing time as a product of culture and the environment, the proponents of this epistemology chose to see it as an intellectual capacity. They used the concept of time to support the argument that blacks are still stark in the past: that they lack mental capacity, moral laxity, and that they had not made any progress in civility of science.

Evolutionist epistemologies formed the foundational basis of the discipline of anthropology and its role in the discursive construction of black figures under colonial modernity. Johannes Fabian's analysis of the concept of time profoundly presents us with a critique of modern anthropological sciences and its use of time in the epistemic construction of difference and the Other. Fabian, like Said, argues that within anthropology, the African subject is not explained

in terms of itself, instead, s/he is observed from the time of the observer.[54] Anthropological time creates a Eurocentric/white normative gaze which provides a framework within which the Other is observed and represented. It is applied in European historicist discourses to depict the African Other as the antithesis of modernity and modern subjectivity. By understanding the use of time in anthropology we are able to inquire into the dialectical constitution of the Other and recognise the concrete temporal, historical, and political conditions of this dialectic. In a sense, while history is concerned with remoteness in time, anthropology is mostly concerned with remoteness in space, and its main goal is a better understanding of temporally or spatially different societies.

The modernist colonial writing of anthropologists, scientists, historians, theologians, travellers, navigators, and adventurers forego the encounter between different human times. Their discourses use time to accommodate schemes of a one way history: progress, development, modernity, and their negative mirror images: stagnation, tradition. Anthropology emerged under modernity as a pseudo-scientific discourse used to support the notion of an uninterrupted Western civilisation across linear time. And, as Magubane says, it functioned as the handmaiden of the British second empire. The rise of evolutionist epistemology, visualist epistemology, phrenology, physiognomy, and polygenism within anthropology served the principal aim of natural history, which was to observe, compare, measure, and order animals and human bodies based on visible, especially physical, characteristics. Natural history permitted one to discern identity and difference, equality and inequality, beauty and ugliness among human bodies. As highlighted above, the categories of natural history are classificatory, that is they consist of various inventories of difference which impose some degree of order or representational schema on physical characteristics**.** The genealogy or temporal succession of these models informs the understanding of history within the Western episteme and they use the notion of succession to legitimate a social evolution in which knowledge functions as power.

According to Mudimbe (1991:5) anthropology and ethnology are sciences with epistemological roots in Montagne's sixteenth century form of curiosity about "savages" but

[54] Like in Orientalist discourse, as Said (1978:20-21) tells us, the Other is represented through the motifs of the observer, in the sense that "the Orientalist … makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West."

they have only been thematised as disciplines since the nineteenth century. They were established analogically to the natural sciences, particularly with regards to the principles of evolution and biological inequalities of species and beings. They helped to vivify the idea that: Western history is the only space of human history and of God's fulfilment and revelation (forms and signs). The scientific discourse on Africa was made up of preconceptions and speculations on the history and the nature of the Great Chain of Being; it contained unproven evolutionary assumptions about cultures and human beings as well as political considerations grounding the right to colonise. In a sense, as an extension of natural history, it informed the anthropological, scientific, historical, and philosophical approaches to the understanding of time and temporal concepts manifest in Western epistemic traditions/discourses of Otherness. It enabled European anthropology to express itself from a place that is not African; and express itself in the diachronic dynamism of spatializing the original locus, a beginning and its history. The epistemological conditions of colonialism and slavery under which ethnography and modern anthropological praxis took shape enabled them to contribute to the intellectual justification of these enterprises. Western anthropological discourses about the Other amounted to a destruction of historical science in its attempt to regard the African Other as a people without a history. Anthropologists promoted human differences based on geography and the epistemological criteria of homo afer, homo asiatics, homo eurpeus. That is, within anthropological and ethnographical discourses African notions of time signify the historical caught outside the hermeneutics of historicism.

What this discussion has been hinting at so far is the understanding that the scientific revolution signified the authority of science and led to the development of ideas of observation and evidence and the modern conceptions of hypothesis, fact, inference, validation, and verification used in the classification of black figures. That is, scientific modes of knowledge and power provided the colonial lexicography or mechanisms and concepts through which the Other was understood and was to understand itself. Maps, charts and tables contributed to this lexicographical or canonical consolidation of discourses on Otherness. The philologists, travellers, and anthropologists were all lexicographers. Their lexicography was useful to the institutions and agencies of European colonialism and it gave the European subject a sense of assertion and domination over the Other. Blackness was used by anthropologists to remove the African out of the human race and to give the justification that, the enslavement of Africans was in conformity with the laws of evolutionary theory and natural history. They legitimated

racism on the grounds of innate biological characteristics and comparative cultural anthropology.

Their discourses of scientific racism rested on the negation of the fundamental principle of the unity of the human species. Anthropology created a priori assumptions about the African Other in order to enslave and colonise them. For example, as Magubane says, it was built into the classification paradigms of the Swedish botanist, Linnaeus, who privileged the white over all forms of life. Facts were marshalled from the plants and animal kingdom and applied to the depredations of colonialists. Using concepts borrowed from the botanical and zoological discursive formations, the concept of the native meant that, they are assimilated to the non-human fauna and flora and may "be treated as vermin and weeds to be extirpated or as natural resources to be conserved and exploited."[55] According to Magubane, the term savage which was used to refer to the colonised "invokes, among other things, 'animal', 'brute', Neanderthal', 'troglodyte', 'bestial'; its abstract noun brings to mind 'heartlessness', 'unfeeling', 'unresponsive', 'inhumanness', 'bloodthirstiness', and 'cannibalism'" (Toynbee 1947:230 cited in Magubane 2007:14).[56] The term savage is counterbalanced with such terms as domesticated or civilised, and "dealing with savages requires steps towards conquest, control, territorial extirpation and extermination" (Magubane 2007:7). The concepts of primitive, savage, barbaric had semiotic power to signify the African Other. That is, they could bring the distant Other into the immediate of the Self (like the Benthamian panopticon of Foucault's notion of biopolitics and governmentality).

The point I have been trying to drive home in the length of the preceding discussion is that, the implied capabilities of the European modern subject to name its complexities and environment were paramount to the projects of slavery, colonialism, and racism. The Cartesian transformation of philosophy enabled the creation of metaphors, notions, categories, and norms of discourses on Otherness. We find under slavery and colonialism the idea that the authority of the subject should deny the autonomy of its object. The age of scientism which the Cartesian transformation precipitated and created the epistemic conditions which provided the

[55] The concepts of savage and barbarian carried connotations which were similar to those found in the Greek mythological stories mentioned earlier on in the discussion.

[56] Magubane, 2007, p. 7.

intellectual, aesthetic, scholarly, and cultural methods used in the discursive construction of Otherness and it was central to the creation of the normative and societal conditions that made slavery and colonialism possible. It defined the cultural, material, and intellectual relations that existed between the West and its Other, that is, the knowledges of conceiving humanity, knowledge and social reality from a position of authority and power. In the discourse on the Cartesian dualism Westerners are assumed to participate in logical thought which enables them to inquire into causal relations and determinations. Whilst the Other is assumed to live in the prelogic and symbolic realm which is dominated by collective representation and depends upon the law of mystical participation. The Other as an object of study is seen as customary, passive, non-participating, non-active, non-autonomous, non-sovereign, and endowed with a historical subjectivity. The discourse adopts an essentialist conception of the Other and these essentialist conceptions of the Other were used to transform it into historical fixity. It made the Other to be seen like the same, unchanging, uniform, and a radically peculiar object. In other words, it turned the Other into a general object which can be made to serve as an illustration of a particular form of eccentricity.

The Text and the Writer in the Making of Colonial Discourse

In the words of V. Y Mudimbe (1994:4), "texts are, strictly speaking, second level *legenda*, a mixture of facts, stories, symbols, presuppositions, and the like arranged according to a contemporary grid". Context (although not recognised as such by the Classical episteme) has so much influence on the author and the authority of a text, because it is through the text and writing that discourses are formed. As Said (1979:157) states, "within a text there has to take place a metamorphosis from personal to official statement." In this section, following Mudimbe and Said's assertion that literature and culture are not neutral, I shall argue that post-Enlightenment writers (whether travellers, soldiers, navigators, artists, or novelists) and philosophers were well aware of the fact of Empire and its influences on their views on race, slavery, and colonialism.[57] That is, they produced their writings in the intellectual and imaginative territories of Empire. Western forms of textuality prove that discourses have both socio-historical and epistemological contexts, and it is the epistemological contexts within which they are constructed that make them possible and accounts for them. It is in the

[57] As Wynter (2003:270) definitively notes, the discipline functions "as a language-capacitated form of life."

reproduction of modern systems of knowledge and power that discourses on Otherness which stem from the ancient, medieval, and post-Enlightenment eras have survived through the restorative citation of antecedent authority. These discourses rely on the retrieval and reproduction of a canon which was geared towards degrading and reducing Africans into mere commodities and properties through maintaining a relationship between history, writing, and forms of power. Scientists, philosophers, anthropologists, historians, artists, novelists, and theologians popularised racist ideas through a popular culture which was expounded by journalists, literary scholars, film directors and other individuals concerned with shaping public opinion within the Western episteme. It was the writers who recommended that the African Other as savage and barbaric, requires European conquest in order to bring them into liberty and freedom (consciousness). Their discourses were geared towards promoting the "redemptive" spirit of modernism.

The Western epistemological field within which these discursive formations emerged had a lot of influence on their ideological manifestations and the creation of the mythology of the "Human Other figures" (Wynter 2003:290). Renaissance and Victorian writers canonised the Human Other and created an instrumental literature in which the stereotypes and caricatures of the African as the savage and inferior Other were deeply embedded. Within literary writings, Enlightenment poets, novelists, and essayists adopted stylistic strategies that summed up and canonised images of the Other. Their literary forms created ideological myths which were used to create ideas and images of the Other. The text as both a primary and secondary form of representation – upon which commentaries are still produced – helped colonial discourses to assume the authority of a scientific knowledge. It provided the epistemic structures that formed the Eurocentric ethnographic gaze and destroyed the reference schema that provided the black subject with an ontology of its own and imposed a sense of colonial alienation in him or her. The textual representation of the African Other within Western epistemologies contained already axiomatic categories which were circumscribed and well established within the European canon. That is, colonial modernity is a socio-historical context which provided the epistemological context of discourses on Otherness and the context which made possible a domineering or humbled culture through forms of textuality. The Western epistemology determined the rules of formation of concepts, theories, and the objects of study that informed colonialist writings on Otherness. And since epistemology provides writers with knowledge and ideas about other things in the world, the representation of the Other within Western

discourses is not a natural depiction, it is rather a pseudo-scientific representation informed by the cultural prejudices of the Enlightenment. Hence, when working with the European canon on historical discourses about the Other, one must look at the kind of narrative voices adopted by the *author*, the type of structure he builds, and kinds of images, themes, and motifs that circulate in his text. Edward Said's book, *Orientalism*, is geared towards such a project of showing the interrelationship between society, history, and textuality, and the cultural role played by ideology, politics, and the logics of power in the epistemic construction of Otherness. The theory of representation is read by Said as the primary product of exteriority contained in Western discourses on Otherness.

In the Renaissance error, literature in the form of prose, poetry, or drama became the fundamental mechanisms for the metaphoric use of the black figure and its consumption in the European psyche. Literature as a discipline – just like anthropology, philosophy, history, or philology – also created a body of theory and practice in which the colonial imagination laid a considerable amount of investment. Literary history, like all these other disciplines, was also informed by the experiences of Empire, and was also functional to its intentions. In a sense, to use Said's (1978:14) words, literary writers were "extraordinarily aware of the fact of Empire." An example is Shakespeare's *Tempest*, which used the paradigms of exteriority and metaphor or the "mysteries (of the black figure) plain for and to West" (Said 1979:21). As Wynter tells us, "in the plot of the *Tempest*, the central opposition is represented as being between Prospero and Caliban; that is, between Higher Reason as expressed in the former, irrational, sensual nature as embodied in the latter." Caliban, the black figure, is represented as someone savoured from the movement and unity of time. He is depicted as a "thing of darkness" (*TS*, V. 1.275), that is, Caliban, represents to Prospero the unsullen, dispeakable evidence of a brute, unresponsive nature which requires a Cartesian res cogitans to speak on its behalf. Shakespeare, like other Elizabethan writers such as Milton, relied on accounts of voyages to Africa and the New World. And, the source material for Shakespeare's *Tempest* were the Jacobean pamphlets which dealt with the Bermuda shipwreck in 1609.

This also shows how the power of the author is visible in all Western discourses on Otherness: since he was regarded as the bearer of mathematical qualities that can help him understand the conditions of desacralized nature. The author functioned as an instrument through which the violence of language was encoded in Western modes of representation. Thus, "the author designates, name, and the point to fix what he is talking about or thinking about with a word

or phrase, which is either to have acquired, or more simply to be, reality" (Said 1979:72). The book and the text acquired authority and expertise under European imperialism in the sense that the "knowledge and reality that they created acquired a tradition or what Michel Foucault calls discourse" (Said 1978:94). Western discourses created generalisations about the other and it turned into immutable law, all knowledge about the nature, temperament, mentality, or custom of the African Other. These discourses were Western instruments of power that enabled them to transmute the Other into "thinghood", because it was believed that nothing in the Other could resist the objectifying power of the subject. According to Aime Cessaire (2000) "thingification" was the discursive mode within which the black subject was constituted as the invalid, and dysselected variant of modernity. The discourses that were maintained through the book and writing enabled Europe to absorb the Other, to cancel it, subdue and reduce, its strangeness and hostility. The writings of Renaissance scholars like Shakespeare worked under the assumption that the Other needed to be known, invaded and possessed, that is, she or he had to be "transubstantiated from resistant hostility into obliging, and submissive, partnership" (Said 1979:92). Slandering as we find it in Shakespeare's writings and the contents of all colonial discourses was a constitutive part of modernity and it had a a discursive as well as a political role and function.

Just like the evolutionary theorists, travellers, explorers, and adventurers, literary scholars also commented upon the distance separating savagery from civilisation on the diachronic line of progress. According to Mudimbe (1994:xii), at the end of the nineteenth century, their works came to constitute a colonial library which represented a body of knowledge constructed for the act "of faithfully translating and deciphering the African object". For Mudimbe, Western scholars and writers, since Greek times, have always used their "fantasies and constructs" to constitute an idea about Africa. As highlighted above, to emphasise the significance of travel in colonialist discourse, universal time was established concretely and politically in the Renaissance as a response to classical philosophy and cognitive challenges presented by the age of discoveries opening up in the works of the earth's circumnavigation. Similarly, since the beginning of the 19th century, literary works, like explorers' report, had been useful for opening the African continent to European imperial interests. Guided by the Cartesian epistemology, the works of explorers, like those of literary scholars showed a will to write about the Other which was driven by a sense of material possession and material imagination since to them travelling was a matter of political will, political imagination, and political

definition. Their writings were filled with "imagination and imaginative interpretation foisted by the imperial ego" because they could not write from within the black experience (Said 1979:73). Their writings on the Other showed an imaginative and aesthetic dimension within a European episteme. Everything that they wrote about the Other was wholly dependent on the ego of the Self and their understanding of the Other was dependent on a Eurocentric canon which contained the vocabulary, imagery, rhetoric, and figures with which to represent it.

Travel was an existential vocation for the disenchanted subject of modernity who could go back into time using the African Other as an experimental simulation. This is exactly what we find in the modernist colonial literature of Joseph Conrad whose, *Heart of Darkness*, is said to be filled with the melancholic homelessness of the modern novelist – at least in most readings of it before Chinua Achebe's intervention. In this novel, "Joseph Conrad uses philanthropic humanism through the process of temporalisation to place Africa and its people in the primitive past. The novel has a topographical configuration which makes him to ask the questions: why is African culture a barbarous experience? What is European civilisation and in what sense is it different?" (Mudimbe 1988:35). Conrad's text shows how discourses of colonial writers and the colonial library negates the possibility of a plurality of rationality and history. It shows how the objective of modern navigators (or scientific travellers) was to complete the history of man through their travels. Travel, in this sense, was regarded as the self-realisation of man and was used to contrast between the past and present of European historiography. According to Fabian, citing Degerando (1969:63) in, *The Observation of Savage Peoples*, "the philosophical traveller, sailing to the end of the earth, is in fact travelling in time, he is exploring the past; every step he makes is the passage of an age" (Fabian 1983:7). He, like Conrad, regards the knowledge of the past as a "sort of Archimedean point from which to change an otherwise hopeless present" which is ravaged by the spirit of disenchantment (Fabian 1983:10). In these two texts, the posited authenticity of a past (savage, tribal, peasant) served to denounce an inauthentic present (the uprooted, acculturated modern subject). In a sense, this shows how, in the textual and schematic attitudes of modern discourses, "the Other existed as a set of values attached, not to its modern realities, but to a series of valorised contacts it had with a distant European past" (Said 1979:85). In these texts, just like in all colonial discourses, the European experience was compared to that of the Other, older civilisations, in order to help the European subject to know itself at the level of plenitude. As Edward Said observes, "travel literature,

imaginary utopias, moral voyages, and scientific reporting brought the Orient into sharper and more extended focus [with itself]" (Said 1979:117).

The science of travel, as we mentioned above, was also crucial in natural historical projects of observation, collection and classification, and description. Travellers discourse helped towards the realisation of colonial ambitions by giving enumerations of difficulties and obstacles to be faced by any imperial force. The missions of explorers and adventurers opened the road for the expansion of Europe since their discourses helped inform the colonialists of the African sensibilities they had to encounter. Their discourses helped the European subject and the colonialist writer in their construction of imaginative geographies and quest to turn alien spaces into treatable and manageable entities. Both the explorer and the colonialist writer used imaginative geography to draw dramatic boundaries between the *Self* and the *Other*. That is, they used imaginative exteriorisation as a means to domesticate the exotic Other. Eurocentric history provided colonialists with an epistemology that enabled them to construct two peripheries: one visible and the other invisible.[58] In other words, civilizational history gave Westen forms of textuality an identity that marched through time unscathed as they are still reproduced through other means in postcolonial time. Colonialist writings show that there is a "congruence between the philosophical solipsism born from the Cartesian cogito and the expansion of the European space and the conditions of possibility for arranging reasons and processes of converting non-Western peoples, reducing them to a European historicity, and promoting a universal will to truth" (Mudimbe 1991:177-8).

As stated earlier, the intellectual legitimacy of colonialist writings in anthropological and philosophical thought was carried forward by scholars such as Kant in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, Hume in *Of National Characteristics*, Montesquieu in *Spirit of the Laws*, Hegel in *History of Philosophy*. According to Magubane, Kant absolutizes Hume's racial judgement "to set the tone of his invidious exercise of comparing the genius and beauty of Europeans, on the one hand, and the mental retardation and ugliness of Africans on the other" (Magubane 2007:23). Such views cemented claims on the African Other into enduring biological, cultural, and philosophical truths. Kant identified the Negro as a deviant form which occupies the lowest rung of the human race species. In his and Hegel's

[58] Mamdani, 2005, p.31

philosophical discourses on the Other, the typical materiality of an object is transformed from mere spectacle to the precise measurement of characteristic elements through the classification of man into types. These two philosophers of the Enlightenment, together with their lot, adhered to those systems of cultural generalisation which were developed within discourses about the Other. These were systems of generalisation in which a particular character of the elements provided the observer with a designation or a controlled derivation. Their discourses sought to transform the typical materiality of beings and things from mere spectacle to precise measurement of characteristic elements.

The aesthetical modes of othering in these discourses assumed that physiology was linked to moral characteristics. They regarded the African as black, phlegmatic, or lax. Black physiognomy and skin colour were used as markers of the dysselected-by-evolution mode of non-being. Enlightenment and Romantic theories of aesthetics, beauty and intelligence used colour as a metaphor, not only for exclusion but also for what is desirable. Black figures, or rather, 'the Human Other figures,' were seen as lacking the innate moral sense that separated human beings from lower primates. Cornell West in his genealogical-materialist analysis of discourses of modern racism, asserts that, the aesthetic ideals of colonial discourse, through classical revivalism infused Greek ocular metaphors (Eye of the Mind, Mind as Mirror of Nature, Mind as Inner Arena with its Inner Observer) and classical ideals of beauty, proportion, and moderation in their epistemologies of Otherness. They used classical ideals of moderation to produce the "normative white gaze" within whose structures they represented Otherness. The classical aesthetics and cultural norms provided to them an acceptable authority for the idea of white supremacy on truth and knowledge in the modern world. They show how artistic productions and representation of the African Other were included among literary productions, i.e. texts and commentaries which formed the Western modes of representation. These gazes showed cohesion in their positive evaluations and concrete representations of the African as Other.

Notions of cultural relativism within Western epistemology also influenced the conception of the African Other as an object of aesthetic contemplation. Art was used to assign symbolic meanings and understanding of the African Other and his culture. That is, through aesthetic representations, the African Other was regarded as an object of aesthetic pleasure. Art used forms of similitude in order to assimilate the African Other into the category of the Same. In other words, similitude as an art technique became a creative process in the modernist

representations of the black through and in its absence. As Mudimbe notes, through a study of the use of similitude in aesthetic modes of representation, one can say the Classical aesthetic ideals of Renaissance art were applied to nineteenth century aesthetic discourses on the African Other. Mudimbe's analysis of similitude in 16th century and nineteenth century art works which sought to represent the African Other can help us understand how art was one of the ways through which Western epistemologies "subsumed particular versions of human beings" (Mudimbe 1988:19).[59] That is, one can see that in the imagination of Empire art was used to express a discursive order and the models created by artists "became a mirror through which the painter evaluates how the norms of similitude and his own creativity would impart both a human identity and a racial difference" (Mudimbe 1988:20). In other words, the paintings were viewed as natural links connecting human beings or as indications of racial and cultural difference in the sense that they formed the basis for constructing classificatory tables. These artistic representations relied on Renaissance ideals of the black and they applied the epistemological configurations of Western discourses of Otherness. The symbols and elements used to present life on canvas were to show that the African belong to a savage universe. And the virtues of resemblance used on canvas worked towards the erasure of physical and cultural variations while maintaining and positing surface difference as meaningful of human complexity.

This shows how through art, Enlightenment discourse and Western subjective reason became the canon of aesthetics and how it subsequently related the idea of a subject that was able to master and dominate nature. Modern aesthetics applied a formal principle, obedience to subjective lawfulness regardless of what was Other to it and was unshaken by this Other: in it subjectivity, unconscious of itself, enjoyed the feeling of power. Aesthetic theory used the idea of a full subject to advance the notions of formalism in the concept of the ugly and the beautiful. The Western subject uses this formalism to "raise itself above the domination of natural powers in order to perpetuate them as domination over nature and human beings" (Adorno 1970:48). This is the use of formalistic classicism in aesthetic theory which shows that the latent content of the distinction between the ugly and the beautiful has its social aspect. Thus, as mentioned

[59] For Mudimbe, since the objective of these artworks was to "proclaim the virtues of resemblances", their intention was also to "assimilate exotic bodies into sixteenth century Italian painting methodology, reduce and neutralise all differences into the sameness signified by the white norm" (Mudimbe, 1988:8).

above, the black according to the standards of the beautiful, lives in an ugly society is uncouth and distorted by resentment and bears all the stigmas of degradation. The black was used to describe the ugly and these doctrines of aesthetic invariants were used to raise the reproach of degeneracy in black, since beauty in aesthetics was associated with the purity of the soul.

One of the qualities of the soul is rationality which is regarded as the quintessence of the means for dominating nature. This "rationalism of aesthetic means, makes mathematically superficial connections to form and content" (Adorno 1970:56). We witness within colonialist discourses on Otherness, "the misuse of aesthetic rationality for mass exploitation and mass domination" (Adorno 1970:56). Through these aesthetic modes of Othering, the black figure as that which is said to appear in nature, is robbed of its being-in-itself and being-for-itself because beauty, reason, and rationality are assumed to be the givens of the Western subject. The paradigms of discursive aesthetics were hinged towards the aim of subjugating the black subject by regarding him/her as a thing among other things. Things and objects under the Enlightenment epistemology are deemed to be at the mercy of the "mastery of the omnipotent subject" (Adorno 1970:66). Within the frameworks of aesthetic modes of Othering, ethnographic museums or natural history museums and colonialism enjoyed a symbiotic relation in the sense that museums were the port of call for exhibiting African cultures, introducing them to the European audience and attracting financiers who were interested in investing in colonies. Ethnographic museums were helpful in the conversion of African beings and spaces to Western imagination. Some objects which were not even art at all in their native context were ethnologised and given an aesthetic character.

These were all consequences of a visualist epistemology which informed the aesthetic projection of symbolic meanings and understanding to the culture of the Other or the assumption that the primitive ways of thinking is symbolic and therefore not scientific – that is, like Plato's sophists, they are still in the realm of myth. Hegel uses his theory of the symbol to distinguish between three major art forms: symbolic, classic, and romantic. For him the symbolic marks conceptually and historically the origin of art, it is therefore pre-art and belongs mainly to the primitive. In his temporalisation model the symbolic is marked as preceding the Classic and the Romantic ages by logical necessity and is placed in the time of origins. And, in order to drive home the idea that the African Other exists outside of time and history, Hegel intimates that the symbolic as the origin is characterised by an inherent ambiguity in relation to form and content, reality, expression, and meaning because it is not yet imbued with Spirit.

The symbolic is said to constitute only mere imagery as opposed to Western culture which has attained the inner unity of form and content. In Hegel's dialectic of the concrete realisation of the Spirit, classic art and romantic art comes closer to reaching the unity of the human spirit and that of substance and expression, the synthesis of form and content. An overcoming of the symbolic constitutes for him the self-realisation of man in the age of the Romantics. In a sense, Hegel's theory of aesthetics is based on the assumption that the knowledge systems of primitive societies, since they are not yet a science, must be understood in terms of symbolism. It is a theory of aesthetics which converges with those of Hume, Kant, Comte, and Durkheim.

In what can be understood as another function of discipline which follows the Western notions of textuality, modernity used the ideological tenets of philology in its quest to destroy the value systems which constituted the being and ontology of the African Other. Through an extension of scientific discourses into the field of the human sciences, language came to be regarded as an elemental quality of a speaking subject who was said to possess reason and rationality, qualities which the African Other was deemed to be devoid of. Modernity assigned to language ontological and ideological qualities that were regarded as crucial for bringing man into being. Realising that, the African Other has been denied access to these qualities of being, Fanon laments, "a man who has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language" (Fanon (1952:9). Language is a living organism which accommodates the forever changing concepts and ideas of a society, so if other societies are denied that quality and capacity they are therefore deemed to be non-living or out of joint with the world they inhabit. At the centre of the Renaissance project was the argument that linguistics treats words as natural or silent objects which are meant to give up secrets and it was assumed that the African Other does not have access to language as a scientific episteme. The issue of language for the African Other raises the question of cultural ambiguity, since it is assumed that, "to speak a language is to take on a world, a culture." (Fanon 1952:25). Having denied the African Other access to language and ontology or life forms and life chances on the basis of his or her phenotypical difference, as Fanon notes, the colonial master had to invent a system of sociogenic principles with which to justify such action. The sociogenic principles conjured up by colonial by colonial masters were meant to make sure that the African Other's system of language or ontology dissipated to the extent that he or she was compelled to subsist as a non-being. That is, the sociogenic principles of modernity forced the black-African-Other into a zone of non-being where it could not find any form of organic unity between it and the world.

And this lack of organic unity between the individual and the world throws the African Other into a state of metaphysical despair and alienation. It creates a world of existential nausea or an existential void for the African subject because he or she is made to assume a (not yet) language of angst.

The ideological tenets of philology encouraged the reduction of a language to its roots, in order to make it possible for scientific discourse to connect linguistic roots to race, mind, character and temperament. In Western modernity, most of the work on language was done by archaeologists, anthropologists, and necrophilias whose theories of representation located the African Other outside the realms of both being and Being. For example, Magubane says, the British Philological Society emphasised the importance of preserving and studying the languages of natives before they were extinct in order to understand the physical history of man (even though without them). So, in order to make a possibility of classification, the philologist had to make a linguistic fact correspond in some way to a historical period, which the black figure as an artefact was made to occupy and from which it was simultaneously displaced. The linguists ranged languages by a European prose that pointed out defects, virtues, barbarisms, and shortcomings in the language, the people, and the civilisation. They used time to transform language into the space of comparative classification, which at the bottom was based on a rigid binary opposition between organic and inorganic languages. In other words, as Said says, within linguistics Indo-European language was taken as the living, organic norm and non-European languages were comparatively seen as inorganic. That is, the language of the Other was seen as an un-regenerative process and as a phenomenon of arrested development in comparison with the mature languages and cultures of Indo-European language. The language of the Other is inorganic, arrested, totally ossified, incapable of self-regeneration, because it is not live, and since it is not live, the Other cannot be a live creature.

Discourse and the Imagination of Empire

The coloniser, the adventurer, the anthropologist, and the missionary helped create a colonial library on the African other: a canon which became handful to the physical project of conquest and colonialism. According to Mundimbe (1991:4) the three overlapping powers of the colonial state, science, and Christianity, ground “the three principal arenas of conversion: the colonial commissioners transmutation of “savage spaces” into “civilised settings”; the anthropologist’s codifying of humans, institutions, and beliefs by their particularity vis-à-vis a functional model;

and the Christian missionary's self-sacrifice among "primitives" in the struggle between the "true light" and "local tradition". Mudimbe shows how these three powers can be used to analyse rules for the transformation of physical and human spaces and how they can also help us see the procedures through which the African other was pathologised within Western discourses. Again, through the power of Christianity, in the 1453 *Romanus Pontifex*, and the subsequent papal bulls to follow it, all the lands inhabited by non-Christians were declared *terra nullius* and were granted to European Kings. The declarations of the church gave European Kings the power to forcibly convert the Other to Christianity and enslave in perpetuity. To show the link between science and Christianity, philosophical position, on which these papal bulls were based on also relied on the classificatory paradigms of natural law.

The powers of the scientific grid enabled the invention of such categories as 'native' and 'tribes' (which were themselves categories familiar to the Church) and provided the foundations for them to be modelled on thematised classifications that would help in the conversion of primitive societies. The systems according to which so-called 'savage' beliefs were divided, contrasted, related, regrouped, and classified from one another as objects of the anthropologist's discourses were turned into universal systems of binary oppositions which founded and accounted for the grand dichotomy between civilised and primitive. These discourses were circumscribed and determined by the three systems of power and knowledge of "the 19th century Western surface of emergence of discourses on a Deus Africanus; the authorities of delimitation that situate themselves in the frame of historical, scientific, and theological rules as concrete events; and the grid of reference which differentiate types of methods, validity of discourses, and techniques of describing and converting cultures (imperialism and colonialism)" (Mudimbe, 1991:5). These systems are institutional exercises which constituted historical and sociological events which had humans as subjects and objects of their practice and discourse. The mission to colonise and civilise they helped suppose was accounted for by the scientific discipline of the natural law. They helped the missionary to conform to the meaning of his or her generosity to both the theological implications of the extension of the history of salvation to non-Western peoples and the procedures of missionising.

The Christian revelation became a political performance in Africa because missionaries as human actors using God's incarnation set the foundation for the political processes of colonisation. The religious discourse that was spread by missionaries was founded on a

philosophical postulation which was guided by the existence of a "canon which unites in Christian interpretation, Judaic revelation, Greek rationality, and Western historicity (Eboussi-Bouluga 1981, cited in Mudimbe 1991:5). In other words, it had a telos which helped the missionaries to assert the integration of the African Other into Western time and order of Same as a means to salvation. They helped missionaries to inflate the spiritual and political sacredness of their own enterprise and conflate their activities with God's will and politics. This is how, for Mudimbe, the symbolic actualisation of divine power was meant to bring about major spatial and spiritual alterations in the ontological condition of the African Other. The conjunction of the politics of missionary integration with techniques of manipulating symbols of divine power signified a re-ordering of a social map and constitutes the kernel of missionising as both an epistemic performance and a political performance. That is, it shows how missionaries played a huge role in the expropriation and exploitation of new found lands after they had been declared as terra nullius.

Hence, following Mudimbe, we hold the position that, explorers and missionaries since the end of the 15th century determined the modalities of mastering and colonising the African continent and they compiled the complex bodies of knowledge about the African Other. That is, the missionaries were agencies of the political empire, and their aim was to convert minds and spaces in a way that was advantageous to the aims and intentions of Empire. Their discourses were informed by an ethnocentric outlook which denounced the mythological character of African spirituals and all pagan religions were made to constitute the black side of white transcendental Christianity. Through missionary discourse, the black subject was made a member of a different genus in order to exploit him and transform into a nominal Christian or destroy him according to the whims of the enslaver. It is for these reasons that David Livingston carried the banner of the missionary urge with the intention to convert the heathens to Christianity. Again, during the period of colonialism, the shift from theology to science from the late eighteenth-century in the construction of race was necessary because the colonisers had already rejected the logic of Christianity (monogeism) that argued for spiritual kinship of all humanity.

From this archaeological analysis, we can see how colonialist discourses articulated by missionaries, adventurers, travellers, philosophers, anthropologists, historians, and philologists helped create the myths that birthed imperialism and colonialism. This is in the sense that their reductionist discourses were used by the colonial state to justify the processes of inventing and

conquering a continent and naming its primitiveness or disorder as well as the subsequent means of its exploitation and methods for its regeneration" (Mudimbe 1988:33). The right to colonise was duplicated by a natural duty and spiritual mission. Like in the other discourses of colonial writers, missionaries justified colonialism on the assumption that "the subject races did not have it in them to know what was good for them" (Said 1979:37). Such assumptions about the Other, as Wynter tells us, were drawn from the medieval theocentric descriptive statements of the human. For the missionaries, the knowledge of the Other's character, culture, history, tradition, society, and possibilities was effective for the colonial project. Nineteenth century missionaries, unlike their predecessors in the Renaissance era who used the Christian doctrines to help the monarch exterminate the subject races, used missionary discourse to justify the idea that the aim of Empire was to bring Africa into European modern time. Or rather, to bring Africa into the continuum of Judeo-Christian homogenous empty-time. Nineteenth century missionaries also the helped the Empire to accomplish the metamorphisis of scholarly discourse into an imperial institution; the point where ideas about the Other were put into political use.

From the threads of continuity and discontinuity between sixteenth century missionary discourse and nineteenth century missionary discourse we can see how, through slavery, colonialism, and racism the ideological space of rationalisation of Otherness strongly confirmed itself as both a model of cultural orthodoxy and a sign of normativity. That is, we can see how "the surface of emergence of Western colonial responsibility explains and makes necessary colonisation as a global activity for converting a non-Western space into a Western marked area" (Mudimbe:1991:7). The nineteenth century Christian doctrine of salvation, similarly to the order of scientific knowledge gave the European subject a form of discursive currency and was an enabling factor in the "systematic accumulation of beings and territories" (Said 1979:123). To extend from Said, we can see how the "Knowledge of the subject races was what made their management easy and profitable; knowledge gives power, more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control" (Said 1979:36). In a sense, we can see how both Classical and nineteenth century Christianising missions show how the colonial structure is constitutive of the physical, human, and spiritual aspects of the colonising experience. That is, they show the symbiosis between missionary discourse and the imagination of Empire.

Colonial archivists like missionaries allowed the African Other to enter into Western European modernity as a disposable piece of property subject to arbitrary acts of violent punishment. The ideological rationalisation of slavery they used relied on the explicit formulations of an ontological order which worked towards the constitution of colonialist discourse. Under the colonialist discourse of the Second British Empire in the nineteenth century, commerce and Christianity became the new methods with which to subjugate the African Other. That is, together with the Christianising missions, 'free trade, legitimate commerce, and the end of protectionism became the new methods with which to usher in an era for the 'benighted' African Other. With the help of Christianity, the colonial state Westernised African space by installing new processes of production, extending new techniques, and establishing transformations of social relations of production under the discourse of bringing the African Other into History. That is, together with Christianity, nineteenth century imperialism marked the tradition of genocide of the colonised peoples and a moment when violence became the midwife of history. And the idea that all primitive races were doomed to extinction through mere contact with civilisation also became central to this genocidal racism and genocidal campaigns against indigenous peoples.

So far, we can clearly see that, together with the various domains of colonial discourse, missionary discourse constitutes one of the elements of the discursive formations that are responsible for alienation and nausea in the black experience, and collective carthasis of Europe on the black figure. They constitute what Fanon (1952:84) refers to as the "thousand details, anecdotes, and stories" qua the sociogenic principles of the colonial archive which the black figure is woven out of. For Fanon, as we briefly mentioned above, sociogenic principles form the "constellation of postulates, and a series of propositions that through discourses work their way into one's mind and shape one's view of the world" (Fanon 1952:118). They form part of the post-Enlightenment epistemological and discursive formations that defined the colonial space even if "they are not at all of nature or constitution, but of perception" (Fanon 1952:131). Sociogenic principles, as post-Enlightenment discourses of power and knowledge, helped constitute the codes within which the human species was to be understood. They introduced a system of knowledge which coincides with the purely biological understanding of being and they show how the human brain, with the idea of an auto-poetic being. These were limited paradigms of conceptualising the human form because they could not transcend the parameters of the Eurocentric understanding of Man as nothing but a thinking and speaking being.

Of Epistemology and Ontology

As Sylvia Wynter relates, the post-Enlightenment epistemological order informs the (ontological grounding or) modern idea of the human as a hybrid being of the *bio* and *mythoi* model or the modern understanding of the human in homo narrans terms which themselves led to the modern biocentric descriptive statement of the human. Whilst this epistemological order induced in European Man the idea of a "discusrsively elaborated order of truth/knowledge,"[60] to the African Other it induced a neurological response which only worked in relegating it to the place of the pathological: a psycho-social experience of alienation and nausea. The "phylogeny/ontogeny descriptive statement" of the human it instituted was intended at making sure that black subjectivity "functions at the level of the physiological body" and would therefore have no kind of orthopaedic support its being (Mckittrick 2015:57). The ontogeny/phylogeny descriptive statement of the Human and the 'Human Other Figure' helped inform the 'master code of symbolic death and life' which founded the auto-poietic field of modern colonialist episteme. It constituted the sociogenic principles or the "naturalised autopoietic-social system"[61] within which the black figure was to be experienced or experience itself. That is, through the colonial sociogenic principles, the Black subject as Man, could not know how it feels to be human in its purely own phylogenic/ontogenic dimensions. He or she could not translate his/her experience into language because he or she was barred from recognising him or herself as a reflexive subject.

Hence, Fanon (1952:143) says, all the efforts of the black subject to reach for the universal were (and are still) hampered by "his Negro essence, his Negro nature"[62] which was (and still is) kept intact and fixed by the phenomenology of the colonial socio-symbolic. And in the event of any attempt to construct an idea of the Self, the corporeal schema is overcome by the racial epidermal schema, forcing him or her to exist as a morbid body, with no value of its own and always contingent of the Other. That is, the descriptive statement of modernity sought to position the black subject as a being that is culturally and socio-situationally determined from without. It created within the black subject a sense of alienation that induces a double

[60] Wynter, S. 2001, p. 29.

[61] Mckittrick, K. 2015, p.116.

[62] Fanon, F. 1952, p. 143.

consciousness, or rather, it made the black experience to be analysable at the level of "failure": a failure which simultaneously induce alienation and nausea (Fanon 1952:23). Since they are thrown into a condition of double consciousness by the institution of these sociogenic principles, black figures experience themselves as both norm (Man) and the liminally deviant Other (Wynter 2001:44). And within the psyche of the colonising subject, this double consciousness leads to the presentation of the black subject as "a phobogenic object, a stimulus to anxiety" (Fanon 1952:117). That is, he or she is turned into an object which arouse fear and revulsion, whilst at the same time, through him or her, the European Man comes to experience himself "as that fullness and genericity of being human, yet a genericity that must be verified by the latter as *lack* of this fullness, of this genericity" (Wynter 2001:40).

The sociogenic principles of colonial modernity imposed a historico-racial schema that is still to date responsible for the failures of the black subject's bodily schema and the corporeal maledictions placed upon it. This schema still determines the structures of the visual phenomenology of the black self and it still induces a general autophobia within the black subject as well as the white anti-black 'aberrations of affect'. As an information encoding principle, this historico-racial schema conjured through colonial discourse became the mode through which the black figure is experienced and experiences itself. It persisted as an invented *techne* which through processes of colonial socialisation, the categories of being and non-being could be assigned to things and beings. That is, it formed the foundation of the conditions on which Negroid physiognomy or being was to be experienced as aesthetically ugly and ontologically evil. Therefore, I argue, that the duty of theories of liberation and resistance in their attempt to invent new human futures is to challenge the psycho-political dimensions of colonial discourse on black subjectivity and their continued reproduction in postcolonial time. In order to construct the correct model for an emancipatory subjectivity, they should theoretically account for the mutation of the colonial symbolic in postcolonial time. That is, they must recognise that the purpose of colonial discourse was to inscript death on the Negroid physiognomy: a death which engenders a certain form of politics even in postcolonial time. In other words, they must acknowledge the fact that the colonial symbolic turned the black figure into the product of a historical process which deposited in it "an infinity of traces" which induces a certain form of psycho-political dimensions which must be confronted even in postcolonial situations. Hence, we argue that the efforts of any theory of resistance and

liberation should be directed at accounting for the dynamics and dimensions of the colonial socio-symbolic order and think of strategies to rupture it.

Conclusion

Since we have so far established the conditions of the concrete historical reality of subjection for the black figure, our efforts in the proceeding chapters will be directed at finding ways of dealing with its consequences on the imaginative and actional capacities of this figure. In contemporary debates on postcolonial emancipatory discourses, there has been an effort to displace the paradigms of resistance developed within the theory of anti-colonialism and a failure to give a diagnoses of the minute way through which the colonial structure is reproduced and reproduces itself. Since the aim of colonial discourse was to empty the black figure of all substance necessary for subjectivity in the effort to place the European 'Man' at the level of plenitude, what postcolonial theorists have done is to seek the re-substantialisation of the colonised subject in order to show the instability of the identity of the colonising subject. This re-substantialisation is done through an imposition of the reflexive qualities of the Kantian transcendental subject onto the properties and functions of the colonised black subject. Thus, forgetting that all identities are negative and therefore there are no positive identities even for the phallocentric colonising subject himself who despite all efforts to raise himself to the level of plenitude still remains a partialized object-subject. In other words, they forget that it is because of the inherent lack of identity in structure itself (qua White structure that the coloniser had to constitute the black figure at the level of difference). If they were to read subjectivity from this angle, postcolonial theorists, like anti-colonial theorists would realise that they don't need to confuse the necessity of substance with the necessity of freedom and liberation. That is, they would realise that the relational constitution of difference is itself an antagonistic constitution of subjectivities.

In the effort to analyse the potential of an emancipatory politics rooted in the black experience, the proceeding chapters shall problematise the consequences of coloniality through the thematics of Materiality, Ritual-myth, and Death, at both a theoretical and philosophical level. And, unlike postcolonial theorists, I shall maintain the position that the black figure does not require or desire plenitude, res cogitans, qua the plenitude of full subjectivity to subvert the colonial structure and its relations. Rather, in order to make emancipation possible, the black subject needs to confront the psycho-political dimensions and effects of the colonial symbolic

on its bodily formations. This however does not imply the call for an appraisal of the colonial structure as the only necessary analytical category for the postcolonial condition. Instead, it is a call against its effacement in most postcolonial discourses. So, to justify the efficacy of the anti-colonial paradigm in postcolonial time the proceeding chapters shall try to show that it is in the moment of breach, of antagonism, and contradiction where the colonised subject cuts the ground which the colonising master is standing on where the journey to a liberated future begins. This moment of breach is neither the moment in which the future resides nor is sustained but it is a moment where the window to the (impossible-)future starts to open. So, with that awareness, the following chapters shall attend in theoretical and philosophical ways to the question: what is the position of the subject of the logic of resistance and liberation in the dialectical relationship between the 'actual' colonial register and the scientifically invented *techne* for the reproduction of the colonial symbolic in postcolonial liberal democratic principles and practices?

Chapter Two

In the 'Break' or in the 'Cut': The Poetics of the (Post)Colony

"To describe a group of statements not as the closed, plethoric totality of a meaning, but as an incomplete, fragmented figure; to describe a group of statements not with reference to the interiority of an intention, a thought, or a subject, but in accordance with the dispersion of an exteriority; to describe a group of statements, in order to rediscover not the moment or the trace of their origin, but the specific forms of an accumulation, is certainly not to uncover an interpretation, to discover a foundation, or to free constituent acts; nor is it to decide on a rationality, or to embrace a teleology" (Foucault 1989:141).

"To take part in the African revolution it is not enough to write a revolutionary song; you must fashion it with the people, the songs will come by themselves, and of themselves" (Fanon, 1967:166, citing Sekou Toure).

Introduction

The colonial register whose condition we have tried to examine in the preceding chapter constitutes an 'epidemiology of oppression' which is still relevant to our 'postcolonial time' and its (dis)continuities still persistently threaten our articulations of human freedom. Therefore, what is demanded of any theory of resistance or philosophy of revolutionary violence is to identify the forms and structures within which its discourses are both sustained, transformed, and reproduced. However contrary to this demand, most poststructuralist or postmodernist postcolonial scholars have declared or proclaimed a rupture with both its chronology and (dis)continuity, and have thus ignored the centrality of the Real material domains of resistance in their notion of liberatory praxis. Not only are they dismissive of the persistence of the historical-past in our future-presences, they are also dismissive of the material basis of pre-colonial mythical artefacts which for them are effective in so far as they are logical or cosmological models of a futurity based on fantasy and imagination: the epistemological qualities of the scientific subject. To put it crudely, they have identified their task as one of strategically invalidating the operations of the historical past in the present. That is, they have relegated historical paradigms to the remnants of the past which are without any effectivity in the imagination of human futures. The recurrent theme in their argument is that history or historiography (which for them are only obsessed with the need to attain the status of an ontology or of an epistemology) should not be regarded as revolutionary practices for future human sociality. Indeed, they should not, but when this idea is subjected to a rigid and rigorous philosophical and theoretical investigation one starts to see cracks and limitations in its contentions. That is, if the idea is for it to be read as implying that both history and

historiography will have to be removed from the paradigms of emancipatory action and imagination in toto.

It is of no doubt that every theory of resistance and liberation has to confront the dogmas of scientific and theological historiographical traditions but such an exercise does not necessarily imply the displacement or dismissal of the affect and effect of history or the past (in its capacity as a material artefact which structures subjectivity). Although history and tradition should not be treated as uninterrupted texts or linear descriptions one must understand that liberation involves the stripping of old structures through an understanding of the present and a renewal of past subjectivities in a mode closer to what Frederick Jameson refers to as a 'realistic reflection'. The return to historical pasts suggested by such a thesis does not signal the attempt to define (post)colonial subjects as constant objects of pre- or colonial relations. Rather, it is a definition of the present as a place of circumscribed political dimensions which have their roots in both the historical past and the desire for a futurity. This does not again imply an obsession with dates chronology or continuities but a taking into consideration of the experience of time in its discontinuous nature – if we are to give it a Foucauldian interpretation.[63] Hence, one asks: if futures are concerned with changing the past, how can that past be changed if we do not or cannot know what it was or when it was or where it is? These questions point toward the idea that the discourse of resistance and liberation is both a theoretical and symptomatic discourse which suggests a return to the 'primal-scene of subjection' and its antidotes of primitive insurance and anti-colonial resistance. It requires the invoking of performative discourses based on fugiveteness or the ephemerality of both the past and the future. In other words, instead of reducing "experience into logical categories of noncontradiction," fugitiveness or anomaly makes contradiction, defeat, and death the composites of life itself (Pelton 1980:252). For it is in death and by death that the subject of resistance and liberation confronts and penetrates every mode of being surrounding him or her. Like the 'death bound' subject of African mystics or the colonial conjuncture through which he or she composes images of life in every form of death.

[63] We are well aware that the unity of the colonial symbolic in postcolonial time "does not appear to have the same dates, or the same surface, or the same articulations" (Foucault 1989:51), but we recognise that, it is also equally important that we theorise the conditions and specificity of its reproduction.

Thus, since in the history of colonial modernity, the black subject suffered a loss of insurance, language, or ontology its processes of resistance and struggle are bound to be both diagnostic and symptomatic. As Nathaniel Mackey says, they involve 'alchemising a legacy of lynchings' – what Homi Bhabha and Henry Louis Gates, Jr may mistakenly refer to as the "ascendancy of the colonial paradigm" (Gates 1991:457). Contrary to what this two may suggest, Mackey reminds us that a history articulated through a fractured subjectivity amounts to a history related in-brokenness. Not that these two do not acknowledge such a fact in both the colonial plantocracy and the slave plantocracy, rather, it is the models through which they propose a break or rupture with the psycho-social mediatory value of colonial historiography. A futurity hinted at through an echoing of the historical past is that of a movement founded in the particular – like the '*Giant Steps'* of John Coltrane. It involves the process of finding the past and then kill it or try to kill it in order to stop it from haunting us – if such an act is possible at all. Hence, its emancipatory process, if we are to read it as an epigenetics, is that of a destruction and sublimation of the history of violence under colonial modernity through what Mackey refers to as the models of a 'post-expectant-futurity'.

The Dialectics of History in Postmodern-Postcolonial Theory

But as mentioned above, there is no transformation or sublimation of the unconscious history of colonial modernity without knowing the types of institutions, knowledge, norms, and practices which are responsible for its (re)production in postcolonial time. Hence, we say that the task of theoreticians of the postcolonial human condition should be one of accounting for the epistemological and ontological mutations of the colonial register in postcolonial time. In other words, it is only after making such an account that they can be able to diagnose the condition of the human future. Although in this chapter I problematize only the status of the colonial register and the anti-colonial register in postmodernist postcolonial theory, from now on our task will be that of looking into the conditions of the subject of resistance and liberation through the articulation of the concept of death in the theory of anti-colonialism. But, in this chapter we shall look closely at the contours of mainstream contemporary postmodernist postcolonial thought and the emancipatory paradigms it supposes. It is in the same problematic of confronting the question of the dialectic of (revolutionary) transformation and the question of the subject of emancipation that postcolonial theorists construct their critique of discourses of liberationist history and the theory of anti-colonialism. Despite their critique of these discourses, they are also engaged in the analysis of the effects of the colonial past on psychic

representation and the social reality of their postcolonial subject although they do so through the lenses of a Cartesian scientism which is couched in a postmodernist critique. That is, although their pretensions border on the displacement, dismemberement, or disclocation of historical determinations, they realise that there can never be a complete eclipse of colonial history and its anti-dote – the theory of anti-colonialism. Like their contemporaries in postmodern theory, they are aware of the fact that, in order for revolutionary emancipation to be possible, one has to account for the unintelligibility of the past by reading into a punctured and interrupted history. In other words, no matter how their subject is steeped towards transcendentalist imaginations and fantasy or forms of futurity (in the neo-Kantian sense), they recognise the need to write in the language of the historic past. To advise them in their writing, 'a change of verb tense from future to historic past would do it' if they are to sufficiently deal with the structures of coloniality.

Although the main focus of my critique in this chapter is Homi Bhabha's text, *The Location of Culture*, mostly against what Gates (1991:461) refers to as his "mobilisation of Lacan … as an explicit correction of Fanon's own citation of Lacan in *Black Skin, White Masks*," or his existential and phenomenological moment in *The Wretched of the Earth*, that engagement will appear in the last section to the chapter. Not as an explicit reading of Bhabha against Fanon but as a philosophical and theoretical engagement with the psychoanalytic or phenomenological critique he launches against the liberationist reading of historical ontology. But firstly, I would like to look at the problematic of the status of history and historiography in postcolonial theory in general. Although it is not easy to decide when was or when is postcolonial time, the sixties as the period that marked the event of the struggle for liberation in Africa is often identified as that moment of transition and transformation. And the literatures that emerge during that period and in the aftermath of that period are the ones regarded as postcolonial literatures. But if we were to include literature from the Black Atlantic world, especially Haiti which gained independence in 1804 or South Africa which had its post-Apartheid transition in 1994, the question of the postcolony or postcolonial time is found to be neither here nor there. Since dates and chronology are of no use when theorising the history of blackness under the more than 500 years (and still counting) of colonial modernity. I shall also say the same with regards to the period that marks the emergence of African postcolonial literature. However, I shall identify

as postcolonial literature or discourse the works which emerge or coincide with postmodernist writings in continental European discourses.[64]

Postcolonial theory identifies itself with the antinomies engendered by postmodernists and poststructuralist, or rather, it is "located within the same temporal, historical intellectual space" with these traditions.[65] That is, its preoccupations and questions with regard to the subject of liberation are almost similar to those posed in postmodernist or poststructuralist discourses and there seems to be "more deliberate connections, recognitions, dialogues and debates which unite"[66] them both philosophically and theoretically. Or to be more precise, it relies on the idea of an epistemic break hinted at by Loytard in his notion of postmodernism as a metanarrative of the end of metanarrative or a "radical break" with the structural novelties of modernism (Appiah 1992:140 and Jameson 1984:vii).[67] Not so separately from that of postmodernism, to use the example of postcolonial literature, theirs is a radical break with and an intention to "delegitimate not only … (African) realism but the content of (African) nationalism", i.e, the history of colonial modernity (Appiah 1992:152). In other words, or rather, as Bhabha says, postcolonial theory challenges "the identification of the historicised colonial subject who is inscribed in texts of history, literature, science, and myth" (Bhabha 1986:xxvi). A task which they say the theory of anti-colonialism, social realism, or nationalist discourse does not perform sufficiently because of the pre-eminence they give to anthropology and history. Like their contemporaries in postmodermism, postcolonial theorists confront the questions of ontology,

[64] According to Newell (2006), the hyphenated term, 'post-colonial', signifies a chronological analysis of the historical stages of colonialism and its ending. As a hyphenated term, it is mostly used to chronologically mark the end of the historical epoch of colonialism. The unhyphenated term 'postcolonial' has been broadly used to signify the wide range of discourses, ideologies, and intellectual formations which emerged in colonial societies during and after formal colonialism. That is from the canon of anti-colonialist writing in the decades before and after independence. It identifies its role as one of interrogating the specifics of the textual, semiotic, and representational modes of discursive colonialism. In its canonical literary form, it engages in the rereading and rewriting of European historical and fictional record on the African Other and offers a counter discursive strategy to the dominant colonial discourse.

[65]Williams, 2001, p. 3.

[66] Ibid.

[67] According to Ahmed Aijaz (1992:17), "Loytard defines postmodernism as a rejection of three fundamental legacies of the Enlightenment: Dialectics (associated with Hegel), Reason (associated, respectively, with Deascarte and Kant), and the idea that political economy was the backbone of all organisation (associated with Marx). He further rejects, as mere Enlightenment optimism, the idea that humanity could work toward its own emancipation through rational thought (Kant) and revolutionary action … (Marx)."

epistemology, subjectivity, and historicity through the categories of a self-reflexive subject which is founded on the Cartesian cartography. They challenge the idea of historical or political teleologies in nationalist discourse through the categories of a scientific and philosophical subject. And also, like postmodernists, they look for an affirmation of the decentred subject of resistance and liberation in a priori or transcendent structures of being. As we mentioned above, this does not necessarily imply an outright rejection of the historical paradigm in the formation of subjectivity, rather, it suggests its general effacement within space and time.

A point which Appiah (1992:141) also highlights by stating that, the 'post' of postmodernism, like the 'post' of postcolonial theory also emphasizes "the lament of logical and historical consequences rather than temporal posteriority." And the postcolonial in postcolonial literature, as we shall see in the discussion to follow, refers to post-realist writings which challenge the "tactics of nationalist legitimation" or what Appiah refers to as the avant-garde left modernism of the like of Ngugi wa Thiong'o (Appiah 1992:150). That is, although what they oppose are the notions of a historical chronology and those of the historical totality of the rational subject, they do not dismiss both the concepts of history and ontology in toto. But the question that remains for us to pose to postcolonial theorists is whether that can be regarded as a failure or a success in their theoretical and philosophical quest to separate the subject of emancipation from history and ontology. Hence, we ask: what is the status of colonial discourse in postcolonial theory? What is the status of tradition, ideology, and narrative in postcolonial theory? How does the interplay of the colonial symbolic order sustain the condition of the subject of liberation in postcolonial theory? What is the nature of the historical structures and conditions within which postcolonial emancipatory subjectivity is defined and activated? To what extent are postcolonial writings postscripts of the colonial archive? What is the specifity of the colonial archive and the pre-colonial archive in postcolonial time? Or, to ask in a psychoanalytic way, what is the role of the statement in the formation of the subject of postcolonial enunciation – if there ever was one?

Also, with regards to postmodernist discourse, the questions posed are not so different, we equally ask: how does postmodernist theory seek to invalidate the value of totality in modern theory? How does postmodernist theory go about questioning the place of history and historiography in the dominant ideas of structuralism and semiotics? How has the postmodern condition been understood in contemporary social theory? For now, I shall only give an outline of the main theoretical and philosophical positions on the question of history in postcolonial

theory. That is, their position on the question of conscious history or of history as the consciousness of a subject and how does that filter into their treatment of the realist epistemology in postcolonial literature. A more nuanced analysis of these themes at both the theoretical and philosophical level will follow in the remaining chapters of the thesis. In relation to the questions of ontology, epistemology, subjectivity, and historicism, as Jameson (1984) and Appiah (1992:141) mentions, "the difficulties in specifying postmodernism lies in its symbiotic or parasitical relationship to high modernism." In this outline of the main epistemological strands of postmodernism, I only briefly examine Loytard's position in *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, withholding a more theoretically and philosophically nuanced engagement with the position of Derrida on the theory of the sign for our conversation with Homi Bhabha in the last section of the chapter. We shall see in that discussion how Bhabha's extension of the Derridean theory of the sign betrays the cause of postcolonial theorists to establish the conditions of an emancipatory subjectivity autonomous from historical-ontology. In the Derridean theory of the sign, the signified is forced to slip under the signifier and it only has effectivity in so far as it is repressed in the signifier, that is, in so far as it sutures or stitches up the signifier which pre-exists it. In other words, the postmodernist subject of Derrida, like the postcolonial subject of Bhabha experiences history through the transcendence of an ontology and the reflexivity of a self-sufficient being – being-qua-being. Or rather, the movement suggested in Derrida's Husserlean-Platonian epigenetics, as he himself notes, is that of a "passage from exterioty to interiority" (Derrida, 1983:6). That is, if we are to take Derrida to be referring to history as the signified and ontology as the signifier, we must take it that he gives primacy to the transcendental value of ontology over the historical which in his "logic of repression" or logic of iteration constitutes an "orgiastic mystery" (Derrida, 1983:7).

Similarly, according to Jameson (1984:ix), the postmodernist discourse of Loytard is a reinvention of "classical high modernism," that is, in the art scene, it marks the return of the "aesthetics of high modernism."[68] In the quest to overcome both the theory of the subject and

[68] According to Jameson (1984:xvi) "Loytard is in reality quite unwilling to posit a postmodernist stage radically different from the period of high modernism and invoving a fundamental historical and cultural break with this last." Postmodernity is a "moment in the perpetual 'revolution', evolution, and innovation of high modernism ..., a cyclical moment that returns before the emergence of ever new modernisms in the stricter sense" (Jameson 1984:xvi). Postmodernity is a moment "critical negation ... not outright social and psychological transformation" (Jameson 1984:xvi).

the theory of history in modernism, postmodernism reinvents itself as a scientism and a new form of speculative knowledge. And neither does postcolonial theory escape this cul-de-sac which postmodernism is caught up in, its proponents also retains the neo-Kantian, or rather, the romanticist philosophy of the subject. It is also not immune to the threat of what Williams (2001:163) refers to as the "transcendental/empirical doublet which haunts the discourse of anthropology." Loytard, casts postmodernism as a "non- or postreferential 'epistemology' in terms of linguistics, and in particular of theories of the performative" (Jameson 1984:ix). Yet, however, besides these efforts to go beyond the limitations of linguistic structures or of establishing an 'epistemological break' with structuralist formulae, they end up preserving them. However, we do agree that to some extent, postmodermism induces a crisis of narrative which changes the conditions of knowledge and science and challenges the use of metadiscourses in both theory and philosophy. And, it challenges the use of "grand narratives, such as the dialectics of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational (Cartesian subject) or working class" (scientific Marxism) (Loytard 1984: xxviii). Not that it gets rid of narrative or metanarrative, postmodernism, as Loyrtard (1984:xxiv) tells us, is the "incredulity toward metanarratives," or rather, it is the "metanarrative apparatus of legitimation." And as a "narrative of language elements," it is to be located at the intersection of multiple elements or signifiers [a heterogeneity of elements] (Loytard 1984:xiv). This is however a phenomenological or structural dialectic conception of language which will come under heavy criticism in this work.

As an extension of the theory of metaphor in the romanticist epistemology, as Loytard notes, postmodernism relies on "a form of legitimation based solely on parology which must be distinguished from innovation: the latter is under the command of the system, or at least used by it to improve its efficiency: the former is a move … played in the pragmatics of knowledge" (Loytard 1984:61). In Loytard's case, as is for Homi Bhabha, it is through the theory of metaphor that the subject of emancipation, in a disenchanted form or in a Nietzschean sense, assumes godly substance.[69] However, like Loytard (1984:80), Bhabha's idea of historical reproduction, like that of most postcolonial theorists, is based on the subject's assumption of the "inner consciousness of time." According to Loytard (1984:81), the process of

[69] I say to a lesser extent with regards to Bhabha because his position on meaning borders on the idea of the romanticists or Kantian transcendental subject, which is more self-reflective and determinate.

postmodernist historical reproduction, in what echoes the Derridean logic of repression mentioned above, must be "understood according to the future (*post*) and the anterior (*modo*)." Or, to use a Foucauldian concept, they should be understood through the process of exteriority, or rather, through the process of an interiorised externality.[70] Whilst Loytard's subject moves toward the historically true in its transcendental sense, that of Foucault, as Williams (2001:161) relates, gravitate toward "what Gilles Deleuze has aptly called 'the dark forces of finitude', (the structures of materiality) or into the (unconscious) structure of (without) knowledge."

Contrary to the realist referential nature of the performative in the anthropological schemas of empiricism and speculative realist thought, in postmodernism, the performative, or rather, metonymy and metaphor are promoted to the principle of science.[71] And, the principle of science used in postmodernism calls into question "the crises of representation which an essentially realist epistemology, which conceives of representation as the reproduction, for subjectivity, of an objectivity that lies outside – projects a mirror theory of knowledge and art, whose fundamental evaluative categories are those of adequacy, accuracy, and Truth itself" (Jameson 1984:viii). And at a sociosystemic level, it takes it that narrative is affirmed through the performative. For Loytard (1984:75), realism makes the mistake of looking for "the 'correct' images, the 'correct' narratives, the 'correct' forms." And in a mode similar to that of postmodernism, postcolonial literary theory positions itself as an assault on social realism in both African Studies. Hence, according to Appiah (1992:149), the postcolonial in literature and literary theory refers to postrealist writing which challenges the "tactics of nationalist legitimation", or, as mentioned above, what he refers to as the avant-garde of left-modernism in Ngugi wa Thiong'o. In other words, postcolonial theory, for Appiah, intends to "delegitimate not only the form of realism but the content of nationalism" (Appiah 1992:152).

[70] According to Williams (2001:161), Foucault thinks subjectivity through "the uncertain nature of the subject's *finite* experience of time and space." For Williams (2001:181), there is, according to Foucault, no simple opposition between interior and exterior, between inside and outside, not because the interior site of the subject is merely an empty place but rather because interiority is none other than the interiorisation of the outside," hence, "in this, Foucault politicises the construction of the subject: all that is outside the subject forms a hinge for interiority, that which Deleuze calls, following Foucault's own discussion in 'The Thought of the Outside', a hallowing out, or a fold of the outside."

[71] Loytard's idea of scientific abstraction modulates "towards a Nietzschean thematics of history" (Jameson 1984:xii). That is, it turns toward the Nieztschean call for strength to forget the past in preparation for the superman to come.

According to Appiah, social realism, in African literature, naturalises the originary 'African novel' of Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, which for him uses narrative to affirm African history and tradition. Hence, he laments that, "far from being a celebration of the nation, then the novels of the second stage – the postcolonial stage – are novels of delegitimation ... rejecting the nationalist project of the postcolonial national bourgeoisie" (Appiah, 1992:152). That is, the postcolonial novel appeals "to an ethical universal" by challenging the "earlier legitimating narratives" of realist novels (Appiah 1992:152 and 155). Since postcolonial literature identifies its task as that of imploding the narrative form in literature, it posits a "clearing gesture,"[72] yet however for some it does not transcend or go beyond coloniality. In this case we can take Edward Said's *Orientalism*. But, there are those like Homi Bhabha who believe that the idea of an epistemic rupture with the early African novel suggests a complete invalidation of the latter. Thus, forgetting that we cannot simply solve the problem of history by simply ignoring it or by taking it as a non-factor in the formation of subjectivity. In other words, the need by postcolonial (literary) theorists to do away with historical narrative (in either creative or critical writings has proven to be a premature move. With that said, in the following section, we shall, through a reading of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, try to show that a 'speculative realist' approach as proved in this early African novel, rather than the 'speculative idealism' of postcolonial thinkers, went a distance in pointing us towards the direction of a materialist theory of the subject.

Speculative Realism: Historicity and Narrativity in the Early African Novel

As we have noted in the preceding discussion, it was in the field of literary studies, where the concept of postcolonialism became more prevalent (or was mostly entertained, at least from the vantage point I'm reading the concept of postcoloniality, which is not that of the Subaltern Studies Collective of south Asia). Therefore, in this section we shall look at the postcolonial literary critique of the use of narrativity in the canonical forms of African literature and literary theory before looking at its contemporary form as postcolonial discourse theory.[73] It is in the latter that postcolonial writing makes a defined movement into the problematic of the political.

[72] Appiah, A. 1992, p. 152.

[73] As mentioned above, both postcolonial literary theory and discourse theory draw their influences, besides postmodernism, from the early modes of African self-writing in literature.

That is, it is in its contemporary form as postcolonial discourse theory – with criticism being extended to the Fanonian theory of anti-colonialism by the likes of Bhabha and Appiah – that postcolonial writing starts to develop epistemological fields that enable the evolution of strategies of resistance and liberation. Or rather, comes to be more clearly concerned with the rigours of philosophical and theoretical exercise or the fantasies of political insurrection. But since postcolonial writing first identified its task as one of assaulting the 'conventions of realism', to use Appiah again, I shall read Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* with the guidance of literary theorists such as Harry Garuba who are devoted to his works. I intent to show through this reading that a speculative realist epistemology is required in postcolonial literary or discourse theory in order to prevent the reduction of language or history to phonemes or metaphors which do not have a grounding in their materiality. This requires, as Roland Barthes (2009:162) tells us, giving "the problem of realism a frankly semiological (or philosophical) solution."[74] The mistake that postcolonial literary critics make, when critiquing the realist novel is that of failing to read the historicity and narrativity of the early African realist novel as a (re-)production of semiological reality rather than a representation of ideological reality.

The intention here, if I may say, is not to argue for a narrative ontology as the foundation of emancipation but to continue with the conversation on the problematic of history and historiography in the poetics of revolution as it extends from the early African modes of narrative into contemporary discourse theory. And neither is it an attempt at theoretically and philosophically qualifying the role of narrative in the canonical form, rather, it is to argue that narrative, in the early African novel, constituted a body of work that sought to give an analysis of colonialism and although bordering on an affirmation of history its thematics (as counternarrative to the colonial discourses of European writers like Joseph Conrad) were able to show that Africa was not a dark continent as it was made to seem. But this is without disputing the fact that the early African novel remains descriptively and analytically informed and therefore susceptible to the theoretical limitations of a realist narrativization. Like in the

[74] In fact, in the words of Wilson Harris (1981:14), realism must not always be regarded as having a "deterministic dead-end", instead it should also be seen as an "attempt to fuse the actual and fictitious within an asymmetrical …, an art of memory which dislocates, in some measure, an idolatrous plane of realism by immersing us in a peculiar kind of ruined fabric, may help to free us from a consensus of bestiality, monolithic helplessness, monolithic violence."

realm of what Fanon (1967:182) refers to as "descriptive and analytic poetry", it at times fails to translate into a 'literature of revolt'. Postcolonial theorists, such as Bhabha, do not however believe in the foundation of such a Fanonian critique. Instead, for the likes of Bhabha, the revolutionary violence proposed in Fanon's theory of anti-colonialism is limited because it is said to be without a social or a humanism: in the external-interior form of the concept. But for now we shall limit ourselves to the problematic of the postcolonial critique of history and narrative in African literature and a more detailed problematisation of their dismissal of the Fanonian theory of anti-colonialism shall follow later.

Postcolonial literary theorists make the shift from the use of narrative which is peculiar to the early modes of African forms of representation through the postmodernist analytic models of subjectivity. As stated above, they invoke the Romanticist conception of language and the importation of the structural framework of the unity of the subject via a postmodernist and poststructuralist reading of history, textuality, and tradition. Hence, we are now going to look at the place of history and narrative in early African literature, with Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* as our central text. Anti- or postcolonial writing in its canonical form as African literature, emerged from what was referred to as the separate models of Commonwealth Literature or New Writing in English.[75] It is referred to by contemporary postcolonial theorists as canonical counter discourse because it is a discursive practice in which the African writer takes up a character or characters, or the basic assumptions of a canonical text in the dominant discourse. *Wide Sargasso Sea*, in the Black Atlantic World, is an example of such New Writing in English which protests against British sovereignty, over persons, place, culture, language, and unveils those assumptions, subverting the text for postcolonial purposes (Tiffin 1995:97). In South African writing Bhekizizwe Peterson (2000) directs us to the like of B. W. Vilakazi, Sol Plaatjie, and H. I. E. Dhlomo who used narratology to contest colonial marginality. Within African postcolonial literature Chinua Achebe's, *Things Fall Apart*, is one of the early seminal texts. The novel challenges the mode by which African subjects were increasingly made to know themselves under colonial modernity. Achebe's novel went on to influence postcolonial writers who pitted themselves against modes of representation and language within both the Africanist epistemologies and Western epistemologies on Otherness and difference. In other

[75] This is not to mean that the writings of nativist scholars or the Black Atlantic scholars which precede what we identify as anti- or (post)colonial literature is not part of African literature.

words, the novel is a testimony to how African literature questions the assumptions presented in colonial discourse on universal features of language, epistemologies and value systems.

Writing, like orality, was for the early African literates a mechanism for using narrative to give an account of their own histories which had been erased or were being erased through colonialism. The early African modes of discursive enunciation were constituted through the esoteric texts and letters of mission educated Africans which were produced under imperial licence by natives as African missionary literature. However, the potential of subversion in the themes of these African missionary texts was not fully realised because they remained submerged in the language of the master: liberal and romanticist ideology. The possibility of them to fully explore their anti-colonial potential was restrained by the available conditions for the production of that literature. Hence, the literature suffered the constraints of a discourse. This is because, the discourse of African missionary literature, in some ways sought to demythologise and sustain a critical interpretation of an African history invented from its exteriority by the discourses of colonial missionaries.[76] They opposed the negation of African societies imposed first during the slave trade and later during the colonisation and balkanisation of the continent. More so, they were intended at questioning the validity and the relevance of the compensatory negation of the African Other in colonial discourses.

The early African literary text challenges the manner in which blackness was constituted as a discursive mechanisms within Western epistemology and looks at how innovation and tradition mesh to create a new universalism and normativity. And to give a narrative of the histories that were negated in colonial discourse, African literature, "integrated oral traditions and its

[76] As Ntongela Masilela notes in his genealogical analysis of the history of the New African Movement in South Africa, in the 1880s, the publications of the likes of H. I. E. Dhlomo, A. B. Xuma, and many others, relied on missionary publications to the extent that those who were of a modernist view or the *"proselytisers of modernity*", unlike those who held on to a traditionalist one, were the ones who got the most support because their discourse worked to the advantage of the Christianising mission of the Europeans. In fact, for Masilela, to quote him to length here, "with the emergence of African intellectual traditions among the Xhosas in the 1880s, it became possible in the 1920s for Henry Selby Msimang and R.V.. Selope Thema in *Umteteli wa Bantu* to argue that the political practice of the African National Congress must be informed by new modern intellectual thinking and creations that found its point of origin among Xhosa intellectuals forty years earlier. This was at the centre of their dispute with Pixley ka Isaka Seme who wanted the Old to determine and give direction to the New, rather than the New transforming the Old. Although all three were *conservative modernisers*, Msimang and Selope Thema's thinking about history was based on the principle of progress, whereas Prixley ka Isaka Seme, paradoxically seems to have been based on the belief in processes remaining permanently the same." Whilst I don't necessarily support Masilela's modernist view, I believe that it was important to show that the debate about the place of history and narrative in African Studies or in African literature goes a long way back.

expressions (poetry, fixed formulas, anthroponymy, and toponymy) … and began constructing simulacra about the relations existing between present African social organisations and history" (Mudimbe 1988:189). It presented itself as a discourse on African realities under the notion of realism and used the text to question and challenge the discursive authority and subvert the ideologies of Western discourses together with their political and cultural monocentrism. The discourses espoused in early African literary writings provide frameworks for understanding the African experience in the early period of colonialism. Hence, for Mudimbe (1988:178), early African literature must be treated as a discourse, referring to events and signification. Its invention of African history, coincided with "a critical evaluation of the history of the Same" that informs the Western epistemology (Mudimbe 1988:190). It provides the "the processes of promoting constructs" rooted in the African experience and provides "procedures of limiting the meaning and the multiplicity of discourses" on Otherness (Mudimbe 1994:178). The early African novel, just like Jean Rhys's, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, or Aime Cesaire's, *The Tempest*, from the Black Atlantic was structured towards the tendency of writing back to founding imperialist texts. That is, the cultural alienation created through discursive colonialism and notions of identity and authenticity were the main concerns of this anti-colonial literature. Displacement produced alienation of vision and the crisis of self-imagination which the early African writer seeks to retrieve. Postcolonial literature, in the form of the early African novel, concerns itself with the gap that opens between the experience of place and the language available to describe it. It signifies a turn where "elements of the periphery and margin threatened the exclusive claims of the centre they were rapidly incorporated into" (Ashcroft, et al, 1989:4).

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* was for a long time the most cited text in African literary criticism because it was regarded as one of the early novels to set the postcolonial themes of African literature in place and define its field. Achebe is a seminal figure for most African literary scholars and his novel hold a canonical status in literary theory. It contests identities, ideas, and images produced by the discursive structures of colonial discourse. In other words, it contests the inscription of the Other in Western languages and modes of representation. Achebe recognises the importance of speech, presence, and literary representation in sustaining colonial power. He sees the denial of African presence in colonial discourse as the keynote of colonialist ideology. And he contests the role played by European narrative writing in the construction of the 'native' as Other and seeks to fill the absent space occupied by the Other in Western texts through the insertion of African literary genres and mythical narratives in his

writing. *Things Fall Apart* represents "in a condensed form, the long historical process whereby Africa was overwritten by Europe." (Newell 2006:87). It shows numerous scenes of African silence or absence in the presence of European speech or presence. It challenges aspects of cultural erasure presented through colonial discourse and parodies colonial anthropological writing about Africa. For example, the District Commissioner's response to Okonkwo's suicide shows how colonial discourse sets images which overshadow and become the permanent realities which compete with the Other's modes of self-representation. And Achebe, in presenting the character of Okonkwo in such a tragic form seeks to playout these processes of discursive colonialism. The text directly addresses the unspoken or written upon condition of Africa in relation to Europe. It competes in a textual battle with Western writers on Otherness in the process of effacement and re-inscription.

According to JanMohamed, Achebe uses realism to re-create the past and to re-establish its dignity through symbolic means. He tasks himself with "alleviating the problems of historical petrification and catalepsy" (JanMohamed 1983:155). His early novels: that is, *Things Fall Apart* and *The Arrow of God*, "focus on the questions of narrative detail in realism and naturalism" (Jan Mohamed 1983:156). The later, as JanMohamed further notes, "juxtaposes colonialist characters and narrators' perspectives of indigenous cultures, through allusions to the rhetoric of Conrad and Cary" (JanMohamed 1983:156). It is informed and underpinned by the need for restitution of indigenous history and narrative. That is, Achebe's writing is informed by the "dialectics of negative influence" which are constitutive of the experiences of the colonial experience (JanMohamed 1983:160). Hence, for JanMohamed, the advent of colonialism in the Igbo tribe did not completely annihilate their culture and tradition, rather it ended, "the cohesive, totalised, yet contradictory phase of Igbo culture" (1983:168). Their culture and tradition is carried into the new phase by "characters like Obierika and Ezeudu, who are capable of flexibility, compromise, and adaptation" (JanMohamed 1983:168). These are the themes carried forward by the animist characters which we find in *The Arrow of God.*

According to Harry Garuba, *Things Fall Apart* has a "historic significance in relation to the image of Africa in the colonial library and in the making of the counter-image of Africa that currently circulates in institutions of knowledge and knowledge production" (Garuba, 2015:16). As a form of anti-colonial and postcolonial writing, it seeks to oppose the legitimacy of modernity and its authorising paradigms along with the dominant master narratives of knowledge. According to Achebe himself, the novel works to disrupt the literary and

philosophical basis of Western civilization by challenging its imposition onto colonial space and time. And it is on these basis that *Things Fall Apart* contests the aspects of "discursive erasure" that are present in colonial discourse (Garuba 2015:17). This tendency to underline and reject some typical aspects of imperialist literature and conscience is a practice of postmodenist postcolonialism which intends to rupture, disassemble or deconstruct the logic and ideologies of Europe. *Things Fall Apart* is concerned with questions of "discursive authority, that is, the authority or power to define the limits of what is acceptable and normative and, conversely what is non-normative or abnormal or deviant, within a domain or discourse of human activity and thought, or within a social world" (Garuba 2015:20).

At the historical moment of the colonial modern, Achebe's oeuvre "was made to affirm, to prove that African societies were not mindless and savage, but were culturally sophisticated, functioning entities with their own rationalities and codes, and frequently had a philosophy of great depth, value and beauty" (Garuba 2015:19). It rejects the imperialist and pastoral literature of Joseph Conrad, whose novel, *Heart of Darkness,* is one of the many writings within the Western epistemology which shows that there is a point where the ethno-scientist stops and re-creative imagination takes over. *Things Fall Apart* is a cultural nationalist novel operating within the colonial/anti-colonial dichotomy, it occupies the space of African art forms in the historical process of liberation. It emerges from the Self versus Other dichotomy that characterise colonial discourse and it contests notions of primitivist discourse that characterise the Western text on Otherness. Or, it recognises Africa as a narrative construction produced within Western textuality. Chinua Achebe's, *Things Fall Apart*, attempts to read the colonial canon differently and uncover its underlying ideological subtext. It is a novel by an African scholar who questions the racialized degradation of Africa through a reconsideration of its history in order to further erode the production of Eurocentric history.[77]

Achebe's novel shows the struggle for discursive authority faced by the African subject in the anti- or (post)colonial situation. This is why in contemplating the content of his book, the District Commissioner in a resemblance to the practices of colonial discourse theorists says he may have to write only a paragraph on Okonkwo since he has to cut out details because the details on these cultures and traditions do not really matter. According to Gikandi (1996), the

[77] Mamdani, M. 2005, 31

irony of Achebe's novel is that "although the Commissioner has the final word in the fictional text, Achebe the African writer who has appropriated a Western narrative practice, writes the coloniser's words and hence commemorates an African culture which the coloniser thought he had written out of existence. According to Said (1979), the power to narrate or to block other narratives from forming and emerging is very important to culture and imperialism and constitutes one of the main connections between them. Hence, Achebe, to counter this move, inserts himself in the struggle to narrate between the coloniser and colonised, a struggle which is one of the major concerns between culture and imperialism. And, in this case, Achebe seeks to reduce the District Commissioner's narrative to secondary status.

Garuba argues that Achebe sees colonialism as an irreversible tragedy from which the African Other cannot escape through any form of authenticity. And Msika (2008:v) also reads, *Things Fall Apart,* as a text that "shies away from positing absolutes." For these two literary theorists, Achebe acknowledges that printed narratives are potent vehicles for speaking the self and re-interpreting the past. Hence, his novels highlight the notion that "two discursive ideas, both claiming normativity were established in the same social and geographical space" through discursive colonialism (Garuba 2015:21). He avoids both the epistemological codes of modernity and tradition in order to remain open to the areas of alterity and non-transparency. This is why Achebe is at pains to find a means of bridging the gap between languages, of going beyond the logos, the authoritative, self-enclosed, and self-validating discourse of each culture. For him, narrative and art are central to our understanding of the African tradition.

In other words, Achebe seeks to capture the novel from the central tradition and ground it upon an aesthetic of movement and motion and agility which is at the centre of the African concept of existence. He sees the African concept of existence as defined by constant renewals that redefine the imperial concept of the centre in African terms, in terms of slippage: as that blank space where innovation inscribes itself on the ground of tradition. In *Things Fall Apart* and the *Arrow of God*, Chinua Achebe stages a mythical confrontation of modernity and African cosmological systems to show how a new universal was created in the colonial encounter. He shows how language functions as a means of access to these indigenous aesthetical and cosmological systems. For him the value of traditional animist culture is anchored in a single overarching discursive order which is not the order of discursive conflict and contestation that characterise colonial modernity. His subject relies on the ability to occupy multiple positions in order to create a new normativity without letting go of the old. According to Garuba, Chinua

Achebe renders his novels in a trans-generic mode to depict how traditional animism is a singular order that welcomed plurality and multiple perspectives. That is, it is centred on learning a new dance while maintaining the rhythm of the old and how throughout colonialism modernity lived side by side with tradition. And Achebe himself, as Mcdougall notes, refers to this as apart playing in terms of cross-rhythmic interpretation.

Or, as Garuba notes, Achebe uses the protean nature of the symbols of African metaphysics to articulate the idea that "African societies thrive on the recognition and adoption of plural subject positions" (Garuba 2015:21. They draw from symbols of African metaphysics to show how the African subject operates under two discursive orders and considers them normative. Achebe's texts recognise the fact that African expressions of self cannot break free from their endless inscription in these two discursive orders. Such an endless inscription is characteristic of the palimpsest of the post-colonial condition and is preferable to the act of fully making present. It enables the African subject to move between and inhabit two discursive and symbolic orders by what Garuba (2015) refers to as a 'simultaneous interpellation'. These ideas of simultaneous interpellations, as Garuba asserts, are used by Achebe in *Things Fall Apart*, through Obierika who represents the in-between space of signification which escapes fixity. The body of Okonkwo on the other hand represents the insistent presence of one irreducible detail, that of tradition and the fatalistic position it bears on the subject. He symbolises the tragic impossibility of any attempt by Africanist scholars to engage in exercises of cultural retrieval that seek to rescue non-colonised and authentic forms of tradition from the cultural wreckage left by colonialism.

The notion of simultaneous interpellations, for Garuba is used by Achebe to address the epistemological crises created by the Manichean binary of tradition and modernity and to dispense with the simple dichotomies drawn between speech and silence, presence, and absence in the essentialist epistemologies of Africanist discourses and Western discourses. According to Garuba, simultaneous interpellations produce "coeval subjects and coeval subjectivities that challenge the epistemic grounds of conventional dichotomous binary conceptions of modernity and normalisation" (Garuba, 2015:22). Unlike the mirror image of colonial modernity, in postcolonial modernity, the divide between the subject of tradition and that of modernity would "collapse and the same subject would be simultaneously normalised into both worlds while at the same time retaining the fantasy of separation" (Garuba, 2015:25). This argument raises questions about how the African subject is to act in relation to the

subjective positions he occupies within tradition and modernity, that is, the co-presence of two normative orders within his domain.

Garuba uses David Scott's concept of 'problem-spaces' to argue that colonial modernity and post-colonial modernity are two separate discursive contexts and therefore Achebe's oeuvre should be read differently in relation to the changes and transformation of the postcolonial world and the new theoretical and discursive conditions of knowledge production.[78] That is, *Things Fall Apart* should be interpreted differently in relation to the different 'problem-spaces' which characterise the reproduction of the colonial modern and the anti-colonial conditions. In other words, the anti-colonialist nationalist mode within which Achebe's oeuvre was read under colonial modernity should be read as one of the ways that they sought to confront their practical situation. For David Scott the term 'problem-spaces' is a temporal concept which he uses to support the idea that every historical moment has to confront a specific set of questions, concepts, and meanings. Garuba, like Lewis Nkosi (1981), also acknowledge that, Chinua Achebe's oeuvre, like any modern African writing, has its origins in the anti-colonial struggle. Hence, its narrativisation of history can be regarded as one of the modes that aided the struggle for liberation, although at a discursive level. This approach to history, does not necessarily denote the analytic or descriptive realist retention of history and ontology.

This is why we say, during the struggle for liberation, the problematic of the role of history in the formation of emancipatory subjectivity had more to do with the problematic of the political than with that of form. This is also where anti-colonial theorists differ with postcolonial theorists. The latter are more concerned with the role of narrative authority in the African literary text whilst the former are more concerned with how they make the call for revolutionary violence in nationalist discourses and theories of liberation. This is why for the most part, the targets of postcolonial critique are the nationalist intellectuals and politicians, and the Black Radical thinkers of the anti-colonial phase who they say look for an affirmation of past

[78] Although this is not what Garuba implies, we can read David Scott's concept of problem spaces as it is here used by Garuba through Lacan's extension of Aristotelian logic in his definition of the concept of existence. Echoing what is intimated by Garuba, Lacan argues that, using the structure of the argument of existence taken up through mathematical functions, we can understand how the term existence changes meaning in between space and time. So, in that manner what we understand as pre-colonial existence is not the same as colonial existence, hence, colonialism has its own dynamics which demands a certain set of strategies for it to be properly confronted. We can say that it is the 'natural existence', or the 'natural reality', or the 'natural history' qua a mode of sustainance which is assuredly material, or corporeal, or historical which must inform subjectivity and subjectivisation.

experiences. Not that the postcolonial theorists themselves are not concerned with trying to re-think the project of colonial historiography and its implications on the postcolonial present, rather, the problem lies in the methods they prescribe to us and I want here to locate the basis of the impasse in their theory of the subject of liberation. So the next section lays the foundation or is the preliminary phase for our theoretical and philosophical defence of a dialectical materialist theory of the subject of liberation which relies on the conceptual frameworks prescribed in the Fanonian theory of anti-colonialism. On these grounds, the proceeding section shall argue against Homi Bhabha's indictment of Fanon by interrogating the grounds of what he refers to as the betrayal of Fanon "by his view of the Manichean structure of colonial consciousness and its non-dialectical divisions" (Bhabha, 1986:xxxiii).

Towards a 'Poetics of Revolt'

As mentioned above, Bhabha laments what Gates refers to "as the ascendancy of the colonial paradigm" and a move toward a new historicism in black radical theories of colonialism and the theory of anti-colonialism. To use Premesh Lalu as an example, most postcolonial theorists say they criticise the early African literary text for encoding the ideal of Empire in its form of fiction or for investing narrative authority in omniscient or centralised perspectives on history and tradition. Like Bhabha they also argue that both liberation theory and nationalist discourse, in their reading of the colonised subject's dialectical relation to the colonial register, they continue to regard "history as a system of subjection" rather than "as a system of production" (Lalu 2009:13). What I want to argue against are both the methodological, theoretical, and philosophical premises of this kind of criticism captured here in the language of Premesh Lalu in his book, *The Deaths of Hintsa: Post-apartheid South Africa and the Shape of Recurring Pasts*. The centre of my theses in this section is that, by reading history as only a system of production[79] whilst ignoring its subjectivising role, postcolonial discourse theorists fail to appreciate the extent to which the colonial paradigm continue to determine postcolonial subjectivities or fail to account for its (re)production of colonial structures in postcolonial time. For me there are two shortcomings I want to highlight within postcolonial discourse theory and

[79] This is however not a critique of the category of 'production', rather, it is a critique of the phenomenological use of it in Premesh Lalu's sub-altern subject.

these are: the limitations of their critique of Fanon's theory of anti-colonialism; and, their Cartesian and neo-Kantian conceptions of the theory of the subject.

Bhabha, whose work is the main focus of our critique in this chapter, tells us that, as postcolonial discourse theorists what they argue for through their structuralist reading of history as a system of production is a "non-deterministic organisation of the psyche" (Bhabha 1986:xxii). They do so in order to make their subject fit into the order of a transcendental ontology similar to the one we find in Kantian categories. Although Bhabha might not be advocating for a complete divorce with the colonial paradigm, to borrow from Foucault (1989:52), one is correct in saying that he is trying to establish the conditions of the subject of emancipation independently from its historico-material situation, or rather, he is trying to establish the conditions of a Bhabha or Gates are not aware of the fact that, even though postcolonial time concerns "a place in which – a tangled plurality at once superposed and incomplete – of objects is formed and deformed, appears and disappears" (Foucault, 1989:53) and it does not imply the absence of discursive formations and practices qua history and ontology. Which is to say, although emancipatory subjectivity is always constituted as a "state anterior to discourse" this does not necessarily mean that one has to do away which the function of historical determinations. For now, my defence for the materialist paradigm of historiography is not informed by the intention to look for what Foucault (1989:53), again, refers to as the "intersection of things and words" or to position discourse as that which intervenes in the space between reality and language. Rather, I intend to look at their loosening of the embraces of history and ontology which allows for the emergence of the subject of the anti-colonial struggle which can open the possibilities of a politics of liberation. This process "defines not the dump existence of a reality nor the canonical use of a vocabulary but the ordering of objects" in relation to their practical situations or social conditions (Foucault 1989:54).[80]

Bhabha's, Lalu's, and Gates' structuralist proposition that history should be read as a system of production and not as a system of subjection is limited in the sense that it sees the self-reflexive or transcendental subject as responsible for the project of the anti-colonial struggle.

[80] To reference Foucault (1989:54) at length, such a subject takes seriously the problematic "of a work that modifies its own form, displaces its own data, and reveals, at the end of the day, a quite different task. A task that consists of not – of no longer – treating discourses as groups of signs (signifying elements referring to contents or representation) but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak."

Even though colonialism was a violent event, for this trio, to put it in the words of Bhabha it was never a "violation of human essence" hence historicism (whether of the colonial register or the pre-colonial register) can be challenged through an "an agonising performance of self-images" (Bhabha 1986:xxv). Hence, we argue that, postcolonial discourse theorists see history-writing as a science of language not of as a form of speculative realism as we have tried to argue above in our reading of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. What we are trying to emphasise through this retrieval of the narrative mode in historiography is the point that although in social theory it has become axiomatic that narrative is a limited method of analysing history and historiography, this should not imply the ineffectvity of the colonial paradigm in postcolonial time. Postcolonial discourse theorists are wrong in believing that it is the speaking subject or the self-reflexive subject who can re-write, subvert, or turn the discursive conditions of dominance into grounds of intervention.[81] Rather, it is the subject of real historical materiality, both in substance and function, as symptom and diagnoses which should be regarded as the genus of the process of resistance and liberation. This is not to say that history is a condition of human freedom, but it is to say that, history is what structures the process of revolution itself or history is what creates the desire for freedom. That is, antagonism or contradiction, materiality or experience are the necessary conditions not the end goals of the emancipatory process.

Although postcolonial theorists recognise the fact that the subject of resistance and liberation is both complicit and implicit in past and future worlds, it is through the paradigm of the latter that they read the subject's status in the present world from. They enter into the debate on the problematic of the subject of liberation through the creative text (fiction) and they also identify creative revisionism or reflexive subjectivisation as emancipatory methods of reading into colonial history. This point emerges from their reading of the deconstructionist and post-structuralist theories of writing, language of textuality and discourse, difference and enunciative modalities. For them writing is a quality of the speaking-subject who is able to reveal through conjuncture the phenomenological meaning and existential meaning of the True-Word. That is, postcolonial theorists regard writing as a quality of the self-reflexive

[81] History for them is generated at the two levels of the speaking-subject and the Truth. The speaking-subject in Bhabha's postcolonial discourse theory generates truths or probes the conditions of the true from the structure of self-image or self-identity. In Lacanese, one can say that Bhabha suggests to us the performativity of human freedom is generated from the Imaginary-Symbolic loci of subjectivity not from the order of the Real.

subject who is able to retrieve the 'said' or what has already been synthesised into language, and through scientific mechanisms, apply it back into experience. This is what we can refer to as the function of interpretation in the Cartesian cartography. I shall return to this discussion on the convergences of postcolonial theory with the many diverse postmodernist and post-structuralist positions in the last section of this chapter, this is where I shall critique Bhabha's interpretation of the Foucauldian formula of discourse theory and the Derridean deconstructionist ideas of logocentricism. But for now, let us return to Bhabha's critique of the Fanonian structure of the 'Manichean delirium' as the condition of colonial relations and his notion of the poetics of revolt as an anti-colonial paradigm.

The position Bhabha holds against the Fanonian theory of anti-colonialism is a familiar position amongst postmodernist postcolonial theorists. Although they acknowledge the antagonistic and ambivalent status of postcolonial time due to its implicitness in the colonial register they lament the call for revolutionary violence in what Bhabha (1994:191) refers to as the "discourses of cultural dissent and social antagonism" qua the 'poetics of revolt' suggested in Fanon's theory of anti-colonialism. Not that Fanon needs any defending against Bhabha's critique on his position on national consciousness and ideology or revolutionary violence for that matter, for he already anticipates or deals with this problematic in what Gates (1991:460) through Benita Parry sarcastically refers to as Fanon's premature poststructuralism (which Bhabha in the most Sartrean way claims to be trying to bring into maturity). In the attempt to debunk the effectivity of historicism in postcolonial theories of emancipation, Bhabha unnecessarily ventures into a critique of the liberationist theories of the anti-colonial phase, accusing them of failing to acknowledge the transhistoric nature of identity and difference. Of course, a transhistorical logos (in its fantasmatic or transcendental form) is not what the liberationist theories are advocating for, perhaps that position could be assigned to their counterparts; the nationalist ideologues. I want here to briefly retain Fanon's critique of the nationalist intellectuals through JanMohamed's critique of Bhabha's lamentation of Fanon on this position.

When locating their positions in the Fanonian liberationist discourse and their treatment of the material and ideological legacies of colonialism, Gates (1991:465) says "if JanMohamed made of Fanon a Manichean theorist of colonialism as absolute negation …, Bhabha clowned from Fanon's *theoria,* another Third World poststructuralist." The essence of Gates' identification and differentiation of these theorists (within Fanon) is that "the problematic feature of

JanMohamed's theorising is what critics describe as an overtly mimetic[82] conception of oppositional literature" (Gates 1991:464). And the response of those referred to as 'Manichean theorists' to such accusations is that, postcolonial discourse theorists, through their Cartesian notions of the science of language and speech, they underestimate the implications of ideology and history in colonialist writings and the lived experience of the colonised black subject. What Gates and Bhabha identify as self-representations or 'postcolonial contramodernities' are not strong enough instruments with which to confront the colonial paradigm or dislodge its structures of re-production. To borrow from Aijaz Ahmad (1992:172), my theses is that, the "inventory of colonial traces" is not something that can be displaced through the inventory of the unity of the subject or transcendental models of language and freedom. Rather, they lie in the incision of rupture into the antagonistic structure of the 'Manicheanism' of colonial relations.

In other words, the functions of colonial power cannot be disrupted or limited through the "performativity of the speech-act … (or) its enunciative modalities of time and space" as Bhabha (1994:188) may like us to believe. Before I move to a more substantive theoretical and philosophical critique of the Bhabhaian postmodernist postcolonial strategies of emancipation, as promised above, let me briefly outline JanMohamed (1985) and Simon Gikandi's (1996) critique of Bhabha's reading of the colonial conjuncture. Since for Bhabha, the colonial and postcolonial conditions are defined by the ambivalence of the traditions of irony, mimicry, and repetition this tells us that, for him, power and discourse are not entirely possessed by the coloniser. That is, for him, the minimal rationality possessed by the colonised subject provides him or her with a position of reading the categories of modernity and their negation. It enables the colonised subject to see that all modes of colonial signification rest in a position of ambivalence which allows for their partial mutation through the axis of metonym, writing, symbolic textuality or textual productivity, or speech acts and performativity qua the strategies of desire.

For Bhabha, the colonial modern and postcolonial situations are moments of discursive and affective contiguity and as such there is no antagonism, conflict, or "recognition of master and

[82] This is what I shall refer to as Bhabha's second order mimesis, that of "Aristotelian mimetic time," which he identifies with the place of the ethical, "the third locus, the intersubjective realm," the realm of universal humanism, or the general from which particularities are sublimated (Bhabha 1994:190-1).

slave, it is a matter of the enslaved master and the unmastered slave" (Bhabha 1994:131). What he is alluding to here is the idea that, since there is no higher unity recognising the master and slave relation, it is thus "not the Colonialist Self or the Colonised Other, but the disturbing distance in-between that constitutes the figure of colonial Otherness" (Bhabha 1986:xxviii). This however, for him, does not mean that this 'in-between distance' is by any chance structured by an antagonism, rather, it is structured like a linguistic system of differentially related but substantiated elements. According to Bhabha, the colonial stereotype is a fetishistic mode of representation or a system of "metonymies of presence" which are only realisable through signification. And this moment of signification, as he further says, emerges from the "colonial encounter between … white presence and its black semblance" (Bhabha 1994:90). The attempt to identify the colonial situation as devoid of Master/Slave power relations works toward displacing the subject from historiography and it allows Bhabha's subject of to escape the trauma engendered by the colonial originary scene and to therefore avoid dealing with the antagonisms and contradictions that are constitutive of this scene. It also allows him not to belabour himself with the efforts to show how the historical occasions of slavery and colonialism are products of these strategies of splitting that he identifies with the potential of unsettling colonial authority or colonialism's originary myths.

As Gikandi observes, Bhabha forgets that signification is already contained in the categories he seeks to deconstruct. If we are to respond to Bhabha with the same Derridean notion of signification and imagination he relies on, one can say, despite the phenomenological or structuralist current in Derrida's theory of deconstruction and although not rooted in the material but in the transcendental, the significations and imaginations of his subject are of the acoustics of materiality or are of phonic material, i.e. the energetics of materiality. With regards to the relationship between imagination and materiality, Derrida, through his extension of the Husserlian notion of epigenetics, notes that, "it is a powerful agent for creating, as it were, a second nature out of the material supplied to it by nature" (Derrida, 1978:6). For Derrida, in this case, signification, or rather, imagination, although an "operative concept", it is also a "thematic concept" but for Bhabha on the other hand it is only operative and it allows him to bracket the political or material contexts of culture and history as a humanistic closure. And as a strategy of emancipation, the categories of signification and imagination, taking from the phenomenological current they are given by Derrida, allows Bhabha to systematically avoid an analysis of the systems of domination, manipulation, exploitation, and disenfranchisement that

are constitutive of colonial modernity. It makes him forget that the historical reality of colonial modernity is the one which produces the 'Black' figure as an alienated being, or rather, as a subject which due to the phenomenology of the colonial socio-symbolic order is unable to subsist in the moment of 'the verb to-be' or to create, as Derrida has it, "a second nature of the material". And he is too quick to forego the conditions of social history (in its material rather than phenomenological form) and the power relations that structure colonial relations. According to JanMohamed (1985:63), Bhabha forgets that the dominant "model of power and interest-relations in all colonial societies is the Manichean opposition between the putative superiority of the European and the supposed inferiority of the native." His theory of history fails to acknowledge that the material and discursive antagonisms between the coloniser and colonised are impossible to explain outside the representations of a profound conflict. It downplays the function and circumvents the dense history of the material conflict between the Europeans and natives in order to focus on colonialism as if it existed in a vacuum.

The idea of history as a humanistic closure that Bhabha presents treat coloniality as though it were an innocent and naïve discourse. It fetishizes the contradictions of colonial discourse as the problematics of an ambivalence and an indeterminacy which place the coloniser and the colonised on the same plane. JanMohamed reminds Bhabha that any sign of ambivalence in the structure of colonial modernity itself is a product of deliberate, subconscious, and imperialist duplicity operating through the Manichean allegory. These allegorical extensions of the Manichean delirium under colonial modernity dominated and still dominate every facet of sociosystemic relations that structures our concrete situation. The historico-ontological structure of the colonised subject has been threatened by the elements of these allegorical extensions; the seemingly unthreatening "complex articulation of the tropes of fetishism (metaphor and metonym)" that Bhabha (1994:77) refers to. They invoke feelings of revolutionary redemption; "the originary anguish"[83] of the 'poetics of revolt' which Bhabha is trying to do away with in his theory of the social imaginary. What we see in JanMohamed and Gikandi's critique is a true template of how one is supposed to show the limitations of Bhabha's lamentation of the Fanonian theory of anti-colonialism, a lamentation which extends from a multiplicity of theoretical and philosophical positions which encompass the fields of linguistics, psychoanalysis, and phenomenology. In a sense, this is how one can show how he

[83] Bhabha, H. 1994, p. 179.

manipulates these traditions in ways that enable him to avoid the horrors of the practical situation of coloniality. What he takes from these fields, since they all merge within the field of linguistics, is their reading of the theory of language metaphor from the level of structure or system.

Beyond the 'Poetics of Logical-Truth'

Bhabha (1994:186) suggests that, for it to assume an emancipatory strategy or represent social contradiction and antagonism, "rebel consciousness" must constitute itself as the "repetition of the One" rather than an expression of the Zero qua the 'multiple without-One' or trace of the unnameable. An emancipatory strategy articulated through such a mode of movement, as he says, in what was earlier referred through Gates (1991:461) as his "correction of Fanon's own citation of Lacan in *Black Skins, White Masks*," is aimed at the "historical development of a subjectivity manifestly directed towards the rediscovery of a truth which lies in the order of symbols" (Bhabha 1994:191). What we are encountering here through our critique of Bhabha are the thematics of the protracted discussion on the materialist theory of the subject of the anti-colonial struggle that shall belabour us for the rest of the thesis. Here I shall only discuss these thematics in relation to Bhabha's critique of Fanon, a more qualified theoretical and philosophical analysis of these outlines shall follow in the chapters remaining to this thesis. For now, we shall continue to show how the moment of contingency within which Bhabha locates the colonial encounter describes a situation where the subject of emancipation, as he says, "seems 'manifestly directed towards the order of symbols in the social imaginary" (Bhabha 1994:191). That is, the postmodernist postcolonial subject is directed toward the search for a phenomenological meaning rather than the historical meaning which Bhabha would say is associated with the Fanonian theory of anti-colonialism.

The central thesis of Bhabha's argument is to debunk the theoretical foundations of the Fanonian paradigm of the 'poetics of revolt'. This he supposes can be articulated through the paradigms of a 'poetics of truth' which expresses an "antagonistic agency functioning in the time lag of sign/symbol" (Bhabha 1994:193). The poetics of truth, as Bhabha presents them, in contrast to the Fanonian poetics of revolt, are meant to develop a theory of emancipation through the deconstructionist theory of the sign/symbol and seeks to point the revolutionary subject towards the manifestation of a truth that lies "within the metaphoricity of language" (Bhabha 1994:191). That is for Bhabha, the temporal break associated with the processes of

mimetic ambivalence in colonial modes of representation enables the sign and the symbol to overlap and to be indeterminately articulated by the very being it seeks to subsume. This is how the genealogy of the subject of postcolonial emancipation, for Bhabha, is embedded in the realm of signs and symbols. The incision of the sign or symbol into 'rebel consciousness', as Bhabha (1994:193) intimates, is "not similar to what Frantz Fanon describes as the knowledge of the practice of action" or poetics of revolt which, to borrow from Kristeva (1986), rely on the rhythmicity of the "semiotic *chora*," a poetics of revolution sutured by a *thetic* condition produced in the death drives generated by material situations.

For Bhabha, through the function of the sign or the categories of textuality, the Manicheanism of colonial relations is said to "come to be replaced with truths that are only partial, limited and unstable" (Bhabha 1994:193). If the subject of resistance and liberation presents itself as alienated within the realm of the sign, it then becomes able to articulate elements of a universal humanism. The incision of the truth into the social order or social discourse prepares the subject of emancipation for the uncanny double of history. According to Bhabha (1994:194), this doubling of history takes place "through the cut and thrust of the symbol, the signifying conditions of contingency, the night-time of love." It is an effect of the "seizure of the sign" and it displaces the subject of emancipation into a "supplementary movement that exceeds" the limits of the Real.[84] As a "symptomatic moment" of the sign, the moment of rupture in what, for Bhabha, would be an agonistic articulation of history transforms the materiality of the present into a discursive space that inscribes the event. Bhabha, as we have noted earlier, draws from and at times gives an unqualified reading of the deconstructionist and poststructuralist theories which link the project of emancipation with the phenomenological meaning of discourse.

What Bhabha presents to us is the idea of a decentred subject of symbolic or phallic suture. This is a subject that downplays the role of materiality in the processes of subject formation. It is from this perspective that we can come to discover how Bhabha, like most of his contemporaries in the field of African critical philosophy who, even in their reading of African ritual-myth as we shall see in the case of V. Y. Mudimbe, fail to escape the epistemic paradigms of Western social theory and its inversions of a negative theology. Perhaps Bhabha, as Ornete

[84] Bhabha, H. 1994, p. 193.

Coleman does with Derrida, needs to be reminded that innovation is not invention, or even if they were to mean one thing, it doesn't mean that they should be understood as word(s), rather they should be understood as sound-action: or expression of a voided and emptied materiality.[85] The idea of innovation or invention as word(s) is an aspect of Western social theory which relies on the 'repetition of the One' in order to confront the practical condition or situatedness of being. Hence, like Derrida and all theorists of the messianic figure, Bhabha also locates subjectivity in the temporal break of the sign. The postcolonial subject for Bhabha (1994:206), as a subject of the historical event or 'evental truth' (in its phenomenological form), through symbolic suture, becomes "a site of cultural hybridity rather than a form of negative consciousness" which engenders revolutionary action.

What we witness in Bhabha's version of postcolonial discourse theory is at times an unqualified interpretation of the Derridian theory of the sign or the Deleuzean theory of desire and the theocentric paradigms of freedom and liberation they point towards. In his effort to discredit the grounds for what Adrian Johnston (2007) refers to as "the transcendental materialist theory of the subject" of liberation, which in our case is a little close to what is suggested in the Fanonian theory of anti-colonialism, Bhabha (1994:204) would tell us that the Fanonian theory of anti-colonialism "create(s) the possibility of a war of nerves and sporadic guerrilla action." For Bhabha as is for Derrida and Deleuze, an immanentist genesis of the process of emancipation articulates history as though it were "an ontological cast"[86] similar to the Hegelian idea of the Absolute Spirit. Although one may agree with the claims of such a statement at face value, it is upon discovering that it is directed at the Fanonian theory of liberation or materialist theory of the subject of the struggle for liberation that they would make a retreat into. The strategy of emancipation he proposes is not moulded after or by the "material

[85] Coleman reminds Derrida in an interview "about his views on composition, improvisation, language, and racism" that after failing to find help from a psychiatrist with regards to the racial violence he suffered, he "checked out all the books possible and imaginable on the human brain" and he made one striking discovery that the "brain was only a conversation" (Derrida 1997:326). Coleman tells Derrida that this discovery made him "understand that the fact of thinking and knowing doesn't only depend on the place of origin" qua language as speech (Derrida 1997:326). Whilst Derrida insists on the idea that "there is a repetition … that is intrinsic to the initial creation – that which compromises or complicates of improvisation" Coleman reminds him that "repetitition is as natural as the fact that the earth rotates" (Derrida 1997:323). He makes it clear to Derrida that whilst in language they may be concerned with the question of repetition of origin, sound unlike language "has a much more democratic relationship to information, because you don't need the alphabet (or place of origin) to understand music" (Derrida 1997:19-20).

[86] Bhabha, H. 1994, p.219.

entities of objective reality," rather, it emanates from an "external imposition" of the Symbol into the Real (Jonhston 2007:1). The Real in this sense is cast as a realm of "natural animality" out of which the subject must emerge. Yet however this emergence is credited to the power of the Symbolic which descends upon the Real and thereby help it into ascension.

Like writing which the deconstructionists identify with the translation and interpretation of the Word rather than experience, the speaking-subject qua the subject of emancipation (or enunciation) who is primarily located outside or prior to the statement assumes the Word before translating it into speech. In Bhabha's 'poetics of truth', writing, like the process of emancipation, is a mastery of the word by the speaking subject. Drawing from Barthe's semiology, Bhabha (1994:179) tells us that the subject of emancipation is "an enunciative space" which opens up to the possibilities of the true by preparing its body as an event-site. It positions itself as a beyond theory which he thinks surpasses the limitations of a radical historiography. That is, for Bhabha (1994:179), "language metaphor opens up a space where a theoretical disclosure is used to move beyond theory" (Bhabha 1994:179). This "beyond theory" of the postcolonial enunciation, as he further tells us, "is itself a liminal form of signification that creates a space for the contingent, indeterminate articulation of social experience" (Bhabha 1994:179). And, as a writing form or an ambivalent form of mimicry, he impliedly tells us it does not require the mastery of the word since the word itself already pre-exists it.

In support of what we have earlier referred to, through Lalu (2009:13), as the postcolonial conception of "history as a system of (phenomenological) production" or what Bhabha, referring to Barthes, says is the innovation of textual strategies of;

> "writing aloud … which is neither the expressive function of language as authorial intention or generic determination nor meaning personified. It is similar to the excio repressed by classical rhetoric, and is the corporeal exteriorisation of discourse. It is the art of guiding one's body into discourse, in such a way that the subject's accession to, and erasure in, the signifier as individuated is paradoxically accompanied by its remainder, an afterbirth, a double" (Bhabha 1994:184).

Perhaps Bhabha here should have said, it is the corporeal interiorisation or the generic process (instead of saying exteriorisation) of discourse because his subject evolves into action after the suture of (or by) the symbolic/signifier. This is because what we witness through his strategies of emancipation is an advocacy for the transformation of the Real or materiality by the Symbolic or a transcendental Truth-Idea, not by actionality qua a materialist (re)production of

historical pasts. Like the Derridian "notion of supplementarity"[87] which he invokes, the transformation of the Real by the Symbolic suggests the sublation of experience by essence. That is, the phantasmagorical nature of essence does not allow the quasi-substances or energetics emanating from the material itself to be fixed and become determinate, as we shall see in Badiou's theory of the Truth-Event which he advances through his notion of generic procedure to be discussed later. Contrary to the epigenetic formula of Badiou, the body, in Bhabha's theory of emancipation, assumes a phenomenological status through the multiplicity of the Sign/the One/the Signifier.

That is, what Bhabha suggests through the Barthian notion of 'the death of the author' is the sublation of the subject of the order of the Real by the Symbolic order. Bhabha's subject assumes the position of a reflecting reflection and all its modes of self-apprehension are here configured into the metamorphisis of history in the sense that this metamorphosis is reduced to the actionality qua speech of the subject. From this angle of critique we can see that the idea of an "Aristotelian mimetic time" suggested by Bhabha is an attempt at recentering the subject of the Real as a speaking subject of the Symbolic or transcendental Truth-Idea. It supposes that the speaking-subject has some level of authority because it is itself determined by some privileged object which appears in the form of a transcendental truth. However, unlike the *petit object a* of the Lacanian algebra which emerges from the primal separation of the subject from the Real, this object is a resemblance of the infinite. The fantasy of the subject of postcolonial emancipation must depend on the *object a* of the Real or existence, not the *object a* of essence or *object a* as the 'Master Signifier' in the form of a disenchanted 'big Other'. Its ideas of repetition or transference must explain the movement of the Real or the substance of the in-existent. This substance cannot be that of a life constituted through the order of the Symbolic, rather, it can only be the expression of a life constituted through a form of death which is enacted ar the level of the order of the Real.

Bhabha misses this point because the Lacan he deploys against Fanon, to use Adrian Johnston (2007), is the Lacan of the "quasi structuralist phase" during the 1950s or of the Real 2, to use Bruce Fink. Adrian Johnston (2007) is one of the contemporary philosophers who have provided a good genealogy of Lacan's psychoanalytic subject and Badiou's subject of the

[87] Bhabha, 1994, p. 179.

Truth-Event in its material form. If we were to rely on Johnston's distinction of the earlier (of the 1950s) and later Lacan (of the 1970s), we could see how Bhabha is heavily indebted to the Lacan of the 1950s who tells us that a true subject of emancipation "requires supplementing dialectical materialism with transcendental materialism by insisting upon the existence of certain sorts of irreversible alienation (such as the Lacanian notion of the constitution of the subject in and by the alienating mediation of signifiers)" (Johnston, 2007:1). He ignores the Lacan of the 1970s who shows us that "what allows for these (signifiers or) Imaginary-Symbolic structures to take root in the first place" (Johnston 2007:1). The 1950s Lacan that he uses against Fanon's theory of colonialism relies on the idea that there is an eternal 'big Other'/a 'Master Signifier' responsible "for transubstantiating an organic being with instincts and needs into a speaking being with drives and desires" (Johnston 2007:1). Were he to use this later Lacan, probably, he could have seen that there is "a series of somewhat cryptic remarks (which) testifies to Lacan's awareness of the need to redefine nature itself in order to account for why human nature is predisposed to being thoroughly altered by the denaturalising mediation of socio-symbolic structures" (Johnsotn 2007:2). The Lacan of the 1970s locates the genesis of subjectivity in what Fink (1995) refers to as the Real 1 (a Real which appears prior to the institution of the Symbolic order), whilst the Lacan of the 1950s locates subjectivity in the Real 2 (the Real which appears after the Symbolic order). [88]The latter presents "a theory of the subject that fails to finish a basic delineation of human nature as the precondition for the genesis of the subject" and the former takes the conflict-ridden Real as "the very conditions of possibility for the genesis of the subject, for the ontogenetic emergence of a being situated on the plain of antiphusis" (Johnston 2007:1).

Conclusion

What we have sought to outline above are the foundations and limitations of Bhabha's Lacanian critique of Fanon's theory of anti-colonialism. And we have also shown how his idea of suture of the Real by the Symbolic explains the 'temporal process of the transmission of rebel agency' from antagonism to agonism. Bhabha's theory of postcolonial emancipation may appear radical when compared to the negative theology of the Hegelian type or the positivist

[88] According to Fink (1995:27), in Lacanian psychoanalysis, "there are two different levels of the real: (1) a real before the letter, that is, a presymbolic real, which, in the final analysis, is but or hypothesis (R1), and (2) a real after the letter which is characterised by impasse and impossibilities due to the relations among elements of the symbolic order itself (R2), that is, which is generated by the symbolic."

logic of the Kantian type, a historiography of the ethnophilosophical type, or the scientific humanism of the Cartesian type but when confronted with the theoretical rigours of a materialist theory of the subject which is present in the Fanonian theory of anti-colonialism it crumbles. So, what we have tried to point out through this critique is the fact that, postcolonial theory, is not a theory with which one can dislodge the 'Radical Historiography' of the Fanonian type. And we have seen that, although posited toward an intentionality, the directives of Bhabha's theory of the subject are those of a causal function or of a function with a cause, i.e., a cause of the Symbolic-Imaginary order. That is, his subject, like the messianic figure of Judeo-Christian eschatological redemption, is the subject of the return and it symptomatically expresses the "fantasm or simulacrum" of an invisible 'Big Other' qua the 'Master Signifier'. It is a subject, to use Derrida's terms, of the "structuralist passion", a subject who reproduces "a solicitude and solicitation of Being, a historico-metaphysical threatening of foundations" (Derrida, 1978:3). That is, it is Being in its scientificity which brings Bhabha's subject into existence, hence, he says, "it is the realm of representation and the process of signification that constitutes the space of the political" (Bhabha 1994:190).

So we can end this examination of Bhabha's postcolonial theory by stating that, that which is supposed as temporal in his conception of the "mode of existence of the political" is the phantasmagoric ethical Truth or re-presencing of a transcendental form of being-qua-being. Drawn from "Arendt's Aristotelian's mimesis"[89], someone known for being a foremost critique of Fanon, his model of 'reification' or 'repetition' is steeped toward the sublation of the antagonisms of the Real which he supresses in the Symbolic-Imaginary order.[90] Although I have here provided a psychoanalytic critique of Bhabha's rebuttal of Fanon, this critique is applicable to postcolonial theory in general and their extension of deconstructionist or postructuralist concepts. They commonly develop their theories of the subject of emancipation from a structural linguistic reading of linguistics, psychoanalysis, or phenomenology. It is for

[89] Bhabha fails to acknowledge that the "effect of mimicry is a camouflage of an in-itself that is behind" performativity or enunciative modalities" (Gikandi 1996:143).

[90] This is why for him, in the colonial situation, "a contingent, borderline experience opens up *in-between* coloniser and colonised" (Bhabha 1994:206). Such an assumption as JanMohamed (2005:63) reminds him, neglects the fact that the dominant "model of power and interest-relations in all colonial societies is the Manichean opposition between the putative superiority of the European and the supposed inferiority of the native."

these reasons that I have, in the next two chapters, thought it relevant to examine the field of the theory of hermeneutics or theory of interpretation as the generative ground for the postmodernist postcolonialist models of emancipatory subjectivity. In these chapters I argue that, although postcolonial theory tries to surpass the limits of the principles of hermeneutics, it remains bounded in its assumptions of meaning, reflection, understanding, knowledge, or explanation. In other words, in order to address the problematic of the meaning of freedom and experience of finitude qua the question of emancipation, it moves to the phenomenon of the doublet supposed in either the 'hermeneutics' of symbols and myth, 'hermeneutic' phenomenology, existential 'hermeneutics', psychoanalytic 'hermeneutics' which all have their "roots in a reflective philosophy" (Ricoeur 1981:35). So, the next chapter, as an underhand to our defence of the materialist theory of anti-colonialism, it looks at the explicitness of the argument towards the delineation of subjectivity as an effect of the monistic-One in the theory of hermeneutics. I say here, underhand, because the philosophical developments in the history of hermeneutics, both methodically and conceptually, have been extended by postcolonial theorists to the reading of symbolism in mythical, ritual, or aesthetic modes of expression. And despite their variations, all models of hermeneutics consider subjectivity as an effect of some externality acting upon being and non-being. Thus said, in our continuing problematisation of the postcolonial paradigms of emancipation, we shall make a detour through the hermeneutic network to flash out the elements, or rather, unearth the founding premises of the theory of the subject in postcolonial theory. In other words, to account for the epistemological basis on which the reflexive subject is produced in postcolonial theory. Both as not a subject of the material substratum of experience but of Truth and Rationality, or rather, Truth transformed into (incorporeal) Rationality.

Chapter Three

Interlude: Hermeneutic Noetics and No-Logy

"Poetry, to echo Louis Zukofsky, is an art whose lower limit is check, upper limit enchantment. Or is it upper limit check, lower limit enchantment? Poetry is the art of having both – horizontally or, if not each variably above and below the other. Our recent turn toward promoting enchantment want to forget lyric's etymology, as though the art might arrive at a point where there were no strings attached. But strings are always attached, even in the most thorough going doubt of disenchantment" (Mackey, 2015:xii).

Introduction

The common mistake made by most postmodernist postcolonial theorists is that of trying to substantialise the subject with external elements and categories of the symbolic and that of conceptualising its theory of the subject through the phallocentric categories of the Cartesian subject. They use reflective axioms or enunciative models subjectivity as forms of full-speech which come in the aftermath of the (de-)substantialisation of material forces by external forces acting upon being and the world of things and objects. The model for the logic of resistance and liberation they propose demands the infinite qualification of the finite, or rather the disqualification or substitution of the finite for the infinite cause as both genesis and foreclosure. Through an improvisation of Nathaniel Mackey (2015:xii) and Adrian Johnston (2007:36 and 41), one can say, instead of echoing the subjectivity of the *'lower limit' of check*, which requires taking the properties of the "Real of ground (past)" and the "reality of existence (present)" as "conditions of possibility for the ontognesis" of the subject of resistance and liberation, the substantialisation it echoes is that of the '*upper limit' of disenchantment and re-enchantment'* which requires the deployment of the expressions of the categories of the Symbolic-Imaginary or the Imaginary-Symbolic or *concept* into the structures of the Real. Hence, they fail to develop a theory of the subject which relies on the qualities of the "horror of nature", the death gnosis, or the "hideous necessity of nature's transient nature" (Johnston 2007:37). It is in the realm of the natural-Real or transient nature that the dialectic of the death drive is set in motion. The natural or the 'barred Real' (as neither the a priori nor the a posteriori of the dialectical-logic of the death drive), as Johnston (2007:41) tells us, "due to its dissatisfying instability and desire provoking contradictions catalyses the sudden event of a gesture of negation." It is the originary condition (of death) which sunders or quilts or jolts the subject into the ruptural violence of revolutionary action. Unlike the symbolic to which proponents of the hermeneutic model of interpretation bestow meaning, knowledge,

explanation, or understanding, the natural or the plane of concrete operations or the concrete situation, for us, like Kristeva's (1986:93) notion of the semiotic chora functions "as a distinctive mark, trace, precursory sign, proof, engraved or written sign, imprint, trace, figuration" and is the quasi-originary ground of subjectivity and subject formation. However, contrary to this assumption, the theory of hermeneutics which we are going to problematise structures its interpretations of the subject in relation to its functions within the field of scientific knowledge and transcendental models of the Truth-Idea. That is, instead of taking the condition of non-being as the catalysis of the emancipatory subject, its proponents see the subject as a historical being capable of subordinating truth to that historicity. This is the historicity of a meaning, a monism, or a totality which is presented in an onto-phenomenological form which, as an ethical variant, threatens the potential for both political action and guerrilla action. This is the meaning of a Truth or Time deposited onto corporeality which gives eternal validity to the subject and enables him or her to conquer experience and space.

The language 'object' or the word takes precedence in the hermeneutic interpretation of meaning embedded in symbols, myth, or fables. As Derrida himself says, it allows for the "phenomenological extension of the concept of meaning" into the material categories of existence (Derrida 1981). In other words, the hermeneutic theory of interpretation reads "meaning as an object of logical or linguistic enunciation" which precedes both action and actionality (Derrida 1981:30). Symbolic meaning, in these hermeneutics of the circle, is regarded as that which reconciles the "break between phenomenological attitude and naturalistic attitude" (Ricoeur 1981:115). Not that this reconciliation takes into factor the role of the contradictory and antagonistic natural or the excess of the remainder, rather, it supposes the displacement of the "naturalistic-objectivist attitude" by "phenomenological attitude" (Ricoeur 1981:114). That is, it relies on the bringing of experience into language or the submerging of existence by structure. And, it is this variant of hermeneutics and its aspects of structural dialectics that postmodernist postcolonial theorists rely on for the interpretation of meaning concealed in symbols, myth, and fables. Phenomenological meaning, for them, as the "unsurpassable presupposition of hermeneutics"[91] suggests that, the subject as an effect of the

[91] Ricoeur, P. 1981, p. 101.

suture by the Symbolic appears as barred, broken, and not an identity with itself.[92] That is, for them, the subject as a non-identity, requires the support of the 'Big Other' who although appearing in an ephemeral form is capable of subsuming all the functions of experience and sensuality. Thus, in the hermeneutic interpretative model, the Lacanian Big Other is constitutive of the subject's ontology, its metaphysics, myths, symbols, systems of signs, or codes. The Big Other like the subject appears in an ephemeral form because, as language, it cannot interpret itself, which means that the speaking subject qua the scientific or interpretative subject has to be invoked in order to initiate the process of signification and transformation.

The theory of hermeneutics conceptualises the subject as a historical entity which is able to subject the field of truth to that of historicity or a structural dialectics which seeks to subordinate the dynamics of the real. It conceptualises the subject as a pre-reflexive entity "constituted by certain presuppositions" prior to its emergence as a consciousness (Williams 2001:6). In its phenomenological variants, the theory of hermeneutics suggests the return of Greek concepts as utilisable models for grasping meaning embedded in mythologies, cosmogonies, symbols, and elements of the conscious-unconscious psyche. This is what Derrida implies in his extension of Nietzsche where he delimits the task of postmodernism as one of deconstructing metaphysical concepts. The theory of hermeneutics only applies the methods of aesthetic and historico-ontological interpretation in order to avoid the mistake of presupposing the creative subject as a transcendental, self-knowing, and non-historical entity. Hence as Gadamer (1976:230) observes, it basis its framework of understanding on the "Aristotelian concept of analogy" whilst continuing with the "Aristotelean criticism of the idea of the Good" in Greek ethics. In other words, it is used to understand the function of mediation in the dialectical relationship between two seemingly separate entities: the appearance of form

[92] Differently from what we are moving toward, or what is suggested in the theory of colonialism and anti-colonialism, this break, to use Kristeva (1981:98), is not of the "*thetic* phase" or the semiotic function qua the moment of the cut, rather, it is the break of the symbolic function. The break of the semiotic function, unlike that of the symbolic function which we find in hermeneutic models of interpretation, as Kristeva (1981:118) relates, produces a thetic condition that gathers up the "instinctual semiotic stases within the positing of signifiers, then opens them out in the three-part cluster of referent, signified, then opens them out in the three-part cluster of referent, signified, and signifier, which alone makes the enunciation of a truth possible." The semiotic function qua the thetic phase, is of the economics of the death-drive and it "is structured as a break in the signifying process, establishing the identification of the subject and its object as preconditions of propositions". For Kristeva (1986:98), the death-drive produces the thetic which help translate the 'barred Real' (as we shall see later with Adrian Johnston) into "a semiotic fragment" or a materialist ontology. That is the thetic phase is for her, "the deepest structure of the possibility of enunciation" because it is that "which produces the positing of signification."

and matter, or rather, the transformation of matter by form in the need to account for the "ontological status of appearance", to use Gadamer (1986:13) again. A mediation which is said to be that of the mediated subject of Cartesian phallocentrism.

Theosophical Logic in Hermeneutics

The philosophical dialectics of interpretative hermeneutic theory as mentioned by David E. Linge (1976:xii), in the Introduction to Gadamer's text, *Philosophical Hermeneutics,* draws-in the "reflexive dimensions of understanding" that were ignored in the conceptual frameworks of the "sciences of hermeneutics" or notions of the transcendental ego during what could be referred to as its Husserlian phase. Its proponents say that they critique the transcendentalist assumptions on the unimpeded, immediate self-knowledge, and imaginative capacities of the neo-Kantian subject because it is still implicated in the Cartesian and post-Enlightenment ideals which ignore the concrete historical reality of the subject. For them the task of philosophical dialectics is "to learn to see things together in respect of the One" by outlining the fundamental conditions, scientific and non-scientific, that underlie the phenomenon of understanding as an event that surpasses the transcendental ego of the cogito (Gadamer 1986:12). They consider the historical contexts or actions that influence an event and take the task of understanding in philosophical dialectics to be that of the recovery of the genus of subjectivity. A genus which they inversely withdraw from the very same historical contexts they intend to understand.

The hermeneutic interpretative model, again, as its proponents claim, is intended at transforming the metaphysical concepts found in the Platonic notion of '*separable form'*, the Aristotelian '*immanent form'*, St Augustine's neo-Platonian notion of the '*Word* and *time'*, the Spinozian notion of '*substance* and *totality*', the Leibnizian notion of '*monadism*', the Kantian notion of *substance* and *subjectivity*, the Hegelian notion of the *Absolute Idea* and *metatheory*, and all the metaphysical and scientific notions of Cartesian *transcendentalism*. But as stated in the previous chapter, this intention to deconstruct the entire history of metaphysics was not in the form of a decisive rupture.[93] Rather, it meant a certain continuity which the metaphysical approach in the fields within which it has taken root, which are: linguistics, phenomenology, mathematical logic, and psychoanalysis. The hermeneutic conception of 'meaning' in all these

[93] As Derrida (1981:24), the fore figure of the deconstructionist rupture relates, "epistemological breaks … are always, and fatally, reinscribed in an old cloth that must continually, interminably be undone."

fields has to some extent, as Julia Kristeva poses in a question to Derrida, remained "intrametaphysical" and "complicit" with the metaphysical tradition that it seeks to refute. That is, in either its psychoanalytic or phenomenological extensions, the "logical-mathematical-notation" and the "linguistic notation"[94] in their axiomatic function form the categories of its principles.

These principles tend to point towards the denaturalisation of materiality, or rather as Ricoeur (1986:85) himself puts it, they have "an enemy in sight: the enemy in this case being objectivism, naturalism, philosophy of life, anthropology." But as we have seen in the previous chapter and as we shall see in the next chapter again through our critique of the theoretical and philosophical premises of postcolonial theory and critical philosophy in African Studies, the grounds on which we have made the detour into the theory of hermeneutics is to problematize their treatment of the first two enemies of hermeneutics: objectivism and naturalism. With their critique of metaphysical concepts, the Husserlian transcendental *Idealism/ego*, the hermeneutic theoreticians and philosophers probably felt that they have successfully dealt with the problematic of philosophy of life and the problematic of anthropological or scientific humanism. Truly, the theory of hermeneutics might have sufficiently or successfully dealt with the problematic of its first two enemies but with regards to the manner in which it has dealt with the last two, it did so through an inversion of the phenomenological over and above concrete historical reality. Thus, it has come to regard its method as that of the interpretation of the phenomenological (either through linguistic or psychoanalytic and logical formulas) as a means of accessing the objective. Although the theory of hermeneutics, read through a Ricoeurean formula which owes allegiance to the Kierkergardian notion of the 'Fall', or rather, negative theology takes the genus of subjectivity as that of historical experience, it only does so in so far as it takes the place of historical experience as an effect of suture by some elemental force which pre-exists it. That is, historical experience or materiality is subjected to the process of reflection by and through an external force. Where I beg to differ with both the proponents of postcolonial theory and hermeneutic interpretation are the premises on which reflection is said to be extracted from. For them, reflection is the extraction of an already represented materiality. This, as Ricoeur (1981) does, is explained through the theory of signification, the theory of metaphor and metonym, the theory of transference, the theory of the text, or the

[94] Derrida, 1981, p. 33.

notions of explication and distanciation: all borrowed from linguistic paradigms. These theories, as they say can help us understand the promotion of materiality in relation to its essence.

The finitude which Ricoeur takes as an expression of the ontological condition in hermeneutics, is an already qualified finitude, or rather, is a finitude which is reduced to the order of the infinite. Qualified, in this sense, by the infinite qua the eternal truth which pre-exists and precedes it and is therefore generalised into the particular that the finite is. He tells us again that this finitude is best expressed by the Heidegerrian ontic-ontological concept of "belonging-to" (Ricoeur 1986:88). The Heideggerian concept of belonging-to or Marleu-Pontyian notion of phenomenology of perception, as we shall see in our discussion of the articulations of hermeneutical phenomenology designates the adaptation of Dasein to the linguistic experience. As a matter of fact, the linguistic experience informs both the noematic and no-logical notions of the system of hermeneutic interpretation that they prescribe. The strategies of hermeneutical interpretation, whether read from psychoanalytic or phenomenological formulas, retains the characters of the problematic of language as an externality. Hence, it is essential that, before delving into the analysis of psychoanalytic and phenomenological hermeneutics, we outline the application and function of the theory of language in the hermeneutic interpretation of experience and materiality. This is because the paradigms of hermeneutic interpretation suppose a recourse to a subject that depends on the Rule of language as a regime of law.

The subject of hermeneutics, whether in its psychoanalytic or phenomenological conditions, always appears to be dependent on the Signifier. In other words, although the structure of language always appears to be invisible to it, it always remains constituted by it. It is the structures of language, as consciousness, which constitutes those of its unconscious. The subject is in this sense placed within the permanent split or doubling in the structure of language itself in order for the hermeneutic circle or hermeneutic movement to be complete. It is in this return to the problematic of language that we see how hermeneutics retains the theosophical, or rather, where we see the "cosmic drama consisting in the emanation out of the One and the return into it, with the self-designated as the pivot of the return" (Gadamer 1976:236). These presupposed structures of knowledge and understanding are transposed from infinite Being to mathematically or geometrically finite being. This process entails aspects of linguistic concretisation. That is, it involves a concretisation of the elements of language onto the natural, to the extent that the natural is forced to leave "an open domain which can be filled by the

production of the human Spirit" (Gadamer 1986:13). This is how for Ricoeur (1986:99), hermeneutics subordinates the "linguistic plan (of noesis) to the prelinguistic plan of noematic analysis."[95]

The referential function assigned to *noeme*, in this case, is not a declaration of its capacity to displace *noesis*, rather, it means that, the hermeneutics of historical experience is 'exploded by the linguistic experience'. Or, for the linguistic experience to subsist in space and time, it requires the assistance of historical experience. In other words, it pulverises the historical in order to subsist through it. And although made to subsist in the structures of historical experience, the field of interpretation, as Ricoeur (1986:100) tells us, "is not identifiable with the vital and emotional layers of human experience", instead, it designates the "reservoir of meaning, the surplus of meaning of the life experience, which makes possible the objectifying and explicative attitude"[96] qua the linguistic experience. Since it is concerned with the question of meaning, the field of interpretation, tries to look for a *logos* that can unite language and thought in such a way that it does not only become "a methodology of exegesis and philology" (Ricoeur 1986:96). The kind of rapport discernible in the linguistic extensions of the field of interpretation, as we can see from Ricoeur, involves a process of positive negativity where the linguistic sign is exchanged for things. In other words, it involves a process where the linguistic experience gives rapport to the naturalistic-objectivist attitude.

The Hermeneutic Model in Linguistic Theory

By identifying its task as that of the actualisation and articulation of meaning contained in language or released from linguistic signs, the field of exegetic interpretation or reflection theory points to us how it seeks the unity of the a priori and the material rather than the morphology or metamorphosis of the later. This unity is attained by bringing historical experience or materiality to the level of language in order to raise it to level of meaning in its phenomenological form. So, in our brief excursion of the field of hermeneutics, we shall look

[95] In the hermeneutic process of transference, the noematic analysis surbodinates the linguistic experience to aesthetic and historical experience. Ricoeur (1986:99) says, the *noeme* is the strategic level proper to phenomenological hermeneutics because of its "modifications (presence, preservation, memories, fantasies, etc.), its modes of belief (certitude, doubt, reckoning, etc.) its degrees of actuality and potentiality." In the *noeme*, the "functions of domination, predication, syntactical liaison, etc., have access to articulation" (Ricouer 1986:99).

[96] Ricoeur, R. 1986, p. 100.

at how it makes the methodological return to Saussure's system of the interdependence of linguistic units qua the differential relations of language systems or phonic incorporeal elements. The structuralist model of linguistics has been extended to the categories of hermeneutic interpretation in order to generalise how language acts as a differential system that unites the separate entities of being (the subject, situation, and transcendence). Relying on Saussure's fundamental distinction between language as *langue* and *parole*, proponents of these fields, give priority to the former. Like in Saussure's system of the interdependence of linguistic units, what is acknowledged is the primacy of the Word and the category of the speech-act, i.e., the primacy of the synchronic dimension over the diachronic. That is, language is presented as something that supports a reference to transcendence. Thus, unlike the semiotic modality which Kristeva (1986:90) says pays attention to the 'instinctual drive', it considers "language a strictly 'formal' object – one that involves syntax or mathematicisation." In the hermeneutical "theories of meaning, theories of language, and theories of the subject,"[97] language is treated as a logico-semantic system which reveals the synchronic dimensions of time or of movement in time, not the diachronic dimensions of time as suggested in the kinetic morphology of materiality.

To use Ricoeur (1976:3), the idea of '*total mediation*' emphasised in Gadamer's hermeneutic theory or the *subject of enunciation* emphasised in Benveniste's linguistic theory are all elements of langue or "the description of the synchronic system of language." Saussure's method of structural linguistics and its dialectic treatment of the diachronic and synchronic dimensions of language presents language as both a descriptive science and a historical science which gives primacy to the articulations of the synchronic systems. It locates the "arbitrariness of the act" within the synchronic code or system. And the hermeneutic method of interpretation follows this Sausserian consideration of the theoretical status of linguistics and the primacy of language over sound, system over process, structure over function, structure over process, or the self-sufficiency of language and the immanence of all difference to it. It follows a reductionist approach which seeks to establish a calculus of the elements of language and the possible relations that they enjoy. This is how the extension of the structural linguistic model

[97] Kriesteva, J. 1986 p. 90.

into the field of interpretation entails the emptying of the material content of semiological elements.

The theory of signification or the theory of performance suggested by this linguistic extension of the field of interpretation formulates a theory of the subject in which the speaking-subject is joined at the descriptive level with the theory of reduction which founds it on the transcendental level. And in this *langue-parole* dialectic or signifier-signified dialectic, the thematics of hermeneutic theory apply the meaning drawn from only the properties of the elements of the realm of *langue* or the realm of signifiers. The elements of *parole* or the elements of signifieds taken as either undifferentiated articulations of the transcendental ego or of 'instinctual drives' are subordinated to the mandates of *langue* or signifiers. Langue, in a sense, refers to the system of forms or codes which make parole or actual speech possible. And, parole is the realisation of form or system through speech. Or, to use Jonathan Culler's, (1977:31) distinction, parole, on the one hand, leads to a phonetics which study sounds in "speech acts from a physical point of view", and langue, on the other hand, leads to phonology which studies the "distinction between the abstracts units of the signifier which are functional within linguistic systems" and linguistic functions or the study of functional distinctions. Thus, in langue, linguistic systems possess a value or a meaning which is relational and in parole they have "a signification, a contextual realisation or manifestation of meaning" (Culler 1977:33). Culler, as one of the proponents of the structural linguistic model favoured by hermeneutics theorists, further supports this position by stating that it is a mistake for philosophers and theoreticians alike, to "say what Saussure calls the signification of an utterance involves both meaning and reference", since for Saussure there is "one kind of meaning, a relational meaning or value, and another kind of meaning or signification which involves the use of linguistic elements in actual situations of utterance" (Culler 1977:33).

Hence, within the hermeneutic structural-linguistic model, the "dialectic of event and meaning" is reduced to the "structure of systems" (Ricoeur 1976:8-9). Treated as a manifestation of the structure of systems qua phonology, this dialectic can then come to be seen as language proper, symbolic, and a means of transcribing articulated sounds. Its articulations are separated from those of the 'semiotic *chora*' which as a "non-verbal signifying system"[98] or a realm of

[98] Krieteva, K. 1986, p. 93.

'instinctual drives' is said to be devoid of meaning in it's a priori form. And it is also separated from the field of phonetics which, Saussure (1966:32) says, is a historical science that "analyses events and changes and moves through time" or is a science that studies the evolution, revolution, or transformation of language through intention, motivation, and rational thought. Saussure gives primacy to the element of phonology, over phonetics and semiology because it exists in the realm of *la langue* proper and it designates the units and combinations properly identifiable with the linguistic system. The latter two are said to be ancillary, accidental, or posteriori, and they all "fall into place within and around it" (Culler 1977:31).

Implied in this statement is the idea that, by focusing on langue, which as a linguistic sign, is an abstract concept or form, the field of interpretation allows us to see how phonology finds expression as a sound-image which is sensory and material or concrete. For Culler, Saussure chooses to focus on *langue* because it acts as a system of signs that determines value through differentiation and it defines every sign: where every sign through the relation it enjoys with other members of the linguistic unit, is able to produce meaning . Saussure's structural linguistic model, to which hermeneutic theory accedes, downplays the role of parole or sound because he regards it as both a social and individual phenomenon which does not have a unit. It is for him only a physical, physiological, and psychological phenomenon. Parole in Saussure's structural linguistic model, and for that end, as a speech-event/act in the hermeneutic enterprise, relates to how the subject gives the linguistic system a "concrete phonic and psychological manifestation, as sound and meanings" (Culler 1977:30). This all, in a sense, to use Ricoeur (1976:12) not so differently, is said to show how the hermeneutic enterprise "attests to the intentionality of language, (or) the relation of noesis and noema in it."

It is important to also highlight here that, like with most social theories and theorists critiqued in this thesis, that, it is that which is explicit rather than implicit in Saussure's structural-linguistic model, just like in hermeneutic theory that the status of social phenomenon is always unconfirmed. For example, in some occasions, Saussure tells us that langue (the speech-act or the speech-event) is an effect of the "social product(s) deposited in the brain of each individual."[99] Although in hermeneutic theory, the structures of the linguistic system are not as rigidified as they are in Saussure's structuralism, language still continues to manifest itself as

[99] Saussure, E. 1966, p.23.

a unit or a condition of meaning for the non-meaning represented by undifferentiated materiality. Although read as a reflection of meaning contained in the inarticulable material realm, it is still regarded as a manifestation of the structure of systems. And although read through materiality, it is still regarded as capable of perpetuating its own alterations by remaining faithful to its old substance. In other words, the change implied by the association or the articulation of meaning with history, evolution, or initiation does not necessarily affect the signifying concept.

The hermeneutic conception of language as a product of both social force and time, as Saussure himself says, "theoretically entails the freedom of just establishing any relationship between phonetic substance and ideas" (Saussure 1966:76). It only expresses how hermeneutic theory, just like structural linguistics, sets itself as both a descriptive science and a historical science. The study of language as a descriptive science entails the analysis of "the axis of successions" in a phonetic structure and it excludes the content contained in the elements constitutive of this very structure. It supposes the articulation of its synchronic dimensions over and above its diachronic dimensions. This is why we argue that, the study of language as a descriptive science or a historical science entails the analysis of its occurrence as an event which does not necessarily change the nature of the linguistic system. It supposes the articulation of its diachronic dimensions at the synchronic level since the latter pre-exists the former. What this separation suggests is that, as mere modifications or processes of the language system, diachronic facts do not change the arrangement of the relations that constitute the synchronic system. So for us, it is these logico-semantics of structural linguistics that interpretation theory and postmodernist postcolonial theory fail to dispense with from their categories and frameworks.

The Logico-Semantics of Structural Linguistics

To continue with our analysis of the problematic of structural linguistics, we shall, in this section argue that, as a logico-semantics, structural linguistics, and postmodernist postcolonial theory by implication, presence the elements of language as separate synchronic and diachronic systems. With that said, in this section, I shall go a little further in my analysis of the modalities through which the diachronic dimensions of language are separated from the synchronic dimensions because this separation, or rather, dialecticisation has deeper implications on the logico-semantics of structural linguistics and its extension in the field of the theory of

interpretation. It also helps to shed light on the structuralist tendencies that inform postcolonial strategies of emancipation, the reading of African myths, fables, and symbols in critical philosophy, Derrida's deconstructionist or grammatological project (which informs most of the categories used in postcolonial theory), Ricoeur and Gadammer's theory of interpretation (which we have relied on for our examination of the hermeneutic enterprise in this chapter), Heidegger's analytics of Dasein or Marleu-Ponty's phenomenology of perception (which are extended upon in existentialist tradition). It is for these reasons that this chapter is intercalated between the previous chapter and the next chapter which also examine the emancipatory strategies outlined in the field of postcolonial theory and critical philosophy in the discipline of African Studies.

As highlighted in the above discussion, the theory of interpretation takes it that, "a synchronic approach must precede any diachronic approach because systems are more intelligible than changes" (Ricoeur 1976:5).[100] And, since "a change is a partial … change in a state of a system …, the history of changes must come after the theory that describes the synchronic states of the system" (Ricoeur 1976:5). It is within these parallels that the structural linguistic models of signification and performance, meaning and knowledge, explanation and understanding, distanciation and explication are deployed as categories for the logic of resistance and liberation. The functions of these categories are defined through the domain of semantics which the proponents say is not purely structural. Rather, they are based on what Ricoeur (1976:52-3) refers to as "a semantics of dissonance … which takes up the structural problems left unresolved" by linguistic structuralists. The logico-semantics contained in the kernel characteristic of the categories of structural linguistics supposes that meaning in language has a first and a second order. Like in the dialectic of diachrony and synchrony, this supposes the manifestation of a double-meaning on an architectonic form of transference. In the case of the diachrony and synchrony dialectic, these forms of transference are based on the translation of the non-linguistic dimensions of being (diachronic elements) to the linguistic dimensions of being (the synchronic elements).[101]

[100] In the logico-semantics of structural linguistics or interpretation theory, diachrony is concerned with difference at the axis of co-existence whilst synchrony looks at difference from the axis of succession.

[101] In the structuralist theory of symbols, as Ricoeur (1976:54) tells us, "the psychoanalysts links its symbols to hidden psychic conflicts; while the literary critique (as with Bhabha in the previous chapter, or Mudimbe, Soyinka, and Gates in the next chapter) refers to something like a vision of the world or desire to transform all

The hermeneutic theory of emancipation, whether postcolonial, poststructuralist, or postmodern is concerned with the "structure of meaning" contained in synchronic systems and "the principles of its dissemination" through diachronic systems. So, it is important to highlight, again, here, if I have not already done so, that the diachronic dimensions of structural linguistics which we find in hermeneutic theory are not of a materialist practice, rather, they are those of the subject of logical necessity. Since the diachronic dimensions of Saussure are the dimensions of logic (as a qualification of the scientific subject), they do not emerge from the naturalistic or unconscious dimensions of the death drive that are articulated in the theory of the subject. But for methodical reasons, we shall place the articulations of the death-drive which inform our theory of the subject on the diachronic plane (as designating the concrete historical reality of the subject). The elements of the death-drive or a naturalist practice, as pure excess, to use Ricoeur (1976:55 and 57) differently, are, for us, those elements that can "resist any transposition to language" or "any linguistic, semantic, or logical transcription."[102] In our materialist theory of the subject of anti-colonialism these are the elements of the semiotic *chora* or the elements of the death-drive. Or, they can be read as manifestations of instances where Saussure says, the diachronic event assumes its own rationale without the influences of the synchronic fact. These are instances where, like in the semiotic *chora* of Kristeva[103], (naturalistic) diachronic elements, since they are intricately constitutive of antagonism and contradiction, are left to assume their own historical evolution or meaning, independent of the synchronic systems.

language into literature; and the historian of religion (or the philophers of negative theology and the theorists of the Truth-Event, as shall be seen in chapter 5 and 6) sees in symbols the milieu of manifestations of the scared, or what Eliade calls hierophanies."

[102] For Ricoeur, this refers to the non-semantic aspects of symbols, not experience or reality. That is, in the field of interpretation theory, there are no elements of being or experience that are not open to the opacity or rootedness of meaning.

[103] Kristeva uses the concept of the semiotic chora to refer to the imprints or traces of the material. It is for her, a modality of the drives which "displace and condence … the energies and inscriptions" (Kristeva 1981:93) of both the unconscious and consciousness. The drives are, for Kristeva (1986:93), "energy charges as well as 'physical' marks (which) articulate what we call a *chora*: a non-expressive totality formed by the drives and their stasis in a mortility that is as full of movement as it is regulated." The chora as a symbol of the lack of the Real, is something that the subject "simultaneously depends upon and refuses". It depends upon it because "as rupture and articulations (rhythm)" it generates a subjectivity of the enunciative type. And it refuses it, because as conflict-ridden, it does not give the subject-body any respite and it perpetuates its own suffering as lostness.

The models of reductive hermeneutics examined in this chapter approach language through its diachronic dimensions, as its proponents says, to help show that Saussure's structuralism is not rigid to the extent that it does not leave space for freedom. They are the structures within which the differential relations of the elements of language play out. As elements of speech-acts, they are always viewed as preceded by the synchronic facts, meaning that, they are not independent of the linguistic unit. Hence, Saussure chooses to focus on the synchronic dimensions of language because this would at the same time reveal its diachronic process. In Saussure's structural linguistic model the diachronic perspective is first and foremost conditioned by the structure of the linguistic system and it deals with phenomenon that are related to the system. And, a synchronic analysis is an all-encompassing approach which looks at how the symbol of language may bear several meanings. Instead of making the change of language the sole creation of rational thought, synchronic facts maintain the dialectic between form and content, being and experience, or structure and process.

Although Saussure acknowledges through his theory of value the effects of time on language, he keeps reminding us that the system cannot be directly modified by thought or the speaking subject, "only certain elements are altered without regard for the solidarity that binds them to the whole" (Saussure 1966:84). This is why for Saussure (1966:87) language is "a system whose parts can and must all be considered in their synchronic solidarity" because diachronic facts or "change does not affect the system as a whole but rather one or another of its elements". This is how, in structural linguistics, value is attained through the differential relation between substantive elements such that it is not attained by changing the relation between the signifier and the signified because they are all its productive forces. A thing on the diachronic plane, in this case, can only be determined as a reality once after being sutured by the elements of the synchronic system. Synchrony is, for the structuralists, and the poststructuralist alike, the "relation between simultaneous elements" (Saussure 1966:91). And it refers to the study of the principle of regularity or moves from the assumption that "facts are multiple manifestation of one and the same fact" (Saussure 1966:93).

In this dialectic, the concrete or particular facts which diachrony (in its materialist form) seek to impose on language are never reached because the unbroken chain of differential identities in the historical filiations of language are still of its synchronic dimensions. As Jonathan Culler (1977:49) relates in a structuralist praise to Saussure, this is because, the "linguistic system consist of different levels of structure" and is not "a system of elements which are wholly

defined by their relation to one another." That is, in the linguistic model, the dynamic of succession (synchrony) will always take precedence over the dynamic of difference (diachrony), or rather, the diachronic will always be subordinate to the synchronic. The synchronic, although regarded as a second order meaning its extension within the field of interpretation, it is still said to be initially responsible for the coming into being of the first order meaning, which is generated at the diachronic plane. Hence, the diachronic dimension in its naturalistic conditions is never granted any ontological primacy. Or, rather, to echo Benveniste (1971:80), Saussure's structural linguistics emphasises the "primacy of the system over the elements which composed it."

In Benveniste's defence of Saussure's structural linguistic model, elements cannot be dissociated from the whole and one cannot start from the independent whole (like in the theory of totality) in order to obtain its elements. The ensemble of elements constitutive of the whole are regarded as subject to the laws of the structural whole and they are not a sum of elements which can be isolated, analysed, and dissected independent of it. For Benveniste, as noted above, the fundamental principles of structural linguistics must adhere to the predominance of the system and its unity over the independence of the elements constitutive of it. And, like in the deconstructionist and postructuralist theory of the sign and signification, the subject of structural linguistics is at the middle of the analytic project just like a true deconstructor of metaphysical concepts. To take from Culler again, its task becomes that of deconstructing the whole, or explain meaning in terms of systems of convention. This subject is so different from that of the materialist theory of the subject, which like Kristeva's subject of the semiotic chora, believes that, as an "unstable and empty subject," it "ought not to be fixed and stabilised, but turned into a *work in progress*" (Moi 1986:14). Such a subject, is not one of exegetic hermeneutic, but of what can be referred to as a diegetic hermeneutics, for it is a subject "poised in the space suspended between One(-less) Meaning and the deconstructivist rejection of truth, however tentative" (Moi 1986:15, additions mine).[104]

[104] This is why for Kristeva, the grammatological project of Derrida, as a project of exegetic hermeneutics, remains essentially limited by the Hegelian notion of negativity which it uses to "construct a critique of phenomenology" (Moi 1986:15). For Kristeva (1986:15), since Derrida ends with a "privatisation of the concept of negativity," the concepts itself ends up being "drained of its potential for producing breaks … It hold itself back and appears as a delaying (retardment), it defers and thus becomes merely positive and affirmative" (Kristeva 1986:141, cited by Moi 1986:15-16). Kriesteva, in the interview with Derrida (1981:95-6), distinuguishes negativity from negation, the later as it is used by Derida, implies "the act of a (transcendent) judging subject", and the former for her, as a quality of the semiotic chora, designates "no more than the place

The subject of hermeneutic interpretation theory or that of the theology of truth (as we shall see in the following chapters) is not interested in the deconstructivist rejection of truth, but rather, in its affirmation. Unlike our subject of the death-drive in the theory of anti-colonialism, it is not a subject constituted by material substances but by the substances of the signifier which are only realisable through the scientific articulation of the sign and its meaning. This is how, according to poststructuralists, we are able to encounter language as a *saying* after we have passed from structure to function, elements to structure, or structure to process. Hence in phenomenological hermeneutics, as we see through Ricoeur's interpretation theory, the categories of *explication* or *distanciation* are the ones which are said to enable the subject into language and attain the quality of reflection. And this is how as a mediatory act, emancipatory subjectivity becomes directed towards reality. It comes to be directed towards reality after "taking shape in words which have a symbolic significance or a metaphoric structure" (Ihde 1974:xiv). Through the processes of explication and distanciation, we are told by Ricoeur (1974:13), the subject enters into a "reflective mode that allows it to decipher the meaning in the apparent meaning, in unfolding the levels of meaning implied in the literal meaning." This supposes an exegesis of the self and of being or an interpretation of the hidden meaning based on systematicity because words or symbols, due to their multivocality, are said to contain a double meaning: which is a direct and an indirect meaning.

Heidegger and Marleu Ponty's Phenomenological Meditations

Since interpretation, in the phenomenological sense, entails bringing closer the far, the temporal, or the spiritual to the familiar, it usually tends to concern itself with questions of transference and function in the processes of subject formation. That is, it tends to be more concerned with the coming to be of a subject who places himself "in the same semantic field as the one he is understanding and … (uses) to enter the hermeneutic circle" or uses to express the "openness of discourse" (Ricoeur 1974:55 and 96). As Ricoeur (1986:89) further relates, this entails the apprehension of the ontological condition of "belonging-to … as finitude of knowledge" like in Heidegger's analytics of Dasein or Marleu-Ponty's 'phenomenology of perception'. Proponents of the hermeneutical model of phenomenology, all in different ways,

where the subject is both generated and negated, the place where his unity succumbs before the process of charges and stases that produce him." Rather, it is a "rhythmic space" qua a space of the drives which "involve pre-Oedipal semiotic functions and energy discharges that connect and orient the body to the mother", that which sets the subject "on the path of destruction, aggressivity and death" (Derrida, 1981:95).

extend on the Hegelian assumption of negation and its concepts of difference, reflection, opposition, and relation. These categorise, like those of explication and distanciation, seek to transform the idea of rational reconciliation in the dialectical theories of Jewish messianism or negative theology into a logic of resistance and liberation.

That is, the process of phenomenological explication defined from the perspective of interpretation, as poised by Ricouer, supposes a form of exegesis radically different from (but not opposed to) that of pure mathematical logic and structural logic. Explication is rather, for Ricoeur (1986:90 and 91) coextensive with mediation by the text or the "exegesis of texts" because, like in the postmodernist or poststructuralist theory of the sign and signification, it should be regarded as a process that induces an intuition which is "simultaneously primal and final." And its articulations, in interpretation theory, "rests on the element of distanciation" which relates subjectivity to a "distance which oscillates between remoteness and proximity" (Ricouer 1986:92). Hence, the aim of the theory of the text, as Ricoeur (1986:93) relates again, is not to "recover beneath the text, the lost intention, but to display before the text, the 'world' which it opens and discloses" (Ricoeur 1986:93). That is, its task, is that of the "explication of the being-in-the-world shown by the text" (Ricoeur 1986:93). A text which projects a world which the subject has the possibility of inhabiting in future time. Reality is in this case metamorphosed by the imaginative variations of the text which are applied to the real. And the intention of the subject or the Real is subordinated to the intention of the "thing of the text" (Ricoeur 1975:94). Hence, in the process of distanciation, the text is placed "at a distance to the world", that is, through distanciation, the automy of the text is related to the subject itself, "to its situation, and to its original destination" (Ricoeur 1986:94).

Through the process of distanciation, the subject is placed into a new being-in-the-world projected by the text and the withdrawal from everyday reality. In Heidegger's existential or phenomenological hermeneutics, the text from which Ricoeur reads, this being-in-the-world or process of distanciation is grounded in the ontology of understanding qua fundamental ontology. Viewed as conditioned by a fundamental ontology or as located in the space between an ontic priority and an ontological priority, the Heideggerian Dasein, oscillates backward and forward between these two parameters (B)eing, making its characteristics to be interpreted

existentially.[105] And, for Ricoeur (1974:230), this helps to show that "existentiality is nothing other than the totality of the structures of an existent who exists only in the fulfilment or the lack of fulfilment of his own possibilities." Or, rather, this supposes that, the constitutive structures of Dasein should be interpreted as being-in-the-world, present-at-hand, ready-at-hand, worldliness, being, existence, historicality, experience, pure objective presence, spatiality, or care and concern.

Following Ricouer's (1974:227) extensions of his categories, one can say that Heidegger's idea of primordiality or fundamental ontology advances a "series of propositions which proceed from the existence of the ego to the existence of God and to the existence of the world". It proposes a model of ontological inquiry that gives the a priori Idea the capacity to act as the originating movement or genus of subjectivity. This a priori, as the genus of desire, will always remain an impossible possibility to be fulfilled in future-time. Its mode of possibility is that of a being-towards-death. In being-towards-death, Heidegger's Dasein, is related to itself as an eminent potentiality-of-being (Heidegger 1996:234). Dasein grounds its ontological possibility in being-towards-death because death is always an anticipation, or an ephemerality. Death in Heidegger's existential or hermeneutic phenomenology is experienced through projectedness because it is a factical status of occurrence in inquiry: or an experienced effected at the level of the ontic. The Heideggerian ontological condition of being-towards-death is not an inquiry about an entity or a category that has a factual status of occurrence as is the case in our materialist conception of death (which will be outlined in the following chapters). Rather, Heidegger's notion of being-towards-death deals with the question of the Self (or theontic) through the dialectic of authentic (consciousness) and inauthentic (unconscious) existence in the constitutive phenomenon of end and totality qua system or unit. This is because hermeneutic interpretation, as an interpretation, has what Heidegger calls a forehaving, foresight, and foreconception, and this allows for existence to be understood as an authentic potentiality of being.

[105] According to Adrian Johnston (2013:93), "this insufficiently dialectical, too neat-and-clean distinction between the ontological and the ontic leads straight to a fundamental(ist) obfuscation of actual material existences both natural/non-human and non-natural/human as well as obsfucating spiritualist pseudo-explanations of historical structures and dynamics on the basis of a divinely opaque being." Or, rather, it ends "up promoting a facile mysticism whose basic underlying logic is difficult to distinguish from that of negative theology" (Johnston 2013:93).

In order to give a fundamental ontology to Dasein, as Heidegger persuades us, one has to bring to the forefront its possible existential authenticity and totality since the variations of end and totality are its ontological determinations. And coming to an end, in that sense, would however imply positing a mode of being in which the actual Dasein cannot be absolutely represented. Because, the authentic potentiality of the being of Dasein and the primordial ontological ground of its existentiality are temporally experienced. In other words, it requires acknowledging that, it is temporality that enables the being of Dasein to be historical, because time (in the ontological sense) is that in which innerworldly beings are encountered. In the existential mode of being-towards-death. That is, Dasein experiences death as a process of becoming (which is neither fulfilment nor disappearing) but it has become finished or completely available as something at hand. And, the interpretation of fundamental and existential ontology is prior to any biology and ontology of life, and it acts as the foundation for any biographico-historical or ethnological inquiry into death.[106]

As a revelatory category, death for Heidegger, is not something not yet objectively present or the last outstanding element reduced to a minimum, it is rather an immanence which manifests itself in the transcendent. And by being immanent, death becomes a possibility of being that Dasein always has to take upon itself towards an a priori. It reveals itself as the fallenness of and as falling prey to an external force qua dying in the 'Name-of-the-Father'. In Heidegger's phenomenological hermeneutics, when Dasein is imminent to itself in a mode similar to death as a possibility of no longer being there, it is thrown back upon its own most potentiality of being-qua-consciousness. And this thrownness into death, death, is revealed to Dasein in a more primordially penetrating attunement. An attunement of the economy of angst or desire, not of the economy of drives which generate from its material conditions. So, in being-towards-death, Dasein is related to itself as an eminent potentiality-of-being. And instead of the empirical certainty attributed to death in existential models of inquiry, the ontological interpretation of death uses apodictical certainty. Thus, the fact that demise occurs as an event

[106] Heidegger might be making this statement against the neo-Kantian scientific investigations which locate the phenomena of death at the ontic level qua the level of the cogito, but his observations are often inverted by postmodernist postcolonial theorists to launch a critique against the dialectical materialist conceptions of death in the theory of colonialism and anti-colonialism. But it would be wise to remind those critics that, the theory of colonialism and anti-colonialism, unlike in the ontic theory of inquiry, death is not viewed as an essence of life, but a fact of life. Its dialectic of death is not that of spiritual interpretation but of the processes and kinematics of the Real material.

is only empirical and it in no way decides about the certainty of death. As the end of Dasein, death is the own most, certain, and, as such, indefinite, and not to be bypassed possibility of Dasein.

As stated in the previous paragraph, in postmodernist postcolonial thought, Heidegger's category of being-towards-death, is posed as an ethical paradigm to counter the antagonistic articulations of the political sphere suggested in the theory of anti-colonialism. Being-towards-death is regarded as an ethical category grounded in *care* because it is a being toward an eminent possibility or a being toward something possible and taking care of its actualisation. The possible, in this sense, is the humanism contained in categories which require actualisation. This actualisation is reliant on the existential mode of *expecting*, and in expecting, one leaps from the possible and gets a footing in the Real, not that they move from the Real to the possible-impossible (like in the poetics of death articulated in the theory of anti-colonialism). As a hermeneutical category of reflection, by expecting, the possible is drawn into the real, arising from it and returning to it. However, this must not be read as promotion of a materialist logic on the part of Heidegger, rather, the spatial existence suggested here, for Dasein, is articulable through the structural moment of Time. It is not that of the corporeal man whom Marx (1959:68 -9) says "is man inhaling and exhaling all the forces of nature" and is able to create and posit objects "because he is posited by objects." It is, rather, similar to that of the corporeal man of Marleu-Ponty's phenomenology of perception or theory of the body. Heidegger's ontology of language moves from the ontological weight of the speaking subject, the creative-thinker (as a product of sign or discourse), the poet (as a product of metaphor), or the prophet (as a product of the Word) who interprets meaning through speech. What is located at the level of speech is the totality of significations which are bound with meaning in its a priori form. That is, for Heidegger (1996:151), through the intervention of the speaking subject, "words accrue to significations." He understands language as the making known of experiences through symbolical forms. And his idea of signification, representation, and meaning looks at the role of words and the process of naming in the dialectic between word and speech or langue and parole. So, for him, the speaking subject, like the poet or the inquirer is bound by the word which creates him and allows him to disclose existence. Here we can see that, by integrating semantics with ontology, Heidegger's hermeneutics "relate(s) symbolic language to self-

understanding"[107] or tries to show how words function as intermediaries in the creative act of the poet.

Like Heidegger, Marleu-Ponty, in his theory of the body also agrees that language is a property of the speaking subject in so far as speaking comes after the word and before writing. For Marleu-Ponty, as is for Heidegger, language is built up by a set of independent elements, and speech – the central element – occurs in a circuit of third person phenomenon and it is an entity of rational thought. However, for Marleu-Ponty, the word is thought of as an instrument of action or movement, which is summoned and given meaning by neurological mechanics. It is thought of as a form of hermeneutical explication which find effectivity through the creative capacities of the subject. That is, the physiological and psychic mechanisms which are possessed by the speaking subject are only structural elements which help transform the word into language. Although Marleu-Ponty's theory of the body attaches little value to the idea of the word or signs, he still remains in agreement with his predecessor, Heidegger, on the idea that these categories have "a location in the linguistic world" of the speaking subject. In what could be read as an insight into the materialist ontology, Marleu-Ponty, following Bergson's notion of 'motor-framework of representation' argues that "the body converts motor essence into vocal form, and spreads out the articulatory style of a word" (Marleu-Ponty 1962:162). In this instance, for him speech and thought are not thematically given, rather, they are intervolved and "meaning swallows up the signs" or the words whenever it is performed (Marleu-Ponty 1962:163-4). That is, aesthetic expression, in Marleu-Ponty's theory of the body, brings meaning into being, as though it were primordially constituted. Hence, he says, in poetics, differently from the onomapoetic theory which seeks to understand the world through objective resemblance; vowels, words, vowels, and phonemes are the "many ways of singing the world" (Marleu-Ponty 1962:168).

However, in Marleu-Ponty's phenomenology of perception, like in the linguistic theory of metaphor, the meaning of the word or its verbal concept is captured in the moment since words attain value through the subject's point of view. A subject who himself or herself cannot exist as a substance without the suture by the word. Marleu-Ponty advances an archaeology of the subject which unites the three theses of meaning; the subject as the bearer of meaning; and, the

[107] Ricoeur, 1974, p. 16.

idea of reduction as an act which gives birth to meaning. This proposition lends him a heavy criticism from Ricoeur because it suggests a veering towards the speaking subject of the transcendental type. For Ricoeur, it advances the notion of a logical meaning which uses the root of linguistic meaning in order to reach the meaning held in the intentionality of consciousness (transcendental consciousness). He suggests that it follows Husserl's phenomenology which joins the philosophy of the subject to the theory of meaning or is a transcendental reductionism which "transmutes every question about Being into a question about the sense of being" (Ricoure 1974:246). That is, Being comes to be described as appearance, as phenomenon, or as meaning to be made explicit. And, in this sense, language is no longer an activity or a function since it only opens up the subject towards a transcendence. It is rather used to suggest the "return to … (a) speaking subject (who) rushes past the objective science of signs and moves too quickly to speech" (Ricoure 1974:247).

Despite all the kinds of observations which can be used to emphasise the immanent rather than the explicit in both Heidegger and Marleu-Ponty's phenomenological meditations, their extension of phenomenology into the field of the theory of interpretation does not fully advance beyond the confines of ontology and the speaking subject. In both their hermeneutic, all ontological understanding implies a comprehension of Being and it designates the link between the ontic level and the reflective level. The system constitutive of the ontic level is taken as the first-order-reference and the abstraction of all theodicies which help understand the wholeness of the condition. The pre-eminence of the ontic priority as an ethical priority, over the ontological or existential priority, shows that in Heidegger and Marleu-Ponty's phenomenological meditations, when absorbed in the concretion of categories, logic remains the same as it was from the beginning. Like in Bhabha's deployment of Lacanian psychoanalytic categories against Fanon, they extend on the Hegelian assumptions of negation and its concepts of difference, reflection, opposition, and relation. So, the Heideggerian and Marleu-Pontyian theory of hermeneutic interpretation, spirituality transcends the human subject, it distils beauty from agony, sees the most divine in the most lifting of griefs, and transforms frustration into a region that transcends the human subject.

From Freudian Psycho-linguistics

The theory of hermeneutics envisions a philosophical anthropology that "reassembles the scattered results of the human sciences"[108] and psychoanalysis is also one of the most central one features to this process. Since we said this chapter interlaces the preceding and the proceeding chapters, in this section, we shall briefly examine the psychoanalytic conceptions of the economy of the whole and the stages of symbolism, meaning, metaphor, or allegory implied in such an economy. This is because psychoanalysis, as we have seen in the previous chapter, is central to postcolonial theory and critical philosophy in African Studies, especially for the former's crusade against the Fanonian theory of anti-colonial. Both Marleu-Ponty and Heidegger are central to Lacan's psychoanalytic categories (especially the Lacan of the Real 2). We shall here try to outline the contours of the scientific paradigms of the linguistic-psychoanalytic tradition and their extension into the field of hermeneutic interpretation theory in postmodern postcolonial theory. Taking from the analytics of the Freudian discourse, Ricoeur relates to us that hermeneutic-psychoanalysis is concerned with showing how language is a relation between apparent meaning and hidden meaning and it seeks to discern the hidden meaning in the apparent meaning. Instead of focusing on psychoanalytic categories of the economy of the drives, like Freud's theory of the unconscious or of the Lacan of the Real 1, proponents of the hermeneutic paradigm place the axis of existence on the axis of desire which intervenes in the gap between the libido and the symbol.

In Ricoeur's testimony, the psychoanalytic-hermeneutic tradition proposes an analytical and regressive movement toward the unconscious and a synthetic and regressive movement toward the Spirit. Like we have done with the linguistic and the phenomenological traditions, we shall here try to tease out the explicit structuralist inclinations of the Freudian-Lacanian linguistic-psychoanalytic framework by focusing on the implicit materialist undertones of their theories of the unconscious (Freud) or of the 'barred Real' (Lacan). That is, we shall focus on how psychoanalysis moves from being a speculative realist model to a method of systems which privileges a structural analysis of the constitutive elements of being or existence. If that point is not so clear at the end of this section, well, not to worry, because it is the point that will occupy us for the rest of this thesis. What we only want to emphasise at this point is how within

[108] Ricoeur 1974, p. 263.

the hermeneutic enterprise, scientific psychoanalysis is seen to be treating subjectivity as a collective and traditional institution which manifests through myth, fable, symbol, folklore, and metaphor. In its scientific form, it sets the Oedipal complex as the ontogenetic conditions of subjectivity. And, it establishes the following series of acts for the internal perception of a subject: the unconscious, the preconscious, and consciousness as systems. As we notice, through Adrian Johnston (the Lacan of the 'barred Real) or Bruce Fink's (the Lacan of the Real 1 and the Real 2), there are many Lacanian psychoanalytic turns, so it is difficult to pin him down as either an immanentist or a transcendentalist. And similarly, for Freud, it is also difficult to read his theory of the unconscious in either a strictly spiritualist (or structuralist) manner or a strictly materialist manner. So, I acknowledge the limitations of my critique on those grounds.

With Freud, for the proponents of the hermeneutic interpretative paradigm, the spiritualism emerges from his understanding of psychoanalysis as a method of apodicity and a method of scientism which takes the human psyche for a compound or systemic whole consisting of differentially related elements of the unconscious, the preconscious, and the conscious domains: with precedence being given to the latter. They read from this differentiation, in the Freudian topography, the command to take psychic apparatus or processes as instances or systems whose relations should be categorised according to structure. That is, the unconscious, preconscious, and conscious systems are seen as domains structured by a simultaneity which is similar to the successive stages in the synchronic dimensions of language examined above. The instances or processes definitive of the psychic apparatus are seen as elements which structure the memory traces of the reflexive subject. Like in the early Lacanian psychoanalytic method of reflection which places desire in the gap between need and demand, form and content, desire as the genus of subjectivity is placed in either the preconscious or the conscious domains. As an effect of either of these domains, desire is tasked with the role of negotiating the gap between need and demand because there is no point of adequation between the two elements (which are from the onset recognised as separate).

From either point or plane, the dialectic of desire, although regarded as eccentric or insatiable, it is accorded the capacity to act in so far as it is an effect of symbolic articulations. However, for those preferring a mystical reading of the Freudian theory of the unconscious, the unconscious is the genesis of desire because it does not make a distinction between it and reality. They take it for an archetype of some sort, and it is Freud himself, taking his

psychoanalytic method as a science, who says, the unconscious is "one of the preliminary phases of the image"[109] of reflection. Hence, for them, Freud does not necessarily give a structuralist reading of the unconscious because he goes on to identify its elements as those of the material base qua the unconscious dimension. And he also goes on to insert within it an economy of the drives which gives it efficacy, to take from Johnston (2013b:95), "the (R)eal causal efficacy of absences, conflicts, gaps, lacks, and the like." However, through an inverted arrangement of the system of transferences, Freud (1997:382), tells us that, in the systematic ordering of the psychic domains, although the unconscious is the genesis of the whole structure, it only gains access to consciousness through the preconscious domain.

But it is in the moment that the Freud of *Interpretation of Dreams* says, the psychic domains are separated between the progressive and regressive relations where the structuralist Freud who is favoured by postmodernist postcolonial theorists can be said to be locatable. In this Freud, within the progressive mode, the method of interpretation moves from the unconscious domain to the conscious domain and it can be associated with the materialist ontology of the unconscious which is similar to Kristeva's dialectics of the semiotic chora. However, in the regressive mode, Freud says, the psychoanalytic method of interpretation moves from the domain of consciousness to the domain of the unconscious. Since the regressive mode is topical, formal, symbolic, and temporal it shows an effort to get back to the idea, origin, or genesis. It affirms the non-affirmative nature of the idea because in its dynamics, structure breaks down into its raw material or into the unconscious state. And it is the cathexis created through these moments of structural breaks or structural rupture that enable the subject to transfer meaning from the different elements of the topography.[110] Although Freud goes on to say it is the unconscious which acts as the phylogenetic principle that makes it possible for the subject to return to its underlying ontological framework. He makes an about turn and reads the symbolic into the unconscious by stating that the performativity of the preconscious domain is made possible by "the memory speech symbols" available to the unconscious domain (Freud 1997:411).

[109] Freud, 1997, p. 377.

[110] Its order of meaning is not of the one produced in the instant or in the process by an "unstable and empty subject" but that of the "fixed and stabilised subject" (Moi 1986:14).

In this move, Freud is made to locate the moment of poesies in the instance where the unconscious domain is brought under the dominion of the preconscious domain (qua the Imaginary-Symbolic in Lacanese) which he says makes it possible for meaning embellished in it to emerge as thought or consciousness. And this cathexis from the preconscious system is also triggered by consciousness in the same manner that the preconscious system is able to intervene in the domain of the unconscious. This is what can be indicated as the regressive-repression of the unconscious system by the preconscious system despite in a manner that is not permanent or total. The cathartic energy is only not made a prerogative of a preconscious system because as a 'certain quantity of excitation' it can be transferred to the domain of the unconscious. It is important to remind ourselves here that, for Freud in a linguistic turn, both the unconscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious domains are defined by their functional relations qua systems. And, the capacity or function of each system is dependent on its ability to bear "descriptive, dynamic, and systematic meanings" (Freud 1997:447).

Remember, we have said, we are going to tease out the explicit structuralist views in the Freudian-Lacanian psychoanalytic framework. But we also said it is also important to highlight the implicit materialist underpinnings of their psychoanalytic framework which we shall rely on in the next chapters. In the case of Freud, strictly speaking (or rather read differently), his theory of the unconscious can work to undermine the categories of transcendental spiritualism or scientific subjectivity. The preconscious systems, through cathexis, Freud tells us, is responsible for retracing the memory material that is housed in the system of the unconscious. Or, rather, what is *doubled* by the preconscious system is the phantasmic scenario of the political unconscious. For Freud, since the preconscious domain signifies a moment of criticism, thought must be "reproduced in the material of visual and acoustic memory traces" (Freud 1997:351). That is, the thought translated into images or speech has its foundations in the undifferentiated elements of the unconscious (qua the latent dream content). Which, although, in order to have access to consciousness, has to constantly engage in a struggle for translation into the preconscious system qua the Real-Imaginary in Lacanese.

Freud tells us that although topographically structured, present to the systems of the psyche is a dynamic mode or a "succession of instances" which first generates through the operatives of the unconscious. In these materialist instances, Freud believes that, it is the unconscious (without it being a systemic model) which makes possible the rhythmical, acoustic, and visual movements of the creative subject into future-past traces (qua the search for the conditions of

freedom). If asymmetrically read, as Wilson Harris does with the Jungian archetypes, it could be said that the Freudian theory of the unconscious can work as a framework for a materialist theory of the subject. But it is not our purpose here to be caught in an attempt to rescue Freud from the extensions into postmodernist postcolonial theory and interpretative hermeneutics. Even if we were to, he will ultimately ditch us because for him, the unconscious still functions like a symbolic system or an ethical category. Similarly, for Lacan, there is the Lacan referred to by Bruce Fink (1995) as the Lacan of the two Reals (Real 1 [the Real qua materiality] and Real 2 [the Imaginary-Symbolic]) but in the following discussion we shall follow on the appropriation of the first Lacan (that of the Real 2) in the conceptual frameworks of postmodernist postcolonial theory and interpretative hermeneutics or critical philosophy. In fact, it is Lacan, more than Freud, who is deployed by postmodern postcolonial theorists, especially Bhabha and Gates, against the proponents of the Fanonian theory of anti-colonialism.

Through the Lacanian Matheme

This critique of the extension of the Lacanian matheme in postmodern postcolonial theory and hermeneutic theory or critical philosophy is based on their reading of it as a category of the Imaginary-Symbolic order, that is, from their reading of it as a category of the Lacan of the Real 2, to use Bruce Fink's distinction between the two Lacans. Postcolonial theorists read from this Lacan of the Real 2, the matheme of the 'empty set', the 'object *a*' qua the '*small o-object*', the 'Master-Signifier', or the 'Big Other' as representing the discourse of a transcendental logic and as designating a structural dialectics which rules out the possibility of any revolutionary antagonism.[111] The empty set or the object *a* is said to play an interventional role by mediating between the structures of experience and is presented as a 'vanishing cause' or an 'absent cause' with the power to determine its own effects or is said to be structured like an a priori order of knowledge. But in the Lacan of the Real 1, the object *a* as a material signifier is defined as a constitutive remainder of a 'barred Real' rather than a 'barred Symbol'. This is

[111] In fact, Lacan is himself buffled by those who want to lock him into a structure which rules out the possibility revolutionary action. Hence, he says this is a huge mistake on the part of the reader (both the disciple and the critic) since he presents his Big Other as already having been barred. The barring proves the inexistence of the Big Other, that which he refers to as the '*small o-object'* or object-*a*. The barred nature or the emptiness of the 'small o-bject or the energetics it produces is what helps maintain the subject's immanence to the Real or what enables an understanding of the Imaginary-Symbolic as a category of the Real. A category which lacks being since it is an excess of lack, or rather, an 'excessive lack'.

the Lacan who in either Book XIX, or Book XX, or Book XXIII relies on mathematical logic and geometrical "notions such as the Barromena knot in order to give the real a minimum of consistency" (Bosteels, 2009:xv). Suffice to say, it is the extension of this Lacan of the Real 2 by postmodern postcolonial theorists that we have been critical of in their reading of psycho-linguistics. To take from Josefina Ayerza, postcolonial theorists should be reminded that they should take the Lacanian object *a* or vanishing cause as a "left over" of a barred Real which evades all attempts at symbolisation by any quasi-transcendental models. As a symptom of the barred Real or of the ruptural effect of energies produced from the economy of the drive – in the Lacan of the Real 1 – it connotes an absence" of the Signifier, the "effect of rejection of discourse. Object *a*, as an effect of "unconscious materialisation", should be regarded as a semblance of death or the inanimate and the unnameable which functions as the genus of subjectivity. In other words, it must be understood as constitutive of the impossibility of structure itself if we are to rely on Lacan's analysis of Aristotle's four categories of: the impossible; the possible; the necessary; and, the contingent. Or, as a designation of the impossibility of structure it maintains antagonism and as a manifestation of 'life-in-death' – for the subject of blackness – it is a performative living in forms of non-living which seeks to render the Symbolic order of colonial modernity disfunctional. That is, as an expression of the 'lack of being' or 'the lack of forgetting' it is what allows imagination to exist as a function of desire for the denied and impossible freedom.

But as related in the previous chapter, postcolonial theorists, contrary to this materialist conception of the Lacanian matheme have, for their critique against the Fanonian materialist theory of anti-colonialism, relied on what Fink (1995:xi) refers to as Lacan's "extensions of the concept of structure" into the analysis of subjectivity. In this extension Lacan identifies subjectivity as something which begins, something which "takes exception to structure", or something which emerges at the point where structure takes off. Translated into the subject of the statement and the subject of enunciation, what this taking of exception to structure implies is that, subjectivity emerges or the subject acquires certainty at the level of enunciation. That is, like in Foucault's theory of discourse or Derrida's theory of the sign, the subject is constituted by and is secondary to the Signifier, i.e., a Signifier which in this sense is sui generis while the subject is set as an effect of it. Or, is said to be the subject of the mark, or rather, it is said to be the subject of the 'barred Symbol' not the 'barred Real' because it formulates its identity by distinguishing itself to the sign. That is, the subject forms itself as a duplicate of the

sign. And it is at this point that Lacan in a recuperation of the structural dialectics found in the Freudian theory of the unconscious argues that;

> "In analytic practice, mapping the subject in relation to reality, such as it is supposed to constitute us, and not in relation to the signifier, amounts to falling into the degradation of the psychological constitution of the subject" (Lacan 1981:142).

For this structuralist Lacan, what is embedded in Freud's psychoanalytic framework and concept of the unconscious is recognisable through a topology or the stages of its becoming.

It is however the same Lacan (1981: 22) who reminds us that, the unconscious "shows us the gap through which neuroses recreates a harmony with a real – a real that may well not be determined." Hence neuroses is a scar of the unconscious because it emerges in the gap, the void, the moment of the cut, the *limbo*, or the hole characteristic of causality. Mark that, it is the causal function the material situation of the subject that returns again in this Lacan in a mode similar to Freud's materialist conception of the unconscious. The unconscious as a category of the Real, just like in the Freudian theory of the unconscious, still acts as the mirage to which every reference is attached. This shows that our position on the effectivity of a conflict-ridden materiality of the unconscious is not necessarily different from psychoanalytic theory, rather, it is only its structural appropriations in postmodernist postcolonial theory that we differ with. In the Lacan of the Real 2 that these postmodern postcolonial theorists adopt, it is in the conception of subjectivity as an exception to structure, an exception that is two-fold, where the structuralist tendencies manifest. Two-fold in the sense that the moment of trans-phenomenal freedom is dependent on the functions of the subject and its capacity to reflect through symbolic functions.

Reading from Bruce Fink's interpretation of the Lacan of the Real 2, we can take it that, the Master-Signifier, as the cause of desire, finds its content from an a priori symbolic meaning. That is, the subject for the Lacan of the structural dialectic, "comes into being as a form of attraction toward and defence against a primordial" (Fink 1995:xii). Subjectivity, in this sense, is a stance adopted with respect to the Other's desire which is without reference to the real of its cause or a desire which functions as a cause in-itself. The Other's desire is, in this instance, is a causal alterity which brings subjectivity into being.[112] Without abrogating all the

[112] Taking from his reading of Lacanian notion of the subject as a two fold exception to structure, Fink (1995:xii) relates that, this Other's desire is experienced as *jouissance* because it is "fundamentally thrilling and as yet unnerving, fascinating and yet overwhelming or revolting" (Fink 1995:xii). Hence, the subject has to balance the

structuralism of Lacan to Fink's own interpretation of him, it is after all Lacan (1981:21) himself who says that it is the linguistic structure which "gives its own status to the unconscious" by imposing itself on the Real and the perceptual knowledge of the subject.[113] Lacan is here telling us that he himself believes that it is only through the explication of the linguistic or symbolic structure which makes the elements of the unconscious accessible and objectifiable. In other words, the linguistic structure qua the Master-Signifier turns the unconscious into an opacity.

However, what the Lacan of the Real 2 – taking from the Saussurian dialectic of the synchronic dimensions and the diachronic dimensions – refutes in the return to structure, are the Kantian reductions of causality to the category of pure reason and the negativity of the pre-Oedipal material content, the *horror* of *matter*, "the unnameable, body without language," not the Truth dimension or what he, through Aristotle, refers to as the 'third form'.[114] For Lacan (1981:138), as is in Saussure's structural linguistic[115] model or the deconstructionist phenomenological hermeneutic model adapted to postcolonial theory, "the relation of the subject to the signifier is ... primary and constitutive in the radical function of the unconscious." In other words, the Lacanian theory of ontology can be read as an attempt at trying to reveal the subject's strivings towards topological configurations. In that instance, perhaps we can say that the Lacanian notion that, "the unconscious is made out language" or "the unconscious is determined by language and speech"[116], is an attempt at denying the apprehension of the unconscious from the place of a 'transcendental materialist' ontology. Or as Fink (1995:8) would go on to testify:

attraction and the repulsion of desire (Fink 1995:xii). This is, "but one face of the Lacanian subject: the subject as fixated as symptom, as a repetitive, symptomatic was of getting off or obtaining jouissance" (Fink 1995:xii). The "the second face of the Lacanian subject appears in the overcoming of that fixation, the reconfiguring or traversing of fantasy, and the shifting of the way in which one gets one's kicks or obtains jouissance: that is, the face of *subjectivisation*, a process of making 'one' own what was formerly alien" (Fink 1995:xii).

[113] Perhaps this ows to his influences by the phenomenological linguistics of Alexander Kojeve, Heidegger, Marleu-Ponty, or Heidegger himself, as is the case with the Lacan of the *Ecrits*.

[114] Lacan, 1981, p. 21 and Jacquiline Rose, 1986, p. 160.

[115] Except for the fact that, for Lacan (1981:157), unlike Saussure, he views the concept of system as radically different from the concept of signifier. That is, his idea of the system is that of the material Real rather than the Symbolic.

[116] Lacan, 1981. p. 197-8.

the Lacanian statement that "*the unconscious is language*" means that "language is that which makes up the unconscious."

In other words, for the psycho-linguistic Lacan qua the Lacan of the Real 2, the Master-Signifier as language, brings about being and subjectivity by coming in as an external stimuli. That is, even if the signifier in its materialist sense as object *a* points to the impossibility of language and signifiers in the subject's representation of meaning, it is still read by postmodernist postcolonial theorists as though it were implying the subject's interpellation to an external force. Perhaps in this case, like we did with the hermeneutic phenomenological categories of explication and distanciation, we can also say in the structuralist Lacan, the subject as an extension of the symbolic structure is to be located in the place of consistency, condensation, metonym, or metaphor in so far as they are categories independent of experience. The symbolic order which is given precedence in this structural formalisation is in this case said not to be an element of existence but of transcendence, as per the Lacan of the Real 2. But in the Lacan of the Real 1 who reads the process of biochemical reaction from the place of the energetics produced by material substances, it is the real rather than the symbolic which has to be seen as a system of foreclosure "signifying elements which unfolds in accordance with very precise rules", rules which are in themselves regarded as axiomatic[117] (Fink 1995:10).

What the above critique of the postmodernist postcolonial extension of Lacan tells us is that, its proponents read him through the function of mathematical axioms and they tend to mistake his psychoanalytic symptom for the knowledge of the 'Name-of-the-Father' which comes to subsume the non-reproductive body of the mother. This is all because they fail to see that, in Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, the body is an alienated[118] element of the Real in so far as it

[117] Axiomatic in the sense that they are regarded as functions of pure mathematics.

[118] We are here trying to contest the idea that in Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, the subject is "one of language's subjects, a subject of language, or in language", that is, the idea that the "subject disappears beneath or behind the signifier" (Fink 1995:49). This is with reference to Lacan's Seminar XXIII, in whose reading we find the Lacan of the Real 1, where algebra and geometry expresses the idea of the Material Signifier and where the symptom is not read as an extension of the symbol, or rather, in an anti-Chomskian and anti-Deleuzean sense. That is, where the body is not regarded as a function of the organ (qua language). Perhaps we can say that what we find in this Lacan is not an articulation of the dynamics of the 'sense organ', but rather the articulation of the dynamics of 'organic nonsense' (qua bacteria which escaped the naming or the Word of the Divine i.e. language in-itself). It is this organic nonsense or a discourse "logically extracted from the babble", that which the symptom is, i.e. an articulation of the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic (the 1, 2, 3 or triplicity of being in the Lacanian algebra). It is this triplicity which for Lacan enables nature to be "distinguished by not being one" with itself, or rather, its suture by the drive economy. Thus, we can say, although Lacan's symptom, in its theological sense, is that of the Original sin, i.e. of the subject making use of the function of the index or the word, as Eve does when

is riddled by or written by signifiers of material substances. Hence, in Book XIX he clearly states to his audience that the purpose of his mathematical logic or use of Frege's notion of logical propositions is to find the "logical genesis" of "whole numbers". And this genesis, he says is to be found in the empty set or the void, "namely, either the there exists,, or the there does not exist; either the all, or the not-all" (Lacan, unpublished). This is the condition of the inexistent, the 'barred Real', the corporeal, death qua body as the locus locus of logical necessity qua life. The body, in this sense, as the inexistent is what gives effect to the material signifier, i.e. the desire for freedom which emerges in that moment of the cut, i.e. the moment before the split which enables mathematical formalisation and consistency in the structure of being. These mathematical formalisations are themselves imaginative fictions which come to take the function of metalanguage. This is why Lacan, in Book *XIX*, says, "*there is no metalanguage*" since metalanguage as a variable which supports the reference to a truth is always constituted by an empty place which the material designates. It is for the same reasons in Book *XX* that he warns his readers that, "just because I have written things that serve the function of forms of language doesn't mean I assure the being of metalanguage" (Lacan, 1998:118).

she assumes the use of language as soon as the word is provided by the divine, he however goes he does agree in the Idea of beauty as a category of the "splendour of Being" (Lacan, 2005: 3). That is, for Lacan, although one may choose to grasp the truth by way of the symbol (the 3), but as a "thorough-going-heretic" – that is to say, having recognised the nature of the sinthone, not depriving oneself of the logical use of it, until it reaches its real, beyond which it has no wish to go on" (Lacan, 2005:3). This Real supposes the designation of a nature-not-at-one- with-itself i.e nature as the 0 or "hole" in which the 1, 2, 3 subsists. The 0, as the symptom, is that which is repressed in every count or that which is turned into an absent-point on the geometrical plane or the points of the semiotic triangle that he presents in Book XIX together with Recanatti. So, nature as a body not-at-one-with-itself produces drives (energetics) i.e. the "echo of the body", which in itself is an indication that all the elements of existence subsist in it. Hence, Lacan says, "the body has several orifices, of which the most important is the ear – because it has no stop gap …" (Lacan 2005:4). The body, like the 0 in Cantor's set theory, translates into skin, i.e. the empty set (the S indexed as 1) and the skin in this sense is the real which holds the disconnected structures of the body. Skin qua the real, is the imagined "empty sack" or "empty set" which designates "(*in*)existence and (*in*)consistence of the body" (Lacan, 2005:5, additions and emphasis mine). The body bears the mark of all the categories of existence. That is, it is the body as subject or as the only (in)consistent thing which appears in the form of a "skin" or "sack" that can hold all the elements of ex-sistence together. In is in this manner that Real-materiality, in Lacanian geometry, is the surface from which we can imagine or suppose the infinity of points. What this footnote has, in a sense, sought to explain our retrieval of the Lacanian psychoanalytic materialist theory of the subject through what Bruce Fink refers to as the Lacan of the 'Real 1', i.e. existence or what Adrian Johnston refers to as the Lacan of the 'barred Real'. We shall have another go at the Lacanian matheme in the next chapter through Jacques-Allain Miller and Alain Badiou's theory of whole numbers.

Even in the case of the function of the symbolic from which all mathematical formalisations are assumed to take root, he still tells us that, far from being confused with being-qua-being, the symbolic "subsists qua ex-sistence with respect to the act of speaking," that is, "the symbolic bears only ex-sistence" (Lacan, 1998:119).[119] But if Lacan is read from the place of the Master-Signifier as the Big Other (with a capital-letter O) which behaves like a "linguistically structured entity", to use Bruce Fink differently, he can be read as implying that, "the body is subdued: 'the letter kills' the body ... The 'living being' – our animal nature – dies, language coming to its place and living us" (Fink 1995:12). In that process of suture, the elements of the Symbolic can be said to be deposited into the body where they metamorphize into Imaginary elements which themselves come to function independently of the very same Symbolic order which had initially created them. This is how, in a sense, one can say that subjectivity, in Lacanian psychoanalytic sciences, is read as the affect of the Big Other of language, the Other of demand, the Other of desire as an external stimuli.[120] So, the purpose of our analysis of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory was to dissuade theorists and philosophers from reading it as though it were of a transcendental logic. After all it is Lacan himself who tells us that the purpose of his extension of Frege's logical schema or theory of whole numbers is to ground "the number 1 on the concept of inexistence" qua 0 and "the subsistence of the number can only be assured from the equinumericity of objects that a concept subsumes" (Lacan, unpublished).

Analysis in both Lacanian and Freudian psychoanalytic science, we are told, must start from the place of 'objective desire' (nature as drive) rather than that of 'subjective desire' (transcendence), i.e. that which denotes the power of meaning in its transcendental form. This, one can do without falling into the trap of a pure empiricism or supposing the logic of the thing in-itself by focusing on his notion of the genitive process or theory of energetics or theory of drives. That is, by cautiously and logically examining Lacan's statement that Frege regresses

[119] Lacan himself makes this point quite clear nowhere more than in Book XIX where he states that his matheme looks at how "historical resonance" is introduced at the "level of logic" or at the level of the function of qauntifiers, that is, how logic itself "contains the not-whole […] which is, very precisely and very curiously what Aristotelean logic in the measure that it put forward and separated out the function of prosdiorisms which are nothing other than what you know, namely, the use of all *pan,* of some, *ti*, around which Aristotle takes the first steps in formal logic" (Lacan, unpublished: 14).

[120] Fink, 1995, p. 13.

"to the concept of the concept qua empty ..., precisely by considering what he believes to be nothingness, namely, the concept whose number would be equal to zero" (Lacan, unpublished). The One, in order to be, has to go through the aleph Zero as the genus of the logical series of whole numbers because the One is found to be lacking at the level of Zero. This is why, Lacan reminds us that the symbolic tells us that "there is no meta-language, from where can one designate, in language, an object that one can be assured is not different to itself" (Lacan, unpublished). And similarly, in set theory, the foundation of the One is Zero, or rather, the foundation of the enumerable is the non-numerable. Hence, the One in Lacanian mathematical logic, will always imply the inexistent Zero.

What the Zero reminds us is that, there is a Real which is always attached to the Symbolic qua the One. This is why he says, what is meant by his *matheme* is the idea that the empty set or the void of lack designated by Zero is "the door whose going through constitutes the birth of the *One*", that is, it is breaking through of the Zero or the empty set that the One is constituted (Lacan, unpublished). The point that Lacan is making through this materialist interpretation of Frege's theory of whole numbers and Cantor's set theory is that in mathematical logic, "0 has just as much truth-value as 1, as 1, because the zero is not the negation of the truth 1, but the truth of the lack which consists in the fact that 2 lacks 1," that is, "0 is not the negation of anything whatsoever, in particular of any multitude. It plays its role in the building up of number" (Lacan, unpublished). This is how in numerating or the counting of subsets, 2 (the Symbolic), as the third form, enjoys a relationship with 0 (the Real) through 1 (the Imaginary). Such is the materialist function of transcendental materialism in the Lacanian matheme. And through it, we can see that, problematic to the theory of whole numbers and the counting of subsets, is the status of the 2 (the Symbolic), for it is much easier for logic to establish the status 1 (the Imaginary) because it is guaranteed by the relationship it enjoys with the 0 (the Real).[121]

[121] That is, as Lacan says, it was at least easier for him to establish that the Imaginary is a function of the Real or to underline that, "the 1 generated from the lack marked by the 0" (Lacan, unpublished). With 0 and 1, the number is easily accessible "by being able to be produced either as a sum, or as exponentiation of numbers that are smaller than it" and even "when you add them, or when you put them with one another, indeed 1 by itself in an exponential relation, never will the 2 be reached" (Lacan, unpublished). That is, it seems impossible to say that the 2 can be established, either by a summation or an exponentiation generated from the smaller numbers.but unlike Lacan, since our Fanonian logical schema is not that of invention or humanist ethics, but of resistance and liberation, we are not necessarily concerned with how he proves the existence of the 2 through the supposition of 3 in the same order of summation and exponentiation (or subtraction as Badiou would have it) through which every series of numbers is establishable.

For the fear of being repetitive, I shall leave it here with Lacan, because the psychoanalytic theme, like all the other themes examined in this chapter, will keep recurring in the ongoingness of our dialecticisation of the black struggle for liberation through the concept of death, or rather, the economy of life-in-death. We will, in the fifth chapter return to the Lacanian matheme by way of Miller and Badiou's theory of natural numbers and whole numbers. However, I shall end the chapter with a brief take on the theory of symbol and myth. Since we have already mentioned that this chapter is interlacerated between the previous chapter and the next chapter(s), the theoretical and philosophical treatment of symbol, myth, or fable in postcolonial theory and critical philosophy in African Studies has not yet been discussed. We have deliberately left that part for the next chapter and have made this chapter an interlude between it and the one to follow because the categories examined here are the ones within which a postmodernist postcolonial reading of symbol, myth, or fable is taken. Instead of Symbol being a mechanism for the black subject to, as Fanon (1986:2) says, "accomplish … (the) descent into a real hell" we are told by postcolonial theorists that it is functional to the celestial journey alone: a journey that the subject of resistance and liberation has to make into future-time. We are not here denying, as Fanon tells us, that "Man is a *yes* that vibrates to cosmic harmonies". But we are being cognisant of what he reminds us of, a few lines before this statement, that, "the black man is not a Man", if Man is of an ontological category (Fanon 1986:2).

He is 'Not a Man' due to the factors that we have accounted for in the first chapter. Hence even its ontologies cannot be captured at the level of transcendence (not that they are not or cannot be transcendental but are forced back into the material by the violent phenomenology of the colonial socio-symbolic order). They have been forced, under colonial modernity, into the realm of death, the "zone of non-being, an extraordinarily sterile and arid region, an utterly naked declivity where an upheaval can be born," the ground zero of subjectivity (Fanon, 1967:2). It is because, being forced to remain at the animus, by the violent ontologies (or the "series of aberrations of affect")[122] of colonial modernity, that the objective experience of the colonised subject becomes represented, in ways that allows him to curve a path-way for "truths that he has worked out for himself one after another" (Fanon, 1967:2). That is, what is expressed in the mythic-ritual processes of the black traditional and 'modern' aesthetic forms are calls for the plunge into a fraternal blood-bath that allows "them to ignore the obstacle(s)"

[122] Fanon, 1952. p. 2.

presented by the phenomenology of modernity (Fanon, 1967:42). Or rather, what is expressed in the "death reflexe(s)" of song, drum, and dance are the energetics that release muscular tension of colonised subjects and jolts them into an auto-destructive mode based on the interpretation of their concrete historical reality. A form of existence which is riddled by material contradictions and antagonisms which come to produce a desire for human freedom. This dialectical movement from the realm of death is not reflective in the sense that since its subject is denied the vertical apprehensions required in transcendental ontologies, its articulations are turned into the base material (qua material ontologies), which like in be pop jazz and black polyrhythmic musical forms, in general, requires the rhythmical ascension of the bass note for their translation. In the bass note, like on the plane of 'life-in-(death)', there is but a totality where structures and forms cannot be separated.

The negativity suggested here is neither that of theodicy besides the fact that it is directed towards a transcendence, nor that of mechanistic material idealisations qua the unnameable endowed with a substance of form.[123] Rather, it is the negativity, which is operative in "the reality of the (death-)drives" i.e. an economy of the drive which is understood best through the categories of division more than those of desire (Moi 1986:16)[124]. It is not similar to the negativity of Derrida's "deconstructionist subversive effects on transcendence" which "falls into the trap of not being truly able to account for that which is heterogenous to language and the symbol" (Moi 1986). As we noted above, such a Derridian positive-negative "doesn't go far enough, remaining as it does enclosed in the field of the signifier". This conception of negativity, as we have seen above, is based on the idea of *separation* which informs the Western

[123] This is why Barthes says, "semiology has not yet come into being", because "since Saussure himself, and sometimes indenpendently of him, a whole section of contemporary research has constantly been referred to the problem of meaning: psychoanalysis, structuralism, eidetic psychology, some new types of literary criticism of which Bachelard has given the first examples, are no longer concerned with facts except in as much as they are endowed with significance" (Barthes 2009:133-4).

[124] Since as Lacan himself notes, the "divided subject", as a category of ex-sistence escapes the analytical paradigms of modern science which "makes an object into a subject" (Lacan, 2005:10). The onbject as a subject, is in this sense regarded as a thing in which knowledge resides and can be derived. But for Lacan the object, as a category of real-existence is riddled with contradictions and antagonism, i.e. is constituted as a libido or an energetics of the drive economy. And it is from its existence as a conflict-ridden-thing that we can "observe desire", hence Lacan says, "from this observation of desire we infer that the cause is objectal" – objectal in the sense that "the desire for knowledge encounters obstacles" (Lacan, 2005:10). The dividedness or conflict-ridden nature of the real of existence qua materiality or social history is what makes experience a plane borne with rupture or revolution.

scientific and philosophical epistemology. Perhaps it is here that we should remind Homi Bhabha and other postmodernist postcolonial theorists that, instead of trying to correct Fanon through (the early structuralist) Lacan, they must look to Fanon for the correct reading of Lacan. Lacan should have left it at the statement that, "the unconscious is structured like a language", or rather, postmodernist postcolonial theorists, with their deconstructionist tool kit, should stop approaching Lacan by way of this statement (Lacan 1981:203). Or, Lacan to make himself not so confusing to his Judas Iscariots and Peters[125], perhaps he should have simply stated, and confidently so, that, 'the unconscious is language' or 'the unconscious is capable of transforming into language'. There was no need for him to say that, 'the unconscious is made out of language', because such a statement left him in territories that he might not have intended, although familiar with. That is, he should have examined the processes through which the unconscious, as a lack produced by contradictory material forces, translates into language forms. And in order to do so, there was no need for him to veer into an Idealist structuralism or Idealist transcendentalism which both made it hard for him to escape the metaphysical trap that threaten the extension of his theory of the unconscious in postmodernist postcolonial paradigms of emancipation.

As we have discovered through the Lacanian psychoanalytic formula analysed in this section, in order to move away from the transcendental ontologies espoused in early African nativistic thoughts, postcolonial theorists should have learnt from Fanon, that, African ontologies, as sound which fails to translate into speech and into Word, their only modes of translation into a transcendental direction is that of destructive vibrations or ruptural rhythms rather than the subtractive strategies they prescribe through their interpretation of Lacanian mathematical functions. In that way, they could have seen how the articulations of both the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic becomes a unity at the material plane qua the 'plane of life-in-death'.[126] But Let me not veer off from the immediate task at hand as we are to return to the

[125] His Judas Iscarriots and Peters in the sense that like the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ, there are those who are willing to follow him but only to betray him in the end and there are those who like Peter, the rock that he was, representing perhaps the element of 'Earth' in the symbolics of this progressive Judaic Masonic society are willing to stand with him forever (without saying until the end since there is no ending for the militant Peter, the ernest disciple of the Truth).

[126] The dialectics of the 'Women Time' of Kristeva, like the dialectics of 'Black-Death-Time", through Nathaniel Mackey's reading of it as an articulation of 'life-in-death', to correct Jacquiline Rose's (1986:154) inditement of Kristeva, is indeed that of a "rhythmic space without thesis or position". It is indeed, as she states dismissively of Kristeva, composed only on naturalistic, unnameable, and unrepresented material whose narcistic violence,

place of African systems of thought in postmodernist postcolonial theories of emancipation in the next chapter. In the following section, which is the last to this chapter, I shall examine, the implications of the structuralist hermeneutic model on the interpretation of symbol, myth, or fable which, as seen above, are regarded by postmodernist postcolonial theorists as metaphoric and metonymic extensions of the 'indicial Symbol' qua the phenomenological or transcendental Signifier.

To the Hermeneutics of the Symbol and Myth

In this section, I put it that, the conception of symbol, myth, and fable in postmodernist postcolonial theory is an extension of the logico-sematics of structural linguistics. It reads myth as a "metalinguistic" structure, where, Fred Moten (1997:219) in a critic of Levi-Strauss' structuralist or logocentric conception of myth and ritual says, "words *do* go there". For us, rather, myth, as Moten says, denotes a "paralinguistic" structure where "words don't go there, words go *past* there", where they "float/drift/linger" and mark "a temporal/ethical problem" (Moten, 1997:218 and 223).[127] As we have been at pains to show, the Symbolic, in all the extensions of the theory of hermeneutic interpretation, is regarded as the genus or the overdeterminative system which the speaking subject (qua the subject who has made the transition from empty-speech to full-speech) has to constantly refer to for a dialectical grasp of existence and the meaning of existence. The general linguistic theory, the theory of hermeneutic phenomenology, or psycho-linguistic theory examined above, seek to present the functions of symbol, myth, or fable through the structural-systemic theory of language. These concepts are regarded as semantic categories which logically introduce speech-acts to the subject whilst at the same time bestowing meaning on both the subject and things. They constitute the sources or the systems to which action and experience must correspond to. The Symbol, in psycho-linguistic theory, with all the sorts of accidents and atypicalities contained

or "psychic functionalism" is that of "neuroses and paranoia" (Rose, 1986:154 and 158). And as pathological, it is indeed pre-Oedipal but this does not mean that it is incapable of producing language itself, since it is already of both language and existence. Language is, for the subject of psychic pathology, not a priori, like in the Oedipal complex. That is, the pathological subject, unlike the militant figure of (Infinite) Truth, does not relate to language as dread or Fallenness like in the act of the 'Original Sin' of Kierkergaard.

[127] This could be read as what Fred Moten (1997:219) refers to as "the attempt to read ritual as it is manifest in the sound of such words or the attempt to transcribe myth transformed by gesture and meaningful positionality might be better though in terms of the improvisation of ritual, writing, sound, idiom, event."

in it, structures the subject's processes of coming-into-being, and just like the Oedipal complex, it functions as a point of sublimation for the elements of the Real. That is, a sublimation through identification with the Symbolic order.

It is seen as "a voice of Being" which is prior to experience and whose meaning can be grasped at semantic, myhthological, and dogmatic levels (Ricoeur (1974:316 and 319). Symbols are regarded as central to the economy of philosophical reflection because, they are said to enable the subject (in a phenomenological sense) to reflect on their meaning which has an expressive and exploratory value. That meaning is, however, opaque and contingent, not transparent, and cannot therefore be reduced to analogy. Rather, it is seen as a "structure of signification in which a direct, primary literal meaning designates, in addition another meaning which is indirect, secondary and which can be apprehended only through the first" (Ricoeur 1974:12). For example, in the Freudian topography of subjectivity, the interpretation of meaning embedded in symbols designates a "kind of metabolism of meaning" that is rooted in the metonymic, allegoric, or "metaphorical transformation of (a) desire" caused by the same symbol, positioned as a transcendental ontology (Wilson, 1997:viii and xiv). And in Lacanian psycho-linguistic theory, the categories of metaphor, catachresis, automasis, allegory, metonym, and synechdoche are the semantic condensations out of which the subject modulates the discourse of the symbol.

What is interpreted through these categorical extensions of the symbol, are the self-sufficient meanings of the symbol itself, which the speaking subject disguises as his/her own. The meanings (or Signs of Signifiers, not Signifieds) are crystallised through the semantic condensation centred on speech which is a scientific element functional to the reflexive subject alone. As a mechanism of scientific condensation, the speaking subject is assigned the power to determine and assign value or meaning to things and objects qua the elements of experience. If we are to critique this structuralist underpinning or rather structuralist extension of Freud (1997:183), we can say, here condensation, as a category of Ideality, serves the purpose of forming new unities, composite persons, mixed images, and the production of common sense. Its work transforms symbols into ideas of things and unites differential elements through composition in a higher order. In a sense, this is how the structural models of psycho-linguistic theory and its extensions in the field of postmodern postcolonial theory examines the nature of the relation between the subject and the symbol in psychoanalytic terms. By tracing the meaning of symbols to transcendental models rather than right back to materiality as supposed

in the Lacanian algebra i.e. the order which represents the most radical agencies of symbolisation in being. In other words, by tracing them to the categories of cultural normativity carried in myths, folklores, or religious rites. Which however for the postmodern postcolonialist is system rather than the social as the materialist Lacan or materialist Freud seems to propose.

The positivistic regressive method of analysis suggested in the interpretative models that we have been examining tries to suggest to us that symbol, myth, or fable are categories which imply a situation where the subject 'is spoken' by the Word or is speaking through the Word in its Ideal transcendental form rather than material form. In Lacanian language, this can be read as a reduction of speech to the form of a metheme or mathematical axioms or an algebraic sign. And, it shows how "the support of the symbolic function" is recognised "in the name of the father" qua the Phallus. This 'name of the Father' or Oedipal myth arises from the hermeneutical conception of a "primordial appeal for meaning" which gives rise to a mediation on self-recognition, the struggle for truth, and tragic knowledge" (Ricoure 1974:55). Because it comes to learn that the Fatherly phallus qua the 'Symbol-Erect' absolves or condemns its own fullness of being qua scientific or psychic being. It is by dying in the order of transcendence (rather than death in materiality) that the subject can penetrate and reveal the truth-meaning contained within the Symbol. In a sense, manifest in the Symbol are both the properties of affirmation and negation in the absolutist sense. This teleologisation of death into life qua the symbolic, like in Heidegger's idea of being-towards-death, takes death-in-life (rather than life-in-death) for the limit of one's unconditional, unsupercedable, certain, and determinate possibility[128]. In this regard, they fail to realise how the Lacan (2005:77) of the material signifier relates that "the symbol manifests itself first of all as the murder of the thing, and this death constitutes in the subject, the externalisation of desire."

These hermeneutical outlines of the theory of the symbol that we find in postmodernist postcolonial thought suppose that the subject always has to renew itself through the transcendental symbol and find completion by projecting itself in it. This is done in such a way that human knowledge or experience comes to be regarded as determined by the force of desire for an origin that lies in an eternal truth which will always remain external to the subject itself.

[128] Lacan, 2005, p. 76.

And, the only duty of the subject becomes only that of mastering the unconscious symbols of language through reality because those symbols, to take from Benveniste (1971:74), are "both infra and supralinguistic". And, as infralinguistics, they make use of (the) signs (of Signifiers) which cannot be split (like the signs of Signifieds) but can have a multiplicity of variants; and as supralinguistic, it makes use of signs which correspond to large [or general] units of discourse than to minimal units [or particular]. These notions of predication are premised on the semantic structure of the symbol which forces the subject or "surbodinate(s) consciousness, the symbolic function, and language to the primary position of desire" (Ricoeur 1974:265). The symbolic function is, in this sense, the origin of social life and it draws the subject to the origin of language, in a mode similar to the quantum amplification of (cosmic) signs into repetitive dimensions or extending rhizomes.

The symbol itself, although fixed and rigid, possesses surplus meaning and a temporal charge which enable the recovery and re-appropriation of any meaning that might have been lost in the dialectical movement between abstract and concrete reflection, or vice versa. Like the Word, the symbol, as a hermeneutical model, is regarded as "a cumulative entity, capable of acquiring new dimensions of meaning without losing the old ones" (Ricoeur 1974:93). Its univocity tolerates one primary meaning, that of the 'Old *Form*', not the *concept*, in the Barthian sense. Differently, as Roland Barthes (2009:144) tells us, mythical signification, unlike symbolic signification, has "no fixity". And neither is its functional mode synthetic like that of language which draw the subject to the place of origin through symbolic solidity. Suffice to say it that this is the mythical of the materialist theory of the subject of anti-colonialism that this thesis is trying to reach at, not that of the hermeneutic paradigm supposed by postmodern postcolonial theorists. The material or contents constitutive of this myth are not those of Form and substance (in the Spinozian sense) but those of ruptures, contradictions and antagonisms emanating from concrete historical reality. The mythical, read through the linguistic theory of the symbol, to use Barthes' (2009:159), distinction of myth (Classical poetry) and (contemporary) poetry (or modern myth), the former "has the pretensions of transcending into a factual system" whilst the later "has the pretension of contracting in an essential system." And in the case of contemporary postmodern postcolonial theory it is haunted more by the pretensions of the latter, while that of the materialist theory of the subject of anti-colonialism is haunted, more, by the pretensions of the former without its cosmological aspects.

What the subject reads or interpret, as essential in the latter are the conventions of a social myth promoted, sedimented, metamorphosed, or translated to the level of meaning equal to that of language. These conventions are promoted to the rank of symbols by culture and tradition. Yet however, the subtleties and complexities which influence their possible mutation and extension are not read from (and through) content but are rather read from (and through) form (as a category of an abstract idea). In the essentialist or cosmological conceptions of myth, the subject interprets the figurative language within the series of symbols because the symbols themselves are the categories which are used to understand human knowledge. And, contrary to this interpretative mode which places meaning within the synchronic dimension of symbols, the factual conception of myth places meaning within the diachronic dimensions, or rather, reads myth as a category of the diachronic dimensions. That is, it does not rely on the descriptive science of structural linguistics which, as an interpretative paradigm, is premised on phenomenological distanciation: the bringing close of the far, the temporal, or the spiritual as a concept turning back on itself.

What the hermeneutic analysis of symbol and myth as paradigms foregoes or forgets is the fact that both as artefacts of the void of materiality rather than transcendence as suggested in the 'ontology of the void' of mathematical logic, they are already pregnant with language and meaning (which is not of the '*full*' type but of the '*empty*' type). But the question to be asked, is: how do they become pregnant with meaning and language, or, how do they get transformed into categories of incorporeal materiality? Or rather, how do they engage into movement through *chaos* and *accident*? For someone like Roland Barthes, it is by *inflection*; for the interpretative or critical philosopher, it is by *reflection*, and for the avant-garde anti-colonial theorist (or what I shall refer to as the theory of 'Black-Death Time), it is by through the generic process or *diffractive-refraction* of a regressive genesis. The answer to this question, can be found through also asking questions like: What is the characteristic of myth as a linguistic form? What is the characteristic of myth as a natural form (or rather, a deathly form)? In the various schools of thought that we interrogate in this work, these questions are responded to in varying and contradictory ways. But, to answer these questions, Barthes, in a very persuasive way, moves towards a materialist semiological postulation of the terms signifier, signified, and sign. The linguistic system, whether psychoanalytic or phenomenological (in the manner that we have outlined them above, regard these terms as separate, not as a unity, in instances where they read them as a unity, it is only around the elements of the former (the Signifier which

produces both the object and the predicate, qua both the Signified and the Sign), that they do so.

A mythical Signifier of materialist ruptural trajectories, unlike that of the phenomenological or transcendental type, is according to Barthes (2009:136), a "conceret entity" and is therefore neither empty nor full of a priori meanings, like that of Form, which bear cosmological meaning. It contains a meaning constituted in its concreteness in what can be regarded as a bottom-up production of a materialist truth and language. Although not a 'full' meaning, per se, in so far as it is inundated by the contradictory elements of the nonmeaning of the concrete, or rather, like the mystic or the initiate, in so far as it expresses a 'life' forced into 'death', it still is a meaning with language not a meaning within language or the meaning of celestial forces. That 'life', forced into sedimentation or into 'death' by the colonial socio-symbolic is never 'dead'. But like a dormant volcano, it often at times find a vent to erupt from at any moment. And like the anus, it excretes the obscene and the grotesque which we imbibe and breath in social situations. It induces moments of contradiction and antagonism through which, as a life forced into a 'permanent' death, it tries to translate and transform into life (only) through the back door. This kind of (a not yet) life forced into symbolic death overwhelms the elements which subsist together with it within the natural, or rather, is overwhelmed by the contradictions emanating from the natural which birthed it. But since it is a negativity of the "bio-material complexity" of the human condition, it is never One with the material (which in itself is of the category of the 'multiple without-One'). It always finds itself alienated, as a lack, longing for a fullness which never was, never is, and will always never be because mother nature, as a ruptural entity, keeps jolting it and denies it the comfort of an ethical existence that its seeks. This perpetual alienation, compels it to always search for a *place,* through production rather than reflection. This is how we would seek to account for the characteristic of ritual death or social death as a natural or materialist form, or, account for: why myth bears an 'empty' meaning; for, why the signifier of myth is different from the signifier of structural linguistics; for, what is a diachronic study of myth in the theory of the death-drive, and how is it different from the synchronic study as life qua transcendentalist conceptions of myth in the theory of desire; or, for, how myth is formed at the plane of death drive qua the Real material plane.

If we are to follow this dialectical materialist approach to the articulations of ritual-myth, we could see that, differently from the articulations of the 'psycho-linguistic' symbol, those of

what we can refer to as the 'psycho-materialist' symbol are not those of speech but of sound qua the anomalous and inorganic life-in-death which defines the condition of blackness in both the past and the present of our modernity. Since this 'life' is heavied by the elements of the material (situations) from which it emerges or is hampered by its "acceptance of death,"[129] it is not always clearly audible. Thus, like the *duende* or the groanings in the speech of a *sangoma* (a spirit medium), the material content connotes a surplus which freezes it to the level of an absence of speech, a 'life-in-death', the 'true' zero-degree of subjectivity.[130] That is, the overbearingness of the material content on myth, is a pointer or testimony to how myth, as Barthes (2009:158) puts it, is borne with everything corrupt or manifests or manifests as "a harmony between content and form". In other words, in a materialist myth, the elegance of the language it produces is naturalised and neutralised by the symbolic orders of its own making which have thought themselves as omnipotent. The 'materialist' mythical signifier, to take from Barthes (2009:153), functions as an "inextricable whole made of meaning and form", created via contradictory and antagonistic concrete situations. The hermeneutic theorists, in the attempt to account for this status of myth, make the mistake of returning to language as a structure or an essence which justifies its articulations. They forget that, those very same categories they privileged so much are themselves manifestations of the dislocated elements of material content: the small stuff, big stuff, hot stuff, cold stuff, fast stuff, dark stuff, turbulence, and the concept of time that Copernican scientism or Einstein's geometry has not been able to deal with. This, they do, as though material drives which are incapable of producing their own consistences, except through constant movement. Language in the field of hermeneutic interpretation theory, which postmodern postcolonial theorists rely on for their interpretation of myth, fable, or tales, is regarded as a causal factor, both in the a priori and a posteriori processes of subject formation, hence its limited emancipatory potential.

[129] Barthes, 2009, p. 158.

[130] To use Barthes (2009:158), we can perhaps say, at no point did we abandon language at all, but only corrected its use in structural linguistic interpretative models, since "myth is a language which does not die: it wrests from the meanings which give it its sustenance an insidious, degraded survival, it provokes in them an artifial reprieve in which it settles comfortably, it turns them into speaking corpses." Yet, however, it "prefers to work with poor, incomplete images, where the meaning is already relieved of its fat, and ready for a signification …" (Barthe 2009:151).

Conclusion

As we have tried to show in the last few paragraphs through our reading of Barthes, "language lends itself to myth",[131] or, rather language is produced by the materialist energetics of myth in a mode different from that of the symbol in psycho-phenomenological linguistic theory. The meaning possessed by myth is not that of the 'language-object'[132] but of a material 'sound' which bears the potential of being transformed into a referential mechanism. Of which the dialectics of the latter are aimed towards "transforming" meaning whilst those of the former are aimed towards "eternalising" meaning (Barthes 2009:176). As per Barthes' analysis (which we follow with reservations because it bears the potential of collapsing into a transcendentalism as assumed by the standards of Western social theory) in myth there is no eternity or eternal language, language is of reality and is complicit with it. Myth as a metalanguage "acts nothing" and does not possess the prerogative of inducing action in the subject through externality. Rather, myth symbolises the failure of a material ontology or the language of the unconscious, and its *tautology*, to take from Barthes (2009:180) again, "is a faint at the right moment, a saving aphasia, it is death, or perhaps comedy, the indignant 'representation' of the *rights* of reality over and above language." Its hermeneutics are not those of explanation to the extent that it may not even qualify itself as a hermeneutic project. And for these reasons, it "testifies to a profound distrust of language" (Barthes 2009:181). Of which, any "refusal of language", as Barthes (2009:181) has it, "is a death". I mean here the refusal of language as an Ideal transcendental position.

Barthes' term, '*neither-norism*' signals this kind of a refusal as he himself testifies and as we also have tried to testify in this chapter and as we again intend to testify in the next chapter but this time through a direct engagement with the critical philosophical on processes of ritual-myth in African systems of thought. These works, in various ways take the semiotic and symbolic, phenomenological and psychoanalytic models of mythical signification to justify an

[131] Barthes, 2009, p. 157.

[132] This is not to say that, postcolonial theorists maintain the rigid metaphysical notions of the 'language-object' logic, but to say, for them, the mythical signifier is an element of Ideal transcendence where speech is "solidified into reflexive speech" (Barthes 2009:182).

emancipatory subjectivity that takes the a priori Truth-Idea qua the system of language as its genus. These are the kinds of moves that we have been trying to warn postmodern postcolonial literary theorists against because myth is neither of a transcendental ontology nor a reflexive ontology but of a materialist ontology qua the energetics of the natural-Real. Hence, we cannot focus on it as though it were a form of full-speech whose meaning escapes all experience. The subject of myth is never a "sign-object" as Mudimbe (1991:xii) says in his reading of African fables, parables, and myth. It is not a metaphor in the way that existential phenomenology or psycho-linguistic theory would like us to believe. Myth does not bear the capacity for an objectifying existential necessity similar to that of the linguistic or phenomenological structure of ontology.

Unlike in the categories of a transcendental ethics, myth, is not based on an agnostic and non-contradictory communion between the Same and the Other in the predicative manner that the hermeneutic paradigms examined in this chapter would suggest. The mythical subject, or rather the mystic, unlike the ethical subject drops most of its "analogous features" with the Other "and keeps only a few" because it always has the full guarantee of nature causes in which it tries to mould into truth: the nature causes which when the subject of resistance and liberation moves in a transcendental direction qua the direction of the Other, tries to shed their dead weight.[133] So in the manner that we have sought to define myth in the last few paragraphs, we can ask the most pertinent question: how can we account for myth as an alibi of coloniality? Or, to put it in Mudimbe's (1991:xxi) words, we can ask, without making the same mistake of running to the Oedipus myth as he does; how do we examine "the influence of parables, fables, (and myth) on human existence?" Ours, unlike that of Mudimbe, is not an Oedipus myth or a Symbolic or a cosmological myth which aims at the transference of human and social relations into language. It is, rather, a materialist myth aimed at the transformation of human and social relations through actionality not their transference into language. Or, it is the mythical of the materialist ontology of death. The one borne with concrete situations, not of the synchronic dimensions of the scientific subject, as suggested in the hermeneutic interpretative paradigm, but of the diachronic dimensions of life-in-death, the frozen-speech of the material and corporeal body. Not the (in)corporeal body of Marleu-Ponty's 'phenomenology of perception' or that of Heidegger's 'Dasein' but the substanceless body, the speaking corpse, whose

[133] Barthes, 2009, p. 150-1.

symptom is that of the real of coloniality, and whose dialectics are those of the pathological. It is albeit a body endowed with (the) significance and meaning of a language prior to its being coded, that is, ‘object language’ before it is experienced through the reflexive categories of its structuralist paradigms.

Chapter Four

Semiotics of Myth or Semantics of Life?

"In what degree may the psychical arrow become so obsessed with elaborate and over-explicit detail in a long narrative such as Voss that the transparency of the Word lends itself to oppression in the name of hunting down truth, participating in marrying truth?" (Harris, 1981:77).

"Understanding kills action, action depends on a veil of illusion – this is what Hamlet teaches us, not the stock interpretation of Hamlet as a John-a-dreams, who, from too much reflection, from an excess of possibilities so to speak, fails to act. Not reflection, not that! – True understanding into the terrible truth, outweighs every motive for action, for Hamlet and Dionysiac man alike." (Nietzsche, 1993:39).

Introduction

Since, we have mentioned that the mythical signifier, in the situation of the colonised subject denotes the 'material signifier', the Real natural/material, the inexistent, the non-enumerable, the unnameable, or the inanimate, its moments, processes, or acts of appearance cannot be equated to those of the Oedipus myth or the phallocentricism of Western social theory (which is of the Imaginary-Symbolic order in its Cartesian form). And its functions can neither be those of reflection, indexing, coding, inference nor reference, because they are not conditioned by a logic of iteration or the retrieval of a psycho-linguistics or the semiotics of the Original Sin qua the transcendent Truth-Idea of subjectivity supposed in onto-theological social theory. Instead of locating myth and fable at the *third-order semiological system* (the transcendental Truth-Idea qua the symbolic), we locate it at the level of the *first-order semiological system* (the Real natural and that of the barred Real in the form of the energetics producible through the drives of the former). This first order semiological system is not of the One-All suggested in the hermeneutic models criticised in the previous chapter but it is of the kinetic rhythmicity of the 'barred Real' qua the economy of the death drive. After having its third-order semiological systems sublated by the phenomenology of the colonial symbolic order, this materialist subject moves through a refractive geometry. This refractive or regressive movement is not one of choice but one of a subject which when tossed up or quilted by the energies generating from the barred Real is forced back or is forced to recoil into the 'Real material' which, in itself like a Mother's love, is harsh and is only functional in so far as it gives the subject the courage to face all its detractors again with more vengeance. The first order-semiological system, to extend on Barthes' thematisation, is the level at which the

ontological materials of the colonised subject (as the true embodiment of propertyhood) are reduced to deathly forms (material ontologies), which themselves through the dynamics of contradiction and antagonism throw the subject up and sets it in the search for the path to emancipation.

We have ignored the second-order semiological system, found in Barthes' schema, in order to avoid the limitations of transcendence which his theory of myth might be susceptible to, or rather, is said to be susceptible to by its critics and non-sympathetics in Western social theory (a position we do not necessarily share in our reading of him here).[134] The first-semiological order, for us, following Adrian Johnston, is a zone of "Ghosts of Substance(s) Past", headed towards the impossible actual or the absent "Point of Freedom" qua the third-semiological order.[135] One may say that the third semiological system does not appear (as a separate entity) at all in this schema but this is not the case because it is already of the first semiological system. Perhaps this is because there is not only three stages to emancipation, as Barthes himself may want us to believe, or rather, are denumerable like infinite numbers. Or, perhaps the three-stage schema that we often see in Western social theory, is just of a wrong thematisation since there is never a point of the actual or arrival unless it is *presupposed* or *posited*. But, beside this point, we differ with the proponents of the circular hermeneutic paradigm on the interpretation of the dialectic of sublimation and promotion in the case of the colonised subject because its structures of subjectivity are not those of the reflective dimension but of the diffractive-refractive dimension (since they are constantly denied the opportunity to transcend or carry themselves into *concepts*). With that said the works to be examined or to be critiqued in this chapter make the mistake of moving towards "the direction of the anti-nature of language" by either postulating or reducing existence to a "simple semiological system" or "a pre-semiological system" or a "regressive semiological system" (Barthes 2009:158 and 160). They forget that the mythical articulations of the colonised subject are neither restorative nor reflexive (as we have kept on re-iterating), hence they cannot be located at the level of the

[134] The second system, is the level at which the deathly forms of life or the laments of the material Real are transferred into concrete situations or the plane of the social Real, where "that which is a sign (namely the associative total of a concept and image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier" (Barthes 2009:137).

[135] To use the titles of Adrian Johnston's two papers, *Ghosts of Substance Past: Schelling, Lacan, and the Denaturalisation of Nature* and *Points of Forced Freedom: Eleven (More) Theses on Materialism*.

third-order semiological system. These articulations or semiotics are not of the 'Eternal Man' who merely empties reality for the place of form.

The Ante-Black Philosopheme

Although not necessarily positivistic, we have argued that the hermeneutic mode of inquiry still adheres to a scientific theory of causality which either takes the truth or the subject, both in their self-sufficiency, as points of departure and arrival, with the material being a metaphoric extension of either. That is, the hermeneutic mode of inquiry either poses scientific or ontological questions all aimed at the sublation of the elements of the material, taking the space between the scientific pole and the ontological pole as a gap within the signification chain which demands all theoretical and philosophical efforts of inquiry. The Real is either supposed as eliminable by the scientific drives of the self-sufficient subject or by the scientific drives of the symbolic-sutured subject qua the infinite subject. It doesn't matter from what angle one enters the debate, either way, the scientific drive qua 'subjective desire' gains its position from successfully eliminating the 'empirical gap' qua 'objective desire' and leaving open the 'ontological gap' to which all subjectivity is acquitted, although itself is an absent Form. In a sense, we can say that the idea of revelation still remains central in all the hermeneutic forms of scientific inquiry.

Coming to the themes or reads immediate to this chapter, I shall say these modes of scientific inquiry, through their extension in postmodern postcolonial theory, fail to move away from or "destroy the transcendent status of … (the) signifier" (McGowan, 2013:272). That is, they fail to surpass the theoretical and philosophical limitations or what they call the historicisms of the early advocates of the 'ante-black philosopheme': the ethnophilosopher and the negritudinist poet. This goes without saying that, our theory of anti-colonialism or 'poetics of death' (with its diffractive-refractory methods), does not necessarily say the "subject goes underground to access the Signifier" or moves towards transcendence to access the Signifier, because, what we are left with, in the situation of the colonised subject after the devastating effects of the colonial symbolic is neither a subject nor the Signifier in their scientific and pure mathematical sense.[136]

[136] To use, Todd McGowan's (2013:271) analysis of the hermeneutic ethos in the search for the holy grail in the film, *The Da Vinci Code*.

Hence, at no point does the colonised subject rely on "the mechanical flow of pure life"[137] as suggested in the hermeneutical modes of inquiry, whether in their scientific or mythical form. This is probably something that both the ethnophilosopher and negritudinist poet fail to realise. Of course, they focus too much on the idea of getting beyond "historical distortion in order to get to 'original truth' and the primordial original truth is. However, this goes without saying that at least they have been correct in saying, for the colonised subject, unconscious language, as sound translatable through rhythm, is buried underground and is not held in the transcendent.

Of the works closely examined in this chapter, it is, to a large extent, Wilson Harris who influences our reading of the dialectic of the death-drive in the black ritual-mythic and modes of aesthetic performance. Wynter, besides her inclinations towards a humanist ethics, through her adaptation of Cesaire's concept of the 'Science of the Word' in a dialectical materialist reading of ritual-myth and her theory of the neurobiological subject, is also valuable to our materialist theory of the subject. Harris, through the inversion of the Jungian archetypes and theory of the limbo in his reading of history, fable, and myth allows his poetics to be a poetics of death that concrete poetry and simultaneous poetry tries to read and write from, par

[137] Todd McGowan (2013:237), subjects Barthes theory of myth to a criticism for how it conceives the "relationship between ideology and the signifier". For McGowan, the need by Barthes to focus on the status of signification as production, places too much emphasis on the point where signifiers "would cease to be transcendent interruptions of life and would enter into the process of life itself" (McGowan 2013:237). The conditions of death in the politics of the colonised are slightly different from those which McGowan reads into Barthes, they are not those of a 'pure life'. Those which he says seem to advocate for a moment of emancipation where "revolution would eliminate the seemingly unsurpassable distance between the signifier and life. The conditions of death that both the 'pre-colonial myth symptom' and the 'colonial symptom' engenders do not allow for such a relationship between the signifier and life to subsist. For the theory of colonialism and anti-colonialism that we are working towards in this thesis, the colonial symptom does not have functions similar to those of the psychoanalytic symptom. Its phenomenology displaces the symptomatic functions of the pre-colonial mythic symptom, which when forced into the realms of death, ceases to be life. It rather, transforms into a death, or a life in death, which requires another transformative process through the death-drive for it to start pointing towards another potential form of life; different from that which it was as a pre-colonial mythic symptom. In such a politics of death, emphasis is more on revolutionary performance as ritual enactment, not the ritual enactment of mimesis supposed in ontologies of affirmition, since there is no longer anything substantive to mimic. The pre-colonial mythic symptom does not exist as "the lost object" in a mode similar to that of the psychoanalytic symptom, and does not engender a similar mode of 'lack' or 'alienation'. The 'colonial symptom' does not have negativistic functions similar to those of the 'psychoanalytic symptom'. The politics of the anti-colonial revolutionary project unlike those of the psychoanalytic project, does not involve "helping the subject to recognise its symptom (be it that of the pre-colonial mythical symptom) – the part of the body that resists full intergration into the (colonial-capitalist) symbolic order – as the source of its enjoyment and its freedom" (McGowan, 2013:239). The theory of colonialism and anti-colonialism does not focus on myth as narrative, as is the case with postcolonial theorists, whose occupational field is mostly that of cultural theory, than liberation theory, but on myth as actional (if that's what ritual in its non-mimetic, or rather, dialectical materialist form. Simply put, we are not here trying to establish a point of rapport between matter and essense.

excellence. The others take the usual postmodern postcolonial hermeneutic approach to myth, and these are the hermeneutes: V. Y. Mudimbe, more especially his semiotic analysis of relations and expressions of African metaphysical orders to political performance through the paradigms of critical philosophy, his notion of semiotics of absence in the formation of metasignifiers; Wole Soyinka's in his notion of metaphysics of accommodation: and Henry Lewis Gates' in his analysis of the metaphoric transfer of meaning in modes of signification and figuration within the black aesthetic discourses. For them an emancipatory subjectivity is based on the "knowledge of esoteric systems", as Mudimbe (1991:93) himself puts it. They follow the transcendental reading of both mythical signification and the politics of language. And their intent to escape the orthodoxies of the disciplines of anthropology and history through semiotics, psychoanalysis, or phenomenology is methodically hampered by the structuralist tendencies or Pythagoreanism implicit in these fields of thought. Because, to put it in the words of Mudimbe (1991:101) himself again, myth for them, is still an externality, it still is something that "is out there". They remain lodged in a neo-Kantian philosophical theory of science or Copernican geometry aimed at a logical positivism and a (structuralist or an almost metaphysical) philosophy of consciousness through mythical textuality.

Although the theses of negritude is implicated in these transcendentalist reading of the aesthetics of myth and the politics of death (even at a more slightly metaphysical level), what I want to save from its poetics is the theory of rhythm as a structure of movement for the articulation of a politics of death and a theory of anti-colonialism. Thus, the first sections to this chapter, recognising the limitations of the attempt in African ethnophilosophy and ethnography, Pan-Africanist discourses and negritudinist thought, as Mudimbe (1991:95) would put it, to "postulate the principle (a founding archaeology) or a final reconciliation (a teleological concept)", we shall try to read from negritudinist poetics a theory of the death drive that (could have potentially) rupture(d) any progressive or teleological conceptions of human freedom (had negritude poets not been swayed by the reading of African mythical discourses through the Greek template of metaphysics). I want to rescue from negritude poetics, through Sylvia Wynter, the historical materialist notion of the 'Science of the Word' which she extends from Cesaire because it might enable us to conceptualise death as a currency underlying social structures and forms. And I also want to extend on Senghor's analysis of the aesthetics of mask, song, drum, and dance through the theory of rhythm. Rhythm not as a category of the Pythagorean cosmos as he himself seems to suggest through his philosophical anthropology

but as a category of the material Real qua bass. I take these two frameworks articulated in negritude poetics as bearing the potential for a materialist theory of the subject of anti-colonialism which we are trying to build up through the dialectics of the death-drive. However, this is not without ignoring the fact that just like the hermeneuts, within the dynamics of the trilogy of death that this thesis is trying to outline, negritude thought also makes the mistake of locating emancipatory subjectivity at the plane of 'death-in-life', that is, it tries to locate the 'politics of death' in the realm of esoteric forces.

The ante-Black philosopheme to which postmodern postcolonial theorists respond to has its roots in the anthropological and historical conceptions of African systems of thought as ontological entities transcending the natural acting upon it as a 'vital force' which metamorphizes into the natural body. The black aesthetic, in these epistemologies or philosophemes is read as an 'interpretative' criterion, or rather, a 'naming' criterion which produces abstract rules and identities. The 'naming criterion', in this sense, acts ex nihilio on the factors of material being and its contradictions. The ante-Black philosophemes which read the aesthetic or the mythical as a mode of symbolic transformation are the early nativist discourses of ethnophilosophers, ethnotheologists, the realist Pan-Africanist discourses, and negritudinist poets. They tried to render a genuine reality of history by invoking essentialist claims to their reading of the mythical and the aesthetic in African systems of 'thought'. Unlike their postcolonial counterparts who appeal to the *semiological* and the *hermeneutic*[138] modes of transforming African myth into symbolic signs, they appeal to metaphysics, (H)istory, and anthropology which are more concerned with the internal coherence of myth and its external functionality to existence. They suppose an "ontology that conceives Beings as Forces (each being … in itself being an immaterial force existing with or without its visible envelope)" (Mudimbe 1991:131).

The biggest blunder to be made by these proponents of the ante-black philosopheme was that of making their mission one of an ontological restitution aimed at finding in pre-colonial African traditions and philosophy equivalents of European philosophies. By taking that root of describing African systems of thought as metaphysical certainties or modes of actualisation

[138] Following Foucault in *The Order of Things*, Mudimbe (1991:114) defines *semiology* as "the knowledge and methods which allow one to observe, describe, and relate social cultural signs in a given culture", and *hermeneutics* as "the knowledge and technical norms which permit one to read, relate, and interpret relations and meanings in a given culture."

and self-determination, they opened their theories up, or rather, the systems they intended to analyse to the limitations of abstract transcendental logic. That is, the problem with Africanist discourses of the ante-black philosopheme type, as identified in the postmodern postcolonial debates, to start with ethnophilosophy, as Mudimbe (1991:189) himself notes, are its "two guiding thesis which are political postulations: the cultural unity of African cultures (a reconstitution of Pan-Africanism) and the metaphoric investment of the African past into Christian eschatology (which redescribes the secret of revelation)." It is the theoretical and philosophical implications of the later indictment that Mudimbe makes against ethnophilosophy which mostly concerns us in this section. The conception of human freedom as an eschatological redemption or revelation which it touches on is premised on the transcendent idealist conceptions of Life. Following Mudimbe's critique of John Mbiti's "analysis of the 'African concept of time'", the "topographic politics" it suggests supposes an "inexistent future" or terrestrial life to which the subject affirms existence but is not even able to actualise its possible death in it, in order to assume its reflexive potentiality.

That is, unlike the hermeneutic subject of postmodern postcolonial thought, the emancipatory subject of ethnophilosphy fails to translate from the subject of the *statement* to the subject of *enunciation* in the full sense of the psycho-linguistic formula. Its idea of truth, to use Mudimbe's deployment of Foucault against Mbiti, is that of a "truth that is of the same order as the object – the truth that is gradually outlined, formed, stabilised, and expressed through the body and the rudiments of perception" (Mudimbe 1991:190). This in Mudimbe's words, shows a failure to apply ritual-myth to political positions; an application (or *production*)[139] which, however, for him, should be one of a critically reflexive phenomenology that relies on the (so doubtful) double-meaning of the Word qua Truth-Idea. Just to remind ourselves here, postmodern postcolonial theorists launch their critique against what they refer to as "the historicity hermeneutics" of Africanist discourses, to use Mudimbe's words, but also against the 'historicity' of "anti-colonial discursive practices". But we shall return to this point in the last section to this chapter, where we will show the limitations of their 'politics of life' as opposed to the 'politics of death' that the theory of anti-colonialism that they are at war with suggests.

[139] Mudimbe, 1991, p. 182.

Implicit in their critique of Africanist discourses, to follow Mudimbe, is the call for:

> "a (radical) suspension of and bracketing of anti-colonial discursive practices as a preliminary condition for an opening towards alterity; a radical suspicion of the Tempelsian notion of an implicit and subterranean ontology of vital force expounded and generalised by Kagame and Mulago; a reformulation of the philosophical task – indeed the theological, also – as perpetual recommendation and search for the supplement to what is supposedly there in the some-thing" (Mudimbe 1997:105).

These contribute (like in negritudinist poetics) to what he refers to as, the quest for an authenticity through retrodiction and an essentialist position of (the) radical alterity (of the Negro). Because, like the Greek philosophy which they claim to surpass, they make the mistake of treating African systems of thought as though they were categories of metaphysical certainty or models of self-actualisation and self-determination which have no potential to effect a human praxis or political praxis (in the form of an after life or 'life-in-death'. For Mudimbe the ethnophilosophical and ethnotheological discourses make the mistake of classifying African systems of thought within the Aristotelian philosophical grid of: formal logic, ontology, theodicy, cosmology, and ethics. That is, they read African systems of thought (or mythical narratives) as eschatological discourses in which the value of a *hope* and promise is supposed to actualise a truth in the process of fulfilling an African mode of Being and being-qua-being. And they engage in a project that tries to ontologically restore African systems of thought by appealing to their histories, languages, religious ideas, cultures, and tradition in order to qualify them under Western philosophical and institutionally accepted epistemological practices of metaphysical certainty (and scientific thought).

Subjectivity or subjectivisation is, in these essentialist formulas, based on the exoteric function of mythical symbolism. Since they rely on the Tempelsian notion of African ontology (and the Bergsonian notion vitalism, as is the case with negritudinist thought), for them mythical practice does not mean action(ality) on the part of the subject, rather it suggests an "ever-acting principle of activity (or negativity)" on the part of the subject (Washington Ba 1973:46). For Mudimbe, these conceptions of subjectivity arise from the fact that, like in the Aristotelian philosophical grid, they impose the spirit of rational inquiry and logico-political deduction on African (social) mythologies. These are, as identified by both postmodern postcolonial theorists and anti-colonial theorists, the mistakes of the ethnophilosophical and negritudinist variants of Africanist discourses. Their anthropologism and historicism, on the other hand, instead of going towards the transcendent Idealist model, as Mudimbe notes, also plunges into

the empirical reductionism of Anglo-analytic philosophy and its functionalism. The implicit philosophy and ethics represented in these models maintain the enunciative models of Western theological social theory in both its empiricist and transcendentalist forms.

The accusations of anthropologism in negritudinist thought, are mostly directed at Senghor's negritude, which postcolonial critics say, due to its embeddedness in a biologism, gravitates towards an anthropological exegesis instead of a critical exegesis. For the postcolonial critic, this anthropological exegesis is an appeal to a metaphysics that aims for a unity of the subject in ontic and ontological structures that function as totalities. In its reading of mythical cosmic dynamics, negritude poetics adopts the surrealist technique in its articulations of the apocalyptic vision. But unlike ethnophilosophy and ethnotheology, it, in a structuralist code, inverts the orders of transcendence in a manner that allows the life (or vital) force to have a relationship with the material. And, as an anthropologism which appeals to a metaphysics or the dialectics of a death-in-life, its framework appeals to an existential ontology which sublates aims at collapsing the binaries between matter and essence through the element of a life force which compliments in man or the reflexive subject. In the dialectics of negritude, the life force or celestial Being, harmonises the relation between Man and nature. That is, the unity, balance, harmony, or rhythm of the life force or the cosmos is said to be realised in Man through a neo-Kantian formula. However, besides this brilliant criticism of the metaphysical limitations of the ante-black philosopheme, we shall see that postmodern postcolonial theorists, in their treatment of death-in-life, their hermeneutic reading of mythical symbolism is also threatened by these kind of theological undertakings.

But to return to our task at hand, it is clear that although a posteriorily united in Man, it is the a priori status of the mythical symbol which negritude accords primacy. The rhythmic characteristics of emotion and intuitive reason, art and poetry, image and myth, are in this process cases treated as static, and therefore for (not only for) the hermeneutic enthusiast (but for the anti-colonial theorist also), are denied their aesthetic and creative value. Socio-political reality, is in this sense, made dependent on the representation of a cosmic meaning. That is, it is not the energetics or what David Evans (2004:30 and 32) refers to as "sobs of the world" or "the crushing materiality of the afterlife" qua death which is tasked with revealing the secrets of rhythm or being-qua-being. The symbolic role of cosmic forces is, in a phenomenological move, drawn to the level of the reflexive subject who is supposed to act as the intermediary between the material and celestial worlds. That is, a subject who emerges in the moment of

"glorious revelation after the death of a transcendent" (Evans, 2004:32) or a subject who oscillates between the monistic-One-All of nature and the monistic-One-All of the cosmos. This is, all in a show to the 'Bergsonian vitalism' to which negritude owes its ontological readings of mythical symbolism. The metaphysics of negritude poetics, just like Bergsonian vitalism, synthesises the concrete, the vital, and the immediate (qua the word-idea-emotion unity) or shows a "convergence of the three versions of vitalism" (qua the unity of the ego, the id, and the world) (Washington Ba 1973:139 and Arnold 1981:58). This is how the negritude exegete, as Abiola Irele (1964:10) relates, expresses a transcendental conception of life that coincides with that of the Roman Catholic saints and Greek mythology. Just like in the Christian eschatological hope, Hegelian teleology, and Platonic Idealism, as an ethics, mythical symbolism is said to assume the capacity to transmute the violent activity suggested in its poetry into a synthetic resolution of dialectically opposed elements.

In an articulation of the double-meaning in myth, the negritude exegete uses symbolism to form an analogical image of its experience. That is, it applies the imaginative transpositions supposed in these mythologies in order to reveal the causal chains that determine the structure of human experience. In other words, the sensuality of the subject is an incarnation of a spirituality that is expressed in concrete or direct images (Washington Ba 1973:52). The mystical, in negritude poetry, is what allows the creative imagination to reach a point of cosmic fusion or identification where there is no distinction between subject and object (Arnold 1981:82). And, in its Bergsonian vitalist ontology,[140] the reconciliation of the elements of the self, existence and essence is only achievable through the technique of poetic return in time and space. That is, through a return to the ontological a priori from which the energy or life forces arise. And it is in that return, from the diachronic dimension of a finite (un)consciousness, which has through the infinite concept, conjured and sublated the material. The infinite concept, in negritude poetics, as Washington Ba (1973:41) tells us, although not of the material, functions as a "synesthetic vision which arises from relieved memories: persons, rites, and emotions." And it purifies these in a positivist reductionism which suggests

[140] Bergson's vitalism, on its own, is a form of transcendent Idealism which emphasises the immutability of an Idea reduced to its most sublime forms through the scientific subject. It shows "the demonstration of truth" which seeks to "vanguish historicism" through a hermeneutics of transcendence (Peden 2014:70). It is a formulation which succumbs to the threats of negative theology. Bergson's vitalism dwells on a phenomenology or "science of the Singular" similar to the one found in Deleuze's theory of ontology.

a revelation of meaning through the movement of cosmic dynamics which are said to channel life into a promise for the future.

This is how the theme of extra-temporal bliss in the re-birth of temporal imagery arises, in Senghor's poetry, as an expression of the cosmic cycle of regeneration. Recurringly, in Senghor's poetry, the ephemeral image, is used to show how the aesthetics of the 'conscious' being are determined by cosmic elements. And, similarly in Cesaire's poetic formulations, the ephemeral image, plays the same phenomenological role, e.g. the Bambara symbol shows the telluric union of Man with the universe. Imagery and symbolism, in negritude poetics, is used to show how eschatological imagination is structured in terms of birth, death, and rebirth. We see these orders of resolution, in the symbolism of vegetal imagery, terrestrial bodies, and numbers that it uses in its poetry. The symbol, acts as the ontological structure supporting the experience of conscious being or as elements that animate life. For example, in the *Ethiopiques* and the *Nocturnes* anthologies, as Irele (1964:20) relates, Senghor uses imagery and symbolism as elements of a "primal eroticism" or "cosmic sentiment" that induces the desire for an immaterial life.

Although subject to a process of the *up-downward* movement that engenders a comprehension and a mutual birth of subject and object, it is the *below-upward* which negritude imagery and symbolism tasks with establishing the link between experience and essence. This dialectical process takes place in a manner that relates how or why, even temporally located in the material, the vital force is still of a divine presence that induces a "deeper spiritual feeling" through the processes of "immediate reference" (Irele 1964:23). In an invocation of colour theory/symbolism and the image of woman, similar to the one we find in Mudimbe's semiotics, especially in Senghor's poetry, the colour red or the image of blood is used to show the imagery of a re-birth that goes beyond the division of life and death or to show how time should be conceived as "synchronic and diachronic, rather than historical" (Washington Ba 1973:53 and Irele 1964:25). The image of woman or the colour red (as a form of 'strong death' as Mudimbe's has it through his semiotics of the Word), differently from the position of an "essence of life" that Irele (1964:25) assigns to it, is made subject to the colour white or the male phallus (a form of 'strong life'). And, similarly in the "evocations of the night star" in Senghor's poetry, as Irele (1964:26) again relates, "night is opposed to day, as black to white".

It is at this level of condensation that the theory of death-in-life, similar to the one we find in postcolonial philosopheme is formulated. That is, it is at the phallic plane where the cosmic cycle of birth, death, and rebirth that negritude uses in its notion of life, forces are condensed or synthesised. It is a condensation which functions in such a way that the female image is subjected to the fecundity and creativity of the male phallic image qua the 'Fatherly' Signifier. This form of structuration perpetuates the idea that "all things, by virtue of their participation in life, are ontologically bound" in a hierarchical form (Washington 1973:56). For Washington Ba (1973:57), this shows how, in negritude poetics, death falls "into two categories: (1) complete death, i.e., physical and spiritual annihilation, and (2) cessation of existence without loss of vital influence". That is, even if death is accorded the capacity to express the fact of existence, that fact is expressed through the "awareness and knowledge of that existence and its contexts" (Washington 1973:59). The knowledge and contexts of a celestial life which accords meaning to the nothingness of death. This all tells us that, the theory of negation that we find in negritude is structured in a mode similar to the negativity of the Hegelian Absolute Idea. It supposes a unity of elements which is similar to that of the dialectics of logic or the Kantian notion of internal finality.

To take further from Mudimbe's critique of ethnophilosophy, ethnotheology, and negritudinist thought, this outline shows how they both make the mistake of presenting symbolism in mythical narrative as though it were a "simple modification in strategies of manipulating concepts and metaphors" (Mudimbe 1988:208). Especially the exegetic hermeneutic model of ethnotheology which he says designates the transposition of one system of signs, symbols, and meanings into another and yet still remains a translation of the esoteric canon. Thus, they try to explicate African signs and symbols within the spiritual economy of Judeo-Christian messianism. This is what, for him, leads to their attempts to establish an ontological restitution of mythical systems as only metaphysical traditions without the capacity to attain the level of critical reflection. Conceptualised as models of a transcendent ontological affirmation, they comment upon their positivities (rather than their negativity) "from the arrogance of a Hegelian dialectic and thus fail to witness them as concrete temporal and localised figures" (Mudimbe (1988:208).[141]

[141] Obviously, in the case of Mudimbe's (1991:169 and 172) suggested hermeneutics proper, as per the postcolonial chant (which we don't necessarily concur to, despite our common criticism of the metaphysics and historicism of Africanist discourses), this kind of reading amounts to a "place-knowledge" assessment of mythical

Their model shows the limitations of a philosophy which is reflected upon through vital attitudes and fixated on a historicism. It tautologises mythical narrative and symbolic language by regarding them as sources and objects of interpretation which reproduces the grammar of a basic memory. In a sense, as Mudimbe (1991:185) says, they reduce mythical narrative or "the *primitive* to the time of things (that is, the silence of an in-itself, the inactual), considered as both diseased, poor reflection of origins and the impossible memory of the civilised and historical for-itself." That is, they regard them as "being-in-themselves", incapable of reaching the level of a "being-for-themselves" (Mudimbe 1988:202). As read through the hermeneutic model, this reads as a failure to treat the elements of mythical symbolism as synchronic and dynamic elements. And only succeeds as an effort to "convey the meaning of … practical and traditional wisdom rather than that of a systematically explicit and critical system of thought" (Mudimbe 1988:167). In the case of ethnophilosophy, by positing an imaginary a priori and by setting a "confusion between the anthropological structuring of beliefs, myths, rites, on the one hand, and metaphysics on the other," it destroys the role of a potential creative imagination (Mudimbe 1988:187).

By taking African metaphysics, cosmogony, and religion as canons of truth and knowledge, they end up reducing them into static and rigid models of manipulating experience. They produce from them to monological versions of the humanistic paradigm. But as Mudimbe notes, within the tradition of ethnophilosophy and ethnotheology, there are those who are concerned with restoring African mythical narratives ontologically and there those who are concerned with restoring them hermeneutically. The ones we have discussed so far are concerned with their ontological restoration. But there are those like Mudimbe himself, Appiah, Bhabha, Soyinka, or Gates, who are concerned with restoring them hermeneutically. And, these include Mulago and Hountondji. In ethnotheology, they are the incarnation theologists, who as Mudimbe says are not interested in collapsing the difference between *doxa* and *episteme*. But some, like Hountondji, in his *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*, choosing a straight neo-Kantian route, prefer to treat the question of philosophy as a problem of episteme (science)

systems which follows the logic of rigid system of signs, as opposed to a "space-knowledge" assesment which goes to the extent of reflecting on these systems. In a similar modelling, Marcel Griaule (1956:xii), in a similar take to Mudimbe, although with different prefixes, referring to how various persons are trained in Dogon mythology and the different levels of understanding they hold, regards "simple knowledge" as the knowledge available to those who are at the early stage in the understanding of beliefs and customs and regards "deep knowledge as the knowledge held by those who are able to understand and reflect on these beliefs and customs.

rather than doxa (opinion). As proponents of the hermeneutic restitution model, they try to reconceive the mythical narratives of sacred art, liturgical vestments, and ritual music in traditional symbolic structures, in a manner different from that of the incarnation theologists who advocate for an ontological restitution of myth.

The incarnation theologists, like postcolonial theorists, regard the "understanding of the meanings symbols and customs … as essential for a solid anchorage in the most profound stratum of the known and the familiar" (Mudimbe 1991:57). In its advancement by Kagame and Mulago, although still echoing the Tempelsian idea of ontological certainty, as Mudimbe (1997:95) notes, it adopts the method of retrodiction as a technique for the native subject's "new right to speech". That is, they, through the paradigms adopted from the domain of critical and speculative philosophy, tried to give a new arrangement to mythical narrative by interpreting legends, fables, and oral traditions as texts and documents which bear an a priori meaning. And for Mudimbe, this approach qualifies incarnation theology as a hermeneutical mode of inquiry. In what could be read as one of his viles against the discursive and political practices of negritude and liberationist theory, Mudimbe praises incarnation theologists for adopting a language of poetry or an aesthetic theory which he says provides a plausible hermeneutic framework for a new ethics or science. And, he says this language of poetry, "in its most pure manifestations in logic and mathematics, explicitly aims at an absolute inexpressiveness and lack of noise and violence" (Mudimbe 1997:185).

Retrodiction, as an extension of this poetic-language model, we are told by Mudimbe, is adopted as a method of signification, which denotes speaking "from an illusory, invented moment back in time" or in metaphorical speech (Mudimbe 1997:95). It entails a process where "the present invests its values in the (mythical symbols of the) past with its questions and hypothesis, and rediscovers in the invented, reorganised spaces, laws, paradigms or the truth of its suppositions" (Mudimbe 1997:95). And it is regarded as a method of hermeneutical reflection into the historical experience of the exegete because it looks at the validity and respectability of the past through scientific models. That is, it is taken as a method of scientific inquiry which uses an existential and phenomenological argument to present and validate a new ethics. For Mudimbe the hermeneutic method of inquiry, like that of incarnation theological ethics, comprice of what he refers to as the "three stages of rigorous practice of philosophy: first, philosophical reprise of symbolic language; second, hermeneutics as means for a good understanding of symbolic meaning, and finally, philosophising as a bet on the

significance of the symbolic and reflexive world in Ricouer's sense" (Mudimbe 1997:98). This approach, as he says, brings "a description of forms of knowledge (savoirs) and their definition – that is, mythical thought, divination, and the values embodied in relationships between initiation and knowledge (connaissance), thought and mysticism, ethics and spirituality" (Mudimbe 1997:99). This is because the savoir or language of myth and symbols is, for him, hidden and therefore requires interpretation.

Of Life Gnosis: Signification of Death-In-Life

Since the diachronic dimensions or the materiality of the postcolonial subject in general or Mudimbe's subject of emancipation, to be specific, is still implicated in the same matter-essence dialectic as we shall see in the continuing discussion. And, it offers us little help in the attempt to avoid the ante-black philosopheme mistake of treating mythical narratives as metaphysical certainties. Perhaps postcolonial theorists and critical philosophers might be able to do so at the level of history, but as we shall see in the following discussion, they fail to do so at the level of philosophy, despite the philosophical strides they claim to have made through their critical approaches. Such failures are due to the fact that, their critical philosophy is a hermeneutic of transcendence which priveleges the categories of knowledge, meaning, or understanding, which are all functions of reflection. For example, in what is refered to, by Mudimbe, as postcolonial individuality, the individual/subject actualises itself as an experience of consciousness through three stages of ekstases which almost mirror the categories of death that Washington Ba (1973:57), as mentioned above, identifies with negritude. These are, the ekstases of:

> "temporalisation or a subjective procedure where by an individual or a collective consciousness negotiates the norms of its duration as being, as well as those of things in the world; reflection, or the incredible assumption of a reflecting consciousness present in, and separated from, a consciousness reflected on; finally, the last ekstases, being-for-others, during which the self conflictually apprehends itself outside of itself as an object for others" (Mudimbe 1997:199).

The last ekstases, as an ethical category, is the one which Mudimbe (1997:199) says, although circumscribed by the history of colonialism, allows the postcolonial subject of emancipation, as a *metis,* to articulate itself as a continuous project towards a transcendental logic. In this regard, the postcolonial subject is treated as a metis because, in the very consciousness of perceiving and apprehending its freedom "as both lack and need", it actually actualises "itself as a negative and a positive praxis" (Mudimbe 1997:200). The psychic desire of the

postcolonial subject, is for Mudimbe (1997:200), structured in this manner because, as a negative with a "purposeful activity, it signifies … in the negation of a given", and as a positive, it functions as "an opening to what is coming". In the hermeneutics of transcendence of postcolonial theory, it is through this opening – rather than the closure which we find in the tautologies of both ethnophilosophy, ethnotheology, and negritude poetics – that the subject experiences its being-in-itself and its being-for-itself in the form of a desire whose fulfilment is perpetually delayed and postponed.

However, this absence of actuality, as Mudimbe insinuates, does not mean that mythical narrative should be understood as a dubious hypothetical notion "of an absence of anything, and absolute blank" (Mudimbe, 1997:30). Rather, it means that the scientific subject, as an intermediary point between the Real and the Symbolic, is never actual in any of these orders, although *a priorily* determined by the ethics of the latter. As mentioned in the theory of reflection outlined in previous chapter, the subject only engages the processes of repetition and revision which maintains that value lies in the foregrounding of the Symbolic order in its a priori status. This value which lies in the primacy of the Symbol, is produced, or rather, is extended by the self-reflexive scientific subject through the categories of knowledge, mediation, and vision. These categories show how, the Symbol, as a realm of double-meaning is regarded in postcolonial theory as both productive and reproductive. It is productive and reproductive because it represents the causalities, accidents, or successes bound with the process of Becoming. In his differentiation of the nexus of representation and being in mythical and historical narratives, Mudimbe says that mythical narratives "inhabit the present as discursive practices and as such operate as political ideologies, that is, as bodies of functional ideas and truths" (Mudimbe, 1991:98). Note that, the mythical for him, is "what is out there as a secret knowledge" or an *episteme,*[142] so the political ideology it denotes is not that of contradiction and antagonism (or what he refers to as *doxa*) that produces a materialist ontology, but of a truth that is metamorphosed, or rather, a truth that regresses into the material.

It is not a political ideology that emerges from the contradictions of the colonial schema, but the ideology of estoric elements which work towards the obliteration of those points of contradiction and antagonism. Like in the Bhabhaian theory of signification, Mudimbe,

[142] Mudimbe, Y. V. 1991, p. 101.

through his structural dialectics, believes that the mythical, as ideology, can obliterate the objectivity of the colonial structure. And our pre-occupation in this thesis is to dispange with the premise of that whole argument. Hence, we maintain that, although we cannot wish away with ideology as a historical-ontology (in the form of both the colonial symbolic and the pre-colonial symbolic), we also cannot at the same time exaggerate its effects. Because, for us the subject of emancipation emerges in the moment of structural failure and impossibility, the moment of contradiction, where the subject survives as that 'material' thing not saturated by ideology or the symbol. And it is, for us, this moment of contradiction which is testimony to the fact that, although (un)successful, ideology is never totally successful in all its attempts to interpellate the subject. That is, the subject of anti-colonialism, unlike the subject of postcolonial emancipation is not a teleological subject that, a priori, has built-in drives for that enable it to embark on the struggle for liberation.

For the colonised subject of the poetics of death, reflection has to be surbodinated to the plane of material antagonism, not that of the hermeneutics of the transcendent. Hence, we say the colonised subject is a subject of the 'not-whole' because it is a materialised subject. But contrary to this idea, Mudimbe's notion of the signification of death-in-life follows the logical sequence of an esoteric truth which transcends the material. Which as a naming process, all that the subject is responsible for is to understand and tighten "up the meaning and intention… of controverted concepts and sequences" represented within mythical narrative (Mudimbe, 1991:103). The naming process, as a task that the infinite spirit assigns to the finite subject, does for Mudimbe (1991:109), possess "the power of metamorphosing [the named]" things and objects of the Real. It is a "phantasmagorical project" which harmonises the differential elements of subjectivity, without allowing the colonised subject to escape the constraints of the colonial symbolic. By just replacing the colonial symbolic with the mythical symbolic, Mudimbe keeps the colonised subject locked in that very colonial symbolic because the subject is not given enough time to wriggle itself from its intestices through action. That which we call the de-centering process, or the escape into the materiality of the contradictions and antagonisms which help set it in motion or prepare it for the ultimate onslaught against the bounds that hold it down.

This brings us to Mudimbe's notion of the signification of death in the image of the women which he surbodinates to the Symbolic qua the fatherly phallus. Instead of treating death as something that happens to material beings, Mudimbe, regards death as a form of transcendent

life that happens through the immaterial spirit. Death is for Mudimbe an affirmation of reflexive subjectivity, whilst for us it is a challenge to reflexive subjectivity. For us the material, as a plane of contradiction and de-centredness affirms the death of all forms of symbolic interpellation. It helps us have an understanding of the processes through which the subject strips itself of all the symbols of ideological interpellation. Hence, we say instead of it being transcended through an accentuation to some a priori order, the conditions of the material, before their negation, must first be embraced as essential to the formative stages of an emancipatory subjectivity. That is, emancipation does not necessarily depend on the subject acceding to the truth through a process of reflection but through a diffractive-refraction process which is determined by the conditions of the material situation. We shall continue to see in this thesis that, again and again, the point emphasised mostly is that the purpose of the first moment or the ground-zero of subjectivity qua death, in the materialist theory of the subject, is to see how structures are antagonistic and how they impact on the subject, forcing him to go through the 'night of the world', the abyss of freedom from which a revolutionary subjectivity is born.

The colonised subject, differently from what we see in Mudimbe's notion of signification of death, is not given a headstart by structure or truth which pre-exists it when engaging in the process of revolutionary action. But to come back to the place of the image of the women in Mudimbe's theory of death, like in Senghor's Imagery and Symbolism or cosmic rhythmicity, the female is set up as though it is always waiting to get fucked and funked by the phallic erect in order to maintain the processes of production and reproduction.[143] The 'living' or 'life', that which the phallic is, is opposed to 'death' or the 'material', that which the 'Body of the Women' is. Hence, we see that, in his hermeneutic description of the Original Sin or the Fall, in Luba mythology, the 'Real Thing' qua the female body, is just one of the surpassable stages for the positive or objective realisation of the male phallus. The male phallus is regarded as "the dread" that makes the female "feel of a flow that … elude … (its) codes" (Mudimbe 1991:70). That is, the male phallus as an 'in-itself', transforms into a 'for-itself' through a female body devoid

[143] To use Lacan, "feminine eroticism" or reproduction does not necessarily rely on the penis because, in its "extreme" form, referring to the Japanese Samurai women, it appears as "neither more nor less than the fantasy of killing the man" because she goes as far as cutting "his cock off", i.e. his "erectile tissue" (Lacan, 2005:49). The need by Mudimbe to bring everything into scientific analysis (or rather, reduce the body to the ego) causes his inability to see the castration, because as Lacan says, "it is not easy to situate its function in analysis, as it can be fantasmatised" (Lacan, 2005:49). For Lacan, the women in this case, like God, is "fecund", and it is as fecund that she "produces children" (Lacan, 2005:49).

of any drives capable of setting it in motion towards the living or a unity with the living, which it itself has produced. Since, as always dislocated, the subject is never One with the material which produces it, hence there is always that constant irking for unity, by the mOther, with its own child.

In his dialectic of the 'diachronic tempo' and the 'synchronic tempo', the diachronic (qua the material or the female) always succumbs to the synchronic (qua the celestial or the male). And in what he refers to as his duplication of the Oedipus and Electra images in the Luba mythical narrative, the Oedipus is the initiator of the Electra subjectivity, that is, in a mimetic form, the Electra image is an extension of the Oedipus image. The Electra image is set up as a decoding in the flows of the repetitive (re)production of the Oeipus image. As an incarnation of the Oedipus image, it only exists in so far as it is its necessary extension. An extension which can be wished away with through a return to the a priori or which manifests as an economy of desire for the originary. Thus, in Mudimbe's representation of the Oedipus and Electra images, the Oedipus image is regarded as "productive, predominant, and articulated" while the Electra image is held "in a position of inertia, subjection, and opaque resistance" (Mudimbe 1991:96). That is, the Oedipus is regarded as the causality of Electra and Electra is a becoming of the Oedipus. Or, the Oedipus is the "somewhere", the 'something', the "what is out there" from which Electra speaks (Mudimbe 1991:94).

In a sense, what is realised in this process or (dialectic of the Oedipus complex and Electra complex) is not a negative dialectics of the contradictory elements of the material and social Real but the original repression or the "objective transformations, discontinuities of modes of production" qua the Symbolic (Mudimbe 1991:71). These are said to be articulated on the social plane which they also have the prerogative of articulating. That is, the Symbolic is accorded the power to assert itself onto the Real, making sure that its figures and transformations are realised through space. In a way, the Symbolic, as a mythical a priori, is roped into the present in order to serve as a schema for the future. By relying on Deleuze and Guattari's (1977) Oedipal schema, Mudimbe, like Bhabha and Achille Mbembe, is here behaving like the Laclau and Mouffe of postcolonial theory. The latter two, like postcolonial theorists, think emancipation through the category of a working-class subject who can be interpellated into the structures of capitalism and democratic principles or is reduciable to the money form. Their subject is not thought of from its position of dislocation or the antagonisms and contradictions inherent in social (or material) situations. Such a subject, to which the

colonised subject is exemplum, is more unstable than the working-class subject because, as an effect of contradiction, it emerges in the moments of dislocation and symbolic death. Its knowledge of freedom is not produced through the reflection of some transcendental meaning, rather, it is produced through the ruptures caused by the antagonistic and contradictory material conditions it habitates.

Mudimbe (1991:82), following Deleuze and Guattari, in his weakening of the 'Mother-Discourse', asserts that, it is the "father, who in his paranoia Oedipalises the son and invites him to violence". In what reads as an eschatological reduction of myth, the dying Father, by re-incarnating his breath on the birthed son ensures the conituity of a patrilineal order and signals the death of the matrilineal order. In a sense the Oedipalised son chooses the fecundity of life (qua the Father-Phallus which is of the nature of the transcendent) over the fecundity of death (qua the Mother-Phallus which is of the nature of the material). For Mudimbe the infallibility of Man is that of life not death. This notion of separation that Mudimbe supposes is heavily influenced by his reading of Deleuze and Guattari's separation of meaning and sense. As a hermeneutic conundrum, the distance separating these entities is said to be negotiable through the phenomenological category of explanation (which as we have noted in the previous chapter, is said to rely on the reflexive capacities of the subject). This explanation, as an expression of knowledge, manifests as a (re)production or imprint of meaning onto the material plane. Simply put, the succession of stages in Deleuze and Guattari's Oedipalisation process or translation of sense into meaning is just but one of the repetition and realisation of the meaning held in the Symbolic order. Explanation could in this sense, be taken as a function of an Imaginary order enacted onto the order of the Real but it still remains an aspect of the Symbolic order. And the succession of stages of subjectivity it suggects, are just but of the repetition and realisation of the meaning of the mythical symbol.

Mudimbe's retrieval of Deleuze and Guattari brings us to the many others who can help us identify the source of the blunder in his theory of semiotics: Marleu-Ponty (whose phenomenology of perception and psycho-linguistic theory of the body was discussed in the previous chapter), Derrida (whose theory of the event and concept of friendship and democracy is to be examined in the next two chapter) and Julia Kristeva (whose notion of the semiotic *chora* has helped us develop the foundations for our theory of the death drive). But it is Mudimbe's retrieval of Kristeva (and perhaps, also of Marleu-Ponty) which interests us at this point. Mudimbe for his critique of monologism and differentiation of life (the Father-Signifier)

and death (the Mother-Signifier), in Luba myth, relies on Kristeva's notion of the "aegis of the Phallic Mother-screen" and notion of the "Master-Mother of instinctual drive" who herself also relies on Bemba myth which he says is part of Luba myth (Mudimbe 1991:148 and 149). Yet however, Mudimbe, unlike Kristeva, does not believe that subjectivity is structured around the mother's body. For him, the phantom of the Mother as a category of instinctual drives qua nature comprises of an 'ethics of the good', that is, the Mother is a 'creature of human compassion'.[144] And on the other hand, the mother's body is for Kristeva (1986:95), a "scene of pre-symbolic functions". Or, rather, it is that which gives birth to the Father-phallus, hence its pre-condition.[145] As a matter of fact, Kristeva, herself, in the very same reference that Mudimbe gives, makes suggestions toward a mechanical materialism that allows for a "negation of symbolic positions" through a regression into the "aegis of the Phallic Mother-screen" (Mudimbe 1991:148). That is, the body of the mother, as he goes on to say in this reference is the "Master-Mother of instinctual drive, a ruler of psychosis, a subject of biology" (Mudimbe 1991:149). Contrary to what Mudimbe says, the mother's body does not need to "offer itself as womb"[146] to the male image in order for the reproduction of language to commence. For the linguistic fanatic and an enemy of psychotic revolutionary violence that Mudimbe is, he fails to realise that for Kristeva (1981:95), the "mother's body is … what mediates the symbolic law organising social relations", that is, it is what generates both

[144] Here, Mudimbe as a theorist of the 'third element' or a semiotician of the Word', echoes Zizek's suggestion that, the feminie is an ethical category of undifferentiated nature "which threatens to swallow the male subject" qua political action itself (Zizek, 2002:169). This is how in most cases, the feminine as both a biological and a spiritual category is said to be promising of "eternal peace" or eternal redemption. In this semiotic process, as Zizek further notes, it is supposed that, "while the destructive lethal Women-Thing wounds the (male) subject, it is only its own obverse, the pacifying Eternal-Feminine, which can heal the wound" (Zizek, 2002:169).

[145] In Lacan's theory of the body, indeed there is a detachment with the (mother) body that the subject (son) experiences as it gravitates more towards the soul (father), but this experience since it exposes the organs already covered by the skin, what the subject experiences after looking at the exposed organs is a "disgust" rather than jouissance. It induces a "reaction of disgust" with the body because "it is like someone who expels a bad memory, puts it in parenthesis" but is continuously haunted by its presence, nomatter how much they may want to see it as "foreign" to them (Lacan, 2005:60). To forget the mother or cover the shame or disgust with the mother, and as a "last straw" of survival, the son continues to think that he has a father (or a soul). Lacan refers to this process of 'repression', 'estrangement', or (forced) 'forgetting' as a "kind of 'dropping out', the 'dropping out' of the relation to the body" or mother (Lacan, 2005:60). The mistake that Mudimbe makes is that of making production dependent "on the function of the father", i.e. the mistake of making production and value dependent on the the commodity form. Thus, forgetting that, even in the Freudean sense, although "the father is the bearer of castration", it is still a wounding of the mother. It is through ignorance or the attempt to forget the body (mother) through the signifier (father).

[146] Mudimbe, 1991, p. 148.

language and subjectivity. And although the drives generating from it, as Kristeva (1986:95) says, "have been described as disunited or contradictory, simultaneously 'positive' and 'negative'", they are what allows it to function as a unity of the differential substances of subjectivity. The "term drive" as a quality of the mother's body, "denotes waves of attack against stases which are themselves constituted by the repetition of these charges" (Kristeva 1986:95).[147] To refer to Lacan's matheme of the empty set, located at the crossroads "between centre and absence", the women as the 'not-all' or the 'not-one' or "is not contained in the phallic function without nevertheless being its negation" (Lacan, unpublished). That is, for Lacan, as is for Kristeva, what is "involved in feminie enjoyment" is not the function of the phallus, rather it is the enjoyment of the failure of the phallic function.

Mudimbe, in his reading of Luba myth, presents the female body to justify the semiotic assumption that it functions as a "transition from strict patrilinearity (life, word, or *langue*) to matrilinearity (death, speech, or *parole*)" (Mudimbe, 1991:73). A transition in which, the material or the signified gets overridden by the linguistic sign. I am not here talking about the authenticity of Luba myth, as Mudimbe himself forewarns, but my point is, should he not be asked the question that: is it not the duty of the theorist to interrogate the translation of myth into political and social situations? If that is the case, then to what value or gain does Mudimbe's retrieval of myth serve as an emancipatory strategy if it tries to force the dislocated subject, which the colonised is, into a structure that refuses it a head start to engage in the process of political practice? How can myth translate the rhythms of contradiction and antagonism which emanate from the material it lays "witness to as a stabilising effort"?[148] Or, how can myths be emancipatory if they "inhabit the present discursive practices, and as such operate as bodies of functional ideas and truths"?[149] Obviously we cannot rely on the Father-Phallus, which as an ethical paradigm, gives birth to a subject with both a *cause* and effect or only symbolises the genesis of life and its future.

[147] And as she further states, "together charges (drives) and stases (or Symbols) lead to no identity (not even that of the 'body proper') that could be seen as a result of their functioning" (Kriesteva 1986:95).

[148] Mudimbe, 1991, p. 98

[149] Ibid.

As a form of a future-death-in-life, the Father-Phallus, has no knowledge of the contradictions and antagonisms that jolts the subject into the quest for freedom and liberation. These contradictions and antagonisms are of the colonial-past whose symbolic order still determines the dynamics of the (post)colonial present. So how can life as a future come to determine death or the present-past which it has no knowledge of? This obviously cannot be done through imposing a doubling effect of some transcendent meaning on it. For the postcolonial theorists, that Mudimbe or Bhabha or Soyinka and Gates are, life is brought to the dead material through the doubling of celestial forces or meaning. The father, to take from Mudimbe, is regarded as a strong *positive*, he represents life while the mother, regarded as a weak *negative*, she represents death. Or, the mOther discourse is made dependent on the "master-discourse of a dying father" who still retains his *place* as the genesis of knowledge (Mudimbe 1991:79). In other words, celestial death is regarded as the first stage which makes possible the second death, through which the infinite subject is brought into a material which incarnates it into another life. Differently from what postcolonial theorists believe, the capacities of the female body to represent are not dependant on some external life. It is that the female body and its truths (as effects of rhythmic and ruptural energetics of the real), is itself a never sufficient whole. But is a void, a lack, an empty hole or not-whole which requires the service of other elements which constitute that very same absent whole which both the body (death) and breathing (life) are all part of. This whole is that of the unameable material which for us produces a materialist ontology which is without closure. And for the postcolonial theorists, mistakenly so, it is the 'immaterial spirit' which is produced by and produces a transcendental ontology. As Mudimbe (1991:76) would be happy to remind us, the immaterial spirit qua the mythical, as an "original repression", conjures away, through representation and naming, the unnameable material.[150]

The Subject *Stricto Sensu* of the Logic of Myth

What we find in Mudimbe's semiotics, postmodern postcolonial theory, and critical philosophy in general, is a reading of myth through the philosophy of the transcendental subject. It is what Peter Hudson (2006:300), refers to as a 'subject-object', that is, it is a subject of the "eternisation" of structure or the subject of "structural causality" to refer it to the variant of the

[150] In detail, for Mudimbe (1991:76), "conjuring away" is a "preflexive choice (in the Sartrean sense), an unconsciously motivated decision, or simply (why not?) a conscious desire to erase the unthinkable – whisking away (in fact, into the bush) an essential name or action and pretending to know nothing about it."

Althusserianism adopted by Mudimbe himself. Mudimbe's philosophy of the subject relies on a subject founded on the conscious knowledge of the 'Original sin' and the death of the Father, which subsequently breathes life onto it, helping the Father revive his discourse through a process of (re)production and regeneration. What we have witnessed through out this discussion of myth, is a philosophy of a subject who relies on the "*reflexive* articulation"[151] of one signifier into another. From the theory of rhythm, that we see in Senghor's negritude, to the theory of meaning or the theory of metaphor that we see in postcolonial theory, what we find is a subject who can never escape or who is not avoided by the intricacies of structure. The question then is; how is a subject which bears such content and functions useful to the problematic of anti-colonial emancipatory strategies? How can we join the trickster with the revolutionary or antagonistic modes of overcomig history? How does the trickster figure exploit social anomally?

Following Hudson's critique of Laclau's concept of the subject, what we see in the postcolonial theory of the subject, is a reiteration of all the weak points of the postructuralist subject. It is a subject which "remains caught between transcendental subjectivity and the subject of Althusserian 'structural causality'; the transcendental subject or the 'subject' as 'always ready' constructed to repeat its identity in other words, the subject as object" (Hudson 2006:300).[152] In a mode similar to the iconoclasm of Mudimbe, which we have tried to problematise in the section above, we find in Soyinka's (1976) and Gates's (1987 and 1988) notion of the 'Trickster Figure', a reliance on this idea of a transcendental subject. With the later echoing a theory of rhythm similar to the one we find in Washington Ba's reading of Senghor theory of rhythm. For both Soyinka and Gates, the trickster figure is a system capable of translating a historically muted meaning into value. A meaning which they also say is translatable through the theory of metaphor. Metaphor, in this sense, being the prerogative of the scientifically self-reflexive subject qua 'the Trickster Figure' of Gates or Soyinka. The concept of metaphor and meaning, as phenomenological categories or categories of the symbolic order for the extension of language, as Hudson observes, describes "the subject as distinct from itself" in so far as it

[151] Hudson, 2006, p. 301.

[152] Hudson (2006:300), following Badiou (2003:4), further emphasies that, the "implicit ontology" of (post)structuralism, which we can say similarly to (post)colonial theory, "lumps the subject together with whatever else is usually recognised in an ontology."

identifies intself as a "subject-position". That is, even in Soyinka and Gates, as part of the Laclau and Mouffe brigade of postcolonial theory, that we said Mudimbe and Bhabha are also part of, we see that, "the subject is not really a 'subject' at all, in as much as it merely repeats an identity into which it has been interpellated" (Hudson 2006:301).

As a metaphor or extension of the 'One-All'[153], the trickster figure, is tasked with establishing a cosmological link between matter and essence or the dead and the living, through movement, rhythm, and self-interiority, which are themselves elements that they regard as cosmic echoes of the One-All. Not echoes of the "One-less multiple" qua the "multiple without-One" of "the negativity of a barred Real plus that of a barred Symbolic" (Johnston 2013:96). The trickster figure exploits metaphor against the signifier in reflective mode. And thus, in a regressive manner reproduces the meaning already embedded within the hermetic world or the system of signifiers, that myth is. In other words, the trickster figure translates "experience into meaning and meaning into belief" (Gates 1975:176). However, this thematisation by Gates, does not suppose belief as an a postori of experience, as is the case with dialectical materialism, rather, it supposes belief as an a priori of experience. That is, the trickster figure, as a mediator between the symbolic and the real, is only responsible for negotiating the relationship between metaphysical suppositions and patterns of figuration within the concrete material entities which are said to be immobile. It connects the truth with the world in the form of a verb *to be*. An expression which Gates (1988:6) says, represents the "figure of meta-level of formal language use, of the ontological and epistemological status of figurative language and its

[153] To use the Lacanian notion of the logic of quantifiers or logic of predicates in this case, we can contradict this conception of metaphor by arguing that, metaphor is not a category of the Symbolic order, rather, it is an extension of the Real into a 'third discourse' or that which establishes "the relationship of the unconscious to truth" (Lacan, upublished). In other words, it is a "privileged real in connection with which the handling of the truth makes logic progress", a real which "commands the whole function of significance", or the real functions as a deviation or an "error that sustain what is natural" (Lacan, upublished). That is, a discourse of the insistence and consistences of the real, the "energetics of blackguardianship and stupidity", the real which forms the "metaphor by which the speaking being subsists," the real which is "his bread and butter" (Lacan, unpublished). Perhaps it is something we can remind the reader, that we do not necessarily agree with the ontological underpinnings of Lacanian mathematical logic and its intension to make subjectivity analyzable within the dimensions of this third discourse. But this shall become clear through our more critical engagements with Badiou and Johnston, however, I thought it necessary to highlight this fact at this point, although we shall return to it again in the next chapter. So, I only make mention of it here because we have so far been basing our critique of the postmodern postcolonial analytic paradigm through a materialist interpretation of Lacanian mathematical logic, which itself may draw us into an onto-logical impasse we want so much to avoid. This is because, although caught in the struggle for the subsistence of logic, the colonized black-subject, never completely disengages itself from the antagonisms of the Real of the colonial social Real That is, it remains caught up in an "*impossible*" which always forces it "*not be able to be able not to be*" (Lacan, unpublished).

interpretations." That is, the trickster figure, as a critic engaged in the interpretation of or the signification of the divinity of the figurative *text*, is said to establish a "highly accomplished dance, a mask-in-motion, which signifies in ritual, his phallic dance of generation, of creation, of translation" (Gates 1988:20).

The figurative text in this case, functions as the primal scene of instruction for the trickster figure. Hence, as an extension of meaning or as a hermeneutical principle and figure of signification, he is said to be capable of moving "from hermeneutics to rhetoric and semantics, only to return to hermeneutics again" (Gates 1988:21). That is, he releases meaning through a vertical system of signification and figurative substitution. And he takes "the role of an intermediary quester, an explorer into territories of essence-Ideal around whose edges man fearfully skirts" (Soyinka 1976:1). Soyinka, like Gates, also reads the trickster figure in a cosmic functionalist framework which in a neo-Kantian formula reduces the discourse of emancipation to a transcendent Truth-Idea. As Soyinka (1976:96) himself, tells us, the trickster figure only expresses the aesthetic temperament of the gods because he has a distinctly humanist vision, a vision which relies on the idea that, the contradictions and antagonisms of social situations can be elevated into a cosmic or mythical whole which is capable of sublating any motions, vibrations, shifts, or ruptures in the structural whole. And this mythical whole is said to form "the hermetic milieu within which the individual can be observed in his dilemmas" (Soyinka 1976:72). In other words, it sets up experience as a repetition or a sound-image of the original qua belief.

The idea of rhythmic fluency and sound transformation, which these notions of aesthetic expression suggests, is of cosmic elements qua mythical speech. Or, to read Barthes (2009:137), in the same light with Gates and Soyinka, they are "the materials of mythical speech …, reduced to a pure signifying function as soon as they are caught by myth." It is especially Gates who gives such a theory of rhythm which is similar to the one applied in Senghor's metaphysical poetics. And it is a theory of rhythm which aims toward a humanistic form of resolution for all contradictions and antagonisms that riddle the socius. Failing to recognise that rhythm is an expression of the bass note, of the base material, or of raw-material-sound not of the sound-images or the harmony of cosmic elements they, like the negritudinists, regard it as a manipulation of mythological archetype in their transcendental form. Gates' theory of rhythm relies on the idea of separation although he says that sound and meaning exist "in a relationship of equality rather than subordination such that meaning is allowed to follow

sound as much as sound does meaning" (Gates 1988:62-3). Although said to be projected through the rhythms produced in the acoustics between sound and meaning, like in the Derridean notion of differance or theory of the sign, the third order meaning which is produced by these acoustics is still that of meaning in its linguistic form. A meaning, which, as an extension of Word than can still thwarts and supplant sound because sound is, in this case, regarded as muted if it is without the echo of the cosmic Word as that which can translate it into speech. In a mode similar to that of negritude, rhythm is, in this sense, presented as though it were a category of understanding, an understanding of the immaterial-word not of the material-sound.

Thus, like in Senghhor's poetics, the theory of meaning, implied by Gates and them, reads the subject as an incarnation of the word and "the *vital forces* of rhythmic vibration into the soul of the dancer" (Washington Ba 1973:57). These are the rhythmic vibrations of cosmic Symbols, not material symbols. Instead of it being an acoustic effect of the ruptures cooked up by the contradictions and antagonisms (qua the material conditions) that define the socius, it is regarded as an effect of some external force which eternalises the subject. The form of signification supposed through this idea of celestial rhythmical and acoustic movements symbolise a moment of signifying the Word in a manner that interpellates the subject into a transcendental position. That is, spiritual forces or life forces are activated into the experience of the subject, thus, inducing within the subject which in itself is a biological entity visceral physical responses. Hence both the trickster, as we see in Gates's theory of rhythm and the negritude exegete in Senghor's poetry, expresses the attitude of the subject to externality, or the external stimuli of object or force. That is, the viscerality that is induced by the stimulus object, like in Mudimbe's schema of the 'Mother-Discourse' and the 'Father-Discourse', is an effect of the idea that the subject as an incarnation of the vital forces has to be thrown into action by its own processes of interiorisation and not by the exterior aspect of the object.

The body or the sound, in this sense, is presented as a ritual form or entity through which the Word or the system of language is made manifest. All the aesthetic forms which accompany ritual, be it mask, art, dance, song, or drum, are taken as interpretations, figurations or significations of the cosmic Word or revelations of the meaning of the Word. These aesthetic forms of performance, are in this case, regarded as modes for expressing the meaning of the relations between the living and the dead, and the hermeneutical conceptions of death itself. In the rhythmicity of these aesthetic forms of expression, sound (qua death) is linked to a cosmic

force and is regarded as an expression of that cosmic force. That is, the meaning of the Word is included in the sound in a mode that suggests a reverse onomatopoeic process. The rhythmic patterns of sound, as an effect of cosmic forms qua the Word are the elements whose meaning the negritude exegete and the punning trickster should reveal through an interpretation performed via ritual forms of signification. That is, since rhythm patterns are said to be structured like a system of language, what is required of the signifying subject qua the trickster or the poet, is through a mode of reversal, to ascertain the meaning of the articulations in poetic speech by transmuting them into the system of signifiers.

This is where in the case case of the trickster figure, to take from Pelton (1980:2), it is said to speak truth by dissembling or deconstructing it. Dissembling, in this case as a deconstructive or interpretative category is what allows the trickster or the initiate, in African dance, to reveal the meaning hidden within cosmic symbols. That is, through the process of dissembling, a reflexive mechanism, the subject identifies with an a priori meaning. And engaged in the process of dance, the subject, "links animality with ritual transformation" and "ties cosmic processes to personal history" (Pelton 1980:3). Ritual in-itself is not, in this case regarded as a productive process, rather it is only productive in so far as it reproduces the meaning embedded in cosmic symbols. In other words, the initiate or the subject of ritual engages or only faces the world as given and process. Hence rhythm, as an element of the cosmic Word and a hermeneutic component, is said to make life processes cyclical and periodic. It is conceived as a primordial element of the cosmic order which as a multiplicity of the One, to take from Pelton's (1980:9) notion of the trickster figure, produces the subject in a "humanistic, rationalistic, or voluntaristic sense."

The notion of cosmic figures and their rhythmicity, both in the negritude of Senghor, the (post)colonialism of Soyinka, or the (post)structuralism of Gates, in one way or another, still continues to adhere to the philosophy of the transcendental subject. What we see in their conception of meaning, whether through the theory of metaphor or through the theory of rhythm, is an idea of a signification process, which gives a structural or typographic analysis of the subject. In the rhythmic dances of both the negritude exegete and the trickster figure, there is a synchronic affirmation of diachronic elements because they both are regarded as linguistic symbols: the latter as an extension of the former. In other words, to use Washington Ba's (1973:118) analysis of the theory of rhythm in Senghor's poetics, "the Word is the sign of life force and rhythm, the wave of energy by which it (the subject as rhythm) is activated,

the most vital element of language" (Washington Ba, 1973:118). That is, for him, in a retrieval of Heidegger's notion of ontological affirmation in the logic of Dasein and an inversion of the Leibnizian monad, the percussive process of rhythm is regarded as a dialectic between the monad-dyad movement and the monad-triad movement which structures the dialectic of the struggle between life and death or being-towards-death. That is, rhythm, as that which sets and expresses the subject in trance and dance, echoes "the perpetual flux and reflux of cosmic forces (qua the monad)" in their ontic-ontological form (Washington Ba 1973:128).

Rhythm, in both the trickster dance and the dance of the negritude exegete, is thus read through the synchronic dimension of cosmic or vital forces, instead of the diachronic dimensions of the echoes of the contradictions and antagonisms of material situations. The manner in which these material situations constitute a dimension of subjectivisation, as we mentioned above, is very different from that of transcendentalism. They are of the naturist attitude, which does not treat material entities as somehow a priori inhabited by language. Such transcendentalist treatments of the natural see nature as an entity which can "copulate in order to generate the fictitious, perfected unity of a spherical totality" (Johnston, 2006:36). For us the rhythmicity of the subject follows the echoes of fractured materials, which themselves fracture the subject, throwing it into a realm of uncertainty, and therefore forcing it into a search for a place of comfort. A place which is not a priori, but a *place* which is constituted in that moment (or *space*) of destitution or dislocation, where the subject is through memory forced to look back into a past (that never will be) where things are thought to have been better, and finding itself alienated from that past and seeing it as a lack (but also an archetype), tries to retrieve it in the possibility of constituting a future. That is, the subject must, through *refraction*, as suggested in Nathaniel Mackey's poetics of the geometrical subject or through *vision* (as Wilson Harris suggests), journeys into the underground where death resides, that of nothingness, non-being, and dislocation, where the acoustics of 'muted' sound (not Word and speech) vibrate.

However, this is not what we see in the treatments of mythical narratives and mythical remnants which we have sought to analyse above. Rather, what we see is myth constituted as a future possibility which both a priori and a posteriori conditions the possibility of the subject of emancipation. In the trickster dance of Gates and Soyinka, the trickster is directed towards celestial possibilities through a reflexive modality. To use Hudson (2006:307) differently, these cosmic or transcendental forces, in an a priori manner, "set the co-ordinates of what it is possibleb for the subject to choose and will", that is, they frame the horizon of what is possible

for the (trickster) subject. Although Pelton's conception of the trickster dance, relies on what he calls the 'degradation' and 'infantilisation' of symbols, it points towards the possibility of a subject jolted into action by the contradictory 'bio-material' plane (qua the Mother's body), from which as a, generic entity, it emerges. That is, despite the fact that, he reads the trickster figure as a linguistic symbol (what he calls a radically synchronic entity)[154] or its dance as an articulation of logical consciousness (what he calls the expansion of the categories of logic), Pelton still acknowledges that the trickster is borne with contradictions and antagonisms of material situations.

For him, myth as a science of the concrete reveals the exchanges, relationships and transformations that happen beneath the level of the narrative (qua the subject of consciousness). Hence, the trickster, as both a metaphysical rationale and a social concept, intentionally transgresses the boundaries separating the metaphysical and the social or the real and the symbolic, because in their differential nature, they produce ruptures, which, however for him, can heal the social in what he calls the "devotion to the human cause"[155] since the metaphysical comes to trump the social order. That is, the metaphysical rationale helps the subject (as a conscious logic) to resolve the contradictions that constitute the social as a conflict-ridden realm. In a sense, the trickster, for Pelton, first violates the boundaries separating the metaphysical and the social (or exploits the social anomaly created through their antagonism), in order to, in an a priori manner, synthesise and harmonise them. Thus Pelton, theorisise resistance from the boundary breaking character of the trickster figure in what looks like a Sartrean existential framework which presupposes the independence of the subject and the immanence of its freedom in relation to the object.

However, what makes his trickster figure a little more radical than that of Gates and Soyinka is that, logic for him, as an entity which can be dissimulated through immersion into the material or does not collapse the possibility of the subject to create its possibilities through the contradictions emanating from that very same material situation it exists in. That is, in Pelton's theory of the trickster figure, the anomalous (that which the bio-material complex of our being

[154] That is for him, in trance and dance, the trickster engages in "the struggle to link diachronicity and synchronicity and the very process of logic by which that link is forged" (Pelton 1980:239).

[155] Pelton, 1980, p. 245.

is) should be understood as a kind of (metaphysical) dirt that should be fitted into our modes of experiencing existence. And the trickster dance, as a ritual process, allows the initiate (qua the mediator between sound and its future-past translations) to use (or translate) the "symbols of anomaly …, incorporate evil and death, along with life and death, knot a single, grand, unifying pattern" of energetics or drives geared towards possible-impossible future-freedoms. The trickster dance as an expression of the "limbo-anancy syndrome" (as we shall see soon with Wilson Harris' theory of limbo) "brings out into the open conflict, lust, and dread"[156], emotive feelings (since they are born of dislocation) which can "become agancies" of freedom (Pelton 1980:250). That is, the trickster dance, "represents a blatant insistence that these very moments of disjunction which seem to deny (the) transcendence (of symbolic-bio-material complexes) weave into the daily fabric of human life" (Pelton, 1980:243).

As a prescription on how we should conceptualise the trickster as a subject with a unit of meaning, inner structure, and social purpose, Pelton demands us to see, in its dance, the ways in which he or she composes images of life in every form of death. Formlessness, the non-actualisable and the wholly potential, the transparent and opaque qua nothingness and death, as "an apt symbol of beginning and of growth as it it is of decay"[157], is through the trickster dance exploited, recomposed, and transformed in ways that try to configure the new. In other words, in ritual dance, anomaly both disrupts and degenerates the old order in the quest for a new order. The trickster, through anomaly, makes contradictions, defeat, and death the composit of life itself. That is, it makes the anomalies of "disease, ugliness, greed, lust, lying, jealousy – into the orbit of life" itself (Pelton 1980:252). Although Pelton's 'demystification theory' or triad of the trickster figure as a metaphysical, rationale, and social concept, gives primacy to the rationale, it however, allows us to read myth as a dialague between man and nature, that is, in relation to both man and nature as anterior to themselves and to each other. And it enables us to ask: How can we join the trickster with the translation, rather than, the overcoming of contradictions and antagonisms of the conflict-ridden nature from which it is born? It is in Harris' theory of Limbo, where we would find such a fully dialectical materialist conception of the mythical, one which gives primacy to the social concept; the 'motherly

[156] Harris, 1981, p.25.

[157] Pelton, 1980, p. 250.

womb', the 'creative womb', the 'psychopathological womb', the 'base' qua bass/base of productive forces.

Of the *Phallic* Dance or Of the *Limbo* Dance

Since bio-material complexes can frustrate logical inquiry, which Pelton privileges as a category of emancipation, it is improvisation as an intuitive archetypal mode of imagination which can help surpass the limitations of both rationale logic and transcendental logic. This is what we find in Harris' notion of the trickster dance as a limbo anancy syndrome which rhythmically responds to the acoustics or "the reality and necessity of psychical/physical parallels" (Harris 1981:76). For Harris, the trickster dance qua the limbo anancy syndrome as a form of signification, relies on the "dicey, accidental (not the essential) character of nature and society wills" (Harris 1981:20). And by focusing on the transcient character of nature through Harris' theory of limbo, we can therefore be able to ask: How can we visualise death as a structure of freedom, authority, and change? How do we conceive of death qua dislocation as a 'creative womb'? How can we read ritual-myth as an effect and response to the crises of the material situations? How can we understand death as a condition of life in the material sense not transcendental sense? Or, how does myth accompany catastrophe and change? With these set of questions as guides to our reading of myth, we can therefore come to a comprehensive understanding of how the dynamics of black 'losses' and modes of 're-membering' are articulated.

That is, we can understand how they are articulated as metaphors of *groundlessness,* not as metaphors of *essence* or acoustics of cosmic gods but as intuitive and psychic concerts of the gods of land and sea. Hence we say, with the help of Harris' theory of Limbo, we can get to a place where it can be possible for us to posit the "ontogenetic emergence of a being situated on the plane" of materiality, not the "antiphusis" qua the "anti-nature" of the quasi-structuralist Lacan of the 1950s that we find in the postmodernist postcolonial analysis of mythical narratives and remnants (Johnston, 2006:35). That is, by taking the "additional step of pointing to something within nature itself that inclines it in the direction of its own effacement" (Johnston, 2006:35). With groundedness as the "precondition for the genesis of subjectivity", what Harris refers to as the "transparency of the word", or what Wynter refers to as the 'Science of the Word (or of Man)", to use Mckittrick (2015:25), this can help us understand how we are "hybrid-auto-instituting-story-telling species". This is without veering into the transcendence

of either the Word or the Subject which Wynter's 'new ethical humanism' might be susceptible to but by focusing, like Harris on the neurobiological idea of the human as autopoetically enacted by the sociogenic system of the existing historical conditions. Before we get to Wynter's neurobiological conception of human freedom, we shall first outline Harris' conception of the trickster as an agent of the ground of the subconscious and unconscious elements.

Harris' theory of limbo and Wynter's autopoetic notion of the human, emphasises the point that, we must look for the silent anomaly of sound within the telling science or transparency of the Word as a category of neurobiological transpositions. That, in a sense, as Nathaniel Mackey (1993:167) does in his reading of Harris' theory of Limbo notes, can help us understand why an emancipatory subjectivity must root itself in the "descent into voicelessness, a confrontation in depth (qua death)." Unlike Pelton, Harris does not attribute the qualities of the 'limbo-anancy syndrome qua the limbo dance or the 'spider metamorphoses' to 'rational' logic, rather, he attributes it to 'spatial' logic. Spatial logic (rather than place logic, as we see in Mudimbe, Soyinka, and Gates), is for Harris (1981:39), a weak resource because "we appear to move freely through it or bend it freely to our wills." Through Harris' theory of the limbo, we can reach for a theory of rhythm where "sound becomes sight because of the discontinuous line of the drum, of the mask, that allows for the breath and life of the icon" (Harris 1981:41). This is however without making iconicity or language the originary fissure, rather, it is by acknowledging that sound as an expression of the biocultural artefact of subjectivity represents a "reciprocal comportment of voice *on the way* to language but without any particular incentive to arrive" at (Rasula, 1997:309). And similarly, rhythm expresses the "semiotic discharge" of those whose articulations are deemed "teleologically indeterminate", "the acoustic materiality", a "philosophy of biology" or a "biological unrest" whose expressions are however unable to reach the level of sequence and consistence because they are kidnapped by the phenomenological violence of the colonial socio-symbolic.

The qualities of sound are conceivable and translatable through *visualisation in the functions of writing through poetry in neither its 'pre- nor postlinguistic' form*[158] which, as Harris relates,

[158] Harris' notion of visualisation is different from that of the "Corpenican psych or imagination" which he says, "loses the 'witness centuries' and their implicit capacity for genesis born of oceans of spaces in which cultures vanish to re-appear" (Harris 1981:7).

requires that the subject "occupies a reflected object, not as an absolute formula, costume or investiture around each living moment of time but as a doorway into apparently eclipsed proportions one needs to unravel, in some degree, if the living body of the present is to be capable of some measure of detachment from the past as well as relatedness to the past" (Harris 1981:83). They are unlike those of *reflection theory* which are of the semiotics of the Word in its transcendental, iconic, or indexical forms, and which Harris (1981:83) says, "is built into a passive order of the imagination which possesses its own marvels of exactitude … (and) to reify it absolutely is to submit to a straightjacket of tradition ultimately as code of sensibility." Through the concept of visualisation, we can see how Harris' theory of limbo can help us understand how death (qua the mythical past) must be regarded as the "ground of sacrifice and a source of buried authority" which escapes all the dynamics of a Pythagorean cosmos or of Copernican geometry (Harris 1981:6). It helps us qualify the expressions of human freedom born from the contradictions and antagonisms, which to use Johnston (2006:36), designate "a 'barred Real' (corresponding to Lacan's 'barred-Real' as the inconsistent, conflict-ridden-(socio-)symbolic order)."

The notion of reflexive subjectivity supposed in the works examined above avoid confronting the void of the past as the abysmal or "abyssal groundlessness" which, as Johnston (2006:41) further notes, "due to its dissatisfying instability and desire provoking contradictions, catalyses the sudden event of a gesture of negation." This gesture of negation, as symbolised in the limbo dance, entails paying attention to the echoes of "ground's own drives"[159], stammers, or creaks. The limbo dance as a 'concrete pun' or metaphor, involves an "atavistic spectacle"[160] where the trickster consolidates the absurd and the meaningless into metapsychological concepts that can rupture the stasis of the socius. It follows the modalities through which the contradictions and antagonisms which define the socius are transformed into "half-flesh-and-blood, half-stifled-breath-in-unravelled-fossil entities of the imagination" (Harris, 1981:41). As the opposite of the phallic dance, suggested in Gate's and the negritudinist theories of rhythm, which themselves adhere to the vibrations of the acoustics of cosmic gods, the limbo dance, as

[159] Johnston, 2006, p. 41.

[160] Harris, 1981, p. 26.

Harris says, "brings into play an arbitration of deepest self between implacable orders to unbind ego fixated conquest of heaven by earth and vice-versa" (Harris, 1981:41).

The breath-body (qua the body of the m(O)ther which Harris (1981:140) says is constituted by the stammers or the creaks of the "thunder of heaven's drum" demands us to acknowledge that, the body also internally breathes in those moments where it bleeds, excrete 'black' emetics, shit, and respire. It conjures the living dead forces long relegated to the realm of the disfunct and the dysfunctional. In the breath-body, the subject, is able to go beyond the language of the living, into the language of the dead, within which it can lay witness to "a profound confrontation between the unknown – though not unknowable – past and dying present, the living and the unborn future, between life and death" (Harris 1981:10). That is, through the limbo dance, the subject is transformed into an "implacable body of time, (in which) time repeating itself endlessly, remorselessly, pitilessly until birth and death are equally feared as seals of fate" (Harris 1981:70). The body of time(-past), as Harris (1981:70) further relates, reflects on "time as parallel birth wish, parallel emergent child/ghost child." It shows how the subject of emancipation plays a "dual role as a finite being inhabiting a defined <season> of time, and as an infinite extension of certain human attributes (modified by landscape, climate and historical experience which exist in eternity)" (Harris 1981:18).

Its structure of eternity is not that of the transcendent Ideal or of a monistic material substance, which turns a "living language" into a "stasis in the name of a humanism" (Harris, 1981:86). Such a structure, as we have seen, through Mudimbe's semiotics to Gates' theory of metaphor, produces passive and closed orders of the imagination. Rather, it is of the limbo imagination which signals the "activation of unconscious and sleeping resources in the phantom of dismembered slave and god" or the "psychic re-assembly of the parts of the dead muse and god" (Harris 1981:26). Since the possession trances and dances "are the re-incarnations of family deities in the bodies of their descendance" (Harris 1981:31).[161] And these deities are said to have dealt with some catastrophy of nature in the past, and the mythical remnants and narrative are the modalities within which that evental trauma is carried forward in history and applied to the interpretations of the present and adapted to the construction of a future socius.

[161] The spirit of a family deity, in the Nguni cosmogony, can both protect make sick and kill one of its own if a ritual is not perfomed to attone the family of any bad luck that may befall it. Blood has to be spilt and the *camagu* (the bellow of the animal, symbolizing the voice of the ancestors, has to be heard) in the case of Xhosa rites of passage.

The limbo imagination, as Harris further states, is "well known … by the law of subversive political stratagem."[162] It symbolises the "dislocation of an anterior space", an inarticulate and broken space, and the expression of an "inner time" qua the "inner portrait of reality", with all its contradictions, conflicts, and ruptures.[163]

This is why myth, as a science, to follow Harris' advice must point "to black holes of gravity as an extinction of light drawn into paradoxical genesis of sums beyond image or imaginable models" of the exterior (Harris 1981:85). That is, myth, must be regarded as a "ground of creativity" which seeks to "transform … within a deepened tone of echoing gravity, (the) infinite frailty of man" (Harris 1981:85). And if understood as such, we can then be able to see how the expressions and performances of the limbo dance turns "into an architecture movement like 'deathless' flesh", symbolic of a recreation which help convey the losses or decapitation/death suffered by the dislocated subject. Since space, not place is the character of its dance, the trickster subject, "possessed by the muse of contraction, he or she dances into a posture wherein one leg is drawn into the *womb of space*" qua the "bloodstream of space" (Harris 1981:32). And from that space, he or she engages in a transformation of "the hubris of reason (or proprietorship of flesh-and-blood) and bring(s) into play a necessity of recreative and therapeutic capacities grounded in complex vision" (Harris 1981:29).

The limbo posture, or the spider or anancy configuration that Harris explores, shows how the trickster exteriorises itself, and becomes an intense drama of images in "(and of) space, which may assume elastic limbs and proportions or shrink into a dense current of reflection on the floor" (Harris 1967:50-52). That is, it shows how the limbo dance, is a dance "of sacrifice ... with and through the eyes of 'space': with and through the sculpture of sleeping things which the dancer himself actually expresses and becomes" (Harris 1981:32). The limbo dance is "a language of fiction" which arises "from the variables of the unconscious/subconscious/conscious in the chasm of humanity" (Harris, 1999:231). And it is at the same time anterior (but not external) to these elements because it emerges phantasmagorically in that moment where they collide, or to recall Harris, in the moment when they stake it out for a place in the 'womb of space' (qua the Motherly phantom) from which

[162] Harris, 1981, p. 26

[163] Ibid.

they are birthed. It makes that return into the womb of space, in a manner that suggests the marriage of arts and science qua the mythical itself. In that *return*, the subject of 'loss' engages in a process of building revisionary bridges that, however, will not amount into a restoration of the true through some resurrectory act which tries to unite the Son with the Father, leaving the Mother both childless and widowed.

The process of *return*, as a movement back to originality or the genus (of both creation and recreation, the name and naming), signals a moment of conflict, disruption, and rupture in the sense that, the subject, as a transfiguration of conflictual nature or as a dislocation within nature, "may run out of the past into the present and the future to turn invisible fire around into a therapeutic signal" (Harris, 1999:232). It, in that process, should transform the traumatic 'Event' or the primal scene of its birth (production) and re-birth (reproduction) into a quantum imagination which functions as a revisionary epic which guarantees its regeneration. But what we witness in this event, in the case of the colonised subject, is a process of failure. Within Harris' 'womb of space', as Bundy (1999:26) notes, in the introduction to his collection of essays, "one pre-incarnates, one post-incarnates, one prolongs the self in the fable of history." A fable, being in its materiality, not the transcendental form supported by the proponents of the hermeneutic paradigm of inquiry. It is a space where *psyche* and the *place* of *space* (qua the concrete in its ephemeral form) interchange, where the organ of wholeness is never achieved since spheres of duality continue to exist between the creator and created, the name and the named, or consciousness and unconsciousness.

Within the psyche of space, the meaning conferred on gods (not by gods) is, in an ascending way transformed and translated through rhythm (in Black aesthetic forms) by threading space, time, and language into each other. Not by threading space and time into language, as we are told by the proponents of reflexivity, either of the mythical, scientific, or metaphysical type. It is not a matter of looking for a constellation of elements of subjectivity which rely on the capacities of the reflexive subject to establish a link between the cosmic and the natural, or the Self and the One. As improvisatory mechanisms, both rhythmicity and dance in the art of imagination, make possible "the marriage of consonance and dissonance" (Harris 1999:43).

That is, through the mythical, or rather the "ythmic", to refer to Mackey's (2015:xv) term[164] as a form of creative visual imagination and incorporation (in the Harrisian not Copernican sense), rather than reflexion, the "sculptor and painter and architect and carpenter and mystic, sensitize and re-sensitize themselves to rhythm and pulses orchestrated through (apparent) being and apparent non-being" (Harris 1999:43). This historical materialist reading of mythical remnants, by Harris can help us understand how the subject of emancipation enacts a voided and emptied cosmos qua a materialist ontology based on a concrete conception on the 'transparency of the Word', or the 'Science of the Word' as we shall see soon with Wynter in her conceptualisation of freedom and liberation as the transfiguration of the 'gazes from below'[165] or articulation of the death-drive.

Harris theory of the Limbo and his historical materialist inversion of mythical archetypes enable us to understand how the phantom constituting the libidinal formation of the black subject is that of "the flesh within but beyond the sound of flesh" as the dislocated element of a Real which is a-buzz with sound (qua the language of the living-dead) (Mackey 1993:171). Harris' theory of the Limbo is a central thesis to Mackey's notion of 'discrepant engagement'. For Mackey (1993:177), "Harris accords brokenness, breakage, symptomatic as well as symbolics of incompleteness, the status of cosmogonic truth." And unlike Derrida (as we shall see in the next chapter), who the postmodern postcolonial proponents of the hermeneutic mode of inquiry rely on for their reading of myth and fable as Transcendental facts or as "fictitious narratives which embodies a Truth", Mackey (1993:215) says, "Harris' reading of (myth and) fable is rooted to the ground." That is, the fable which Harris reads through the inversion of the Jungian archetypes is a "rullind fable of the earth".[166] It is based on the articulation of the "irrelevant dead, the irrelevant beaten, the irrelevant blind" (Mackey 1993:219). In other words, in Harris' notion of fable and theory of limbo, to use Glyn Daly (2006:361), "we are increasingly confronted with the excess of the excesses."

[164] Mackey (2015:xv), in an improvisatory mechanism, combines the concepts of rhythm and mythic, to come up with that of 'ythmic', which he says is "the anagrammatic versioning of the mythic and the clipped, syncopated form of the former coined in the course of these two series."

[165] Mckittrick, 2015, p.11.

[166] Mackey, 1993, p. 215.

So, in the same manner "that a phantom limb mends amputation (in a mode almost similar to that of Marleu-Ponty's motor theory)", Harris' notion of the 'limbo anancy syndrome' or idea of fable and myth as models for an existential redemptive politics relies on "canons of obscurity" supposed in the mythical paradigms in traditional systems of thought. The limbo dance, as a dialectic of dislocation, "claims to enter the most obscure and difficult terrain of experience without incurring a necessary burden of authenticity, obscurity or difficult at the same time" (Mackey 1993:221). It points to an immersion, which Wynter says, invokes a transfiguration of the 'Science of the Word'. To relay these sentiments, as mentioned above, Wynter relies on Cesaire's notion of the '*Science of the Word'*, DuBois' concept of '*double consciousness'*, and Fanon's concept of '*sociogeny*'. This trio helps her to develop the paradigms of what we can refer to, through Daly (2006:361) again, as a historical and mechanical materialist idea of "a positive transfigurative politics" or what she refers to as an "emancipator antinominalist theocentric poetics of the propter nos hominess" (Mckittrick, 2015:73). Wynter uses the conceptual framework of these scholars in order to formulate a theory of resistance and liberation which is different from the autopoesis of the modern episteme, which situates the Human in the scientifics of mathesis, logos, reason, and rationality or self-determination.

For Wynter, Fanon's notion of sociogeny works at two levels in its conceptualisation of black subjectivity under colonial modernity. At one level of analysis, Fanon uses it to examine the structures responsible for the double consciousness or alienation in black. And at the other level the sociogenic principle refers to the codes or mythoi or origin narratives which are "linked in semantically activating terms, with the bios phenomena of phylogeny/ontogeny" or the biological aspects of the human (Mckittrick 2015:11). A bios which is however not of material totality, but of the contradictions enforced by this materiality. These contradictions, since they are located at the level of the concrete situation, they manifest themselves in physical and psychic forms, as noted above, through Harris. What the level of contingency symbolises, without the humanist ethics that Wynter reads into it, is the groundless plain of being and its supposed foreclosure in the real of ex-sistence. It is a level where the non-living starts the metamorphoses into the death-drive because the differential nature of the elements constitutive of this space create conflict and rupture that makes it impossible for it to be one with the Real, although it is itself still of the Real. As neither 'here nor there', its identity (even in death) is never a full identity. It is at this level of contingent encounters that Wynter, through Fanon,

says sociogeny as a principle of emancipatory subjectivity surpasses both the materialist-evolutionary conceptions and transcendental manipulations of subjectivity. In a sense, for Wynter, the Fanonian concept of sociogeny, transgresses the descriptive statement of modern episteme which conceptualises the human as a biological being without the capacity of storytelling for it functions through a "discursively elaborated order of truth/knowledge" that denies the hybridity of humanness (Mckittrick 2015:29).

The sociogenic principle is, according to Wynter, the "counter-manifesto with respect to human identity" that Fanon presents over and against the notion of the "biologically determined mode of being" (Wynter 2001:37). For Wynter, the bio-theocentric descriptive statement of the modern episteme supposes an "a-cultural, a-sociogenic, a-autopoietic" conception of the human and it misses the chance to see the human as a "hybrid-auto-instituting-languaging-storytelling species" (Mckittrick 2015:25). The sociogenic principles are for Wynter epistemologically and humanly structured, rather than bio-instinctually experienced modes of being. They are nature-culture laws, which are non-reducible to, although inseparable from the physical or neurobiological processes which implement them. And by drawing from the Fanonian notion of sociogenic principle, Wynter is also able to show how subjectivity is sociogenically encoded through culture and history, which is both contingent in form and formation. It helps her make the point that "subjective experience is extrahumanly mandated yet experienced reflexively as though it is normally human" (Mckittrick 2015:57).

Wynter contrasts the sociogenic principle with the genomic principle which defines species-identity as purely organic life, or to borrow from McGowan, 2013:55), which sees the quest for human freedom as a "biological need [or desire] (which might be satisfied or not, depending on whether it discovers its object)". It is not the bio-material nature of things themselves which generates the flow of energy, rather, it is ruptures and contradictions generating from them which do so. The acoustics of these ruptures, antagonisms, conflicts, or contradictions induces a neurobiological activity within the human brain. Following Chambers (1996), Wynter's neurobiological idea of the human emphasises the role of the neural processes of the brain in the formation of subjective experience, and she emphasises the point that, the sociogenic principle does not suppose a subjectivity that is totally determined by the objective world, as the vulgar naturalists or vulgar materialist would have it. Rather, it is a subjectivity that is based on a transfiguration or extension of the antagonistic and contradictory elements of the Real (qua the material energies it releases). Read in this sense, the sociogenic principle is "the

information encoding organisational principle of each cultures criterion of being/non-being" (Wynter 2001:54). In a way, it applies to a model of the human which refers to the "genetic and non-genetic codes responsible for our subjective sense of self and subjective sense of *we*" (Mckittrick 2015:25).

The Fanonian notion of sociogenic principles which Wynter utilises, invokes the idea that each subject has to attain a mode of eusociality which surpasses the genetically determined kinship characteristic of the primate family. In a sense, the 'new' it supposes will be over and above the purely ontogenetic and biocentric conception of the human suggested by the present epistemological order. As pointed by Mckittrick, this is what Wynter suggests in that extension of Cesaire's notion of the 'Science of the Word'. Wynter uses this Cesairean dialectical materialist concept to propose alternative realms of becoming human that surpass the theo-scientific-naturist conceptions of the human we are subjected to by the modern episteme. That iss, the notion of the 'Science of the Word', for Wynter, as Mckttrick (2015:63) highlights, allows us to escape the "Western belief system of a biocentric cosmogony, which gives rise to a naturally selected/dysselected bioevolutionary teleological logic." Thus, for Wynter material conditions of existence, the brain (bios), produces the ideological forms of representation (mythos).

As a dialectic of the death-drive, the category of the Science of the Word, although still haunted by the humanistic binarism of categories of existence, initiates a discursively enacted governing structure of subjectivity and a "biologically determined principle of causality", and in this sense allows the brain to function as a "sociogenic code of symbolic life/death and or its descriptive statement at the level of the psyche or the soul" (Mckittrick 2015:71-2). That is, the "myth making regions of the brain" are autopoietically enacted by the sociogenic system of the existing historical conditions within which the subject is immersed (Mckittrick 2015:69). And, the bio-agency of the human brain is put into action or implemented through the science of the Word, symbolised in the dances of mythical rites.[167] It describes what Wynter refers to as the

[167]Wynter draws from Aime Cesaire's idea of science of the Word and goes on to assert that, " Here the "first set of instructions" (genetic codes) and the "second set of instructions" (nongenetic codes) emerge; the study of the Word in this light is the study of an *agency* that functions according to the laws of nature and its genetically programmed "first set of instructions" (biological genetic codes) whose role *in this bios/mythoi* hybrid context is to *neurochemically implement* the "second set of instructions" (nongenetically chartered origin stories and myths)."

"hybrid phenomenon of human consciousness" under the bio-mythoi model. The processes of becoming that are realised in initiation rites are for Wynter the premises on which a "meta-Darwinian redefinition of the human as a hybrid being" and a new aesthetic ethics should be anchored (Mckittrick 2015:63). Such an approach to the logic of resistance and liberation, neither supposes the primacy of the Word as a cosmic nor conscious category but it supposes the Word as an unconscious category. The unconscious qua death, as the nothing which grounds human existence, viewed in this sense, can really go a long way in helping us found a genuinely revolutionary emancipatory political project. And as the realm within which the mythical emerges, the unconscious (of death) or the "Unconscious God" (qua the "missing binary signifier"), to refer to McGowan (2013:251), is the unknown point where death itself becomes symptomatic in significant ways. This is how Death as the effect of (R)eal situations, unlike Life which is of transcendental abstractions, can help us conceptualise an emancipatory political project informed by the "concrete conflict in which the people is engaged".[168]

Conclusion

The mythic subject, read in the manner we have sought to outline it in the last pages of this section, helps us understand how through the 'death-drive', resultant from the evental ruptures of the Real, to use McGowan (2013.:259) again, "the subject frees itself (or is rather freed)[169] from the dictates of nature and ideology, dictates that almost always manifest themselves through the prism of utility." The postcolonial theocentric readings of mythical narratives, by taking transcendence and the cosmos as the necessary conditions for human freedom, to follow McGowan's psychoanalytic logic, they fail to see how "freedom does not encounter limits but posits them" (McGowan, 2013:261). Or rather, they fail to show how "freedom depends on the signifying structure containing a point of nonknowledge."[170] That is, the hermeneutic ethos or tempo within which mythical narratives are read in postmodern postcolonial theory, tries to reduce subjectivity to "the primordial original truth" qua the cosmos, in ways that suffocate the

[168] Fanon, 1967, p. 36.

[169] Although in the case of our subject this moment of 'freeing' itself is rendered futile by the dialectics of the colonial socio-symbolic.

[170] This unknown point or point of nonknowledge, as the ground zero of subjectivity, is as McGowan (2013:260) futher relates, "the result of the absence of a binary signifier, a signifier of justification, that would complete any signifying untterance."

acoustics of the ground and its 'groundlessness'. But the "death reflex" qua the death gnosis, as a metamorphosis of the acoustics or rhythms of groundlessness, in contrast to the hermeneutic ethos, "fulfils certain well-defined functions in the dynamism of the libido" i.e., the libido of the a-subjective-heteronomous-material foundation (Fanon, 1967:43). Through the death reflex, supposed in ritual myth or dance, the subject "discovers reality and transforms it into … practices of violence" (Fanon 1967:45). Reality helps the subject of anti-colonial emancipation to formulate, through action, the categories of human freedom. In other words, it shows how the subject of anti-colonial emancipation adopts a pathological stance structured in an anti-humanist form marked by a series of engagements which are not aimed at a totalising truth.

The force of inertia realised by the subject of revolutionary anti-colonial emancipatory struggles, like the rhythmic energies transmitted in the limbo dance of the trickster, as we have read through Harris, are vibrations of the ruptures emerging from the contradictory and antagonistic nature of a Real not-at-one-with-itself. But the fact that such a Real is not-at-one with itself does not require the summoning of some external force, as read in the hermeneutics of postmodern postcolonial theory, but a Real which perpetually moves towards its own transformation, and should be given the right to fail, if need be. That is, the 'natural-Real' or the zone of (non)being[171] qua the essence or ground zero of reality and material being which, Johnston (2007:2) says, "ought to be designated as a 'barred Real' (corresponding to Lacan's 'barred Other' as the inconsistent, contradictory-plagued symbolic order", is not just an abyss which absorbs the rhythmic expansions of some celestial and transcendental force. So, in our reading of fable and myth, as relied upon Harris's theory of Limbo, what emerges is the idea that the rhythmic expressions of the trickster subject are not diffracted-refractions or regressions of a Being or Force that has been made to fall into the plane of non-being or the groundlessness of death. With that said, what is left of us now is to try account for that which allows the evental rupture or the 'mad-dance' of a revolutionary political project in the case of the colonised subject to take root in the first place.

Since in the last section to this chapter we have tried to give an analysis of the 'Material-Real' through the dimension of the ritual-myth, that means we have identified the realm of the

[171] (Non)being, as Johnston (2007:2) puts in it in reference to the Lacanian subject, refers to a subjectivity "alienated from its corporeal-material stratum".

‘Material-Real’ qua of death, as a sight riddled with contradictions, antagonisms, conflict, and tension and a *point* of generation for the death-drive that seek to translate the ordering of the ‘Social-Real’ (or the concrete situation), the *point* at which emancipatory political praxis take root. It is a ‘Social-Real’ which, also subject to an economy similar to that of the former, generate drives which translate its elements (or subsets) into a ‘transcendental materialism’ or archetypes of a ‘Symbolic-Real’. Transcendental materialism (or the Symbolic-Real), as a third (but not last) point of the generation of the economics of the death-drive, is what is mistaken by the proponents of the theocentric models of political emancipation as the point of singularity or the standard form qua the a priori One-All multiple to which all forms of subjectivity must be accounted. In the next two chapters, through the theory of the death-drive qua the ‘One-Less’ multiple or “the ontology of the pure multiple-without-One”, we shall try to outline a revolutionary paradigm which does not follow the dictates of the ontology of the ‘One-All’ which we have shown through our reading of the different emancipatory strategies analysed so far to be incapable of enacting both a political action and a guerrilla action. That is, we shall try to outline a theory of revolutionary practice rooted in the (non)-ontology of the ‘One-Less multiple’, or a *poesis* of the secret symptoms of the ‘Material Real’ and the ‘Social-Real’ featured in colonial situations.

Chapter Five

The Semiotics of Death

"the character of control in this day – is profoundly influenced by the defensive and humiliating trauma of the past and, in fact, if we are to digest that trauma, if we are not to succumb to the chasm of proportions – implosion/explosion – the death of numbers through numbers, we must begin" (Harris, 1981, p.12)

"In order to grasp suture, we must cut across what a discourse makes explicit of itself, and distinguish from its meaning, its letter. This paper is concerned with a letter, a dead – letter. It should come as no surprise if the meaning then dies" (Miller 1966:2).

Introduction

In taking the economy of the death-drive or the 'Real material' as the genus of subjectivity, we are extending on a polemic already present within social and political theory (whether in literary criticism or in philosophy). And we are at the same time trying to construct an alternative theory of revolutionary action, one which does not rely on the 'fallenness' or 'reflection' of some external force which induces beings and things with drives and desires. That is, we are trying to present a materialist theory of the subject, one that has what Fred Moten (1997:225) refers to as an 'alogical', "an systematic, anarchic organising principle (… the oxymoron), a notion of totality and (ensemble-)tonality at the conjunction of the pantonal and that 'insistent perviousness evading each and every natal occassion", every aspect of mathematical logic, whether of set theory or of string theory, opting for what McCaffery (1997) refers to as the 'theory of simultaneity'[172] since what is caught in its movement-without-position are "militant" cries "from the depth of the Dungle (or Jungle)," the mournful groans of black anger and anguish, 'improvisatory' and 'incantatory' revolutionary violence because it is an expression of the pains and passions of the psychopathological subject or the subject of psychopathology, a psychopathology of the colony and the plantation (Collins, 1997:196). The point here as Moten further notes in the same passage "is not to make an analogy between the deconstruction of the centre and the organisation of the jazz ensemble: it's to say that the organisation is of (the) totality (of the void), of ensemble in general"[173], that is, it is an attempt

[172] This is not a simultaneity of the Leibnizian monads or the Kantian multiples

[173] The movement of this subject (if there is any movement at all) is not of the Levi-Straussian 'logocentric assumptions' and Derridean 'geometrical assumptions' or 'theory of spontaneity' which believes that "there is a correspondence between myth/text/totality" (Moten, 1997:226). This is because the subject we are trying to theorise is a marked by a failure to produce or reproduce philosophy, it is a subject which subsists or "floats in

at the theorisation "of something free of the (hermeneutic) circle, free of *event*ual tension," something that is "not" caught "in the interest of any numerical determination (the valorisation of the multiple or its shadow), not in the interest of any ethico-temporal determination (the valorisation of the durative or of process), but for a kind of decentralisation of the organisation" of the numerical sequence (Moten, 1997:225).

Or, to introduce the chapter by way of Jacques-Allain Miller's (1966) conception of the scientific and psychoanalytic logic of the signifier or his theory of natural numbers, it is in the "zero lack" the inexistent or the multiplicity of the nonnumerable, not in the "zero mark/number" or in the categories of philosophical reflection or the order of predication where we can locate the revolutionary or avant-gardist impulse manifest in Black Radical Thought.[174]

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the limbo of the cut, in order to mark nothing akin to an initial phase or prior singularity" (Moten, 1997:227). Such is the case with the alogicity of the colonized-black subject, an alogicity which directs us towards the logic of an "unthinkable of philosophy", a philosophy or musical "tone … to be thought neither as or in its absence (atonality) nor as/in its multiplicity or plenitude (pantonality): it is rather an ensemble tone, the tone that is not structured by or around the presence/absence of singularity or totality, the tone that is not iterative but generative" (Moten, 1997:226).

[174] I have introduced this chapter by way of Jacques-Allain Miller's theory of number, to continue our dialogue, or rather, to continue our conversation (as those participating within the black radical tradition) with Continental philosophy or Western social theory, not to defend the validity of its doctines but to show who amongst its proponents can help us (if possible) advance our materialist theory of the subject despite the fact that their mathematical logic or structural dialectics tries to develop what Bosteels (2009:xx), referring to Badiou's Althusserianism, defines as a "materialist theory of history without history." A dangerous territory we would not want to find ourselves in, especially if the material that we are dealing with is that of *dense* 'black' *matter*. It is their mathematical logic, especially Badiou's axiom of choice, which helps us in contrasting the politics of the working-class subject and the messianic subject with the politics of the colonised black-subject, or rather to contrast Western social theory with black badical thought qua Black theory. More so, not that we totally agree with Miller's notion of suture, like that of Badiou which is read as an implication of a structural dialectics (i.e. an effect of the vanishing or absent cause) because it is in the end premised on Frege's logical schema of concepts and predicates and it uses set theory and reflection theory in order to avoid any reference or reference to the real itself. Or rather, like Badiou, through his mathematical logic and theory of the number, he constructs the zero as a concept which precedes number 1. The same can also be said of Adrian Johnston who inscribes a category of transcendence to his method of dialectical materialism, but we we still rely on his materialist theory of the subject in order to set the foundation for our theory of anti-colonialism. As for Miller, what we take from him is the supposition that before the zero comes to be constituted as number or before the 'count-as-one', it should be regarded as an empirical entity which is non-enumerable and is riddled with inconsistence since that which it represents is of the order of inexistence. Or what in Lacanian geometry is referred to as the 'surface' which functions as a unifying unit for the number or for all the elements of existence, i.e. the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic trilogy. So, for the reader, it should be noted that, unlike Miller and Badiou who in what the latter refers to as the Fregean system of "the three concepts of the concept; the object, and the number, and the two" (Miller, 1966:3), the second comes to subsume the first. Miller makes the turn towards the symbolic in the attempt to establish the Lacanian psychoanalytic "logic of the Signifer" as a function of "formal … fields of knowledge" (Miller, 1966:2). However, bringing us close to Badiou and Miller in our problematic of the materialist theory of the subject, is their attempt to argue for the "possibility of articulating psychonalysis and historical materialism (science)" (Badiou, 1969:11). This Miller does by pointing out that psychoanalysis turns into a logical system in the moment it acquires specificity in the field of formal functions because it wants to

That is, in Miller's psychoanalytic extension of set theory, as is the case with both Badiou and Lacan in their materialist moments, it is things themselves (not things-in-themselves) as heterogenous substances which constitute an order of predication. That is, prior to their transcendental moments of 'sequence', 'consistency', 'comprehension', 'rest', 'position' or 'logocentric assumptions', it is the energetics emanating from the drives of the 'barred Real' which effect and affect movement. In other words, it is the Zero as a multiple of all integers which constitutes the One as the mark through which enumeration must commence. This supposition, despite the fact that it uses algebraic topology to describe a coding process or a coagulation of the energetics of the death drive, directly contradicts that of the semiotics of the Word or a semiotics of the Sign/Mark supposed in the hermeneutic interpretative paradigms which take subjectivity as an expression of the limitless expansion of a Transcendental Being/the Master-Signifier which splits itself into two in order to produce a 'double'. A double through which we can account for the place of the unknown. And thus like Derrida turning the unknown of space into an 'unknown-known' of place. So, what we are hinting at here is the idea that, through Miller's "theory of natural numbers" and "concept of the logic of (natural) signifiers", we can account for the genus or the specificity of subjectivity within the realm of materiality, the unnameable, the 'not-whole', the 'barred Real', the *not-all*, the 'empty set', or

ensure "a progression reduced to linear movement uniformally generated at each point of its necessary sequence", and in the case of Frege's "logical discourse", by ecluding the empirical, which for him, as ideology, is the realm "in which logical and psychological discourse are wedded, with political discourse occupying the key position" (Miller, 1966:2 and 3). And in the case of Badiou, he draws a difference between "psychoanalysis and historical materialism: the former producing the schema […] of particular signifying orders (ideologies), the latter producing the structures of their efficacy, the laws of entry […] and connection through which the places allocated by ideology are ultimately occupied" (Badiou, 1969:11). So, it is the Miller who examines the function of zero before it is constituted as a concept, model, or index that we shall read from. Badiou's notion of the void also bears theoretical purchase for our materialist theory of the subject, although we don't go into length discussing it. The void, in Badiou's reading of Aristotle's *Physics,* as the non-place or the constitutive remainder which the state cannot subsume or account for, is that which allows for movement, violence, and rupture due to the relative speed that it allows to the movement of elements within its space. It is the movement within the nothingness of the material which allows this very movement to "tend towards infinite speed" because it "bears no relation to the full" or any relation to the (ontology of the) state (Badiou, 2013a:75). This is the Badiou of the material before transcendence, of the "empty set" or of "the side of the void, the without one, the unrepresented" before the Badiou of the "side of fullness, the multiple as counted-as-one" (Badiou, 2013a:76). What Badiou's Aristotelean theory of the void allows us to do, if we are to take a theoretical thread from it, is to locate the material as the cause of transport" or movement because it allows for the existence of "the matter of the heavy and the light as such" (Badiou, 2013a:76). And what we have briefly highlighted here is our position with both Miller, Badiou, and Johnston (or generally, Western social theory), a position which may not necessarily be clearly outlined in our extension of their work as we shall be moving both in and out of their theoretical and philosophical innovations.

the 'One-less multiple' which at all times is always, riddled by contradiction, antagonism, conflict, and tension.

The Death Gnosis as a Function of the Mathematical Real

What this formula we are introducing by way of Miller's theory of whole numbers suggests is that, the colonised black subject always remains immanent to the material-social Real at all its attempts towards extension, such that we could say it behaves irrationally like the sum of the π which does not produce a terminating decimal but produces a recurring decimal which cannot be easily turned into a fraction whether by approximation or by rounding-off. And, this is to the extent that it contradicts the model of Miller's theory of *points* or the *algebraic topology of his set theory* which allows an object of reflection to be "uniformally generated at each *points* of its sequence" (Milller 1966:2). The colonised subject is truly that which takes to the limit the problematic of the impossibility of the Two in the sequence of whole numbers. Hence, we say, the mathematical logic of the colonised subject, unlike that of the subject of Miller's or Badiou's mathematical ontology which in the attempt to give consistence to these points of sequence invokes a model of indices and predication through summation and exponentiation, we argue that the colonised black subject, due to the phenomenology of the colonial socio-symbolic order which is effected through its sociogenic principles, is marked by a failure of predication or extension, i.e., it fails to enact the process of infinite repetition which is functional to the latter's theory of substitution.

In other words, for us, under the colonial situation, blackness itself implies the failure or subversion of an ontology which can be accounted for by finding either its Highest Common Factor or its Lowest Common Multiple. This is in the sense that, although there is initiative towards negation or predication, due to the dominance of the social structure by the colonial socio-symbolic, that which it negates fails to be erected into a pure mathematical function qua ontology. That is, it fails to get established into the field of the possible-impossible or the 'unknown-known' of the order of the One, i.e., the second order of the logic of double negation in the sequence of numbers whether through summation or exponentiation.[175] Since through

[175] Since as Fanon tells us, 'blackness escapes all ontological explanations' (i.e., it escapes all the categories of the 'beyond' or the 'unity of moments'), so we cannot, like in the orders of the 'Resistant of *Logic*' supposed in pure mathematical functions assume, that its models of resistance and liberation are those of the nature of exponentiation. For Hegel, in *The Science of Logic*, tells us that, exponentiation is of the order of determinateness which functions as a "complete quantum," a quantum which is expressed through the notion of the "numerical one", that is, it is a quantum which in "referring *itself to itself* in the *otherness* which it has within it, it is only a

mathematical logic, we are told that there are two orders of negation: the first being that of 0 qua the empty set or "the field of the potential or impossibilities", and the second being that of 1 qua the field of repetition or the field of possibilities, consistency, comprehensiveness, and possibilities (Lacan, unpublished). The 1 as a law of consistency or the 1 turned into a category of ethics intends to eliminate all possibility of internal contradiction as we shall see soon in our analysis of the forms of interpellation experienced by the working-class subject within the colonial-capitalist socio-symbolic order.

But for us, since we are concerned with the logic of resistance and liberation, we focus more on the first order negation, i.e., that of element 0. The failure of the '*break'*, the '*unbinding process*, the '*split*', the '*double*', the '*first separation*' is what forces us to analyse the political action of the colonised-black subject through the dynamics of the '*cut*', or the '*pure 0*', or the '*unconscious*' qua the groundlessness which functions as the zero-degree of subjectivity. The colonised-black subject, due to the phenomenological violence of the colonial socio-symbolic, is forced to remain at the level of the inanimate, and since there is a failed transference, it can't "hold onto an order", be it of the postcolonial liberal democratic state or the capitalist commodity/money form. We want to remain at the level of the proposition that it is the field of the potential which determines the impossible not that of the second order which supposes that it is the field of possibilities which determines the nature of the impossible. For the field of the potential is that of the anti-colonial struggle and the field of the possible is that of ethics. This we have already established through our analysis of the Lacanian matheme in chapter three. And so, we have introduced this chapter by way of Miller's theory of whole numbers because it may enable us to account for the logic of inexistence articulated within blackness. This is the logic of the Real signified by Zero, rather than the logic of the Symbolic signified by the index 1. This allows us to avoid the limitations of the ethical impasse which threaten the

qualitatively determined quantum, for its difference, its beyond, is in it" (Hegel, 2010:272 and 273). Rooted in the situation of a conflict-ridden-material-Real, we contest that the emancipatory categories of blackness, as expressed in the antagonisms and contradictions of the colonial structure, are not of a negative determination supposed through the notion of the possible, rather, they are those of finite 'indeterminess' supposed through the notion of potentiation. A potentiation as told by Hegel, in either geometry or arithmetics is of the 'base line or the base plane', and in that sense we are able to understand that all the moments of exponentiation are of the moments of the dynamics of the 'Real-situation' of the subject in question. Hegel's "mathematics of nature" or "science of the concrete," although not read closely in this thesis, unlike Badiou and Miller's pythagoreanism, may have a lot to offer in our attempt to understand the nature of the movement or non-movement of (non)beings and (quasi-)substances rendered 'black' and 'dead' by epistemologies informed by the modern Cartesian cartography.

messianic subject of negative theology or the impasse of the commodity form which threaten the working-class subject of Marxian analytics. The field of the potential, as Recanatti notes in Book XIX of Lacan, allows us "to define the paradox of the continuous" which, for us, has a departure but no arrival (Lacan, unpublished). This is what is held in the logic of objective desire which functions through the negation of 0 and is always subjected to *movement,* as opposed to what is held in subjective logic of subjective desire which functions through the negation of 1 and may come to suggest *rest* or *position* since it can easily be mistaken for a category of ontological affirmation.

As Recanati's notes, it is after all the before which determines the after, or to put it in his own words, "the before is in a way an after. Or rather the after is a before that is inscribed and one can absolutely not deduce the before from the after because the before which is inscribed in the after, is precisely the after which in this sense has no longer anything to do, precisely with the before whose property is precisely not to be inscribed" (Lacan, unpublished). The purpose of this quote is to make clear the point that it is potential which determines the logical nature of the colonised-black subject, hence, one has to, in their analysis of revolutionary emancipatory subjectivity, examine all the angles of political action and guerrilla action through the prism of real existence as supposed through the vertices of the semiotic triangle that both Lacan and Recanatti present in Book XIX. So in the function of the mathematical real of the logic of the struggle for liberation, it is the existential reality of the subject which is problematized. It is this existential reality with its contradictions and antagonisms which makes political action imperative. This kind of political action is not dependent on the subject's suture by some external force or a "punctual external impulse". That is, it is neither of reflection nor intuition, hence we chose to analyse in detail what really takes place in the field of the potential before we venture into the field of possibility as most social theorists tend to do. It is at this level that we discover the incomprehensible which demands that there be a process of transformation. The field of possibilities on the other hand, as a field of knowledge or an order of ontology (however Real), directs us towards the already transformed future anterior which "transforms into an image of itself" qua the "first cause", or an "original reflection", or the 'vanishing cause' of structural dialectics (Lacan, unpublished). This order, as we mentioned above, may come to suppose an ethics which can end up directing the revolutionary struggle from a "formal point of view". Thus, making the subject forget that there is no mediating variable or, as Recanati

says, "there is no formal representation, there is no abstract representation" (Lacan, unpublished).

Now, to refer to the discussion in the previous chapter, Miller's position without its structuralist underpinnings which to some extent echoes the materialist position held by Wilson Harris and other Black avant-gardist semioticians through whom we have tried to read myth as a model for the articulation of a material-social Real (similar to the One-Less multiple of Badiou and the '*not-all*' or the 'element 0' of Lacan) which follows the echoes of the drives through which it is formed. It contradicts the interpretative paradigm adopted in Mudimbe, Soyinka, and Gates' reading of myth as the expressive expansion of a transcendental Truth-Idea or an a priori Imaginary-Symbolic realm (qua a One-All). In commitment to the task set in this thesis – that of conceptualising a materialist theory of the subject of anti-colonialism or an emancipatory political project which surpasses the limitations of the 'Imaginary-Symbolic order' or 'Natural-Monistic' One-Alls – we shall look into the ruptural dimensions of the economics of the death drive (or the death gnosis) at both the levels of the 'Material-Real' (the realm of myth or the realm of the living-dead ancestors) and the 'Social-Real' (the practical situation of the colonial socius in Sartrean terms).[176] Since, at this stage, through Harris' theory of the Limbo we can

[176] What we are trying to suggest here is that, even though both the Material-Real (the mythical) and the Social-Real (the political) are all categories of the unconscious, they are still differentially related. The former as Cesaire (2000:84) says, again, although not independent from determination (not in the last instance) by the colonial socio-symbolic, is the genus of profound or profarred being, a being "over whom all sorts of ancestral layers and alluviums had been deposited." This is because for the colonised-slave subject, the mythical qua the symbolic, does not subsist at the level of the social or is not given the opportunity to subsist as a mode of interpretation for the social. The point I want to drive home is that, for the black subject living under the condition of coloniality, there is no point of separation or 'break' between the Natural and the Spiritual, between the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic, or rather, there is no room for expansion or morphology from the Natural-(real) into the Symbolic. In other words, there is no splitting between the material and the "socio-symbolic", or rather a logical transition from the Real into the Symbolic. In the black subject, to contradict Peter Hudson, "the laws of culture, the symbolic …, the Big Other" fail to assume their "full responsibility for the construction of the human subject and the structure of social practice", or rather they fail to enable the black subject to accomplish "a 'total and subtraction from biomaterial being'" (Hudson, 2018:1 and 2, citing Johnston, 2013b:330). As Fanon says, this is due to the fact that the sociogenic principles that construct blackness as property under the colonial symbolic or capitalist colonial regime of accumulation work towards constituting it as an aberration of affect, hence the ontological fatalitism. And because of this condition, in theorising anti-colonial subjectivity, one cannot like our counterparts in Continental philosophy, prioritse the structures of logical representation which are realisable at the levels of the imaginary and the symbolic. Rather, over and above the categories of logical representation, when analysing the 'now' of blackness as a subjectivity which still denotes relations of property in the colonial capitalist regime of accumulation, we should prioritise the theory of revolution/rupture which gives priority to the real. So, unlike both Hudson and Johnston here, we cannot say in the condition of the black (qua propertyhood), the symbolic subsists at the level of the socius, that is, if for the two, the socio-symbolic is a point of freedom or establishes the "transcendental condition of subjectivity", its symbolic is not locatable at the level of the social. Instead of the real vanishing, splitting into or sliding under the symbolic (a position which would lead to the overriding of contradiction and antagonism), it is the material-real which continues to articulate the

say we have gotten an understanding of the economics of the death-drive generating from myth as an extension of kinetic energies from the 'Material-Real' – the realm of the living-dead or the underground which holds together all the elements of existence. It is the ground prior to the economics of the energetics manifest or generated at the level of the Social-Real through the paradigms of struggle and conflict. In other words, the point and the conditions and functions relevant to it as Hortense Spillers would say, are below the level of the body and flesh, that is, they are of the level between meat and flesh, the realm of the ancestors, in whose death we find the genus of an anti-colonial emancipatory subjectivity.

Mind that, we are not here trying to suggest that the Social-Real is a point independent of the Material-Real, we still recognise it as an expansion or extension of the Material-Real (qua the ground zero of the One-Less multiple), or rather, we still regard them as a unity – or perhaps such a distinction in itself is arbitrary. That is, they are not, for us, separate points of subjectivity. Perhaps we can regard the Social-Real as the realm of the 'Real-Imaginary'. But what we want to do is to establish the position of the phantomic subsets of the Material-Real as the ground zero of an emancipatory political project which, through translation, comes to manifest at the plane of the 'Social-Real' and if not hindered by a phenomenological violence like that of the colonial socio-symbolic can generate into artefacts for our conceptions of sociality. Or, to use Adrian Johnston's (2006:34) set of questions, what we want to do is to account for: "what allows for the Imaginary-Symbolic structures to take root in the first place? Or, how the Imaginary-Symbolic is generated as an impossible-possible under the conditions of coloniality? What permits them to colonise bodies, to overwrite the being of individuals and thereby denaturalise their natures? Why are these structures, often involving modifications apparently moving in directions contrary to the presumed default trajectories of the libidinal economy, not rejected by this economy in a manner analogous to failed organ transplants?" In the case of postcolonial theorists and their deconstructionist counterparts (such as Derrida, and Deleuze and Guattari, whose philosophical meditations on the concept of democracy, the

symbolic, or rather the symbolic continues to be articulable within the material-real – the level beneath the social-real – i.e. myth itself. Under the conditions of the mythical or the schema of the real, even the imagery cannot be mistaken for a reflection of the symbolic or suture by the socio-symbolic, rather it can be clearly observed that it maintains its relation to the real, the real which shall continue to be the stage of rupture, the lower limit of check in Mackey's poetics. Or, in the Lacanian sense, myth as a category of the real is that in which meaning consists: the copulation of the symbolic and the imaginary" (Lacan, 2005:46). In other words, it is the real which holds the imaginary and the symbolic together or it is myth which is behind the factual history of the socio-symbolic.

concept of the messianic figure and notion of messianic eschatology shall be examined latter), these questions can be responded to through the logics of the One-All multiple, the non-natural, an external force (or theological Idea of God qua the Master-Signifier). But for the anti-colonial theorists (or the avant-gardists in the Black radical tradition), it is the assymetrical nature of the material and social conditions of existence (or the libidinal economy of death qua the void or the empty set which is however not without elements). In Badiou's notion of generic procedure and dialectical materialist notion of the truth, we are told that the 'multiple without-One' (the '*before'*), as a category of the real or natural numbers, precedes the 'count-as-one' (the '*after'*) which is a category of the symbolic, or rather an extension or transformation of the real into the symbolic.

Thus, continuing with our argument for a political project rooted in the economics of the death-drive or in the poetics of death, we shall try to establish the grounds for a zero-degree of subjectivity which is rooted in the material conditions existence – i.e. the condition of the death gnosis qua the real of sound not song. That is, with a focus centralised on the reading of works of the Black avant-gardist and the anti-colonial type, we shall try to show the ways in which the subject of revolutionary action is determined by the phantoms of its material and social conditions of existence or how is it an excess-of-(non)being (qua death and void). Rivalling the Monistic-One-All of both logicists, theologians, and empiricists, we shall argue, through a materialist theory of the subject, that the model of signification suggested through the One-All multiple, especially in the case of the theologians, makes the mistake of trying to reduce the unnameable (qua the material) into the nameable (qua Spirit). By now I guess it must be clear that this has been a consistent position held in this thesis. But for the more philosophically and theoretically inclined reader it can be easily detected that we have not yet clearly articulated the grounds of our reservations with such a model of subjectivity. So far, through our reading of the phenomenological and psycho-linguistic models of (mythical) inquiry or interpretation – in both postcolonial theory and postmodernist theory we can see that – (non)being is regarded as a realm without any idea of freedom or potential for transcendence, i.e. as always pinned down to immanence (the lower world). That is, the theocentric-primordial-One is always regarded as responsible for the summarising or erasure of what we, to use Jacques-Claude Milner's (1966:1), can refer to as "all the positive countings" of nature.

To refer back to our analysis of the Freudian-Lacanian psycho-linguistic theory, the primordial-One is what Freud refers to as the Oedipal complex or what Lacan refers to as the Imaginary-

Symbolic order. Both the Oedipal complex (or the castration complex) and the Imaginary-Symbolic order are regarded as external forces which, a priori and a posteriori, impose their discharges and excitations upon the undifferentiated elements of the material. Again, it is essential that, at this point, we still start by confronting the premise of such a position because it is directly linked to the extensions by postcolonial theorists of postmodernists like Derrida or Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical meditations on the concept of democracy and the commodity/money form – which comes to be presented as a modelling system or structure of subjectivity. And more especially in the case of Derrida, it is of irrefutable substantiality to his notion of the messianic/militant figure of redemptive eschatology, whose political project (we say in the next chapter) is different from that of the psychopathological subject of the struggle for liberation (or the anti-colonial struggle). The articulations of the Lacanian psycho-linguistic subject (as *antiphusis*), like those of the messianic subject of Derrida (and the trickster subject of Soyinka and Gates), are those of a subject "shot through with non-natural influences ... (and) restricted to handling the manifestations of a denaturalised nature" (Johnston 2006:34). They are of a subject who is "submerged in a world of images and signifiers" (Johnston 2006:34). That is, is a subject which, due to the mediatory role of the Imaginary-Symbolic order, "exists as a (non)being alienated from its corporeal-material substratum" (Johnston 2006:34).

Although, in the polemic between Jacque-Alain Miller and Jean-Claude Milner one may associate the postcolonial theory of the subject with Milner's notion of being and non-being. Postcolonial theorists, unlike Milner's logic of the Signifier (and to some extent Derrida's theory of the sign), do not recognise how non-being functions or subsists as both a genesis and an inflection which is "at one limit and passage from one term to another, i.e. the dimension of alterity through which discourse defines itself as assemblage" (Milner 1966:8). Or, even more radically to take the point emphasised in anti-colonial theory, postmodernist postcolonial theory does not even recognise the extent to which the Colonial-Socio-Symbolic denies the differential subsets of the black existential mode or blackness as non-being, the capacity to translate into models of 'being-qua-being'. Even Badiou's theory of the body and theory of points, and their extension in Johnston's transcendental-materialist theory of the subject, are also susceptible to almost similar limitations when applied to the situation of the colonised subject. That is, how the Colonial-Symbolic, unlike the Capitalist-Symbolic which follows a logic of subsumption in relation to the working-class subject, denies the colonised subject any orthopaedic support or any chance to engage in transcendence or "philosophising" (mythical

narration) as "an activity driven by evental impacts forcing it to move along certain truth-trajectories" (Johnston 2007:1). Or, how in the case of the working-class subject in Badiou's theory of the Truth-Event, the subject 'desacralises' the Capitalist-Symbolic or in the case of Pelton's trickster subject, the subject demythologise, unveil, or demystify the Mythical-Symbol. Or, how the colonised subject is denied the opportunity to engage in a (re)productive *repetition* and consumption of its *philosophical crumbs* (the eating of flesh turned into meat) – that is, how it is denied the choice of the *Either*/*Or* of Kiekergaard's ethics. We shall focus more on this point in the sections to follow but for now let us focus more closely on Adrian Johnston's and Todd McGowan's outlines of the psychoanalytic theory of the subject and Miller's theory of natural numbers because their conception of nature or non-being "as the precondition for the genesis of subjectivity" can help us to understand the dialectical relationship between the politics of the psychopathological subject and its articulation of human futures – the theory of anti-colonialism or Black-avant-gardist-aesthetic-theory.

Johnston's and McGowan's psychoanalytic theories of the subject are aligned to Miller's reading of the 'concept of the Material-Signifier' and theory of natural numbers in Lacan's algorhythmic analysis of the elements of the unconscious [qua the Lacan of the Real 1 noted by Bruce Fink (1995)]. This Lacan believes that "in the unconscious, there is a corpus of knowledge"[177] which is not reducible to a manifestation of a priori Imaginary-Symbolic orders. In other words, it is the Lacan who "contends that nature is far from being entirely natural" (Johnston 2013:35). Or the Lacan who becomes aware "of the need to redefine nature in order to account for why human nature is predisposed to being thoroughly altered by the denaturalising mediation of socio-symbolic structures" (Johnston 2013:35). That is, the Lacan who starts to ask: at what point does non-being give being the support of predication or at what point does non-being give being the support of being? Or, since non-being is not actualisable, at what point does it come to set the proper *name* of being? At what point does non-being (or the unamenable sutures or) give to the subject of emancipation the status of a name or at what point does non-being turn into a place where being comes to be designated as irreplaceable? How does the place of the unnameable or nonbeing come to mark a point where being proves

[177] Lacan, 1981, p. 134.

to be desirable impossible or where being disappears or comes to lack? How does the suture-of-nonbeing manifest as a lack of being?

In the Lacan of the Real 1, the lack of non-being is what fixes the subject in miscognition (*meconnaissance*), that is, it is that which establishes the structures of an unconscious imagination. It is unlike in the Lacan of the Real 2, on whom postmodernist postcolonial theorists rely on, where the tautology or totality of transcendental Being qua the Master-Signifier or the Imaginary-Symbolic order fixes the subject in miscognition. The Lacan of the Real 1 is the Lacan who contends that "the Other, the Capital Other, is already there (not a posteriorily so), in every opening, however fleeting it may be, of the unconscious" – or myth (Lacan 1981:130). It is the Lacan who sees repetition as that which designates the transference of the Real into the psychic of the subject or the capacity of the subject to engage in thought process, hence the subject qua though finds its genus in it. The Real, in this case, is that which is unassimilable within the structures of subject formation and movement towards being or what functions as an encounter with trauma, a missed encounter. And its ascendance, as non-being is not determined by transcendental Being which comes to immerse itself by moving towards it in a descending form. In other words, the Lacan of the Real 1, is the Lacan who asks, again: how is the Material-Social-Real (i.e. the mythical and the socio-symbolic order) always pending, always in abeyance or always phantasmagorical? How does the Real get transferred from trauma to fantasy under the model of a diffracted-reflexion – a death gnosis or a reverse anthropomorphism?

For those who read from the Lacan of the Real 1, the 'barred-Real' (qua the material-Real or Real-materiality) bear within itself, chaotic energies capable of constituting a "minimal logic ..., necessary to assure it a progression reduced to a linear movement, uniformally generated at each point of its necessary sequence" (Miller 1966:2). This is the Lacan, as we have noted in the previous chapter, through Adrian Johnston, who instead of "grounding his assertions ... by invoking the externally imposed intrusion of images and signifiers as the ultimate cause of the denaturalisation involved in subjectification ..., takes the additional step pointing to something within nature itself that inclines it in the direction of its own effacement."[178] And one who believes that "nature (at least human nature) should not be envisioned as an integrated organic

[178] Johnston, 2006, p. 35.

wholeness, a co-ordinated sphere of components interrelating according to the laws of an eternally balanced harmony" or a "monistic-One-All of a seamless tapestry of entities and events bound together by mechanical relations of efficient causality" (Johnston 2013:35). In the Lacan of the Real 1, the natural qua the unconscious or the 'barred-Real', as Johnston (2006:36) contends, is not a "harmonious and whole One-All", rather, it is an "inconsistent, conflict-ridden symbolic order" – i.e. a real hole. It is of a "libidinal-material ground" which is "internally plagued by rottenness ..., by a decay or defect out of which culture (as antiphusis) bubbles forth" (Johnston 2006:36).

Thus said, the task of the philosopher, theorist, artist, or scientist is to identify the points at which the horrors of nature manifest because it is at these points that nature in its transient form, tries to translates into *meaning*, albeit an always empty-One. The barred-Real, for Johnston (2006:37), as "an internally conflicted libidinal economy at odds with itself" produces a subject which acts in a mode similar to that of the "Schellingian 'vortex of drive" because it bears within itself "a [pseudo-]transcendence of embodied materiality. Through the notion of the 'vortex of drive', as Johnston (2006:38) further states in the language of quantum mechanics, "Schelling posits a law of reverse entropy: chaos comes first, and any established order is necessarily preceded by this same chaos from which it emerges and subsequently excludes." Johnston here evokes Schelling's idea of reverse entropy, in a manner that echoes Wilson Harris' idea of limbo imagination and Mackey's notion of the genitive process which this work uses as a model for understanding the dynamics and articulation of Black 'loss' and historical 'imagination' in ritual myth. In the previous chapter, we saw that, the material-ground qua Real-materiality, as the genus of myth in Harris' theory of the limbo dance, subsists as a lack or void (or a '*not-all*' to use the Lacanian conception of the feminine matheme), which the figure of Blackness, as a subject of 'loss', coils back into in order to conjure the forces of the dead. It re-curls into it as a model of its historical past in order to construct imaginative fictions of the future. However, we did not, to an extent, sufficiently outline how this place of loss qua the historical past as void or lack, in psychoanalytic terms, is capable of producing future-imaginaries or future-impossibles. Or rather, we did not sufficiently account for the failure to situate these future imaginaries within the field of the possible.

So far we can see that, the need to address the question of the material-Real or the historical past, as lack or void (qua the 'creative womb' of Harris) which is at the same time the primordial condition for the genesis of subjectivity, demands of us to see it as more than a mere

empirical materialism or empirical algorithm, which to use Johnston (2013b:95), functions as nothing "but a scientific positivism, a simplistic, narrow-minded metaphysics in which only physically present matter-in-motion in the *hic et nunc* is admitted as real." Both Miller and Johnston, the latter through Badiou's notion of the multiple without-One, return to the logics of the Material-Signifier (or the logic of the element 0) in the Lacanian algebra. Unlike the Lacan of the Real 2, who we have said, through the project of externality or through the idea of an external force explains how the subject, as Fink (1995:60) says, "achieves a phantasmatic sense of wholeness, completeness, fulfilment, and well-being", the Lacan of the Real 1 invoked in the materialist moments of Miller and Johnston, believes that, the object *a* is the unknown, the undecipherable Real as symptom, the excess of lack, the inexistent not-all, or the remainder which refuses symbolisation. The element 0, as we have seen in the preceding discussion, is both internal and anterior to the Real 1 which in the series of whole numbers is responsible for the formation of the Real 2. In the algebra of the earlier Lacan, the Signifier is given a structural and ontological rather than a semiological and logical interpretation, hence the structuralist conceptions of object *a* as an external force which, both a priori and a posteriori determines subjectivity.

For Miller, the fact that logic, in the Lacanian algebra, should be called the logic of the Signifier, is a mistake which can help us correct the linguistic declensions of the Signifier (whether in cosmology, theology, astrophysics, algebraic topology, quantum mechanics, string theory, set theory, and the theorems of physics – mathematical logic) and prepare it for a materialist application. After all, it is Lacan himself who states that the concept of the system (as read in linguistics) is different from the concept of the Signifier (as read in his mathematical logic). So those who read the concept of the Signifier from the place of the Real or the material rather than that of the Imaginary-Symbolic are correct if we are to go by the word of this Lacan. Which is to an extent what we see in Miller's analysis of the logic of the signifier or Badiou's notion of generic procedure and notion of the multiple without-One (which comes prior to the leap from the quantitative to the qualitative that he supposes in his extension of the Hegelian logic of scission or his regime of law and notion of the count-as-one) which Johnston extends in his transcendental-materialist theory of the subject. By grounding the Signifier within the economy of the conceptual expenditure or energetics of the natural or the biological, Miller (1966:2) says, we can be able to understand the "logic of the origin of logic". This we cannot do through the rational structures of meaning and representation, rather we need to focus on

the non-meaning produced within the chaotic interstices of the material-social-Real qua the conflict-ridden realm of existence. In the Lacanian algebra, the idea that meaning is conditioned by non-meaning, the nameable by the unnameable, being by non-being, suggests that the "dimension of the archaeological can be grasped most succinctly through a movement back from the field of logic itself where its miscognition [meconnaissance], is at its most radical because closest to its recognition, is effected" (Miller 1966:2). But for us, unlike Miller in this case, who through the theory of whole numbers wants to theorise from the field of logic as locatable at the level of consistence qua the field of possibilities, the subject we are concerned with cannot yet retrieve its categories of existence from this realm. However it is his idea that meconnaissance is of the category of the real which at this point attracts us to his work.

This, as he further states, is a miscognition which "finds its points of departure in the production of meaning"[179] not the one of the reflection suggested by the hermeneutic or phenomenological paradigm which finds its point of departure in an a priori meaning. That is, it locates meaning within the heart of the inner core Real-materiality, a meaning which generates from the *void* – or the contingency of *repression* or *lack* or *suture*. This conception of meaning is different from the theological, phenomenological, or linguistic ones which regard the (re)production of meaning (or subjectivity) as "the process of God's creation of the existent natural world through the elevation of himself above the murky fray of His own drive-ridden being" (Johnston 2006:40). To the contrary, what we are suggesting here is a meaning which is produced through the repression or lack or void of the Real. That which is responsible for both the production and reproduction of meaning through a movement which is prestructured by the Real of materiality. The Real itself, both expands and contracts in ways that allows it to exist as the zero degree of subjectivity or to function as a point of pleasure, pain, and suffering capable of inducing the subject into political action. And unlike the symptomatic-Symbol, the symptomatic-Real does not suture like a universal/transcendental agent because it always acknowledges its particularity/immanence. Its mode of suture, as that of empty-meaning or non-being, does not seek the closure of all the points of generation or the foreclosure of meaning and existence.

[179] Miller, 1966, p. 2.

The symptomatic-Real as that which is always held in abeyance or repressed or as that which subsists as a lack at every point of subjectivity, to use Miller's application of Frege's schema of the three-stage itinerary of existence: substitution, subversion, and succession it disturbs or sutures, rather than saturate the points of its generation. Which are both points at which forces such "as *drives*, *desires*, and *passions*" – division par excellence – are at play.[180] In the Freudian-Lacanian psychoanalytic metapsychology of Johnston and McGowan, it is the drives which take precedence over the other two forces. The drive as that which help maintain the status of lack and suture of/and by the Real is what affirms the non-satisfaction or non-saturation of subjectivity at every point of its generation. To use McGowan (2013:54) differently, it is that which helps guarantee that psychoanalysis does not turn into a therapy that only seek to "effectuate a qualitative change in the subject by transforming dissatisfaction into satisfaction." The concepts of suture, lack, and repression as categories of the drive, show the repetitive character of the Real and how it maintains its presence at every point or detour of existence. That is, the dynamic nature of the drive (like firing neurons or the dance in the Limbo anancy syndrome of Harris) help maintain the "flow of psychic energy"[181] at each point of existence. And as a function of the libidinal economy or as a function of the real, the (death-)drive, helps make present the syncopations of the unconscious.

The disruptive nature of the economics of the death-drive help maintain that the (political) project of the subject (of emancipation) is not that of elimination by qualification but of disqualification by repetition – but unlike in Badiou's notion of subtraction, this is not a disqualification of the Symbolic by the Real, rather, it is vice versa. In that manner that which has to be disqualified is retained as a constitute remainder which escapes all efforts towards symbolisation. So, perhaps to contradict Badiou's theory of repetition which maintains the function of the Real without at the same time abandoning the task of disqualifying it through the affect of the Symbolic. Put in the psychoanalytic terms of McGowan (2013:56), contrary to Badiou we maintain that, in the project of psychoanalysis, the doctor must not try to "eliminate the symptom ... The symptom is valuable for the doctor in so far as it provides an indication of an underlying disorder, but at the same time it coalesces the subject's psychic

[180] Johnston, 2006, p38.

[181] McGowan, 2013, p. 55.

existence." Hence, we say, the symptomatic-Real must subsist as lack or suture and as that which is repressed in order for being or human freedom to become a possible-potentiality. That is, its presence must always be sought at its initial point of genesis, however phantasmatic and elusive it may be. In other words, although indicating an underlying disorder, the symptomatic-Real is helpful in coalescing "the subject's psychic existence" or the subject's material structures of existence. It always bears testimony to the unfulfilled *lack* of existence. And "without the symptom's disruption of the circuit (of existence), there would be no drive at all; we would have a living organism rather than a desiring subject" (McGowan, 2013:56).

Since the Real (as both material and social) is by its nature antagonistic, it produces an excess of energy which powers the "engine for political action". It, unlike the Imaginary-Symbolic, does not try to normalise the conditions of human suffering, rather, it amplifies them, through what we have above referred to as disqualification by repetition, or rather, through a regression into the material real, since the process of subtraction supposed in the theory of repetition supposes a logic of consistency as functional to the process of subjectivisation . Yet however, this process of disqualification by substitution helps prove that the lack of the subject of the material-real is that of the empty-form not the full-form because to regard itself as full is tantamount to falling prey to the spells of transcendental interpellation. Observed as an empty-form and since structured as a lack the Real-Material can be in that sense made to appear as a void, a nothingness, or dark abyss from which subjectivity finds its purpose and function. To think the subject as divided or to think subjectivity as a void or lack or hole which harbours all the subsets of existence is to think the subject as a quasi-substance or think Zero as a Number. It is the only way through which, to use Miller (1966:2), we can understand how the Real-as-suture, comes to figure "as the element which is lacking, in the form of a stand-in [*tenant lieu*]" or as, "by extension – the general relation of lack to the structure – of which it is an element, in as much as it implies the position of a taking-the-place-of [*tenant lieu*]."

Thus to think the subject as a quasi-substance or zero as a number, to return to Miller's Lacanian logic of the signifier or what Johnston (2007:5) refers to as "Zizek's portrayal of the Lacanian subject of the signifier" in the comments on desire, is to take Lacan's subject of the signifier as "multiple, dispersed" and immanent in the material, that is, as something Real. And to think the subject as immanent in nature is to acknowledge the epiphenomality of the Real. A Real "impossible to exorcise decisively as a spectre forever haunting humans' self-conceptions" (Johnston 2007:5). This Real as a ghost "can be *repressed* but not destroyed", its

phantom lingers and continues to be a differential element within the antagonistic neurobiological whole that being-qua-non-being is within blackness. It is at the level of the Real-qua-non-being that being is at its most radical. In that realm of a-subjectiveness or field of the potential, it is fostered to translate non-knowledge into knowledge, the meaningless into meaning. Nothing is at the level of the Real causal as an ephemeral ethereality, not because the elements constitutive of it are equal, but because they all, as antagonistic and differentially arranged, stake it out for the moment of freedom (or metonymic and metaphoric translation): a moment which is however elusive by its very nature, because it never is and never was from the beginning.

Hence the moment of freedom as that which is desired is perpetually on the run, making the subject find no *point* of *rest* because it always has to be in constant *movement* (to use two of the genera in Milner's extension of Plato), chasing the elusive. The subject of objective desire has no destiny because there is always a void and an unfilled lack in subjectivity due to the over-presence of the conflict-ridden Real. Whether as movement or rest, to use Johnston's (2007:5) extension of Badiou's notion of "the passion of the Real", the subject remains subjectified to the negativity "between actual materiality and virtual-more-than-materiality". That is, it remains caught between the Real and its phantoms (which in the case of the colonial subject does not attain the level of consistency or to the level of the Imaginary-Symbol but finding no anchor, is forced to return again into a Real within which it is birthed (but more on this point latter). What amounts to miscognition, in all the sense of the word, is the miscognition of an over-present Real. That is, "the power of miscognition (in this sense) can be construed as what negatively produces a Real of illusions" or quasi-transcendental models of existence for the subject to hold onto (Johnston 2007:5). Thus, as a form of "transubstantiation in reverse"[182] or the death gnosis, to return to Harris' theory of the limbo dance, miscognition is of the latent capacity of the Real qua the unconscious in the Freudean latent dream content.

To refer to Miller's notion of the logic of the signifier, miscognition affirms the "intra-systemic logics"[183] of the elements or subsets of the natural. The theory of logic, as read in Johnston's extension of Badiou and Zizek or Miller's logic of the signifier, affirms the Hegelianism in

[182] Harris, 1981, p. 38.

[183] Johnston, 2007, p. 5.

Lacan's "doctrine of the material-Signifier"[184] not the Hegel of Absolute or positive negation[185] but the Hegel of pure negation, the Hegel of the *Logic of Science*, the one who marks "the transition from ... *Philosophy of Nature* to ... *Philosophy of Mind*. The negativity of Hegel's subject of *Logic* is that of a more-than-material transcendence (which) arises of a material immanence" (Johnston 2007.:4). And in what affirms our psychoanalytic reading of Harris' notion of the spider-metamorphoses in the limbo dance, Johnston also makes the observation that "although the Lacanian subject of signifiers plays on cerebral surfaces – Lacan describes language as straddling the brain like a spider."[186] Similarly the ontogenesis of Hegel's subject of logic is the negativity of matter in motion, or rather atoms set in motion by the void that it denotes. The helplessness of the subject in the conflict-ridden material creates an *anxiety* which sets the subject on the path for the search of freedom and in that search it both tries to occlude the 'passion of the Real' which vacillates within it throughout all its processes of expansion and contraction because the Real is like a rupture inscribed in a certain *lack* which the subject cannot surpass or escape from.

Hence, we say the logics of the material-signifier are different from the logics of the linguistic-signifier. It is a signifier which, although structured in a quasi-transcendental status, remains immanent in physical-biological substances. Its immersion or immanence in biological substances produces the opposite of the substances "of groundless imaginative fancy" relied upon in such "scientific disciplines as cosmology, astrophysics, quantum mechanics, string theory, and the like" (Johnston 2013b:94). Apparently, for Johnston (2013b:94), this is affirmed in the "post-Spinozist" Hegel of immanentism, who treats "subjectivity and various phenomena tied up with it as 'real abstraction'". Thus, "subjectivity as substantial", in Hegel's

[184] Johnston, 2007, p. 4.

[185] This is what Badiou (2013a:161) identifies as the ontological impasse proper to Hegel which is "fundamentally centred in his holding that there is a being of the One; or, more precisely, that *presentation generates structure*, that the pure multiple detains in itself the count-as-one." For Badiou, the count-as-one as an order of infinity in Hegel's matheme of the bad infinity, designates the "second existential seal" which is founded on "the finite's insistence on surpassing itself" (Badiou, 2013a:164). In other words, it supposes the 'thereness', 'the having-to-be', 'the passing-beyond' of the void/nature (shot through antagonisms) which affirms the 'repetetive oscillation' of the finite in the order of the infinity – the translation of the 0 into the 1. However, Badiou remains critical of the Hegel who assumes that "the repetition of the One in number … arise(s) from the interiority of the negative" rather than in the impure (Badiou, 2013a:169).

[186] Johnston, 2007, p. 4.

logic, affirms its "irreducibility to the asubjective grounds of its very being" (Johnston 2013b:94). Like in Miller's theory of natural numbers and Badiou's notion of the multiple without-One, which we have, for the large part of this section, been skirting around because of its conceptual difficulties, this affirms how the number 0 translates into the number 1 (i.e., the count-as-one) or how zero as a natural number confers upon "the world the property of being one, effects its transformation into an object of the concept".[187] However, as we mentioned above, Badiou and Miller's theory of natural numbers, assigns the (non-)e-numerable Zero, which functions as unit in algebra, the third term of the sequence, the number 1, meaning "that this function of the number 1 is repetitive for all the things of the world" (Miller 1966:5).

For Miller, the number 1 as an extension of the number 0, does not exist as a "number with its own particular place and property in the series of numbers."[188] Rather, in order for the number to pass from the repetition of the 1 of the identical to that of its ordered succession, it has to allow the logical dimension to gain its autonomy definitively, without any reference to the real, the zero has to appear."[189] And what allows for the algebraic e-numeration of zero is the fact that, zero is the number assigned to the concept 'not identical with itself'" qua the 'not-all' of Lacan (Miller 1966:5). That is, without being invoked at the point of its generation, "the concept of not-identical-with-itself is assigned by the number zero which sutures logical discourse" (Miller 1966:5). This is how even in Badiou's notion of the movement from the multiple without-One to the count-as-one what subsists is an engendering of zero. The number 1 or the count-as-one, as an extension of the logical suturing zero signals the evocation, revocation, or repetition of the number 0. It is a repetition because "at each of the places or points it fixes", the number 0 circulates. That is, the number 0 moves from the "function of *reserve* to that of *term*" qua the number 1. This is unlike as per the discourse of hermeneutics, where the number 1 instead of 0 is "taken as the primary symbol of the emergence of lack truth" (Miller 1966:7). Contrary to this *belief*, Miller *holds* that, we must "recognize in the zero

[187] Miller, 1966, p. 4.

[188] Miller, 1966, p. 5.

[189] Ibid.

number the suturing stand-in for the lack" and its exclusion from the number 1, "the discourse which it internally intimates in is suture". [190]

Now to come to Badiou's theory of points or set theory and its use of symbolic logic, this is how the number zero functions as a possibility of the number one qua the law of the count-as-one. For Badiou, in the regime or law of the count-as-one, all significations are metaphorical or metonymic extensions or the negative quantities of the number zero. The logic of the number zero is what governs the immanence of a situation and its horizon of verity qua the series of numbers. In what could be taken by theologists as its defects, i.e., its form as a nonthingness or void, there it retains its powers to vacillate at all the points of its manifestation. The number zero, for Badiou, functions as a precondition for any ontological discourse by providing the presentative suture to the being-of-any-situation. In the series of numbers qua the count-as-one, the number zero, that which is a lack, "splits the multiple ... into consistency (the composition of ones) and inconsistency (the inertia of the domain)" (Badiou 2013a:52). The number zero subsists in the series because "prior to the count the one is not ... Yet what is explicit in any situation is rather that the one is" (Badiou 2013b:52).

For Badiou, even if what is supposed in the count-as-one is an effacement of the a priori qua zero, that effacement is never total because being always remains imminent in the material. The number zero, "as a phantom of inconsistency" sets the one as its own sequence and affirms it as its own result. Since the One cannot be of the "situational thesis" (although borne with) it is "not an in-situation-term" or cannot continue to subsist in the material and since the zero as a phantasmagoric nothingness cannot also subsist as a permanent form, independent of reality, for both their presentations, they require the support of each other.[191] The one subsists as form because it is already counted in the nothingness of the zero qua the *void* of *unity* or *lack*. It is sustained as form by the desire emerging from the drives of the deathly energies present in the void of existence. And the void in this sense is what exists in the gap between transitions, that which sustains movement-without-rest and affirms subjectivity as operational. In that movement, the zero as actional through the one or as the "errant cause" which sustains the one, Badiou says, it is transformed into a term. Even if zero is a *non-term* or factor of non-

[190] Miller, 1966, p. 7.

[191] Badiou, 2013a, p. 55.

presentation and the one is a *term* or factor of presentation, the one as its double maintains its presence within it. This again is where we also may differ with Badiou's theory of the void or the "mark ϕ of the empty set" which he seems to structure in an ontological form or as a "point of being […] of a conceptual distinction introduced by an Idea (an axiom)" – or a 'barred Symbolic' (Badiou, 2013a:86). But for the sake of convenience we shall continue to read it as a category of immanence rather than as a category of transcendence. Or, we shall keep the Badiou who asserts that, to say the void does not represent anything does not necessarily mean that it is devoid of elements. Badiou says the void consists of an element, although the element itself is void, i.e. "the name (of the unnameable or) of the void, the existent mark of the unrepresented" (Badiou, 2013a:88).

So, the number zero, in Badiou's theory of the immediate 'pure multiple without-One or theory of points, is an "unlocalizable void point", a nothingness, such that, as he says, "it would ... be inexact to speak of this nothing as a point because it is neither local nor global, but scattered all over, nowhere and everywhere: it is such that no encounter would authorise it be held as presentable" (Badiou 2013a:55). As the "womb of space", to evoke Harris' concept, a chaotic and conflict-ridden space, it allows for the subsistence of all the undifferentiated elements of existence, hence providing the suture to being or a space where "every structured presentation unpresents 'its' void" (Badiou 2013a:55). To get back to Badiou again, it is a pure multiple or "void rather than nothing, because" in it "everything is counted" since as materiality, all the elements of existence subsist in it.[192] As substance-in-situation, the void, the constitutive remainder, the 'dysfunction' or 'excess-of-one', which as its phantom fails to sustain itself as a 'One-full' or fails to translate as a "species of re-presentation" in the "count-as-one of subsets" – to contradict or counter Badiou's notion of the "second existent-multiple in the 'genealogical framework of the set theory axiomatic" (Badiou, 2013a:89). The void provides the suture-to-being and it is, according to Badiou (2013a:57), "*the sole term from which ontology's compositions without concept weave themselves*." In other words, for him, the presentation of the errancy of the void does not take regard of some necessarily full singularity. That is, the void, as non-point, the "unpresentable of presentation", the "absolutely original

[192] For Badiou (2013a:56), "void indicates the failure of the one, the not-one, in a more primordial sense than the not-of-the-whole."

existential position" is always empty and inconsistent in ways that allows it to contain contradictory elements and amplify their contradiction at the same time.

Badiou's concept of the void, is not of full-singularity or Absolute knowledge because it is of emptiness in the materialist sense which, in his Hegelese, allows it to be a space where every concept is split and without origin because it is "the unrepresented point of being" (Badiou, 2013a:86). It is more in the *Theory of the Subject*, where Hegel gets a sympathetic treatment from Badiou[193], than in *Being and Event* and *Logic of Worlds* where Hegel the transcendent Idealist philosopher is pitted against Kierkegaard the theologist. More on this point in the next few pages but, for now, let's focus on what he has to say about the Hegel of the *Logic of Science* from whom he draws his theory of substitution in his *Theory of the Subject* which, without pointedly saying so, might be the one that marks what Johnston (2013b:93), as we mentioned above, refers to as the "transition from ... *Philosophy of Nature* to his *Philosophy of Mind*". This materialist Hegel takes it that the movement of human freedom into logic, reveals to the subject how experience is always changing and has orders, constituents and stages whose process, moving from the actual, must be understood as negation – the negation of the material (or the lack of the Real) rather than essence (or the Symbolic). That is, free action only possible "when the content of that which stirs the mind is drawn out of its immediate unity with the Subject, and made an Object for it, then there begins Freedom for the Mind, which while caught in the workings of instinctive mental activity is broken up within the meshes of its categories into infinitely various material" (Hegel 1966:46). This is what truth is in Badiou's Kierkegaardian and Sartrean existentialist ontology, despite what he says of Hegel in *Being and Event* and *Logic of Worlds*. That is, "the name of a subjective connection constructed between existence and eternity ..." (Badiou 2013b:429).

In the Hegel of *Logic*, the idea of a dialectical-free-act supposes that Logic, before it is "freed from all concretion of sense", must result from the knowledge of the particular (Hegel 1966:46). In other words, logic must be conceived as that which enables the mind to raise the materiality of (H)istory to the level of Freedom and Truth. The materiality of history, for

[193] This is what Bruno Bosteels (2009:xiv) in the Translator's Introduction to *The Theory of the Sub*ject refers to as Badiou's redefinition of the "Hegelian dialectic in terms of the logic of scission, instead of the typical textbook notions of alienation, negation, the negation of the negation, and so on" or his separation of the "two matrices of the dialectic in Hegel: an idealist one, defined by the externalization and return to self, and a properly materialist one, in which every term is split without unity either at the origin or in the end."

Badiou, designates the empty-form or nature as a *not-all*, that which he says is not a nothing, although structured as a nothingness. In the *Theory of the Subject*, like Derrida, he names this nothingness the 'something' which is the first form of being-there-in Hegel's *Logic*" (Badiou 2009:4). This something (which applies to the death gnosis) is what, he says, gives "rise to the dialectic of the One and the many, of the infinite and the finite" (Badiou 2009:4). In Hegel's concept of number, the One itself is of the multiple, but can become promoted to the level of 'philophemata' or mediation, i.e., a realm supposedly constituting the 'imperfect grasp' of existence. It is what guarantees, in Hegel's *Logic*, the manifestation of "being and nothing ... (as) the same thing posited twice", that is, as the something-in-itself and the something-for-itself as opposed to the thing-in-itself and the thing-for-itself (Badiou, 2009:5). Badiou calls this positing of the something, "the minimal primary differential: two times one" or the "indexical stasis, because, 'the something' "is the same thing' posited twice" (Badiou 2009:6). This 'something' is "distributed by the space of placement", the power of the repetition of the one, second occurrences of the primal scene of experience/history (Badiou, 2009:6). And Hegel, in the chapter, *Quantum*, the One, although denoting a '*uni*t', it is still of 'quantity' rather than 'quality', that is, it is a negation of the many, which, in quantum theory, can become a "*self-reffering, enclosing,* and *other-excluding* limit" (Hegel, 2010:168).

But for Badiou, Hegel's thing-in-itself, although of the void, it is never posited as a something-in-itself. For Badiou, Hegel being the Idealist that he is, depletes his negative to the level of the concept (savouring it from its immanence) and chooses to remain there. And instead of acting like Kierkegaard or Sartre, he insists on keeping existence as the "pure choice between two possibilities", that is, Hegel reduces his negative to the order of the One-All, that of a "particular point which sums up all the others, into the instance through which the subject comes into himself so that he may communicate with God" qua the transcendental Truth-Idea, cutting off the material from it.[194] Thus, Hegel's subject, unlike that of Kierkegaard, is to some

[194] But before making the entry into negation, Hegel, in his criticism of the Pythagoreans and geometers (that Althusser says Badiou risks turning into) he says, the "mathematical determination of things" is incapable of expressing "what is corporeal in thoughts'. Hence, to quote him at length, he says, by representing space or the corporeal in the thought of triangles, they are only expressing "the thought of unity, of self-sameness and equality, and the ground of congruence, of combination, and the sustaining of everything, of the self-identical, as a *one*, and so forth" (Hegel, 2010:179). In Hegel's logical realism, number is regarded as "the self-externality of the *many*", a many which "is itself the sensuous as taken up in thought, the category of the internally self-external that defines the sensuous" (Hegel, 2010:179-180). That is, although regarded as concept, number, when it digresses into the material, it would all be in vein to force it to maintain "any approximation to the (movement of the) concept" (Hegel, 2101:180). So similarly, for the colonized subject, forced to regress into the realm of

extent, as Kierkegaard himself would claim, denied the choice of return.[195] To put it in Johnston's (2007:3) words, it is not given the opportunity to straddle "between consciousness and the unconscious".[196] The Hegelian subject, for Badiou (2013b:426), unlike that of Kierkegaard, cannot make the eternal appear "in a moment of time", rather, it remains locked into the eternal, the "immobile mover, with an effective or indifferent transcendence" (Badiou 2013b:426). The subject, in this form, reduced to the immobile mover, is ineffectual because, since its Truth is of the finite-real, "it must be exposed to finitude, it must bear witness to the fact that the life of Spirit 'is not the life that shrinks from death [...] but rather the life that endures it and maintains itself within it" (Badiou 2013b:426).

Thus, for Badiou, in Kierkegaard's existentialist ethics, eternity, in order not to be reflective, must submit to the "effective mediation of time" or must be translated into the "my time" of the infinite subject. And in that way, allowing itself to be related to "as inwardness", as something that "build up" internally within the subject. In a sense, making the question of truth an existential one, allowing it to commence and recommence within the corpo-Real body. And existence, in Badiou's Kierkegaardian-Sartrean inspired vocabulary, as a radical decision between life and death or as an activity of the sentient mind, "always comes down to choosing, to being confronted with an 'either/or'" (Badiou 2013b:427). This is the point at which

Death, it becomes difficult to approximate it to Life or any pre-existing category of Being-and-being-qua-being/the ethical or the symbolic. It is only when abstracted from the many that number becomes a concept, which for Badiou can re-establish its connection with the material-Real through *subtraction*, in the same manner that it first came to form itself as a concept through *substitution.* This is how the negative in the Hegelian theory of the dialectic, the Truth becomes devoid of any connections to the material-Real. A kind of inauthenticity-to-death I guess, if we are to use some traction from Heidegger and Sartre notion of inauthenticity. But our subject, unlike that of Badiou and Hegel, due to the functions of the colonial socio-symbolic, it fails to pass "over into its opposite", whether through "exclusion" or "rejection", thus making it a subject, contrary to what Hegel believes, which is capable to 'debunk speculative truth', whether of the Symbolic in psycho-linguistic theory or of the Trinity of negative theology or of the concept in number theory. To use Hegel again, it is not a subject, which can, like number, in the attempt to constitute itself as One, tries to expose the many, which is its primal scene "as plain nonsense – which is to say, … (the One) itself commits the nosense of making that which is pure reference (i.e., the material-Real) into something devoid of all relations" (Hegel, 2010:180, additions mine). Thus, Pythagoreans and geometers, as Hegel goes on to say, make the mistake of taking "*symbols* (the circle, for instance, of eternity; the triangle of Trinity)" to be devoid of any connection to the concrete.

[195] Not that we are trying to establish the condition of the return within the category of blackness, since for the colonised black subject it is even impossible for it to even to set its models into transcendence, let alone setting them up for the return.

[196] This does not necessarily mean that we are in agreement with Foucault's critique of Hegel vis-à-vis Kierkegaard because Hegel's subject, like that of Kierkegaard also assumes the position of Fallenness.

Badiou's theory of the points, theory of the body, theory of the militant figure, or theory of the Truth-Event, as we said earlier, runs into all sorts of problems when applied to the situation of the colonised subject who is not of sentient being,but of psychopathological nonbeing. Its body as non-point, to put it in Johnston's (2007:5) language, fails to open the distance between "the virtual and the actual", not by choice but because the colonial-socio-symbolic keeps it locked within the Real, the material conditions of life qua death, the place of contradictions and antagonisms.

Now let us confront this problematic at both the points of the body and mind or brain and mind the two existential points or possibilities that Badiou identifies with the Kierkegaardian ethical pathos. In relation to this dialectic, the body or brain, the body as a post eventa1-Truth must be able to prepare itself for the "corporeal construction of the true" (Badiou 2013b:427). That is, the body as point, it must be able to remind the subject that it exists or must induce the subject into thinking. The body, conceptualised as such, as something that can encounter eternity in time, can therefore help the subject to "pass into the third stage, that of (a) properly Christian (ethical) pathos" (Badiou 2013b:430). Now the body, conceptualised as, "the function of the point" in the case of the colonised subject fails in its function and remains only useful to the one of the material-social-Real: that of a point of contradiction and antagonism. The corporeality of the colonised subject, unlike that of the working-class subject, who is Badiou's militant figure, due to the phenomenological violence of the colonial symbolic order, is denied the opportunity to translate its political activity into "a power in the world point by point" (Badiou 2013b:431). That is, for the colonised subject, unlike for the working-class subject who is interpellated into the capitalist-Symbolic order, there is no lifting out of the existential condition.

For the colonised subject, there is no escape or flight from the contradiction and conflict ridden Real or from the antagonisms of the concrete colonial situation. As always limited – by the colonial socio-symbolic – to the place of the pathological, it does not bear the characteristics for the 'appropriate corporeal substratum to take place' or for the process of philogenesis to generate. And in that sense, the colonised subject, unlike the working-class subject, does not vault the abyss of contradiction. That is, due to the nature and function of the colonial symbolic (even in postcolonial time), the colonised subject cannot make that leap or the translation from the 'One into Two'. The semiotics or the drives of the colonised subject, unlike those of the working-class subject are not fetishized, they are real and consistent, hence it is always in limbo

and it fails to make the transition into either side of existence. As we shall see in the following pages, at the level of (Ideological) interpellation, the colonial symbolic, unlike the capitalist symbolic, does not follow the logic of subsumption, rather, it follows that of elimination. That is, the full totalisation of the colonised subject-body and its truths by the colonial symbolic is impossible. Its own myths qua its own truths, do not achieve their 'thereness' under colonial conditions, or rather, the Real-natural of the colonised subject, together with its Symbolic-Imaginary (qua myth) cannot be fully absorbed by the resources of the colonial symbolic. Hence, we say, the body of the colonised subject remains closed to Badiou's "vocabulary of transparency" or his Kierkegaardian-Sartrean inspired "logics of choice". The colonial symbolic forbids the colonised subject "from fully accessing his own interior". That is, that "revelatory moment" of radical choice, is always postponed because it cannot "become co-extensive with ... (its) own interior". Its nature is at no point purified in ways that would allow it to subsist as a subject localizable to the "element of truth". The subject-body of the colonised, therefore, does not qualify "in terms of the organ that treats a point, in so far as it is indeed an 'organic' part of the body-of-truth" (Badiou 2013b:433).

In other words, it is that subject-body within which, Badiou (2013b:430) says, "the objective power of the One does not guarantee ... any instance of the Two." It fails to reach the point of a mediated subject-body, either by consciousness or by the return-of-the-truth. With that said, locked into the perpetuity of the economics of the death drive or locked into the dimension of the 'multiple without-One', the colonised subject, like the Gregory Rasputin of Glyn Daly (2006::359) qua the "*force majeure*" of the Bolshevik movement, remains the most relevant figure for the space of the possible, "a catalyst for de-stabilising the political edifice" of colonial-capitalist modernity. Because due to its immanence in the Real of contradictions or as a suture-of-(non)being, it bears "the effect of disclosing the lack in the (Big) Other ... (the Colonial-Symbolic) and of undermining the proper Kantian distanciation between public duty and private enjoyment" (Daly, 2006.:359). It is that subject in which hope loses all efficacy. Unlike in the case of the working-class subject which, due to its interpellation by the capitalist Symbolic/Ideology, does not usually guarantee the disruption of the "operation of imaginary and symbolic identifications"[197], for the colonised subject there is no moment of transparency or transference. That is, if transparency is conceptualised as that which makes the subject

[197] Yahya Madra and Ceren Ozselcuk, 2015, p. 32.

capable of achieving identity with itself or the truth qua the Either/Or of radical decision in Badiou's extension of Kierkegaard and Sartre.

So, if the death-drive or diffracted-reflection, not refractive-reflection (i.e. reflexivity) is the only option remaining to the black/colonised subject, under the conditions of colonial modernity, what are the implications of its articulations of an emancipatory political project? This we ask, if the possibility of reflexivity is that of the transparent subject-body qua the point of contingency. Without transparency, the subject-body of the colonised continues to "symbolise a certain obscene, a basic corruption, at the heart of the (capitalist-colonial) state" (Daly, 2006:360). Since structured as an excess, it remains both antagonistic and contradictory to the functions of the capitalist-colonial symbolic. And if contradiction more than antagonism alone, is the anchor to an emancipatory subjectivity, it is of the unqualified quality of the colonised subject, more than it is of the qualified quality of the working-class subject: in the form of Marx's species being or the Sartrean practico-inert. The working-class subject, interpellated into the capitalist-colonial symbolic, although always antagonistic to it, is not at times contradictory to the functions of its functions. Therefore, at times, like the militant subject of truth or the subject of messianic eschatology, its articulations, to use Madra and Ozeselcuk's (2015:32) critique of class antagonism, at times, "remain merely at the level of deconstructing meaning, it runs the risk of moderating and curtailing the radical implications of antagonism as the Real of the social."

The black/colonised subject, since its place is at no point guaranteed in the capitalist-colonial symbolic, like the excess that Glyn Daly says Rasputin embodied, it has no capacity to be *either/or* in Badiou's Kierkegaardese, but has "the capacity to be *both and neither*".[198] Thus "depending on the choice of name-root, (like) Rasputin (it) can mean either Spring or rascal".[199] To take a long quote from Daly, like the Rasputin figure, as a "diabolical improbable strength", the black/colonised figure remains "a paradigmatic expression of the Freudian death drive. This death drive, which is not any kind of annulment or finality, is a constant impulse to break free of all forms of symbolic mortification. It is the unaccountable surplus that persists beyond both biological death and life. As Lacan puts it, death drive is 'will to create from zero, a will to

[198] Daly, 2006, p. 360.

[199] Ibid.

begin again' (Lacan, 1992:212). Death drive derives its surplus ballistic energy *ex nihili* as a negative impulse from the originary fissure – the constitutive gap being and void – and as such constantly re-inscribes the inhesion of existential negativity."[200] Hence we say, the libidinal economy of the colonised subject is that of the originary fissure, the wound of colonialism, the 'eternal past' which outlives even the time of the postcolony. And as such it does not escape the powers of an imagination "derived from the ... thirst for the Real" (Daly 2006:360).

This thirst for the Real guarantees the stay of the poetic pathos in its articulations of a politics of resistance and liberation the poetic pathos of the Black avant-gardist type, if in a way to contradict Badiou. Its articulations, denied translation into the transcendence of the Word, remain at the point of Sound qua the rhythmic expressions of the death-drive. In other words, to use the language of Johnston (2013:39), they remain those of a 'spiritual negativity' bone out of the contradictions or the drives of the Real-past qua Real-social materiality. With its myths locked into the material from which they are created, a conflict emerges between transposed (qua myths or the subject who comes in the second-place) and the untransposed (qua death or the subject who comes in the first-place) sound. With the grounds for our materialist theory of the economics of the death drive now fully in place, we can now journey into the analysis of the conditions characteristic of the economics of death in the struggle for liberation: at both the political plane and the aesthetic plane qua its revolutionary political aesthetics. That is, we are now going to look for a more elaborate materialist theory of death as produced, performed, or expressed within black-revolutionary aesthetics (and/or black-aesthetics-of-revolution).

Note that, in the works analysed above, their paradigm of revolutionary emancipation is the working-class subject, and we have briefly highlighted the limitations with that subject when it comes to the dialectical relationship between its capacity for transposition and non-transposition under the colonial-capitalist socio-symbolic. Simply put, the working-class subject, interpelled into the capitalist symbolic/Ideology, its potential for antagonism is often threatened. In the following section, using the colonised subject as a paradigm for our materialist theory of the subject, I want to contradict the dominant Marxian conception of the working-class subject as a universal political subject. In other words, I want to argue that,

[200] Ibid.

although the Real of capitalism qua classes and exploitation as the objectified unconscious constitutive of capitalism always disrupts the capitalist symbolic. And, the capitalist symbolic at all times protects or shields the worker from his Real as antagonism and contradiction. The worker as an element of suture for capitalism, is translatable into the category of a free and an individual commodity exchanger in ways that can be functional to the repressed unconscious of colonial-capitalism. The working-class subject, can be made to act or work to suture a Symbolic which is always trying to conceal its own internal antagonisms and contradictions. That is, the capitalist socio-symbolic is always engaged in an effort to downplay the immanence of the working-class subject in the Real, by interpellating it, it does succeed in that endeavour. It dupes the working-class subject into believing that its structures as systems are its necessary and sufficient conditions of ontology and existence. Hence, we say, the status of the working-class subject or the conditions necessary for its emergence as a second-subject or count-as-one (in Badiou's sense of the word) is always threatened by the idea of free commodity exchanges between individuals.

Figures of Emancipation: The Working-Class-Subject *contra* the Colonised-Black-Subject

Differently from the working-class subject, the colonised subject remains with the status of non-being or inexistence inscribed onto its incorporeal. Structured as such, under the system of the colonial socio-symbolic, the colonised subject at no point sees itself as having a causal-genesis within the colonial-capitalist Symbolic and neither does that Symbolic try present itself as such to it. In other words, the colonised subject, more than the working-class subject, to use Johnston (2013:46), can help us advance a "materialist theory of the subject that is not vulnerable to relapses into Idealist models". As immanent in Real-materiality, the colonised is always contingent to the surface or plane of contradictions and it is never mediated by external forces. Contingent in the sense that, it always has to emerge from the drives generated by the contradiction and antagonism of the ground, not contingent in the sense that it is a unity of transposed or transcendental materiality. Thus, we find in the colonised subject the closest expression of the Real-Social/the Real-Natural qua the inexistent body not always fully incorporated into the Symbolic. A body structured as both refusal and refuse of the colonial-capitalist-symbolic. Hence, we say, due to the descending phenomenology of the colonial symbolic, the conditions for the necessary, the actual, and the possible in the experience of the

colonised subject are different from those of the working-class subject.[201] And the thesis of ideological interpellation, in the Althusserian sense, operates differently in the case of the colonised subject. It is also difficult to pin it down under the "process of 'inverse interpellation'"[202] suggested in Adrian Johnston's transcendental-materialist theory of the subject or the law of consistency supposed in mathematical logic.

Hence, making it difficult to eliminate what we can through Althusser (2014:58) refer to as the "*eventual* contradictions" of the subject-body of the colonised black-subject. So as a reject and an excessive lack (which is precisely something more than an excess of lack), the mode of political struggle initiated by the colonised black-subject is not at any point articulable within the structures of the "moral ideology of 'Conscience' and 'Duty'", i.e., the categories of law

[201] This is not to say the the colonised subject is constituted in the moment of the *cut* alone, but if what happens after the cut is the *split*, which enables the subject to capitulate, then that moment for the colonised subject never arises, so we might as well say that it lives in the cut, although always remaining focused on the horisons of split. For it is in the moment of the 'split' or the '*break away*' of the unconscious from the Real-ground, for the transcencendal materialist subject of Johnston, the death bound subject of JanMohamed, Mbembe's subject of the clinic, or Fred Moten's subject of 'black-aesthetico social life that the subject makes the shift into consciousness or enters into the moment of human freedom. This shift is in itself regarded as a transcendental act or act of choice, for us unlike, the scholars listed above who also locates the colonised-slave subject in the moment of the split, the colonised black subject, due to the phenomenological violence of the colonial symbolic, subsists in the cut or is faced with an "incapacity to take flight". For these scholars, although finding it necessary to recoil into the unconscious qua death or the zone of the non-living, the colonised-slave subject, at some point, comes to chose consciousness, because "the transcendental act/deed founding consciousness cannot be(re)introduced into the circumscribed reality of the experiential field to which it gives rise to" (Johnston, 2006:43). Perhaps for the working-class subject of Johnston, but for the colonised subject, as JanMohamed and Moten themselves can testify, nomatter how much they might want to locate it in the moment of the split, the question of capitulation is not that simple for the colonised black subject. As we read from Fanon himself or Frank Wilderson (and many others in the black radical tradition) the phenomenology of the colonial symbolic forces the quasi-transcendental acts of blackness back into the material Real, making it impossible for the moment of the split (or the chance to enter into the path towards freedom, to arise. Or rather, to refer to Hudson's use of Johnston, under the colonial symbolic, it is difficult to account for "the transcendental condition of free subjectivity" or the transition from "the barred Real of Nature" into "the barred Big Other of Lacan" (Hudson, 2018:4, citing Johnston, 2006:49; 2013b:96).

[202] The process of inverse interpellation, as Johnston (2013:49) states, is a process "wherein the negative, dysfunctional dimensions of the big Other (qua the Not-All or multiple without-One) as the symbolic order (that is, the necessary structural incompleteness and inconsistency of this Other/order, denoted by its 'barring') sometimes, due to various factors, 'hail' the individual and thereby force him or her to (temporarily) become an autonomous subject, to be jarred out of the comfortable non-conscious habits of the automaton of quotidian individuality and plunged into an abyss of freedom devoid of the solid ground of unproblematic, taken for granted socio-normative directives and guarantees."

and commodity form that the colonial-capitalist-socio-symbolic or the "absent gardame"[203] of "economistic-technicist-legal-bourgeois ideology" seeks to institute (Althusser, 2014:46 and 68). Neither the functions of the colonial capitalist state nor the functions of colonial capitalist ideology can sufficiently suture the subject body of the colonised black subject. In fact, whenever the colonised subject is confronted by the colonial socio-symbolic, it is faced by what may amount to an ontological fatalism, thereby forcing it to clutch on to the elusive remnants of its historical past through the paradigms of ritual-myth in its destructive form. Of which even these remnants themselves cannot provide it with the ontological affirmation sufficient for it to subsists as being-qua-being. It is through the category of the colonised black-subject more than the category of the working-class subject that all the facts of colonial-capitalist domination become more visible or the material function is more determinant in the last instance in the process of subject formation. Thus, making it to want, more than the working-class subject to smash the power of the colonial-capitalist state or to kill the Master. If we are to further rely on Althusser's thesis on the functions and practices of a system, we can say, the working-class subject, since it is assimilable to the capitalist relations of production, it functions as more of a "component part of the (colonial-capitalist) *system*" (Althusser, 2014:76) than the black subject which is constituted as the eliminable Other which the system is incapable fully encompassing or subsuming.

That is, the working class subject as a productive force produced by capitalist social relations, in that topological fashion of the Althusserian structural dialectic, it functions as a concrete material support qua base for the colonial capitalist superstructure. And inversely, the "material practices (of the working-class subject) are anchored in non-ideological realities" (Althusser, 2014:76) represented by the socio-symbolic order of the colonial-capitalist state. This is why the Ideological State Apparatus, i.e., the Scholastic Apparatus, the Familial Apparatus, Religious Apparatus, the Political Apparatus, the Associative Apparatus, the Information and News Apparatus, the Publishing and Distributional Apparatus, the Cultural Apparatus, etc., are more functional to the interpellation of the working class more than they are to the colonised subject who only experiences rejection by the functions of the colonial capitalist socio-

[203] According to Althusser (2014:69), "the gardame is the *violence* of the state cloaked by an inoffensive (or not so inoffensive) uniform; opettas are composed about him precisely so as to forget that he exists only by *violence.*"

symbolic. It is through these ideological apparatuses that the state enables the working-class subject to abstract from the antagonisms and contradictions which structure its present concrete situation. To return to the functions of mathematical logic which we examined in the previous section, using Althusser's extension of Stalin we can argue that, in the political practices of the working-class subject, "certain elements of an ideology (the State Ideology) 'are realised in' (it) or 'exist in' (it)," and therefore, because of these inscription mechanisms, its potential for revolutionary praxis is limited (Althusser, 2014:82, additions mine). It is all these factors which throughout the historical occasions of the class struggle have come to threaten its revolutionary moments because they constitute what Althusser refers to as "the manifest pacts and unambiguous (or even ambiguous) objective forms of complicity that are forged" between the capitalist state and the working-class subject (Althusser, 2014:86). These are some of the factors that annuls the revolutionary capacity of the working-class subject.

Hence, we argue, both through and beyond Althusser, that, contrary to the conditions of the working-class subject, although necessary to its reproduction, the colonial-capitalist symbolic or the colonial master does not regard the colonised-slave subject as that which enables it to "reproduce the conditions of its production" since the colonised is constituted as a non-subject – a non-presented multiple (Macherey, 2012:9). And similarly, for the colonised subject, there is not a point at which it may feel itself as a being which is alienated within the structures of the colonial symbolic. Although usurped from it as a slave (qua a non-sentient being), the colonised subject, unlike the worker does not feel a sense of loss, estrangement, or transference of its models of being-qua-being, which can be compensated for through its participation in the money-ontology of the capitalist commodity form. Its ontological status cannot be accounted for through the structures of the free commodity exchanger. Even if it were to imagine itself as a free commodity exchanger, like in the many instances of collaborationist tendencies and counter-revolutionary moments, the colonial-capitalist-symbolic will always seek to eliminate any claims to an ontology. Its mode of alienation is not that of an interpellated being, that is, although structured as a 'double-consciousness, it never gets to recognise itself as an alienated Soul or Spirit. Rather, it remains a doubled and contradictory being whose aspirations towards universality have been frustrated" by the functions of the colonial-capitalist-symbolic (Macey, 2000:7). What we are supposing here is that the mode of alienation for the working-class subject and that of the colonised subject do manifest differently at different times: for the latter in ways that are functional to the reproduction of the colonial-capitalist-symbolic, and for the

former in ways that are always antagonistic to it.[204] That is, the manner in which the subject-body is prepared as 'evental-site'[205] by the colonial-capitalist-symbolic, operate differently for each other. Such that non of its forms of political expression are registered, or rather, are articulable within the ontology of the commodity form, for it is constantly of an excessive lack or of inexistence.

To use Pierre Macherey's (2012:9) comparison of the two formulas of interpellation for these two subjects – "Look a nigger! (Fanon), 'Hey you there! (Althusser)", we can say that, the colonial-capitalist symbolic is successful in unfolding the "process of subjectivisation" to the working-class subject than it does to the colonised subject. Although Macherey's critique is directed at the theosophical thread in Althusser's structuralist theory or topological notion of ideological interpellation, it helps us in understanding the conditions characteristic of the working-class subject under the colonial-capitalist Symbolic order but not so much for the black colonised-slave subject. Our critique of the working-class subject is at this moment directed only at highlighting the limited capacity of this subject-body to assume the position of 'body as event-site', capable of giving rise to a fully emancipatory revolutionary process or

[204] The slave or the colonized subject, unlike the working-class subject, is at no point allowed to commodify its use value or allowed to translate that into surplus value, hence it does not see in the capitalist symbolic the projection of its labour power that "has been alienated or abstracted …, (or) objectified" (Macey 2000:7). In other words, the the function of commodity fetishism operates differently for the two subjects.

[205] That is, to borrow from Badiou (2013a:175), the colonized subject-body as an "evental site" is "an entirely abnormal multiple; that is, a multiple such that none of its elements are presented in the situation". It is a subject-body which is "*on the edge of the void*" because it is constituted by "non-presented multiples" beneath which "there is *nothing,* because none of its terms are themselves counted-as-one" (Badiou, 2013a:175). Yet however, unlike the multiple of Badiou's evental-site, it does not "naturally enter into consistant combinations", "undergo a state of normalization", come to constitute "*a point*", or come to "belong to multiples counted-as-one". Which again, remaining both in and out of Badiou, does not denote a "natural multiplicity" which can be "normalized by socio-political history" because it is a multiple which although appearing as "singular" under the colonial-capitalist-socio-symbolic, its elements can appear as normal in "another situation" or can "happen to be presented in a new situation" (Badiou, 2013a:176). It is not just founded by the real alone since, as materiality (or a mythic-subject) all the elements of existence belong to it – i.e. that which allows it to subsist as the site of the event (revolution) – a *something* 'other-than-void' which however does not necessarily constitute an ontological 'formalisation' (which in Badiou's logic allows for the 'count-as-one'). In other words, what allows for the clonised subject to be the site of the event proper, more than the working-class subject, is the fact that all of its elements remain within the order of the multiple-without-One, i.e. non-presented 'multiple on the edge of the void'. Its revolutionary emancipatory discourse does not come to constitute a syntagm like those of the 'French Revolution', as the situation of the 'event' of Badiou (and mostly of all Continental philosophers) which fits very well into the cartography of the modern subject. So, if we are to look at the working-class subject and the colonized subjects as subject-bodies or sites of the event (or revolution), it is in the subject-body of the colonized as a multiple constitutive of the (Real) contradictions of the colonial situation that a revolutionary emancipatory project can arise or a 'real upheaval' of Fanon can be born.

rather, to articulate itself within the field of possibility. It foregoes its fidelity to the principles of contradiction and antagonism with which the dialectical relationship between "productive forces and social relations of production" and instead chooses to "to confine its subjectivisation" to the ontology of the latter together with all its repressive declensions (Badiou, 2009:26). That is, the working-class subject fails to recluse itself from determination by the ontology of the capitalist socio-symbolic order: and this extends into its realisation of the communist ethic. Hence, its position or function as a revolutionary category is compromised because it relinquishes its groundedness in the materiality of productive forces for the ontology of social relations of production qua value in the money form. This approach to the theory of the subject also has consequences for the post-Marxist philosophical meditations on the concept of democracy in social and political theory[206], which (as we shall see in the next chapter) are still haunted by the ghost of theodicy or negative theology. Whilst in Althusser's structural dialectics, ideology sustains itself "by the distance that it keeps from the Real and its materiality, making it a tissue of illusions, a curtain of smoke" or "does not actually participate in the process of social production whose inverted, mystified, imaginary version it is compelled to offer, so as to mask the real problems, but only after the fact"[207]. This is the premise held in the psychoanalytic mathematical logic examined in the preceding section. Yet however, helpful to us are its proponents' of the transcendental-materialist theory of the subject which does not take Truth qua ideology as an omni-historical phenomenon which is capable of externally reproducing being as subject-being.

As we have seen, in the above discussion, we do not hold any reservations to such a notion of the subject of political practice (if there is room for any since it risks turning out into *passion*) but our intervention at this point – through the comparison of the working-class subject and the colonised subject – is informed by the need to try understand which subject between the two is more prepared or capable of undertaking the kind of a revolutionary political project that even these Western avant-gardist social theories for that matter, suppose through the materialist theory of the subject. Both as discursive figures but subjected and subjectivised differently by

[206] To zoom into Badiou further, we can say, "the geometrical of 'convergence'" in liberal democratic-ontology constitutes "a minimal and purified political heterogeneity" of agonistic forces whose differences/antagonisms are dissolved within the structures of the state.

[207] Macherey, 2012, p.9.

the colonial capitalist symbolic, my argument is that, like Macherey, with such a beautiful theory of the subject, the proponents of the economics of the death drive qua the materialist theory of the subject working within Continental philosophy must turn to the black colonised-slave subject and the writings of the avant-gardists of black radical thought. The colonised subject, we say, remaining alienated in the conditions of Real-social-materiality qua the ground zero of subjectivity, does not mistake the colonial-capitalist-symbolic (or the concept of democracy supposedly represented by the ontology of the postcolonial state) for the mediator between the actual and the possible. In other words, since its capacity for exaltation is threatened and frustrated under the colonial situation, there is no room or potential for logical inference into the structures of the colonial-capitalist-symbolic for the colonised subject. The capacity for human life, or to use Badiou (2013b:73), the conditions necessary for the "energetic separation", transference, consistency or repetition is rendered futile for the colonised subject.

The colonised subject, conceptualised as a non-subject or non-being, is forced by the colonial-capitalist symbolic, to at all times maintain its immanence in Real-materiality. It is a subject, who even at the level of 'transcendental materialism', sometimes postpones the duty or responsibility to create the archetypes of human freedom. Not to say that this project is ever lost in its political project, rather it is to say that it takes a pose to focus on the factuality of the present situation and its implicatedness in the historical past – or we can say the real takes more precedents over the other elements of existence, i.e. the Symbolic and the imaginary. Due to the operations of the colonial symbolic order on the colonised subject, its capacity to engage even in the quasi-Hegelian process of anthropomorphism is limited. Hence, the movement between 'consciousness and the unconscious', like the return, in the form of a post-evental-truth (of the subject-body not even of subject-being), is not even realisable for the colonised subject. It is made to remain at the level of the "beginning" qua the ground zero of subjectivity, where its quest for human freedom remains as that of the death drive, with only the intent to destroy the capitalist socio-symbolic in order to create a 'new situation'. This is because, always appearing as an excess of non-being (not not-being) qua the abnormal or the absurd, to use Fanon (1967:82), phylogenetics or "ontology is made unattainable" in the case of the colonised subject. That is, the potential for ontology, in the case of the colonised subject, than it is for the working class subject, is rendered obsolete by the phenomenology of the colonial socio-symbolic. This is not even, like Althusser, discoverable in the movement from the purely

representational plane qua the field of possibilities, but closer to Badiou's epigenetics, this is discoverable in the movement from the Real plane, the Real-materiality qua the ground zero of subjectivity to what it manifests at the end of the process (qua representation or truth).

For Badiou, the Truth is first a product of Real-materiality, i.e. the generic and indiscernible multiple before, in the form of a return, it gets re-instated into it as Evental-Truth through repetition and torsion. That is, for Badiou, unlike it is for Althusser, materialist ontology qua transcendental materialism, first realises itself as ascending time before returning as descending time only to be torsed up again by the energetics of that contradictory and antagonistic Real-materiality which it is born from, back into ascending time, endlessly or repetitively so. That is, for Badiou, the body as evental-site is realised through the performative nature of the Real, whilst for Althusser, the body as subject-being is realised through the distanciation or misrecognition (*meconnaisance*) of a linguistic or symbolic 'Big Other' with a capital 'O'. Ours, at this point, is not a disagreement with Badiou's idea of the performative or an intention to offer a critique of Badiou's theory of the subject but an intention to offer a general critique of the theory of the working-class subject, or rather, to offer a comparison between the working-class subject and the colonised subject. Perhaps, suffice to say that, a critique of Badiou's militant theory of the subject which emerges through his turn to the ethical pathos of Kierkegaard shall be offered in the next chapter. At this point Badiou's subject remains immanent in the material (or maybe the Imaginary-Real not the Imaginary-Symbolic as is for Althusser): which is also the case with our subject of anti-colonial political practices.

What we are trying to do here is to remain with a subject that guarantees to us its immanence in the material or whose immanence in the material is always guaranteed. And in the case of the working-class subject, its commitment to that political project always remains doubtful, as we have briefly tried to show, due to its multiple forms of interpellation into (and by) the capitalist symbolic qua ideology in the Althusserian notion of structural interpellation. A Symbolic order which, like in the case of the colonised subject, also threatens its capacity or potential to grope "towards the unknown", one which it must also recognise as such at all time, although failing to do so in most instances. That is, it threatens the capacity of the working-class subject to see the contradictions and antagonisms of capitalist social relations as its primary condition/point of existence, which must be punctured, ruptured, destroyed. The working-class subject sometimes fails to see that its conditions of existence will always unfold on the plane of the unconscious and never on the plane of consciousness or the level of the

Symbol qua transcendental-Ideality. That is, the working-class subjects sometimes forget that their conditions of existence are reproducible "in their concrete individuality, in their work, their daily life, their acts, their commitments [*engagements* or *marriage* in Kierkegaard's sense of the word], their hesitations and their most immediate intuitions [*evidences*]" qua the contradiction riddled plane of the unconscious (Macherey 2012:11).

Since the capitalist symbolic often works positively in recruiting the working-class subject as subject-being (not subject-body which is more revolutionary, to refer to Badiou's use of the concept) or recognises it as "worthy of becoming subject", its potential for revolution has often been limited. And it is for these reasons that we juxtapose it against the colonised subject, that which is regarded (by the colonial-capitalist-symbolic) as not worthy of becoming subject and therefore always reduceable to antagonisms and contradictions. The conditions to which the colonised subject is discursively subjected to or "acquainted (to): that of being not a subject in general, but a subject of an altogether peculiar sort, a subject 'of colour', exposed at every moment to having the interjection (or to be readily killable) 'Look a nigger!' hurled in his face, triggering in him the phenomenon of a double consciousness"[208], does not allow for its phenotype to be realised as ontology. Marked by 'its strangeness' as a non-being, the colonised subject, "continues to constitute a problem", a problem for both the survival of the colonised-Slave subject and that of its colonial Master, "more precisely, a mental problem" that is diagnosed by Fanon as a psychopathological one.

The 'external stimulus' induced by the phenomenology of the colonial symbolic order and constantiated or enunciated in the 'Look, a nigger!' statement, is what makes '*impossible*' the attainment of the transcendental Truth-Ideal for the colonised subject. Interpellation by the 'Look a nigger!' formula, induces, in the colonised subject, a 'psychic tension' which sends the subject back into the 'creative womb' of the material qua death or the pathological. Alienated from its being by the 'Look, a nigger!' statement, neither does it try to enunciate itself as its metaphor but it recoils or curves like a diffracted-reflection back into heavy matter, filled with anguish and vengeance. It remains a doubled subject, who at the same time after realising that the flight from that external stimuli (into ontology or back into the material) is made impossible by its descending time and the drives created by contradiction and

[208] Macherey, 2012, p. 14.

antagonisms present at the level of the material and social Real. And finding itself as lacking, the colonised subject plays to the music of the groundlessness of its lived experience, generating more momentum and energy to confront its adversary in the 'theatre of death'. Being pays tribute to non-being or ethics pays tribute to violence when it comes to the performative in the lived experience of the colonised subject, that is, the colonised subject remains immanent in the moment of the cut or in the conditions of materiality or myth – as both escape and refuge from the colonial socio-symbolic. That 'lacking', to answer Macherey's question, is that of the indelible mark of the excess of the material.

Finding itself reduced to the lack of the Real-unconscious qua Real-materiality, it engages in a 'speculative realism', albeit a "speculation that is incapable of accounting for what 'being' is in the specific case in which being is also being qua not-being ..., which is not the same thing at all" (Macherey 2012:16). Hence to extend Macherey's echo of Fanon's interpellation formula: 'Look, a nigger!', we can say it is through the "bearer of the qualifier 'black'" that we can be able to "fundamentally modify the fact of 'being', to the point of turning the project of ontology on its head" (Macherey 2012:17). It is for these reasons that we shall return to the canon of the black subject itself as it is interpreted or deconstructed by its own avant-gardist in the black radical tradition: whether aesthetic or political. That canon which, as we saw in the last chapter, like the semiotic chora of Kristeva or Johnston's transcendental materialism, will always without fail, recognise the "barred Real" or the colonial situation as "a contingent ontological condition for the emergence of (its) trans-ontological subjectivity."[209] This is a subjectivity articulated in the performative of the 'black': in the neurobiological sciences of Wynter (without its telos and humanism), the psychiatric medicine of Fanon, the ritual-myth of Harris, the geometrical poetics of Mackey, etc.

The Politics of the Death-Drive-in-Black Modes of Existence

What we have been trying to relate in the above section is the point that, it is with the colonised subject qua the qualifier 'black' that we can come to witness a full moment of 'inverse interpellation'[210] or of psychosomatic pathological refraction in what Fred Moten through

[209] Johnston, 2013, p. 321-2.

[210] Johnston, 2013, p. 49.

Fanon, refers as the 'contingent of cortico-visceral illness'[211] among the colonised subjects. It is our task now to examine the unfolding of the revolutionary political project that this process of 'inverse interpellation' produces on both the political plane and aesthetic plane of the colonised subject qua the 'black' figure. Produced in the moment of the colonial encounter, the black, unlike the sentient being/mind whose 'subjective vertigo' is produced egologically, that which the worker is, does not necessarily have a choice, that is it does choose 'inverse interpellation' over 'Ideological interpellation' or the 'unconscious' over 'consciousness', something that Macherey, through his retrieval of the Sartrean notions of *situation* and *choice*, does not recognise.[212] In other words, for the colonised subject, the return into the unconscious, is not made out of the place of choice or demands of necessity. The abyssal freedom (with its 'objective vertigo') enjoyed by the colonised subject in the moment of the cut or the 'night of the world', is not so much of "a natural fall-back, a certain default steering direction for individual action reverted to (by choice) when clear socio-normative mandates are inoperative." Indeed, for the colonised subject, inoperative are the conscious offshoots qua the myths (as noted in the previous chapter) produced by "an inconsistent and conflict-ridden corpo-Real, a libidinal economy intrinsically lacking in balanced cohesiveness and co-ordination." Hence, the only option (rather than choice) available to it, is that of the return into the unconscious qua lack or the pathological.[213]

Or, to use the words of Cedric, J. Robinson, in *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*, the only "historical force" to non-subjects, those denied "exceptional subjectivity", those rendered incapable of "national existence ..., ethnographic monuments

[211] Moten, 2008, p. 207, citing Frantz Fanon's, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 217

[212] Unlike Adrian Johnston, it is not clear whether the notion of choice given by Macherey is that of rationality, that of transcendence, or that of a structuralist presupposition. For Johnston (2013:41-2), in the "event of rupture", the choice for the unconscious or consciousness in the moment of radical decision qua "a separating decision or decision to separate … is an occurrence that has never taken place within the field of reality (as the domain of existence opposed to that of ground)." Rather, it is an "act" that is "presupposed as having happened inorder to account for the status quo of the present" (Johnston 2013:42).

[213] According to Johnston (2013:42), it is probably incorrect to say, "an individual chooses his or her pathological character structure, especially for a model of mind based upon the axiom that an unconscious beyond conscious control (and, hence, presumably outside the parameters of any decision-making agency capable of choice) overdetermines life."

without political existence"[214] is that of pathological revolutionary violence. There is no choice/option to either thrust "toward a positive science" or a negative theology, like the Marxian subject, which Robinson (2000:46 and 48) says, can choose to anchor its "politico-historical myths" on the Symbolic which can generate a "revolutionary eschatology". In other words, within blackness, there is neither positivity nor negativity – because they are undifferentiated. To take from colour theory, blackness does not reflect through some form of transcendence, rather, as void, it absorbs and refracts, hence, it maintains the power to absorb (not in some form of a positive) and the power to reflect (not in some form of a negative). Which is to say, the colour black is that which allows the transfiguration, the "hidden fluctuation" in art. Or, as Fred Moten says, it is that which allows for the diffracted-reflection, the "imaginative flight, that descent into the underground – that finding (the) people and things requires" (Moten, 2008:203). That is, the capacity of blackness, as the psychopathological subject, to reflect or to exploit "cracks and gaps of the Real overlap(ping) with those within the Symbolic"[215] are frustrated by the phenomenology of that very Symbolic qua the colonial socio-Symbolic. Hence, we say, the existential redemption of a simultaneous decent into history (the unconscious) qua pure negation and accentuation into future-past-human-freedom (consciousness) is more complicated in the case of the colonised subject than it is for the working-class subject. As expressed in the 'black rebellions' or anti-colonial struggles of the 1960s and 70s, at both the political plane and aesthetic plane, the 'black figure', in the colonial situation, is forced to find its effectivity (being of subjectivity) in the (trenches or in the) realm of death or non-being.

The capacity of the colonised subject to maintain both a theory of rupture and a theory of constabstantiality is one that is difficult to analyse because it demands 'the convergence of the conditioning and end of politics. Its nature of the performative, as Fred Moten (2003:8-9) puts it in an ensemble of Leibniz and Nathaniel Mackey, is that of the "nomad and monad", where "N gets a letter from M". Its account of freedom is that of the pure negative and it maintains the temporal implicitness of the unconscious, the power of the 'cut', the trauma of colonial

[214] Robinson, 2000, p. 56 and 66.

[215] Johnston, 2013, p. 50.

modernity, the freedom that "originates from the material conditions of life"[216], "the currency underneath social structures and forms"[217] or rather the currency that undermines social structures and forms. Hence, to follow Robinson (2000:73), we say. It is better analysable through the lenses of a theory or philosophy which "owes its peculiar moment to the historical interdiction of African life by European agents". And that theory, is the theory of anti-colonialism. That is, a theory or (anti-)philosophy which can help one understand the presence of 'sentiment of the flesh' or that can conceptualise the torsions and repetitions of 'terrible blackness' (in the absence of the choice for transference and consciousness). The very blackness which becomes too terrible that it turns into neuroses qua the temporal (re-)active force of the 'barred Real' because its capacity for an upward thrust (transcendence) is always frustrated by the phenomenology of the colonial socio-symbolic order.

Its articulations of liberation or its political project makes it doubtful to say, as Kierkegaard would, that it is a "deed undertaken in the consciousness of a purpose"[218]. Rather, it is a conjuring of the elements of the unconscious *qua* the dark history of blackness, a history which compels it to defer all efforts towards Life and futurity because it is a movement from death towards the unknown and uncertain realm of life. Hence, that kind of movement, as a non-positivist account of freedom, as Moten (2003:89) would have it, is tantamount to "the oscillation between ghostly posts". In other words, it is a movement rooted in and touted by the libidinal economy of the death drive. A form of drive which is generated by contradictions and discontent, but whose effort to bring the subject to "a 'higher' plane of existence …, above the roiling, seething cauldron of driven matter"[219] is frustrated by the phenomenology of the colonial symbolic. For the colonised subject qua the subject of the qualifier 'black', "the Ideal of spiritual negativity, as that which comes to break away and transcend the … ground" is forced back (or diffracted) into the very ground that it is trying to escape from. This failure symbolises the difficulty that the black subject faces, under conditions of coloniality, to

[216] Marx, 1970, p. 20.

[217] Robinson, 2000, p. 51.

[218] Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 123.

[219] Johnston, 2013, p. 39.

conceptualise the various links conjoining the three stages of subjectivity: 'invention', 'self-creation', and 'human freedom'.

The historical past *qua* ground, for the colonised subject, to use David Marriot (2011:46), "is to be felt incommensurable with that leap" into human freedom or the moment of liberation. In other words, due to the untimeliness of blackness or the failure of the "possibility of a beforeness that is only comprehensible in so far as it comes after, and an afterwards that is before the origin"[220], the black subject is forced to enter into the dialectic of a future oriented articulation of human freedom through the economics of the death drive i.e. the death gnosis. Thus, for the colonised subject, "being is not a question of knowledge or history but of struggle and force, one that is affirmative, that has the strength to maintain itself in the value of surprise and, as such, allows itself to be open to the unforeseeable, the unanticipatable, without logic or calculation, telos or narrative" (Marriot 2011:71). The distance separating the three stages of subjectivity that we mentioned above and the imagination it inaugurates is, as Moten (2003:89) says, of "the there, here 'but not of' that haunts here and there, the resonant sound and flashing light, the emergence of the ensemble of scenes (eternal past), which dawns on us iconically, but in a way that is always touched by, or bears the trace of, the fullness (or rather the emptiness) of the sign (since it is not of a positive account but negative account of human freedom)."

The colonised subject, as a subject of the economics of the death drive and the Death that it lives, does not play out its epigenesis or pseudo-genesis and pseudo-destiny in Life. As Mbembe (2017:3) notes and as we have been at pains to show, its articulations are not discernible within the structures of the "inaccessible Other with a capital O' evoked by (the quasi-structuralist) Lacan." Rather, they show a refusal of any effort toward Oedipalisation or the futurity of redemptive eschatology. They are what Mackey (1993:173), apropos Harris, refers to as apprehensions of "life-in-death". Like in the "bass notes" of the 'black' jazz avant-gardists, the political project of the colonised subject produces "work of a refractory, oppositional sort", and in it, "one hears the rumblings of some such 'place' of insubordination" (Mackey 1993:1). It symbolises the nature of "black non-conformity", the refusal of "the very notion of centre" (Mackey 1993:2) which the existential redemptive eschatology of theistic

[220] Marriot, 2011, p. 69.

political projects suggest. That is, the "dialectical wholism" of the politics of the death-drive-in-black is premised upon "the simultaneity of integrative and disintegrative tendencies attendant upon the pursuit of a wholeness admitted to be out of reach" [as both ascending time and descending time] (Mackey 1993:4).

Since, as Fanon notes, for the black subject, there is no opportunity to take flight from existence into ontology (since ontology itself is of existence, not vice versa), the problematic of ascending time is for it already foreclosed, and the only option left to it is that of descent into death-time, into the underworld of death, the abyss of freedom, the theatre of death, the zone of non-being qua the materiality in which it will always be immanent. In other words, the political project of the black subject, as a work of a diffracted-refraction (or reflection, it doesn't matter what you call it at this point, since all geometrical points are sublated and there is no foundation for a topology), precedes through the recession into the realm of death and it moves through a "spectral and phantomic remembering" of the traumatic 'scene of subjection' qua the colonial situation. Its political act is an act of "underworld imagination", a process which involves the passage into the "unmentionable black" or a journey into the unfamiliar territory of death – the realm of myth (Mackey 1993:14 and 136). And the notion of futurity such a subjectivity suggests is one which draws its verities from a past which it uses to sublate the present historical structures and social dynamics (of colonialism). This is how its emancipatory project comes to be structured as that of a simultaneous descent into history and accentuation into the future impossible. That is, although a vertical projection is still maintained in its articulation, it is rather that of the diffractive-refractive type, that of the 'bass notes' which although maintaining a 'mystic thrust' are not those of transcendence but ground. As Mackey (1993:254) puts it, the vertical projections of black rebellions show "the incongruity between heaven and earth … (and) the refractive obliquity and bend of passage from one medium to another", i.e. it suggests a curvilinear movement.

Black rebellions are of a refractory movement which invoke a "utopian aspiration" that fails to "capture wholeness" not only because predication is a never ending project but also because, as we mentioned above, the phenomenology of the colonial symbolic does not even allow for the process of anthropogenesis to even commence (Mackey 1993:255). This wholeness is made impossible by the contradictory nature of the relationship between the substances constitutive of it: the psyche, the body, the social, the political, and the economic. Thus, to use Johnston (2013:47), as a category of the material, "in it, one can discern certain (antagonistic-

)convergences of opposites" – i.e. the articulation of all the elements of existence. We can say that it is a materialist "ontological edifice" which, as mentioned above, is internally inconsistent, shot through with antagonisms, fissures, gaps, and tensions" (Johnston 2013:46). Due to the cracks (or the lack) in the (w)hole of materiality, "what remains unconscious in the constituted subject is, above all else, the cutting, disruptive gesture of the act/deed qua *En-Scheidung* (or choice) founding subjectivity itself in its jettisoning of the drives" (Johnston 2013:44). Or, to use Moten (2003:1), what remains is the "phonic materiality" of the substances of the 'barred Real'. That is, the subject that emerges from these cracks does not bear a "corpuscular sense of being", rather, it is a mystic subject which follows the "vibrational" forms of the drives (Mackey 1993:20). And as a pathological character, it supposes the "multiform affirmation of the deliriums of the Real"[221], the deliriums of 'underworld imagination'.

This underworld imagination as an "abyss of freedom" provides the subject with "an a priori propensity for the diabolical as well as the angelic" (Johnston 2006:45). It is this dualism which for Kristeva (1986:95), as an effect of the drives "makes the semiotised body a place of a place of permanent scission." The diabolical, as Johnston further states, institutes an act of evil which is "spiritual, and not just pathological". That is, as an extension of "phonic materiality", to use Moten (2003:2), it is what manifests when the subject "echoes and redoubles the dramatic interenactment" of "contentment and abjection" (Moten, 2003: 1 and 2).[222] When evoked by the colonied-black subject, it projects the "discourse of cut, rememberment and redress …, the performance of the object and the performance of humanity" (Moten 2003:2). As a discourse of the neurotic, it signifies the transference of substances which are of phonic materiality[223], those substances which turn to sound because they do not have access to speech. This phonic

[221] Badiou, 2013b, p. 484.

[222] The quality of "phonic materiality", like the polyrhymicity of *kora* or the percussive nature of Black-sonics, in Moten's (2003:1) retrieval of Saidiya Hartmaan, maintains the contradiction riddled Real qua the "scene of subjection" (or the 'eternal past', to use Adrian Johnston's synthesis of Schelling and Lacan) as "an ongoing eruption that arranges every line" in the music. Thus, for Moten (2003:7), phonic materiality, in 'Black music', is "the animative materiality, the aesthetic, political, sexual, and racial force... of black performance, black history, blackness" (Moten 2003:7).

[223] From the continuum of phonic materiality and because of the drive economy underlying it, we recognise "the connections between the (glottal and anal) sphinters in (rhythmic and intinational) vocal modulations, or those between the sphinters and family protagonists, for example" (Kristeva 1986:97).

materiality, as Kristeva (1986:96) would say, is "susceptible to semiotisation: voice, gesture, colours." And, these modes of semiotisation are the various forms through which the diabolical, as a revolutionary act, is instituted on the aesthetic plane. Phonic materiality or the rhythmic movement of sound as the connection or function of the "stases in the drives", helps us recognise the "the process of displacement and condensation in the organisation of the semiotic … [and] the relations (eventually representable as topological spaces) that connect the zones of the fragmented body to each other and also to 'external' 'objects' and 'subjects', which are not yet constituted as such" (Kristeva 1986:96).

This is how, in the projectdeness of the drives, as Abdul, R. JanMohamed (2005:14) notes, we witness an "insistence on the conjunction between the deployment of death and the inauguration of self-consciousness". Also, this is because, as substances of 'eternal pasts', the elements translated in the deployment of death, to refer to Mackey (1993:157) apropos Harris, are those of "flesh and blood, not spirit and stone", that is, of the drives which functions "as the animating substance of the motion of the world". That is, in the attempts to understand the movement from the unconscious towards consciousness, we must first examine the temporal condensation and acceleration of 'pasts eternal' or historical pasts (to invert the Schellingian concept).[224] At the level of the 'Black' aesthetic plane, the drive economy is an expression of modes of radical performativity or subversive impersonation through the process of historical materialism – in the Marxist sense of the concept. That is, it shows the reproduction and disappearance of the 'eternal past' in performance or the "radical breakdown" of experience in black modes of (revolutionary) aesthetic expression. The violence (of the drives) that characterise this transformational or articulatory process of the eternal past, plays the equivalence of an "originative act" or acts as the genus of subjectivity. It signals the return to the realm of the non-living qua the "abyss of freedom" into which the subject is inversely interpellated.

The realm of myth or death, of the non-living or non-subjects, in its materiality rather than transcendence is what effectuates the processes of subject formation in black political and aesthetic modes of expression. This is, how, in JanMohamed's notion of the death bound

[224] This manifestation of eternal pasts, is not similar to an unveiling or dissimulation of history as a phenomenological variant, which is what Premesh Lalu suggests in his Derridean interpretation of the effectivity of the death of Hintsha in the post-Apartheid conjuring of historical pasts.

subject, the subject is propelled by being aporetically bound by death. That is, the subject emerges in the space between the structures of death (qua the material-Real) and the structures of socio-political relations (qua the social-Real). Within the structures of a death-bound subjectivity or in that moment (of the abyss of freedom) where it seizes the power to actualise its own, death is transformable into a "politico-economic apparatus"[225], that is, the materiality of death is transformed into a reality and a realisable potential (not an affront possibility like in Heidegger's being-towards-death as JanMohamed himself ambiguously suggests). Thus, as an aporetic being, locked between the ritual performance of terror and enjoyment, the death-bound subject sees dying as an "unavoidably reproducible and reproductive performance" (Moten 2003:4) which inaugurates a psychoanalytic break, an originary repression or a punctuation which disrupts syntax.

To develop his theory of the death-bound-subject, JanMohamed relies on a psychoanalytic extension of Richard Wright's archaeology of death. In Wright's examination of the corporeal structure of the death-bound-subject, to read JanMohamed with some help from Mackey (1993:139), "the monumental architecture of the world is the exception rather than the rule" (Mackey 1993:139). Like in the pathologies of the Fanonian subject, that Mbembe (2017:161) examines, the death-bound-subject faces up to the moment of freedom by recognising that it is created "unendingly, irreversibly, within and through struggle." However, for Mbembe, the colonised subject (qua the death-bound-subject), in a therapeutic and ethical reading of it, "emerges from the *intersection of the clinic* subject and the *politics of the patient*" or passion Mbembe (2017:162). But to extend on this or to read it contrary with some help from Mackey (1993:224), the politics of the colonised (the patient, the pathological) subject, as an act of struggle, relies on "the psyche's autonomous ability to create illness, morbidity, disorder, abnormality, and suffering in any aspect of its behaviour and to experience and imagine life through this deformed and afflicted perspective." Its struggle for liberation (qua freedom), bears the resemblance of an "apocalyptic dread or foreboding" (Mackey 1993:225).

This is how, for Mackey, the "experiences of pathologizing …, although working with natural materials such as urine, quicksilver, or antinomy", that these substances, as temporal materiality are turned "into fantasies" as underworld imaginations (Mackey 1993:225). These

[225] JanMohamed, 2005. p.13.

two characteristics of materiality i.e., pathology and fantasy, represent the two modalities of death and the colonised subject keeps recoiling into the first modality qua its own actual death because the possibility of enacting the second modality under the colonial situation is rendered futile by the phenomenology of its Symbolic. We mentioned this point above but let us emphasise it again here with some help from Peter Hudson (2012). To extend Hudson's reading of the Fanonian notion of the colonial unconscious, although these two modalities of death are impossibles, their nature of impossibility is different. For Hudson (2012:5), in the manner of relating to these "two impossibles (i.e., the two modalities of death) …, the first is barred and the second an impossible in its own terms as there is no black 'being' – blackness produces no ontological resistance". Yet however, that absence of ontological resistance/value in blackness does not guarantee its suture by that which regards itself as 'Being' qua the colonial symbolic. Rather, it guarantees its return into the impossible of the first modality of death qua the realm of non-being or the realm of the 'living-dead' in the black aesthetic (or mystic) tradition. And as something riddled by the rhythms or ruptures of the drive economy, it renders itself as lack, threatening the subject with annihilation and it forces it back into the movement or thrust toward the second modality of death i.e., that of underground imaginative fantasy and human freedom.

The realm of death, within "the colonial matrix", to return to Hudson (2012:5) again, "is the ontological vortex, that is, the elementary colonial identity and lived experience of the colonised black subject and all his compulsive (self-destructive) pathologies (qua liberation violence), have their source in this primary ontological difference." It is a realm which allows for the antagonistic and "alchemical wedding of opposites" (Mackey 1993:229). Like the '*womb of space'* in Harris' theory of the limbo dance or the '*thetic* phase' qua the *'chora'* (to use Kristeva) in the semiotic theory of the body, the realm of death is a "receptacle …, the nurse of all becoming and all changes" (Macey 2000:61).[226] In the realm of death qua Real materiality or the Real natural, subjectivity becomes localizable at the level of the object, of

[226] The chora, to return to the concept again, as described by David Macey, in *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory*, is defined "in Kriesteva's theory of the body … (as) a provisional and mobile articulation of movements and their ephemeral stasis. It exists prior to spatiality, temporality and representation, and can be likened only to primitive vocal or kinetic rhythms" (Macey 2000:61). And like the womb of the mother, it is the point of the subject's birth but he or she is barred from returning to it because it is turned into antagonisms and contradiction by the ruptures emanating from the drive economy to the "extent that it is a receptacle that threatens the child with a suffocating enclosure, (and) it is also the site of the subject's negation" (Macey 2000:61).

the body, below the zero point of the 'flesh', that is between 'flesh' and 'meat', as JanMohamed apropos Hortense Spiller intimates. In JanMohamed extension of Spillers, the 'flesh' is the "zero degree of social conceptualisation that does not escape the concealment under the brush of discourse, or the reflexes of iconography" (JanMohamed 2005:10). That is, although denuded almost entirely of subjectivity, the flesh is still alive, it at this point turns to be closer to the zero degree of subjectivity because, this is the point at which the subject becomes readily killable. Hence, meat is the absolute zero degree of subjectivity and the death-bound subject occupies the space between it and flesh (ie. the semiotic space, the space of the drive economy or the 'abyss of freedom'). So, the convertibility of flesh into meat is, for JanMohamed and Spillers, what constitutes the "negative-latency" of blackness (JanMohammed 2005:10). And this space between meat and flesh is the aporetic zone within which blackness is constituted and it's a space which determines "the (im)possibility of life and the (im)possibility of death" for the colonised-black-subject (JanMohamed 2005:10). Such is the case with the law of race which makes the attainment of political ontology for blackness within both the structures of the barred Real and of language an impossibility.

This is how in 'Afropessimism', to turn to Frank Wilderson (2009:119) for a moment, the fact that "violence and captivity are the grammar and ghosts" of every gesture of blackness under modernity, renders the "promise of sense and meaning" futile. These "semiotics of death" as Frank Wilderson (2009:120) further notes, make meditations on 'life-in-death' qua African performance, subjectivity, and emancipation inarticulable within the symbolic rules of the colonial and slave plantocracies. That is, what is admissible as theory constitutive of "rigour, knowledge, and value" is "divorced from the force of the grammar and ghosts which converge whenever 'Africa' (or blackness) is spoken" (Wilderson 2000:121). Under the colonial practical situation, there is no relationality between "Black *being* and political ontology" (Wilderson 2010:74). That is under colonial conditions the black subject will under no circumstances be considered or come to think of itself as an Ontological Absolute. Hence, we find in Wilderson's 'Afropessimism' the contention that the structures of language within which political ontology is thought under the "epistemological machinations" of semiotics, phenomenology, existentialism, or psychoanalysis imposes a "sudden nausea of helplessness" on the part of black subjectivity, if they continue to define 'ontology as leaving existence by the wayside' (Wilderson 2010:74 and Spillers 1988:83). And this is why Frank Wilderson (2010:74) argues that, "Humanism has no theory of the slave because it imagines a subject who

has been either alienated in language (Lacan) and/or alienated from his/her cartographic and temporal capacities (Marx)."

To read this mode of alienation from Orlando Paterson's *Slavery and Social Death*, within the interstices of the colonial and slave plantocracies, the black subject lives under a commuted death sentence and the constitutive elements of the socio-political conditions such a structure evokes are: powerlessness, social death, and lack of honour. For Paterson, these conditions, as characteristic of the New World slave society, were aimed at denying black sentience and being. And such a "pained constitution of blackness" as Hartman (1996:537) notes, made the black subject, "the originary locus of transgression and offence". For example, the dual invocation of slave and property (as the constitutive subjective modes of blackness acknowledged under slavery) meant that even "the actual or attempted rape of an enslaved woman was an offence neither recognised nor legislated by law", therefore raising "critical questions about sexuality, agency, and subjectivity" in relation to the object status of the slave (Hartman 1996:537 and 539). That is, in the New World, the fungibility of the slave commodity as the property of the master was a discursive framework that was used to define the non-discursiveness of the corporeality or political ontology of blackness. And according to Hartman (1997:21), "the fungibility of the commodity … (made) the captive body an abstract and empty vessel vulnerable to the projection of other's feelings, ideas, desires, and values; as property, the dispossessed body of the enslaved … (became) the surrogate for the master's body since it guarantee(d) disembodied universality and act(ed) as the sign of his power and dominion". Yet however, the scattered events of Black histories of revolution as Moten (2003:1) says, lay witness to the idea that "objects can and do" actually resist against such modes of subjugation, although their practices are without "proper Locus" in the language of a universal humanism.

For Moten, the question of blackness as a linguistic or ontological impasse, when subjected to the Marxian analytic of the theory of value comes down to: what is the status of slave subjects as commodity? A question which touches on the status of human freedom within blackness. Freedom which is a quality anterior to the subject itself, hence we should also ask: how do we think rupture, transformation, and change in colonial or slavery situations through the materialist theory of the subject, i.e. a subject whose possibility of accessing the this freedom situated in the future anterior is rendered futile. If in that case, the history of blackness under colonial modernity, is testament to terror and enjoyment and if, as Hartman (1997:3) notes, what is important "are the ways we are called upon to participate in such scenes" or histories

which rely on a materialist regression rather than a linguistic regression. For Hartman (1997:4), we must be cognisant of the fact that, the invoking of the history of slavery or colonialism is not an attempt to "convey the routinized violence of slavery" in the present but to show the diffusion of blackness as a category of non-being and a "ghost of modernity" which nevertheless bears the potential to produce different forms of being (Mbembe 2017:129). And as Mbembe (2017:104) also notes, by taking the (slave plantation and) the "colony … as a primal scene" in our analysis of the postcolonial present, we are taking it as "more than just the space of memory, functioning in the manner of a mirror." Rather,

> "the colony is … represented as one of the signifying matrices of the language on past and present, identity and death. The colony is the body that gives substance and weight to subjectivity, something one not only remembers but continues to experience viscerally long after its formal disappearance. Blacks bestow on the colony the attributes of a founding power in possession of a psyche, that which doubles the living body, 'a copy that one substitutes for the body, that shares its same appearance, manner of dress, gestures and voice,' while at the same time participating in a shadow whose essence is evanescence –a fact that only adds to its morphogenous power" (Mbembe, 2017:104).

The representation of the conditions of blackness in the post-colony has not diverged so much from that of the colony, hence in order to understand the nature of the structures responsible for the production and reproduction of blackness within the post-colony, one has to make that unfamiliar detour into the unfamiliar territory of history/the space of the non-living. As this would help us understand the anthropogenesis of the notions of humanness supposed in the discourses of modernity and also understand how blackness, as it has manifested on the political plane (in anti-slavery, in anti-colonial, and liberation movements) and on the aesthetic plane (in black modes of performance such as music, art, dance, etc.), functions as a legitimate point of view for a new anthropogenesis of the (H)uman.

This return into the unfamiliar territory of history is informed by the need to keep faithful to the indelible traces of (non-)value that lie within blackness. Since blackness still continues to function as the zero-degree signifying the 'nothingness' that makes possible the imagination of the human in Western epistemology, one has to trace the origin of value that lies in this objecthood. In other words, the theory of memory outlined through such conceptions of blackness, to use Walter Benjamin (1968:154), enables us to give a genealogical analysis of these "indelible traces" of the "ritual origin" of value from the non-value that blackness is. Or to read Benjamin with some help from Mackey (2015:xv), "memory teleoscopes a history of

what was typically much more disruptive or even catastrophic, a digestion both rhythmic and 'ythmic' (the anagrammatic versioning of the mythic and the clipped, syncopated form of the former coined in the course of these two series."[227] That is, memory, as an element of the unconscious, stores the energies (or drives) which, like the mother's love, protects the subject from the excess of the stimuli of the external world (or the colonial symbolic) and whose effects "tend toward an equalisation of potential and hence toward destruction" (or life-in-death) (Benjamin 1968:160). In other words, the more readily the subject registers these shocks from the excesses of external stimuli by trying to escape into the cracks of the Real, the less likely they are to have a traumatic effect. This is how all the forms of actionality that the subject institutes may come to succeed in rescuing the subject from the traumas of fear, revulsion, and horror, the emotions characteristic of the experiences of the subject in the abyss of freedom qua the conflict-ridden Real. The status of the 'black' subject as commodity – instituted under slavery, colonialism, or apartheid – is what compels us to examine the temporal condensation and the acceleration of black history in the postcolonial present. That is, in a quasi-genealogical sense, to borrow from Moten (2003:7), the retention of the (absent-present) category of Blackness in the (Western epistemologies of Human freedom) is what compels us to project – in the 'postcolonial-present' of 'colonial-modernity' – "the animative materiality, the materiality, the aesthetic, political, sexual and racial force … of black performance, black history, blackness". In these moments of retention of history, the black subject, in a true enactment of ritual-tragedy: "recognises his powerlessness, his genealogical isolation, his lack of control over any aspect of his present and future life" (JanMohamed 2005:21).[228]

In order to trace the value embodied in the category of blackness qua non-value (or use-value), Moten (2003) and JanMohomed (2005) deploy the Marxian theory of value to understand this

[227] I say here 'with some help from Mackey' because Benjamin's subject is that of the messianic militant figure, which follows the theo-logic of redemptive eschatology, whilst Mackey's theory of memory refers to the 'black figure', the pathological or clinical subject (in Fanonian terms). Simply put, Benjamin's messianic subject follows the linearity of a homogenous empty time, whilst the black subject of Mackey is refractive and it moves towards a "recursive reach", that is, its mode of analyses is 'emic' not 'etic', like that of the messianic subject. With "*emic* being an anthropological term to analyses of cultural phenomena from the vantage point of a participant in the culture in question, distinct from *etic*, which applies to analyses from an outsider's perspective" (Mackey 2015:xiii).

[228] Hence, we say, in the underground imaginations or anti-colonial struggles of blackness, the project of ethics, whether as *responsibility* or *gift* in either JanMohamed's, Mbembe's, or Moten's extension of the concepts from Derrida, just to contradict them a bit, is suspended.

mode of translation. To advance their theory of value, they extend into their analysis of the category of blackness, the Hegelian Master/Slave dialectic, the Freudian-Lacanian psychoanalytic theory of the death drive, and Derrida's deconstructivist hermeneutics of 'invagination'. And, recognising the conditioning of these theories of value by language, they make a detour into the unconscious of history through the logic of the death drive. A move which enables them to supplant and radicalise (through the practice of versioning) the theory of language beyond its Idealist limitations. Marx, in that case, makes the mistake of locating the theory of value at the level of exchange (qua the commodity or money form), thus, therefore, regarding value as though it were the prerogative of the Master whose speech must be usurped by the Slave. Rather, value according to Moten and JanMohamed, is neither exchange-value nor surplus value but use-value, and therefore a prerogative of the Slave, not that of the Master. Value is an inherent part of the zero ground qua the unconscious from which the object emerges and is held in the material, graphic, or phonic substance of the commodity before it becomes a commodity. And in order to keep trace of the value contained in its objecthood, the Slave must maintain its "refusal to deny or disavow the objective socio-political conditions" that constitutes its being (JanMohamed 2005:45). Such a conception of the genesis of value requires us to understand the nature of the structural relations that determine the productions of material value and symbolic value within the thetic phase or the libidinal economy of the death drive. In other words, we must look at the processes through which value is produced before we look into the processes through which it is measured or distributed at levels of the political and the aesthetic – in their ontological sense. That is, we should differentiate between the two moments of the creation of value: that of production and that of exchange (human freedom).

The Hegelian Master/Slave dialectic offers a paradigmatic framework of analysis to JanMohamed's examination of the moments of creation of value in the history of blackness or black history. Kojeve, whom Derrida (2006:16) counts among "the classics of the end" (although in an onto-theological sense), assists JanMohamed with the tools required for his phenomenological analysis of the dialectic of death. In the Master/Slave dialectic, the Slave gains freedom after recognising its necessity,[229] that is, after realising that the value of his life

[229]The nature of the necessary, as we read it here, for the slave is of a different kind, to use Hudson's (2016:5) notion of the concept, it is that of antagonism, that is, it is that of the economy of the drives.

is the use-value of his death (JanMohamed 2005:18). The Hegelian Master/Slave dialectic implies that, in every human condition, there is an element of Mastery and an element of Slavery. This can only be so if one were to acknowledge the fact that all forms of truths are revelations of reality not of some absolute abstraction. That is, the objective world is the first mode within which the subject comes into being. Since the fear of actual death at the behest of the Master is what makes the slave to beget its freedom, it can only retain this freedom by choosing actual death over 'social-death' or by renegotiating the death contract with the Master. That is, the Slave has to realise that, "the road to freedom lies not through a commitment to work but through the renegotiation of the death contract that has bound him in the very process of forming him as a subject" (JanMohamed 2005:270). This is the point where Fanon also part ways with Hegel, that is, unlike in the Hegelian Master/Slave dialectic where the Slave who instead of seeking the death of the Master, chooses work in order to gain recognition, the Fanonian Slave seeks the death of the Master. The Fanonian slave does not require to usurp the speech of the Master (which Hegel takes for the Absolute Truth) because he is aware that the speech which the Master, as the holder of surplus-value, controls what was initially usurped from him. This realisation by the slave is what allows the dialectic of death to contain within it an amount of transformative labour that generates the process of cathexis which makes the potentiality of life-in-death an impossible possible. According to JanMohamed (2005:274), "the process of cathexis harbours its own dialectic between 'Idealist' and 'materialist' moments, wherein the former can, within Lacanian psychoanalysis, be designated as being occupied by the Imaginary and the Symbolic registers and the latter by the register of the Real". And in the moment of cathexis, Thanatos – "the brutal, deathly process of destruction and unbinding" – takes the place occupied by the positive erotic cathexis (JanMohamed 2005:274).[230]

That is, for JanMohamed, in the moment or process of cathexis, the slave makes a life out of deconstructing death. The slave realises that if he chooses not to renegotiate the terms of the death contract it would have chosen a "negation without autonomy" but if he were to accentuate to symbolic death (the death in the unconscious) he would be able to seize the value of his death, and retain it through a "dialectical overcoming or what can be called a 'negation with

[230] This is not to say that we have foregone our reservations for his Derridean or phenomenological interpretation of this unbinding process.

autonomy'" (JanMohamed 2005:280). This is why, for JanMohamed "symbolic death is a form of sublation (dissemblance), a form that overcomes yet preserves what it supersedes" (JanMohamed 2005:280). It constitutes the transformation of the subject-commodity into a subject qua a subject who is filled with the energies of the abyss of freedom. That is, for the Slave, it is the possibility of the actualisation of death that produces subjectivity, hence, for JanMohamed, unlike the Heideggerian Dasein or the Hegelian Slave who avoids the actualisation of Death (through accentuation into Life), the slave awaits for the actualisation of its death. The Master may control the actualisation of the slave's latent death not its manifest death which according to JanMohamed is lauded with ideological and political functions.

Under the threat of death at the hands of the Master, the slave cannot project the possibility or potentiality of his life in the future, since this potentiality is appropriated by the Master, hence he has to temporarily suspend that project in order to confront his adversary. Again, differently from the Marxian theory of value, the slave or rather labour-power is aware of the fact that the value assumed by the abstract concept of money was created through its work not the speech of the Master which is only locatable at the level of exchange. Fred Moten (2003:13), in his analysis of the sonic event through the theory of value, argues that Marx fails to look at this kind of possibility or to look "at the traces of a subjectivity structure born in objection" and neither does he realise nor anticipate the value embedded in that structure as "something more than alienation and fetishisation". Furthermore, for Moten (2003:14), Saussure, just like Marx, fails to recognise value prior to the system of exchange i.e., the synchronic system, hence, "the speaking commodity thus cuts Marx: but the shrieking commodity cuts Saussure, thereby cutting Marx doubly: this by way of an eruption of phonic substance that cuts and augments meaning with a phonographic, rematerializing inscription".

Working through Marx's distinction between labour-process and labour-power, JanMohamed (2005:269) also argues that, in the distinction between potentiality and actuality, it can be discerned that value is produced through the expenditure of labour-power in the labour-process. Labour-power in this sense supposes the materialist predication of the subject or its immanence in the material-social-Real. The labour-process or transformative labour is a moment of cathexis which is associated with the various forms of affective (un)binding of the subject within the abyss of freedom. This is how, for JanMohamed (2005:274), the "materialist moments" harboured within the process of cathexis or economy of the death drive is occupied by "the register of the Real." And this is also how, in Moten's (2003:14), analysis of the erotics

of sound drives in black musical forms of expression, the material disruptions in the phonic substances of black performances are "invaginations of a foreclosed universality, a heroic but bounded eroticism". While for Saussure and Chomsky, these material disruptions are deuniversalising material differences or agrammatics that disturb syntax. For Moten, they are "phonographic disruptions, (which) set speech and writing, spirit and matter in opposition, they set in motion a movement that cuts and augments the primal", the violent scene of subjection too terrible to pass on" the "impossible natal occasion" of blackness (Moten 2003:14).

The articulation of value by the black subject or the aestheticisation of the 'barred' Real, in the much-analysed slave narratives of Frederick Douglas, is according to Fred Moten and JanMohamed a confrontation with death, an improvisational audition of sighting, non-sight of the spectacle at the scene of subjection. Whilst Moten extends his analysis to DuBois, Amiri Baraka's, and Nathaniel Mackey's inquiries into a model of subjectivity which relies on sound, JanMohamed extends his to that of the agency of death in the literary works of Richard Wright. According to JanMohamed, in Richard Wright's archaeology of death, the death-bound-subject, in the attempt to imagine human futures outside of the ontologies of modernity, is always drawn back to the scene of death where it is formed by the ubiquitous threat of death. And this is how the aporetic subjects of Wright's works are defined by a dialectic of death which intervenes in the "relationship between social-death, actual death, and symbolic death" (JanMohamed 2005:12). In a sense, the archaeological site of the death-bound-subject is, for him, the unconsciously sedimented product of the psycho-political-ideological-process of coercion" (JanMohamed 2005:12). And a subject constituted by this archaeology always "tries out the various imaginative resolutions for real contradictions" by being actional, both on the political and the aesthetic plane (JanMohamed 2005:12). In Motenean language, the being actional demanded by the situation of death is that of a radical actionality syncopated in the "broken claim(s) to connection" of Nathaniel Mackey (Moten 2003:6).[231] That is, it is that of the articulation of a subjectivity that "suture corrolarity, asymptomatically divergent ruptures–

[231] Mackey in a reading of Brathwaite, similar to that of JanMohamed's reading of Wright's archaeology, argues that in Brathwaite's poetry, like in Harris's novels and critical works, there is a summoning of the past which suggests a "summoning" of "reserves of creative endurance and resistance" (Mackey 1993:154). An "adjustment to pain" which carries of bitterness, adversity, and affliction a vision of woundedness, hurt, and victimisation" (Mackey 1993:1993:155). For Mackey (1993:153) Brathwaite's work shows an "indebtedness to the Earth".

maternal estrangements and the thwarted romance of the sexes–that refers to 'wounded kinship' and the 'sexual cut'" (Moten 2003:6).

And in JanMohamed's analysis of the archaeology of the death-bound subject, we are told that the being of such a subject is produced by both active and creative processes. That is, as actives of immanence directed towards transcendence, i.e., an active which is refractory, as Nathaniel Mackey would have it. It involves a retrieval of the trilogy of the colonial plantocracy, a process which Fanon (1965:52) says, is helpful in the colonised-black subject's effort to "initiate the essential of eroding" the colonial unconscious or a method of retrieval which as an act of memory, seeks to resurrect the historical past whilst at the same time seeking to "devalidate it." Like that of the pathological it is an act of resistance which seeks to give a "new life" to the dead element … cultural stock – dead because stabilised, without any progress change in form or colour" (Fanon 1965:30). As an act of struggle, the retrieval of the historical past, whether as eternal past, renews the symbols, the myths, the beliefs, or the emotional responsiveness of the people in the time of conflict and suffering: not as *passion* but as *action*. And it is in the quest to defend the living dead that the colonised subject initiates "a (temporal) movement of change and flux (instead of cyclical repetition) flowing away from its thereafter-surpassed past point of origin" (Johnston 2006:42).

Of Black Emetics

The articulation of notions of freedom and liberation informed by "Black (con)texts" is what informs the "Black critique of time"[232] at both the level of the political (black histories of revolution) and the level of the aesthetic (black histories of figurative performance and narratology). It is not only a critique of time but it is also a critique of the semiotics of transcendence through a semiotics of the ground/the dead or the non-living. A 'semiological chora' which does not rely on the axiomatic notions of language and time. The primal scene of slavery, the colonial plantocracy, or apartheid as we have tried to prove through the theory of the death-drive, constitutes a structure which the black subject must destroy in order to move towards its posited categories of freedom and liberation. This destruction involves an act of memory which seems like an animist retention and repetition of the primal scene of subjection, i.e., its historical past. It invokes a desire which cannot be actualised and as a mourning process,

[232] Mbembe, 2017, p. 120-1.

what it can minimally achieve is a dissemblance or a sublation not a total destruction of the 'scene of subjection' or the Imaginary constituted by the colony. In the psychanalytic terms that we find in the Black texts examined in this work, this return to the primal scene of subjection (or the colonial plantocracy) involves a work of memory founded in mourning and melancholia. This is how the rebellious political subject outlined in Fanon's theory of liberation is always perpetually caught in the attempt to articulate an idea of freedom that derives from the destruction of a self that is threatened by the weight of history.

Caught up in this dialectic of overcoming and becoming, the colonised-black-subject, as a subject of the dialectic of death, preserves an understanding of the political economy of the relations of its situation (qua the Real-social) – this is how the subject let's go of the overcome entity – history. Liberation theory or the theory of anti-colonialism, in a sense, tries to formulate the content of the structure of this process of transference. At this point we can safely say that these structures are those of the dialectic of death and they produce, bind, and motivate the subject or constitute the form and content of its knowledge. To follow, JanMohamed (2005:154) although his subject seems to be constituted by the categories of 'Fallenness', the Black critique of time through mourning produces two consequences within which subjectivity is preserved: first, it produces a radical temporal de-cathexis; and second, the gaps left from this moment of de-cathexis are filled in by a recathexis which reveals the expressions of the destructiveness following the release of the subject from the Erotic cathexes. This probably explains why in Fanon's dialectic of invention and history, to use David Marriot (2011:49), "there is no invention without a leap, and no leap without unsettling the borders of the self and history, for history to be meaningful it can never be completed, and precisely because truth itself is an event of endless revision and recovery".

In response to the proponents of the postcolonial analytic who only consider history as a category of phenomenological reproduction, this conception of a subject's relation to history, to invoke Lewis Gordon (1995), brings to the foreground the difference between the two types of history: History with a capital letter 'H' and history with a small letter 'h'. In what suffices as a critique of the Hegelian idea of History, according to Gordon, the latter refers to the experience or the participation of the individual in the mundane world and the former, in Hegelese, to *geist,* Spirit or the highest form of freedom attained through knowledge of the truth. Instead of subsisting in the former, the colonised subject subsists in the latter. It is true that colonialism produced an economy of signs and images that the colonised keeps

remembering in a phantasmagorical form but these signs never mature to the level of ontological truths which can induce it into a reflective mode since they remain barred by the phenomenology or 'Heavyside layer' of the colonial socio-symbolic. As Mbembe (20017:120-1) seems to suggest, the remembrance of the "colonial potent as a founding trauma" in the black experience offers a "criticism of time" which help us "identify the cognitive and expressive parameters that have shaped the Black critique of time and, more generally, the elaboration of memories of the colony and of the potentate" (Mbembe 2017:120-1). And it is in this intent that we should read the "deathly or death-driven being" of the black critique of time (Moten 2008:178). As Moten (2008:178-9) says, it is a dismemberment of the social structures which denied expression to black social life. They are structures where its being was posited as an ensemble of impossibilities as it was denied engagement with the "world as a set of facts that are available to the natural scientific attitude". Hence, the engagement of the black subject with the world for Fanon, as Marriot (2011:49) notes, "is a moment of uncertainty and undecidability". Its attitude to the world is that of the pathological. The unlocalisability of the call for a universal humanity in the inventions of blackness is what "permits it to be in time but not yet in history, (like an endpoint that can never amount to an ending)" (Marriot 2011:51).

The denial or suspension of the historical becoming of blackness under modernity is what makes the history of slavery, colonialism, and apartheid to remain as some "kind of traumatic– albeit disavowed – memory in the unconscious life of the colonised" (Marriot 2011:63). This act of bringing the objective experience of blackness into the subjective realm signals the failure of the traditional theories of ontology or phenomenology to comprehend blackness as a framework for the new science of the human. According to Lewis Gordon (1995:15), the return of Blackness to "natural attitudes … to an originary or primordial reflection" signals the failure of "eidetic reduction," that is, a "reduction to the reduction of essential meaning of phenomena" in phenomenological methodology. For the black subject, existence presence values as materiality, it regards being human "as embodied consciousness, as consciousness in the flesh," and conceptualises human freedom through "social perspectives in the world" (Gordon 1995:20). This is why for Gordon (1995:24 and 35), the weight of history outweighs the ontological explanation of the fact of blackness and why Fanon "rejects all ontology that puts existence to the way side."

What I am hinting at here is the idea that, the libidinal economy of death-drive is comparable to the structures of the work of mourning which consists in the killing of death itself through

actionality. That is, in the work of mourning, the subject is involved in the struggle of death which entails fear that is transformed into an anxiety about death related to a sense of liberation. The work of mourning, as a "dialectic overcoming, is a negation that overcomes in such a way that it keeps and preserves the overcome-entity and, for that very reason, itself survives the fact of being overcome" (JanMohamed 2005:38).[233] And in the performative of the death-bound subject, mourning involves an intended sublation of colonial historical reality through an engagement process that pays attention to the antagonisms inherent in those very socio-symbolic structure. And sublation, in this sense, suggests a process of work rooted in the Real of materiality – it is not a flight into the cosmic realm of the Symbolic-Imaginary. It is the killing by death which compels the subject through the effect of the drives to remain faithful to the 'barred Real' without which it cannot exist as a subject-body, a body subjectifiable within the abyss of freedom. An abyss which in itself is a "space of the Imagination" which "produce(s) nothing but nonsense" (Moten 2007:2). Differently from the act of History (with a capital 'H') or unlike remembrance (which is an element of consciousness), the act of memory as an effect of the unconscious is "not actually conservative," rather, "memory is destructive" (Benjamin 1968:160).[234]

No matter to what extent the colonial symbolic tries to relegate blackness to the realm of the non-living, thanks to the mystic that this subject is, that project has been equally meted with a refusal to capitulate – a refusal accounted for in the black histories of revolution (and aesthetic performances), from the marroonages in the New World to the first anti-colonial settler wars of Hintsha, Nehanda, Nzinga, Yaa Asantewaa, etc. As a subject of a Real-natural extended into

[233] As Zizek (2000:658) observes, in the work of mourning, unlike in that of melancholia, the subject does not persist "in his or her narcisstic identification with the lost object" (Zizek 2000:658). That is, in the work of mourning, the subject cathects the death of a beloved as part of the object, he or she "remains faithful to the lost object, refusing to renounce his or her attachment to it" and for that subject, it involves "the successful acceptance of a loss …, a kind of betrayal, the second killing of the (lost) object" (Zizek 2000:658).

[234] As Mackey tells us, this positing of history as reality is different from that of bourgeoisie realism and hard scientific empiricism. It is the realism of natural realism, that we find in the natural animism of Harris or Wright's novels. The subject of African mysticism, like that of the phantom limb, as Mackey (1993:161) further tells us "is caught in an endless oscillation between arousal and frustration", the two ghostly posts which structures subjectivity. It posits a reality "which is entirely permeable to history" and does not posit a reality "which is … impenetrable (and) irreducible." That is, instead of the vulgar historicism that we find in Western realism, the subject African animism, participates in an archaeological retrieval of the dead that features a dialectic (re)membering of the disfigured past. A retrieval of "non-discursive things" whose translation requires "non-discursive ways of speaking" (Mackey 1999:136). The bringing into the universal, the discourses of "those whose lives historiography overlooks" (Mackey 1993:145).

the Real-social, the anti-colonial still continue to threaten and overwhelm the structures within which the potential vertigo of blackness can be realised. The dialectical relationship between the Real-natural and the Real-social, to use Walter Benjamin (1968:160) differently, produces a stimulus whose effects and affects "tend towards an equalisation of potential and toward destruction." Thus, it should be that, the more readily these shocks from the excess of the stimuli are registered by the death drive, the less likely they are to have an effect but this is not the case for the black subject who is without any suspended axiomatic indices to register or code its transpositions. Constituted by the emotions of fear, revulsion, and horror; the effects of the work of mourning, to refer to JanMohamed's extension of Richard Wright's archaeology of death, it is the unconscious of death (i.e. the night of the world) which raises Wright's characters "from contingent, abstract negation to essential negation" (JanMohamed 2005:38). Wright's archaeology of death, as JanMohamed (2005:38) observes, transforms the layers of the death-bound subject's consciousness of bondage into an acute awareness of bondage, that is, into sites of freedom as the discursive spaces within which a theory of society is produced. This is why he intimates that his "study of Wright's archaeology of death is dedicated to articulating in great detail the latent content of Wright's death-dream-works as the lived experience of the death-bound subject" (JanMohamed 2005:38).

And in what could be taken as an anticipation of or a position on the revolutionary violence of liberation movements, JanMohamed notes that, Wright's violence tries to hack out an opening from the entrapment the death-bound subject suffers. This is why, in a melodramatic form, for JanMohamed (2005:46), the consciousness of Wright's "characters gradually increase throughout the anthology" and there is not much focus on interiority in Wright's anthology. And for Wright, that process in itself remains an endless and open impossible possibility that can never be actualised but only alluded to the events of the histories of revolution or the categories of the unconscious. History, as JanMohamed observes, constitute the naturalistic socio-political conditions within which the creative imagination of the death-bound subject takes place. As a model for the Black critique of time, the emotional elements which structure the work of mourning (qua historiography) constitute the stages or the architectonics of emancipatory violence. The most significant of the stages, as Mbembe identifies, albeit in a phenomenological sense, is the emotion of fear which produces the destructive energies of the pathological subject of the liberation struggle and its attendant registers are those of frustration, rage, and violence. The site of fear sets in motion the primal scene of the death-bound subject.

Mbembe (2017:168) however, adds to the stage of fear and destruction the other two stages or dimensions of what he refers to as the pharmacy of power and responsibility, which are, those of care and healing (health, sickness, death (or burial). For Mbembe, the last two dimension refers to "the scenes of mourning …, those sites of loss and heartbreak where new practices had emerged in the place of yesterday's lamentations". I think it is important to highlight here that we only agree with Mbembe up until the stage of fear and strongly disagree with his retrieval or extension of the Derridean concept of 'the gift of death' through his notions of pharmacy of power and responsibility. These concepts in their Derridean sense, designate the undertaking of a metaphysical or ontological violence through a predicative or ethical "economy of war" and peace.[235] So for us, unlike Mbembe who wants to give a messianic interpretation to the logic of the pathological subject of Fanon through the Derriderean-Heideggerian concepts of the gift, responsibility, care, and healing which are all derived from the plane of ontico-ontological determination, we chose to remain with the Fanon of the pathological or nihilistic lamentations, i.e., the Fanon of the cut, rather than Fanon of the split (if there ever was one). The moment of the cut itself, can for Fanon, be a sign of hope for the birth of a "new spiritual community". The insight which underpins the logic of the pathological subject of Fanon, to use Moten (2007:3 and 5), "fully recognises the irreducible desire for … (the) formative and deformative, necessarily supplemental" or ecstatic temporality of blackness. This is to say, of the three dimensions that Mbembe associates with the logic of the Fanonian pathological subject: destruction (and fear), care, healing, the subject keeps tripping back into the first because it fails to make the vertical thrust for the manifestation of the last two. The capacity to translate into the last two dimensions qua human freedom, as we have tried to explain so far, is barred or threatened by the phenomenology of the colonial symbolic. The first dimension (which is that of antagonisms of the Real-social), that of the drive economy, as Mbembe (2017:168) might have rightly observed, is intended at destroying that which destroyed, amputated, dismembered, blinded, and provoked fear and rage in the clinical subject. And for Fanon (1965:47), in this "initial phase, it is the action, the plans of the occupier that determines the resistance around which a people's will to survive becomes organised". It

[235] Derrida himself describes this messianic eschatological violence as a violence of the dissimulation of Being. It is a violence which enacts the possibilityof speech by propping "up thought by means of transhistoricity", a kind of violence which "is also the first defeat of nihilistic violence and the first epiphany of Being" (Derrida, 2001:185-6).

is the stage where "the colonised people … react in a harsh, undifferentiated categorical way before the dominant group's activity" (Fanon 1965:122). The second and third dimensions, are those of the Symbolic-Imaginary or of truths, which seek to take care of and, heal those who had been hurt, raped, tortured, or simply driven mad by the commandment of the colonial potatent, hence, their, function from then on is to contribute to the general process of healing when colonial antagonisms and contradictions have been addressed or dealt with. But as we have established so far, these dimensions are impossible for the colonised-black subject because the socio-symbolic structures of colonialism do not intend to transform its experience. Instead they want to eliminate them or reduce them to the lowest possible incomprehensive (inaudible) stage.

Under the colonial situation, as he seems to note in this extension of the Fanon, the colonised-black-subject (or the subject of the clinic) is structured by:

> "the power of the (unbounded) material, the material of death and of need constituted the time 'before life began, 'the heavy darkness'–or the great night that had to be escaped, … Fanon gave the escape from the 'great night' several name: 'liberation', 'rebirth', 'restitution', 'substitution', 'resurgence', 'emergence', and 'absolute disorder', or walking constantly, at night and in the day, making a new man stand up, finding something else, a new subject emerging out of the cement which had been mixed with blood and anger –a nearly indefinable subject, always outdoing itself, a kind of difference that resists law, division, and hurt" (Mbembe, 2017:169).

Although Mbembe, unlike us in this thesis, does not go as far as showing how, for the colonised-black-subject, the escape from the 'great night' or transition into the dimensions of care and healing is rendered impossible by the phenomenology of the colonial symbolic. Constantly forced back into the dimension of destruction or "the zone of unattainability", to revert to Moten (2008:178-9), the colonised-black-subject "demands a para-ontological disruption of the supposed connection between explanation and resistance" within the bounds of "fugitive movement." Or rather, to refer to Frank Wilderson (2011:2), this failure to escape the 'great night' expresses the nature of "aphasia and abjection in the vengeance and vertigo of Black insurgents." That is, under the colonial situation, the black subject is constituted as an "objective vertigo, a life constituted by disorientation rather than a life interrupted by disorientation (subjective vertigo)" (Wilderson 2011:3).

This failure to translate into a subjective vertigo is testimony to the (un)universalisable character of black ontology under the colonial situation. It shows how the socio-symbolic structures (or the political ontology) of colonialism work towards guaranteeing that "Black

social life"[236] or 'black time and semiotics' are turned into impossibles which cannot be turned into potential possibilities. And the anti-colonial struggle in this situation, is thus an attempt to resituate life, work, and language for blackness in order to also constitute itself as a 'philosophical posse' in search for the impossible possible or an attempt at constitutes its own 'cognitive maps'. That is, the anti-colonial struggle is a mode of para-ontological disruption, which signifies the pathological disruption of colonial ontology by the colonised-black-subject. It is an attempt to escape the "history of privation … and plenitude, pain and … pleasure" that the colonial plantocracy imposes on the colonised-black-subject (Moten 2008:199). In the colonial situation, the black is always a scandal whenever it is made to appear, hence its revolutionary violence must be understood as rhythmic accompaniments to the harmonic disruption of all its normativity. This rhythmic accompaniment as an expression of struggle, to read from Moten (2008:203), "implies a repetition, however different and differentiating, of a beat that, when it is understood as resistance in the broadest sense lies radically and originally before us." For Moten (2008:204), the space of suffering, is a space "where one lives a kind of oscillation between virtual solitude and fantastic multitude … (a) canted zone or curved span (that) moves between a fact and an experience that, in themselves and in the commerce between them, remain inaccessible to all concepts of and desires for the racial object and unavailable to the protocols of dematerialising representation". That is, the uninhabitable zone of blackness produces "mad works …, anticolonial refusal" (Moten 2008:205), which Gordon (2007) defends Fanon for, against Hannah Arendt, the self-proclaimed guardian of the 'totalitarianism' of the prohibiting commons of modernity (which are intended for either the elimination or subsumption of the African Other).

To emerge from or to manifest outside of situation, the subject of the struggle for liberation, as Moten (2008:206, citing Fanon 1967:157) notes, has "to actually bleed red blood and free himself from that part of his being already contaminated by germs of decay". This struggle as Fanon further notes takes place at both the aesthetic and the political plane (qua the realms of the drive) with varying degrees of success and failure. Since it expresses itself in the form of the pathological, its modes of enunciation are structured as forms of violence which often reach a dead end: for they are not translatable into the theory of human life. That is, the "psychosomatic disorders" that colonialism fosters engender on the colonised subject a mode

[236] Moten, 2008, p. 178.

of resistance which takes multiple forms of encounter and flight. Hence the thematics of liberation on both the political and the aesthetic planes as we have found in the foregoing discussion is always "urged toward a dialectical movement" without closure. And with colonialism making an effort to force the black subject into plane of non-being, whenever it tries to claim its being, the only mode of comprehension for such a subject evades both language and temporality with all their cognitive registers of meaning, knowledge, and reflection. Hence, for Fanon (1965:48), "it is in the practice of the Revolution where the people have understood that problems are resolved in the very movement that raises them."

The struggle for liberation as a "hallucinatory war" of the pathological subject, raises the problematic of a subject who as Spillers (1988:85) notes, appears "long before the barred subject of Lacanian discourse brought it to our attention, becomes the hyphenated proper noun that belongs neither "here," nor "there"". At a psychoanalytic level, it is therefore difficult to locate such a subject within the last two of the three dimensions of existence: the Imaginary and the Symbolic. The "apocalyptic atmosphere" of colonialism, as Fanon (1965:122) intimates through his theory of bodies, makes "the colonised people ... react in a harsh, undifferentiated, categorical way before the dominant group's activity". It enforces a reactionary psychosis because the colonised subjects are forced into a display of the force of inertia or the force of the drive economy. It is on these grounds, from the locale of the semiotics of the barred Real, that the subject offers an "(in)coherent hopeful solution to things" (Wilderson 2003:183). So, the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s liberation struggles in Africa, demand that we conceive them as "instances of psychosomatic pathology, 'the general body of organic disorders developed in response to a situation of conflict'" (Fanon 1967:216, cited by Moten 2008:206). This is how the violence of the struggle for liberation and its disorders can be understood as "both symptom and cure" or as an "onto-epistemological field" capable of enacting or creating meaning and explanation (Moten 2008:207).

The inertia of the political imaginations that the subject of social-death or 'black social life-(in-death)' enacts on the aesthetic plane, as Moten (2008) notes through Nathaniel Mackey, moves between an "evasive previousness" and an "unavailable previousness" which is neither 'here' nor 'there'. And these two dialectical occasions, of the neither 'here' nor 'there' within which blackness as an articulation of a universality should be examined, has occupied most of the theoretical endeavours by black radical critics of time. The conjuring of the dead through the struggle for liberation takes its ultimate dimension as a moment of aesthetic and political

creation. And it is, for the colonised subject, the ultimate form of defence against ontological forms of death instituted by the colonial symbolic. Even in its movement towards unbounded forms of life, the colonised subject relies on the resemblance and proximity of the Real. It is the force of the conflict-ridden Real which determines its dialectical movement aimed at rupture and irruption of antagonism and contingency. In an inversion of Derrida, the conjuring of the dead symbolises a process of becoming which seems like a "repetition of the same, of the same thing as ghost" (Derrida 2006:45). Unlike the subject of knowledge which claims the capacity to suture (or is sutured by) the Truth through Transcendental or Absolute essence, the subject of the repetition of the barred Real recognises that it cannot suture what it does not know. It is this mode of appearance (the conjuring of the dead spirits) which we witness in the black performative. That, "blackness or black as a constitutive social, political, and aesthetic power … whose essence is a politics of impure or impurifying facticity" appears as "dark (or night) of absolute freedom" (Moten 2008:193). An articulation of value in the language of the commodity.

In the colonial situation, the confounding of the social with the genetic, at a psychosomatic level, as Fanon says, leads to a failure of ontogeny, and raises the primacy of sociogeny as a method of analysing existence with regard to blackness. And in that situation, the duty of blackness as a critique of modern time is to "correct the tragic wrong" that was done at its birth. To use Derrida (2006:24) without his teleological conceptions of time, it has to "put time on the right path, to do right, to render justice, and to redress history, the wrong (tort) of history." As a revenant/a ghost of the night, it has to be seized by "immanence and desire for resurrection" – the elements of the material Real – the psyche, and the spiritual, tasked with rescuing the subject from the chthonic realm/the zone of non-being/the zone of the socially-dead.[237] The presence of these differential elements in the structures of blackness is what compels Moten (2013:74) to say, what blackness suffers under colonial modernity is a social-

[237] However, the colonised subject's immanence in the Real is different from that of the Derridean revenant or ghost. Firstly, the colonised-black-subject does not have to assume the immanence of the Real as though it were some a priori force or an effect of the articulations of the barred Symbolic, rather, it is of the immanence of the barred Real qua the material Real. Secondly, the colonised-black-subject, unlike the ghost or the revenant, fails to live through 'the long night of swords'. And as we shall see in the next chapter, through Zizek's critique of Derrida's meditation on the concept of democracy, the Derridean ghost figure qua the Spirit, unlike the militant figure of the black liberation struggle, elevates the political or "historical causes" to a "cosmic metaphysical feature" (Zizek 2014:3).

death imbued with a political possibility.[238] That is, the model of political subjectivity supposed through the theory of blackness is rooted in and constituted by the materiality of death which

[238] In Moten's 'Black-optimism', as opposed to the Afropessimism of Frank Wilderson, Jared Sexton and Huey Copeland, so he says, black social death is a "minor of social life" not just a form of material totality qua nature with a capital N, incapable of movement and production. It is for him, as he shows through his ambivalence with Agamben's notion of bare life, not a "naked life, something they call raw life, that moves – or more precisely cannot move – in its forgetful non-relation to that quickening forgetive force that Agamben calls the form of life" (Moten, 2008:180). For him it is, Fanon the phenomenologist whom the Afropesimists rely on in their reading of *Black Skins, White Masks*. Yet for Moten, as is for JanMohamed, the real of social death, as the zone of 'chromatic saturation', is a world filled "with a melodramatic imagination …, one drawn toward the occult installation of the sacred things, gestures (certain events, as opposed to actions, of muscularity)" and rationality (Moten, 2008:181). That is, although relegated to "plane or plain of the minor", blackness as thing, "sustains itself in that absence or eclipse of meaning" (Moten, 2003:181). And, the black as a fugitive sublimity, occupying this space of the minor, the abyss of freedom, the chthonic realm, the 'theitic phase', within which it, as object transforming into thing, "escapes in or through the object's vestibule; the object vibrates against its frame like a resonator, and troubled air gets out" (Moten, 2003:182. The black subject, as the pathological par excellence lingers in the "unbridgeable gap" or shows the capacity to "linger in the break" between life and death, that is, as the living dead, it is forced to exist as "gathered matter" which, however, can echoe "the undifferentiated materiality of a collective head" and can keep a "shadow" or "trace" of 'life-in-death' (Moten, 2003:182-3). That is, as a body of contradictions or of the death drive, blackness, behaves like a void or an empty space capable of accommodating both the qualities of the animate and the inanimate. This is how, although a being which projects, blackness does not suppose a transcendental character of being. Although concurring with Moten on his conception of 'Black optimism', I do not necessarily agree with his suggestion that the thinking of the Afro-pessimists or of Fanon "fails to depart from the 'sphere of mere attitude'" (Moten, 2008:186). Perhaps it is a criticism which can stand against Agamben, and not Fanon or the Afro-pessimists even if they do not pay much attention to what he refers to as the "ontic-ontological fugitivity of/in the slave". To say that the anti-colonial theory (even with our limited reading of Afro-pessimism as a body of work, except for Frank Wilderson whom we briefly discussed above) remain at the level of attitude, is very incorrect. Incorrect because, in the Fanonian clinic or in "Fanon, the militant cortico-visceral psychopathologist", is not "the limits of psychopathologies" which are exposed, as Moten (2008:206 and 208) would like us to believe, but it is the limits of psychoanalysis as a science that are exposed. I say so, because I believe that, the level of attitude, since it is antagonism and contradiction they are concerned with, was never their point of departure in the first place (especially with Frank Wilderson's Fanonian logic), but like him they also depart from the point of the death drive qua the barred Real or what he himself refers to as "rhythmic accompaniment". Or, perhaps it is that, those whom he levels his criticism against, also believes in the idea of an "imaginative flight" that makes a descent or a "movement of withdrawal" into (hell or) the underground, "the unstable zone between the lived experience of the black and the fact of blackness" (Moten, 2008:204). Yet, however although they acknowledge its capacity to "absorb and reflect", they focus more on its failure to reflect as an effect of the phenomenology of the colonial symbolic, a failure which in itself does not necessarily mean a rejection of life and living but is a failure which allows it to "re-initialise what has been dismissed as the pathontological in the discourse of the militant onto-pathologist" (Moten, 2008:205). Such is the nature of the refractive, rather than, reflexive circuit which forces the black subject to make the descent into the underground. Fanon's notion of the pathological is far from being natural or biological as Moten suggests (only perhaps to launch a critique against those he might not agree with), it is very much of the kinesis of the energies emanating from the drive economy. If we were to focus more on the movement of these energies, we end up treating them as fantasies capable of fashioning our relationship to the Real. This is, to some extent what befalls JanMohamed (2005), when he focuses more on the moment of the split rather than the cut in the aporetic structure of the death bound subject. He, like Moten, in the allegory of the 'empty jug', also forgets that, the jug bears not only the gift and consecration which heal and cure, but also the symptom which wounds before it provides the gift of the cure or gift of the cure to-be, since it is not yet a cure, or has not yet cured, perhaps because it is still of the symptom. That is, with JanMohamed's priveleding of fantasy or the concepts of the Will, the erotic intentionality, choice, and potentiality as categories which help identify the process of metaleptic reversals or the unbinding process forces him to say potentiality is based on

is characterised by an ambundance of life or freedom created through the contradictory and antagonistic nature of the elements or substances constitutive of it. In 'black radical discourse, as Moten would say, meditations on an emancipatory subjectivity are held "within the stance of the pathologist" (Moten, 2008:177).

The contradictory nature of the Real-material and Real-social within which blackness is constituted, provides us with a framework for thinking the dialectical relationship between death and life, especially for those whose inner life, as DuBois (2007) and Fanon notes, remains inaccessible to the world because it is forced to subsist under the veil (of death). And whenever it appears from under the veil or tries to reach into the possibility of the space above, it only does so only as a scandal. We have so far in this section looked into the thematics of the struggle for liberation as the inauguration of such an unveiling at the political plane and now we are moving into another plane, that of the aesthetics of the political: the moment of the double of blackness. The aesthetic modes of blackness express the experience of death. They express the experience of a death which can only capture "the body but not the soul," (DuBois 2007:130). That is, they are expressions which reveal how the aporetic subject goes through the unlimited experience of death or of the pathological psyche under the conditions of social-death. Blackness, in its political, mythic, and aesthetic forms of performance, veers between the polyrhythmic blurs or ruptures emanating from the grime of the unconscious of death, the ground zero of subjectivity.

The Semiotics of Sound and the Logic of Rhythm

If read through a musical theoretical lenses, one can say that we are trying to read the semiotics of sound through the logic of rhythm. As seen in the previous chapter, the theory of rhythm as a category of the biological and the physical, rather than the cosmos, may help us understand the movement of 'black' sounds because sound as Hegel defines it is "the *time* within which a

one's futurity, not ephemeral past. An initiative which like Moten forces him to return to Heidegger or Derrida, and unlike the Fanon of Wilderson and Sexton, who rejects phenomenology and psycholinguistics, choses to find refuge in them. There is, no opportunity for the subject of blackness, to contradict JanMohamed (2005:292), to posit or reflect, into the future, its own "utopian possibility as an alternative". In other words, due to the phenomenology of the colonial symbolic/ontology, the black utopia can be analysed through "the structures of the future anterior", which is itself of the Symbolic order (JanMohamed, 2005:296). I have decided to carry this argument only in the footnote because, it in itself, as (one of) the most relevant polemic(s) in contemporary Black Radical Thought or modern social theory for that matter, requires a thesis on its own, taking us into a deeper engangement (than this) with the same psycho-linguistic and phenomenological concepts I have engaged with in the attempt to build a materialist theory of the subject of revolutionary emancipation.

certain number of vibrations occur, the spatial width and thickness of the sounding body, are moments of its determination" (Hegel, 2010:302).[239] This is because, rhythm if read as a materialist model of logical inquiry, can help us account for the dialectical relationship between sound and action or sound and body or politics and aesthetics. If sounds, in their multiplicity, are taken as the differential material elements of existence, then the logic of rhythm can help us establish a link between them. Albeit a link which is ruptural and inconsistent rather than harmonious and consistent. That is, its logic does not follow the idea of a "perfectly normal harmonic progression" (Zizek, 2002:133) which is supposed in Western musical forms. The logic of rhythm, as a function of suture or stitching-up, is that which can help us account for what we can, to use Zizek (2002:8) differently, refer to as "the opposition between the mathematical and the dynamic Sublime (in the Kantian sense)," or rather, the failure of the transposition from the mathematical real to the sublime of the symbolic, i.e. from the Zero to the One.[240] At the plane of the aesthetic, the notion of actionality supposed through music, dance, and art expresses the form of expenditure of life-in-death or a regression into the 'night of the world' – i.e. the composition of the One from the Zero in mathematical ontology. This is however not in the sense of an inscription of death in life or a suture of life by death that is supposed in negative theology or in the linguistic theory of signification. Rather, it is that of suture by the elements of the conflict-ridden materiality of the ground of death or the drive economy generated from the realm of death itself (qua the unconscious), which erupts and irrupts into the ghostly violence through which the aporetic subject tries to emerge from into the prohibited realm of the socius through the process of unveiling. An unveiling which is however not a process of dissimulation because there is no meaning to fulfil in this regression into the mythical depth. The former is that of the position taken by Mbembe (2017:160), who

[239] What I am trying to say here is tha, contrary to the cosmological conceptions of the logic of rhythm in Western onto-theological and phallocentric conceptions of the theory of the subject, rhythm, as a materialist category, denotes the movement of 'bodies in solace', the articulation of underground deathly formations, 'geometry of blue ghosts', 'the architecture of archetrace', 'the physics of rememberance', the 'rites of affliction' that Fred Moten (1997:216). Perhaps we can say our position on rhythm even contradicts the one that David Evans (2004) says is associated with the Platonic theory of forms, the one which he says Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Mallarme's idea of poetics tries to avoid.

[240] The logic of rhythm in the case of black music, to borrow from Zizek, we can say, denotes the "repetitive structure of the doubled failed attempt to elevate oneself" (Zizek, 2002:133). Or rather, the absence or deferent of *harmony* which is of the "external simplicity of numbers" (Hegel, 2010:302), albeit without losing its *melody,* which is that of pain and suffering.

believes that the black aesthetic mode of appearance "depends not on repetition but on the *radical difference* without which the dis-enclosure of the world is impossible".[241]

That is, a 'radical difference' similar to Hegel's 'negation of the negation', i.e., the differance of the Signifier in Derrida's deconstructionist theory.[242] Mbembe tells us that what he wants to imagine is a subject whose appearance is a scandal because "to act as a subject within a context haunted by ghostly terror means having the capacity in all circumstances to rearrange fragments continually in new and different patterns or configurations" (Mbembe 2017:160). But for Mbembe, in order for the subject to make an appearance, albeit scandalous, it has to appeal to the categories of speech or of ethical resolution and freedom, i.e., the categories of the gift, responsibility, healing, and care. Thus, although this appearance might be conceived by Mbembe as a violent act, its violence is still that of transcendence because it denotes the translation of the body into speech as though the body itself is not capable of producing speech without being acted upon by an external factor like speech which "is stolen from language".[243] He forgets that, in the case of the colonised-slave subject, there is no guarantee that the ethical fragments emanating from black suffering and agony of dying will themselves accede to the status of the sign (or language). Rather, under colonial conditions they are forced to remain at the level of the body i.e., at the level of sound not yet transformed into speech, or rather, a sound not translatable into a priori categories of speech. For example, in the mask-double, the body as an in-existent, a void, or a site of death, the colonised-slave subject creates forms of truths that the subject transmits as sound through dance and music (rhythm). What is transferred is, as we said, however a sound not transmittable into a priori categories of speech because it is "structured by temporal dislocations and riven by disconcerting metamorphoses" (Hayles,

[241] It is important here to note my difference with Mbembe's quasi-phenomenological or ethical reading of African myth, although I'm going to rely on his reading of the semiotics of rhythm in African mask, drum, and dance. Whilst for Mbembe, through his extension of the Derridian phenomenological categories of care and responsibility in the notion of the 'gift of death', the mythical denotes the "apotheosis of the spirit" through the "triple pattern of incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection – of salvation and sacrifice", for us the mythical is nothing but the expression of the kinesis of the material energies of the ground. In other words, for us the mythical is not an externalised interiority which acts upon the materiality of death in order to transform it into life. And again, whilst the black subject, for Mbembe, is able to make an ethical appearance in the realm of the socius or slip into the realm of imagination, for us, it remains in the moment of the cut, i.e., the moment of antagonism in the plane of the material.

[242] For Derrida, in *Writing and Difference*, meaning emanates from the autonomy of the Signifier.

[243] Derrida, 2001, p. 224.

1997:75). But, for Mbembe on the other hand, who wants to think blackness within the possibility of speech rather than sound, the mask double as "*work for life* consists in capturing death and exchanging it for something else" (Mbembe 2017:143).[244]

In Mbembe's analysis of the pharmacy of power through the mask double, the metamorphosis of sound into the realm of speech or the process where "the body spirals in a void" entails the exchange of death (materiality) for life (truth). That is, for Mbembe, the doubling of the mask "as the face of the flesh" transforming "itself into a living, figurative surface" is what defines the body as "a network of images and heterogenous reflections, a compact density, liquid, osseous, shadowy, the concrete form of the disproportion and dislocation that is always on the verge of exceeding the real" (Mbembe 2017:134). That is, "the body flesh and meat all create an inseparable totality"[245] in a process that produces a 'ghostly terror' or a 'ghostly violence' which operates through the body after the subject has been reduced to immobility. These violent forms of capture by the transference of death into life or the existent into essence as he further notes, result in the suspension of the body's "prehensile and motor functions" (Mbembe 2017:140).[246] This suspension signifies a moment of freedom during which the diviner (or initiate) is plunged into "an infernal whirlwind" and "becomes a whirlgig, the plaything of antagonistic powers that tear at him until he cries out in horror" (Mbembe 2017:141). From these lines, we can see that, Mbembe, through Derrida tries to read the theory of rhythm or the theory of movement in the aesthetics of the mask double from a phenomenological or onto-theological perspective. The economy of the mask double is here read by Mbembe as though

[244] Rather than say, the in-existent opens up to some transcendental truth as Mbembe supposes through his Derridean notion of the gift. The double-binding to which I read Mbembe's notion of the Word is that of the material, not that of the word as supposed in the structuralist theory of the language of what is still-to-come. It is the wound itself (like in the 'wounded kinship' of Mackey) which create spirit, not the spirit which wounds the body in order to enable it to attain infinite substance.

[245] Mbembe, 2017, p. 134.

[246]As mentioned in an earlier footnote, Mbembe makes these kinds of mistakes because he owes his reading of ghostly violence to Derrida, and Deleuze and Guattari's cosmic metaphysical notions of eschatological violence, hence, he reads it as a 'power of the *gift*'. For him, it is a third or external factor which suspends or puts into stases the motor functions of the body in the mask double, not the economy of the drives which emerges from the realm of the barred Real. And as he notes through Amos Tutuola's, *Palm-Wine Drunkard and My Life*, the suspension of the body "occur through the projection of a light whose starkness, harshness, and brutality invests objects, erases them, re-creates them, and plunges them into quasi-hallucinatory drama" (Mbembe 2017:140).

designating the redemptive eschatology of Derrida's "war of light".[247] What Mbembe forgets is that, the polyrhythmicity of the drum, as accompaniment to the mask dance, to evoke Mackey, helps the subject accent absences through its power to echo or elicit "the echo of what's not there" because it works with sounds and shadows (Mackey 2010:135).

That is, in African ritual-myth, as Mbembe himself may acknowledge, song, drum, and dance, as expressions of the economy of the war of the long night, rather than the economy of the war of light, show the movement of the spirits of the dead or the mythical embedded in the Real-natural. This is why he says, "all the three together produce a concatenation of sounds, rhythms, and gestures that gives rise to a half-world of spectres and reveals the return of the dead" (Mbembe 2017:141). These ruptures or concantenations from the 'Real-natural' qua the 'zone of the living dead', to quote further from him, have the power "to take flight … from the dungeon of death, from the grave,"[248] or the abyss of freedom within which they are generated. Which is a flight of "discovery" which seeks to "advance beyond severance and limitation" (Mackey 1993:235). And as testimony to a history or an ontology of loss, it "haunts or critiques a condition in which feeling, consciousness itself, would seem to have been cut-off." [249] For the lack of a better term, this flight is more of a refraction (regression) rather than reflection (or accent) because it shows how the colonised-black-subject's forms of spiritual strivings are forced back into the material from which they are generated. An internalising which signals the descent into the zone of the dead (not the self), the Real-natural (which is beyond the Real-social) or the mythical realm within which all creative elements abound. Since this realm is structured as a void, a lack, or a nothingness, it has, over the history of both the slave plantocracy and the colonial plantocracy, been turned into a space for fossiling the social narrative of blackness, that is, a space to conjure the spirit for revenge and revolt or the counter-cries of the Negro, to evoke DuBois.

[247] Although Derrida (2001:146) says this kind of war, designates an "avowal of … within discourse, an avowal which is not yet peace", what is avowed is an a priori truth. And what this kind of war designates is not a disavowal of the material conditions or the immediacy in which the subject is implicit.

[248] Mbembe, 2017, p. 142

[249] Referring to George Lukacs, Mackey (1993:235) further argues that, notion of "phantom objectivity … means by way of which a social order renders its role in the construction of reality invisible." It is "a relativizing tem that cuts both ways, occasioning a shift in perspective between real and unreal, an exchange of attributes between the two" (Mackey 1993:236).

In the context of the slave plantocracy, as DuBois relates, most elements of the African Spiritual world might not have expressed the alternative of revolutionary violence because they were transferred or forced into "doctrines of passive submission" by a Christian theologism which emphasised the element of the beautiful as an "infinite capacity for dumb suffering" (DuBois 2007:134-5).[250] This was, for DuBois, referred to as the moment of the slave's ethical growth, which however was never lost to the broader strategy of black radical politics i.e., through the Christian doctrine, the slaves were able to maintain the "sensualist side by side with the martyr" (DuBois 2007:135). It was only that at this moment, as we have noted above, the Negros could not externalise because they were forced into the internal but when they started to externalise again; instead of focusing on the beautiful within the internal through life, death became a thing to live within or to realise oneself within. The desire for freedom in death "became their one ideal of life" and the "world within and without the Veil of Color" started to change (DuBois 2007:135). It was the moment of the doubling of death as it was ruptured by the vibrations of the drives emanating from the internal qua the unconscious into which it was forced. In this process of becoming, as DuBois further intimates, the subject forgot that "life is more than meat and the body more than raiment" (DuBois 2007:137). Hence, we see in the black aesthetic, the concatenation or simultaneous play of all the realms of existences.

This is where the black spirituals (song and dance), narrative, poems, art, and the models of what Alexander Weheliye (2000 and 2003) define as the 'Sonic-Afro-Modernity' bone of the conditions of the mythical past, the Middle Passage, and the slave plantocracy emerge from. According to Weheliye (2000:535), the notion of sonic Afro-modernities suggest a subjectivity that relies on sound and utilises material from African forms of dance and art. And as expressions of "death and suffering and unvoiced longing for a truer world, of misty wanderings and hidden ways," they contain within them the "tell in the word and music of trouble and exile, of strife and hiding; … grope toward some unseen power and high forest [which may never appear] in the end" (DuBois 2007:172). The music which acts as an accompaniment to these aesthetic modes of retrieval carries with it a depth of memory and history. This is also how within the context of the colonial plantocracy, Black radical or avant-gardist aesthetics function as "cognitive parameters and expressions that have shaped the black

[250] As we have noted above through Mackey, this lead to the retention of African mythical figures through practices such as the Haitian vodoon.

critique of time, or more generally, the elaboration of memories of the colony and of the potentate" (Mbembe 2017:121). The models of sonic Afro-modernity, as we learn from DuBois and Weheliye, help overcome the limitations of the linguistic sphere in the problematic of the subject born of bondage and freedom in death. And like the black narrative and spirituals, they present a "mode of discourse by which African(-Americans) envisioned a transcendent human possibility under captive conditions" (Spillers 1988:84).

Embedded within the models of sonic Afro-modernity or black aesthetics in general, are the thematics of liberation which find effectivity from the economics of the death-drive. And the structuration of these thematics of liberation within the drive economy is what impels them to evade any resolution supposed in transcendental notions of human freedom. That is, there is a "deferment of place" which compels blackness to belong neither "here" nor "there" (Spillers 1988:85). A deferment made possible by the fact that, as a substance of death, it occupies not a point nor a place but a space which is yet to be differentiated. And the colonised-black-subjects as those who by virtue of being relegated to spaces of animality by the phenomenological violence of modernity, that is, as those reduced to "raw flesh", they are the ones who can make the detour to human existence by successfully passing through the fifteen stages of death; "a death multiplied by fifteen" (Mbembe 2001:198). This is how, like the ghost, the subject of blackness (as the true 'night of the world'), and to invert Derrida, remains within the "clandestinely humous, tomb, and subterranean prison,"[251] the lowest, humble, and humiliated terrain of death. This sphere although borne by the bio-logical, it is not necessarily of its functions. Rather, it is that of a vibratory kinesis qua the drives produced by the antagonistic and contradictory nature of the elements constitutive of the bios. And it is those 'kinetic rhythms' which set the subject in motion or gives birth to subjectivity.

Perhaps the duty of theory or philosophy is to examine how the energy released from these elements become causative instead of examining how they are structured as causes. That is, it must be one of examining how ruptural elements of the drive or the registers of existence are translated into articulations of human freedom qua liberation. This is where the invention of sound technology or the "phonography in the twentieth century" in Alexandre Weheliye's or DuBois' 'Sonic Afro-modernity' comes to function as a methodological and epistemological

[251]Derrida, 2006, p. 117-7.

device for the movement, more than the translation, of sound. It enabled them to engage the acoustic "physical rhythms that surround them" and the body's vibratory field" (Morris, 1997:33). That is, the gramophone and other modernist sound/acoustical technologies offered black musical worlds an "ability to split sounds from the sources that produce them …, generating a 'posttechnological' orality and musicality in twentieth century black culture" (Weheliye 2003:99).[252] As *techne*, in the illogical or alogical articulation of blackness, sound technologies constitute a space for imagining and producing a variety of cultural practices", that is, it enabled the imagination of a "space-logic that demands a complete reorientation in the … (subject's) attitude toward language" (Weheliye 2003:100 and Morris, 1997:34).[253] Or, they create a rupture between sound and vision and they offer the black subject an escape from the visual scene of subjection, to which modernity has sought to localise it. So, from a corpo-Real point of view, sound technologies, like in the mask dance where the mask hides the true identity of the sorcerer or establishes the link between the ancestors and the community, function as models of translation for the invisible or non-existent blackness.[254]

Hence, we say, mask, song, drum, and dance, and the models of Sonic Afro-modernity are the means through which a subject who lives his/her life in death can get access to these spaces and is able to enact them in his or her existence, although he or she finds his or her existence reduced to the level of the bio-logical. These spaces are "space(s) of raw life" which have the properties of both death and life. That is, they are splaces[255] "where death and life are so entangled that it is no longer possible to distinguish them" (Mbembe 2001:197). And black aesthetic modes of expression as ritual processes are an attempt at laying witness to the several

[252] For the black avant-gardists, this is an appropriation of black modes of performance, this is why, as Nathaniel Mackey, in the critical stages that jazz evolved into, especially the bebop jazz revolution, the artists tried to mask African modes of expression through a manipulation of traditional musical scales.

[253] In other words, sound and visual technology "made it easy to preserve sound across time as it had become to transmit it through space" and the "visit to the spirits of the underworld" was made possible "with a meditation on the theme of disembodied presences, presences that are, like the voices on the air, both 'here' and 'not-here'" (Morris, 1997:36). That is, as Adalaide Morris emphasizes, in the period "between 1880 and 1960", the invention of "Bell's telephone, Edison's aerophone, Cros's 'paleophone', Bell's 'photophone', Edison's 'kineto-phonograph', the marconiphone, the paleophone, the dynamophone, the aetherophone, and the phonoautograph" foregrounded the black-sound's generative aspects (Morris, 1997:42).

[254] For example, in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, although Okonkwo's wives could notice his face beneath the mask, they were forbidden from recognising his corporeality.

[255] In Alain Badiou's sense of the word.

forms of death and several forms of dying that happen in this space which is very hard to define as a place.[256] The rhythm maintained in black aesthetic modes of expression expresses the several modes of existence within which such a being is structured. And this must be taken as a reminder that the remainder or zero degree of subjectivity to which death qua blackness as sound lays claim to, as Mbembe (2001:205) would say, "does not imply silence, even less the end of possible representation of the dead," rather, it "opens a time after death." In other words, it must be taken as that which allows for the expression of blackness and the influx of losses experienced under colonial modernity. Or what Mackey (2010) defines as the longing for lost kinship that we find in the genres of black music in general and jazz in particular.

Rhythmicity, like we sought to understand it in chapter four through Wilson Harris's theory of the Limbo dance, is what makes blackness to behave like a 'primary repression' without a cathexis or to behave like the fidgeting corpse of Haitian voodoo. A fidgeting which articulates an ontology of loss. And as an element or substance of the phonic materiality maintained through the creaking of the voice in what Mackey (2010:50) refers to as the theory of the falsetto in New World African music, rhythmicity aims at alchemising the legacy of lynching within which blackness is constituted.[257] For Mackey (2010:50), the theory of the falsetto, like the "Theory and Play of the *Duende*" which Federico García Lorca explores in an essay which bears the same name, examines "the dislocated African's pursuit of a meta-voice". Mackey develops his theory of the falsetto or *duende* from Lorca's idea that, "all that has dark sounds has duende …, a mysterious force that everyone feels, and no philosopher has explained" because it is of the "culture of immediate creation …, the spirit of the earth". It maintains familial ties with the "mourn and the shout" (Mackey 2010:51), like the screaming which emerges in Busi Mhlongo's music, after the groaning and the gasping, the *is'ginqi* in

[256] There is a difference between 'space' and 'place' from both a phenomenological and existential perspective, in our case space consists consists of undifferentiated materiality and place refers to a point identified with meaning.

[257] Rhythmicity, in Mackey's theory of the falsetto, is an "art of memory which bears upon certain ritual practices, historical anecdotes, symbols, and myths" (Mackey 1993:168). In his extension of Harris' theory of the limbo, he reads it as that which is what which enables the black subject to make the "descent into voicelessness, a confrontation in depth". And as an act of memory, it is that which also enables it to emerge from that same "void" and "incoherence", which both Mackey and Harris say Orlando Patterson associates with "historylessness" (Mackey 1993:167). Contrary to what they say Patterson holds in his concept of social death, for them, "a native tradition of imaginative response to cultural dislocation or 'historylessness' does in fact exist" (Mackey 1993:168).

um'banqanga[258] or the horn or saxophone in Zim Ngqawana's music which is mostly an improvisation of Xhosa initiation songs. The sharp tones in black music, like the falsetto, signifies the transformation of material energies, through rhythm: something that transcends the creative imagination of the rational subject or the idea of celestial figures. It "explores a redemptive, unworded, realm–a meta-voice" which also seeks to go beyond this worldliness (Mackey 2010:51). And it goes beyond a transcendental ideality that seeks to make the world a tautology, and as though it were a cosmic symbol, it hints towards a musical form which transcends "the so-called harmony of the spheres" aimed at in Western musical forms (Mackey 2010:73).

The theory of the falsetto in African and New World music does not give a formulaic outcome to the future – because what it seeks to project through the movement of sound is denied the full freedom of infinite space by the phenomenology of the colonial symbolic. And the rhythm of the music summons the spirits of the ancestors and it guides the subject in its attempt to return to the mythical past of the ancestors. An attempt which is always bound to fail because it is made by a subject which is ordered by an imprecision and it avoids all the categories of the hermeneutic enterprise. That is, unlike in the Cartesian grid applied in Western musical themes, black musical forms have no locatable point on their notational scales and as transpositions of rhythm qua the economy of the drive, they do not follow a rigid or determinate, formal or harmonic course. Hence, the black avant-gardists say, rhythm, in the black musical world, is a refusal of the scientific system rationalist builder and it is neither structured by a philosophy of consciousness nor a philosophy of pure mathematics. Like the creaking of the word in the theory of the duende and the theory of the falsetto, rhythm "rejects all the sweet geometry we understand" (Lorca, 2004) and similarly to the 'grounding' of reggae dub[259] it evokes something here but not there: it is an alternation between absence and presence. More so, for Mackey, like Legba's limb, rhythm shows the "offbeat or eccentric ascent, the suspended accentuation of blackness" also symbolised by the one legged Nguni God Mlenze-

[258] Um'mbanqanga is a genre of contemporary-traditional Zulu music which draws its influences from the Blues and the Marabi music which were, during the history of the colonial plantocracy heavily, influenced by the liminal spaces occupied by the colonial-black-subject, especiall as a migrant labourer in the mines of the Witwatersrand – where relations of propertyhood played out in almost a similar way they did on the slave plantation.

[259] Mackey, 1993, p. 81.

munye (Mackey 1993:243). Legba's or Mlenze-munye's limb, as compensation for the "difference in leg length", shows the power of impairment like in the syncopated accent of different elements (Mackey 1993:244). It is like the simultaneous play in Sun Ra's collective improvisations, which to use Mackey (1993:244), is of "a gong, a bell, a drum …, a flute" etc.

The energies of rhythm transform the registers of the emotional into creative models by seizing the phantomic flashes of memory. And again, like Legba's limp, it is an "emblem of heterogenous wholeness, the image and outcome of a peculiar remediation" (Mackey 1993:244). The centrality of rhythm as a mode of retrieval is what compelled in the black spirituals or the ring shouts of the New World, the slaves to find multiple ways of preserving and masking it since the drum was banned from the plantation. That is, after the drum was taken away from the slaves, in order to maintain the 'polyrhythmicity' of their musical arrangements and aesthetic forms of expression, they resorted to foot stomping, handclapping, and used the body-as-drum in general (Mackey 2010:124). This insistence on rhythm in the general environment of the slave plantocracy, shows how for the black subject, rhythm has always been sought to function as an accompaniment to pain and suffering in the same way that music has always functioned as an accompaniment to song, drum, and dance in ritual myth. Now we can say that all these elements of rhythm or percussive aspects of music, from either African ritual myth or the black spirituals of the New World, have been translated to non-percussive instruments introduced after the technological advancement in the twentieth century phonography.

In the slave plantocracy and as a device or mechanism for transforming energy, the tonality of rhythm in black music bordered on revolution, so the slave master had to ban it from the plantation. But since what is dead may never die, rhythm always found ways to re-insert itself into the black musical-ontology. This is what, according to Mackey (2010:124), is hinted at in "Cecil Taylor's much quoted reference to the piano as eighty-eight turned drums, and the practice among present day base players as slapping the strings." From what Mackey refers to as the cosmic symbolism represented by the falsetto which when mixed with percussion, as mentioned above, we can understand how Busi Mhlongo's falsetto, mixed with the groaning and cries, is like a cocophony of fear, suffering, and pain as it tries to hit a mark or point of unity on a geometrical plane: the elusive and impossible mark of freedom. The falsetto, unlike the muse, does not try to reach the high note which is identified with the celestial union of the subject and object but it refers back to the bass notes from which its energetics emanate. And

differently from the tautology of concepts, the falsetto and the percussive rhythm (its source of momentum) do not try to destroy the rift between aim and object, rather, as Mackey (2010:187) observes, "the use of the falsetto in black music, the choked up register into an upper register had a way …, of alchemising a legacy of lynchings" in the same way that every concept no matter how figural or sublime, had its literal, dead letter aspect as well.

In black aesthetics, there is no such thing as bridging the chasm or healing the rift, rather, as Mackey (2010:133) puts it, "you either leap it, failing that you fall in it." The most important part of the theory of the falsetto as we can observe through Mackey (2010:132), similarly to the arrow pointing to the star Sirius B, in cosmic symbolism, is the moment when the arrow is shot into space. This moment is the part most important to theorisation, creativity, or philosophical inquiry as it entails effort, process, and work in both the shooting of the arrow and its movement through space. Since space as a chasm occupied by all forces of nature, which in the shooting of the arrow itself (which involves geometry and mechanics), are represented by the elements of air and gravity which the arrow must overcome in all its efforts to reach the realm of the Ideal symbolised by Sirius B. So, the preoccupation with rhythm, or rather drumming, as Mackey (2010:134) notes, can be explained by the statement that, "music is perhaps best considered as an arrangement of gaps where one may add rhythm rather than a dense pattern of sound (as is the case with formal and harmonic themes in Western musical arrangements). The dynamic tensions within polyrhythmic drumming comes from the space between musical notes, or rather, the space between sounds. And the tension or energetics that these sounds release boarders on resistance and revolution.

Rhythm in the aesthetics of the black, represents the categories of inadequation within sound or the impossibility of translating sound into song (or word) and it functions as a model through which the subject cannibalises the past. It symbolises a postponement of the inevitable phallus of history from which the estranged colonised-black-subject exists or lives its life in *potentia*. For Mackey, it is the hollowness produced by this estrangement to history from which the marooning subjectivity of blackness or the creaking voice of the *duende* is trying to escape from. A future experienced as a hollow or void provides a "new way of writing in hopes of a new world or a re-newed world" envisioned through the use of the projective method which involves an externalisation towards a new reality (Mackey 1978:359). A new reality not created through a totalising ontology but a new reality grounded in the 'living present' and memory of a past based on futurity. The disjunctive relation between the aesthetic plane and the political

plane or the political purchase accorded to music in black history was, for Mackey, nowhere more visible than in the projectivist, Black Nationalist, and radical Marxist writings of Amiri Baraka under the pseudo name of LeRoy Jones. Baraka wrote in the 1960s[260], the heightened period of the anti-colonial struggle (both in Africa and the Americas), the period of the transition to bebop and free jazz to which Mackey (1978) says John Coltrane's music expressed a unique human quality. The avant-garde spirit within which the transition to bebop and free jazz was made shared the Marxist thought that black aesthetic modes of expression are determined by and are reflective of their social political and economic contexts. As observed by Mackey (1978:360), the Black avant-gardists of the 1960s shared the conviction that the continuum of modernity has to be repelled through a materialist theory of "outsidedness or of alienation and resistance," that is, by invoking the "changing same," the "unmoved mover" which is the condition of human freedom from the prism of the night of the world rather than that of the light of the day. It is for these reasons that the musical forms of the jazz avant-gardists reflect on the "shifting attitudes or constant attitudes within changing contexts" (Mackey 1978:360). In other words, it suggests a musical theory that is compatible with the analytics of the shift from colonial to postcolonial contexts.

The avant-garde 'beboppers' sought to conceptualise an idea of human reality unimaginable within the contexts of modernity by examining the structures of Black estrangement, alienation, or subjugation. And they echoed "acts of subversion, sabotage, and revolution" (Mackey 1978:362). The aesthetic plane from which the music emerged had a feeling of rapport determined by an ethno-political underpinning that appealed for disengagement in ways that seemed to suspend the category of the ethical, or rather, in way that articulated in ethics violence. Although synonymous with collectivity, the music had a communalistic impulse which often came in tribalistic and nationalist undertones, thereby, compelling the critic to look for the universal or ethical in them. This is why the collective improvisations in the music of Sun Ra are an escape from the jazz solo (individualism) that had overtaken the African ethic. This return to collective improvisation, as Mackey notes, is a return to the collective which white-musical theory refers to as "chaos, … the all-force put together. Rather than accompaniment and a solo voice, the miniature thing, securing its own greatness (Mackey

[260] In South Africa, this moment coincides with that of the Sophiatown Renaissance and the District Six Renaissance from which Abdullah Ibrahim and many other South African jazz avant-gardists emerges.

1978:380). Thus said, the paradigms of liberal democracy which have sought to constitute postcolonial subjects as individuals should be seen as another attempt at denying the collective improvisation of blackness. The idea of individuality enacted through liberal democratic principles and practices is another mode for masking the continued production and reproduction of colonial subjects under a postcolonial rationale. The postcolonial space, defined by its structures of liberal democracy, as Mbembe (2001:115) observes, still continues to function and reproduce itself under "the economy of death."

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the framework within which the themes of the materialist theory of the subject running through the thesis is conceptualised. Rhythmicity, the last conceptual framework to be looked at in this chapter, defines the phantasmatic character or the logic of such a subjectivity. The contradictory and antagonistic nature of the substances constitutive of the libidinal economy within which such a subjectivity is constituted produces the energy qua drive forces which make rhythm "a sort of disgraceful way of proceeding …, by means of transference".[261] Owing to their commonality more than their difference, Wilson Harris', Frank Wilderson's, Adrian Johnston's, Abdul, R. JanMohamed's, Fred Moten's and Nathaniel Mackey's materialist theory of the subject has provided us with a very instructive framework for our conceptualisation of an emancipatory project rooted in the existential mode of the colonised-black-subject. Since it is within the question of the subject where the problem of emancipation is said to be situated it is therefore important for us to understand how, in the case of those regarded as non-subjects (the colonised-black subject), can freedom and liberation become a possibility. But as we have seen above, the question of the subject as a category of emancipation becomes problematic when applied to the colonised-black-subject because it is not a subject that is reducible to the maxims of a humanist ethics or a rationalist scientific logic. As a subject of the 'ground' or the multiple without-One, blackness expresses the experience of a 'life-in-death' and for its emergence or escape from this space, it depends on the drive economy which provides it with the energy (or kinetic rhythmicity) to move towards places otherwise unknown and unfamiliar to it.

[261] Lacan, 1967, p. 3.

The situated volatility (or libidinal economy of the death drive) to which blackness is relegated, is what helps, to use Moten (2007:1),[262] define its political project as an "emergent poetics of the emergency". That is, as a poetics of the negativity of the material type rather than a poetics positivity or privations, iteration, and iconicity. It is a "space of the imagination … which only comes into its own when it is seen in opposition, say, to that set of faces or folks who constitute … a part of the … (theistic) Marxist (or rationalist) historiographical critique(s)".[263] A subject which finds its genesis within this space and which for its extensions, relies on a mode of transference which is based on the function of a 'barred Real' in repetition or the function of the energetics of the death drive, is a subject which evades all the formulas of an a priori causality or an a posteriori point of actualisation. We have described this function of the barred Real as that of a missed encounter with trauma (or of a traumatic *situation* which has been fossiled into the unconscious) but such an encounter does not amount to an actual point of reference as supposed in Badiou's theory of repetition. Rather, as a point which manifests through the temporal movement of the ballistic or kinetic energy of the death drive generated from its contradictory elements, it helps set the subject in motion towards the search for alternative modes of being. Its, as we discovered in the foregoing discussion, are not extensions or externalisations of a self-reflexive being or of some external force or explanations of experience through the knowledge of some transcendental Truth/Idea. The materialist theory of the subject relied upon in this thesis, as we can see, can help us envision a political project which is not based on what Descartes would refer to as the "knowledge of effects through causes"[264] of objects as the only extended and extending things. Based on the fortunes of a materiality, which is by its nature riddled with contradictions and antagonisms or is not at one with itself, this theory of the subject, as we shall see in the next chapter, is relevant to the critique of the categories of postcolonial time or post-Apartheid time.

[262] Fred Moten is here echoing Nathaniel Mackey who himself extends Wilson Harris' theory of the imagination, looked into in the fourth chapter of this thesis.

[263] Moten, 2007, p. 2.

[264] Descartes, 1998, p. 121.

Chapter Six

(Re-)Versioning the Time of the Postcolony

"The concern with meaning … from which rules derive has the effect of binding us to an adult, oppressively human social order. But rapt attention to sound, the music or utterance impact in words …, moves us into the animal, cosmic realm of the child" (Mackey 1993:93).

"In most cases, the black man lacks the advantage of being able to accomplish his descent into a real hell" (Fanon 1986:1).

Introduction

Like in the Fanonoian logic of resistance and liberation, the thesis has tried to envision a revolutionary political project which emerges from the ground or immanence of the subject in the material and social Real. The materialist theory of the subject which we find in the Fanonian Logic is not that of a subject of suture by a transcendental absolute or of the phallocentric subject of scientific inquiry, but one of a subject which constitutes forms of living through the energetics of the death drive or in the moment of an originary fissure which gives to the subject the negative impulse necessary for its emancipatory psychopathological tendencies. It is a psychopathological activity which however regressively refractive in nature, is albeit, one which allows the colonised-black-subject to make the descent into the second level of death or the Real-material – the zone beyond and beneath the Real-social – that which Fanon (1986:1) refers to as, "a zone of non-being, an extra-ordinarily sterile and arid region, an utterly naked declivity, where an upheaval can be born." The articulations of this psychopathological subject of anti-colonial emancipation are neither those of "timeless truths", of metaphysical repressions, nor radiances of consciousness as we shall see in either Deleuze and Guattari's or Derrida's theocentric philosophical and theoretical meditations on the concept of democracy. Especially, in the latter's extension of the Paulinian theory of the militant figure, in his *Spectre of Marx* which we shall contrast with Badiou's own extension of the same theory in his *Saint Paul: The Foundations of Universalism.*[265]

[265] Perhaps the militant-messianic subject, by virtue of it appearing as a 'figure' of truth (although a 'figure subjacent to Chaos') could prove to be a problematic or arbitrary concept to place in the same category with that of the colonised black subject which exists in the Real of social-materiality qua of the 'barred Real', as Moten or Badiou notes, the former on the concept of the *militant* and the latter on the concept of the *figure*. For Moten (2008:205), "the pathological", is dismissed "in the discourse of the militant onto-pathologist" which supposes an axiom system of presentation. The militant subject, is for Moten, not synonymous with the psychopathological subject. Treating the discourse of the psychoanalyst (Fanon) as though it presence itself as

Although as Zizek warns us, the latter's theory of the four conditions of philosophy (science, art, politics, love) posits the Event in a 'dualist fashion' which acknowledges both its material (immanence) and immaterial (transcendental) order. Such is the Badiou of *Metapolitics* or of *Conditions* who reads the political as though it were a topology.[266] From the reads we rely upon

the Master discourse to the neurotic, Moten says, "the militant (Fanon) believes he must drag 'up from the pit and out of the cave'" the neurotic or psychopathological subject (thus blaming Fanon of doing exactly what he himself does when he, likeJanMohamed or most postcolonial theorists and their postmodernist and poststructuralist counterparts), makes the leap into the world of imaginative fantasy (Moten, 2008:208, citing Fanon, 1968:219). This is however with him not acknowledging the fact that Fanon, like Lacan, also relinguishes the cap of the psychoanalyst as scientist, the clinic for the trenches in the struggle for liberation. Of course, he is the militant psychopathologist who "ventures into the dead space of the unexplained" but he is not interested in some "kind of rehabilitation and reintergration … (or) procuring 'substance, coherence, and homogeneity'" (Moten, 2008:208). Fanon is more aware than Moten recognises, that this 'dead space' of the unexplainable' is far from being a 'monistic One-All' filled with wholeness, rather, he sees it as the realm of the death drive which is 'filled' with contradictions and antagonisns, which themselves set the *necessary* conditions for the liberation struggle. That is, the logic of the cure he proposes is that of a refraction into the natural Real qua the unconscious realm, a process which simultaneously rejects the Imaginary phallus and the Symbolic phallus qua psychoanalysis as a science. But this is not without saying the pathological signs of this barred Real refer to a different form of living, a form of 'life-in-death'. As for Badiou, the figure, retains the "appearance of Being and affirmative thinking" and as a subject of the infinite Truth, it "exists beyond the natural needs of the human animal" or "exceeds the limit of our vital and social determinations", it is the "obscure, the violent, at the same time luminous and peaceful, element of inhumanity within the human element itself" (Badiou, 2007:1). That is, it "is not reducible to animality", is "beyond the natural limits of the human animal" or is of the Symbolic-Imaginary order. We are very much aware of these prejudices or ambivalence with the natural or the finite that Badiou sometimes holds, but through our reading of the extension of his notion of the 'multiple-of-nothing' or 'multiple without-One' (which, as he says in Christian theology, designates "the triplicity of the person of God … (as) internal to the dialectic of the One, but … never affects his unicity (mono-theism) by Adrian Johnston, we shall try to rely on the Badiou, who in *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, sees the moment of resurrection as a manifestation of flesh (the finite or the mortal) rather than spirit (the infinite or the immortal). From the little that we can gather in this explanation, Moten is against the concept of the militant, whilst Badiou is for the concept of the figure. But what we shall do is, to avoid Badiou's conception of the figure as a category of the infinite, which he read his militant theory of truth through a 'transcendental materialist perspective. And with Moten, instead of reading them as separate entities, we read (Fanon) the militant-pathologist, as one immersed in the psychopathological tendencies of his analysand.

[266] And Derrida also does a similar job, but we have decided to separate them even though depending to what end the commentator is retrieving something from either, one finds in both of them a materialist and a transcendental theory of the subject. For example, in *Difference and Writing* or in *The Gift of Death*, Derrida advances both a materialist and a transcendental theory of the subject and he simultaneously invokes both the category of energetics and the category of topography, the concept of madness and the concept of metaphysics, sound/body and speech/language, writing and dance, force and meaning. That is, Derrida, like Badiou, also juxtaposes materialist concepts with scientific or metaphysical concepts, making it difficult to pin him down into only one of them. And most importantly, they both believe in the idea of a unifying text or a unifying concept of time, but the question is whether this unifying text is of the category of the material and materialist energetics or of the category of transcendence. And since Derrida is concerned with the deconstruction of metaphysical concepts, even if he says there is what can be identified as an "unconscious text" or 'unconscious time', he still mantains that, "the timelessness of the unconscious is no doubt determined only in opposition to a common concept of time, a traditional concept, the metaphysical concept: the time of mechanics or the time of consciousness" (Derrida, 2001:269-270) . In this case Derrida invokes the idea of a text or time that is already there even if he tells us that there is no essence and in order to engage in the process of inquiry, one has to move from the material when making the transition to any order of speculation. So, it is perhaps this kind of

in this thesis, i.e., *Being and Event*, *Logic of Worlds*, *Saint Paul: The Foundations of Universalism*, etc., with the help of Adrian Johnston, we try to remain with the Badiou of the

ambiguity, that we have chosen to read Badiou's theoretical and mathematical models as "material assemblages" and those of Derrida as "abstract models" (Badiou, 2007:10-11). Even if Derrida may in his materialist moments be seen to be arguing that, the material or finitude is always supplemented, albeit by a force which is its own "archi-trace", i.e., the "materialised supplement which is necessary to the alleged spontaneity of memory" (Derrida, 2001:286 and 290). In a sense, to refer to their interaction with Lacan, it is Lacan himself who, in his materialist moments, distinguishes his theory of the signifier from that of Derrida which in the attempt to distance writing from the real, ends up giving too much autonomy to writing in-itself. In actual fact, for Lacan, the signifier as a category of the real, has nothing to do with the writing (Lacan, 2005:57). Signifiers or letters are for Lacan, of the dimension of the real since what they indicate is not always necessarily true. The speech of the Lacanian signifiers, unlike that of Derrida's signifier is always accompanied by a lack. Similarly, in Badiou's extension of Lacan's geometry and number theory, we also find a difference between the two, especially in their theory of points. For Lacan (2005:55), "the real does not comprise the point" as supposed by Badiou in his attempt to locate what he refers to as the "lexicon of signifiers" in mathematical axioms or concept of model. The real, for Lacan, is like a geometrical line or surface with no point of location for neither the symbolic nor the imaginary although it is always constitutive of them. In his matheme, both the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic as elements or points of existence are chained together and are undifferentiated. What Lacan calls the figure, or the point is in this case something unthinkable and it is as energetics emerging from this undifferentiated plane that one can rely on "the manipulation of a certain number of numbers, from which" they can "isolate a constant number" (Lacan, 2005:50). And it is from this isolated constant number that Badiou's concept of model and its mathematical axioms relies on. That is, unlike Lacan who starts from the Zero as a lack rather than a mark, in other words, Badiou's number theory, unlike that of Lacan starts at the stage of the consant number. This is very far from Lacan who goes as far as saying that "One is not a number", thereby forcing us to go back to the moment before Badiou's notion of the 'count-as-one' and notion of the translation of 'One-into-Two'. Badiou's concept of model is a framework within which he tries to order the real, whilst Lacan maintains that, "the real has no order", but it is like the symptom whose energetics one can manipulate through mathematical modelling systems to produce a constant number. This constant number is not something that one draws from a priori axioms as one does in pure mathematics or applied mathematics. Rather, it is more of an additional mathematics because the constant number is obtained from a number of numbers or the non-numerable which precedes it. Badiou's theory of mathematical functions relies on the idea of an epistemological break between the categories of existence. As he himself states, his "concept of model", or "logic of the Signifier", or structural "stratification of the scientific signifier" designates the Truth "as something foreign to the real" (Badiou, 1969:1). Instead of the real, as is the case for Lacan, for Badiou, it is here the symbolic which holds together all the elements of existence. The symbolic as the Lacanian hole which represents nothingness, for Badiou, marks the lack of the real on which the symbolic moves without any impedements. The mistake that Badiou makes can be found in this kind of statement, i.e. the statement that the nothingness of the symbolic, unlike that of the real is not marked by impediments, narcissism, or contradiction. What becomes the primary stage of existence in Badiou's mathematical logic is a syntactic mechanism rather than the plane of materiality where elements are constituted undifferentially. The symbolic as a machine which in this sense is represented by his notion of "concatenation" functions like a "sphere of technical production: writing" which "consists of a stock of graphic marks" (Badiou, 1969:2). It is through this formula that 'the transcendentalist' Badiou or the Badiou of truth functions wants to establish a mechanism or number out of Zero. In a sense, the difference between Badiou's and Lacan's matheme, or rather, their geometry, is that, the geometrical line or circle of the latter is voided, whilst that of the former has marks and points. Perhaps at this point, one may ask – Why bother with both Badiou and Derrida? Well, we enter into conversation with these two because, like we did with the working-class subject, we also want to compare the revolutionary potential of the messianic subject and that of the colonised black subject. So, I have included the two long footnotes on Badiou and Derrida just to show that one is aware of their tendence to reduce the subject to the categories of transcendence, no matter how much I may come to rely on Adrian Johnston's extension of the former for my materialist theory of the subject.

generic procedure which supposes a materialist ontology. That is, we remain with the Badiou of the *ground* who posits either a "molecular multiple" or a "materialist multiple" before quantum-superposing it (Laruelle, 2013:xxviii). This is the Badiou who criticises both the Deleuzeans and Derrideans for being the philosophers of the One, i.e., for conserving the onto-phenomenological categories of transcendence in their respective vitalisms and deconstructionisms. The intention is to avoid the implicit teleology which these two suppose in their theory of the militant subject or evade the point of 'matrix' supposed in the mathematical axioms of Badiou's generic procedure and notion of the 'relation of force'. This is however without understating the fact that the material-social Real, due to its conflict-ridden nature, is always molecular and quantumic. But in the case of our subject, although it is constantly jolted by the energetics of the contradictory Real, it is however always marked by a failure of ascendance or transcendence or consistency, a failure which negatively impacts on the asymmetric functions of its quasi-substances in the sense that these qausi-substances are not indexed (like those of the linguistic symbol) in a manner that makes them attractive to the process of repetition and subtraction.

With that said, reading from Badiou's 'ontology of the void', we take it that, his militant theory of the subject of truth, comes close to that of the psychopathological in Fanon's theory of anti-colonialism. Since, as we have so far come to see in this thesis, what we have been trying to reach at is a theory of the subject of revolutionary practice which is of the energetics of materiality, that is, a subject who goes beyond nature, logic, and transcendence, or rather, one that ruptures and puts them all in concert. We see, in this subject, a refutal of both the philosophy of transcendence and the philosophy of the cosmos which both amount to theologies in their different ways – if we are to use Badiou's (2003) critique of the Greek and Jewish theories of discourse. The materialist theory of the subject which we have tried to draw out from our reading of Continental philosophy and the canon of Black Radical Thought (in both Africa and the Atlantic world) contradicts both the transcendence of Jewish-Christian theology, the natural totality of the Greek cosmos, or the natural causality of modern scientific thought. It is a theory which does not follow "the Cartesian separation of man into cognitive and extensive substances …, quite explicitly expressed as the destruction of romantic love, which is actually a disguise, a rationalisation of psychical impulse, 'a false and always dangerous metaphysic" (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002:108). Rather, it is a theory which follows the logic that in the colonial situation where, as Fanon says, black subjects are "prey

to unspeakable terrors, yet happy to lose themselves in a dreamlike exercise, such a people become unhinged, reorganises itself, and in blood and tears gives birth to very real and immediate action" (Fanon 1967:44). Hence, for the colonised-black-subject, the full descent into the world of the dead or the unconscious "fulfils certain well-defined functions in the dynamism of the world" (Fanon 1967:43). As the world of the mythical which gives life to the living dead, it functions as a realm where "actions are repeated with crystalline inevitability" (Fanon 1967:44).

That is, the yearning for life in black social death cannot be read on the same plane with the onto-phenomenological 'theoretical humanism' of either the hermeneutics of the Subject of science or of the transcendental Truth/Idea that we find in postmodernist postcolonial theory, negative theology, and the Marxian analytics that our theory of anti-colonialism is at variance with. And far from arguing for a politics of what we, through Adrian Johnston (2013:321) is referred to as "the monistic One-All of a seamless tapestry of entities and events bound together by mechanical relations of efficient causality" which is the epistemological assumptions of the hermeneutic models found in either Mudimbe's or Bhabha's postcolonial theory that we have sought to critique through a materialist theory of the subject, what we have tried to present is a poetics of revolt articulated by the inexistent which takes the ground of materiality as its genus. From that critique, emerged the assertion that a truly revolutionary politics should be founded on "humanity's inborn animality and cosmicity" [not the cosmicity of some external force but of the kinetic rhythms of the drive economy qua the 'barred Real'] (Mackey 1993:93). That is, a mystical mode of subjectivity which, as Mackey (1993:93) puts it, emphasises the idea of "moving from meaning by way of sound through the animal/child realm to the world at large."[267] In other words, through a theory of the subject which concerns itself with the coinciding of the "'timely' and 'the timeless' with where phylogeny recapitulates ontogeny and life [which is nothing but] a localisation of generic traits and characteristics" (Mackey

[267] In Badiou's militant theory of truth, the mystical in Saint Paul's universalism, is a "fourth discourse" (the discourse of Love), which, like the Lacanian analytical discourse, is only considered for the purpose of inscribing 'it within a mobile schema', so in this case what could be read as close to Mackey's notion of the mystic is Derrida's notion of mythology which is a "metapsychological fable", i.e., a combination of the "neurological" and the "metapsychological" (Derrida, 2001:287). The mythological, is the level at which both these categories are indistiguishableand the geometry of these registers in the Derridean sense can be regarded as movements of love. A love informed by both the economy of violence and the economy of ethics, without the latter determining the former. An idea of love or ethics without blood is not revolutionary because it denotes the "renouncing (of) immediate political action, guerrilla action" (Derrida, 2001:424).

1993:95). Such a movement is not a journey into a primordial mode of Being or an overarching absolute 'Big Other', rather, it is that of a subject who pays attention to the articulations of their servile status or immanence in conflict-ridden materiality. Or rather, it is a movement towards what Derrida refers to as the undiscoverable 'elsewhere' or the 'unknown known' which we cannot fail to pursue despite is non-existence.

Hence, we say, it is for these reasons, that the thesis has sought to contradict the "Adamic presence" or "Adamic life"[268] which is a legacy of the Fall supposed through the doctrine of the Original Sin with the "presence of a tradition" which precedes the Fall, i.e., the moment when evil and good or life and death were simultaneously articulated (Mackey 1993:98). That is, it has sought to argue for a revolutionary politics founded on an "instinctual wisdom" or a "dis-closure of limits"[269] which exists prior to the Fall. This is because, the doctrine of Original sin or of the Fall, to read from Badiou (2003:82), depicts "the life of a subject who is supposed as full, or undivided" rather than that of "the indistinct subject" in whom "desire remains an empty, inactive category." It also functions differently when compared to the mysteries of death qua the structures of the framework within which black-subjectivity is articulable, which as Mackey (1993:98) tells us, must be seen to be "porous rather than impenetrable, to be fissured and incomplete rather than comprehensive and monolithic."[270] They suppose a mode of subjectivity which is analytically founded on "language's ability to negate". And it is for these reasons that, as Mackey would say, "death and ghostliness in this work must be seen not as a choice against life or even a helplessness within it but as a literal pole[271], where life is present

[268] In the "Adamic life, before the Fall, before the law", as Badiou (2003:82) observes, "there is no liberated, autonomus, automatic desire", as we saw in the third chapter in Ricoeur's notion of it. For Badiou, unlike in the Kiekergaardian doctrine of Original sin, which the latter extends, life is produced through immanence rather than transcendence, i.e., through immanence in the materiality of death or the unconscious, not the transcendence of life or consciousness. This immanenence as Badiou relates in his Paulinian theory of the militant truth, signals the invocation of a "kind of infancy" or the return "to the path of death" rather than the path of the truth in its transcendence. Badiou's militant theory of the subject of truth is that of the subject of a "before", a before which is before the subject's own invention of death, a death transformable into life.

[269] Mackey, 1993, p. 89.

[270] That is, a life articulated in the 'theatre of death' which makes Derrida to say, "despite everything that it must ravage in its awake, the theatre of cruelty / is not the symbol of an absent void. It affirms, it produces affirmation itself in its full and necessary rigor. But also in its most hidden sense, the sense most often buried, most often diverted from itself: 'implacable' as it is, this affirmation 'has not yet begun to exist'" (Derrida, 2001:292-3).

[271] Or, rather, death must be seen as a "transliteral" pole, as Badiou (2003:84) would have it, because the path of death is "one of the paths of the divided subject". And in that path, the truth or "every (dead) letter is blind

a point and then suddenly absent from articulation" (Mackey 1993:101). The moment of absence or "the constitutive gap between being and void"[272] is the most essential one to any process of subject formation, it is a moment of suffering and destitution that makes creation or work and action possible. It inaugurates the dialectical process of cathexis and de-cathexis in a way that opens up death to a true possibility of being in life, or rather, a process where death can be minimally repressed in the categories of life and freedom. As Mackey further intimates, this is an opening up susceptible to exhaustion rather than limitation, because the extension of death into life, although is an exaltation of life itself, is not necessarily an exhaustion of death in life as though life was an external factor acting upon death. In the Sartrean sense of the word, in as much as it can be seen as an "apparently literal intrusion of an all too figurative Other (in the form of a repressed materiality) …, death itself attests to the duplicity that is the crux of figuration" (Mackey, 1993:101). That is, "death … becomes a wished-for reassurance that otherness is not merely a matter of speaking" since this conception of language is that of nature (or the supposed in-operative unconscious), not some Abstract Transcendentalism. It supposes the notion of an "Other, announced in and figured by the past" (Mackey, 1993:102).

The process of figuration suggested here is not the figuration or a double binding of an Absolute 'Big Other' as still held in the onto-theological versions of the concept of 'Truth' that we find in the transcendentalist or structuralist Derrida of the hauntology of a 'spector still to come' or Deleuze's and Guattari's notion of vitalist ontology or Badiou's 'ontology of the void'. These metapolitical concepts have been translated into the post-marxist analytics of the concept of democracy which to some extent intersect with most critical analytics of post-Apartheid time in South Africa. Not that within the post-marxist or postcolonial thought, the logocentric models of the Subject and of the Truth have not been subjected to rigorous criticism and revision. Instead, what my critique of them has sought to highlight is the implications of their failure to move beyond the bounds of theistic conceptions of eschatological redemption[273].

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and operates blindly", because it symbolises a "powerlessness of thought" (Badiou 2003:84). A powerlessness which, he although moving towards an eschatological messianism or cataclysm, is in itself what allows for the extrication of its other partner – life – which comes to occupy the position of its remainder – through resurrection. For Badiou, resurrection as a moment spent by the subject in the abyss of freedom, signals the connection between life and death.

[272] Daly, 2006, p. 360.

[273] In a similar observation Caroline Williams (2001:8) states that, in contemporary Western philosophical and political debates on the question of the Subject, "whether we investigate 'structuralism or 'poststructuralism'",

Even by postcolonial theorists, these paradigms have in varying strands been conceptualised as the mortars of history in postcolonial time (or rather the time of the metacolony, as Mbembe has it). We have tried to rally behind the call for the production of a new world by holding and suspending the linear movement of time through revolutionary action, an act which can help in disturbing the matrix of colonial power in the postcolony. That is, by advocating for a moment of rupture realisable through the conjuring of "canons of originality and instinctual wisdom" (Mackey 1993:91). Which is what is implied in Mackey's statement on the theme of 'unboundedness' in Robert Duncan's poetry. Referring to the latter, Mackey (1993:92) intimates that, "his having to do with sources leads to the idea of a transcendent source." In other words, his having to deal with the material and social Real as a source of human freedom, or to invert Derrida[274], we can say, is an attempt to "situate death on the side of the act and (not) on the side of form" (Derrida 2006:7).

particularly in the works of Althusser, Lacan, Derrida and Foucault, "each of these thinkers may be understood to have transformed, repositioned, and reconstituted the question of the subject." But, for her, they still remain post-Cartesian, especially Foucault and Derrida, the duo whom postcolonial theorists rely on for their theory of the subject of emancipation. According to Williams (2001:14), although this chapter does not necessarily examine his works, Foucault's theory of the subject in *The Order of Things* "cannot be easily separated from the Cartesian thinking subject, and the later Kantian transcendental subject of knowledge." The failure by the Western postmodernist and poststructuralist interventions to resolve the paradoxes posed by the problematic of the subject obviously has implications on the analytic assumptions made by postcolonial theorists who have adpted their conceptual frameworks without qualification.

[274] These are the remnants of Althusserianism that are identifiable with almost all French philosophies of the event. With regards to their division of the spheres of human action, French philosophies of the event move between the idea of free will and that of ontological affirmation. We have already established that since the black is denied ontological affirmation by colonial modernity, its mode of existence symbolises an "ontological fatalism", a failure, rather than a denial of ontology (Wilderson 2008). Its access to free will is already denied, as we have so far established, since free will is the prerogative of the rational subject and blackness is denied access to it. In relation to Badiou, whose theory of the event-truth shall occupy us for the most part of this section, according to Hallward (2001:ix), in the Introduction to Badiou's *Ethics*, the event, the subject, and the truth are "all aspects of a singl process of affirmation: a truth comes into being through those subjects who maintain a resilient fidelity to the consequencies of an event that took place in a situation but was not of it. Fidelity, the commitment to a truth, ammounts to something like a disinterested enthusiasim, absorption in a compelling task or cause, a sense of elation, of being caught up in something that transcends all petty, private or material concerns. Subjects are both carried by a truth – they compose the 'finite' points of an always 'infinite' truth – and provide its literal, material support. Every subject is only an objective individual, an ordinary mortal, become 'immortal through his or her affirmation of (or transifiguration by) a truth that coheres at a level entirely beyond this mortal objectivity" (Hallward 2001: x).

Most postmarxist and postcolonial critiques of time, whether read from the logic of the Subject or from the logic of the transcendental Truth-Idea, i.e., the history of phenomenology, whether in their circular or secular notions of human freedom, believe that since the Event is undecidable it therefore requires an interpretative intervention or the translation of the "figure of knowledge" qua the "figure of mastery" into the real of the particular.[275] For them the possibility of a redemptive emancipation is dependent on the subject's capacity to determine the situation through the act of naming (qua freedom) that which already is or is dependent on the translatability of death into the structure of life. In Deleuze and Gauttari's meditations on the ontology of democracy and the ontology of the commodity/money form, a rupture which occurs in the concrete situation is recognised as an event through the interpreting intervention of a subject of the transcendental Truth: surplus-value. That is, a subject who in Derrida's structuralist ontology is capable of establishing the conditions necessary for the possibility of a "symbolic synthesis", although not in the sense of a "pure continuum or flow of time" as suggested in Deleuze and Guattari's vitalist ontology.[276] By locating death on the side of life/form in their theory of the Event, Deleuze and Guattari, and to an extent Derrida in his logocentric moments, they virtually exclude those whose being is structured by an ontological destitution. That is, they exclude those non-beings whose idea of the event is only manifest in their "thirst for the Real" which bears "the promise of a new beginning, a social miracle."[277] As evidenced in Derrida's psychoanalytic and onto-phenomenological analysis of the concept of democracy or the concept of friendship and the process of dying on the side of form or life, rather than death, the interpretative interventions they invoke reduces the material and social Real to the abstract thing-in-itself qua the transcendent Truth/Idea, whether that of the self-reflexive subject or of the Absolute Truth. They take the logics of the subject and of the

[275] Badiou, 2003, p. 59.

[276] However, for Derrida, unlike for Deleuze and Guattari who in their vitalist ontology, "the recording surface" is a cosmological system or machine, the semiotic process of decoding symbols suggests an act of deciphering the unconscious content of an "indivisible and unarticulated whole" (Derrida, 2001:260). Derrida says that in Freud's essay, the *Mystic Writing Pad,* what the mystic pad imprints and produces are empirical contents, i.e., signifiers or letters in their materiality, that is, the reading of the text on the mystic pad, like the interpretation of dreams as unconscious contents, involves a "decoding method" which translates the meaning contained in then as manifestation of the material or nonmeaning itself (Derrida, 2001:260).

[277] Daly, 2006, p. 361.

transcendent Truth as ways of finding a place within the "horizon of possibility"[278] that the principle of democracy creates. And, with the phallus in play, their idea of democratic practice, like the one that we find in postcolonial theory and post-marxism, is that of the liberal democratic or national democratic state where all the possible forms of actionality that the revolutionary subject could adopt are decided a priori. Hence, the post-marxist and postcolonial theories of the event run the risk of identifying liberal democracy with "the positivity of Being where 'nothing actually happens'" (Zizek 1991:145). And they lead to a morbid decadence that sublates contradiction and antagonism into the principles and practices of liberal democratic constitutionalism.

In other words, the flight to the level of plenitude that these onto-phenomenological interventions suspect, especially in the case of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the money form, threatens to weaken the potential of any revolutionary process that can make possible what Wynter refers to as the auto-poeitic formation of species being. And in the case of postcolonial theory, the continued (re)production of the colonial symbolic or the 'metacolony' in postcolonial time through the practices and principles of liberal democratic constitutionalism, hampers any potentiality for a truly liberating plenitude. To use a psychoanalytic formula, what I am hinting at here is that the postcolonial state (or the continued production of the colonial symbolic in the postcolony), for the 'colonised' subject, fails to meet the requirements of a comprehensive ontology or order to which the colonised-black-subject or even the working-class[279] subject itself can refer to in order to obtain knowledge or meaning of a concrete situation. In the contemporary postcolonial and post-Marxist meditations on the concept of democracy, which I without prejudice ascribe to most readings of Derrida's *Spectre of Marx* and Deleuze and Guttari's *Anti-Oedipus*, especially in the former's theory of the messianic figure (who can be read as an Infinitisation of Nietzsche's Overman), unlike those found in Badiou's *Saint Paul: The Foundations of Universalism* into which one can import a materialist theory of the militant subject of truth, insinuates the idea that emancipation is to remain in the realm a transcendental Truth/Idea. That is, for them any revolutionary process

[278] Ibid.

[279] This is to say that, even "the very logic of capitalist reflexivity" which the working-class subject relies upon, is itself not an effective mode of revolutionary emancipation, as Delezue and Guattari would like us to believe, because "capital re-colonises the colonisers as part of its global empire" (Daly 2006:362).

should be read in the form of a "speech that defers"[280] the actualisation of the a priori Truth-Event. The problem with these theoretical interventions which read the Event from the side of form, Truth, or Idea is that when applied to a critique of postcolonial space and time they tend to suggest to us that the national democratic state should be taken as the plenitude on which postcolonial subjectivities (based on the liberal trinity of equality, liberty (freedom), and fraternity[281]) are to be formed.

That is, they treat the democratic state as an entity which transcends all political formations and political articulations. Or, as suspended time, the Event for them must remain in the form of a future-to-come, a presupposed future-time or as a future anterior Truth which can be inserted into the content of political situations. To say it in Derridean terms[282], for them, the subject of emancipation experiences (postcolonial) time as a "quasi eternity" and only relates to it from the perspective of a "present of certainty." So for now, let us briefly try to look into detail at Derrida's meditations on the concepts of democracy, friendship, ethics, name, equality, or fraternity and at how he uses the notions of messianic teleopoesis or telos of the Truth to outline them. In Derridean terms, friendship is a future anterior of Truth. The future anterior in this sense being the movement and time of friendship towards a presupposed destiny or an unknown elsewhere. Friendship as a predication or extension of fidelity to the transcendental Truth, is in Derrida's onto-theological conceptions of democracy, that which is said to be subject to the logic of a future anterior. In other words, it does not emerge from the "space of

[280] Derrida, 2005, pp. 19.

[281] Of these three categories, as Moldonado-Torres (2008) observes, under liberal democratic constitutionalism, it is the first two which are given priority, the third one finding effectivity through them. In both liberal anthropology and phenomenology, the first two, are essential to the sustainance of the 'community of masters'. By prioritising these two, "liberalism commits a sin by omission" (Moldonado-Torress, 2008:63). Equality is in this sence identifiable with the egotistic notions of the subject or the atomistic liberal conceptions of autonomy. And freedom, like equality is also "conceived in terms of a radical separation from the natural world and natural causes" (Moldonado-Torres, 2008:63). For Moldonado-Torres, the "ontologism" of liberal anthropological-phenomenology finds "expression in the formulation of an ideal of human fraternity grounded on relations of transcendence and difference" (Moldonado-Torres, 2008:65). That is, fraternity is only extended to those who bear the qualities of a transcendental-Man qua rational-Man, because individuals are not related through their situatedness but through intentionality and ontology. In his analysis of liberal dichotomy of anthropology and phenomenology, Moldonado-Torress argues for the inclusion of the biological in its conception of this trinity. However, his idea of the biological, like we do in this thesis, is not read from the plane of the libidinal economy of the death drive which is antagonistic and contradictory, but from that of the ethical which supposes a futurity based on fecundity.

[282] Derrida, 2005, p. 15.

lapsus"[283], the space of the unnameable or nonbeing, the barred Real which is characteristic of black existence under colonial conditions. That is, to contradict Derrida, the spectre that haunts blackness is not that of the order of a transcendental onto-theological Truth which is of the theories of reflection and affirmation but one which emerges from the Real of existence and the death-drives deducible to it, i.e., what he refers to as the energetics of materiality. Blackness, in a sense, manifests as the failure of the *telos* supposed in Derrida's theogico-political understanding of the concept of friendship. The onto-theological conceptions of the concept of democracy or concept of friendship, which we see in Derrida's hauntology, supposes a performative practice of democracy, not its outright rejection and refusal. A performativity which is said to rely on the capacity of a finite subject who ontologises the infinite Truth, therefore making the revolutionary ascetics which overcome this infinite subject of Truth an effect or affect of the transcendental Fact. Engaged in a *telos* of the Truth, the revolutionary exegete or the messianic figure is tasked with action whenever she or he identifies "the major marks of a tension, perhaps ruptures and in any case scansions, within this history of friendship, the canonical figure of friendship (democracy)" (Derrida 2005:234). Moments of rupture and interruption are marked and identified through a temporalisation of the anterior Truth qua the mediatory value.

Derrida's theologico-political conception of human freedom, read from the stand point of transcendence, seems to be thinking the question of revolutionary emancipation in terms of dichotomies and tridimensional paradigms and tends to conceptualise time as descending from an ontic realm which both structures the ontology and psyche of the subject of emancipation. That is, in this conception of descending time, the discourse of Truth is said to be structured and transmitted like a messianic 'teleopoeisis'. On one hand, it seems to be recognising "as being and occurrence only what can be apprehended in (the) unity" of forms, and on the other hand, it seems to be reducing the "multiplicity of forms … to position and arrangement, history to fact, things to matter".[284] However, even in the case of the latter approach, there seems to be suggestion for ways that suppose the dynamism of a transcendental truth. That is, as assumptions of a formal logic of unified science which take "the basic principle of myth to be

[283] Lacan, 1981, p. vii.

[284] Horkenheimer and Adorno, 2002, 7.

anthropomorphism, the projection onto nature of the subjective" (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002:6). This is a position similar to the one held by postcolonial semioticians like Mudimbe, who are of the assumption that "the many mythic figures can all be brought to a common denominator and reduced to the human subject" (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002:6-7).

Through the idea of descending time, the moments of rupture and interruption that they identify with the concepts of friendship or fraternity, are regarded as diversions in the teleological movement towards the onto-theological Truth. Although this movement is at times regarded as an ascending movement, it is regardless an ascension inaugurated in the Kiekergaadian sense of the Fall. And, as a problematic of the dialectical relationship between descending and ascending time, the subject engages in politically meaningful acts, only as a result of its fidelity to the order of a transcendental truth qua the truth of the Imaginary-Symbolic order. That is, the idea of a militant figure developed in this dialectic evokes the revolutionary oath "with respect to responsibility to a (presupposed) future(-time)" (Derrida 2005:326). And the revolutionary violence or terror it enacts is that of the "hyperbolic paradoxes" of the infinite distance separating him or her from the transcendental truth. This is so because, for Derrida, in his transcendentalist moments,[285] the concept of friendship or human freedom cannot be imagined through the concept of experience, rather, it should be imagined through the concept of reason because reason or thinking as an extension of thought is assumed to be infinite.

In the Derridean onto-theological or atheological conceptions of the political sphere, the time of the name or the One is the basis for phantasms and it relates to the infinite rational rigour of a presupposed truth. That is, the plane on which his formulations or conceptualisations of human freedom are imagined, are of the vertical rather than horizontal dimension as is the case with (his sometimes) immanentist conceptions of human freedom. It is not horizontal like the

[285] We are here saying, "in his transcendentalist moments", because, as we mentioned above, Derrida, like Badiou, also has his own implicit and explicit materialist moments and transcendentalist moments, and it is on the latter, that we are in this chapter zoning into. We say this because, in his semiotic inquiries (both aesthetic and psychoanalytic), the materialist perspective takes precedence and in his theological inquiries, the transcendentalist perspective takes precedence. In the case of the former there is an intention to address concepts in their materiality. Especially in his analysis of theatricality, in *Writing and Difference*, in this case he argues that in order for theatre to avoid the "ethicometaphysical prohibitions" of "classical theatricality", it must transform itself into the "theatre of the unconscious" or a "theartre of cruelty", that is, it must be regarded as a "political *act*", an act which conjures all the elements from "the totality of life and its resources of signification: dance, music (the language of sounds), volume, depth (and not just the height) of plasticity, visible images, sonority, phonist, etc. It is a political theatricality which transmits content or acknowledges that "life is always someone's death" (Derrida, 2001:306). In other words, death precedes life.

aesthetic plane on which the black critique of time is based. This is the very same aesthetic plane which like his "pictographic script" or the act in his "theatre of cruelty" allows for the horizontal thrust of undifferentiated elements of existence in a refractive mode. Instead of presupposing or inserting the order of the One, Derrida must have looked in the direction of the black critique of time which is undifferentiated like "motherl(y) love, which constitutes the ground of all tenderness and social emotions, conflicts with society itself" (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002:116). But instead, he looks to the Fatherly phallus which recognises communality on the basis of a transcendental alterity (or sameness) of the Other. This transcendental alterity is that of the time of the name[286] which ensures the "fraternal solder" of the unnameable or of the human species in their multiple singularities. And the "measurelessness of the movement of dying"[287] that he supposes is based on the impossible possible realisation of ontic time. Hence, in his suppositions, memory and rememberance are said to acquire meaning only in relation to the antechamber of time. Political contradiction and antagonism are reduced to the phantasmogoric realisation of the realms of the Imaginary and the Symbolic which signify the possibility or moment of Jubilee. What we see in these suppositions are the ideas that, political events/ruptures are to be read into the sheet of a time out of joint with itself. Which is the time of "Religious chimeras" which induces a "chimerical fear" that is subsequently "replaced by utterly relentless penal laws" (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002:87). It is not the time created by the people who have journeyed into the 'zone of the dead' or those "freed from fear of a future hell" and the love of a future heaven for that matter, if heaven is still of the cosmos (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002:87).

What is hinted at in the onto-theological conceptions of the political sphere, as the moment of Jubilee, is the gathering and assembling of the primordial One, i.e., the redoubling and rupture of the antechamber of time or the ontology of possibility to which all political actions and motives are to be reduced. This ontology is said to be deductively mapped onto concrete and existential situations and is regarded as helpful in informing the basis on which human freedom is to be realised. It acts as the future anterior that defines the movement and time of human

[286] For the colonised subject, what is of centrality is not the time of the name which is founded on the phantom of the phallus, rather it is "original action of namegiving" founded on the phantom of the mother, "the mother image" (Horkenheimer and Adorno 2002:76-7). The process of 'namegiving' is mythical whilst that of 'naming or name echoing' is scientific or speculative.

[287] Derrida, 2005, p. 295.

freedom or essence. Hence, for the transcendentalist or structuralist Derrida, the concepts of ethics, friendship, death, the name, equality, and fraternity find effectivity within the chambers of this future anterior time. In a sense, these are the grounds on which he basis his assertion that, by critiquing the concept of democracy from the category of place, one is able to "show that the Graeco-Roman model which seems to be governed by the values of reciprocity by homological, immanentist, finist – and rather politest – concord, bears within itself, nevertheless, potentially the power, to become infinite and dysmetrical" (Derrida 2005:290).[288]

Using Aristotle's two *Ethics*, Derrida tells us that, the Greeks and the Romans were slave holding societies and they bare the potential of forming inclusive public spheres, i.e., public spheres based on the order of the One or the excess of the One. The Aristotelian concepts of *telos* and *philia* which he relies on for his analysis of the concept of democracy are some of the concepts that have been rendered impotent in our black critique of postcolonial time. What has been rendered impotent, so to say, are the suppositions that democracy as an expansive political ontology bears the capacity or potential to hold "adversaries together, assembling them in *logos qua* ontological *polemos*" (Derrida 2005:249). Hence, we say, time in Derrida's onto-theology still exists in a transcendental form. And like the superstructure of the capitalist mode of production, it is said to translate into a "unifying feature" which "conjugates man and animal, spirit and life, soul and body" (Derrida 2005:16). For Derrida, as is for Deleuze and Guattari, in their theory of value or notion of the commodity/money form, time "withhold(s) itself in the body" and as an "act of faith, belongs – it must belong – to what is incalculable in decision" (Derrida 2005:16). That is, like in the existential Either/Or of Kiekergaard, one submits oneself to time and must "choose between the priority of revelation and that of revealability, the priority of manifestation and manifestability, of theology and of science, of God and science of the divine, of the divinity of God" (Derrida 2005:18 and 19). This is also the case in what Badiou, describes as the veiled metaphysics of the Deleuzean-Spinozian ontology of the multiple which, like Derrida's transcendentalist hauntology locates the evental realisation of time in the ontology of the primordial-One.

[288] This is but one of those ways in which Derrida in his deconstruction of metaphysical concepts, moves from the place of the transcendental into the material, and then again moves from the material itself towards a now absent-elsewhere whose presents he himself has presupposed.

In his reading of Deleuze's works, especially *Bergsonism*, *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Science*, Konx Peden (2014:223) observes that Deleuze's ontological thesis of vitalism "addresses the 'pure and empty form of time' in the third synthesis." That is, the temporal synthesis of memory in the Deleuzean concept of the virtual "appears to function sometimes as an ontological antechamber for the actualisation of existence and, in other words, as the name for a thinking unencumbered by material constraints" (Peden 2014:223). For Badiou again, the Deleuzean-Spinozist ontology of the multiple is a veiled metaphysics because, like the Spinozian notion of affirmative substance, it relies on the idea that totality passes through attributes, thought, and extension and the subject has connection to the truth "only by the adequate connection of the Ideal and the Thing, ultimately of the Soul and the Body, and can think substance only in the double attributive infinity of extension and thought" (Badiou 2009:22). Hence, for Badiou, in such metaphysics of the multiple, "the presupposed One has the effect of the integral, infinite multiplicity, the infinite of infinities" (Badiou 2009:22). Although separately so, Knox Peden also makes an observation similar to that of Badiou, because as he relates;

> "for Deleuze, an event, what *happens*, is always qua event incorporeal in itself, much in the way that Heidegger's concept of being effectively as time can never be correlated to a discreet corporeal entity. Deleuze's claim is that the irreducibility of sense in language to the materiality of its component parts is homologous to the irreducibility of an event in existence to the corporeal substance in which it occurs. Deleuze emphases his dualism, between sense and events as occurrences and materiality or corporeality as substance, onto his conceptual distinction between Aion and Chronos" (Peden 2014:226).

We have already witnessed this kind of argument in the theory of hermeneutics analysed in the third chapter and its extensions into the interventions that Mudimbe's semiotics, Soyinka's idea of metaphysics of accommodation, or Gates's theory of metaphor makes. Instead of becoming an excess of the Real, the event gets driven into (or from) the Imaginary-Symbolic order, the reflexive realm of knowledge and meaning, the domain of revelation and revealing.

This is also a view shared by the Badiou who emphasises the immanence of the Truth more than its modes of transference and this is the Badiou whom Zizek criticises or takes to task together with Derrida, and Deleuze and Guattari.[289] That is, the Badiou who also enjoys a

[289] This is the Badiou who as we mentioned above, believes that the character of the political event or the character of the political as post-evental, presents the infinite character of situations, refutes death, or convokes infinity at the expence of finitude.

relationship with the Zizek whom Adrian Johnston, in the essay, *Naturalism or anti-naturalism? No, thanks – both are worse!: Science, Materialism, and Slavoj Zizek*, launches his critique against or indites them for the very same offence that the former three commit. As Johnston (2013:324)) intimates in this polemic with Zizek, the latter's ontology and theory of subjectivity (like that of the Badiou) "rely, at certain moments, on a sharp dichotomy between the natural and the anti-natural". In other words, for him there is a first Zizek who is materialist and a second Zizek who is transcendental – the one he refers to as the Zizek of the 'third dimension'. And he argues that, the second Zizek's notion of "some sort of un-derived third vector" or "periodic summoning of a mysterious-neither-natural-nor-cultural force, are both incompatible with an authentically materialist materialism" (Johnston 2013:327). The materialist Badiou on the other hand, maintains that, "there is no truth which is not mutilate, and no subject which is not subjected (and the) operations of a *splace* are substitutes" (Badiou 2005:138). That is, the immanent truth persists in all the stages of existence through some form of a serialised repetition[290] which is itself an effect of the drives emanating from a Real not at one with itself. That is, even in life, for the materialist or militant subject of the Truth, there is no "effective mastery of loss" (Badiou 2009:138). He believes in the idea that "the subject stands at the crossing between a lack of being and a destruction, a repetition and an interruption, a placement and an excess" of the Real (Badiou 2009:139). This is how, for him, revolutions have no other purpose but to "serialise events, to classify the epochs and to re-connect and to re-group the heterogenous …, the partitive repetition of history" (Badiou 2009:152). What is serialised here or what is translated into "non-communicative infinite-torsion groups" is the "first-order logic", the finite generated torsion group or the 'symptomal torsion' of the situation in the domain of truth (Badiou 2009:153).

What Badiou's theory of torsion groups, although reliant on an implicit dichotomisation of the elements of existence, suggests to us is the idea that the Symbolic is maintained through the register of anxiety – an anxiety for the unity of the immediate. Implying that, anxiety, because of its essential complicity with lack or thirst for the Real, is capable of assuring "the subject of

[290] In his *Metapolitics*, this Idea of a serialised repetition, symptomal torsion, or count-as-one as a strategy for eliciting the subjective infinity of situations through the numeration of the political procedure functions through the principle of the same. This is where his notion of the event sometimes becomes a ripple effect of the dynamism of the 'immanent subjective infinite', that is, the Badiou, who, as Zizek says, adopts an 'evolutionary-positivist materialist frame' or the Badiou of the truth-procedure which relies on the logic of *sequence* and *consequence*.

a certain mastery of loss" (Badiou 2009:156). This mastery is of that which dominates the subject i.e., the flesh and it is of the object of death not life. Or rather it is not mastery per se but of powerlessness, if mastery for that matter, is of the quality of knowledge and reflexivity. Mastery in our take here, is perhaps of the generic of the theologico-political assumptions of the Derridean messianic figure or Deleuze and Guattari's vitalist ontology more than it is for Badiou's militant theory of the subject of truth. To use Lacan (1981:53), Badiou, in this instance, anchors his militant theory of the subject of the truth or his schema of the "truth procedure" in "the kernel of the Real". Whilst on the other hand, Derrida's militant subject seems to combine the *discourse of totality* (the Greek cosmos drawn from his Platonism) and the "*discourse of the sign*"[291] (drawn from the Judeo-Christian theology). That is, Badiou, in this instance, more than Derrida, seems not to be ignorant of the fact that the function of recollection and remembering "is not Platonic reminiscence – it is not the return of form, an imprint, a eidos of beauty and good, a supreme truth, coming to us from beyond" (Lacan 1981:47).

Derrida's theory of the event or concept of democracy, like that of the Badiou which Zizek criticises in the *Ticklish Subject*, "consists in the elementary ideological gesture of interpellating individuals into subjects and bearers or followers of the (transcendental) Truth" (Zizek 1991:141). As transcendentalists, Zizek says, they believe that the eternal truth, not the truth of materiality, functions as a universal paradigm of revolutionary emancipation or the militant subject recognises him/herself in its call and undertakes political practice on its behalf. That is, both in their transcendental-truth procedure, and the latter more especially in his notion of metaphysical deconstruction of concepts, as we mentioned earlier, the eternal truth carries the subject into a "Life unencumbered by death" and help define for it the paradigms of an authentic political act (Zizek 1991:143). In Derrida's Spectre of Marx, the historic multiple is determined from the position of a Truth to come qua of transcendence not immanence. And reference to the concept of democracy is taken as enabling to the reading of "history as a continuous democratic struggle aiming at total emancipation: the present situation is experienced as fundamentally 'dislocated', out of joint (the corruption of the ancient regime, class society, fallen) with regard to the promise of a redeemed future" (Zizek 1991:144). The subject, in Derrida's militantism, is "split between the corrupt 'state of things' and the promise

[291] Badiou, 2003, p. 41.

of Truth" (Zizek 1991:144). To use Badiou, Derrida's subject, since it is of the Greco-Judaeo-Christian variant or of the discourse of the Father (and not that of the Son) and of the Signifier, not the Signified, its categories of extension or expansion and contraction are those of "prophetic mastery" and "philosophical mastery".[292]

Derrida, like the Badiou of the infinite truth-procedure, believes that it is the process "of an individual interpellated into a subject by a Cause" which determines the manifestation of the historic multiple (Zizek 1991:145). Concerning causality, however, Badiou, through his Spinozism, is of the idea that "every subject is initiated on the basis of a charisma; every subject is charismatic" (Badiou, 2003:77). That is subjectivity, as spontaneity, is for him "the declaration of the event" qua the Real-eventual-truth. That is, even in his Paulinian miltantism, to be a subject is "a gift [*dorean*]", of which as he recommends, "*dorean* is a powerful word; it means as 'as a pure gift,' 'without cause,' and even 'in vain'" (Badiou, 2003:77). One does not expect since there is nothing due to them because they all possess the "power of being in excess of the law".[293] In what echoes Fred Moten's versioning of the Leibnizian monad, noted in the previous chapter, Badiou (2003:78) suggests that the "the ontological thesis" of Paulinian militantism "supposes one be able to think the multiple not as a part, but as in excess of itself, that which is out of place, as a monadism of gratuitousness." That is, one has to think political truth as not of place but of space or *splace* (to use another of Badiou's concepts). These are the suggestions that we also find in Adrian Johnston's indictment of Zizek for making the mistake of drawing too vivid a dichotomy between nature (flesh) and non-nature (Spirit). And to go back to Zizek's critique of Badiou, these are the grounds on which he says, the latter's theory of the two deaths explains "biological death and death in the sense of succumbing to the way of the flesh", that is, in supposing that "Spirit is life, while flesh brings death" (Zizek, 1991:147). Of which, the first domain of death is that of situation, non-being, nothingness, or non-thought and the second domain is that of death in the Father qua the domain of the living or death-in-life.

This theory of the two deaths, Zizek says, is opposed to the theory of the two lives which explains "the finite biological life and the infinite life of participating in the Truth-Event of

[292] Badiou, 2003, p. 43.

[293] Badiou, 2003, p.78.

Resurrection" (Zizek, 1991:147). But what Zizek sometimes foregoes in this critique of Badiou's theory of the Truth-Event and notion of resurrection is the fact that, for the latter, both flesh and Spirit are described as categories of (the) living (dead) and non is premised over the other, except for the fact that the flesh (up to that which is below it; meat) is the ground zero of subjectivity, the one which generates spirit (which is different from saying that it is the one which generates into spirit). The moment of resurrection as that moment when flesh metamorphoses into spirit [or even of the metamorphoses of meat (the Real-material) into flesh (the Real-social), as we saw in JanMohamed and Spillers' improvisation of Derrida], is for Badiou, an event which "causes nonbeings rather than beings to arise as attesting to God" (Badiou, 2003:47). Knowledge or gnosis, is at this point, of no use. That is, systems of a priori linguistic structures or the onto-theological notions of truth falters at this stage because it is a stage which signifies "the invention of a language wherein folly, scandal, and weakness supplant knowing reason, order, and power, and wherein nonbeing is the only legitimizable affirmation of being" (Badiou, 2003:47).

Hence, we say, on the one hand, Badiou's militant theory of truth, since it regards the event as a point of the Real, is to some extent closer to the Black avant-gardist materialist theory of the subject, i.e., the psychopathological subject of Fanon, Harris' and Mackey's geometrical subject of the limbo dance, Wynter's neurobiological subject (without its humanist inclinations), or JanMohamed's death-bound subject. And the subject of Deluzean-Spinozist ontology and (in implicit rather than explicit ways) Derrida's onto-theological or atheological messianic subject, on the other hand, has more affinity to Bhabha's subject of mimicry, Soyinka's and Gates' trickster subject, or Mudimbe's subject of gnosis which are all models not compatible with the demands of the subject of (anti-)colonialism. Accordingly, in Badiou's theory of the body, like in the Black avant-gardist materialist theory of the subject of revolutionary politics, we are able to find a logic of life-in-death which to an extent can allow for an unmediated moment of rupture. The body as 'earthen vessel', is for this Badiou, the site of the event, that is, in his idea of political truth or meditations on the concept of democracy, it is not some transcendental force or symbol which arbitrarily determines existence. It is a structure of logical displacement and replication within which the elements of existence or "a series of binary oppositions … uneasily jostle one another without being resolved or integrated" (Hayles, 1997:78). Hence, in his critique of Deleuze's vitalist ontology, he says the latter takes it that, death is translated into a "modality of an infinite over-existence or of a power of the

One which we only experience through this reverse; through the passive limitation of everything that this power has designed to constitute, or, as Leibniz would say, to fulgate" (Badiou 2013b:268).

For Badiou (2013b:268), as a theory of the phenomenological current, Deleuze's vitalism will always have "a secularised or sublimated God" that "operates in the background." That is, the Deleuzean theory of vitalism will never leave room for the void which opens up space for the imaginative functions of the militant subject of the Truth. In other words, the place of the subject, as that of name will always be regarded as full because it is that of established languages.[294] And contrary to this phenomenological current, we can say, in Badiou's materialist theory of ontology, the militant subject is the subject of a "post-evental fidelity" and is always immanent in the act of the materiality/situatedness of this event. The mode of subjectivity discernible in the vitalist ontology or "knowledge/truth dialectic" of Deleuze and Guattari on the other hand, aims for a transcendental redemptive eschatology or transcendental revolutionary subjectivity. Theirs is a discourse of the Father or the Sign which is echoed in the postcolonial theories of Mudimbe or Bhabha. Whilst, that of Badiou "results from the militant discernment of a fidelity" to the particular, the "finite parts of the situation", "the language of the situation", or the particularity of the Father, ie., the body of the Mother.[295] Again, unlike Deleuze and Guattari, Badiou locates the act of freedom in the moment of univocity (which can only be of the libidinal economy of the death drive) not in the moment of synthesis (which can only be of signs and transcendence). In the former two, what we see is a theory of the ontology of the One-All or the extension of the Leibnizian principle of Harmony which is of the condition of the One-All. And, by Badiou, on the other hand, what we are told is that the composition of the differentially related elements of the whole should be conceptualised as spatially related to one another in the void of a multiple 'without-One' rather than as hierarchically arranged in the order of the 'One-All' multiple.

[294] It is for these same reasons that we said the political projects of the working-class subject under the conditions of the colonial-capitalist symbolic, betrays Badious's and Johnston's materialist theory of the subject or limit the capacity of the working-class subject to function as a category of a revolutionary emancipatory politics.

[295] Badiou, 2013b, p. 331.

What we are saying here is that, whilst for Deleuze and Guattari or the onto-theological Derrida for that matter, the conditions for an emancipatory subjectivity are those of transcendence, for Badiou they are those of immanence. That is, for the latter, human freedom becomes only realisable in that moment when the subject gets immersed in the indiscernible zone between the traces of the evental-Real. In other words, a militant subjectivity id realisable in the *splace,* i.e., in that gap "where event and world are superimposed in a confused becoming" (Badiou 2013b:84). Hence, human freedom is characteristic of the lostness or alienation of the subject in the space of its genesis, a space which, since it is of the drives, also induces suffering and anxiety: the necessary conditions which compels the militant subject to unfold the veil separating it from its own truth through the act of terror and violence. The Real as the (unstructured) whole within which all subjectivity is articulable is, for Badiou, the 'encyclopaedic determinant' responsible for the desire of the militant subject. It is the paragon of all experience. And it is that which creates the anxiety or desire which defines the militant subject's relationship to the truth. The procedure of fidelity to the Event-Truth, rather than knowledge of Truth is discernible from this 'encyclopaedic determinant' (i.e. the pure-multiple-of-nothing) which help classify "*every (in)finite part of the situation*" (Badiou 2013b:331). The method of verification it applies to is that of the '*veridical*' or logical type because the multiples grouped together in the procedure of fidelity are "connected … to the supernumerary name of the event" qua the "genuinely unnameable" (Badiou 2013b:331 and 2003:46). In a sense, in Badiou's materialist ontology, the Real-Truth remains "the operator which rules fidelity" (Badiou 20013b:332). And present in situation, the Truth, for Badiou (2013b:332), "must be an infinite part of the situation, because for every finite part one can always say that it has already been discerned and classified by knowledge."

More so, as a product of desire for the actual (w)hole, anxiety is the register within which the subject's constitutive relation to both death and life or the past and the future is structured. Hence for Badiou, the Pauline militant figure is structured like a fable of the material Fact or of immanence in the material-social Real. That is for him, a fable is,

> "that part of a narrative that, so far as we are concerned, fails to touch on any Real, unles it be by virtue of that invisible and indirectly accessible residue sticking to every obvious imaginary. In this regard, it is to its element of fabulation alone that Paul reduces the Christian narrative, with the strength of one who knows that in holding fast to this point as real, one is unburdened of all the imaginary that surrounds it" (Badiou 2003:4-5).

It is a motive force (rather than a life force) which the militant figure does not identify with the moment of Christ's death but that of resurrection which symbolises the birth into life and freedom. Resurrection, in this instance, signifies the unification of the Father and Son or the return of the Father to particularity. Badiou here considers the meaning of *fable* to be that of the material type or as "falling under an encyclopaedic determinant (sociological, economic, etc.)"[296]. That is, the notion of fable he seems to be suggesting, to read him with some help from Mackey 1993:215), is not that of a "ficticious narrative which embodies truth". For Mackey, apropos Harris, the concept of fable designates the subject's rootedness to the groundlessness of concrete social history. That is, for Mackey (1993:215), Harris provides us with the idea of a "ruling fable of earth". Contrary to this Harrisian-Mackeyan notion of the fable, the psycho-linguistic fable of Derrida is based on the onto-phenomenological notions of the "poetics of distance" or poetics of the cosmos.[297] That is, of distance from the truth of the Imaginary-Symbolic, not a distanciation of the Real in movement, as suggested by the Harris and Mackey, and to an extent, Badiou. And also, contrary to the auto-poetic or onto-theologico notions of death in the 'Name-of-the-Father' in Derrida's or Mudimbe's hermeneutic paradigms, this three, does not believe in the discourse of the symbolic Father or "the event of the Father" as a Transcendental Fact. For them, as is for Johnston, the embeddedness of the Father in materiality whose nature, due to the presence of the drives, is that of a "kinetic", "verb-like process" or "self-slundering natural-material substance (which) is auto-disruptive enough to account for these explosions of unrest, of the restlessness of negativity" (Johnston, 2013:339 and 344).

Hence for Badiou, as we have tried to read him through Adrian Johnston, what helps constitute the unity of the militant figure or life and death as the two modalities of an revolutionary subjectivity is the taking of communion in the resurrection not in the death of Christ. This is how for him, resurrection, rather than death, instils the logic of militancy not the militancy of redemptive eschatology but of perpetual revolution. And this is how, also for him, the Paulinian discourse of Christ is that of the rejection of signs and the theology of incarnation. That is, for the militant subject, "the revolution is not what arrives, but what must arrive so that there can

[296] Badiou, 2013, p. 334.

[297] Derrida, 2005, p. 32.

be something else, it is communism's mediation, the moment of the negative" (Badiou, 2003:48).[298] Or, the revolutionary act, as a 'post-evental fidelity', is for him, of the desire for the splace of the multiple without-One (whose structures we have, through Johnston, outlined in the previous chapter). There is no mediatory variable in this event or act, for either the ascension or the discension of the subject, as Zizek would have it in his critiques of both Badiou and Johnston. To refer back to the latter's polemic with Zizek and the place of the Master mentioned earlier, the logic of this subject of miltantism has no a priori or mediatory value. That is, there is no Master-Signifier i.e., the "third element"[299] of Zizek, to accede to or to help it in its ascension. Which brings us back to the point we raised earlier about the political project of the working-class subject. That which we said, as a mediated subject is made to appeal to a transcendental idealist notion of truth: as the enjoyment of surplus-value that resides in the commodity form.

The politics of the working-class subject, as we said, are more likely than those of the colonised-black-subject, to accede to the theological recourse of the Zizek who relies on the idea of a third dimension qua the 'Master-Singnifier' or the 'Big-Other'. That is, they are more likely to be determined by the "unavoidable either/or choice between mutually-exclusive commitments" which at times due to his Althusserian structuralism and Sartrean humanism, slightly threatens Badiou's own militant subject of truth. But nevertheless, not to the same extent to which they threaten the subject of Deleuzean vitalist ontology or of Derridean onto-theology. The working-class subject, as outlined in the previous chapter, to use Glyn Daly, who however is more sympathetic to the Zizek of the third dimension, we can say, falls under the category of "symbolic classes" and the colonised black-subject falls under that of "the radically

[298] For Badiou, "a truth proceeds as a 'subtraction' from the particularity of the (un)known and truth is innovation *en acte*, singular in its location and occasion, but universal in its 'address' and 'import'. That is, as inaccessible to the classification, the truth comes to pass as a universal-singular, particular to but unlimited by the contents of the situation in which it comes to exist" (Hallward 2001:ix).

[299] Johnston argues that there are two Zizeks, "the one who endorses Lear's thesis apropos the death drive" and the one "who appears precisely to succumb to the temptation of hypostatisation for which Lear rebukes Freud, namely, treating the *Todestrieb* as a substantial 'third dimension' that's perpelexngly neither natural nor cultural" (Johnston, 2013:334). This third dimension whether presupposed or posed by Zizek, is neither of nature itself qua the "ultimate baseless base of subjectivity" nor of the drives qua the "ground-zero axioms" of weak nature, but rather of the metaphysical. The materialist Zizek, to whom Johnston is still faithful would have taken it as that of the material-social Real qua the barred Real, instead of the metaphysical Zizek, who like postcolonial theorists and the Continental philosophers our thesis is at variance with embraces "flagrantly theological terminology" (Johnston, 2013a:341).

excluded".[300] The latter, more than the former, having a much stronger "thirst for the Real" and more accepting of revolutionary violence. That is, the claim to militancy by the working-class subject, unlike that of the colonised-black-subject, is more susceptible to the mistaking of the sovereignty of the modern democratic state or the capitalist commodity/money form for the true sovereignty of human beings. This is so, because, instead of treating human beings as generic or as of neuroplaciticity and epigenetics, it sees them as full identities. Hence the dialectical space or opposition between death and life, for the working-class subject, will remain haunted or mediated by an ethics which can prevent both event and rupture from happening because the action it supposes is that of laying witness to the Truth or transcendence. The components of (the materialist) Badiou's militant subject, unlike those of Derrida's messianic subject, are univocally arranged in a manner almost similar to the sonic elements which constitute the subject of anti-colonial revolutionary violence. And, it is to those articulations which we shall, once again, turn to in the next section in order to emphasise their centrality in any political *act*, as a gesture to our concluding remarks.

Reflections on the Historical-Materialist-Logic of the Subject of Anti-Colonial Theory

Contrary to the theistic notions of ontological affirmation, critiqued above, present in the revolutionary violence of the Fanonian 'wretched of the earth' or the Fanonian psychopathological subject, i.e., the subject of Black poetry, Black art, Black music, Black revolution (all black forms of struggle in general, whether actional or performative), as Mackey (1978:366) would say, is an "exaltation of process" since "process is more valuable than its products." What Mackey (1978:368) notes, is that what the theory of Blackness considers as movement are the elements of its historical materiality, elements of "intensive group experience". These are the elements which it uses "as means to evolve, to move, as an intelligibly shaped musical concept, from its beginning to its end" (Mackey 1978:366). As stated above, rhythm as process or kinesis, for the colonised-black subject, bears the potential to transform nonbeing into forms of being, nonmeaning into meaning, the unnameable into name: in ways that reveals the functions of a real mechanical materialism. That is, the sonics of the colonised-black subject are expressions of 'aesthetic relations of production' which take the differential elements constitutive of its sociogeny as the genus of subjectivity, i.e., its

[300] Daly, 2006, p. 377.

expressions of the logic of resistance and liberation. Or rather, the function of the psychopathological subject or the black sonic subject is informed by the recognition of aesthetic form as sedimented historical material content. So, for our critique of postcolonial or post-Apartheid South Africa democratic forms, we cannot rely on onto-theological axioms or mediatory values which are of the name and totalities bearing full meaning but we must rely on the emptiness of the unnameable, the void which evades even the symbolic status of the Lacanian object-cause.

This recognition of the energetics of materiality in the aesthetic becoming or the politics of the clinical subject, to evoke Mbembe (2003), are of the 'work of death' not the promises of life in some Transcendental Fact. For it is in the economy of the death-drive where true "sovereignty resides" (Mbembe 2003:11). It is in the attempt to prove the political effectivity of the drive economy or nonbeing that Mbembe (2003:12) charges us to, when "imagining politics as a form of war …, ask: What place is given to life, death, and the human body (in particular the wounded and slain body? How are they inscribed in the order of power?" These set of questions are at variance with those posed in the articulation of emancipatory discourses where number becomes the canon of knowledge, or where "the multiplicity of forms is reduced to position and arrangement, history to fact, things to matter": as suggested in postmomedernist-postcolonial cultural theory (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002:7). That is, they are different from those posed in the onto-theological notions of the concept of democracy where the political act of the messianic figure will in itself lead to a privileging of strongly "normative theories of democracy" (Mbembe 2003:13). The manner in which such theories, to reference Mbembe at length, propagate a;

> "normative reading of the politics of sovereignty … is not (of) the struggle for autonomy but *the generalised instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations.* Such figures of sovereignty are from a piece of prodigious insanity or an expression of a rupture between the impulses and interests of the body and those of the mind. Indeed they like the death camps, are what constitute the *nomos* of the political space in which we still live" (Mbembe 2003:14).

Derrida or Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical and political meditations on the concept of democracy fail to acknowledge the revolutionary emancipatoy potential of the economy of death outside the economy of life because their model of the militant subject still relies on the "philosophical discourse of modernity" and the theocentric discourses of its metaphysician

predecessors. That is, they fail to acknowledge the fact that, death is a less abstract foundational category of a true politics of emancipation.

As Mbembe (2003:15) notes through Battalie and as also testified in JanMohamed's dialectical-materialist theory of the death-bound subject, there are various ways in which "death structures the idea of sovereignty, the political, and subject." Especially, in the existential conditions of the colonised and enslaved subjects, death proves to be "the most luxurious form of life, that is, of effusion and exuberance: a power of proliferation" (Mbembe 2003:15). This is how, as Mbembe further notes, under the conditions of subjugation, even "the humanity of the slave appears as a perfect figure of a shadow" (Mbembe 2003:21). That is, this is how its subjectivity is generated or harnessed from the space where it suffers servitude, subjugation, or the 'historylessness' of Orlando Patterson, "the triple loss … identical with absolute domination, natal alienation, and social death (expulsion from humanity altogether)" (Mbembe 2003:21). Able to invent "alternative perspectives toward time, work, and self" we see that, the colonial and "slave life, in many ways, is a form of death in life", or rather 'life-in-death', to correct Mbembe with some help from Nathaniel Mackey (Mbembe 2003:21 and 22). And even in social-death and "treated as if he or she no longer existed except as a mere tool and instrument of production, (through the kinesis of the energetics of the death economy) the slave nevertheless is able to draw almost any object, instrument, language, or gesture into a performance and stylise it" (Mbembe 2003:22). So, in the dialectical relationship "between death and 'becoming subject' qua life, death is conceived as being "centred on a bipartite concept of negativity" (Mbembe 2003:14). That is, in this dialectic we see how "the human being, truly *becomes a subject* – that is separated from the animal – in the struggle and work through which he or she confronts death (understood as the violence of negativity)" (Mbembe 2003:14).

Hence, the subject of the work of death, qua the drive economy, in the black radical tradition is "seen as having privileged insight as well as input into the working of the alternative courses of the future (which are rooted in the dialectic of death)," and its approach to the truth is "more in keeping with the reality of process and change (of nature)" (Mackey 1978:367). This is what the projectivist, Black Nationalist, and radical Marxist discourses of anti-colonial resistance intended to do. That is, they intended to look into new methods of externalisation into a new reality, a new world, of a transcendental materialism or a type of "transcendence-in-

immanence".[301] Mackey, as we mentioned above, referring to Amiri Baraka's nationalist phase, says the approach to artefacts was occupied with the manifestation of *things* (or the form of things) in their absolutes. That is, central to the "understanding of the synonym of blackness with spirituality" during the error of anti-colonial resistance was the idea of process and creation not just labour and production (Mackey, 1978:367). Unlike in the theologico-political assumptions of the event supposed in negative theology, their idea of spirituality was "more in keeping with the reality of process and change" (Mackey, 1978:367). The spirituality of the liberation struggle movements of the 1960s, in its sonic or musical manifestations, "provided a glimpse into the future" through "evolving musical orders rather than conforming to an already existing one to anticipate the freedom of some communalist future" (Mackey 1978:368). Its idea of retention was different from the Nietzschean idea of the eternal return, with all its theologico-political assumptions that Derrida or Deleuze and Guattari, who were critiqued earlier, seem to articulate. In order to move towards a future, the subject of the struggle for liberation was forced to plunge into the realms of death and, as Frank Wilderson (2011) says, it was also willing to take every form of life with it as it made its 'descent into hell'.

The links that the subject of the struggle for liberation, of the 1960s and even of the present (post)colonial conditions, tries to establish between the past and the future, as Mackey says, are based on the notion of processuality. Echoing the idea of the universal, the new agreement, supposed in black improvised music such as be pop jazz, happens at a level above that of musical resolution, it ruptures language, it goes where words cannot go. This is why we said, for Mackey, black improvised music has a communalistic impulse which often comes in tribalistic and nationalistc impulse, making it imperative for the theoretician of the event to look for the universal in the *thing* qua the Real before abstracting into the imminent realms of the Truth of transcendence: that which white-oriented musical theory would refer to as 'total chaos' in the collective improvisations of Sun Ra. According to Mackey (1978:370), citing Amiri Baraka in, *Black Music*, this "chaos is the *all-force* put together and is what is wanted. Rather than the miniature 'thing' (of an Absolute Truth) securing its own 'greatness'." In order to make the movement towards the universal, the black subject does not draw on Truths existing a priori towards the order of existence. Rather, it plunges into the realm of death and

[301] Johnston, 2013a, p. 330.

nonbeing, into a "previously repressed ancestral strata" where it resurrects from full of the thirst for life and living. Its spectre and idea of the event is not of the orders of the ontic or the ontological, hence we say, its summoning of 'return reversals' is different from the Nietzschean idea of the eternal return or eternal repetition of the transcendent(alised) truth.

The mode of deconstruction and defamiliarisation practiced in the be pop jazz of the nationalist phase, as Mackey notes, did not base its "improvisations on the code structure of the tune's head, the "new-thingers" began to venture into areas not so partly related to the harmonics of the piece being played", that is, they, as Derrida would have it, ventured into harmonics of the minor notes rather than those of the major notes. The non-chordal excursions in the music suggested an unmelodic structurelessness and incoherence, "where players were frequently said to sound *lost*" (Mackey, 1978:372). And this lostness supposed a "descent into the black subconscious, the unmentionable black'" or the *elsewhere* which is never pontificated, to return to Derrida again (Mackey, 1978:372) which the leftist and liberals feared and whose erratic and psychotic moments they sought to monitor in black liberationist discourses. The music wielded a "sentiment/like flesh" and "the terrible blackness" of deathly violence. It relied on feeling in order to express the selflessness of Blackness. Hence, we say, the connectivity used in black revolutionary and aesthetic modes of expressions is "neither logic nor discourse", rather, it is a mercurial, evanescent quality which appears as though it seeks "to assassinate any traceable argument or logical flow" (Mackey 1978:374-5). It reveals a dialectical thinking similar to an oscillation between two ghostly impulses and is motivated by the "desire to transcend conditionality" through a subjectivity bounded by fugitivity (Mackey 1978:377). The 'Will' of its expression is spiritual not Spirit and its idea of human freedom is "social – a direct commentary on the scene it appears in" (Mackey 1978:381). In other words, in its aesthetic forms, it bears "sociological configurations" which makes the "freedom-thrust of black music" to "slide away from the proposed" code (Mackey 1978:381-2).

Contrary to this, concomitant with the redemptive and emancipatory frameworks critiqued above, is the need to adjust actuality/reality to the faculties of the infinite, either through a mathematical, scientific, or philosophical formalism that reads it from "the most abstract form of immediacy" (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002:27). The repetition of an abstract Truth is

accorded the responsibility of "reproducing existence", whether in unity or synthesis.[302] The movement from the logical to the dialectic or dialectic to the logical is read as a substantiation and extension of a transcendental Truth into actuality or a reading of the Truth of transcendence within actuality. That is, the Truth is in this sense not read as an extension of actuality or through a subject "progressively distancing itself from the object" of the barred Real (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002:11). This is how even in the interpretative hermeneutic models of postmodernist postcolonial theory, myth and symbol are read through the paradigms of logical necessity and salvation is reduced to belief qua ontology. Perhaps, to make a disclaimer and to cover oneself from charges of circumventing the very concepts one relies on, in a quasi-Derridean way, the intention was not to dispense with neither of these concepts, but to re-configure, to re-version them in the attempt to outline the conditions necessary for the emergence of the subject of revolutionary action. As Horkheimer and Adorno charges, one can say, humanity needs to "cultivate rather than suppress the memory of an archaic age" however elusive it might be (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002:110-111). And, this entails finding ways of retrieving the iconography of the pre-colonial and the anticolonial past in order to understand the coordinates and configurations of the colonial present and the postcolonial future. For the duo, as elements of the historical past, "the signs of powerlessness, sudden uncoordinated movements, animal fear, confusion, (can) awaken the thirst for blood" in the present: which for us is still a colonial presence that continues to mark the colonised subject as absence.[303] What the greater affinity to both the materiality and spirituality of death suffered by black subjects, due to colonial oppression and subjugation, like the phantom of the mother, "produces in them is the very element which gives them life."[304] It arouses the emotions responsible for the constitution of a revolutionary subject – jouissance – the pleasure principle which produces the feelings of laughter and suffering.

[302] The ideal of the Truth, whether "rationalist or empiricist" is taken as "the system from which all and everything follows" (Horkenhemer and Adorno 2002:7). That is, "even though the individual schools may interpret the axioms differently, the structure of scientific unity has always been the same … The multiplicity of forms is reduced to position and arrangement, history to fact, things to matter" (Horkeheimer and Ardono 2002:7).

[303] Horkenheimer and Ardono, 2002, pp. 112.

[304] Ibid.

The call for liberation by the colonised-black-subject is similar to the call for motherly love[305] "which constitutes the ground of all tenderness and social emotions" and it "conflicts with society" as we know it (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002:116). It contradicts the redemptive eschatologies of both the totalitarian imagination of Judeo-Christian messianism and the liberal-democratic imagination and their call for the Fatherly phallus as a transcendental fact which must suture an unproductive and uninitiated materiality. It is, inversely, a call to immanence in the material fact, an evasion of slippage into primordial or quasi-transcendental structures of redemptive emancipation submerged within its materialist mythical models of existence. These mythical models are "grounded in the existence of irreconcilable" antagonistic relations that exist between the coloniser and the colonised. To refer to Hudson's (2016:2) critique of the post-marxist forms of politics championed by Laclau and Mouffe, it is a call for a political project "which advocate more of a *smashing of the state* than an *exodus from it*". In what can be read as an anti-Althusserian formula, we can say that the "object and objective" of its struggle for liberation is not necessarily the state, or rather, is not the state alone but the whole edifice of the human socius as we know it under the modern episteme. Not that its objective is not the destruction of the colonial state, rather, what we are trying to say is that it is not the state form which is the ultimate goal of its liberation struggle as is for the Marxian species being invoked by the anti-Stalinist brigade. Such that, the structural dialectics of what Althusser (2014:148) refers to as "the spatial metaphor of the *topography* of an *edifice*" or the topological model suggested in the transcendental materialist epistemology of mathematical logic fail to account for the political functions of the colonised black subject. This is because for the colonised subject, under the conditions of the colonial socio-symbolic, it cannot find within the state its "*respective indices of effectivity*" (Althusser, 2014:237).

Hence, we say, the political actions of the colonised black subject are not analysable within the field of possibilities (qua ontology in the form of a liberal democratic constitutionalism), rather they are analysable within the field of the potential (qua immanence and inexistence or the politics of the masses). This is a kind of politics within which we should address the impasses of the Democratic Revolution of post-1994 in South Africa. That is, a politics which heeds to

[305] A motherly love different from that of the colonial structure, which Fanon says fails to let go of its child, in order for it to make its own mistakes. Thereby arresting the colonized subject and voiding of any ontological value, since its nature is neithet that of the Hegelian 'womb of generation' or the Harrisian 'womb of space'.

the register of antagonism and contradiction, i.e., the material base from which it should draw its categories of the necessary, rather than supposing a unity within the ontology of the national democratic state which will never register its articulations because it is always marked as an inexistent for it does not fit the score of the concert. Contrary to what Ivor Chipkin suggests in his *Do South Africans Exist*? *Nationalism, Democracy, and the Identity of the People* who like the likes of Bhabha in postcolonial theory comes out as the Laclau-and Mouffe of post-Apartheid politics, antagonism and contradiction must not be relegated to extra-discursive forms suggested by the principles and practices of liberal-democratic imagination. That is, the social order instituted by the liberal democratic state will never come to function as a determinant in the last instance in the case of the objective desire or drive for freedom of the colonised black subject. This is because what is reproduced within the structures of the liberal democratic state are the relations of production of the colonial capitalist state. So, the post-Apartheid state is just a surrogate of the colonial state which is functional to the production and reproduction of the colonial unconscious. Hence, we argue that, a truly revolutionary theory of the anti-colonial subject is one that is conceptualised within its concrete political situation, i.e. one that is conceptualised within the conditions of *real existence*. The aim of the colonised subject must always be that of destroying the apparatuses within which the colonial socio-symbolic order is continuously reproduced. And the struggle for liberation does not necessarily revolve around the capture of the state, like the socialist class struggle, rather, it is as we mentioned above, aimed at smashing the state and the whole edifice of the colonial unconscious. That is, its invention of the categories of freedom and liberation cannot be limited to the 'topography of an edifice' qua the absent cause or the 'barred Symbol', that which the post-Apartheid liberal democratic state is, if we are to contradict Althusser's structural dialectics.

An Anti-Colonial Critique of Post-Apartheid Time

The articulation of blackness as we have noted, are not those of an eternal truth-Idea, rather, they are manifestations of the failed externalisations of the natural by the ruptural nature of the drives, i.e., the energetics of materiality itself without any cosmic interventions. That is, not the externality of the eternal Truth which lies in absolute or transcendental time but the externality of the conflict-ridden Real or that of lived experienced. Since the effort of colonial discourse throughout the history of modernity, has been to place the black subject outside of time and history, its dominators never came to realise that it is on the black, that which they

sought to exterminate, the 'new' they sought to create shall be founded. It was from that terrible blackness of terrible violence from which an emancipated future for modern man can be founded. And it is by forcing the no longer to be masters, to accompany it in the thetic or chthonic realm of violent death and deathly violence that the new fraternity can be built. Such a fraternity requires the participation of the both fraternal brothers in the ritual of death, the 'phantom' of motherly love qua the realm of '*material existence*' where the banalities of power play themselves out. The phantom of the natural, not that of the phallus, which exists in an ascetic primordial form. The phantom which conflicts with the primordiality of social relations supposed in the concept of democracy. Such a critique of postcolonial time and post-Apartheid time does not start from the category of place supposed in the post-marxist monotheistic critiques of the concept of democracy. Rather, it starts from the category of space before its differentiation by or into time. It does not impose a universal humanism which make impossible the movement of the subject of emancipation from the particular to the general: the realm of human freedom. It does not recognise the national democratic state as a nameable space identifiable with the coming into being of the event.

It takes it that, a politics of emancipation which takes inspiration from liberal democratic principles and practices, only amounts to a unified or synthetic echoing of site and name. that is, it does not take the unnameable or the aesthetics of the obscene and the grotesque as its privileged modes of articulating an anticolonial mode of political practice. Since, at the level of the performative, the colonial unconscious continues to be produced and reproduced through the banality of power, such that the only option left for the colonised subject is to diffract into the space of the dead or the realm of the non-living. And, there will never come a point where it will consciously desire for unity with power qua the constitutional national democratic state. It must be reckoned that, for the (post)colonial subject and for the anti-colonial subject that it remains as, unlike for the working-class subject, it will never come close to finding an ontology in the commodity form or come to identify with the types of institutions, knowledge, norms, and practices of liberal-democratic imagination (no matter the 'bad faith' or 'inauthenticity' as the Sartreans would have it in their choice theory). In other words, although the different forms of anti-colonial resistance are meted out by colonial power through appropriation, imitation, commoditisation, or outright rejection, the colonised subject will never cease to produce "a

vocabulary, equivocal and ambiguously parallel to official discourse".[306] The failure by postcolonial theorists, in the likes of Mudimbe or Bhabha, as we have seen, to provide a theory of the structure or economy responsible for the production and reproduction of colonial relations, makes them read the political project of the colonised within a humanist paradigm. They fail to acknowledge the fact that the leap into the mythic is not a leap of *reason* or *passion*, as is the case with the leap of the scientific subject. Rather, it is a regression and recession into the irrational, the unnameable, or the unconscious of the pathological subject.

In Hudson's (2013) structural dialectic or existential psychoanalytic critique of the colonial unconscious in terms of the return of the colonial repressed in the post-1994 South Africa liberal democratic state, unlike in the post-marxism of Chipkin (2007), mentioned above, we are able to understand the implicitness of the post-Apartheid state in the (re)production of colonial relations. That is, we are able to see that instead of inaugurating a Nietzschean eternal return of the infinite Truth which Derrida supposes in his concept of democracy, South African post-Apartheid time is identifiable within the return or reproduction of the colonial repressed. What Hudson's (2013) psychoanalytic adaptation of the Fanonian theory of the colonial unconscious lays testimony to is the idea that it is at the pathological stance or the drama of the subject of liberation where postcolonial emancipation can be located. Or, as Fanon says, it is "the impossibility of a meeting ground (or friendship) in any colonial situation" that sets it as a fertile ground for humanity's revolutionary imagination (Fanon 1965:105). Differently from the ontological affirmation of Truth suggested by those who believe in the subject's ability, through reason, to translate and mutate signs or democratic practices of equality, freedom, and fraternity into algorithms or means to a Truth, the creation, more than the mutation, of signs supposed in the theory of blackness leads to a destruction rather than a destructuring of monotheistic ontology: since the actions of its subject are those of its concrete situation. This is no longer an effect of the fact that liberal democratic practices still continue to deny blackness its ability to an affirmation of ontology but of the fact that all ontologies are of immanent transcendence of natural substances not some Absolute telluric or cosmological forces. They are proof of the fact that it is in the mode of an objective vertigo not subjective vertigo or original and scientific reflection that a theoretical and practical system of emancipation can be created. Hence, as Fanon (1967:165) says, for the colonised subject, "the future remains a

[306] Mbembe, 2001, p. 105.

closed book so long as the consciousness of the people remains imperfect, elementary, and cloudy": clouded, in this sense, by the sociogenic principles of colonial modernity. That is, there is no first cause to function as an 'unknown' towards which it moves or it is not through reflexive articulations that the subject emerges from this cloudedness but through a refraction into the chthonic realm of death qua the abyss of freedom or the field of the potential that it is able to effect a moment of rupture.

In this instance the denial of the quasi-transcendental formations or the 'onto-epistemological field of blackness'[307] qua the myths of the colonised, in the colonial conjuncture and the antagonism that this conjuncture sets in motion, enables the colonised subject to subsist in the zone of the non-differential or the inexistent – of the phantom of the mother or the void of materiality which bears all the creative energies and endows the subject of emancipation with the capacity for 'underground imagination'. Hence, like Fanon, we say, liberal democracy, similarly to colonialism, is like,

> "a mother who unceasingly restrains her fundamentally perverse offspring from managing to commit suicide and from giving free reign to its evil instincts. The colonial mother protects the child from itself, from its ego and its physiology, its biology and its own unhappiness which is its very essence" (Fanon 1967:170).

In the phantom of the mother or within the paradoxes of motherly love there is no transposition of onto-theologico-political conceptions of creative or fictitious imagination. Motherly love, as a category of the 'not-all' or an inexistent does not proximate toward a utopian ethics: those are the logics of the sublime love of the Father's phallic structure. With this understanding in mind, one cannot move towards a Deleuzean vitalist ontology with its assertions of the 'Substantial-One-All'. Or, like Chipkin (2007:41), say, the post-Apartheid South Africa, as a "nationalist imaginary should be understood as a particular democratic imaginary" not a creation of the unity within the drive processes but an imaginary unity hoped for and still to come in some future time. And to use Badiou (2009:312), neither can we say, the post-Apartheid state "latently defines the adequate form of that which no longer exists as party-subject (or rather, mass-subject or the unnameable) as its semblance …" as Chipkin supposes through a post-marxist ontological schema of the state.

[307] Moten, 2008, p. 208.

Chipkin does not see that the post-Apartheid democratic state fails to recognise the significance of the colonial symbolic or the colonial unconscious in postcolonial time. And in the same regard, fails to recognise the multiple ways through which this very colonial symbolic is produced and reproduced. To use Lacan, the post-Apartheid democratic state does not acknowledge the point that "before strictly human relations are established, certain relations have already been determined": like those of democratic practice which already have their established frameworks of inclusion and exclusion. With regards to blackness these set of relations are determined by the Middle Passage and its subsequent formations of conquest, colonialism, and racism. The Middle Passage which marks the birth of blackness as the beast of mankind, is the primal scene, whose repetition and return, should inform every anti-colonial black critique of time. The principles of law, human rights, and citizenship on which liberal democratic practices are premised fail to recognise the traumatic impact of this history of blackness. Although this is not a problematic peculiar only to postcolonial and postmodernist democratic articulations of human freedom but also the debates and arguments traceable to the Marxist and liberal anti-Apartheid and post-Apartheid intellectual traditions, it is to the former two that most of our attention has been focused.

That is, although this thesis did not take to length the problematic of these intellectual practices, one can trace the manifestation of the post-Apartheid liberal democratic and national state discourses to the Marxist and liberal paradigms that dominated political analysis during the era of anti-colonial resistance. These analytical frameworks have been transposed into models for understanding the condition for the post-Apartheid emancipatory subject. I have here in mind as mentioned earlier, Ivor Chipkin's book, *Do South Africans Exist: Nationalism, Democracy and the Identity of 'the People'*. Chipkin locates the foundations of the liberation struggle in the "process of nationalist resistance to colonialism." He identifies the concept of the party and the concept of the mass as the main organising principles for the liberatioin struggle and the postcolonial imagination.[308] To use Badiou's (2013a:392) take on what he refers to as "the

[308] In psychoanalytic terms, the 'unthinking' mass in this case is the the real or the symptom or the psychopathology that the colonised-black-subject is, and the party is the symbolic or the cure or, as Badiou (2009:27) says, it holds together the "productive masses in revolt" and bears the cure for the symptom. This is in so far as the party is of Symbolic suture or an axiom for 'the singularity of politics' and is able to "constitute an avoidance of complete breakdown, by way of an incomplete outwitting … of the originary conflict" which is borne with contradiction and antagonism (Moten, 2008:207). This is where literature or art in the works of the Sophiatown Renaissance or the Drum generation and the Staffrider generation comes to supplement the account of this point of originary conflict, the moment of the cut, or the wounding of the wound which was not fairly accounted for within socialist discourse or the Marxian lenses used to analyse the anti-colonial

debate on the link between the Party and the Revolution", Chipkin thinks the Party can function as a vessel for the truth-procedure or a representative "of the history of truth" for the subject of anti-colonial resistance. Or, to put it in Althusserianism, or rather, in the language of mathematical logic, he believes that the party should be placed "ahead of the masses" (Althusser, 2014:132). In an exponential form, the party is located above the masses, that is, "*one step ahead of the masses*", as Althusser himself puts it. Or, to put in psychoanalytic terms, the party acts like the symbolic order which guards against the psychopathology of the Real qua the masses. It is these very same analytic approaches which make possible the collapsing of the revolutionary subject into the ontology or truth-procedure of the post-Apartheid state.[309] Or rather, the reduction of the "finite configuration of the generic-procedure" to (encyclopaedic determinants" or to the axiomatics of the economistic-humanist-democratic liberalism (Badiou, 2013a:399 and 408). Again, the political subject which he premises his notion of postcolonial imagination on, is that of the rationalistic individual who has come to replace the worker as the vital force of the struggle for liberation in the post-Apartheid situation. The post-Apartheid state, like the number 2 in the theory of whole numbers examined in chapter three and chapter five, does not constitute the unity of the "mass economic struggle (manifest through the party, for example, the ANC-led Tripartite Alliance) and the mass political struggle (manifest through or the Soweto 1976 student revolts)" (Althusser, 2014:133, additions mine). The state as an absent cause or a vanishing cause is here made by Chipkin to play the role of an inorganic whole or a determinant in the last instance. It is present as a formalism and universality that abstracts from all concrete historical content. Due to constrains of time and space I will not delve too much into this theoretical problem. But what I want to highlight through Chipkin's conception of both the discourses informing the process of the liberation struggle and the postcolonial imagination (with its fictionalising of the future), is the

historiography. The party, due to the influence of Marxism in what Ntongela Masilela refers to as the New African Movement, in the anti-Apartheid struggle, was regarded as the 'body of the evental truth' through which the 'black' mass could be incorporated into the presence of a future-truth/future anterior held in post-Apartheid state (or the truth of a time out of joint). In other words, the party was taken as the place where the 'subject-body' should exist and it was also a space where the "intellectuals and the upstarts" (Badiou, 2008:1) could take over and therefore transform the 'popular' into the 'national'.

[309] This kind of political thinking betrays the aims of the "post-Marxist-Lennist political procedure" itself, which as Badiou says, goes beyond the strictures of a fundamental ontology because it "requires the occurrence of that indiscernible of the situation which is politics in a non-pariiamentary and non-Stalinist mode" (Badiou, 2013a:405).

privileging of the concepts of the party as an ontological category over the concept of blackness as both an analytic category and a category of political practice and articulation.[310] The reasons for the failure of the post-Apartheid national democratic state to recognise the multiple ways through which the colonial symbolic or the colonial unconscious is produced and reproduced lies in these intellectual histories, i.e., the Marxist and the liberal intellectual traditions that dominated publications.

The articulations of the postcolonial imaginary in the discourses of blackness, such as the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970s, cannot be regarded as having been premised on the onto-theological imaginary that liberal democratic practices seek to institute – which are to use Badiou (2013a:98), those of a "statist metastructure".[311] The democratic imaginary that Chipkin supposes is one that foregoes the determination of subjectivity by historical archives and repetoires of pain and suffering. His idea of the democratic imaginary underplays the role of the colonial unconscious in the production of 'postcolonial' subjectivities.[312] It collapses the manifestation of the masses (the multiple without-One) into the universal paradigms or ontology of the state (the One-All multiple) – i.e., that of a democratic universalism, where all contradictions and antagonisms are supposed to sublimate or are sublated. Unlike Chipkin's onto-statist analysis of the postcolonial imaginary in post-Apartheid South Africa, following Hudson, we can say it is a psychoanalytic examination of the principles and practices of liberal democracy and national democracy which bears more theoretical purchase for our understanding of the coordinates of the colonial unconscious in the post-Apartheid liberal democratic state. Such a theoretical or symptomatic approach is one that rightly recognises the

[310] The concepts of the party, in one hand, with the notions the mass and the multitude, on the other hand, informed both the liberal and leftist ideals of the national democratic state as it emerged in post-1994 South Africa.

[311] The state in Badiou's Marxian analytics does not have an ontological function/value to the subject because "it does not entertain any relationship with individuals; the dialectic of its existence does not relate the one of authority to a multiple of subjects" – i.e. the pathological of the 'pure multiple-without-nothing' or the pathological of the multiple-without-extension (Badiou, 2013a:104). In other words, the state, in the end, fails to represent the "immediate social bond" since after all, "the state is always the state of the ruling class" – an instrument to control "the regime of property" – based on both beings and resources, or rather, based on beings as resources (Badiou, 2013a:105 and 106). This best explains why we had the 'Marikana massacre' in 2012 under the post-Apartheid state.

[312] In this essay, Hudson uses Freud's text, Jokes and the Unconscious, to look at how Brett Murray's, *The Spear* painting, "works as a determinate practice of (colonial) signification" (Hudson, 2013: 263).

fact that the signifying dyad of colonialism did not disappear with the advent of liberal democracy. And therefore, can help us come to an understanding that in the various articulations of the colonial unconscious by democratic institutions and practices, the white signifier still acts as the Master-Signifier. And in that case, realise that blackness is still regarded as an ontological void with "no orthopaedic support for an identity" (Hudson 2013:265).[313] Not that blackness should turn into a politics of identity as the Black Consciousness theory of the anti-Apartheid struggle tended to do.

In the post-Apartheid or postcolonial time of liberal democratic constitutionalism, the democratic regime is a transmutation of the colonial 'Big-Other', i.e., the Symbolic order "in and through which the colonial relation is constituted and reproduced" (Hudson 2013:265). Thus, even the extension of universal suffrage, under the post-Apartheid engenders the 'Big-Other'; or, to use Badiou (2013a:206), "fixes, via the state, a uniform procedure for the designation of representatives, interventional choice projects into signifying indexation a term with respect to which nothing in the situation, no rule whatsoever, authorises its distinction from any other."[314] This is all in the name of instituting an ontological state that seeks to do away with all antagonisms and contradictions which arises out of the problematic of settler colonialism. The phenomenology of this colonial 'Big-Other', in the context of the Democratic Revolution of 1994 or as Hudson (2016:19), puts it through an extension of the Fanonian theory

[313] Hudson, here fails to recognise the political effectivity of the modes of blackness which are performed outside the colonial relation. This is due to his Marxian or structural dialectic composition of the concepts of commodity and work. Correct as he might be, in stating that all modes of political action find their genesis in the antagonisms of the colonial structure, he however fails to read into his theory of anti-colonialism the categories of myth which are of the 'barred Real' not of the 'barred Symbolic' or the 'barred subject' as he supposes in his structuralist extension of the Fanonian theory of colonialism. The mythical categories are not only expressable at the level of the socio-symbolic, rather, they are elements of the underground (qua space) which try to stack it out for the place of the Real social, i.e. the level of consistency which is dominated by the colonial socio-symbolic.

[314] To use Badiou further, we cannot say "the terms registered by the (post-Apartheid) state, (the supposed) guarantor of the count-as-one of parts, are finally the site, and the forming-into-one of the name of the (anti-colonial) event", since as proven by the Marikana event, the state has no relation to the site of the anti-colonial situation which remains an 'incoherent multiple' (Badiou, 2013a:207). Or rather, we can say that the discourse of the anti-colonial revolution is not articulable within the structures of the colonial-capitalist state because "it is a disconnected connection, an irrational couple, a one-multiple whose one is lawless" (Badiou, 2013:208). What this reading of Badiou testifies to is the point that, the Marikana event "has the premonition that … a void is convoked which will prove a lasting embarrassment for the State" (Badiou, 2013a:213). It contradicts the belief that "the state is an operator of the count which refers back to the fundamental ontological relations, belonging and inclusion" (Badiou, 2013a:236). Perhaps, what the Marikana event reminds us to do is to reach for an idea of the event which defers the 'concept' or the 'singleton' of the state as an a priori mode of ontological affirmation, that is, it demands us to think an event which is conceptualized outside of the statist thesis.

of colonialism and theory of anti-colonialism "under the conditions of democracy colonialism is repressed into the unconscious." Yet, however this repression does not amount to its elimination, it rather points to its being "barred … from consciousness".[315] In other words, for Hudson, whilst the Democratic Revolution of 1994 and "imposition of a symbolic grid comprising individual freedom and equality, has only sublimated the colonial antagonism, it has at the same time repressed it" – by trying to subsume within it the anti-colonial event/revolution in order to stop it from circulating "within the situation" (Hudson, 2016:19 and Badiou, 2013a:207). The colonial symbolic, under the 'Big Other' of liberal democratic constitutionalism through its supposed notions of parliamentary antagonism, forces the "anti-colonial struggle to enter the ontic dimension of agonistic politics" which the postmarxists like Chipkin take to be the ideal mode of political action (Hudson, 2016:19). The object of Hudson's psychoanalytic critique in this essay is Chantal Mouffe's and Ernesto Laclau's use of the concepts of antagonism and agonism in their *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (HSS). We have in the earlier chapters mentioned that Mudimbe and Bhabha, or rather, postmodernist postcolonial theorists behave like the Laclau and Mouffe of postcolonial theory. And thus, forego the dynamics and functions of the politics of the colonised black subject by abstracting from its concrete situation or existential reality.

In the postcolonial theory of Bhabha, as we have discovered, to refer to Hudson's use of the categories of the necessary and the contingent, in this very same critique of Mouffe, we can say, the concept of antagonism suffers ambiguity in Bhabha's categories of hybridity and ambivalence. Because, mixed with his reading of the Fanonian logic, antagonism, as Hudson identifies with Mouffe, is sometimes regarded as a logical necessity and sometimes as contingent to the real.[316] But, be that as it may, it is the real of logical necessity which as the

[315] Hudson, 2016, p. 19.

[316] For Hudson (2016:5), antagonism in Mouffe, vacillates "between its necessity (as constitutive of the social) and its contingency (as itself an indeterminate form of politics)". The necessary is in this sense a field of possibilities which is regarded as a function and a condition of subjective desire. For Mouffe, it is through the desire for the necessary that the subject is able to structure its forms of political action. That is, for Mouffe, what makes subjectivity and subjectivisation possible is the necessity of speaking within a language. Necessity as a category of the Word or Life qua original reflection, not as a category of the antagonisms manifest within the contingency of the social itself, is here regarded as that which the subject uses to protect itself against death. It is not regarded as a condition of immanence or of death itself which would have enabled her to understand that necessity, as Lacan says, implies the supposition of the inexistent not the eternal truth. In Lacanian terms, the condition of the necessary does not denote the meaning or function of the phallus, rather, it proves the inexistence of both truth and meaning. Again we are choosing here to remain with the Lacan of the first order of negation in mathematical logic, i.e. the Lacan who believes that the truth and meaning are all secondary to

determinant in the last instance dominates the concert by a single score which is occasionally disturbed by the excess of the real conditions of existence. It is a score which seeks to integrate the discordant sound of the bass (here represented by the masses) into the universalising themes of the humanism of liberal democratic practice. The category of the necessary is in this sense locatable at the level of the inorganic whole or the 'absent cause' which invokes the subjective desire for freedom. With regard to the Mudimbe, antagonism is out rightly regarded as unnecessary and the colonial relation is not considered as antagonistic because both the colonising subject and the colonised subject are substantialised beings and equally capable of articulating a coherent discourse through the structures of speech and language which it uses to constitute its idea of the necessary. The duo, commonly move from the premise that the Symbolic whose place is held by the mythic, although not fully the thing-itself but due to its nature of Fallenness, as Being qua the Big-Other, is able to substantialise itself through extension into the being of human species. Therefore, bringing closure to the undecidability of the political, either by closing the gap (as is the case with Mudimbe) or by maintaining the gap, that is, "register and sublimate it"[317] (as is the case with Bhabha). In the postcolonial theory of Bhabha or in the post-marxism of Chipkin or the postcolonialism of Premesh Lalu, antagonism, to come back to Hudson, is regarded as "constitutive of the social" and as a "dimension of radical negativity" (Hudson, 2016:4 and 5a). That is, antagonism is regarded as "a necessary consequence of the constitutive inability of the socio symbolic, Lacan's Big Other to close in on and to totalise itself" as though there was an a priori to the void of the social itself.

In the case of the Democratic Revolution of 1994, as Hudson relates, the real of antagonism is symbolically repressed or there is an effort towards the agonistic "sublimation of the real". The need by the post-1994 democratic state to recognise colonised subjects as rationalistic individuals, to read Chipkin through Hudson's critique of the concept of democracy, although in a radical negativity, obviously confirms that South Africans do not exist and it "ensures that the Universal is 'held up', i.e., not permanently appropriated by any Particular" or '*swart gevaar'* (Hudson, 2016:12). That is, "democracy in 'minding the gap' between Universal and

the real. in this way necessity can conceptualised as that path which can lead us to '*somewhere*', rather than as the 'somewhere' itself. In the categories of original reflection supposed by Mouffe, this somewhere is what necessitates, through logic, subject and the process of subjectivisation.

[317] Hudson, 2016, pp. 3.

Particular, registers the *void* or *lack* at the core of the social, and might even be said to provide a certain experience of the Real" (Hudson, 2016:12). With the periodic practice of electoral politics and the extension of equality and freedom to the unfree and the unequal, democracy, in the context of what was dubbed by the Triaprtite Alliance members (the ANC, the SACP, and COSATU) as the National Democratic Revolution, as Hudson (2016:13), in Lefortean terms, further notes, incorporates indeterminacy and keeps "the Place of Power" empty. Falling short of turning into the Thing-itself, democracy invests itself in the particular in ways that allow for the subsumption of the antagonistic Real by the Symbolic order or the operations of the state. This is how for Hudson, in a critique which can be directed at Chipkin's *Do South African Exist*?, "the Post-Marxist democratic project prioritises 'minding the gap', 'circling around the void', and celebrating contingency over the structural transformation of the existing (colonial-)capitalist order" (Hudson, 2016:14).[318]

This idea of 'minding the gap'[319], proposed by Post-Marxists, is what has ensured the guaranteed production and reproduction of the colonial symbolic/unconscious and has been considered as the necessary condition of the postcolony. It presumes the "self-sufficient, total and full subject" of Cartesianism, which nevertheless powered by the force of the infinite, as the driving force, excludes blackness from participating in it. That is, the homogenisation of democratic freedom and equality under the post-Apartheid era works towards the production, although with minimal substantialisation, of the colonial unconscious even if it remains hidden from consciousness – as was the case with the colonial symbolic of 'pre-1994 apartheid South Africa'. This is why Hudson (2016:2), in an extension of Fanon, as mentioned earlier, continues to retort; "under conditions of democracy, colonialism is not dissolved but repressed into the unconscious". That is, what we have in South Africa, after the post-1994 Democratic Revolution, is a double articulation of colonial time and (or with) postcolonial time. The friendship supposed in the "symbolic frame of liberal democracy" only works towards

[318] That is, for the post-marxists (and perhaps the liberal alike), in democratic practices, "what is involved, or what they maintain is a 'fetishism of the void' and the procedures sustaining it" (Hudson, 2016:14).

[319] In this sense we can say, the gap supposed in post-Marxist notions of democracy is not that of the abyss of freedom, that of the thetic phase of ruptures, antagonisms, contradictions, suffering, anxiety, inconsistences, and conflict. Democracy although recognising the presence of a void, that same void is not empty because it is still reflected upon by the transcendent Truth, which although keeping a distance from the Void, still fills it up with its extensions and in that way antagonism and contradiction are eliminated.

masking, or "occluding and repressing the colonial antagonism" which structures the post-Apartheid present (Hudson, 2016:19 and 20). The mirror image function, to which the principles of liberal rationalism are reduced to, works towards the effect of effacing the death-drive qua the libidinal economy of the (black-)unconscious as the ground-zero of subjectivity.

Conclusion

Continuing with the argument, that has been running through this thesis, but became more clearly apparent as we moved toward the last chapters, this chapter like the ones before it, in a continuous reversal that leads us back to the first chapter and ultimately to the title of the thesis itself, has sought to argue that it is to the anti-colonial materialist theory of the subject that we should turn to in order to imagine the possibility of human freedom. That is, it is to the Particular or the lower limit of 'check' not to the Universal or the upper limit of 'enchantment', as Mackey puts it, that we have to turn to. This in itself, as we mentioned through Fanon, entails a descent into hell, into the abyss of freedom, or rather entails the embracing of the non-being, or the death gnosis, that which blackness is, for it is what gives birth to being, what sutures being, split or splinters being – like the mother's love which checks and enchants. With an extended reading of our materialist theory of the subject into philosophical meditations on the concept of democracy and the articulations of the Particular-Universal dynamic in the Badiouean militant theory of truth, this chapter has tried to fulfil the purpose of the thesis, which, as a philosophical meditation on the concept of the subject, tries to find the genus of this category in the Real materiality of the social. What we have tried to imagine is the logic of a 'barred Real' which transfers to the logic or field of science not a science with the function of a Cause which transfers to the field of the Real. Such a theoretical or philosophical premise of the onto-phenomenological type have never and will never suffice under the conditions of colonialism because whenever a discourse of the Science of Causality is called into place, the discourse of the Master also arises with the intention of repressing the former.

The colonial situation, for the colonised-black subject, is not structured in terms of signifiers, that is, there are no signifers for the colonised subjects as signifieds to slide under. Again, as Fanon says, even if the white signifier is the only signifier which is said to be legitimate, and no matter how much "the black man wants to be white": if to be white means being at the level of plenitude qua a subject, its neurotic fate seems to be sealed as that of *failure*. Whether it is through the principles of democratic assimilation or radical democratic practices, the black

subject, under colonial conditions, will never pontificate from the place of the Symbolic-Imaginary or that of the self-reflexive and self-sufficient Cartesian field. The black subject, as the subject of the field of the unconscious, is not mediated by any figures of causality or consciousness. And, its system of signifiers is not a priori, it is rather formed in the moment of the *cut*, which itself, sutured by the elements of kinetic rhythmicity or the energetics of the Real, is passed into memory, and subsequently to the comprehension of ephemeral images of the present and the future. Perhaps this is where the difference between the linguistic theory of the signifier and the psychoanalytic theory of the signifier lies, if we are to follow Fanon's logic of the latter. This is not the logic of a mathematical science which adheres to the theory of causality. Rather, it is a logic of the cut which is determined by a pulsative function and the need to disappear, hence its phantasmagoric character. The articulations of blackness, as those of the prototype of situation or lived experience, they treat the antechamber of death/the unconscious as the genus of subjectivity.

The Democratic Revolution of 1994 in South Africa, as we have seen through Hudson's Lacanese, supposes the time-function of a logical order "bound up with a signifying shaping of the real."[320] To extend on this Lacanese, both the post-Marxists and postcolonial theorists must be reminded that, the correlative of the subject is not "the deceiving Other, but the deceived Other."[321] The colonised subject has no intention of sustaining the desire or the discourse of the Father or to be reduced to a "certain signifying scansion".[322] Democracy, for the colonised-black subject, does not function as the universal paradigm of political practice. Its assumptions lead to a morbid decadence and the subjugated cannot recognise themselves in its call and political practice. To borrow from Zizek's critique of Badiou, with the idea of a mathematical ontology that it supposes or its notions of equality and freedom, it tries to reduce the articulations of a political situation to 'some determinate State of Being'. The colonised-black-subject, as a part-of-no-part, eludes the grasp of the State of Being. Since blackness constitutes the un-counted or the unaccounted for 'subsets of the situation', the democratic State will never appeal to it, to contradict the transcendentalist or 'Spinozist' Badiou who

[320] Lacan, 1981, p. 40.

[321] Lacan, 1981, p. 37.

[322] Lacan, 1981, p. 40.

moves towards 'the separated character of the state' criticised by Zizek, as some metastructure – 'God or Substance' – which can compose it.[323] That is, for blackness, there is neither representation nor presentation in the democratic State of Being.

[323] This is however without trivializing the Spninozist or structuralist turn in Badiou's theory of natural numbers, lest he reminds us that "a natural multiple (as *sui generis*) structures into number the multiple whose one it forms, and its name-one coincides with this number multiple" (Badiou, 2013a:140). Such is the function of Zero in Badiou's theory of natural numbers. So, it can be safe to say, depending on how one may want to read him and perhaps ignoring how he may himself want to be interpreted, Badiou's order of ontology is formulated within the multiples themselves, i.e. within nature itself.

Postlude

Of the Black Emic

"*my friend … […] … everything ends in death, everything does" (Tolstoy,* War and Peace*, pp. 90*).

"*Through the open window. The fucking window, a slashing wind blows. Through the open window. Within this pale womb with its beard, a brutal story writhes. Night imprisoned in the room stayed with me all day long. Laughter's broken glass, through the fucking window. Is the view. The endless glittering view of gigantic humid trees shutting out the sun. A thin mould of history covers the walls. Cover the blood, flesh and bones. A black skin, thin and minute. Covers the darkness in the room. Through the open window, blows the slashing winds*" (*Marechera, 1980*:*1*).

If the concept of 'emic' connotes the analysis of beings from the perspective of structures internal to them (anatomic structures for that matter not rational structures supposed in Cartesianism), it is very much that which Mackey refers to in that Preface to his *Blue Fasa*. Ours has not been a reading only restricted to the canon of Black, but a reading of the Black anti-philosophical canon in conjunction and in contradiction with mostly that of Continental philosophy: with the psychoanalytic formula, being, in this regard, the most eminent one. That is, armed with a mythico-poetic psychoanalytic formula, this thesis, like a "phanopoetic snapshot" or the Derridean 'pictographic script', has tried to develop a theory for the translation of the "bare-bone narrative" of the "vibration society"[324] that blackness is. It, like Mackey's poetics, whose movement cannot be thought outside the yet to be solved mathematical problems of elliptical curves in differential geometry, turned "toward promoting check over enchantment" through a materialist theory of the subject of anti-colonialism. A theory which moves from and through the "mournful songs of … loss", the "dues-demanding sound", the "emotional vibrato (note to code to scale reference)" of the wretched of the earth. The thesis has tried to lay testimony to the tornness or lament the "cosmic dislocation, social disability, sexual distress and other afflictions"[325] of blackness under the conditions of coloniality. Obviously, the thesis has its mainsprings and blind spots, but nonetheless, we have tried, in a "recursive reach", to give a clear outline of how "The place, polity and condition" are rupturally exorcised in blackness.

[324] Mackey, 2015, p. xi.

[325] Mackey, 2015, p. xiii.

It is to the lyricism of Mackey that we turn to for the conclusion of this thesis, because his work like that of his forbearer, Harris, plays on poetry's homophony with politics. His oeuvre, as that of a true Black avant-gardist, borders on a *poetrics* that simultaneously evade and evoke time and place. As an "*emic* retreat" or regression into the abyss of black freedom and black ghosts, the thesis – because of its "having to do with (the) failed extension"[326] of blackness – repels any *etic* qua onto-ontic theological affirmations of both death and life. Whether they are those of the self-reflexive and self-sufficient semi-Cartesian subject and the sutured subject of the Symbolic in either postcolonial theory or the ante-black philosopheme. Ours, like the poetry of Mackey, is not a philosophy which claims to provide the key to the universe, like the Kierkegaardian escritoire which borders on the reduction of the "subject to his signifying dependence".[327] Rather, we have tried to show how blackness qua the unconscious itself, as a vacillation, behaves like a 'multiple without-One' which is inaccessible to the functions of the both a priori and a posteriority 'One-All'. That is, its desire, as the objective desire of the unconscious, "what it maintains of the image of the past towards an ever short and limited future"[328] or an impossible and inaccessible future. The future of blackness, as an indestructible element of the unconscious or of space, escapes the logic of time and place as we have come to know them under the modern episteme.

Through an improvisation of Harris' notion of the 'limbo anancy syndrome', the 'discrepant engagements' or 'broken claims to connection' of Mackey, the semiotic chora of Kristeva, to use of JanMohamed in relation to either Fred Moten or Frank Wilderson, we have tried to operate on the death-bound subject of social death. The diagnosis has been that, it is in its nature as a life-in-death or a life-lived-in-death that one can say blackness is not life or does not qualify as a category of life itself or a death-in-life – a lived death which transforms into living after the death-of-life-in-death. Death, for blackness, as it should be understood by all of humanity, since we are all biochemical beings (made of excrements and that which excretes or made of biochemical processes and psychic processes), is the antechamber of all forms of life or living. It is that moment of "*seeing*" (check) which harbours within itself the moment of

[326] Mackey, 2015, p. xiv.

[327] Lacan, 1981, p. 75.

[328] Lacan, 1981, p. 32.

"*concluding*" (enchantment) – which it never comes to be an ethical witness to. No one should think that the colonised-black subjects can behave better in the bitter moments of death because all that lay in the past is transposed into the future, so it is unfair to demand the ethical from black in the present, for it does not live in the present or is not of the present, but of past-future-presence. That is, for as long as the night of the world is made to fail to come to the 'light of day' and the black continues to live in the shadows of the 'Black Sunlight', it shall continue to chuckle;

> "white meat. We'll have white meat one of these days. White cunts. White arses …" (Marechera, 1980:1).

In the materialist theory of the subject of anti-colonial theory that this thesis has sought to outline, death has a psycho-political function. A function, which as we mentioned earlier, induces the subject into both 'political action' and 'guerrilla action'. For this subject to realise itself as a subject, it must, as JanMohamed commands, actualise its potential death or transform its social death into a symbolic-death by first seeking the death of the Master. So, for one to burden it with the responsibility of sparing the life of its adversary, would be to demand the continued subsistence of the colonised subject in the realm of social death qua the Fanonian zone-of-nonbeing.

Hence, we say the demand for the ethical, in the death bound subject or the subject of social death does not suffice and is made derelict by the very conditions it subsists in. It is for these reasons that Biko in the essay, *On Death*, says, "you are either alive and proud or you are dead, and when you are dead, you can't care anyway" (Biko, 2004:173). The demand for the ethical is impossible because, the potential of the colonised subject to make it out of the chthonic realm of the death-drive, the abyss of freedom or the night of the world is only by sheer chance and not by choice as the existential phenomenologist believes. Sheer chance because, there is no *telos* or predicate which allows for its movement from the world of the economy of Death into the world of the economy of Life, hence as Fanon says, it behaves like "the god gone astray in the flesh". The potentiality of freedom for the colonised black subject does not lie in some 'future anterior' form of life, as per the hermeneuticist argument. Rather, it is of the potentiality of the energetics drives emanating from the economy of death. And, these energetics are of the material-social Real rather than some transcendental Idealist notions of the Symbolic and the Imaginary. Contrary, to the many scholars we have sometimes relied on for this materialist theory of the subject of anti-colonialism, the imperative of living does not depend on life's

capacity to perpetuate itself, but through its offspring from the realm of the economy of the death drive or the barred Real. What cathects the colonised-black subject into action or movement toward forms of human freedom, is neither the process of work nor the labour-process alone. Instead of identifying the relationship between the material-Real and the Symbolic-Ideal as separate or as mediated categories of thought and extension, as JanMohamed sometimes does in his reading of the theory of the death-bound subject through the Marxian theory of value, it is, as we have tried to do with the help of a materialist theory of the subject, only if we can identify them as united within the libidinal economy of the death drives, that we can develop a truly revolutionary theory of the subject of the liberation struggle.

In the contours of our ensemblic and improvisational reading of Black Studies and Continental philosophy we gave an analysis of a materialist theory of the subject in order to account for the failure, within blackness, of 'the break' or of the leap into fantasy and imagination or a phenomenologically inspired 'fantasy world'. Or rather, for its fidelity to the fictions of underground imaginative fantasies. This psycho-linguistic notion of the world of fantasy and that of the future anterior – as literary devices – are of great value to JanMohamed's Freudeand and Derridean inspired reading of Richard Wright's archaeology of the dream-work of the death-bound subject and its unbinding processes. The fantasy world, the flights of fancy, the phenomenological world, or the world of phantasmagoric imaginations as the "symbolic realm of literature", more so, in the postcolonial theories of the likes of Bhabha, Soyinka, Gates, Lalu, or Anthony Appiah, can be regarded as a category of a "retroversion effect" based on a present and future potentiality rather than the present-absence of the historical-unconscious past – a past which continues to haunt any forms of futurity or projections into the future. By relegating the potentiality of human freedom to some future anterior, there is a risk, as we have seen in the last chapter, of behaving in a manner similar to that of the post-marxist Laclau and Mouffe, who pull out their subject from its material conditions. If that were to be the case, we would mistake the postcolonial democratic revolution for the moment of the possible, as we have witnessed in our brief analysis of the Democratic Revolution of 1994 in South Africa. To read a poetics of resistance and liberation from the "register of abstract potentiality" or to read the categories of death, potentiality, and future as separated, risks prioritising the latter two categories over the former or risks absolving the presence of coloniality in postcolonial time. But by treating death as the 'determination in the last instance, we have tried to treat it not as an effect of Nature with a capital N but as an effect of the kinetic rhythmicity or the economy

of the drive immanent in nature, which enables it to both compote and excrete or cathect potentiality and the future qua Life.

Our subject is a subject who will always find his or her genus (not essence) in the space of the non-living, the unexplainable, the unnameable and avoids the transposition of the contradictions that structures its concrete situation into some future anterior which bears no connection with its historical past and existential reality. The artefacts of history, turned into archetypes through a speculative process are kept alive in all its attempts to reach for the future-impossible, a future whose possibility and potentiality, although denied, does not easily curve-in. That is, the categories it uses to posit a future are forever mortal like those of the psychopathological subject or its notion of historicism exists in tandem with that of logicism. These categories, unlike those of democratic practice or of the post-marxism of postcolonial theorists, resist being turned into Ideal types of some transcendent Truth or of the transparent and self-sufficient and self-reflexive subject of scientific projectedness and rationalism. The truth that the colonised subject qua the subject of liberation par excellence articulates do not exalt or invoke the eternal (as an a priori category), rather, they are always truths of a particular space and time which have their Universal, or rather, their Pluriversality informed by this Particular. And, in its articulations of this particular, it neither seeks to reify it nor to ramify it, instead, it gives more primacy to it than the universal, since the universal is also of it, and what is only lacking is the capacity or fecundity for its projection as a quasi-transcendence. Otherwise, if it were to focus more on the universal (as if it were independent of the particular) it would produce imaginative fictions which are not of the ground of experience or existence qua the unconscious. (Un)fortunately, for us, it is not a subject which has the choice to, in the name of a transcendental ontology, ‘leave existence by the wayside’. Rather, it is a subject of phonic materiality or (in)corporeal materiality, whose substances are of the ground. Hence, we can also say, its subsistence in materiality does not signal the failure of producing an ontology (even in the absence of the phenomenological violence of the colonial symbolic) but signals the refusal of presencing an ontology of the transcendental type. It is for these reasons that in our reading of the theses of the materialist theory of the subject through the concept of death in Black African political and aesthetic forms of revolutionary practice, we have tried to do away with the semantic sciences of either the subject of transcendence, of the subject of transparency, or of the subject of amorphous materialism.

To conclude in the poetics of Mackey, one can say, objective desire for the colonised-black subject, like "unquenchable thirst", denotes a form of "longing without object" or goal. That is, the unbinding process of the death bound subject, in its antagonistic form, never ceases to "seek out the 'trouble of an unbounded reference'" (Mackey, 1991:12). This is because in that infractive-motion or diffractive-fugitivity, it simultaneously evades presupposed notions of speech and language, trying rather to constitute articulations based on its acquaintance with the (un)familiar realm of the unconscious qua death. That is, it re-lives the moment of its encounter with death, or as Mackey (1991:4) says, through Garcia Lorca's discussion of *duende*, it enters into "a conversation with death and with the dead". Hence, the 'confrontation with death' that this treaties on the materialist theory of the subject of anti-settler-colonialism has sought to outline exposed the failure of a rapport between Speech and Language within blackness. Again, to follow Mackey's analysis of both African Music and African-American music, what blackness as sound rather than speech tries to reach for is "something … beyond language" – the something which creates its route across heavy matter or dark matter (Mackey, 1991:21). And, this something beyond language, to retrieve or relive Wynter again, is not of a transcendental type but of the "underground imaginary" – an "underground alternative reality" – which is only expressible in and through the political economy of the death drive. Just as we have tried to do in the many parts to this thesis, we can say Mackey also thinks about the materialist theory of the subject in these black aesthetical forms and what he finds intriguing is the rapport they have with the category of death/sound.

Through the concept of death, we can see how antagonism, struggle, suffering, and anxiety are the existential conditions which show how blackness subsists in the *cut* (qua the economy of death or life-in-death) rather than the *split* – to put it in the psychoanalytic terms of Lacan which we commenced this conversation with. After all, as Douglas Sado Aoki (2006:16) notes, it is Lacan himself who "insists that 'we must bring everything back to the function of the cut'". To say that blackness survives in the cut is not to mean that, under the phenomenological violence of the colonial socio-symbolic, blackness loses imagination and fantasy, to the contrary, by surviving in the cut, this proves that it is capable of producing, rather than presencing both imagination and fantasy in a priori linguistic structures. In the cut, blackness is forced to always struggle for the active production of meaning out of meaninglessness, name out of namelessness, being out of non-being, sense out of nonsense, existence out of inexistence, or life out of death. Which is to say, the 'depth of fissure' or the position of lack

which blackness is assigned to by the colonial socio-symbolic is what allows it to occupy, without a break, the material bedrock of antagonism or is what is responsible for the failure of the objective order and its translation into subjective effects – or moments of 'arrival' or translation into a model for a 'universal humanism'.

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