

The Necropolitical Crisis of Racial Subjectivity in the South African Postcolony: Black  
Consciousness as a Technology of the Self and the limits to Transformation

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Title: The Necropolitical Crisis of Racial Subjectivity in the South African Postcolony: Black Consciousness as a Technology of the Self and the limits to Transformation

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# Introduction

## 1. Research Question

In this thesis, I ask the question: Can Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy be re-read through Foucault's ethical practices as a technology of the self in the contemporary South African postcolony? And can this be conceptualised in a manner that affords a transformative reconstruction of alienated and neurotically traumatized modes of racialised subjectivity which are produced by necropolitical forms of colonial and postcolonial rationalities? The first part of my research question was to investigate, elucidate and ultimately diagnose the production of pathological racialised modes of subjectivity as the result of the immanent concatenation of necropolitical technologies of domination with colonial discourses,<sup>i</sup> engendering racial stereotypes that operate as the primary forms of subjectification. By drawing on an analytic non-prescriptive zone called 'governmental analysis' (Gordon: 1991, p. 4), I decipher the historical constitution of the South African colony and postcolony as temporal modes of violent entanglement, enabling me to reconstruct a nuanced postcolonial history of the present. The second part of the research problem, consequently, shifts to governmental analysis, thereby conducting a decolonial historical ontology of the South African socio-psychic present as a racialised heterotopic space. I examine the reciprocal relationship between the continued existence of the mostly White security establishments set up to protect white people in suburbs from formerly racially stereotyped colonised subjects in townships, who are excluded from privileged urban spaces in South Africa, historically reserved for White subjects. Within this nebulous and multifaceted reality, I show that subjects are infected by overlapping neuroses of victimisation and inferiority/superiority complexes respectively. Third and finally, within the context of historical ontology, I move towards adopting monumental and antiquarian historiography. This involves excavating Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy as a neo-Foucauldian technology of the self and a form of ethics (an ethos) that includes the role of politicizing affect, imagos and desire in the positive reconstitution of a damaged psyche.

## 2. Context

This thesis is a theoretical investigation of the three research problems outlined above. However, my theoretical response has been informed by my experience of the #MustFall movements from 2015 to 2017, first as a master's student writing a thesis on genealogical

historiography, with an interest in postcolonial theory, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism and post-Nietzschean thought; thereafter as a tutor, researcher, and part-time lecturer for the Humanities Education Development Unit (EDU). The #MustFall student protests movements began on the 12th of March 2015, when politics student Chumani Maxwele hurled human excrement at the University of Cape Town's statue of Cecil John Rhodes, former Prime Minister of the Cape Colony (1890-1896). The event set off a series of protests that soon engulfed the entire country. Many of the students who were deeply involved in the movement were in my classes and my engagement with them, as well as my thesis and research for the EDU, became a critical space in which the intellectual problems I will respond to in this thesis first emerged. In relation to the context that I describe above, I historically excavate anti-colonial technologies of the self in a series of contemporary political and theoretical practices that arose in the context of the #MustFall student protest movements (2015-2017). To excavate technologies of the self, I draw on the transformative forms of individual resistance still encoded within the (anti-)colonial episteme. Indeed, the student movement was, partly influenced by and developed in relation to the intellectual return to anticolonial tactics and strategies engendered by Fanon, but also Cabral, Wa Thiong'o and notably Steve Biko. Even though the originary claim that defined #RMF (Rhodes Must Fall) was the elimination of the Rhodes statue from the University of Cape Town, the central demand that emanated from the student movements was for the decolonisation of South African universities and the country (Matandela: 2017, p.12) from alienating and traumatizing forces of institutional and social racism. This logic implies that the racialised pathologies that afflict students are a microcosm of racialised social relations and the everyday alienating investment in the pathological and dehumanizing discourses that contemporary South Africans have inherited from Apartheid South African society. These orders of racializing discourses and forms of domination and conviviality reify the past and the present in the contemporary postcolony. This study will address the alienated and traumatic pathological production of black subjectivity under colonial and postcolonial conditions and the need for hitherto colonised subjects to work towards individual and societal transformation.

Unlike many of my students who were 'born frees', that is, a generation born after the demise of Apartheid (1948-1994) in South Africa, I was born just after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Although sympathetic to the movements' claims, my post-Marxist pessimism (Shari: 2015),<sup>ii</sup> came into conflict with their spectral endorsement of progressive humanism, specifically a politically 'radical' African humanism derived from anti-colonial discourses, and featured in

the work of Fanon and Biko, who were read as part of the first-year introductory syllabus I was teaching. This conflict first appeared in a paper I co-authored (Lockett and Naicker: 2016), where we explored the limits of intersubjective recognition, qua Hegel and Fanon, when individual human subjectivity becomes collectively racialised in a (post)colonial society. The problem of misrecognition and its alienating effects have been documented by many scholars working in the Fanonian tradition of Africana existentialist philosophy but problematically, these often re-essentialise the notion of a racial subjectivity by virtue of an outdated alienation /liberation paradigm (Scott: 1999, p.209) and a necropolitical, misogynistic and phallic conception of revolutionary violence as cathartic, liberatory and transformative (Mbembe: 2019, p.3). Additionally, this violence was endorsed in humanistic terms, which is a facet of post-Apartheid South Africa's unqualified belief in humanism.

Within the contours of Critical Theory, those inspired by Freud and Benjamin's insights have come to acknowledge that, contrary to Aristotle's famous distinction, barbarism exists within, and is not antithetical to, civilisation (Bronner: 2003, p.51). For Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, we can only understand historical development and human flourishing 'in conjunction with the barbaric element, which is veiled by humane values' (Horkheimer and Adorno: 2002, p.59). Orthodox South African social scientists have been extremely reluctant to accept these claims. When the ANC (African National Congress) came to power, the 1996 Constitution of the newly democratic Republic of South Africa promised 'universal suffrage, freedom of movement, freedom of speech and freedom of sexual orientation' (Gibson: 2011, p.72). Its major strategy for unifying a new population from a conservative fractured, divided and violent set of geo-political enclaves was the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, part of a 'historical narrative that told of the redemptive power of a human rights agenda animated by a spirit of national reconciliation' (Posel: 2008, p.119). Of course, humanism itself is a questionable ideology, insofar as the characterisation of the human being from Aristotle until modernity always required the exclusion of 'the other' to define a certain cultural constitution (Goldberg: 1993, p.8). Following Foucault, my claim is that humanist regimes always created a particular constructed image of a true human subject that justified its incentives, while simultaneously excluding or even killing others who did not fit the mould. Colonialism, Stalinism and Nazism all portrayed themselves as humanisms. This problem is not limited to vile political regimes but applies even to the liberation movements against these regimes, particularly those that endorse the idea of the 'true self' – that is in modern terms, the alienation/liberation model – to morally justify their violent and exclusionary actions (EEW1,

p.313-314). Consequently, this means that liberatory and leftist movements in South Africa lack a form of ethics that can provide a means for social and political change without resorting to a racially essentialist and exclusive conception of human subjectivity. By rereading Biko's Black Consciousness as a Foucauldian technology of the self, I aim to provide a political and ethical reading of blackness that avoids the metaphysical and essentialist traps of African humanism, its lingering racial essentialism, and its politically exclusive politics of resentment.<sup>iii</sup>

However, what I hope to offer in this context is not a simple alternative or blueprint for the future. In her analysis of Foucault's reception in North America, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak emphasises that prominent scholars, notably Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow have undermined the radicalism of his work, by portraying his later ethical work as a prescriptive critical theory that conforms to the principles of liberal democracy (Spivak: 1996). Foucault does not practice a method of critique that systematically rules out every possibility except for a single valid one (FR, p.384). This is not to prescribe a set of normative judgements, but rather 'hold on to the possibility and desirability of radical social change in the direction of an open-ended conception of the future' (Allen: 2016, p.188). Following the nominalist tenets of historical ontology and genealogy, I have supplied a problematization of who we are as historically constituted racial subjects. Foucault's genealogies are problematizations, an analysis of the 'the development of a domain of acts, practices, and thoughts that...pose problems for politics' (FR, p.384). As I will demonstrate in more detail in this thesis, Foucault's method of problematization enables an understanding of how a field of experience and modes of subjectivity are constituted via an identification with racial stereotypes within an apartheid symbolic episteme in the South African postcolony (FR, p.385; Pavon Cuellar and Parker: 2013, p.319).

Methodologically, genealogical problematisation does not conform to a tradition of South African historiography that idealises the norms and practices of the past via personal narratives and collective memory. The critical aspect of genealogical problematization is opposed to 'salvaging and maintaining a positive self-image; as a screen filtering out disturbing relations' (Hook: 2013, p.261). My intention in analysing colonial discourses psychoanalytically, particularly from a Lacanian perspective is methodological. Individual narratives operate as defence mechanisms that dissimulate, they do not enable a retrieval of historical material, but instead serve the interests of the ego, in order to obtain a false sense of recognition. For example, nostalgic stories of District six that are personal narratives are psychoanalytically

akin to a form of forgetting (Hook: 2013, p.261; Pinnock: 2016, p. 47-58). My reason for analysing colonial discourses from multiple psychoanalytic perspectives, which includes Lacanian, Freudian and the hauntology is that they are already reflected in the postcolonial work of Achille Mbembe, Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha and Paul Gilroy. Furthermore, these thinkers don't apply psychoanalysis as a naturalist psychology but emphasize the conditioning of psychic pathologies as a function of political technologies. When reading Biko's Black Consciousness Philosophy as a technology of the self, my aim is not configuring it as a prescriptive alternative but a problematization of our current, historically constituted South African modes of being. Because historical ontology and genealogy are not merely subversive, I appropriate aspects of Biko's work, his political spirituality and relationship to parrhesia as historical heritage that can be deployed to provide contemporary political movements with an ethics of political resistance, as a mode of self-formation and as a response to historically constituted pathologies. The tools I am excavating from Biko's thought are not meant to merely constitute an autonomous subject capable of self-determination, but also function as a form of repair in the face of social death, precarity and trauma, as well engaging with the other - a conundrum of Modernist and postcolonial thought (Goldberg: 2018, p. 207; Gerber: 2018, p.2). Although the protesting students had honourably attempted to change the colonial culture of the university and greater society, I realised that the misrecognition they experienced caused them to identify with, or invest in pathological racial stereotypes, which, in Homi Bhabha's eclectic mixture of postcolonial theory and poststructuralism (postmodernism), is the result of the operations of the colonial apparatus (Bhabha: 2004, p.101). Bhabha's deployment of the colonial apparatus is an appropriation of Foucault's post-structural notion of the apparatus as a political technology, which he uses to treat deficiencies in earlier postcolonial and anticolonial theory. Postcolonial scholars have learnt four valuable lessons from post-structuralists. These lessons have special relevance for the relationship between historiography, the constitution of subjectivity and political processes in the South African postcolony:

- 1) The deconstruction of both epistemological foundationalism and metaphysical realism upheld as principles by most modern philosophers and thus a critique of the Enlightenment ideals of a unified notion of human rationality, the veracity of human knowledge and the cognitive capacity of Cartesian and Kantian subjects.
- 2) The critique of ethical universals cherished by the Western tradition, from Platonic dualism to Enlightenment humanism, disclosed through the deconstruction of Western metaphysics, and its relation to racism and colonisation.

- 3) An analysis of how the construction of political reality, universal values and the knowing subject are engendered through the relationship between linguistic representation (which has come to be known in cultural and postcolonial studies as the discursive turn), libidinal forces, structural, that is signifying relationships, and historical contingent processes.
- 4) In political theory, the refusal of the historical optimism and values of both orthodox Marxist and liberal political traditions. What has followed is an extreme historicization, politicisation or contextualisation of the truth claims that define the principles of both traditions, following from an incredulity (disbelief, state of doubt, uncertainty or suspension) rather than outright rejection of historical meta-narratives (Appiah: 1993 p.143; Bhabra: 2011, p.656-657; Chatterjee: 1986, p.49-50; Young: 2004, p.35-45).

In this thesis I aim to contribute to contemporary social theory in South Africa by first and foremost using a neo-Foucauldian framework, in the form of necropolitical black reason, and a combination of post-structuralist theory and postcolonial studies to explore the production of pathological subjectivity in the South African context. The contextual problematic that defines my project derives from the emergence of four general series of practices, or to use Foucault's terminology, political rationalities, that form part of a decolonial historical ontology. Before beginning an analysis of my methodology for this project, it is imperative to introduce the notion of discursive practices. Discursive analysis displaced and undermined the traditional dichotomy between consciousness and ideology (sign) in the human sciences (EAK: p.134), enabling the constitution of a new immanent method that closes the dualistic boundaries between essence and appearance, noumena and phenomena, signifier and signified since Plato (Plato: 2007a p.67). Consequently, any scholar engaging in a coherent Foucauldian analytic would need to prioritise practices (either discursive or non-discursive) and not the problem of (mis)representation to specify the target of their critique. In his Candidacy Presentation at the College (1969), Foucault argues

'And a method asserted itself: instead of running through the library of scientific literature, as one was apt to do, and stopping at that, I would need to examine a collection of archives comprising official orders, statues, hospital and prison records, court proceedings and so on. It was at the Arsenal and the Archives Nationale that I undertook the analysis of a knowledge (savoir) whose visible body is not a theoretical and scientific discourse, nor literature either but a series of everyday practices' (EEW1: pp.5-6).

The first series of everyday discursive practices constituting the first political rationality emerges, despite geographical and historical differences, from the formal period of colonial practices, that is, the era of European expansion and territorial annexation from 1492 (beginning with the Portuguese and Spanish invasion of the Americas) to 1947. My purpose is not to provide a history or theory of colonialism or Empire. Rather I elucidate how particular forms of colonial practices, comprising of differential tactics, constitute a strategy that becomes systematized into a colonial rationality that was refined by South African Apartheid law and bio-security technologies that can be read as an exemplar of necropolitical colonial governance, and the first narrative of black reason (Mbembe: 2017, pp.1-8). In South Africa, the second narrative of necropolitical rationality racialised subjects into four hierarchically defined population groups, each governed by an ideal telos of producing a different set of capacities and intensification of domination for each group as a site of a stereotypical investment (Posel: 2001, p. 93). These stereotypes legitimated a colonial-settler regime as a theologically prescribed, hierarchical racial division of labour, space, and social interaction.

The point of emergence (enstehung) for the third rationality, the postcolonial potentate (Mbembe: 2015), and the fortification of the 'black voice' appears with the 1994 settlement and the questionable founding violence that consecrated the mythical metaphor of the Rainbow Nation, effectuating a fragile postcolony.<sup>iv</sup> By the Zuma years (2009-2017), this postcolony had irreparably fractured due to the convivial forces of private indirect governance. However, it would be incorrect to simply deal with each period synchronically because the qualitative differences overlap. Despite its brutal and rapacious nature, the mode of colonial rationality was appropriated by African rulers by the time of independence. The authoritarian nature of this imaginary was so pervasive, 'it invested itself in the body of anti-colonial movements, inscribing its schemes of meaning into the very constitution of the postcolonial state' (Mbembe: 2015, p.32).

'The postcolonial potentate was thus itself a form of domination that, while using universal techniques, (the state and its apparatus), had its own internal coherence and rationality both in the economic realm and the imaginary. It follows that the potentate's domination must be judged in relation to that rationality and not on the basis of some Weberian model that exists nowhere' (Mbembe: 2015, p.33).

For Mbembe, the postcolonial potentate differs from the Weberian model insofar as the latter proposes a singular model of rationalisation, and the differentiation of powers as typifying the transition from religious to secular authority. According to Weber, the process of devaluation

of traditional values begins with a process of disenchantment ‘which underlies a shift from a traditional world ordered by ultimate religious values to a world dominated by impersonal capitalist relations’ (Gane: 2002, p.21). This produces an unequal ‘social world’ defined by scarcity in which socially progressive practices eventually become bifurcated from their original teleological and emancipatory trajectory within capitalist institutions governed by instrumental reason, quite literally dislocating absolute ethical values. Foucault, however, is not a dialectician and is opposed to dialectical logic in general. So, while he may be interested as a ‘pluralist’ in analysing basic forms of reason (or multiple rationalities) (PD: p.57), he does not provide them with any metaphysical status, rather claiming that micro and macro political processes coalesce historically, as a historical mode of state governmentality. Although law may designate the terminal forms of power, disciplinary and biopolitical practices operate in ostensibly ‘neutral institutions’ in civil society (BB: p.18), a transactional reality that was attributed with far more subversive potential by Gramscian scholars than orthodox Marxists and Foucault would admit. Moreover, the calibration of multiple rationalities (and not a unified process of rationalisation) that Foucault studied in the discursive formation of European modernization would give birth to the modern governmentalization of the population, and consequently the emergence of the modern state. As alluded to earlier, I argue in the thesis that the South African postcolonial state may have unconsciously generated a third political rationality by institutionalising transgenerational trauma in its governmental technologies, a phantom which manifests as a resentment laden neurosis of victimisation. This third rationality is symptomized in acts of necropolitical violence against women, political and ethnic minorities, foreigners, and even random citizens. In this light, the neurotic subject may attack someone who has nothing to do with the original traumatic colonial wound (Mbembe: 1999, p.28; Naicker: 2019, p.72). Resentment in the postcolony thus designates a relation of enmity that defines political interactions between the native, other and foreigner, in a schema of good and evil. In this society of resentment, repressed forces from the colony are released and exacted on any foreign body or racial subject that can be expelled through ritual acts of killing as acts of cleansing that morally purify and strengthen the nature of the ‘national’ race as an act of biopolitical social engineering. For David Marriot,

‘The post-colony... isn’t just simply a relation of domination... but an accursed share based on a principle of sacrifice, wherein the enemy is always potentially also neighbour, brother or friend, an always-to-be sacrificeable racial subject’ (Marriot: 2018, p.70).

Lastly, the fourth and final political rationality is the Anthropocene, which is the fourth stage in the evolution of necropolitics and capital. According to Achille Mbembe, the precarity that defined the life of the black slaves and colonised subjects becomes generalised in the Anthropocene, generating a global condition called the becoming black of the world. In the final section of this thesis (8.4), I critically question Mbembe's universalisation of precarity, by tracing the unequal history of environmental racism-an effect of black reason, creating a contemporary condition, which following the work of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, can be called climate Apartheid.

### **3. Theoretical Rationale: Conceptualising Postcolonial Subjectivity**

Alienation appeared as a socio-diagnostic concept in the philosophical thought of Rousseau and Hegel, but the polysemic nature of the concept has transcended various disciplines. Within the phenomenological and materialist tradition, including orthodox interpretations of Fanon and Biko, the following meanings have influenced the application of this concept.

- 1) First, alienation is intrinsically connected to the problem of meaninglessness, in the sense that traditional religious structures that allocated a meaningful transition from life to the afterlife are ultimately disqualified, and the institutions that enabled their functioning are deracinated.
- 2) Second, the loss of traditional sources of meaning is related to subjective powerlessness and impotence, a consequence of the successful intrusion of a foreign force. Consequently, its second signification pertains to 'a relation of domination', but interestingly, a relation that includes the possibility of reclaiming freedom and personal sovereignty.
- 3) Third, alienation refers to the severance of traditionally meaningful relations, which serve as presuppositions of how things ought to be in a political community defined by reciprocal recognition, comprising normative dialogical interactions that would shape the good life (Jaeggi: 2014, pp.21-25).

In the thesis, I argue that these phenomenological and materialist understandings of alienation are not enough to comprehend the pathological plight of student movements, and their relations to greater South African society: a political space of essentialised and racialised misrecognition. Although Fanon and Biko are read through the traditions of phenomenology and dialectical materialism, both use a sociogenic method to explain how forms of psychic pathology, or an alienating neurosis, are the products of social structures (Fanon: 2017, p.13).

Fanon was a psychiatrist, and Biko, deeply influenced by Fanon's clinical eye, was a medical student (Turner: 2008, p.32). I argue that both Fanon and Biko treated alienated subjects as patients and the inferiority complex as a neurosis in which the subject becomes alienated from themselves and others (Turner: 2008; Mbembe: 2019, p.142). For Freud, a neurosis is a delusion, a defensive measure against reality driven by an unconscious pleasure principle, and a corresponding observable repetitious cycle, or repetition-compulsion, of behaviour that represses a traumatic experience, drive or unresolved context, obstructing self-determination (Freud: 2005, p.341). As the subject's illness or neurosis causes them to become more estranged from themselves and their world, it may trigger the 'collapse of the patient's biophysical, psychical or mental integrity' (Mbembe: 2019, p.142). For those afflicted by racial discrimination, 'these experiences represent a forceful, brutal fracturing of his (sic.) experience of his body, and thus demonstrates that being black in a colonial society produces psychological effects and affects' (Greedharry: 2008, p.30). I argue that contemporary student movements on historically white campuses are constituted by an overwhelming sense of socio-psychic alienation, which was articulated by Fanonian's as a pathological inferiority complex, or a colonial neurosis (Greedharry: 2008 p.34-35). For those involved in student organisations, lecturers, and members who worked with students from outside the university, this meant drawing upon Black Consciousness, anti-colonial, and Pan African philosophies, similar to those involved in anti-colonial and civil rights movements, in order to liberate themselves from this inferiority complex, by reconstructing its imago into a positive force of psychological and existential self-reconstruction. This was the movement's positive moment: it recategorized the Humanities curriculum, making the critical claim that Western philosophy and other scholarly disciplines should be considered political knowledge rather than 'pure knowledge', constituting a coercive ideology of enculturation. By challenging the prevalent institutional racism, not only at universities, but in larger spheres of civil society and the precarity congruent with the perpetuation of the racial division of labour after Apartheid, the movement challenged the political consensus, or hegemony, that the ANC had enjoyed since 1994.

Given the reality of settler colonies, South Africa requires alternative modes of conceptualisation to account for the transition from an Apartheid colony to a contemporary postcolony. Following Walter Benjamin's idiosyncratic relationship to Frankfurt School Critical Theory, postcolonial thinkers have argued that for settler colonial states to come into being, they can only be founded via a moment of a-legality, consecrated through an act of founding, or mythical violence that challenges our peaceful conception of the social contract

(Veracini: 2018, p. 234; Zizek: 2012). It is this law-instituting moment consecrated by violence, in Benjamin's reading of the Marxist tradition, which legitimises and enables a reification of a national mode of production, that is, a new political economy (Benjamin: 1996, p.123), and a new violent schema of meaning that legitimates the original violent act: law-preserving violence (Derrida: 1990, p.272).

For the #MustFall movements, the ANC had ultimately deferred the moment of founding violence and the institution of a new national hegemony, and now this moment is experienced as a haunting trauma, or neurosis that is the result of intergenerational trauma. Thus, in this thesis I will analyse how new pathological discourses and forms of subjectivity arose in a context of resistance to the constant alienation and everyday haunting of traumatic neurosis. This, I will illustrate, is a daily experience, and not an event-based model such as the Oedipal complex, which does not structure trauma in historically white universities and large proportions of South African society (Rothberg: 2012, p.3). Therefore the #MustFall movements can be read as an attack on colonial rationalities, and the modes of cultural values, desires, and aesthetics they produce in ostensibly neutral institutions - what Althusser referred to as ideological state apparatuses (Althusser: 2011, pp.111-144). The violent actions of the students were an attempt to produce a new founding moment of violence, which is a-legal because of its deferred and haunting status (Praeg: 2019, p.14). Although I will draw on Mbembe's discourses of phantomic haunting and victimisation, Kim Wale et al. (2020) supplies a coherent formulation of intergenerational trauma in post-Apartheid South African context, following the traditional insights of psychoanalytic pioneers Abraham and Torok (1994). Since this is a complicated discussion, it is useful to clarify here the dynamics at work. Intergenerational trauma refers to the traumatic experience of a group that is too terrible to process mentally and as a repressed secret it becomes entombed as phantom within a social crypt. Instead of passing away with time, if not addressed in any meaningful sense, the trauma of the elders and their crimes of inaction will be passed onto the next generation, with its institutionalisation in the operation of social structures. According to Wale et al. (2020) in South Africa:

1. For South Africans, the haunting aura of the past is not a simply a memory of historical dehumanization and deprivation, but remains an everyday experience of brutality, trauma and alienated relations to significant others including oneself. Essentially this means that those primarily haunted are not the victims of Apartheid (those who lived between 1948 and 1994), but those who were born with 'no memory' of the period - the generation referred to as 'born

free'. This is a generation born with the hopes of transformation and liberation, but in most cases subjected to similar forms of discrimination, structural oppression, and violence (Wale et al.: 2020, pp.3-4).

2. Hauntology, like the Foucauldian notion of technology, has the ability, particularly in the South African context, to bring psychic and material elements together. As Wale et al. argue, 'We need to rethink this conceptualisation in ways which include the social, economic and political forms of haunting that are entangled with the intergenerational psychic realm' (Wale et al.: 2020, p.4). There are two major forms of South African hauntings that can be added to the slave trade (Mbembe: 2017, pp.33-44) and fratricides (phantoms) established by Mbembe, which will animate my analysis in the thesis, and are outlined below.

3. The first form of intergenerational trauma for the majority of South Africans is forced removals and the national partitioning of land. This is linked to and reciprocates the second form in a dialectic of resentment (Pithouse: 2016, p.38). It means that not only intersubjective relations and communities have been compromised, but that violence is internalised in the psyche, and exhibits itself in repetitious and cyclical displays in an always alienated space that belongs to no one, except brutal gangs, criminals, and former white masters.

4. Symptomatically, even in their acts of resistance, a majority of specifically male students have unfortunately invested in an inversion of pathological racial stereotypes and forms of militancy (Xaba: 2017) that is founded on a colonial metaphysics of difference inherited from the Apartheid and colonial eras. They thereby identify with notions of racial homogeneity that are uncritically reflected in their appropriation of wider phantomic aspects of daily Pan-African, Afro-Marxist, and nativist discourses.

This is the rationale for why this study addresses the alienated and traumatic pathological production of black subjectivity under colonial and postcolonial conditions and the need to work towards individual and societal transformation for hitherto colonised subjects.

'A new cultural temperament is gradually engulfing post-Apartheid urban South Africa. For the time being, it goes by the name 'decolonization' - in truth a psychic state more than a political project in the strict sense of the term ... Psychic bonds - in particular bonds of pain and suffering - more than lived contradictions are becoming the real stuff of political intersubjectivity. 'I am my pain', - how many times have I heard this statement in the months since #RhodesMustFall emerged? - the fusion of self and suffering in this astonishing age of solipsism and narcissism ... In the bloody miasma of the Zuma years, the discourse of black

power, self-affirmation and worldliness of the early 1990s is in danger of being replaced by the discourse of fracture, injury and victimization identity politics and the resentment that is its corollary' (Mbembe: 2015a).

#### **4. Thesis Structure**

In Chapter 1 of the thesis, I explore Foucault's notion of political rationality, to articulate his conceptions of technologies of domination, the apparatus and governmentality. Chapter 2 follows directly from Chapter 1 and provides a thorough explication of Foucault's ethical thought, clarifying the zone of analysis called governmentality by articulating the relationship between ethical, resistant technologies of the self, and technologies of domination. This is the Foucauldian framework that will be used to analyse colonial and postcolonial relations for the remainder of the thesis. Chapter 3 provides a link between Foucault and postcolonial studies, introducing postcolonial studies via an analysis of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Instead of the traditional relationship assumed/ set up between the two thinkers, I provide an alternate reading that suggests Foucault's vision of political spirituality was influenced and bound to orientalist and ultimately colonial discourse. After salvaging Foucault's ethics for the postcolony and relating them to Biko for the first time at the end of Chapter 3, in Chapter 4 I review the literature interpreting Foucault in postcolonial studies, with a specific focus on the problem of political rationality. This allows me to begin exploring how the apparatus as a technology of domination configures racial subjects in the South African colony and postcolony. Chapter 5 introduces the two narratives engendered by black reason and the problem of haunting, phantomic secrets in colonial discourse. Furthermore, it situates black reason within necropolitics, which is taken up in Chapter 6. After an initial analysis of the mechanics of necropolitics in the South African postcolony, and how it changes the nature of hauntology and Foucault's historical ontology, I conclude Chapter 6 with a preliminary explanation of how the mechanics of necropolitics might operate in the postcolony. Chapter 7 is central to the thesis and provides a neo-Foucauldian reading of Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy as a racial, affective technology of the self. Lastly, in Chapter 8 I provide a Foucauldian genealogy of Biko's thought by relating the constitution of radical African thought to the stereotypical and Christian points of subjectification within the colonial episteme. Within this necropolitical schema, I point out how, despite the conferences at Hammanskraal in 1983 and 1984, there are two limits to Biko's transformational model: his notions of gender and African homogeneity. I conclude the chapter by discussing how these limits correspond to governance in the South

African postcolony, specifically focusing on the Zuma rape trial and xenophobia as two symptoms of the neurosis of victimisation, a pathology that has been institutionalised into everyday life in contemporary South Africa.

# Chapter 1. Political Rationality in the Work of Michel Foucault

## 1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I introduce the reader to the notion of political rationality in the work of Michel Foucault, before moving on to a concise analysis of governmental reason. The first section of this chapter exhibits the conceptualisation of instrumental rationality in Hobbes, Weber, and Critical Theory before moving on to Foucault's pluralist conception of historiography, and the notion of the apparatus as a political technology. This will be central to addressing the question of whether postcolonial subjects can overcome the problems of racialised neurosis and alienation, later in the thesis. The purpose of this chapter is specifically to exhibit to the reader that Foucault's work on governmentality is not a general theory of the state, but an open zone of research concerning the emergence of local and plural rationalities that produce national populations as objects of discursive knowledge, and subjects of political control and domination.

In examining Foucault's thesis on governmental rationality, in the following chapters I demonstrate that Foucault not only reformulates the basis of political theory away from a theory of political legitimacy that had existed since Hobbes, but in doing so, also presents us with a novel analytic of power, the history of subjectivity and a historical-nominalist theory of the state. Thus, when I turn to the problem of colonial and postcolonial governmentality later in the thesis, the differences I examine in the formation of African colonial and postcolonial states have less to do with a general model of the nation state derived from European political theory than with the nominalist mode of analysis in question acclimatising itself to new conditions. In this Chapter I will introduce the reader to the Foucauldian terminology and methodology that will be deployed throughout this thesis, I explain the relationship between governmentality and rationality, disciplinary and bio power, technology and power/knowledge, the history of Christianity and the term 'conduct' in Foucault's work. I conclude with Foucault's analysis of the modern subject, his conception of the present and the political role of the specific intellectual in his work. The work on the specific intellectual and Foucault's conception of the present are important bridges to Chapter 2, where I will examine Foucault's ethics, in terms of the art of not being governed as warrior ethics.

## 1.2 Foucault, Critical Theory and Political Rationality in Western Thought

In *What is Enlightenment?*, Foucault included himself in a tradition of critical thinking and questioning that began with Immanuel Kant and continued ‘from Hegel through Nietzsche or Max Weber to Horkheimer or Habermas’ (EEW1, p.303). Although Foucault situated his work in a lineage of criticism that culminates in the revolutionary Critical Theory that emerged from the Frankfurt school, Paul Veyne urges us not to take this comparison too far (Veyne et al, 1993, p.3). In the next chapter, when exploring Foucault’s ethics, following Veyne, I argue that Foucault’s Nietzscheanism prevented him from ever offering a prescription or set of normative valuations to live by. Nevertheless, Foucault was preoccupied by the traditional philosophical problem of living a good life, and therefore was influenced by Critical Theory’s claim that people’s lives had been deformed by instrumental rationality imbued in modern institutions (Jaeggi: 2014, p.xxii). However, he did not share Critical Theory’s utopian visions of progress and was criticised for not attempting to ‘provide an alternate blueprint for the future’ (Habermas: 1988 p.269). Like thinkers in the Frankfurt School, Foucault was concerned with the problem of rationality, or instrumental rationality, but did not share an inherent optimism in Enlightenment reason. He did not consider rationalisation or human history a singular process which at a certain point in history had bifurcated into either exploitative or self-determining and self-realising practices. As Foucault intimated in an interview with Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, he was a historian who did not offer future alternatives, but rather historical problematizations of the multiple forms of rationalisation that constituted contemporary, modern forms of subjectivity (EEW1, pp.256-262). Thus, what Foucault interrogates within Critical Theory is the unquestioning acceptance of the bifurcation of reason in human history, and so the form of emancipatory reason identified with the Enlightenment as a theory of historical progress. Although the first generation of Critical theorists were critical of the theory of historical progress, later thinkers- namely Axel Honneth and Jurgen Habermas adopted a Hegelian strategy that enabled them to view modernity as the culmination of a ‘backward-looking conception of progress as a historical fact’ (Allen: 2016, p.13). For later Critical Theorists, the normative principles that exist within the social world are the outcome of European modernity and as rational principles are ‘justified insofar as they can be understood as the outcome of a process of progressive social evolution or sociocultural learning’ (Allen: 2016, p.14). Foucault was opposed to this ‘blackmail of the Enlightenment’, where one could either remain within the tradition of progressive reason and its institutions or

be cast aside as an irrational mystic - a reactionary conservative trying to hold back to the wave of progress identified with Europe's self-declared propulsion into modernity.

'That does not mean that one has to be 'for' or 'against' the Enlightenment. It even means precisely one must refuse everything that might present itself in the form of a simplistic and authoritarian alternative: you either accept the Enlightenment and remain within its tradition of rationalism ... or else you try and escape from the Enlightenment and then try and escape from its principles of rationality ... And we do not break free from this blackmail by introducing dialectical nuances while seeking to determine what good and bad elements there may have been in the Enlightenment' (EEW 1, p.313).

From the beginning of his career, Foucault was opposed to the Hegelian dialectical conception of a linear, teleological (goal oriented and) and stadial conception of human history that was prevalent in Europe, and French educational system into which he was trained (Butler: 1987). I will return to the historical dimensions of this problem in Section 2. 2. At an epistemological level, Foucault was a part of a school of a French Enlightenment school called Historical Epistemology, and he followed the work of two of its greatest scholars, Gaston Bachelard and Georges Canguilhem (Gutting: 1989). Following the interventions of positivism, Historical Epistemologists argued that the idealistic philosophies of the nineteenth century no longer stood in a sovereign position in relation to the positive sciences. From Kant to Hegel, 'modern philosophy treats positive science... as provincial and derivative modes of reasoning that are explained and justified only by the logico-transcendental methods of philosophy itself' (Pena Guzman: 2016, p. 162). However, from 1840 to 1920, the West underwent two scientific revolutions, in which the empirically observable and factual knowledge outstripped the transcendental norms or table of ahistorical categories of the understanding that defined Kant's and philosophies epistemology. Moreover, despite Hegel's historicization of Kant's categories of understanding to explicate the historical knowledge of truth (and therefore explain scientific change in way Kant's transcendental norms could not) via dialectical transformations (*aufhebung*), his suprahistorical perspective from the perspective of absolute knowledge did not permit scientific research to advance beyond the transcendental concepts that made modern scientific knowledge possible. Hegel's concepts of 'number' and 'matter' contradicted the scientific developments of the time, which had become directly applicable to agriculture, architecture, medicine and had become deeply intertwined with political and economic processes (Pena Guzman: 2016, p.167-171). Consequently, this leads to a shift in focus: the question of how science progresses must not resolve around philosophical norms, but rather

philosophy be able explain scientific progress (Pena-Guzman: 2016, p.173). Historical Epistemology concerns itself with two questions

‘(1) The question of scientific rationality: How can scientific rationality be simultaneously normative and historical, as recent developments indicate? And (2) The question of philosophy’s relationship to it: What should philosophy’s duties to, and expectations from, the positive sciences be?’ (Pena-Guzman: 2016, p.175).

In the interview *Truth and Power*, Foucault articulated his philosophical approach to the major problematics of Historical epistemology, which was avowedly political. His early works were concerned with scientific disciplines, such as psychiatry and medicine and their relation to ‘political institutions, economic requirements and issues of social regulation’ (EEW1, p.312). Foucault argued contemporary philosophy’s task was to concern itself with the political administration of the modern state and society, specifying how the relationship between power and scientific rationalities produced subjects in relations of domination (EEW1, p.299). Consequently, Foucault’s allusion to the relations between rationalities and power signified that, by challenging the conceptualisation of bifurcated reason in Critical Theory hitherto, he was reformulating the basis for new analytics of the relationship between power and knowledge in Western social and political theory (EEW3, p.111). Historically, twentieth century Critical Theory scholars had inherited their conceptions of power and rationalisation (in the form of instrumental reason) - albeit filtered through the interventions of other prominent thinkers including Marx, Freud, Hegel and Weber - from the work of Thomas Hobbes. In his 1651 *Leviathan*, Hobbes describes a bleak pre-political state of nature that is characterised by war. He writes that without a ‘common power’ - that is sovereignty, the metaphysical foundation for institutional political legitimacy to keep men in a state of reverence and ‘awe’ (or submission) - ‘they are in that condition, which is called war, and such a war, as if of every man against every man’ (Hobbes: 1985, p.84). Without any laws or structures to secure and preserve the life of all individuals there is not only an arbitrary order of rank or hierarchy, but a pervasive and ‘continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short’ (Hobbes: 1998, p.84). Hobbes’s analysis of the state of nature discloses a depiction of the natural human condition as both instrumentally rational and self-interested. In Hobbes’s thought, instrumental reason designates a specifically human quality that differentiates us from animals. It is a form of ‘rationality devoted to the accomplishment of some particular goal, that is, reason as a means or instrument to an end’ (Lynch: 2016, p.13). The notion of self-interest in this context is tied to a conception of subjectivity and human

nature predicated on self-preservation. In a state of constant warfare, rights can neither be realised nor enforced, and the possibility of a just and secure order where individual rights can be realised is structurally compromised. Consequently, individuals come together to establish a social contract, engendering a sovereign power that rules over every 'citizen, and capable of enforcing the law and maintaining the peace' (Scruton: 2002, p.236). In this context for Hobbes, plagued by insecurity, individuals consent to the laws of their contract by surrendering or ceding their dangerous individual power in return for realizable rights.

For Martin Saar (2010), the tradition of political philosophy has deployed the notion of power to distinguish a relation of 'incongruity' or lack between individual aspirations and social conditions. Power as a concept is raised whenever there is a disparity between the expectations and supposed liberties of individual subjects and the reality of what is afforded to them by the modern social order. The first camp, The Hobbesian/Weberian tradition, conceptualised power as a theoretical discourse of domination and subjugation. In this tradition, power is conceived as an external attribute that is only possessed by some social agents, which is deployed purposefully as a means in political relations to obtain a particular end from others who lack power, as a form of instrumental rationality (Saar: 2019, p. 9). One of my arguments in this thesis is that Foucault's analytics of power – is a major reformulation of the way power had been conceptualised hitherto in political philosophy and Critical theory. In this thesis, I will demonstrate that this has led to a tension in postcolonial scholarship between conceptualising power as repressive, or productive. According to Couzens Hoy, Critical Theory still upholds a traditional conception of the relationship between power and knowledge. Influenced by Marxism, power is conceived as domination-or as repression. Consequently, this means that Critical Theory presupposes that objective knowledge, and a true consciousness is possible. In this epistemological context, 'ideology is the result of distortion introduced by the oppressive exercise of power by the dominant class. Only if such distortions were seen through and the repression dispelled would true consciousness be possible' (Couzens Hoy: 1986, p. 131). For Foucault, the notion of ideology is delusional insofar as it presumes that there can be any knowledge that is disentangled from power relations, and that we could have obtain any transparent knowledge of our real interests 'in the absence of social coercion' (Couzens Hoy: 1986: p. 133).

Foucault's key move from earlier thinkers was that knowledge and power are not diametrically opposed. Following Nietzsche's work on the will to truth, Foucault argued that there is a relationship between the way power is exercised to control subjects and a normalising morality which is predicated on the pseudo-scientific objectification of human beings in the human sciences (power/knowledge). Foucault argues ethical critique in Critical Theory is directed towards the negative imposition of power and is characterised by an essentialist notion of liberation in terms of overcoming alienation (Saar: 2010, p.10; EEW1, p.371). Many Critical and postcolonial theorists, in their analyses of alienation, neurosis and the uncanny, would furthermore come to be influenced by Weber's distinction between rationalisation and disenchantment. Weber's argument is Nietzschean. He argues that it was the Christian desire (the will to truth) that undermined its own foundations, opening the path for modern nihilistic culture. Instrumental rationality constitutes a set of conditions that engender a set of deeply immoral social practices. Like Nietzsche's characterisation of the modern state as 'the coldest of cold monsters' (Nietzsche: 2007, p.134), Weber defines the modern bureaucratic state 'as the institutional embodiment of instrumental reason' (Gane: 2002, p.24). In Nietzsche's thought, the problem with optimistic and dialectic reason that ruled from Socrates to Hegel is the presupposition that by removing logico-social contradictions, the philosopher eliminates the conditions that produce human suffering (Nietzsche: 2006, pp. 99-101). However, when rationalism undermines the religious, mythical horizon that rendered the world meaningful by virtue of academic knowledge, the modern subject becomes alienated and infantilised. Statist bureaucratic administration is domination exercised by knowledge, notably by an impersonal form of rule, predicated 'on formal equality before the law' - its particularly rationalist aspect. By producing the depersonalisation of social relations, the old ultimate religious values that formerly enchanted the world are subsumed to the systematic and efficient control of human conduct. This accounts for Weber's neo-Kantian claim that 'individuals are not treated as ends in themselves, but as the means to a particular end' (Gane: 2002, p.23). For Schechter, the development of the Weberian paradigm can be analysed in terms of the change from metaphysical portrayals of 'reason, natural law and autonomy in Enlightenment' philosophy to a socio-diagnostic presentation of modern rationalisation and portrayals of 'social stratification, power and contingency' (Schechter: 2010, p.7). These conceptions of human rationality are closely related because of their close association with a cluster of historical events. From the perspective of 1789 and the Enlightenment, the use of reason in the arbitative

power of the state was considered a subversive rebuttal to years of domination justified by religious mythology and superstition.

The second moment of political modernity, which I will draw on more explicitly as this chapter continues, refers to the way the Enlightenment ideal of reason failed in the context of capitalism, urbanization and industrialisation, the sources of modernity. By the end of the eighteenth century, the economic benefits of modern industrial revolution were indisputable. However, the lived conditions of the modern society 'were mentally fragmenting the human being, undermining spiritual harmony, and threatening to narrow down people's labour down people's too narrow and circumscribed activities' (Wicks: 2010, p.52). Within this unstable milieu, modern thinkers produced the theory of alienation, which - mostly following the legacy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, although he did not coin the term - sought to describe, following Aristotle's notions of first and second nature, how the customary artifices of civilisation, as second 'customary' nature, estranged the human being from their own essence, or first nature, a presupposition of modern ethics.

Alongside the emergence of phenomenological and existentialist alienation theory, the characteristics of which were detailed in the introduction, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* attributed the limits of human cognition to finite experience, rendering knowledge of the soul, God and free will untenable (Kant: 2003, p.156). The second moment desacralizes the Enlightenment account of reason, by drawing attention to 'functional differentiation', an increasing complexity that defines the modern social order, alongside a sense of social and metaphysical disenchantment. These factors, when considered together, made a total rational account of reality untenable, meaning that scholars were grasping at an inaccessible, noumenal realm, without any success (Schechter: 2010, p.8). Thus, within the contours of traditional Critical Theory, Weberian rationalisation was posited as the reason for the failure of the tradition of Enlightenment reason, which required resurrection. For Axel Honneth, Hegel's reformation of reason made this possible. Drawing on the work of Hegel, early Critical Theorists, including Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse, presupposed a:

'comprehensive conception of reason in which he [Hegel] establishes a connection between historical progress and ethics. Reason unfolds in the historical process by recreating ethical institutions at every stage. And by taking these institutions into account, individuals are able to design their lives according to socially acknowledged aims and thus to experience life as meaningful. Whoever does not let such objective ends of reason influence her life, on the other

hand will suffer consequences of indeterminacy and will develop symptoms of disorientation' (Honneth: 2004, p.339).

Without this presupposition that all individuals can lead a good, meaningful life if they follow the rational institutional principles that enable self-realization (that is, having a relation to oneself as an end and not a means), the intrinsic structural connection between instrumental rationality and social pathologies could not come to light. For early Critical Theory, those who depart from the ideal Hegelian rational norms of society are bound to develop social pathologies, forms of neuroses and alienation (Honneth: 2004, p.340). To explain how ideal reason had failed and become bifurcated, as a socially deficient form of 'particular' rationality, critical thinkers drew on a sociological framework, synthesizing the theories of Karl Marx and Max Weber (Honneth: 2004, p.346). For Critical Theorists, the emergence of instrumental scientific rationality explained how the ethical capacity of modern reason had been undermined by the emergence of the capitalist mode of production. For Bronner,

'Scientific rationality thus blends easily with the imperatives of capitalism and the bureaucratic state. Capitalism, bureaucracy, and science—all expressions of instrumental rationality—constitute the real core of the Enlightenment. They turn nature into an object of use, progress into alienation and freedom into control...Individuals are seen as increasingly making anything other than technical or emotional judgments' (Bronner: 2011, p., 55).

The main proponents of early Frankfurt school Critical Theory therefore shared the same diagnostic analysis of capitalism as a mode of production that was immanent in a socially deformed form of instrumental rationalisation that was embodied in bureaucratic practices and scientific knowledge (Honneth: 2004, p.351). Additionally, they concurred about how to treat this pathology; that is, they had similar ideas about a therapeutic. We will turn to the psychoanalytic model they produced as a treatment later, when I analyse Foucault's ethics and political spirituality. For now, it is important to explain how Foucault's model of rationalisation differs from that of Critical Theory. The traditional Marxist response and solution to the problem of capitalist exploitation was the proletariat coming into revolutionary consciousness of its own material conditions, ushering in the transition from a class in itself to a class for itself, ideally engendering a classless society. But the early Critical Theorists were sceptical about the contemporary state of the western European proletariat because of the alienating forces of commodification and reification in modern consciousness (Horkheimer: 2002, p.227). Rather their claim was that capitalist instrumentalization had historically bifurcated modern reason at a certain point in history, and what was required was that Hegel's ideal, socially

effective reason ‘must resurface for which all subjects in principle must have the same motivational attitude’ (Honneth: 2004, p.353). In interviews, Foucault mentioned his respect for the Weberian paradigm and the Frankfurt school, but he claimed that his work on governmentality, political rationality or the problem of rationalisation differed in several respects. First, with respect to Weber, Foucault responded in an interview what he thought about the word rationalisation:

‘I think one must restrict ones use of this word [rationalisation] to an instrumental and relative meaning...One isn’t assessing things in terms of an absolute against which they could be evaluated as constituting more or less perfect forms of rationality, but rather examining how forms of rationality inscribe themselves in practices or systems of practices - and what role they play within them - because it’s true that practices don’t exist without a certain regime of rationality’ (EEW3, p.230).

For Cornelissen, it is because the concept rationalisation connotes that there is only a singular (Hegelian derived) political rationality ‘that unfolds across history that Foucault rejects it’ (Cornelissen: 2018, p.127). Foucault rejects the thesis of historical bifurcation promulgated by early Critical Theorists, later advocated by Honneth. For Foucault (EEW2, p.441), historical bifurcation continues to presuppose a basic conception of metaphysical reason that requires rectification, one that is continuous throughout history. Reformulating the theoretical principles that inform Critical Theory’s framework, Foucault reconceptualises a new understanding of rationalisation and power in his research on governmentality and political rationalities, which, as I will show in Chapters 4 to 6, has had huge implications for the way future postcolonial thinkers wrestle with the problem of political reality, colonial subjectivity, and ethical and social transformation. Foucault writes,

‘I would not speak of one bifurcation of reason but more about an endless, multiple bifurcation - a kind of abundant ramification. I do not speak of the point at which reason became instrumental ... I think, in fact, that reason is self-created, which is why I have tried to analyse forms of rationality; different foundations, different creations, different modifications in which rationalities engender one another, oppose and pursue one another’ (EEW2, pp.442-443).

The Hobbesian definition of power that presupposed the notion of instrumental rationality, the self-interested individual and the contractual model of political sovereignty came to influence Marxism, the Weberian theory of monopolistic state violence, and psychoanalysis (broadly defined). It features in the account of power deployed by Critical Theorists, a place which Foucault needed to depart from to work out a theory of governmentality. Foucault distinguished

himself from this theory of power by defining it primarily as ‘negative’ and ‘repressive’, in contrast to his own conceptualisation of power as ‘productive’. Interestingly, Foucault sees his intervention as responding to deficiencies within Critical Theory’s deployment of Marxism (if not Marxism more generally as well).

‘Marxism considered as an historical reality had a terrible tendency to occlude the question of the body, in favour of consciousness and ideology. I would also like to distinguish myself from Para-Marxists like Marcuse who give the notion of repression an exaggerated role - because power would be a fragile thing, if it worked through censorship, blockage and repression, in the manner of a great Superego, exercising itself only in a negative way. If, on the contrary, power is this strong, we are beginning to realise, it produces effects at the level of desire - and also at the level of knowledge. Far from preventing knowledge, power produces it’ (EPK, pp.58-59).

Far from simply ‘inverting’ the model of power that had been dominant in Critical Theory hitherto, Foucault’s recalibration of power has radical epistemological and ontological consequences, and more importantly, intervenes into debates within Marxist-influenced Critical Theory. Freudian-Marxian Critical Theorists do not only share the belief that power is repressive or negative: they also hold the view that power, in line with Hobbesian notions of sovereignty, is a property, possession and privilege, that, as aforementioned, can be deployed against another interest grouping to obtain certain benefits through an act of extractive repression or domination (Deleuze: 1983, p.6). For Critical Theorists, power is instrumental, repressive and alienates the subject from its essence. Foucault, far from refuting this problematic, rather produces a radical subversive formulation. Foucault follows a second tradition of conceptualizing power in the West, in response to two problematics within political thought. This tradition, following the work of Baruch Spinoza, conceptualises power in terms of the constitutive model. Within this model, power is conceived as an ontological part of nature that constitutes individual and collective modes of being. Power is therefore not conceived as the additional attributes of a person or class; ‘it is a trans-individual relational entity’, that defines what a person or thing is, and arises from their powerfulness; this makes them what they are. In contrast to metaphysical Platonism, power therefore defines the dynamic ground that develops from interaction and disturbance between opposing forces, subject to mobile and shifting flows of coercive interaction and resistance that distinguish different modalities of being human (Saar: 2010 p.11). For Foucault,

‘The individual is no doubt the fictitious atom of an ideological representation of society, but he is also a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power I have called discipline. We

must once and for all cease to describe the effects of power in negative terms, it excludes, it represses, it censors, it abstracts, its masks, it conceals. In fact, power produces, it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and knowledge gained of him belong to this production' (DP, p.194).

Spinoza's ontological and constitutive model of power came to influence Nietzsche's notion of the will to power as a biological or organic process that defined the appropriative nature of a set of heterogeneous and irreducible processes that we simplify with the notion of life (Saar: 2010, p.12). For Fujita, Foucault was influenced by the Nietzschean notion that power was not a privilege, or a possession, but primarily a relationship of forces. Furthermore, any event designates a shift, or rather a reversal in the relation of forces, and as we will see in the final section of this chapter, the potential for the emergence of new practices (Fujita: 2013, pp.119-120). In the early elaboration of his theory of power, Foucault combines these insights and uses them to modify the work laid out by Georges Canguilhem. Canguilhem proposed that the multiple relations between social institutions and individual bodies were mechanistic relations, which could be called an apparatus when studied together over time to ascertain their historical effects. In Canguilhem's work, the apparatus regulates the social body as an organism in need of 'food energy, etc' (Canguilhem: 1991, p.91). Foucault flirted with naturalistic and mechanistic notions of power in his early career (WK, pp.202-223), but with the shift to governmentality, he changed his focus to a social analysis of how power functions.

Foucault's notion of the apparatus must also not be confused with Althusser's notion of an ideological state apparatus. Althusser's conception designates a set of civil or super structural institutions, such as the 'scholastic system and religious system' (Althusser: 2011, p.143). These institutions may appear in a neutral relation of exteriority to the state but the ideologies they promulgate are partisan elements within a statist bureaucracy predicated on an ideological repression that enforces class domination via the interpellation of class identification. The problem with Althusser and the Frankfurt school for Foucault was their traditional acceptance of the relationships between political processes and knowledge by continuing to use ideology-critique. By challenging the idea of a sovereign consciousness, Foucault shows that 'the inadequacy of the base-superstructure' model is that as a synchronic structure, it cannot explain how multiple systems of thought and practice can be produced and endure after the previous mode of production has disintegrated (Couzens Hoy: 1986, p.131).

For Foucault, the apparatus is ultimately of a diachronic and strategic nature, it is a 'political rationality where relations of forces accentuate, stabilise, and broaden themselves' (EPK,

p.194). The form of political rationality immanent in these force relations produces both conscious and unconscious effects in the lives of subjects, thereby creating their interests in line (or not) with an overarching strategy. These effects 'enter into resonance or contradiction with each other, producing a heterogeneous ensemble' that can strategically be reworked by subjects for political and economic ends' (EPK, pp.195-196). The apparatus engenders a visual and historical reality, producing the subjective bodies and objects that constitute a discursive formation. Deleuze argues that it produces a visual and linguistic domain, in which there is always a conditioned gap or absence that separates what is spoken (the conceptual) from what is seen (the conditioned object). Furthermore, the apparatus provided a conceptual response to an early question that plagued Foucault's work: how does one articulate the historical relationship between knowledge and power, and the political process of subjectification, without deploying a Hegelian dialectic (Derrida: 2001a) or structuralist model (Sartre: 1965)? For Giorgio Agamben, the apparatus provides an answer.

'The term apparatus designates that in which, and through which, one realises a pure activity of governance devoid of any foundation in being. This is the reason why the apparatus must always imply a process of subjectification, that is to say, they must produce their subject... They refer back to this *oikonomia*, that is, to a set of practices, bodies of knowledge, measures and institutions that govern, control and orient - in a way that purports to be useful - the thoughts - the behaviours, thoughts and gestures of human beings' (Agamben: 2009, pp.10-11).

If the apparatus is an activity that realises practices of governance 'devoid of any foundation in being', Foucault is arguing that the political rationalities he is studying are purely historically contingent, and therefore cannot come into existence via any dialectical teleology of reason. The apparatus enables the historian to study the relations among different relations of power/knowledge and therefore the constitution of political knowledges that engender or 'circumscribe' the reality they thereafter intervene upon. Thus, he claims it would not be analytically coherent to study the rationalisation of a culture as a whole, 'but to analyse this process in various fields, each [apparatus] of them founded in a fundamental experience: madness, illness, death, crime, sexuality and so on' (EEW3, p.299). Foucault's texts prove that these diverse rational practices cannot be reduced back to an essential or a priori schema of reason. Therefore, when dealing with any fundamental experience, the point is not to see whether it conforms to the justificatory procedures of an essential reason that has been deformed or distorted by ideological misrepresentation. Rather, Foucault is a historical pluralist interested in uncovering 'precisely which type of rationality they are using' (EEW3, p.299).

Foucault's studies trace the productive relationship within power/knowledge formations, multiple apparatuses each tasked with the rational and technical production of an 'instrumental' and useful form of subjectivity. He defines these political rationalities as technologies of domination. In this context, the second problem that Foucault has with Marxist Critical Theorists, specifically Kirchheimer and Ruche's book *Punishment and Social Structure* (1939), is that 'they omit altogether an account of how it is possible for the human body to be constituted as labour power' (DP, p.26; Couzens Hoy: 1986,p. 130). For Foucault, it was only the productive quality of modern disciplinary power that could account for the constitution of the human body as labour power. In *Discipline and Punish* (DP), he argued that discipline has been around for centuries in monasteries and consisted of a series of ascetic exercises and renunciations with the goal of the individual obtaining mastery of self (DP, p.137). Modern discipline operated differently and, like biopower, was conceptualised as the condition of existence for the development of modern capitalism and communism (EPK, p.23). The problem with Marxian and Freudian Critical Theory is that it deploys a conception of power that is negative or repressive, legislative, and cannot explain, as Foucault's can,

'how the kinds of knowledge necessary for controlling the human body and labour have emerged. The human body could only have been constituted as labour power if there were a technology or knowledge of the body that made it possible to organise and subjugate bodies into docile, useful roles. Furthermore, this is not something that is imposed on one class (the oppressed workers) by another (the dominant class); it increasingly permeates and characterises all aspects of society' (Couzens Hoy: 1986, p.131).

Unlike the Hobbesian model favoured by Marxist Critical Theory, Foucault's conceptualises power in 1976, in *The Will to Know* (HS1) - the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* - not as a possession or privilege, but as 'exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations' (HS1, p.94). Despite power referring to non-egalitarian relations, these relations these are not fixed in the traditional binary sense of ruler and ruled. The model that Foucault deploys to understand power relations as exercised within society is that of war. This entails, in his own terms, substituting the juridical conception of power (ideology in Marxism or taboo prohibition in psychoanalysis) with that of power as primarily strategic and productive. Inverting Clausewitz, he explains that war, if conceptualised as strategy, may be conceived as similar to politics. But it 'must not be forgotten 'that politics has been conceived as a continuation, if not directly or exactly or war, at least of the military model in preventing war or disorder' (DP, p.168). According to Foucault, power is not exercised from

the top down, as in the traditional sense of sovereignty, but from below or within the social body, insofar as we understand power relations as rationally immanent in the modes of production, 'knowledge relations and sexual relations' (HS1, p.84) that characterise contemporary society.

At this point, I am going to address the critiques of some of the contested aspects of Foucault's genealogical work in the mid-1970s. In *Society Must be Defended*, Foucault acknowledged that his work had reached a theoretical impasse, which he sought to rectify with the help of other scholars (SMD, pp.2-3). Although commentators often frame 'governmentality' as a theoretical development that is internal to Foucault's trajectory, Stuart Elden has recently demonstrated that governmentality was not Foucault's creation, but part of a collaborative research venture organized by his student, Rick Castell (Elden: 2016, pp.83-84). Thus, the investigations published as *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* were 'articulating a zone of research, not a fully formed project' (Gordon, 1991, p.2). Nevertheless, I argue that Foucault's shift towards governmentality did indeed signify a response to a crisis in his own work (SMD, p.2-3), acknowledging three major errors pointed out by commentators.

A) Foucault's modern emphasis on the microphysics of power, that is, analytics of power that attempted to override the problem of state sovereignty (EPK, p.98), was incapable of formulating the central problems of socio-political critique, specifically the relationship between institutions, capitalism, and the role of the state. B) This meant that Foucault was unable to illustrate how these micro-strategies and macro-strategies of power were able to strategically coalesce in a manner that would comprehensively saturate the social sphere. C) The metaphysical focus on power (what power is) as an ontologically pervasive set of warring forces, both enabling states of domination and relations of strategic and tactical resistance, undermined possibilities of meaningful forms of individual freedom or a normative standpoint that justified critique (Baudrillard: 2007, p.50; Fraser: 1981, p.31; Gordon: 1991, p.4; Habermas: 1998, p.279; Lemke: 2019, p.117; Patton: 2013, p.178).

Governmentality enables an analysis of what Foucault calls a political rationality, which will be explored in relation to the term technology in section 1.4. Foucault is referring to historical practices or social relations without a normative standpoint. These systematic practices or political rationalities, as complexes of power/knowledge, constitute the production of new regimes of truth (consisting of concepts, objects as discursive knowledge), which apparatuses (technology) of security then come into support. The rationality generates the discursive series

in epistemic conceptual form (a program) while the apparatus renders it material and capable of being controlled. As Thomas Lemke puts it,

‘a political rationality is not pure, neutral knowledge which simply ‘represents’ the governed reality. It is not an exterior instance, but an element of government itself which helps to create a discursive field in which exercising power is ‘rational’. The concept of governmentality suggests that it is not only important to see if neo-liberal rationality is an adequate representation of society, but also how it functions as a ‘politics of truth’, producing new forms of knowledge, inventing new notions and concepts that contribute to the ‘government’ of new domains of regulation and intervention’ (Lemke: 2019 p.12).

According to Lemke, Foucault argues power relations become a common, if not necessary, feature of all human social relations. Domination, on the other hand, designates a ‘power relationship that is stable and hierarchical, fixed and difficult to reverse’ (Lemke: 2013, p.7). Consequently, the notion of government was introduced because disciplinary power was conceived as implying a static order with fixed boundaries and no margin for resistance (Lemke: 2013, pp.5-6).

‘Foucault corrects the findings of the earlier studies in which he investigated subjectivity primarily with a view to ‘docile bodies’ and had too strongly stressed processes of discipline. Now the notion of government is used to investigate the relations between technologies of the self and technologies of domination’ (Lemke: 2019, p.4).

Responding to the critiques outlined above, Foucault augmented his definition of power as it pertained to the production of the subject, as well as introducing a new concept, which he called technology. In the European context Foucault was analyzing, he drew a distinction between domination and power, which were now ‘strategic games between liberties - strategic games that result in the fact that some people try to determine the conduct of others - and states of domination ... And between the two, between the games of power and states of domination, you have governmental technologies’ (TS, p.19). I will be using the concepts of technology and states of domination in this thesis to address the problem of colonial alienation and neurosis. Foucault claims that what we have traditionally called power, we can now refer to as states of domination. Essentially, what I will be arguing in the following chapters is that subjectification in the colonial context and the postcolony is tantamount to a state of domination.

### **1.3 The Failure of Marxism and Psychoanalysis in Fanonian Anticolonial Thought**

In this thesis, I set out to ascertain whether a Foucauldian reading of Steve Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy can address the alienating and traumatic effects of colonial and postcolonial governmental reason in the South African postcolony. In this section I will expose the weaknesses of Critical Theorists and Fanonian's in their attempts to synthesize Marxist and psychoanalytic thought into a single framework. In twentieth century scholarship, thinkers from the French academy, the Frankfurt school of Critical Theory and anti-colonial scholarship involved in decolonial movements combined the insights of Marxism and psychoanalysis (Barrett: 1991; Long: 2021; Whitebrook: 2004; Young: 2001). For postcolonial studies, all these schools of thought have proved influential, but the way they have been appropriated to reconstruct the postcolonial subject, and whether such a deployment is analytically and theoretically coherent once inflected with French post-structuralism, remains an open and important question. Retrospectively, commentators argue that a coherent synthesis never emerged. Michelle Barrett (1991) claims the fault never lay at the door of psychoanalysis. When attempting to promulgate a theory of ideology, Marxist theorists, notably Louis Althusser, sought to draw elements from Freud and, later, from Lacan's work. The problem that beset Althusser's methodological transformation of the theory of ideology can quite simply be reduced to two incommensurable conceptions of subjectivity: Marxism has a sociological understanding of subjectivity as individual class consciousness or false consciousness that reduces the interests that are determinative of subjectivity to a location within a greater economic structure. Within the critical tradition of classical Marxist epistemology, overcoming false consciousness is predicated on demystifying the illusory ideology of the bourgeois class and returning to science, or reason as it were (Barrett: 1991, pp.18-34).

Psychoanalysis has a deeper conception of subjectivity, focusing on unconscious mechanisms, emotions, fantasy, sexuality and other irrational forces. It rejects the idea of a centred rational individual, completely aware and in control of its motivations, as a remnant of outdated sociological theory and realist epistemology (Barrett: 1991, pp.99-100). Although Althusser could not 'link a functionalist theory of social reproduction to the agency afforded to the Lacanian ego's potential identifications', after his intervention, the classical theory of ideology generally disintegrated. The relationships between individual and class consciousness, ideology, reason and class structures were undermined, eventually subordinated to a schema that conceived of the interpellation of a predominately unconscious 'individual subject' in symbolic class structures. These symbolic class structures were identified as saturated

superstructural institutions, such as the school which functionally secures the reproduction of the conditions that characterize capitalism as a mode of production (Althusser: 1994, pp.110-111; Barrett: 1991, p.112).

In the African context, thinkers such as Biko have responded to the 'inferiority complex' diagnosis opened by Fanon's reading of the colonial and postcolonial condition. Anti-colonial thinkers such as Fanon broke from an orthodox theory of Marxism because it reduced the 'cultural' or superstructural problem of racism, and anti-colonial revolutions, to epiphenomena of the 'real' historical processes that characterized the systemic nature of the material base; this was a critical insight that would motivate later thinkers (Young, 2001, p.6). More importantly, it was Fanon who provided an eclectic approach that could simultaneously account for the colonial subject, whether male or female, being alienated and neurotic, a definition Biko generally accepted (Biko: 2008, pp.60-61)

There is an important break with Western Marxism and psychoanalysis that I will be examining during this thesis whenever engaging the diagnoses of Fanon and Biko. As in European scholarship, in postcolonial scholarship the synthesis between psychoanalysis and Marxism is compelling but not coherent and requires another toolbox to expose the pathological production of postcolonial subjectivity and a mode of therapy, which I will account for in the following chapters by analyzing the production of racial alienation and trauma through a reading of Foucauldian racist affective technologies of domination. Before turning to how Fanon's work finds a place in a theory of colonial and postcolonial political rationality, I will briefly capture his argument in *Black Skin, White Masks*, specifically when it comes to racism and the pathological effects it produces on the subject,

Despite his initial allusion to psychoanalysis (Fanon: 2017, p.3), Fanon's socio-diagnostic method conceptualizes the collective neuroses of the colonial populace as the product of social structures (Gibson: 2003, p.39; Naicker: 2019, p.69). He transformed Jung's definition of the collective unconscious and Freud's notion of projection into a theory of structural racialization that still pays homage to the constitutive role of economic determination in the domain of intersubjective culture (Naicker: 2019, p.69). He makes three clear claims: first, the internalization of the racial gaze is conditioned by the prior destruction of local structures, and with it an entire system of metaphysics, customs, beliefs, traditions and values. Without any system to give himself a meaningful reference, 'the black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man' (Fanon: 2017, p.90). Second, the inferiority complex is produced

by the transference of the European collective unconscious to the colonized population through the installation of colonial structures as the ‘sum of prejudices, myths and collective attitudes of a given group’ (Fanon: 2017, p.159). Third, within the colonial context, the colonized subject will come to consider their cultural heritage and biology as sources of inferiority; these traumas cannot be resolved if colonialism continues to structure social life. ‘The internalization of the inferiority complex acts as a neurosis but its causes are economic, social and cultural’ (Gibson, 2003, p.52).

In the tradition of Fanonian political sociology, which bequeathed the problems of subjectivity and colonial culture to contemporary postcolonial scholars, most political commentators have argued that Fanon proposes violence as a cathartic force, alleviating the racial inferiority complex by destroying the roots of the ‘worm eaten structure’ (Bulhan: 1985; Gibson: 2003; Gordon: 2015). However, Achille Mbembe has argued that the last chapter on colonial war in *The Wretched of the Earth* throws this thesis into disrepute, and that Fanon’s psychiatric case studies illustrate soldiers from both sides, instead of being cleansed by bloodletting, were more traumatized, shattered and consequently neurotic (Mbembe: 2019).

In the context of Fanonian scholarship, the first generation of postcolonial thinkers used psychoanalysis to either, in the case of Homi Bhabha, explicitly reread (or remember) Fanon as a Lacanian, foregrounding his affective work on the mirror stage (See section 4.4), at the expense of any ontological reading of the postcolonial condition. Second, come to the realization, following Stuart Hall (2018), that the presence of the Lacanian unconscious specifically renders the relationship between interiority and externality as a question that cannot be reduced to a form of sociology or anthropology. For Hall, within typical sociological accounts, there is always a process of total structuration, where the constitutive values, beliefs, relations of meaning and practices that constitute social structures are adopted or internalized by the subject: a determinative thesis we call socialization. In psychoanalysis, instead, within the contours of introjection and projection, something is always ‘irretrievably lost, a fundamental displacement’ (Hall: 2018, p.891), which, as in the case of Bhabha’s ambivalence - an affective complex of hostility and affection - becomes a source of agency. Hall argues that when the question of subjectivity is raised, the racial alterity that ruptures the defence mechanisms of the (colonial) unconscious can no longer be reduced to the sociological theory of the structural but requires a theory its own. In relation to this psychoanalytic discovery of subjectivity, two more distinctions were made: one, that psychoanalysis tells us that aggression and violence are internal, intrinsic parts of our constitution as psychic subjects; two, this

implies that the ostensibly revolutionary and cathartic violence that the traditional Fanonian thesis in *The Wretched of the Earth* undergirds is contradictory. As Hall puts it,

‘What is a politics which is already complicit with the violence which you are trying to struggle against? Isn't that what psychoanalysis tells us? It's a very radical insight: that psychic life is itself aggressive and violent. So, the struggle that one tries to constitute between the violent and the not-violent in the society is a kind of fiction, because the violence is already in our inside. That makes us understand more the causes and sources of our confusion. Whether it generates a politics or not, I don't know’ (Hall: 2018, p.896).

I argue that prioritizing the reality of the unconscious radically changes the way we understand the processes of colonial and postcolonial governmentality. Regarding my research question, this has important consequences for analyzing the constitution of postcolonial subjectivity. By virtue of the reality principle, orthodox Freudians attempted to keep a clear distinction between an objective world and the fantastical realm inhabited by children and neurotics. Although Freud did begin to slide away from this traditional dualistic view in his discussion with Flies, it was only by the time of Lacan that fantasy was deemed necessary for all subjects to exist within the symbolic fabric of society. The significance of this discovery for my analysis of the production of racial subjectivity is four-fold. First, in his tribute to Jacqueline Rose, Edward Said presented her theorization that fantasy is essential to the life of nation states. For Rose, fantasy is bound up with the problem of ‘how subjects relate ethically to one another and form a social world’, and ‘plays a constitutive role in the modern world of nations’ (Said: 2012c, pp.494-495). Consequently, the nation becomes envisaged as an idealized community, resonating with Benedict Anderson’s notion of a nation state as an imagined community, an organic homogenous whole that develops through stages in linear time, but is connected, in Rose’s view, by the transgenerational trauma articulated by Abraham and Torok (Anderson: 2006; Said: 2012c, p.494). Second, following from this first position, in *The Critique of Black Reason*, Achille Mbembe (2017) claims that the governance of settler colonies, including colonial and Apartheid South Africa, comprised of a set of ‘institutional mechanisms’, or rather ‘technologies of black reason’ - practices that formed ‘laws, rituals and regulations’, that I will explore in more detail in Chapter 5. For now, what is important is that such technologies transformed whiteness and other colonial fantasies into social realities, ‘a form of predation with an unequalled capacity for the subjection and exploitation of foreign peoples’ (Mbembe: 2017, p.45). Essential to the fantasy of whiteness was thus the necropolitical practice of racial discrimination, which, as a desire for separation and genocidal extermination, has a series of

discursive racial, phobogenic objects as its point of fixation - Negro, Jew, Arab, as Fanon would have it (Mbembe: 2019, pp.42-43),<sup>v</sup> which will become points of identification to produce racial subjects. Third, following from these observations is the idea that unconscious processes outside our rational control stand in a reciprocal relationship to technologies of domination, with extremely detrimental effects to human life. In his critique of Mbembe's *Critique of Black Reason*, David Marriott points out that instead of what Mbembe considered, in his reading of Fanon as the unconquerable element of human freedom could very well also be the death drive, which Mbembe would concur a year later is the cause of the black subjects' status of social or living death, and instead of being cathartic, has a pharmacological effect on the postcolonial subject - a trope I will explore in more detail in Chapter 6 (Marriott: 2018, p.67; Mbembe: 2019, p.3). Freud's work underwent a fundamental shift during the first world war. Hitherto he had thought that the unconscious was driven by the pleasure principle, but after four years of war that had become untenable, and with it the modern ideals of the Enlightenment, the unwavering belief in historical progress. Now he saw the drive to destruction, or death instinct as primary to all biological processes, insofar as we understand that the aim 'of all organic matter is to return to an inorganic state, then the ultimate goal of all life is death' (Freud: 2015, p. 44; Diatkine: 2005, p. 144). Evidenced in a late letter he wrote to Albert Einstein, '*Why War*' (1932), this discovery would change the way he envisioned the transition from a state of nature to culture, or civilisation. Instead of the Hobbesian contract being viewed as a primarily peaceful process, the later Freud's theory of a fratricide to account for the emergence of political liberalism began to resonate with Walter Benjamin's notion of founding, mythical violence.

'Thus, the attempt to replace actual force by the force of ideas seems at present to be doomed to failure. We shall be making a false characterisation if we disregard the fact that was originally brute violence and that even to-day it cannot do without the support of violence' (Freud: 2005, p. 355).

Fourth, following Juliet Mitchell's feminist reconstruction of Freud, psychoanalytic analyses of the state do not presuppose patriarchal norms, but rather start to analyse them in relation to the constitution of different societies. The significance of this is that the state is no longer merely imagined to be the space of African liberation, but rather a space where the phallic nature of psychic power is caught up with its constituting, leading to the constitution of a misogynistic culture where manhood and liberation are complementarily measured in terms of

the capacity to subjugate and penetrate as many women as possible (Mitchell: 1990, p .xiii; Mbembe: 2005, p.41, 2006, p.326).

#### 1.4 Governmentality, Technology and Naturalized Psychology

The implications of these four claims for Fanon's project and, as Hall notes, for a postcolonial and ethical subject, are radical. My problem with Hall's position is that it signifies a naturalized psychology, consequently treating psychoanalysis as a neutral mode of disciplinary analysis. By naturalized psychology I am referring to the fact that the psyche is treated as a natural object to be discovered (like an atom or an exoskeleton) - an ahistorical something that exists as objectively given in the world, regardless of the epistemological and consequently signifying practices of human beings. By rejecting a naturalist psychology, I am referring to a form of psychology that conceptualizes psychic life in relation to naturalism or biological norms. Consequently, institutions such as the family and the state can be recoded or legitimized as viable political expressions of a deep human nature. However, I am not willing to go as far as some postcolonial and feminist theorists do by rejecting psychoanalysis because of its racist and patriarchal presuppositions (Frosh: 2017).

Although a contested and complicated issue, Lacan's radical move, which has been so influential to postcolonial studies, is to move the unconscious from the sphere of biology to linguistics. For Freud, the unconscious was the source of impulses, whereas for Lacan the unconscious is structured like a language-which means that the identity of the subject is constituted within signifying relations in language, which is the space where 'that which can repressed in the unconscious can be understood' (Reddy: 2015, p. 74). -One of the major insights of post-structuralism, particularly the work of Deleuze, Guattari and Foucault, was to treat psychoanalysis not purely as a scholarly or scientific discipline, but as a social institution connected to forms of social control favoured by the modern state (Deleuze and Guattari: 2013, pp.193-194; EPK, p.136). My argument is that, to denaturalize desire, psyche, and racism without falling into the problem of total structuration that envelops sociological methods, we need to conceptualize racism and the colonial psyche(s) as the products of affective technologies of domination. This move seems contradictory, because Foucault appears to define technology in rationalistic terms that permit no engagement with the finer distinctions of psychoanalysis. His understanding of technology has a wider purview than the traditional definition of 'hard technology, the technology of wood, of fire, of electricity' (EEW3, p.364).

Foucault proffers a definition of technology ‘as a practical rationality governed by a conscious goal’ (EEW3, p.364). For Altamirano, although the concept of rational technology in Foucault at first appears to oppose human to the natural, things are more complex. Foucault’s definition of technology ‘recalls the Aristotelean formulation of *techne*, which often holds material alongside physiological and political elements. By bypassing the distinction ‘between the social and the material, the human and the nonhuman, which in turn allows us to conceive of a world order of things between the natural and the artificial’. For Altamirano, practical reason does not have a relationship of mutual exclusion with psychic life, but as I argue, can be said to effectuate it. The way we conduct or carry ourselves, engenders or effectuates a ‘certain affect, in the sense that we are able to affectively respond to the ways that other people acknowledge or greet us on our walks’, and we have practical techniques for avoiding social blunders as well as physical accidents (Altamirano: 2012, pp.12-13). It is important to define the difference between this naturalist position and Foucault’s notion of technology. A naturalist psychology presumes that the discoveries of psychoanalysis reflect an objective situation; the unconscious and the superego are natural objects existing in the world, regardless of social relations. For Hook, a technology of the subject (which Foucault calls a technology of domination) (EEW1, p.177), enables the creation of individuating psychological depth or the thickening of interiority, a process he calls subjectification. This aspect - the psychological and enduring effects of technology, which invest the soul as the core of ‘psychological virtualities’ - cannot be accounted for by either the notion of structuration or the materiality of disciplinary power.

In contrast to the several attempts to synthesize the traditions of Marxism and psychoanalysis, the radicality of Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* was to provide a historical model that could account for the modern ‘soul’, or the creation of psychological individuality - a subjectivity that imprisons the body through a process of continual self-mortification (Hook: 2012, p.1; DP, p.27). The historical emergence of disciplinary technology represented a shift in the methods of punishment. Instead of the crime being treated as the object of analysis, the human sciences constituted and fixed the ‘individual’ as an object of study that would eventually entail systematic knowledge about human behaviour and its relationship to the social environment. The emergence of psychological knowledge can be characterized as a method of intervention, correction and rehabilitation, which presupposes modes of objectification. Objectification entails a process whereby the psy-function, operating on a scale of declining, degenerative subjectivity, effectuates

‘particular problem categories, as in the case of delinquents, perverts, homosexuals, hysterics and so on - through which experts might know and predict the behaviour of deviant subjects, [and which] would become a crucial component of disciplinarily’ (Hook: 2012, p.12).

Butler was the first thinker to recognize that Foucault had presented an analysis of the historical emergence of the soul as the imprisoning force of the psyche, in terms of Lacan’s notion of the relationship between the ego ideal and the superego in the structure of the symbolic (Butler: 1997, p.86). Historically, the relationship between Foucault and psychoanalysis has been nothing but fraught. When publishing *The Order of Things* in 1966, Foucault heralded psychoanalysis as part of the revolutionary new postmodern episteme (OT, p.405). When *Discipline and Punish* was published nine years later, much of the psychological language had been dropped, and with the publication of the *History of Sexuality Volume 1*, colleagues were startled that psychoanalysis, and the problem of liberating desire from repression, had now become central to Foucault’s critique of biopower (Alain-Miller: 1992, p.62). However, I concur with Derek Hook that Foucault’s recourse to an archaeology of Western desire is a genealogical historicization and not refutation of psychoanalysis (HS2, p.44). Foucault advocated a historical nominalism that suspends all forms of universalizing judgement (Flynn: 2005, p.36), and in this sense he could not adopt the meta-psychological language that psychoanalysis deploys because it presupposes a ‘certain view of consciousness drawn from precisely the same type of thinking and the mode of power he is attempting to historicize and critique’ (Hook: 2012, p.28). Thus, we can argue that Foucault deliberately deploys a series of ‘non-psychological’ concepts to explicate a process of psychological self-formation that enables a sense of moral reflexivity and self-surveillance.

This is what Hook refers to as the saturating influence of disciplinary power. The operation of a technology is more effective than a structure because a technology no longer needs to be present like the formal elements of a structure for its psychological investments, or effects, to continue operating through a set of concrete practices, as subjects inscribe the power relation with themselves (Hook: 2012, p.32; DP, p.231). At first, disciplinary power does require a complete capture, and surveillance and control of the body, actions and time of the human subject. But after a while, the functions of self-surveillance become self-perpetuating. In this way, Foucault could exhibit how a political technology gave birth to the superego, a faculty of unconscious mental life in which the repressive laws of the father organize psychic life and control socially prescribed deviant behaviour, thoughts and impulses, generating affective guilt or bad conscience (Freud: 2004, p.6).

‘The operation of discipline must look forward, as Foucault puts it, to the time when only virtual suspicion and instruction will be necessary, to the moment when discipline keeps going by itself, when its acquired skills become self-implementing, automatic and indeed autonomous functions of the subject ... In the very act of becoming the subject of one’s own narrative, one becomes ‘attached to the work of constructing an identity’; by being affiliated to an identity project one is ‘bound to the language and norms of psychological expertise’... a positioning I understand as subjectification’ (Hook: 2012, pp.33-36).

Within this governmental zone of discursive practice, Foucault’s mode of questioning changed to ‘how’ questions to analyse the relationships between scientific discourses and political practices (EPK, pp.73-86). In attempting to escape from a metaphysics of power, Foucault’s new approach, typified by the word ‘government’, eschewed essentialist models of the nation state, human beings and ethical systems. Foucault never tried to articulate a general theory of the state ‘based on any a priori about its essential unity, its pre-given functions’ (Jessop: 2007, p.36). I argue in section 1.5 below that Foucault was interested in ‘how’ one could interrogate the history of the state, the subject and ethics if we did not assume their objective significance, enshrined within transcendental, metaphysical or divine principles. This means shifting to an analysis of the state as ‘the effect of multiple, conflicting and transitory power relations. It necessitates a genealogical analysis of how the state emerges as the contingent object and practice of government and, ‘gets reconstructed as governmental practices change’ (Jessop: 2007, p.36).

As I stated in the introduction to this chapter, the reason governmentality is important as a zone of analysis is that it enables me to study the configuration of modernity and Africa without presupposing a general model which is then simply applied. For example, modernity, according to Charles Taylor, is characterised by the entrance of a new moral order into our social imaginary which is the result of the emergence of certain social formations. (Taylor: 2002, p.92). Fundamentally, the two models which determine the emergence of a normative unit of modern political discourse, the nation state, are the French revolution and the independence of the North American colonies from the dynastic British empire (Anderson: 2006, p.90). As a zone of analysis, governmentality enables me to track the configuration of particular political rationalities that constitute African colonial and postcolonial states outside of this Eurocentric metanarrative, and how the constitution of African modernity may depart from or differently appropriate the norms of modern political discourse, the public sphere, the market etc., and the effects this may have on the processes of subjectification.

## 1.5 Governmentality, Conduct and Christianity

The narrow meaning of government simply refers to ‘the way in which one conducts the conduct of men’ (STP, p.186). The term ‘conduct’ is central to Foucault’s new comprehension of how power is exercised, enabling him to differentiate its deployment from the exercise of violence. For Lorenzini, our modern notion of Kantian inflected ‘critique’ is only the latest historical manifestation of what Foucault defines as counter-conduct, providing the transitional point between his political studies of domination and ethical analyses of resistance (Lorenzini: 2016, p.19). Foucault argues that violence is exercised on a person’s body or possessions. It is not specifically attuned to controlling and manipulating the behaviour of a subject as in a power relation. Violence is enforced to break and destroy the subject, annihilating their future possibilities as a human being. He reformulates his definition of power relations via the ‘equivocal notion’ of conduct ‘as a mode of actions upon the actions of others, when one characterises these actions as the government of men by other men - in the broadest sense of the term - one includes an important element, freedom’ (EEW3, p.341). The central move is that he no longer deploys that binary couplet, opposing power as domination and resistance as freedom as ‘forces’ in a relation of mutual antagonism. Freedom is not opposed to the exercise of power; it is not its antithesis or opposite. A power relation always presupposes that the subject being governed has several possibilities for ‘reacting or behaving’, that is for conducting themselves differently. In that sense, power as ‘a mode of actions upon actions’ cannot be exercised without freedom serving as a certain precondition (EEW3, p.341). This has less to do with a new metaphysical relationship between freedom and power than with the novel relations that Christianity, or pastoral power, engendered, typified by the word ‘conduct’.

The word ‘conduct’ refers to two things. Conduct is the activity of conducting (*conduire*), of conduction (*la conduction*) if you like, but it is equally the way in which one conducts oneself (*se conduit*), lets oneself be conducted (*se laisse conduire*), is conducted (*est conduit*), and finally, in which one behaves (*se comporter*) as an effect of a form of conduct (*une conduite*) as the action of conducting or of conduction (*conduction*)(STP, p.193).

Christian pastoral power can therefore be differentiated from the hierarchical form of rule in ancient Platonic society: that of the relationship of the citizen to the laws of the city state or legislated by a philosopher king, upheld by his guardians (Plato: 2007a, p.130). Pastoral power instantiates an individualizing relationship of knowledge between the priest or shepherd, and

the members of the flock. This is not a relationship primarily concerned with domination, but with the salvation of every member of the flock. As Foucault noted, this is a 'beneficent power' (STP, p.126). Consequently, the shepherd requires knowledge of the needs of each member of their flock, in the process discursively constructing a knowledge of the soul of each member and their sins, to direct and control his conscience or conduct (EEW3, p.421). The characteristic of this power is that it is individualizing and subjectifying; it produces an obedient, self-divided individual tied to a conception of self-identity which consequently legitimates his/her control by another social actor within a political regime of truth (EEW3, p.421). In the history of the Christian West, the secular legislator and shepherd of conscience never fused. Foucault's analytic investment in the problematization of 'modern governmental rationalities' resulted from a historical awareness of the 'demonic coupling' of the 'city game' and 'shepherd game', which constituted, in the discourse of the sixteenth century reason of state, a type of political sovereignty which is both totalizing and individualizing, the characteristic of Western governmentality (Gordon: 1991, p.24). Before turning to normalization and biopolitics, I will explain how this shift to reason of state fortified the problem of government as a political rationality.

## **1.6 Governmentality as Political Rationality**

To understand what Foucault is driving at with his notion of modern governmentality, it is incumbent on me to explain the historical conditions that initially made governance a problem. The modern nation states, that contemporary societies sometimes assume have existed since time immemorial, do not even pre-date colonialism and were constituted by means of the Peace Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. This legislation was designed to conclude the Thirty Years War. The war began as a German conflict, where the reformation tragically set off a series of events in which Rome sought brutally to regain its monopoly over Europe. Almost simultaneously, certain dynastic alliances began to grow faster than others, leading to massive conflicts structured by imperial desires. It provided sovereign state entities with demarcated geographical territories which were given a monopoly over the means of violence. The Westphalian peace meant that state competition could theoretically not involve violence, but was sublimated through the accumulation of wealth, diplomacy and trade to avoid more European territorial conflict. States generally sought to strengthen themselves by strengthening and maximizing their own resources, the most important being the population (Schirato et al.: 2012, p.74). The idea soon followed that the existence, growth, strength and development of a state commanded by a sovereign is not bound to theological but to rational principles that are

immanent in its configuration (Lemke: 2019, pp.121-122). Foucault noted, 'the state is governed according to rational principles that are intrinsic to it and cannot be derived solely from natural or divine laws. The state ... must find the principles of a rationality in that which constitutes the specific reality of the state' (EEW, p.213). The problem with Machiavelli's work, for future scholars, was that it was concerned with how a prince or sovereign may take control or defend his territory from his subjects or potential intruders like himself. In this light, although Machiavelli's text realized that rational principles were intrinsic to the state without any relation to a transcendent sphere (Machiavelli: 2011, pp.33-43), his was a reason of sovereignty, that of the prince defending his principality from his subjects. Foucault's focus was on how thinkers promulgated the discourse of reason of state in response to Machiavelli, which was concerned with the reflective question of the best way a state could be governed to increase the state's strength by maintaining an internal order (peace) and increasing its productive economic forces by interrogating governing as a political practice. Notably, this meant that governance consisted of a) technical practices of governing (conduct of conduct), and totally new ways of constructing quasi-scientific practices and scientific knowledges (savoir), such as the human sciences, which could provide information of what a state's recourses consisted of - that is, the means or 'goods and things' it could 'correctly dispose of' via those technologies in to order to increase its strength by securing its discursive vision. Since the Treaty of Westphalia was always considered theoretically by European nation states, they continued to expand territorially, militarily and economically-the most notable case being the colonisation of the globe. These shifts inaugurated by reason of state historically engendered a transformation in relations of power/knowledge, to articulate an effective mode of 'governmentality'. Governmentality thus refers to:

'The ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses, and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very complex form of power, which has its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means the apparatuses of security ... This type of power-which may be termed government-resulting on the one hand, in the formation of a whole series of governmental apparatuses, and on the other, the development of a whole complex of knowledges (savoir). The process, or rather the result of the process by which the state of justice became an administrative state during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and becomes governmentalized' (EEW3, pp.219-220).

Foucault's analysis of governmentality thus opposes traditional theories of political state sovereignty in the West derived from Hobbes. In Western political theory, democratization occurs through a historical process where the centralized power of the sovereign is disseminated throughout the territory, from the ruler to those once ruled, who now exist as 'the people', turning them into politically sovereign subjects (Schirato, Danaher and Webb: 2012, p. 68). Hence Rousseau's definition of the social contract as a set of legally encoded norms and values that express the general will of the citizens within a participatory republic, encoded through a set of obligating laws. (Rousseau: 2002, p.166). For Foucault, the transition from medieval authority to the modern state is not predicated on any sort of contract concerned with the traditional problem of political legitimacy, but on the strategic production of a new object of knowledge in the discourses of reason of state: the well-being or prosperity (salvation) of the population (or flock). For Foucault, the central strategy that the reason of state presupposed was the construction of an object of knowledge called the population within the discourse of political economy, which, prior to the entry of biopower in the age of liberal governance, was still defined under the general tenor of pastoral power as a total collection of individuals (Pasquino: 1991, p.108).

For Foucault, the development of political economy is unthinkable without the development of 'the science of police'. When we think of policing today it is perpetually posed in a negative, or restricted sense, as 'the maintenance or order and prevention of dangers' (Pasquino: 1991, p.106). The German term Foucault draws upon, 'Polizei or Polizeiwissenschaft' (science of police'), is better translated as policy (Gordon: 1991, p.5). The objectives of the police were not repressive. Their policies were aimed at ensuring the economic prosperity of the state, which entails slowly fashioning the social body as a population of happy, moral obedient and productive individual citizens (Burchell: 1991, p.123). Thus, Foucault analyses policing and reason of state 'in terms of the way individuals are politically objectified and the political techniques for integrating concrete aspects of their lives into the pursuit of the state's objectives' (Pasquino: 1991, p.115). According to Foucault:

'Every program also either articulates or presupposes a knowledge of the field of reality upon which it is to intervene and/or which it is calculated to bring into being. The common axiom of programs is that an effective power is and must be a power which knows the objects upon which it is exercised. Further, the condition that programmatic knowledge must satisfy is that it renders reality in the form of an object which is programmable'. (EPK, p.280).

In this analysis, a political rationality enables, within a discursive space, a ‘problem to be articulated and offers certain strategies for managing it’ (Lemke: 2019, p.15). The key aspect that must be underscored in analysing political rationalities is the role of instrumental knowledge, or discourse, in initially effectuating an alteration of the empirical real through its modes of objectification and conceptualisation, which political technologies then come into support. In this light, the ‘apparatuses of security’ then enforce the program by modifying the conduct of subjects in such a way as to keep with this discursive ‘vision’ (Lemke: 2019, p.119). Foucault’s work maps out the unintended effects and failures of these problems. Historical analysis in Foucault’s account did not aim to see if a plan was successful or to study a general schema of rationality as a structural historical a priori. It was situated on three levels: one, a singular program or singularity of historical, practical rationality that was the result of a discursive problematization; two, the constitutive effects that are brought into being as the discursive program of political rationality transforms elements of the empirical real as a movement of thought, ‘an ideal materiality’; three, the unintended materialized effects that emerge, such as delinquency, ‘as the gap between program and reality’ (Lemke: 2019, p.145). I will conclude this chapter on Foucault’s political rationality by focusing on how subjects are produced in Foucault’s reformulation of disciplinary normalization and biopolitical governance. The following sections provide a framework for later analysis of how subjectivity is produced in the colony and postcolony.

## **1.7 Normalization and Discipline**

For Foucault, the construction of the norm and normalization in modernity is inextricably linked to a historical process of social control in the form of disciplinary power relations. The novelty of disciplinary power was that it exceeded the functions of legality and diffused throughout society in the micro-relations of domination within workshops, prisons, asylums, schools, families, factories, and the army, possessing a penal function that sought to continuously supervise and adjust deviant although not illegal behaviour to a morally acceptable level, or norm.

‘At the heart of all disciplinary systems functions a small penal mechanism ... The disciplines established an infra-penalty; they partitioned an area that laws had left empty; they defined and repressed a mass of behaviour that the relative indifference of the great systems of punishment had allowed to escape...It was a question both of making the slightest departure from correct

behaviour subject to punishment, and of giving a punitive function to the apparently indifferent elements' (DP, pp. 177-178).

Foucault's work is revolutionary for unearthing these problematics, but his understanding of normalisation can be attributed to the work of his doctoral supervisor, the historian of science Georges Canguilhem (BC, pp.39-40). Canguilhem argued that our modern conception of the norm emerged from the biological and medical sciences. It was considered in relation to the medical conception of pathological variation from a state of optimal organic functionality, but it very quickly branched out to saturate the entire sphere of social relations in a new moral vocabulary. Instead of the norm being characterised as a neutral scientific discovery, Canguilhem claimed that the norm, as it was reconceptualised from Broussais to Comte, became a polemical and administrative notion that was central to bourgeoisie hegemony (Canguilhem: 1991, pp.239-246; EPK, p.12). Although the abnormal became conceived as the secondary antithesis of the norm, morally augmenting our perception of the pathological, it is the existentially primary fear, somewhat phenomenologically, of a future abnormality that justifies 'normative intervention' (Canguilhem: 1991, p.243), as each child becomes, within a capitalist economy of surveillance and fear, a future criminal. Until 1829, debates regarding human nature were common amongst both philosophers and sociobiologists, but by the end of 1830, the idea of human nature was translated into the notion of normality. The word normal became valuable because it provided a way 'to be objective about human beings', and also to bridge Aristotle's 'fact value distinction...one can, then, use the word "normal" to say how things are, but also say how they ought to be' (Hacking: 1990, pp.160-163). Thus, there are two different concepts of a norm standing in complementary tension in Foucault's theory of normalization. First, there is the concept of the norm as the empirical average or statistical mean. Second, the normal is an ideal or optimal model of "perfection" to which we may progress' (Hacking: 1999, p.168). More importantly, Foucault notices that the change to the idea of normality corresponds to a shift in juridical and penal practices. In classical law, notwithstanding the victim of the act, crime was always considered as an attack on the body of the sovereign. The object and ritual of punishment was therefore 'the ceremonial reversal of the crime' (DP, p.82). In modern penal practice, on the other hand, the object of penal practice is no longer the crime committed, 'but its psychological-moral double', the figure of the abnormal criminal. Psychiatric and legal discourse by 1832, in many cases, was no longer concerned with whether the accused had committed the crime; the analysis of the case now

tended towards a moral and psychological presentation of a character prone to crime and the specific criminal act itself (AB, 132).

The construction of psychological abnormality, and the constitution of disciplinary technologies of control that sought to normalise individuals by correcting, transforming and rehabilitating deviant behaviour, is inextricable from what Karl Marx called primitive accumulation. As Western society began to industrialize, the state evicted peasants from the rural lands they previously inhabited. With this transformation, the state passed legislation enabling a new regime of private property, securing exclusive control of the means of production and the structure of the capitalist economy. For Sanyal, 'it was a process of ruling out the myriad ways of ensuring subsistence that the pre-capitalist permitted' (Sanyal: 2014, p.121). For the bourgeoisie, annihilating the sources of feudal subsistence would transform the former peasant into a wage labourer, only capable of selling their labour power to sustain their daily existence.

The purpose of disciplinary power consisted of constituting the production a docile body, or subject characterised by the norm. Lemke argues that within Marxist discourse, Foucault is demonstrating that, for labour power to be exploited, it first needs to be constituted. However, the implications of private property and the new capitalist economy were not met with consent. The first forms of resistance or counter-conduct to capital<sup>vi</sup>, were 'shunning wage-employment ... beggary, crime and vagrancy' (Sanyal: 2014, p.124). In *Madness and Civilization*, Foucault illuminated a central event in the history of capitalism, the great confinement. Although confinement coincided with the erection of the 'Hopital General' in 1656, the decree authorizing its establishment must not be confused with a medical mandate concerned with public health. The confinement houses that appeared all over Europe over the next 150 years were not concerned with any form of medical treatment, 'what made [them] necessary was an imperative of labour' (MC, p.42). Confinement therefore netted peasants drawn from their farms, unemployed workers, students and the sick (MC, p.43). In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault's account of normalisation and disciplinary society illustrates the process in French history by which the abnormal, recalcitrant peasant was turned into a docile body. Disciplinary technologies 'increase the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces in terms of obedience' (DP, p.138). Normalization is a social process of controlling conduct that is exercised by means of continuous observation, surveillance and examination from within the social body. As a result, to avoid social punishment, exclusion and the denial of liberty, the docile, normalised subject eventually internalizes the disciplinary

gaze in a network of disciplinary institutions such as schools, factories and prisons, and imposes a regime of self-surveillance that turns the formerly recalcitrant pauper into a new moral category, the proletarian quasi-citizen (EPK, p.155). Thus, 'its constitution as labour power is only possible if it is caught up in a system of subjection (in which need is a political instrument meticulously prepared, calculated and used)' (DP, p.26).

## 1.8 Biopower

In Foucault's thought, liberalism does not represent a discontinuous break from reason of state or normalization, 'but a curve in the development in its constituent element, political economy, which led to what we know as biopolitics' (BB, p.22). This follows from a shift in the discursive economy of modernity, where biology comes to replace language as the dominant discourse in Western society (PD, p.57). The new premise of political economy is that the processes of economic interest that characterize the existence of a population are opaque, but (to include non-rational elements such as passion and desire) follow natural processes. Thus, in the eighteenth century the population was not conceived as a collection of distinct individuals as it was in the police state. Biopolitics concerns itself with the population 'as a biological problem', where the question of biological existence enters the logic of political calculation and administration to advance the strength of the state, not only externally but to defend society from internal threats, such as the biological degeneracy that criminology and psychiatry proposed to find in criminals, immigrants, and members of the lower classes (SMD, p.245). Furthermore, following a governmental reason of state, liberal political economy in the age of biopolitics rationalizes the population as the state's most important resource. Population is conceptualized as the

'species body, the body imbued with mechanics of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that cause these to vary. Their supervision was effected through an entire series of interventions and regulatory controls: a biopolitics of the population' (HS1, p.139).

If what was at stake in the classical period was the life of the sovereign, modernity replaces this with the survival of national populations, pitted against one another. If the characteristic of sovereign power before the nineteenth century was 'to take life or let live', this meant that the 'sovereign power's effect on life is exercised only when sovereignty can kill: it is at this moment when the sovereign can kill that he exercises his right over life' (SMD, p.240). From

the nineteenth century, while the physical right of sovereignty to take life seems to disappear, its function is displaced by being recalibrated into the strategic matrix of biopolitical interventions. This strategy can be surmised as ‘to make live and let die’ (SMD, p.242). Policies and interventions directed towards enhancing the very biological vigour and strength of the population aren’t purely economic matters (HS1, p.146), but a political discourse, state racism, which inscribed itself in the sociobiological terms of evolutionism, constituting the discursive formations and power relations that fostered colonialism and the first and second world wars (SMD, p.245). If disciplinary power signified one pole, treating the body as the productive machine, then biopolitics represented another, with a series of ‘interventions and regulatory controls’ focusing on maintaining the life of the national population (HS, p.139). The second pole of power focused on the

‘species body, the body imbued with the mechanics of life and serving as the basis of all biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause these to vary’ (HS1, p.139).

In Europe, until 1948, although modern nation states fostered vitality, administering conduct in such a way as to contribute to reproductive and economic productivity and the wellbeing of its citizens, Foucault noted that, according to this logic - where the population was still conceived as the state’s recourse or object, the state would sacrifice its population if necessary to enhance its aims - biopolitics would very easily mutate into thanatopolitics. Thus, there is an implicit death drive governing biopolitical processes (EEW3, p.416). According to Stuart Elden, while this type of thinking was not strictly speaking Darwinism, it was a biological comprehension of natural power linked to theories of evolutionism, social Darwinism. The colonial state emerged with the first act of colonial genocide, and ‘the theme of political enemy is extrapolated biologically’. War becomes a means of eliminating weaker enemies and the ‘regeneration of the race’ (Elden: 2016, p.43; SMD, p. 257). For Foucault, human sexuality became such an explicitly political issue ‘because ‘it was at the pivot of the two axes which developed the entire political technology of life’ (HS1, p.145), and was linked to the disciplinary surveillance, control and intensification of the body’s capacities. Second, it was deployed to regulate population: it was a ‘means of access both to the life and the body of the species...a standard for the disciplines and basis for regulations’ (HS1, p.146). For Foucault, the introduction of biopower and apparatuses of security now focused on a detailed empirical analysis of the biological population, which meant that the use of disciplinary power could be informed, and consequently deployed to conduct, manipulate and foster the sexual morality of

each individual by means of continual surveillance and the extraction of truth about the carnal desires of individuals as a confessional mechanism of guilt-inducing obedience in order to benefit the racially puritan growth of the whole:

‘Foucault’s discussion of truth in HS1 is focused on the practice of confession from the Christian pastoral to the psychoanalytic couch... Truth becomes a critical, underlying structural element that conditions how sexuality and practices like confession of one’s sexual thoughts and desires can take shape and define ‘who one is’ (Lynch: 2017, p.158).

## **1.9 Conclusion: Foucault, the Subject and the Present**

To sum up the preceding analysis, Foucault was less concerned with the existence of power than with how it was exercised to constitute possible states of domination. His definition of a subject, in terms of the passive process of subjectification, is a partial process that I will analyse in relation to the active side of Foucault’s ethics in the following chapter. But in concluding this chapter, I want to specify Foucault’s attitude to the subject and the present to open a discussion of his later work. The subject has two meanings in Foucault’s work:

‘There are two meanings to the word subject, subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power that subjugates and makes subject to ... And nowadays, the struggle against forms of subjection, against the submission of subjectivity, is becoming more important’ (EEW3, pp.331-332).

Foucault’s depiction of the subject is predicated on a certain conception of self-mortification (EEW3, p.311) and resistance against the social authoritarianism that he sees flourishing in modernity. Another point he makes in *The Subject and Power* is that subjects are divided not only from having a meaningful and autonomous relation to themselves, but also from others – which includes feelings of impotence. Foucault’s concept of a divided subject might seem to link his politics of truth to a social, non-metaphysical diagnosis of an alienated or neurotic subject. However, Foucault does not have a totally diagnostic attitude towards the present. This is linked to his work as a specific, as opposed to a universal, intellectual such as defines normative Critical Theory. For Honneth, the psychological suffering engendered by the pathological structural impact of capitalism can only be ‘overcome by initiating a process of enlightenment amongst those involved’ (Honneth: 2009, p.20). The universal intellectual, whom we also refer to in contemporary society as the public intellectual, is chastised by

Deleuze and Foucault for sitting safely away from the real seat of battle, and presupposing, based on a disinterested rationality, universal norms and an abstract theory of justice, representing a course of struggle for the masses which is apparently in their best interests (Deleuze and Foucault: 1977, pp.207-208)

Furthermore, paying close attention to the struggles that occurred in May 1968, Deleuze and Foucault claimed that the relationship between the so-called masses and intellectuals has changed. Those involved in struggle did not require the pastoral guidance of the intellectual for the masses to resist, and the dynamic between the two and the role of the intellectual consequently shifted. In response to these problems, Foucault argued that he was a specific intellectual, establishing a new relationship between theory and practice. (Deleuze and Foucault: 1977, p.209). He claimed that specific intellectuals did not provide universal solutions in abstracted philosophies concocted in ivory towers, but only worked within 'specific sectors, at the precise points where their own life or work situates them' (EEW3, p. 126). Furthermore, he reiterated this position 13 years later in an interview, Truth, Power, Self: 'All of these works are against the ideas of universal necessities ... Each of my works is part of my own biography. For one reason or another, I had occasion to feel and live those things' (TS, p.11). Consequently, the relationship between theory and practice changes. Foucault considers his work as a form of radical praxis, creating a practical relay that receives, retransmits and reinforces already existing forces of resistance by exposing the historical modes of subjectification, discursive regimes of truth and dense networks of obstructive power relations that have been used to control and exploit human beings in modernity.

'The intellectual's role is no longer to place himself 'somewhat ahead and to the side', in order to express the stifled truth of the collectivity; rather it is to struggle against the forms of power that transform him into its object in the sphere of knowledge, truth, consciousness and discourse. In this sense theory does not express, translate or serve to apply practice: it is practice. But it is local and regional as you said, and not totalizing. This is a struggle against power, a struggle aimed at revealing power and domination where it is most insidious' (Deleuze and Foucault: 1977: pp.207-208).

Foucault played a supportive and diagnostic role to subjects who are resisting, working in the specific sectors where their experiences interlink. His analysis posited that those subjects are aware of their conditions, insofar as they are conscious that a regime of knowledge 'exercises an uncontrolled power over people's bodies, their health, their lives and death' (EEW3, p.330). Subjects are therefore cognizant of their divided reality, from each other and themselves.

Consequently, if Foucault was supplementing social struggles and not guiding them as a universal intellectual, what was his diagnostic disposition to the present? First, Foucault noted that we must give up the Hegelian habit of seeing the present as some sort of historical apotheosis. More importantly, concerning any diagnosis of the present, the problem

‘does not consist in simple characterization of what we are but - instead, by following lines of fragility in the present - managing to grasp why and how that which is no longer can be that which is. In this sense, any description must be made in accordance with these kinds of virtual fracture which opens up the space of freedom understood as a space of concrete freedom, that is, of possible transformation’ (EEW2, pp.449-450).

For Foucault, the specific intellectual can only operate practically by situating their work along one of the lines of fracture that have been brought about by the transversal struggles of contemporary social movements. In the next chapter, I will examine exactly how Foucault attempts to provide a set of ethics for movements without becoming prescriptive or falling into the ‘blackmail of the Enlightenment’. For now, it is important to stress that Foucault’s work on ethics and his analysis of the present was predicated on his principle of contingent eventalisation. An event, such as May 1968 or the student protests in South Africa in 2015, will constitute a ‘breach of self-evidence’, and disturbs one’s comprehension of what is historically necessary as it constitutes a reversal of the power relations that constitute the horizon of possibilities that constitute the present. In the context of the events breach, students and activists will question ‘those self-evidences on which our knowledges, practices and beliefs rest’ (EEW3, p.226). The position of the specific intellectual or genealogist at this point will not be to prescribe a normative code by which to live. As a historian, his or her task is to rediscover the ‘connections, encounters, supports, plays of force, strategies and so on, that at any given moment establish what counts as being self-evident, universal and necessary’ (EEW3, p. 227). A critique of political rationality enables one to open up a space of freedom between ourselves and a fracturing regime of truth (Allen: 2016, p. 177). It means rediscovering the technologies and political rationalities that have constituted the regime of truth that is slipping away, enabling a becoming otherwise and a crossing of our historical limits and a change in our mode of being. Thus, any event, by forcing a reversal in the relations of power, enables the emergence of new set of practices (enstehung) and power relations. In conclusion, according to Amy Allen in his later work he focuses ‘on the role that critique can and should play in transforming our historical a priori...by revealing it as a contingently

emergent way of thinking, experiencing, and acting, in order to open up the space for the possibility of being, doing, and thinking otherwise'(Allen: 2016, p. 184).

## Chapter 2. Foucault's Warrior Ethics

### 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to ascertain whether Michel Foucault's ethical philosophy can be deployed to coherently reconstruct Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy as a technology of the self, capable of healing an alienated and neurotic racialised subject in the South African postcolony. Before discussing the contribution of Foucauldian ethics in the postcolony and postcolonial studies more generally, in this chapter I will articulate the ethical concepts that structure and define Foucault's later thought - specifically, the technologies of the self, political spirituality, care of the self and parrhesia, as well as the methodological and historiographical framework in which these concepts function, namely historical ontology. A comprehension of Foucault's ethical concepts and the methodological framework from which they derive enables me, in Chapters 7 and 8, to undertake a nuanced engagement with Steve Biko's work on reconstructing a black subject afflicted by an inferiority complex, which will include suggestions for reworking the deficient relationship between Marxism and psychoanalysis that I started to explore in the previous chapter. This chapter elucidates Foucault's position towards governmentality, specifically the art of not being governed, as a form of political ethics.

I begin Chapter 2 by outlining, in Section 2.2, the methodological contours of Foucault's historical ontology. Foucault's historical ontology is influenced by both Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger's historical deconstruction of Western metaphysics. I argue that Foucault unearths subversive technologies of the self as a form of authentic historicizing, highlighting Nietzsche's earlier claims on monumental and antiquarian historiography. Next, in section 2.3, I contrast the revolutionary or subversive technologies of the self (subjectivization) - that is, the Western historical heritage that Foucault interprets as a personal-political ethics - with the technologies of domination (subjectification) that he critiqued from the time he began engaging with pastoral power through his studies of governmental rationality (analysed in Chapter 1). In section 2.4, I analyse Foucault's ethical concepts, political spirituality, care of the self and parrhesia. I demonstrate that Foucault's emphasis on spirituality in his later career is central to his theory of political resistance and his critique of modern Western epistemology, that is, of the transparent relationship between the Cartesian subject and referential theories of truth. This will lead me to conclude the chapter with section 2.5, where I argue that Foucault's notion of political spirituality and his reformulation of the Enlightenment as a political ethos, despite the derisive critiques of Western commentators, is deeply influenced by his relationship with the Iranian revolution and a particular vision of

religious martyrdom that broke with the tradition of European secularism. As I move to Chapter 3, I will articulate the Eurocentric aspects of Foucault's historical ontology, opening political questions about Foucault's spatialization of modernity and the way a totalizing Western narrative begins to replace a more radical archaeological focus on discontinuity and how colonial practices ended up colonising Europe endogenously. Such a problem calls for a decolonisation of historical ontology in postcolonial studies, a trope that will be analysed from Chapter 3 through the rest of this thesis.

## **2.2 Historical Ontology**

### **2.2.1 Heidegger and Historical Ontology**

According to Colin Koopman, Foucault's work on governmentality signified a move to a new method, a 'critical ontology of ourselves' (Koopman: 2013, p.535). There are two aims to a critical ontology of ourselves. The first is to articulate a series of general histories of the contingent practices by which modern subjects have been produced in games of truth. After bequeathing us a genealogical history of who we are or dissolving our present reality, the second goal is to define and marshal a set of historico-political 'recourses' that may enable an ethical transformation of political subjectivity: from a state of obedience and mistrust of self to political courage or bravery that borders on martyrdom (Koopman: 2013a, p.536). In German, *Historie* is the writing of history, the discipline of historiography. *Geschichte* is history as it 'actually happens [geschieht], the events' (Elden: 1999, p.13). In congruence with the material reality of colonial oppression, European ideologies were accused of misrepresenting the reality of colonial experience and the stereotypical categorization of colonized communities. The ostensible split between representation and reality led to the problem of colonial alienation, in which the subject becomes divided from his/her authentic self, or rather true self. According to Scott, for the colonized to overcome alienation, the decolonial project concerned itself with the production of a national culture that could realise the demand of self-representation, a process of restoring an authentic relationship to representation and reality (Scott: 1999, pp.14-16). Thus, as an epistemological and historical formation, colonialism was far more complicated a problem than Marxist scholars would admit, which is why I adopted historical ontology.

Ontology is a term derived from Latin, and had a place alongside metaphysics, cosmology, and psychology in traditional philosophical analysis. The term was originally deployed in modernity by the seventeenth century philosopher Christian Wolff as the analysis of being in general, in opposition to the metaphysical and cosmological analysis of individual entities such as God, or the psychological interrogation of the soul. By the twentieth century, ontological analysis interrogated ‘all types of objects, and what makes it possible for them to come into being’. Objects do not only designate material entities, but also different ideas, classes, or types of human beings. The act of ordering these objects together to explicate ‘what there is’ becomes the study of being or ontology. When analysing the processes by which different types of objects that we have played a role in constituting come into reality, the study becomes known as historical ontology (Hacking: 2002, p.1).

Foucault’s deployment of historical ontology is derived from the historiographical work of the German philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger. For Heidegger, philosophical and historical thinking since Plato had been a metaphysical exercise. The modern representational subject, ushered into the world by Rene Descartes and Immanuel Kant, standing over and against being as a set of objects, was the latest configuration of the metaphysical attempt to ground the reality of entities (or beings, to use Heidegger’s terminology) (Heidegger: 1997, p.88) in a highest entity (being) (Dreyfus: 2003, p.30). As ground, in Heidegger’s reading of the tradition, this highest being is considered both the cause of the existence of ordinary beings and the originating source of their meaning.

‘Philosophers since Plato have replaced the clearing with a highest being that is the ground of being and the source of their intelligibility. For Plato the highest being was the Good, for Aristotle, the Unmoved Mover, For Christians the creator God; and after the Enlightenment, it was man himself. Heidegger calls all these attempts to replace the clearing with the beingest being onto theology’ (Dreyfus: 2003, p.32).

For Heidegger and Foucault, ontological analysis isn’t simply an alternative model that rejects the theoretical investigations of metaphysical philosophy or the human sciences. Ontological analysis stands in an internal relation to these phenomena, and its objective is to provide an analysis of the world of practical involvement in which those metaphysical, Cartesian and transcendental problems emerged. In his ontological analysis, Heidegger doesn’t only challenge our normative understanding of human nature as a rational or spiritual essence but claims that a sense of epistemological indeterminacy both engenders our relations with each other and non-human beings in the world. Heidegger follows the work of Karl Marx, describing

the human being as primarily a practical creature that is perpetually located in, and unable to dislocate itself from, a lived world of concrete engagement (Heidegger: 2008, pp.78-85; Nichols: 2014). Historical ontology as a methodology exhibits that: objects, our theoretical ideas, forms of rationalisation and the different possible ways of being human (or the social roles we enact) become available to us because they are the outgrowth of our everyday practical activities in the world. It is a method that allows us to comprehend how certain ‘possibilities for choice and being arise in history, not in terms of grand abstractions but processes which we constitute ... which create the potential for individual experiences’ (Hacking: 2002, p.23). An ontological analysis ascertains the background relations of our practical involvement in our everyday context as the conditions of existence that render possible the emergence of positive phenomena. According to Heidegger, the problem with metaphysical systems is that they elevate ontic representations of reality to totalizing ‘world pictures’ which conceal the way our pre-reflective practices (to reiterate epistemological indeterminacy) have shaped our apprehension of positive phenomena, and the reified relation to entities that have led to a distorted entrapment in our present condition.

Within the methodological parameters of historical ontology, the metaphysical conception of ground is thus transformed into an active process of grounding, a free space of epistemological indeterminacy in which there is always some capacity for human subjects to stand back, thereby altering their practices by transforming their practical understanding of Being/Power (Blond: 2010, pp.33-34; Dreyfus: 2003). I claim that Foucault was attracted to this method because it allowed him to argue that we have constituted ourselves as ethical subjects in local conditions by deploying subversive tactics that have been produced in alternate historical milieus. This enabled him to overcome a theory of human nature or the development of a singular human reason, and instead to produce a range of studies on how power relations shape subjective life in political processes. According to Dreyfus, the brilliance of Foucault’s work was to appropriate Heidegger’s later focus on the natural realm and things and turn the tables by postulating how selves are turned into subjects under a technological mode of objectification in games of truth. Foucault provides evidence of this facet of his work in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*:

‘For Heidegger, it was on the basis on Western techne that knowledge of the object sealed the forgetting of being. Let’s turn the question around and ask ourselves on the basis of what techne was the Western subject formed and what were the games of truth and error, freedom and constraint, which characterise the subject’ (HERM, p.524).

In the next section, I analyse Foucault's historical ontology as a methodology, articulating its difference from Heidegger's thought. Furthermore, by showing the core aspects that underlie Foucault's method, I will be able to demonstrate in the rest of this thesis, from chapters 3 to 8, how my theorisation of a decolonial historical ontology is different from Foucault's traditional Eurocentric historical ontology. In section 1.8, I introduced Foucault's notion of biopower and its relation to Thanatopolitics. For Foucault, basic life practices are primary, but they can, in the case of colonising genocide and the Holocaust, lend themselves over to thanatopolitics-the conditions of existence of racist, genocidal and ultimately suicidal state(s). However, according to Achille Mbembe, Foucault's analysis of biopower is insufficient to address problems that are central to the colony and postcolony: the 'power of death', the dynamics of racism, 'the sovereign right to kill-becomes vital to the power of life' (Gressgard: 2019, p.13). Mbembe claims that biopower cannot account for the way necropolitical rationalities and fantasies of enmity in the colony and contemporary society (the becoming black of the world-see Chapters 5 and 8), configures the killing of the other, as a racialised enemy as its primary political prerogative. Thus, 'for Foucault death-politics is always a negative by product that occurs in the pursuit of life, Mbembe's concept of necropolitics suggests that are forces of killing that exceed the governmental task of fostering life' (Gressgard: 2019, p.13). In Mbembe's critique of Western metaphysics (Gerber and Tembo: 2019, p.9-10), he articulates a postcolonial ontology in which 'racial capitalism is the equivalent of a giant necropolis'(Mbembe: 2017, p. 136-137). It from within the necropolitical ontology that Biko's Black Consciousness Philosophy can be recuperated as ethical heritage, a racially affective technology of the self I will problematize in Chapters 7 and 8.

### **2.2.2 Foucault's Historical Ontology as Methodology**

Foucault was elusive about his method for most of his career. He defined the methodological structure of his work as a combination of historical ontology and genealogy in an interview with Paul Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *On the Genealogy of Ethics*, and a paper that specified the terms of his critical ethos, titled *What is Enlightenment?*. In the interview, Foucault is far more concise.

‘Three domains of genealogy are possible. First, a historical ontology of ourselves in relation to truth through which we constitute ourselves as subjects of knowledge; second a historical ontology of ourselves in relation to a field of power through which we constitute ourselves as subjects acting on others; third a historical ontology in relation to ethics through which we constitute ourselves as moral agents’ (EEW1, pp.351-352).

If historical ontology is the study of how we have constituted ourselves, then genealogy becomes ‘the critical unravelling of that process’ (Hacking: 2002, p.5). The text that joins the approach of Nietzsche, Foucault and Heidegger and yields insight into Foucault’s combination of the two methods is Nietzsche’s treatise, *The Use and Abuse of History* (Elden: 2003, p.189). Nietzsche’s critique was that modern historical Hegelian culture had a negative impact on cultural life. For Nietzsche, Hegelians, and I include contemporary phenomenological thinkers influenced by Fanon and Biko, ran into the trap of treating human history as a teleological and necessary dialectic that modern human beings can only manifest; they can only make explicit the implicit rationality that was present in prior stages of the Christian idea by adapting to the circumstances of the time. He argued that, since Hegelianism considered the present as the necessary embodiment of a rational teleology, ‘the idolatry of the actual’, modern theory, including postcolonial scholarship, has forfeited the possibility of creating a new culture or a ruptural living ethos that signifies becoming totally otherwise - a revolutionary singularity that displaces the conservative and prescriptive tenets of the Hegelian *aufhebung*. Furthermore, postcolonial scholars have been critical of Hegelian theories of historical progress as a fact, as an implicit historicism- and an implicit belief in the intellectual superiority of European culture (Allen: 2016, p.114). Historicism, to invoke Foucault is a form of historiographical structuralism, in which a totalizing principle-another stage of transcendental consciousness, defines the unified development and meaning of every related phenomenon in a synchronic whole. If one reads Edward Said philosophically, transcendental consciousness is rearticulated as a stadial vision of European consciousness, whereby the colonised (as I will explore in Chapter 3), are subordinated to a European conception of teleological process-and have to conform or assimilate to European culture in order to be considered a rational, mature and modern human being (Said: 1991, p. 151; Chakrabarty: 1993, p. 8; Allen: 2016, p. 114-115).

Nietzsche argued that for historical scholarship to have any value it had to advance the way of life of a society. He claimed that notions of absolute knowledge and historical objectivity, constituting a political history of truth, must be subordinated to a perspectival disposition towards the past in order to liberate society from problems it encountered in the present. Nietzsche's solution was to offer three modes of historiography, which would not only challenge the necessity of the present moment and the forms of truth that delimit our contemporary perceptions of reality and horizons of possibility, but also open new contemporary spaces for living or becoming otherwise.

First, monumental history attempts to reclaim and portray the great figures or moments in human history to depict a model of strength for the contemporary community. Nietzsche claims those fighting against something abominable in the present can rarely find exemplars amongst their contemporaries. Those 'men of action' need examples, teachers and comforters. Such a thinker would not need these figures for their own well-being, but for their society or even mankind. Second, antiquarian history seeks to preserve ancient cultural models to console and therapeutically treat a pathological contemporary society, restoring a meaningful horizon and a sense of growth or self-determination. Nietzsche claims that a nation can reach a painful or meaningless conjecture after being conquered or suffering an internal upheaval. Notably, colonial rationalities constituted a complicated set of intrusively violent foreign elements which destabilised and disenchanting a people, threatening, mummifying, or deracinating their entire way of life - a thesis that disciples of Biko and Fanon engage with in similar terms today. In response to this alienating and traumatic experience, Nietzsche argues, the historian should practice a form of antiquarian history. Third, critical history breaks up the continuity of the past by showing that its values, practices, and modes of being are fundamentally contingent developments. Nietzsche warns that if monumental and antiquarian history are appropriated uncritically, the historian runs into the danger of reifying the past in a manner akin to Hegelianism. Nietzsche argues that these two methods need to be structured around a critical, effective history. He conveyed that these contingent developments were the products of power relations that, over time, conditioned the constitution of the present (Nietzsche: 2009, pp.43-44).

For Foucault, Nietzsche's three modes of historiography problematize our relation to the present as something questionable, fragmentary, and transformable. In Chapter 1, I attended to Foucault's Nietzschean emphasis on the centrality of power relations in the emergence of each historical milieu, which is a prioritization of his genealogical critical history as a process of

unravelling moral constitution. However, at that point I omitted how Foucault relates this critique of the subject to a historical ontology of truth in Western thought. In order to uncover the history of modern subjectivity, Foucault does not follow Heidegger's ontological claim that each historical epoch has a originary and unifying moment (or *ursprung*), in which the truth of Being is disclosed by unveiling a set of new set of practical possibilities in a continuum recognised by an essential thinker. Rather, Foucault's historical ontology emphasizes Nietzsche's principle of *Entstehung*, which details the emergence of marginal practices embedded in power relations (*potenta*) that can break up a set of a prior dominant practices, producing a new political regime of truth. The production of social relationships and a new political regime of truth always emerges from a non-space, a relation of pure distance entailing antagonisms that cannot be synthetically negated (*Aufhebung*).

'Emergence is the entry of forces; it is their eruption, the leap from the wings onto centre stage, each in its youthful strength ... it is a non-place, a pure distance which indicates that the adversaries do not belong to a common space. Consequently, nobody is responsible for an emergence, no one can glory in it since it always occurs in the interstices. In a sense, only a single drama is ever staged in the non-place, the endlessly repeated play of dominations' (EEW2, p.337).

For Foucault, the central question that emerges is not 'what truth is' philosophically, but how philosophical truth has functioned politically in the production and maintenance of human subjects as objects of domination. To even entertain such a paradigm, notably how a politics of truth could enable a political strategy of resistance, I must detour back to central presuppositions of Foucault's revolutionary strategy. The notion of truth, philosophically speaking, has been treated in dualistic terms from Platonic to Kantian, Hegelian and Marxist dialectical philosophy. Plato inaugurated a new form of rational and technical philosophical thought, which created a distinction between the appearance and essence of a thing. To distinguish between the false appearance of a thing and its form or rational essence was the conceptual task of this philosophy. Indeed, the problem of truth, until Kant, was independent of the constitution of the knowing subject, and it was presumed that reason had the capacity to conceptually ascertain the essence of things. In Cartesian epistemology for example, the thesis is that we can have rational knowledge of an objective world. In this light, truthful 'rational inquiry... is the process of insuring that representations correspond to reality - so a fixed reality means a fixed method' (Rorty: 1986, p.44).

Although Foucault was opposed to a philosophy of the founding, transcendental subject as the conditional ground for representation and spontaneous thought, he was a neo-Kantian (IKA, p.8) who was deeply influenced by the modern reformulation of Western epistemology. Kant argued that our finite subjective constitution made it possible for us to only know a phenomenal realm of appearances; the Platonic realm of essences or noumenal things in themselves were beyond the comprehension of our epistemic constitution (Kant: 2003, p.24). But more radically, this implied that reality was not a 'ready-made world', but instead a realm of phenomenal appearances made possible by the way the conscious faculties of the subject were constituted (Bowie: 2003, p.12) In this light, Ian Hacking has described Foucault's doctoral thesis, *Madness and Civilisation*, as a Romantic Kantian text.

'This first major book by Foucault hints at an almost Kantian story in which our experience of the mad is a mere phenomenon conditioned by our thought and our history, but there is also a thing in itself which can be called madness, and which is uncorruptible. Moreover, reason is also only a phenomenon whose very existence requires its opposite to define itself against ... By the time the book had been written it was clear that this romantic conception of a pure and prior madness was a mistake. There could be no such a thing a pre-conceptual way of being' (Hacking: 1986, pp.28-29).

By maintaining a dualism at the level where madness was objectified, between appearance and thing in itself (signifier and signified respectively), Foucault had unfortunately not only continued to deploy a Hegelian historicism (Derrida: 2001a, p. 40), but he had also turned madness into a sign and thus continued to uphold the transcendental tenets of structuralism and hermeneutics. This mistake was acknowledged in *The Birth of the Clinic (BC)*, when Foucault attacked the dualistic model associated with both structuralism and hermeneutics. Foucault contended the problem with hermeneutic structuralism was that it presupposed the sovereignty of the signified, and the interpreting subject. More importantly, in the history of Western political history, hermeneutics has been used as a pastoral technique for extracting the internal truth of the subject and affixing this truth to a relation of subjugation. Foucault's critique of hermeneutics and structuralist semiotics that began in *BC* has five features:

1. Interpretation engenders and presupposes a gap between the signifier and the signified, which can never be closed, fully explicated or elucidated.
2. The practice of closing this gap is given over to the hermeneutic, interpreting subject, a pastor or psychoanalyst 'whose position of epistemic privilege masks the function of power in the interpretive act'.

3. The motivation to close this gap through a limitless process of decipherment and interpretation enables the hermeneutic project, guided by the ancient and modern iterations of pastoral power to use the technique of confession to ‘drive ever inward to the very heart, soul, inner unconscious and so on of the signifier, demanding the infinite intensification of interpretive techniques’.
4. Thus, in the process, the continued existence of hermeneutics, and consequently confessional techniques, conceals their strategic embodiment in ‘the historically situated and ever-changing requirements of institutional power’.
5. Lastly, such an endeavour presupposes an argument about a hidden truth concerning ‘an original man’, with some state of ‘pure authentic subjectivity wherein signifier and signified were once one’ (Nichols: 2014, p.110).

Although Foucault was once attracted to elements of political spirituality and technologies of the self (terms I will explain in section 2.3), and the political ethics of both Marxism and psychoanalysis, he ultimately rejected both traditions because they upheld aspects of technologies of domination that not only recoded the legitimacy of statist institutions (EPK, p.106; Deleuze: 2004, pp. 252-261) but consequently endorsed the notion of a true self that had been produced by the early Church theologians (HERM, p.364). Thus, for Foucault, although psychoanalysis and Marxism had radical potential, they both continued to presuppose a true self, or authentic form of subjectivity, which could be liberated via a process of knowing thyself (EEW1, p.288). Freudian psychoanalysis and orthodox Marxism continued to uphold an epistemological distinction between fantasy and reality, and misrepresentative ideology (exchange value) and concrete reality (use value). These epistemological distinctions continued to be imbricated in a theory of the liberated subject and a quasi-scientific discourse on human nature, insofar as the lifting of repressive prohibitions and distorted labour relations would enable a return to a pure, authentic state of being, a true self from a prior condition of ‘false estrangement’:

‘I have always been somewhat suspicious of the notion of liberation, because if it is not treated with precautions and within certain limits, one runs the risk of falling back on the idea that there exists a human nature or base that, as a consequence of certain historical, economic and social processes, has been concealed, alienated or imprisoned in and by mechanisms of repression. According to this hypothesis, all that is required is to break these repressive deadlocks and man will be reconciled with himself, rediscover his nature or regain contact with his origin, and re-establish a full and positive relationship with himself’ (EEW1, p.282).

The reason Foucault's point is important is that, unfortunately, many postcolonies (or postcolonial states), have, in liberating their populations, constructed a monolithic or homogenous conception of racial identity, which Gayatri Spivak has called strategic essentialism. As I will demonstrate from Chapter 5, these stereotypical constructions may be necessary at the point of anti-colonial struggle, but after the moment of formal decolonisation these identities harden into regressive pathologies, imbued with a morality of resentment. As Said and Mbembe have argued, to accept such terminology is to remain within the contours of colonial discourse; the only difference is that now these stereotypes have been inverted (in the sense that they are now associated with moral goodness), and invested in as a form of discursive identification, a trope I will explain in more detail in Chapter 4.

### **2.2.3 Historical Ontology, Morality and Ethics**

As I have demonstrated, the key to philosophical metaphysics has either focused on a presupposed objective realm or a philosophy of the constituting subject. But the focus of historical ontology, for both Heidegger and Foucault, is not the object, or subject, but rather practices. Instead of the sign/consciousness axis, discourse operates on the axis of knowledge/practice (EAK, p.132). Foucault defines practice as 'the point of linkage of what one says and what one does, of the rules one prescribes to oneself and the reasons one ascribes, of projects and evidence' (EEW1, p.11). Practices should not be conflated with the concept of disposition or habitus. Discursive practices 'are characterised by the demarcation of a field of objects, by the definition of a legitimate perspective for a subject of knowledge, by the setting of norms for elaborating concepts and theories' (OD, p.72). For Rahel Jaeggi, Foucault's thesis on 'the productivity of power radically calls into question the difference between inner and outer, consequently envisioning the subject as being folded into being through a set of practices' (Jaeggi: 2014, p.30). Foucault isn't endorsing an implicit conservatism. Rather he is denying the metaphysical implications of pastoral liberation, the historical hangover of Christian salvation. For Foucault, political liberation does exist, and he specifies that 'when a colonized people attempts to liberate itself from its colonisers, this is indeed a practice of liberation in the strict sense' (EEW1, 282). Liberation is only a first step in the way the colonised, for our purposes, overcome the prior freezing of power relations from states of domination induced by colonial and postcolonial rationality, paving 'the way for new power relationships, which must be controlled by practices of freedom'. For Foucault, it is these

practices of freedom that must be seen as ethical. He defines ethics as ‘the practice of freedom, the conscious practice of freedom’ (EEW1, p.284). This is interesting because at an earlier stage, Foucault had claimed a modern ethics was impossible. According to Foucault, after traditional morality fell into disrepute after the death of God, all ethics sought to do was to reconcile ‘man’ with his [her] own nature, after an arduous pathological process of estrangement that resulted in his [her] self-divided individuation in industrialized modernity; ‘we have used the terms neurosis and alienation to define these conditions’ (OT, pp.357-358). Although this preliminary definition does not tell us much, Foucault is challenging the traditional conceptions of morality and ethics bequeathed to us by the Western philosophical tradition in the context of a Nietzschean-inspired historical ontology. This aspect of Foucault’s project sharply distinguishes his transformative politics from earlier tropes of Critical Theory.

A common trope in Western Critical Theory is that rational norms and conceptualisations of normativity provide the ‘necessary philosophical foundations’ for a transformative ethics and prescriptive political morality. Without the normative principles of reason that are universally prescriptive and binding, the emancipatory potential cannot be realised for all citizens (Taylor: 2009, p.49). For Dianna Taylor, the latest representative of this tradition, Jurgen Habermas conceptualises the norm as possessing an ‘ought’ character. Following Kant’s work on practical reason and moral imperatives, norms articulate which modes of conduct are rational and thus possess objective validity, elucidating which moral claims can be justified (Taylor: 2009, p.51). However, both Foucault and Nietzsche were aware that, under the influence of Christianity, morality and ethics became analytically indistinguishable. They were both aware that ancient philosophy had sharply distinguished the two in a manner that could be deployed to supplement and correct the efforts of contemporary political movements. Morality, as Foucault would have it, refers to ‘the set of values and rules of action that are recommended to individuals through the intermediary agencies such as the family ... educational institutions, churches’ (HS2, p.25). According to Paul Veyne, although ethics and morality both seem to signify an adherence to commonly agreed rules and a universal code of conduct and behaviour, the etymological root of the notion of the ethical in Greek pertains to the formation of character (Veyne et al: 1993, p. 2).

‘Ethical in the sense in which the Greeks understood it: Ethics was a way of being and of behaviour. It was a mode of being for the subject, along with a certain way of acting, a way visible to others. For the Greeks, this was the concrete form of freedom, this is the way they problematized their freedom’ (EEW1, p.285).

In Foucault's historical ontology, governmentality consists of the relationship technologies of domination, and technologies of the self, notably the care of the self, which will occupy me throughout the course of this thesis. The technologies of domination I have analysed in the first chapter designate the way in which power augments the free conduct of subjects into states of obedient self-mortification or subjectification within a regime of truth (EEW3, p.225). A historical analysis of technologies of domination designates what in Nietzschean terms we can call Nietzschean critical history. Critical history is a deconstructive form of historiography that performs a genealogical analysis of the modes of self-mortification in the West. In Foucault's terminology, this refers to the pastoral tradition that has privileged knowing thyself as a mode of moral subjectification. The technologies of the self, practices of subjectivation, that I am about to analyse correspond to Foucault's work on political spirituality which marks the shift in his work from politics to ethics. In the history of the West, pastoral power has dominated the governmental relationship between technologies of the self and moral technologies of domination, insofar as the practices of the former are folded into the historical norms constituted by practices of the latter, meaning that technologies of the self, while accounting for a certain amount of variability, produce subjects obedient to the bio-normative capitalist moral order (Dean: 1996, p.222; Deleuze:2006, p.102; Rose: 1996, p.44). However, technologies of self-designate, in Nietzschean terms, modes of monumental and antiquarian history that can be recovered, specifically a technology such as care of the self, as a form of authentic historicizing for contemporary political movements. Authentic historicizing 'discloses us in such a way as to release us from our own present' (Nichols: 2014, p.83). However, this does not mean human beings can simply be released from our historical heritage into the future. Heidegger claims we cannot live meaningfully without embodying some sort of historical world. Following Nietzsche, this means that a generation needs to struggle with its historical heritage, affirming and negating possible ways of being human to realize its destiny and fate (Nichols: 2014, p.83). Destiny or fate in Heidegger's thinking does not imply an implicit fatalism or determinism. Instead, to affirm one's destiny means coming to terms with the groundlessness of one's being in the world and using that historical contingency as a positive recourse to become authentic (Blond: 2010, p.29). As Nichols argues, this 'creative appropriation realizes latent possibilities and simultaneously fulfils and exceeds the field of existence' (Nichols: 2014, p.83). Resurrecting the notion of the care of the self as a form of monumental history tied to Foucault's historical ontology entailed the work of a strategic intellectual (Deleuze and Foucault: 1977, pp.207-210), supplementing and not prescribing to contemporary social movements with an ethics no longer 'founded on so-called scientific

knowledge of what the self is, what desire is, what the unconscious is, and so on' (EEW1, p.343), but with an ethics based on resistance to subjectification as practices of 'care of the self'. Since Plato, knowledge has always had a virtuous function, and basing one's actions on truth has been essential to living the good life. According to Ian Hacking, Foucault's return to care of the self, as an aesthetics of existence (PT, p.54), is radical attempt to separate 'our ethics, our lives from our sciences and our knowledge' (Hacking: 1986, p.239). In my analysis on divided subjects in Chapters 4 to 6, I will apply this distinction to essentialist notions of racial identity in the African postcolony, and their pathological effects.

### **2.3 Technologies of the Self and the Formation of Political Spirituality**

This section is primarily concerned with elucidating Foucault's position towards governmentality, that is, the art of not being governed as a form of political ethics. Foucault's later work and return to the Greeks is mediated, as I have argued, by a new approach to political subjectivity and modernity. As I discussed in section 1.2, most scholars argued that modernity as an epoch signified the rise of a rational and mechanistic industrial culture, leading to the disenchantment of the religious and mythical horizon that traditionally had provided human beings with a meaningful schema to live by. In the French tradition, the destruction of the Ancient Regime engendered a radically secular culture. Thus, it is interesting that Foucault's monumental and antiquarian reading of technologies of the self, and moreover care of the self, occurs within a framework of authentic historicizing that seeks to inject spirituality back into a political culture of resistance. However, spirituality in the way Foucault defines it does not correspond to attributing an intrinsic value to religion. Rather, spirituality designates 'the subject's attainment of a certain mode of being and the transformations that the subject must carry out on itself to attain a certain mode of being' (EEW1, p.294).

When Foucault takes this up in his principle of care of the self he deploys Nietzsche's constitutive model of power in order to realize or translate the historical idea of the care of the self by means of the notion of assujettissement at the level of practical relations from subjectification to subjectivation as a form of emergence in order to provide a form of ethics for contemporary political movements.<sup>vii</sup> Like Nietzsche, Foucault turned towards Greek philosophy because it was not based on a normative, prescriptive code, constructed on an individualizing and scientific knowledge that aimed to control the life of every obedient subject. Instead, Greek philosophy wasn't conceived as discipline but as a way of life that

facilitated the creation of a personal, even subversive, ethics against the status quo (Ansell-Pearson: 2018, p.36). Foucault refers to these subversive ethical practices as technologies of the self. They:

‘permit individuals to effect by their own means, or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies ... conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain of state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection’ (EEW1, p.225).

The common translation of assujettissement in English scholarship has been ‘subjectification’, which denotes a simply passive process of subjection or subjugation on the basis of a true discourse producing a compliant mode of subjectivity. One becomes subjectified through being objectified in terms of ‘true’ scientific notions such as mentally ill, homosexual, or a criminal, which is known as subjectification. However, for Foucault, the term also denotes the active element of power relations in terms of the self’s relationship to itself as technological subjectivation, or technologies of the self. It refers to the numerous ways a subject can relate to itself and can construct itself on the basis on what one decides to be true. An example in Foucault’s work is the formation of prisoners constructing a discourse of their experiences in accordance with the conditions of existence that enabled French internment to be a reciprocating form of subjectivization. More importantly, there is a relationship between ethical technologies of the self and the ‘spiritual’ transformation of subjects as they are modified by ascetic discursive practices. Nietzsche framed and emphasized self-overcoming as a process through which one becomes what one is. He described this process in *The Gay Science* as an infinite process of daily labour in which one gives style to one’s character as a work of art. The subject is not given once and for all, and therefore Aristotle’s notions of first and second nature, and consequently alienation too, no longer apply as in contradistinction to the philosophical tradition hitherto, becoming is prioritised over being (Nietzsche: 2009, pp.108-109). Similarly, for Foucault the subject is a form of becoming, never in a relation of total unity with itself. There is no pre-discursive subject - a transcendental consciousness endowed with epistemic sovereignty.

Foucault’s return to the subject is still premised on disputing that there is no phenomenological or transcendental subject external to relations of power/knowledge. As he showed in his analysis of critique of Derrida, the enunciative modality or subject is immanent to, and continuously transformed or modified by, its techniques in the discursive field of truth in which it operates (EEW2, pp.405-406). As Daniel Smith has argued, the relation of self to self doesn’t

equate to a transcendent disinterested subject working on itself as separate object. When the subject works on itself, the subject and the work are not ‘two different substances...they are immanent to one another’ (Smith: 2015, p.141). Reflectivity in Foucault is therefore relational: ‘the reflexive active verb is an expression of an immanent cause, that is, of an action in which agent and patient are one and the same person’ (Smith: 2015, p. 141). The subject is the locus of auto and relational affectivity, affected and affecting in its relations with others and itself, giving it a capacity to transform itself where force folds back upon itself to consistently produce new forms on the basis of truthful discourses - an ancient form of subjectivity Foucault calls political spirituality (Deleuze: 2006: p.113).

‘How can one analyse the connection between ways of distinguishing true and false and governing oneself and others? The search for a new foundation for each of these practices, in itself and relative to the other, the will to discover a different way of governing oneself through a different way of dividing up true - and false - this is what I would call political spirituality’ (EEW3, p.236).

Mark Jordan has treated the invocation of spirituality in Foucault’s thought in primarily apolitical, solipsistic terms as the simple attempt to regain ownership of the self and valorisation of religion without any political involvement. Even more strange is Jordan’s incoherent claim that the aim of this objective is to engender a true self in line with Christian thought (Jordan: 2014, p.175-176). Carrette claims that it is no mistake that Foucault uses the term political spirituality in the same year that he observed and commented on the Iranian revolution. It is an attempt to configure the spiritual in the material sphere as a type ‘of discursive power in the attempt to win territory in the governance of human life’ (Carrette: 2000, p.137). Foucault’s objective is thus to deflate the political into the spiritual, and the spiritual into the political (Carrette: 2000, p.140). Foucault’s ideal figure for political spirituality was the Persian mystic and martyr Mansur-al Hallaj (858-922). Hallaj willingly led himself to execution, standing against the Caliph al-Muqtadir for infusing spirituality into a liberation theology, ‘translating it [Islamic spirituality] into the language of justice and emancipation’ (Ghamari-Tabrizi: 2016, p.56). In Foucault’s reading of Louis Massignon, Hallaj became the ideal political martyr, ‘the truth seeking revolutionary, thousands of concrete manifestations of which he later encountered on the streets of Tehran’ (Ghamari-Tabrizi: 2016, p. 56). Instead of falling prey to obedience, the Iranian youth realised, like the great spiritual teacher before them, that they didn’t only need to destroy a corrupt regime, but that they may have needed to sacrifice themselves in the face of what they considered intolerable,

transforming their discursive relationship with reality in the process: ‘We are the truth!’. The revolt was therefore a singular political transgression, potentially opening a fold of being that was at a later point by obscured by the hypocritical practices of the mullahs, who reinstated a state religion (EEW3, p.452; Ghamari-Tabrizi: 2016, p.66).

In this thesis, I employ Foucault’s concept of political spirituality and care of the self in Chapter 7 as a racially affective technology of the self, which enables a rereading of Biko’s Black Consciousness philosophy that can, particularly, transgress the alienation/liberation paradigm in contemporary social theory that has been inherited from Aristotelian conceptions of human nature that are part and parcel of the violent, exclusionary nature of Western metaphysics. Before this task I first need to explore (in Chapter 3) the weaknesses in Foucault’s ethics according to postcolonial critiques, specifically his spatialization of modernity and his overly Romantic, if not Orientalist, reading of political spirituality. After establishing the problems in Foucault’s account, I reconstruct his ethics by rereading the notion of parrhesia, which, I argue, despite the silence of Biko scholarship, is central to his politics as a mode of resistance that enables individual and social transformation, and in the process undermines and exhibits the contingency and violence of South African racial metaphysics.

#### **2.4 The Care of the Self: An Intensification of Political Subjectivity**

In this section, I define one of the models of political subjectivity and historical heritage, the care of the self, that I use in Chapter 7 as a lens to read Biko’s work on Black Theology as an ethics of political self-transformation. I will demonstrate below that these activities are preparatory practices for the development and honing of parrhesia as the telos of political spirituality. In this light, we can distinguish Foucault’s politics from those who have represented him in the West as primarily a thinker concerned with subjectivity as an end in itself (Butler; 2002; O’Leary, 2006; Paras: 2006; Scott: 1989). For Foucault, the ancient Greek practice of care of the self can be compared with Hallaj’s political spirituality, insofar as both ‘can be centred totally on the acceptance of death ... and can even up to a point become a desire for death’ (EEW1, p.289). The commonality between the ancient Greek practice of care of the self and Iranian political spirituality is that they both overcome a fear of death, and in the process of doing so the subjects have learnt how to master themselves, insofar as they do not abuse their power over others. According to Foucault, the notion of the care of the self isn’t premised on academic individualism, but rather is a practice that would ‘intensify’ political

action instead of simply obstructing its actualisation through structures of representational politics. The gap between the subject and the governmentalisation of the state is not widened but tightened through specific practices. One uses the care of the self not to perform a religious escape from the world, but to act in it properly as a political subject (Milchman and Rosenberg: 2007, p.56).

The difference between the care of the self, Iranian political spirituality, and the Christian principle of know thyself is that the latter is concerned with death as a means of salvation from the suffering caused by a sensuous existence. For Foucault, it is this view of salvation that disturbs ethical practice and leads to the depoliticization of the culture of the self. Christian culture signifies a relationship where a person's relations to themselves are characterised by moral mistrust, and therefore to attain a relationship with God one has to obey an authoritarian figure who will guide one's potentially 'evil' conscience (GSOII, p.334). By contrast, the care of the self-emphasises the role of complete self-care – 'one must become the doctor of oneself' - over the examination of conscience, excavation of guilt or the desire for and conceptual projection of an idealised notion of human nature in the pursuit of a total liberation, such as we find in the historical reiterations and reactivations of pastoral power.

Central to the idea of the care of the self is the Greek notion of *askesis*. In Foucault's reading of the Stoic tradition, *askesis* is fundamentally an 'intensification of subjectivity', which is engendered through rigorous training undertaken by a philosopher-warrior. Paul Veyne argues that Foucault's move must be read in the context of Plato's theory of the soul. Instead of invoking the traditional rational focus on *logos*, Foucault instead focused on the second function of the soul, that of 'warriors, with all their ardour, anger and thymos' (Veyne: 2010 pp.121-122). The elements of *askesis* are ascetic or religious exercises in which the subject places themselves in a set of circumstances 'in which he can verify whether he can confront events and use the discourses with which he is armed' (EEW1, p.239). Meditation (*melete*) refers to placing oneself in an imaginary situation of conflict and considering, through different thought exercises, how to engage with the problem at hand (such as a future trial with the Athenian aristocracy). It means strengthening oneself in thought. *Gymnasia*, or training, on the other hand, signifies physical training for a situation of conflict or a trial of adversity, consisting of 'sexual abstinence, physical privation and other rituals of purification' (EEW1, p.240). *Askesis* is therefore unearthed as a set of historical practices that facilitates:

'mastery over oneself, obtained not through the renunciation of reality, but through the acquisition and assimilation of truth. It has as its final aim not preparation for another reality

but access to the reality of this world ... It is a set of practices by which one can acquire, assimilate and transform truth into a permanent principle of action ... Is this truth assimilated enough to become ethics so that we behave as we must when an event presents itself?' (EEW1, p.238-239).

## **2.5 Parrhesia: Speaking the Truth to Power and Revolutionary Subjectivization of the Autonomous Subject**

On the 28th of March 1984, a visibly ill and weakened Michel Foucault delivered his final lecture at the College de France. Analysing the contents of the lecture, Ghamari-Tabrizi argued, the noumenal spirit of resistance Foucault had once witnessed in the Iranian revolution had a historical precedent in Greek society, and therefore the practice of *askesis* is tied to the formulation of a revolutionary spirit enshrined in the term *parrhesia*. Parrhesia can be established as having four specific meanings in ancient Greek and early Christian thought. In the Socratic case with which I am most concerned, the notion of the care of the self plays a prominent role. Foucault argues that there is a movement 'from the parrehsiastic figure of Socrates to the care of the self' (FS, p.36). Regarding Socrates' trial, and the charge that he corrupted the Athenian youth from Meteleus, part of the contestation arose because two men from noble families, Lysimachus and Meletus, who had accomplished close to nothing during their time on Earth, decided to ask Socrates to educate their sons. The reason they chose Socrates is because he had confided to them that the purpose of education was the care of the self (FS, p.35). In his Fearless Speech (FS) lectures, Foucault argues that the four qualities of the care of the self are:

- 1) Parrhesia and frankness: The person who deploys parrhesia is a person who will speak the truth, detailing 'everything he has in mind', and provide a clear account to the audience unequivocally, so that there is no misunderstanding as to what the person says (FS, p.2)
- 2) Parrhesia and danger: Second, the speaker who deploys parrhesia and speaks the truth always does so at a risk to their lives. For Foucault, the point is that whenever you accept the parrehsiastic role, 'you risk death to tell the truth instead of reposing in the security of a life where the truth goes unspoken' (FS, p.4).
- 3) Parrhesia and criticism: The reason parrhesia is a risky business, so to speak, and its relation to the threat of dying is because the speaker is always in a subordinate position,

that is, a position of criticism and inherently dangerous, to that of his interlocutor who may be a judge, military official, priest etc (FS4-5).

- 4) Parrhesia and duty: The last aspect of parrhesia, its relationship to morality through duty, is the most interesting. The parrhesiastes is someone who, for example, has the possibility of keeping silent. Thus, as we will see later in this thesis, Biko started signing off as Frank Talk, and speaking truth to power long before he was detained by the Apartheid security forces or compelled to speak the truth. Socrates, similarly, did not have to speak the truth; he could have kept silent and accepted the charges dealt out to him by Meteleus in Plato's *Apology*, as we shall see (FS, pp.6-7).

In this context, Foucault pointed out that what Socrates meant by parrhesia, philosophically speaking, is 'that there is a relation between the rational discourse, *logos*, you are able to use, and the way that you live' (FS, p.38). There must be a harmonious relationship between the language that you use (*logos*), and the life that you lead (*bios*) (FS, p.37). This means, at one level, that one faces and attempts to overcome a relation of self-deception in relation to the situation or structural context that a person finds themselves in (FS, p.40). This does not mean that the parrhesiastes must provide an analysis of his/her faults, confessing their sins to a pastoral figure. Rather, Socrates was someone who took care of himself, evidenced by the fact that he was able to 'give an account of himself' (FS, p.39). This means that there is no 'discrepancy between what he says and what he does' (FS, p.39). Only someone whose life exists in such harmony between *bios* and *logos* (and who has taken care of themselves) is able to speak parrhesia and reach a level of courage where they are actively able to engage danger.

According to Colin Koopman, at the level of social consciousness, parrhesia does not translate into a simple theoretical knowledge that social customs are unjust. He argues parrhesia transforms our current comprehensions of justice and truth, so that we come to the realisation that some of our most accepted and historically necessary practices are seen as violations of freedom, constitutive of strategies of social control that engender 'unjust' states of political domination (Koopman: 2013a, p.537):

Parrhesia ... does not show what is true or false about society but transforms the conditions of the possibility of showing something to be true or false. Think of the difference between Martin Luther King Jr. (who effected a change in our very conception of justice), and the United States Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education* (which applied an existing conception of justice to a new case). The parrhesiast does not offer evidence to make a case, but rather works to transform the conditions under which cases may be brought to court. Foucault explicitly

contrasts ancient parrhesia to modern epistemology on this point, insisting that the truth established in the ancient practice is not an evidential relation established between beliefs and their objects but is rather a verbal relation established between speakers and truths ... The point is to change social attitudes and cultural behaviours by a change in orientation effected by a practice of philosophical truth-telling (Koopman: 2013a, p.536).

However, such an effort and ethos, because of the precise function of death, includes the role of parrhesia, which in the context of Greek thought has several connotations which are relevant to our discussion. The term can be translated as ‘truth-telling’ or ‘frank speech’ or ‘fearless speech’ or ‘free speech’ (Koopman: 2013a, p.535). In his final lecture, Foucault claimed that parrhesia in the Old Greek translates as ‘courageous boldness’ (GSO II, p.332). In Greek antiquity, parrhesia ‘will be the courage to assert the truth one knows regardless of any danger... one can demonstrate the truth even to the point of martyrdom’ (GSO II, p.334). The difference between the Greek and early Christian iterations, Foucault argued, is that the Christian invoked this courage on behalf of God. In the Greek case of Socrates in Plato’s *Apology*, there was a willingness to speak the truth and die for it as a virtue. In Socrates’s case, this was only possible because of a lifelong commitment to scholarly engagement, critical thinking, meditative introspection and physical training. If Socrates had decided not to drink the hemlock and go into exile, would the relations between revolutionary subjectivity, philosophy and the limits of political power exist in the West? Arguably, the notion of a glorious or valiant warriors’ death that permeated earlier tragic conceptions of pre-Socratic culture continued to play a role, but now are mediated by three new tropes.

- 1) Philosophical: The speaker who deploys parrhesia holds a certain epistemic position, insofar as he is spiritually capable of discovering truths and teaching it to others.
- 2) Political: The speaker who deploys parrhesia also takes up a political position in relation to the polis, its laws, values and morality - specifically how they pertain to the life of the self.
- 3) Criterion: The person who can speak parrhesia is not bound to any strictly defined social position, by birth or by citizenship. Rather what is required is the harmony of logos and bios, which only commences through care of the self as a practice. It is only this Dorian harmony that enables ‘courageous boldness’ (FS, p.41).

Although analysed through the theoretical dialogues of Plato, Foucault was strongly affirming that parrhesia is a practice that alters the constitution of the soul, the prison of the body (DP, p.27, FS, p.37). Although Socrates was promulgating new theses on the immortality of the soul,

he was committed to the idea that virtue and just conduct are not simply a goal for individual transformation but must serve and be advantageous for society. The principle of such a morality was that the philosopher, through the exercises that constituted the care of the self, would become autonomous and conduct themselves appropriately in relation to one other, thus engendering ‘a city that functioned well and found in this the ethical principle of its permanence’ (EEW1, p.287). Thus, most importantly, the role of a Socratic education is to persuade not the assembly, but others in society, that they should take care of themselves and ultimately change their lives and beliefs (FS, p.41). But in a philosophical sense, changing one’s life or beliefs takes on a larger meaning. For Foucault, it became a question of ‘changing one’s style of life, one’s relations to others and one’s relation to oneself’ (FS, p.42). Therefore, Tarrant argued that Socrates did not simply choose an enforced death meaninglessly in search of an afterlife. Rather, since the unity of his conduct led to his death, we can surmise that he died for a ‘purpose ...which was seen to be (i) good, (ii) just and (iii) honourable’ (Tarrant: 2003, p.102). The philosopher has a particular task, which he or she will not renounce even under threat of death: he or she is the person who cares about the care of others. As Socrates stated,

‘Suppose in view of this, you said to me Socrates, well on this one occasion we will disregard Antyus and acquit you, but only on one condition: that you give up on your quest and stop philosophising ... I should reply, gentleman, I am your very grateful and devoted servant, but I owe a greater obedience to god than to you; and so long as I draw breath and have my faculties I shall never stop practicing philosophy and exhorting you and the truth of everyone I meet ... You know I am not going to alter my conduct, even if I have to die a hundred deaths’ (Plato: 2003, p.56)

In this chapter, I have provided a concise analysis of Foucault’s warrior ethics within the context of his historical methodology, which is derived from Heidegger’s formulation of historical ontology and Friedrich Nietzsche’s genealogical critical history. The analysis uncovered important concepts in Foucault’s ethical armature, including care of the self, technologies of the self, parrhesia and political spirituality. Thus, I have briefly exhibited that Foucault’s later work on ethics was not only a response to the rational culture of governance in the historical West, but influenced by an engagement with an Iranian, and somewhat mystical, if not romantic, vision of the West’s relationship to Eastern wisdom and cultural renewal. In the next chapter, I will explore the epistemological colonial underpinnings of Foucault’s ethics, through an introduction to postcolonial theory and the ways in which

Foucault was received and appropriated by early postcolonial thinkers including Said, Bhabha, and Spivak.

## Chapter 3. The Eurocentrism of Foucault's Ethics: An Introduction to Postcolonial Studies

### 3.1 Introduction

In the first chapter of this thesis, I explored Foucault's analysis of modern governmentality as a political rationality, specifying the way disciplinary and bio power constituted modern Europeans as politically obedient and sexually reproductive subjects. Foucault emphasized that subjectification consists of a historical process whereby technologies of domination engender a historically constituted superego, and in doing so, transform a multiplicity of former vagabonds, peasants and paupers from the countryside into self-disciplining, obedient and productive labour power (docile bodies) within a rapidly urbanizing industrial capitalist society. Karl Marx described this process as primitive accumulation of capital. In Chapter 2, I introduced Foucault's approach to governmentality, that is, the art of not being governed. I explored how the practices comprising his ethical technologies of the self-lead to an affective change in the subject from timid obedience to a spirit endowed with bravery bordering on martyrdom. This preparation enabled me to carefully define Foucault's ethical concepts within the context of his historiographical method, historical ontology.

In this chapter, I can now start discussing whether Foucault's ethical philosophy has the potential to reconstruct a racially alienated and traumatised (divided) subject in the contemporary postcolony. According to Laura-Ann Stoler, Foucault was the most influential theorist in the development of postcolonial theory. Foucault's notion of power/knowledge was central to Edward Said's analysis in his seminal text for postcolonial studies, *Orientalism* (Stoler: 1995, p.1). However, despite the work of some contemporary postcolonial theorists (Scott: 1999, pp.206-209; See also Gilroy: 2001; Hook: 2012; Mezzadra et al: 2011), Foucault's ethical work has not only been neglected but has even become the object of scorn, and perhaps for good reason. In this chapter, by rereading the traditional narrative of the Foucault-Said relationship as my point of departure, I present an alternative rendering of the relationship between Foucault and postcolonial studies. In assessing the viability of employing Foucauldian ethics to reconstruct an alienated and traumatised racialised subject, I make two claims. First, I argue that Foucault's revolutionary forms of subjectivity, political spirituality

and parrhesia, as well as his disposition towards the Enlightenment, are derived from, to invoke Edward Said, 'a textual attitude', that interprets the Iranian revolution as a manifestation of an Orientalist spirituality. I demonstrate how Foucault's theorization of the Iranian revolution and other contemporary political events was structured by his anachronistic reading of Louis Massignon's (1883-1962) portrayal of the ancient Persian mystic, Mansur Al-Hallaj. I contend that for Foucault's concepts to have theoretical and political value in the postcolony, they need to be disentangled - not only from their Orientalist but also from their Eurocentric and colonial epistemological underpinnings.

Since Massignon featured prominently in Said's *Orientalism*, and, as there is no evidence of Foucault's having read Said's text in postcolonial secondary literature, this permits an introduction to postcolonial studies by means of a different reading of the Foucault-Said conflict, one that humbly proposes that Foucault was also influenced by Said's portrayal of Massignon in *Orientalism*; it was not simply a one-way street. More importantly, by inverting the way intellectual historians have traditionally portrayed their relationship, I stress that Foucault's ethical notions are deeply informed by a Romantic disposition towards rehabilitating Oriental culture that seeks to appropriate a stereotypical vision of Eastern wisdom in order to rehabilitate the cultural and political degeneracy of Western modernity. This requires an engagement with how later postcolonial thinkers, including Laura-Ann Stoler (1995), Gayatri Spivak (1994; 1996), Robert Young (1995) and Homi Bhabha (2004), chastised Foucault for stereotyping the 'third world' as a colonial construction, and treating the history of the modern world as a singular European narrative, traditionally dating from the inauguration of Platonic reason to the emergence of industrial capitalism first in the West and then in the colonies. This requires a historical and deconstructive interrogation into how certain practices imposed through discipline, biopower and racial governmentality didn't emerge from the European metropolis but were bound to the relational practices that developed via the emergence of colonial reason in the colonies.

Thus, one can ascertain how much of Foucault's work is bound to the colonial episteme and what remains salvageable from his political ethics to reconstitute the postcolonial subject. To salvage Foucault's work from the charge of being Orientalist and deriving from Romantic and colonial values, in section 3.4 I present Foucault's later investigations into Greek and Christian modes of political spirituality, which he argued would form the ethics for social movements, and which I apply in my thesis to student movements. I argue that these forms of heritage can be divorced from an Orientalist attitude, as I propose that an interrogation of Orientalist

discourse enables me to demonstrate that Biko's move to Black theology exceeds the transformative potential afforded by the Fanonian tradition of cathartic violence that is predicated on essentialist, and stereotypical constructs in colonial discourse. Second, I argue that similar forms of resistant technologies were deployed both successfully and unsuccessfully in anticolonial and decolonial contexts. At the end of the section, I pose the question of whether Steve Biko's notions of Black Consciousness and Black Theology resonate, not only with Foucault's concept of technology, but with his ethical conceptions of parrhesia and political spirituality. Lastly, to ascertain whether Biko's notions will prove politically and ethically viable in the contemporary postcolony, I will eventually, in Chapter 8, need to subject the African normative horizon (Cloete: 2019) that conditions his political spirituality to an epistemological critique.

### **3.2 A Reinterpretation of the Said-Foucault Conflict: Foucault's Romantic Orientalist Ethics and Eurocentric Historiography**

Despite slight geographical differences, scholars generally date the formal period of colonisation, that is, the European expansion and territorial annexation of the globe, from 1492 (beginning with the Portuguese and Spanish invasion of the Americas) to 1947. In 1947, 'the formal dissolution of colonial empires and the granting of independence to previously colonised countries followed various campaigns of anti-national resistance, usually with an explicitly nationalistic basis' (Williams and Chrisman: 1994, p.3). Despite the optimistic rationality that permeated the cultures of newly independent postcolonial states, scholars quickly drew attention to the problems that pervaded these ostensibly sovereign modern polities. According to Anne McClintock, the deployment of the term and the corresponding prefix (post) signifies an adherence to Western ideologies of progress. More problematically, the myth of developmental and 'post' discourses fundamentally occludes the pervasive Western forms of military, economic, political, and cultural domination that sustain contemporary neo-colonial relations (McClintock: 1994, pp. 299-303). For this reason, Gandhi has claimed that the term 'postcolonialism' represents an advance over chronological forms of thinking because it considers the historical effects of colonialism, particularly its postcolonial aftermath in our contemporary world (Gandhi: 1998, pp.3-4). McClintock is correct concerning the persistence of Western forms of domination and the reciprocating neo-colonial discursive construction of the 'third world'. But because she reduces the term (post) to narratives of

Western linear progress, she does not indicate a comprehension of the polysemic nature of the term postcolonial. Such polysemy designates a disjunct field of interdisciplinary research, with multiple and overlapping concerns that do, to some extent, resist simple theoretical categorization (Mishra and Hodge: 1994). Despite the disjointed nature of the field as a theoretical enterprise, most scholars have come to agree that it important to indicate the central developments and divergences that have taken place. Gandhi stressed, in relation to the volume of texts that been subsumed under the umbrella term ‘postcolonial’, that more reflexive postcolonial scholarship analyses a historical condition, which she designates postcoloniality.

The value of any theoretical piece of scholarship, for the purposes of this chapter and thesis is the extent to which it coherently illuminates the epistemic, social, and psychic aspects of what Gandhi refers to as the postcolonial condition. It is perhaps no exaggeration in this very context to say that Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, ‘singlehandedly inaugurated a new area of academic inquiry’ (Williams and Chrisman: 1994, p.5). Said’s work represented a radical break with prior Marxist critiques who positioned colonial knowledge as a mere ideological justification for colonial practice. According to Robert Young, Said’s masterstroke in the seminal text of postcolonial theory was to reposition, via Foucault’s notion of discourse, the culture of colonialism at an epistemological level that enabled an analysis of how disciplinary knowledge had the capacity to structure imperial endeavours and contemporary Western culture and policy (Young: 2001, p.383). This consequently meant taking up the subversive position that the truth claims made within a discourse are not only inextricable from but produced and operate in an ‘uneven exchange’ with forms of power (Said: 1991, p.12). Thus, ‘it was the fundamental argument repositioning academic knowledge from its claims to objectivity and autonomy that was at the basis of the impact that Orientalism has in the academy’ (Young: 2001, p.287).

In his very first book, *Beginnings, Intention and Method*, Said included Foucault in a radical tradition of epistemological dissensus that included figures such as Karl Marx and Frantz Fanon (Said: 1975, pp.281-282). He lauded Foucault’s archaeology for deconstructing the natural capacities of the Cartesian subject, while not capitulating to the extreme ‘linguacentricity’ that defined the work of thinkers such as Barthes or Derrida (Racevskis: 2005, p.84). However, by the time he wrote *Orientalism*, it was clear that Foucault’s notion of power/knowledge in combination with Gramsci’s theory of hegemony and civil society was central to Said’s method (Porter: 1994, p.151). By showing the Orient to be a discursive construction that predated colonialism in European civil society he could argue that racial discrimination was not the ideological effect of a material infrastructure that legitimated colonialism after the fact. Rather

the discursive creation of an Orient incapable of autonomy, modern obligation and therefore self-representation justified colonialism before the fact (Said: 2012b, p.209-210). However, Stuart Legg has pointed out:

‘The colonization of most of the free world between the sixteenth and twenty first centuries has brought not only territorial but also epistemic and historiographical violence and domination. The end of formal occupation has not signalled the withdrawal of colonial categories, procedures and technologies of rule, nor has it beheaded Europe as the sovereign subject in deference to which many postcolonial histories and geographies are constructed. Whilst Michel Foucault has provided many of the tools that are necessary to unpick the power/knowledge relationships of post-Enlightenment Europe, especially in their special groundlessness, his silence on the colonial construction of European modernity and the mutual constitution of metropole and periphery is astounding’ (Legg: 2007, p.272).

First, it is noteworthy that scholars who have researched and commented on the Said-Foucault relationship have come to the consensus that Foucault hugely influenced Said’s views on epistemology in the 70s and early 80s, but by the mid-1980s he had become uncomfortable with Foucault’s views on power (Ashcroft: 2008; Racevskis: 2005, p.88; Said; 1986). More importantly, Said’s take-up and consequent critique of Foucault’s notion of power and ethics has had a longstanding influence in postcolonial theory. Said became convinced that, faced with the ubiquity of power, Foucault gave over to political quietism. Said signalled the conclusion in *Culture and Imperialism* (1994) that Foucault’s ethical work was a conservative rejection of political issues (Said: 1986, p.155; Said: 1994, p.4). Additionally, leftist scholars from the Marxist Fanonian tradition have attacked colonial discourse analysts for reducing political problems concerning decolonial resistance to textual idealism, a claim I will explore in the first section of the next chapter.

Second, Said belonged to a cohort of scholars who questioned Foucault’s portrayal of modernity. Legg claims they were awestruck by his silence on the colonial production of modernity, as regards the relational co-construction of the periphery and metropole. Critiquing Foucault’s Eurocentrism is important, because it illuminates a problem in his work regarding the way European subjectivity and colonial methods of rule are constituted. Such an analysis problematizes the European Romanticism that defined Foucault’s Orientalist discourse. Said defined Orientalism in three ways. One, Orientalism is tautologically the academic practice of the Orientalist scholar. In this sense, an Orientalist is merely someone involved in producing knowledge about the Orient. Two, Orientalism designates a mode of thinking that is predicated

on an ontological and epistemological distinction between the Orient and the West. Third, it is a discourse constituted by a set of structural mechanisms that govern what can be said or thought about the Orient, and an indissociable set of corporate and institutional mechanisms (Clifford: 1980, p.208). Said understands discourse as ‘the particular kind of language to which specialised knowledge must conform to in order to be true’ (Young: 1995, p.2).

‘Orientalism can be discussed and analysed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient - dealing with it by making statements about it, authorising views about it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, structuring and having authority over the Orient. I have found it useful here to employ Michel Foucault’s notion of a discourse’ (Said: 1991, p.3).

Said appropriates from Foucault the idea that the development of a discipline and the objects that it studies, such as the madman or the Orient, are inextricable from the discourse that enables the conditions of its existence through a field of statements that regulate a regime of truth and linguistic order for further research (Young: 2001, p.386). For Said, Orientalist discourse is regulated by a form of enunciation called the summational statement, which authorises a stereotypical and reductionist understanding of any group in ‘The East’ to the basic, ahistorical and essentialist characteristics of Oriental psychology, geography and biology - ultimately an imaginary geography (Said: 1991, p.226). Essentially, the construction of a discursive disciplinary regime is inextricable from the production of a set of institutional structures such as the colonial university or asylum, and material practices of legitimation, hegemonic social control and exclusion. Said’s brilliance is to show how the discursive production of the racial Orient is linked to those great Foucauldian figures of Western abnormality, constructed within a framework of ‘biological determinism and moral-political admonishment’ (Said: 1991, p.207). Essentially, we should read the process of stereotypical othering via Said’s reception of Foucault as the first serious trope of studies in colonial discourse analysis (Mills: 1997, pp.106-112). Thus, Said’s analysis of racial othering is a central moment in his historical deconstruction of the West’s representation of its own substantive identity.

For Hulme, the ‘self-image’ that Europe and the West deployed in their relationships with the rest of the world ‘was the model of the future, to which the rest could only aspire’ (Hulme: 1989, p.3). He argued that this relationship was construed in temporal terms, where the non-West was conceived as in a time-lag or delay in relation to the West’s model of unavoidable progress. ‘Europe was self-defining’, and the normative ideal against which Oriental or African

underdevelopment could be effectively measured. Said reminded us that the Orient is bound to a binomial logic, as the stereotypical inversion that could affirm the West's positive affirmation of itself. If the Orient was sexually promiscuous, irrationally mystical and savagely prone to violent outbursts, the Western subject was rational and possessed a rich interiority with self-controls that enabled self-governance and the capacity to transcend the finite conditions from which it emerged (Hulme: 1989, p.4). By exposing the Orient as an object of discourse, Stuart Hall argues that Said could illustrate how the West generated a determinate, colonial subject position for itself in opposition to this constructed function (Hall: 1993, p.302). This distinction between East and West is essential to the way Foucault configures his ethics. In Chapter 1, I drew on Weber's notion of rationalisation of the modern world to explicate the deracination of a mythical horizon that endowed the ancient world with a sense of meaningfulness and creativity. For the Romantics, the rational culture of the Enlightenment had rendered Occidental culture mechanical, and instead of modernity signalling an intrinsic process of simple progress, it concealed the emotive and spiritual degeneration of European culture. For Said,

‘the regeneration of Europe was a very Romantic idea ... And from this defeat would arise a new, revitalized Europe: the Biblical imagery of death, rebirth ... But what mattered was not Asia so much as Asia's use for modern Europe. Thus, anyone who, like Schegel of Franz Bopp, mastered an Oriental language was a spiritual hero, a knight-errant bringing back to Europe a sense of the holy mission it had now lost’ (Said: 1991, p.115).

Said calibrated Orientalist discourse as a dualistic structural topography. The unconscious positivity of knowledge that characterised the latent synchronic level of static othering structured a manifest level that can be distinguished by diachronic historical alterations in the types of theories, methods of analysis and concepts deployed to make statements about the Orient (Said: 1991, pp.205-206). Within the structure of Orientalist discourse, the autonomy of European consciousness is reformulated as a ‘textual attitude’. Instead of possessing a discerning form of reason, the West's perception of the Orient is now seen to be woven out of a set of narrative accounts of travel stories, literature and formal scholarly accounts which create reality. According to Edward Said, ‘the textual attitude’ designates a precognitive or subconscious epistemological disposition that structures the European knowing subject's relationship to a stereotypical vision of Eastern otherness that has become sedimented in centuries of travel accounts, literature, and other quasi-scholarly studies (the colonial archive) (Said: 1991, p.92). It occurs

‘when a human being confronts at close quarters something relatively unknown and threatening and previously distant. In such a case one has recourse not only to what in one’s previous experience the novelty resembles but also to what one has read about it. Travel books or guidebooks are about as ‘natural’ a kind of text, as logical in their composition and in their use, as any book one can think of, precisely because of this human tendency to fall back on a text when the uncertainties of travel in strange parts seem to threaten one’s equanimity’ (Said: 1991, p.78).

In Chapter 2 I introduced Foucault’s theorization of the Iranian revolution, and suggested that his rereading of Greek philosophy, early Christianity and the Enlightenment was a result of the experience of the revolt that he had witnessed in Iran. However, I will argue that, based on his work, Foucault’s experience of the revolution, or any experience for that matter, was conditioned by a set of discursive rules that were both enabling and constraining, and thus constitutive of the possibilities of truth that the subject will be modified by during its existence. In this context, it is important to turn the tables and consider the Foucault-Said debate from an angle hitherto unconsidered. The two met at Foucault’s flat in Paris in the late 70s. Said was invited by Defert, Gilles Deleuze and other French intellectuals to discuss the problem of Palestinian liberation, and because Foucault appeared nervous, non-comittal and suspiciously eager to make his four-hourly research session at the local library without properly greeting Said or discussing political sentiments, this has been considered a sign of a lack of hospitality, if not oppositional political interests. Some commentators have even gone as far as to interpret this as a sign that Foucault was hostile to the Palestinian cause, when in fact a closer reading of several documents indicates that Foucault fully supported a two-state solution between Israel and Palestine (Racevskis: 2005, p.90). Nevertheless, the unconsidered theoretical link in this debate is an observation that may signal a different relationship between the two thinkers than previously reported by those in Said and Foucault studies respectively (Sazzad: 2008, p.12). Said was indeed surprised to find that, despite his work on *Orientalism* only being published recently, it had a space on Foucault’s bookcase of classic works. Instead of the relationship between the two being univocal, Foucault’s revolutionary politics and visions of Iran may have been predicated on a paradoxical reading of Said’s own work.

My argument here is that this paradox begins with Said’s project in *Orientalism*. Despite Said’s well-known reduction of all Western power to the singular intent to know and control the Orient, he still finds a special place in his own epistemological configuration for a scholar who did not have capacity to transcend the rules of Oriental discourse but was still able to provide

a more coherent and ethical portrayal of Persian/Iranian mysticism, named Louis Massignon. For Said, Massignon was a valuable scholar as his portrayal of the Orient was not stereotypical, insofar as he widened his intellectual purview to acknowledge the historical nature of his analyses, and pointedly articulated the revolutionary capacity of Oriental society. But more importantly for my purposes is the question of the subject who takes up the place of resistance because it is this resistant subject who becomes the inspiration for the Foucauldian romantic rereading of modernity. If, for Said, Massignon was the sincerest scholar to analyse the Orient, then it is even more important to emphasize that Foucault's reading of Islam, and the political spirituality he attributed to the ancient Persian mystic, Mansur Al-Hallaj, was completely structured by his reading of Louis Massignon. Despite the risk of repetition, it is important to decipher the passage I cited at the end of Chapter 2 in more detail. According to Ghamari-Tabrizi,

‘Massignon’s four-volume magnum opus, *The Passion of al Hallaj, Mystic and Martyr of Islam* was exactly the type of scholarship that lent Foucault the ideal type of truth-seeking revolutionary, thousands of concrete manifestations of which he later encountered on the Streets of Tehran. The Persian mystic Mansur al-Hallaj (858-922) did not represent a typical Sufi master. But his execution, at the behest of Abbasi Caliph Muqtadir, for the alleged heresy he committed with his famous mantra *ana al Haqq* (I am the truth), transformed him into the very image of sacrificing life for the sanctity of truth’ (Ghamari-Tabrizi: 2016, p.56).

In 1976, Foucault provided an essentialist distinction between a problematic Western sexuality, as a science of sex, and a valorised Eastern sexuality or ‘*ars erotica*’ (HS1, p.70). An Orientalist trope is subtly subsumed in his later work on the aesthetics of the self. Although Ghamari-Tabrizi is sympathetic towards Foucault's reading of the Iranian revolution and Islam as Foucault does not treat the latter as an unchanging ahistorical essence (Ghamari-Tabrizi: 2016, p.68), he still finds problems with Foucault's account that are worth addressing as a conclusion to this section. Furthermore, Ghamari-Tabrizi's criticism of Foucault is useful insofar as he ties it to similar problems with Fanon's reading of the Algerian revolution, which pertain to the problem of pharmakological violence. Fanon treated Algeria in a similarly romantic manner, insofar as he proposed that the spiritual and cathartic violence of the Islamic revolutionary colonized subject would overcome traumatic neurosis caused by colonial violence. Foucault posited that Iranian spirituality would enable a transgression of past modes of subjectification, and the relational practices that constituted them. Ghamari-Tabrizi proposed that while both were extremely knowledgeable scholars, the societies upon which both Fanon and Foucault

based their revolutionary politics were ones that they knew the least about. Fanon incoherently conceptualised gendered oppression in Algerian society and Foucault's comprehension of a contemporary Iranian revolution and its religious roots was completely predicated on a textual portrayal of a ninth century revolutionary to rehabilitate Western society - the defining characteristics of an Orientalist discourse and a Eurocentric textual attitude. Despite the nobility of their efforts to effectuate a revolutionary politics that induces an affective transformation of the subject from a state of fear to courage and martyrdom, both ultimately fail because they lack detailed portrayals of the societies they were engaged with, and both were entrapped by misunderstanding the overwhelming effects of the past in colonial discourse, thus Orientalising the topic under question.

'But as the experience of Algeria demonstrated, the past easily outlived the revolution, and its weight burdened the present, Foucault tried to highlight the significance of living the revolution, but he like Fanon neglected to recognize that the same magnanimous revolutionary energy could then revert into fuelling a repressive state machine ... Foucault is also too intent to ascribe Otherness to the Iranian revolution. He tries very consciously not to see the revolution through the prism of a Western toolkit and thereby Orientalises it in a worn out discursive-universe'. (Ghamari-Tabrizi: 2016, pp.73-74).

I have shown that Foucault ended up distinguishing the Iranian revolution in an Orientalist and essentialist manner. In section 3.3, I will argue that, for Foucault's concepts to have theoretical and political value in the postcolony, they need to be disentangled from not only their Orientalist but also their Eurocentric and colonial epistemological underpinnings.

### **3.3 An Introduction to Foucauldian Postcolonial Theory: Foucault's Eurocentrism, Orientalism and Spatialization of Modernity**

Before Foucault framed political spirituality within the context of the Iranian revolution, he was briefly attracted by the revolutionary potential afforded by Marxism and psychoanalysis (EPK, p.126). When visiting Tunisia in the late 1960s, he drew an Orientalist distinction between the overly rationalistic and formal scholarly Marxism practiced by his French colleagues in the FCP (French Communist Party), and the anticolonial culture of the Tunisian student movements, which he considered to be the living, breathing embodiment of the Marxism of a revolutionary culture (Young: 2001, p.417). Notably, this trope continued until he decided to reformulate his conception of political spirituality in line with Heidegger's

Western heritage, not revolutionary singularities that departed from Western norms. By the early 1980s, Foucault had retracted this vision of Marxism and psychoanalysis because both harboured a vision of a true self that he considered to be a part of pastoral power and modern governmentality (EEW1, pp.226-227). In this section, I will discuss how Foucault has been received and interpreted by postcolonial scholars and offer a rereading of their critiques of his supposed Orientalism.

In order to employ Foucault's concepts for the postcolonial condition, one needs to engage with how later postcolonial thinkers, including Laura-Ann Stoler (1995), Gayatri Spivak (1985, 1987, 1992), Robert Young (1994; 1995) and Homi Bhabha (1992, 1994) chastised Foucault for stereotyping the 'third world' as a colonial construction, and for treating the history of the modern world as singular European narrative - traditionally dating from the inauguration of Platonic reason to the emergence of industrial capitalism, first in the West and then in the colonies. As I demonstrated in section 3.2, Foucault ended up distinguishing the Iranian revolution in Orientalist terms. Robert Young argues that this reading obfuscates the relationship between the revolution and the colonial governance of Iran - that is, Foucault treated it as a singularity instead of scrutinising its historical context, that is, the colonial context (Young: 1995, p.1). The problem for postcolonial scholars, and this pertains to the problem of Foucault's ethics too, is the direction Foucault's work took after *The History of Sexuality Volume 1*. Foucault turned to the problem of racism, within the context of biopolitical regulation of the state's racially homogenous population. In the first research plan laid out after *History of Sexuality 1*, Foucault claimed the sixth volume of *History of Sexuality* would be titled 'Population and Races'. As Young notes,

'This finale suggests the importance that Foucault attached to racialism within the general 'field' of what he called 'biopower' within his history of sexuality ... According to Foucault, its power involves the forms of control carried out in the name of race, for the welfare of the species, for the survival of the population ... He describes it as operating in two phases: first of all in the form of eugenics, it is directed towards the survival of class supremacy, and then it is deployed with respect to the control, ordering and supervision of the exploited classes' (Young: 1995, p.11).

However, Foucault backtracked on that original vision. Instead of theorising race as playing a central role in the construction of Western sexual desire and opening the question of the relationship between Europe's colonial ventures and the formation of modern European society and subjectivity, Foucault returned to the traditional Graeco-European narrative, mediated by

the historical formations of pastoral power and governmentality. Major thinkers in postcolonial studies have urged that Foucault's quietism on the issue of race can be extended to a disavowal of the relationship between the human sciences and colonialism (Young: 1995; Bhabha: 2004).<sup>viii</sup> With regard to the problem of race, Rannabir Samadar and Laura-Ann Stoler rightfully note that the English translation and publication, in 2008, of Foucault's 1976 lectures at the College De France, *Society Must be Defended*, in which the relationship between biopolitics and race war received explicit treatment, was unavailable to the first generation of postcolonial scholars. However, when it comes to the question of colonialism, racism and the development of desiring European subjects, problems emerge that have cast a shadow on the integral unity of Foucault's historical thought on European subject formation. My argument, following Laura-Ann Stoler's, is to suggest that an internal history of Western desire and racial nationalism must consider the role of colonial adventures from 1492, and the role the external non-Western others, the colonized, have played in the constitution of the Western subject. More importantly, Stoler's analysis exposes an aspect of the development of biopower that has been largely ignored by critics who focus on the problems of hegemony or domination: namely, understanding the colony as the site of production and incitement of discourses of racialised sexual desire that fed back into Eurocentric notions of a pure white subjectivity.

'The point is not to reduce the entire discourse that coupled the truth of the self and the truth about one's sexual desire to a discursive variation on the discourse of race; but rather to suggest that the production and distribution of desires in the nineteenth century discourse on sexuality were filtered through and perhaps even patterned by an earlier set of discourses and practices that figured prominently in imperial technologies of rule. Civilization could be defended against transgression by invoking the reasoned logic of race. Foucault would agree with this general point. There was no unitary bourgeois self already formed, no core to secure, no 'truth' lodged in one's sexual identity. That 'self', that 'core', that 'moral essence' that Fichte and colonial lawyers like Niderburgh sought to identify was one that Europe's external and internal 'others' played a major part in making' (Stoler: 1995, p.194).

Foucault has also been chastised for spatializing modernity, reducing it to an imaginative geography in which the forms of rationalisation that endogenously colonise the West and constitute modernisation are subsequently exported outward towards the colonial peripheries (Bhabha: 2004, p.368). Despite his early work on discursive discontinuity, by returning to a narrative of historical continuity that favoured a framework of discursive rupture and recuperation (SMD, p.7), Foucault continued, even if unwittingly, to reproduce, like many traditional sociologists, the Eurocentric definition of modernity predicated on a 'temporal

rupture between a pre-modern past and a modern industrial present, and a qualitative spatial (cultural) differentiation between Europe (and the West) and the rest of the world' (Bhabra: 2016, p.298). If this is the case, then Foucault's quasi-Heideggerian attempts to reclaim forms of subversive heritage that exist as the surplus, or the limit point, of a historical series that maps the historical relations between desiring practises and pastoral power, such as the care of the self, may be misplaced because he failed to see the technologies and modes of desire produced during colonialism as central to the production of modern bourgeoisie sexuality in the West. According to Julian Go, for postcolonial theory to overcome colonial epistemology, it needs to overcome the binomial and oppositional order so dear to colonial thought, such as East and West, white and black (Go: 2013b, p.9). Thus, Go proposes that if one of the constitutive conditions of traditional sociology and colonial knowledge has been to portray the West, East and Africa as substantialist unities, disaggregated from one another, then the task of a postcolonial social theory is to reconstruct the relations amongst these ostensible unities to exhibit how they were co-constituted, and this requires a relational and reconstructive sociology (Go: 2013a, p.41). For Go, not only the biopower described in *History of Sexuality I*, but also Foucault's historical analysis in *Discipline and Punish* falls into this trap. Go writes

'In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault argues that the spectacle attendant with punishment in the ancien regime disappears and is replaced with the prison ... Foucault restricts this transformation (in his words) to Europe, but the realities of imperial history upend this characterisation and this reflexive spatial qualifier... While Foucault qualifies his narrative spatially to Europe, this gesture gets itself at the heart of issues as if imperial and colonial history were not only Europe's history. Such separation and bifurcation may render the theoretical categories themselves inadequate. In Foucault's analytic, exactly, where and when and for whom does disciplinary power as opposed to the spectacle dominate?' (Go: 2013a, p.37).

Go is not postulating a historical possibility or set of political practices that have been under-analysed. In fact, it is rather astonishing that the postcolonial investigations into the emergence of biopolitics and now, notably, disciplinary power in the relationship between metropole and periphery in the constitution of colonial modernity, have received almost no attention from thinkers working with Foucault's concepts within the general field of Western Critical Theory. Indeed, Foucault's silence on these issues may be controversial, but as with all scholarship, it is the role of critical commentators to assess the veracity and validity of these arguments.

If Stoler could demarcate the relational constitution of biopower and its impact on the racial politics of sexual identity coherently, then Timothy Mitchell explored the emergence of disciplinary power, the urbanisation and industrialisation of social space, and panoptic surveillance in colonial Egypt. As we remember from Foucault's insightful analysis in *Discipline and Punish*, it was the famous utilitarian theorist, Jeremy Bentham, who ostensibly created the Panopticon. According to Mitchell, although Foucault's conception of the subject as labour power is supposedly reducible to the European context, 'the forms of power based on the re-ordering of the space and the surveillance and the control of its occupants were by nature colonial in method' (Mitchell: 1992, p. x). More importantly, similar disciplinary technologies were not only developed within the European metropolis, but on 'the colonial frontiers of Europe, in places like Russia, India and South America .... Bentham corresponded with local rulers in all these places' (Mitchell: 1992, p.37). Thus, in conclusion to this section on the spatialization of Europe, it is worth considering that the most we can realistically glean from Foucault's work is the mechanics of colonial governance, insofar as 'the clinic, the asylum, the prison, the university - all seem to be screen allegories that foreclose a reading of the broader narratives of imperialism' (Spivak: 1994, p.86).

### **3.4 Deploying Christian and Greek Forms of Ethical Heritage in the Contemporary Postcolony**

Sections 3.2 and 3.3 of this chapter suggested why Foucault's later works on ethics have been rejected by postcolonial scholars. I explained above that this is due to an implicit Eurocentrism in his historical spatialization of modernity (and consequently a Eurocentric historical ontology) on the one hand, and on the other, that fact that his ethical subject is read through the lens of an Orientalist textual attitude. Moreover, alongside these critiques, Said and Spivak, within the context of subaltern studies, have pointed out that Foucault's work does not provide transformative tools for subaltern subjects (Malette: 2012, p.378), a line of thought I will address in Chapter 4. Therefore, I am left with the question, 'How can Foucault's work on ethics be salvaged for contemporary problems in the postcolony?' This question can only be answered properly once I have articulated a framework for analysing colonial and postcolonial governmental rationalities (also in Chapter 4). Here in this section, I simply want to specify how Foucault's ethics (although not disconnected from his work on governance) can be salvaged from its own epistemological failings.

First, Foucault eventually recognised that his engagement with Iran and the idea of a total singularity were problematic because they ignored the historical limits and conditions of the subject's constitution, creating a dangerous political culture that, instead of overturning authoritarian relations, re-encoded them in a new romantic metaphysics and radical politics. Thus, although his thinking on Iran did represent a break from the earlier problem of power/knowledge, it forced him to reconsider the problem of Enlightenment in a more nuanced way. For example:

‘I mean this ... This means that the project of a historical ontology must turn away from all projects that claim to be global or radical ... The claim to escape from the overall system of contemporary reality so as to produce the overall programs of another society ... has only led to the return of the most dangerous traditions. I prefer the specific transformations that have proved to be possible in the last twenty years in a number of areas which concern our ways of being and thinking, relations to authority, relations between the sexes, to the way we perceive madness and insanity’ (EEW1, p.316).

Foucault's rethinking of ethical concepts such as care of the self, political spirituality, and parrhesia therefore took place in a post-Iranian context, one that attended to reinterpreting and rearticulating the teleological and essentialist characterisation of the Enlightenment handed down from the Kantian tradition. Furthermore, as I explored in the last chapter, this is evident in the way Foucault reconceptualises the Enlightenment, not as an epoch, but as a political ethos. Robert Nichol claimed in his survey of Foucault's role in postcolonial studies that it was only recently, in the work of David Scott, that the question of Foucauldian ethics or ethos had been raised. Scott marks a turn back towards the subject of resistance at the level of politics. His problem with former postcolonial theory was that resistance had been reduced to textual deconstruction, and the role of the intellectual has no relation to sustained political and social action. According to Nichols, Foucault's ethics in Scott designate an artistic strategy of self-transformation, a set of practices that modify ‘one's mode of living which brings about new forms of sociality ‘as aspects of a practice of self-cultivation: the cultivation of a certain mode of being that I shall call *Rwud Bwai* self-fashioning’ (Nichols: 2010, p.143). Following a tradition of Fanonian sociology, Scott focuses on the figure of the *Rwud Bwaai*. Five years after formal Jamaican independence, Scott notes that social unrest emerged amongst several groups, specifically in West Kingston (Scott: 1999, p.209). From the melting pot of popular discontent in the late 1960s, the *Rwud Bwaai* were studied by Fanonian sociologists. These political sociologists postulated that the new Jamaican state had alienated the *Rwud Bwaai*,

because of the latter's corporeal and mental internalization of the disciplinary violence imposed by the state. The only way this alienation could be overcome was through a productive, revolutionary release of this aggression through revolutionary violence (Scott: 1999, p.210). For Scott, the value of Foucault's methodology was precisely the capacity to overcome this essentialist and repressive model, and instead under-score the political agency of the colonized in the face of 'power'. He writes:

'Reading through Foucault, and thus interrupting the Fanonian alienation/realization model, I want to rework this idea of the relation between the body of the colonized/post colonized and power. I want to read those contracted muscles, that contorted face, and the deliberate movements not as the repressed internalization of colonial violence, but as the positive signs of a certain practice of self-formation. This is not to deny the direct inscription of colonial/postcolonial violence on the body of the subject, but I want to focus not so much on the side of dominant power as on the side of those who make their lives in its shadow' (Scott: 1999, p.212).

However, in reading the constitution of *Rwud Bwaai* as a technology of the self, Scott shows a misreading of Foucault's understanding of governmentality as relationship between technologies of domination and technologies of the self (Lemke: 2015, p.67). Moreover, as I exhibited in the previous chapter, where there are systems where a universal moral code holds sway (as in modern racist governmentality or Christian pastoral power), technologies of the self are necessarily enfolded in technologies of domination (Dean: 1996, p.236; Deleuze: 2006, p.101). This problem of racial subjectification in relation to rational and affective technologies of domination will be explored in Chapter 4.

Scott misses another key element of Foucault's reading of technologies of domination: that they constitute a divided subject. In Foucault's work, the divided subject is another way of configuring either an alienated or a neurotic subject without having to use the same order of metaphysical concepts as those of Marxism or Freudianism, and with them the attendant humanist and political assumptions and presuppositions. In this sense, historical ontology still configures an alienated subject, but in other terms. Thus, Scott's misreading takes us to one of the central problems addressed in this thesis: Can Foucault's ethical concepts rehabilitate an alienated and neurotic (divided) subject in the South African postcolony, without endorsing the cathartic violence that marks the Fanonian vision of the new man? As I argued in the introduction, despite the early position of Fanonian scholarship that envisioned revolutionary violence as therapeutic and cathartic (Bulhan: 1985; Gibson: 2003; Gordon: 1995), Mbembe

has argued that contemporary violence is pharmakological, meaning that instead of curing the subject, violence further poisons the infected wound - deepening the neurosis (Mbembe: 2019, p.3).

The problem of reading Fanon *with* Foucault is that Foucault's Orientalist ethical insights are merely applied to Fanon's without an adequate understanding of colonial and therefore postcolonial society, and the forms of governance that have constituted it. Foucault's work therefore becomes framed within the greater Hegelian problem of the life and death struggle and the uncritical Fanonian vision of a 'new man'. In the process, Foucault's revolutionary insights on Greek and Christian technologies are forgotten, and the psychological problems which were supposed to be addressed by revolutionary struggle are compounded because they do not address the weight of the past in the pathological present. This still does not mean that one should simply import foreign models to engage with the problem of racial subjectification in Africa. According to Nichols, many of the greatest tracts of resistance were tactical manuals, treatises written by anticolonial thinkers that are far more reflective of Foucauldian ethics, including thinkers such as Nkrumah and Gandhi (Nichols: 2012, p.114). Although Gandhi's sacrificial militancy may appear to resonate with Foucault, his Hinduism and Orientalism renders his politics somewhat irreconcilable with Foucault's rereading of Greek and Christian spirituality. Similarly, despite attempting to break with the Hegelian paradigm by understanding national liberation as a stage and not a process, Nkrumah's statist secularism and Pan Africanist vision of the ideal citizen takes him quite far from Foucauldian ethics. The thinker whom I suggest is closest to Foucault's turn to Christian and Greek ethics and technologies of the self in the African and southern African context is Steve Biko. Biko's thought reflects concepts that resonate with key Foucauldian notions such as care of the self, political spirituality and parrhesia. Notably, although Biko first advocates a radical political program, he is also concerned with how to undertake an affective and psychic transformation in subjectivity, a precondition for political liberation that concerns an entire country. Second, revolution is not conceptualised as cathartic violence (Bulhan: 1985) by Biko. Instead, he proposes a non-racial synthesis, and the articulation of a political space where there are neither racial minorities nor a majority (Biko: 2008, p.170). By reading Biko through Foucault, I intend to open the question of a decolonial historical ontology. Critically, this would allow the subject in question the possibility of not only overcoming racial pathology but also, in the context of social and philosophical research, to begin to practice a decolonial ontology that would not be bound to Western concepts and modes of temporality and research.

For Malette,

We would minimise the risk of epistemic violence and subtle modes of domination working through our understanding of reality at a fundamental level ... As ontological colonisers, we must learn to let go of our profound desires to control, if not the course of history itself, the metaphysical meanings we attribute to the experience of historical temporality ... While I agree that Foucault's later ethics can certainly be helpful in formulating a postcolonial ethos, it must first be stripped of the assimilative and totalizing metaphysical tendencies still lingering from his historical ontology, testimony of its post-Enlightenment rather than beyond Enlightenment status (Malette: 2012, p.381).

For the remainder of this thesis, my task will be to analyse how Biko's concepts resonate with Foucault's, and more importantly, problematize whether they have the capacity to heal and transform racially pathological subjects in the postcolony. This task will be mediated by first ascertaining in -neo-Foucauldian terms (in Chapters 4, 5 and 6) how these subjects, discourses and exclusionary norms are produced in the context of decolonial ontology-by examining how necropolitical rationality operates within the colony and postcolony. As I mentioned in the first two Chapters, part of the shift from Foucault to Mbembe is characterized by prioritizing death practices (necropolitics) over biopolitics. There are four stages to necropolitics, that constitute decolonial ontology, which will permeate my argument for the rest of the thesis and designate the forms of precarity, social death and alienation from slavery to the becoming black of the world.

1. The first phase may be called 'translation', a process which began prior to colonial capitalism-but its development grew in scale and speed with the emergence of the relationship between modern capitalism and colonialism. 'Translation names the process within, "which the human negates nature", whereby negation serves the function of reducing the natural world to the needs of human beings'. Moreover, human beings in modernity, master and transform the natural world "the negated element, through labour-thereby constituting a social world filled with commodities" (Mbembe: 2019, p. 14; Reyes and Chirrido: 2020, p. 3). Learning to exist as a subject in the social world enables an acknowledgement of a human instinct, or extreme proclivity for violence. This occurs alongside the normalization of necropolitics, characterized by an acceptance that the 'core of commodification is symbolic-material death' (Reyes and Chirrido: 2020, p. 3) For more information see Chapter 6.

2. The second phase of necropolitics is the emergence of what Achille Mbembe has called 'Black reason'. Black reason consists of two narratives, that I explicate in detail in Chapter 5 and 6, as well as their connection. Essentially, the first narrative appears with the development and intersection of the 'normalization of necropolitics' and the 'abstract notion of labour', constituting a rationality, black reason. As a discourse in which blackness 'became the sign of death', necropolitics is constituted by racial principle of division, in which all life under colonialism is distinguished by a Hobbesian state of nature, which creates for a black subject, a new ontology defined by precarity. This ontological precarity is synonymous with a "triple loss" consisting of "absolute domination, natal alienation and social death" (Mbembe: 2019, p. 21; Reyes and Chirido: 2020, p.5).
3. The second narrative of black reason, or the emergence of the 'black voice', is the third phase in the evolution of necropolitics. Although I will explore this narrative in more detail in section 5.4, it is the birth of these new discourses, African modes of Self-Writing, despite critiquing the Western discursive image of blackness and engendering ideas of 'revolt, abolition and decolonization', it couldn't escape both the effects of machine capitalism and racial discourse, which in the course of twentieth gave birth to the fourth phase in the development of necropolitics: The Anthropocene (Reyes and Chirido: 2020, p. 7).
4. Although I will supply a deeper analysis of Anthropocene in section 8.4, I begin my analysis of the Anthropocene, the fourth stage in the evolution of necropolitics and undermines the distinction between natural and social history that was presupposed in the humanities until the turn of the millennium. Industrial Capitalism and population growth have rendered the human population as a geological force, which has the potential to alter, and ultimately destroy the Earth's ecological systems that support life, the spectre of a planetary extinction -which means the precarity that was reversed for Black subject becomes a global condition-the becoming black of the world. I conclude this section by noting the limits of Mbembe's position (Chakrabarty: 2009; Mbembe: 2017, p. 33; Mbembe: 2021, p. 20-21; Reyes and Chirido: 2020, p. 7-8).

Thereafter I will explore (in Chapters 7 and 8) whether Biko's work on Black Consciousness and Black Theology coherently reflect a Foucauldian technology of the self and political spirituality. One of the problems that I have in engaging Biko's work as a technology of the self is that, as a student of twentieth century social theory and philosophy, he provides a

political definition of blackness, but is still influenced by an essentialist and normative notion of Africanity and the West. He therefore engenders a form of African metaphysics, that as I will argue from Chapters 6 to 8 are limits to configuring Black Consciousness as a postcolonial political ethos, insofar as it merely inverts and internalises colonial discourse: which can be diagnosed as neurosis of victimisation-and a politics of resentment. What is therefore required is a critical history of the patriarchy and essentialism within black consciousness, to take those of elements of historical heritage that are worth valorising.

‘No doubt, therefore, part of the approach envisaged in bringing about black consciousness has to be directed to the past, to seek to rewrite the history of the black man and to produce in it the heroes that form the core of the African background ... Then too one can extract from our indigenous cultures a lot of positive virtues which should teach the Westerner a thing or two. The oneness of community for instance is at the heart of our community. The easiness with which Africans communicate with one another is not forced by authority but is inherent in the makeup of African people’ (Biko: 2008, p.32).

Therefore, to ascertain whether Biko’s notions will prove viable in the contemporary postcolony, I will subject the African normative horizon that conditions his political spirituality to an epistemological critique to disentangle the problematic relationships between Africanity, Nativism and Blackness in the contemporary postcolony and to comprehend the extent to which Biko’s transformative account of subjectivity in South Africa is still bound to the colonial episteme. Following my observations of Foucault in Africa, considering his Orientalist reading of Tunisian student Marxism, this critique similarly entails scrutinizing how colonial and black rationality have operated in Africa in general, and South Africa in particular, through the production and subjectification of stereotypes.

Additionally, to engage Biko’s technology of the self (Chapter 7), I first attempt to make sense of what a technology of domination might look like in South African society by drawing on Bhabha and Mbembe’s work on colonial governmentality to understand epistemological stereotyping and racial/necropolitical subjectification as a historical, political, social, and psychic process (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6). This is necessary because Biko’s analysis of subject formation is still grounded in a structuralism that is inadequate for dealing with diachronic processes of governmentalisation in the contemporary postcolony. Furthermore, in the final chapter, I will need to ascertain the problems caused in the contemporary postcolony by the idea of a true, African self in Biko’s work. I will explore how this inversion of colonial and Western metaphysics can often lead to the production of neurotic political forces that leave us

with a society imbued with resentment, continued racism and xenophobia. It is only by creating a postcolonial politics and ethics that overcome the substantialist unities that undergird colonial epistemology that subjects and communities will emerge free from the historical conditions of existence that engender pathological racial subjects and inhumane communities.

## Chapter 4. Colonial Rationality: An Analysis of Racializing Reason and the Crisis of the Postcolonial Subject

### 4.1 Introduction

In the first two chapters of this thesis, I presented Foucault's key concepts for the purpose of later explicating the different role they have played in postcolonial studies. In the third chapter, I demonstrated that Foucault's ethics were unfortunately informed by an Orientalist discourse that requires reformulation through a rereading of Greek and early Christian practices: political spirituality. In Chapter 7, as my response to the crisis of a racialised, alienated and neurotic (divided) subject in the African postcolony, I will articulate how political spirituality is reflected in Biko's theories of Black Consciousnesses and Black Theology. In this chapter, I provide an initial presentation of how this racialised subject is configured through an exploration of a particular form of colonial rationality. I do so by applying Homi Bhabha's notion of the colonial apparatus in the African colony and postcolony, which I explore in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6, in its relationship to black reason and necropower, respectively.

Regrettably, most critics of colonial discourse analysis argue that its textual focus obscures and neglects concrete material political problems, including practical agency, resistance and most importantly, the forms of colonial rationality that deracinated the metaphysical structures of colonized life, constituting new, deficient forms of subjectivity in the process. Their reasoning is that the deconstructive method is by nature apolitical and is therefore of no analytic value when it comes to engaging the problems of the postcolonial present. In this chapter, I counter these claims by arguing that the binary distinction between materialism and textuality does not hold because the discursive turn in postcolonial studies does consider the material effects of representation and signifying practices as ultimately productive of meaning and social reality. Second, I supply a different reading of the emergence of the postcolonial research program in British cultural studies, formulated by Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy. I show that, from the beginning of their radical project, a deconstructive reading was closely aligned with analysing the conditions and operations of colonial and racial rationality, from the emergence of the transatlantic slave trade through colonialism into the postcolonial present. Specifically, both Gilroy and Hall exhibited that our pathological notions of cultural homogeneity are the product of different types of racializing reason, and that the explanation we seek for subjective unity is a result of diasporic fragmentation. I then argue that Homi Bhabha's notion of the colonial apparatus is the most coherent analytic tool for studying the production of colonial and

postcolonial subjectivity. Challenging Said's claim that the stereotype is a misrepresentation of a given reality, Bhabha argues that the stereotype is the point of subjectification. Thereafter, I explicate six features of Bhabha's colonial apparatus, delimiting the aspects of subjectification that are relevant to the African context by drawing on the work of relevant scholars.

#### **4.2 Deconstruction and Political Rationality in Postcolonial Theory: The Problems of Resistance, Politics and Textuality**

Since its inception in 1978 with the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism*, postcolonial studies have been controversial in the Western academy and beyond. It has attracted detractors from within the sphere of Western disciplinary scholarship and scholars who identify with anti-colonial and decolonial forms of criticism. Said was a literary scholar, and this aspect of his work is reflected in his characterisation of Derrida and Foucault as primarily textual thinkers (Said: 1978, p.478; Said: 1989, p.44). Traditionally, literary studies approached the text as the reflection of 'a prior, ready-made reality', that is, realism, where signifiers accurately reflect their referents (Barrett: 1991, p.124; Bhabha: 1984). The theoretical foundation of the textualist position that influenced several post-structural and postcolonial thinkers was that writing, and therefore all language, does not mediate between the subject and a meaningful reality; rather language and the text produce the meaningful schemas that constitute 'reality' (Barrett: 1991, p.124). There is no external reality, but only an intertextual field of performative statements. Textualism is critical of disciplinary claims, and challenges 'conventional distinctions between academic and creative writing and between fact and fiction' (Barrett: 1991, p.125). Foucault's mode of textual analysis was valuable for Said because he was able to show how the text is implicated in the exercise of power. That is, he moves from the text to its political effect of ensuring the consent of the colonized in the sphere of colonial disciplinary culture (Said: 1978, p.491). Although he never used the term, Said's analysis engendered a branch of criticism in postcolonial studies called 'colonial discourse analysis' (Young: 2001, p.406). When colonial discourse analysts scrutinised the Western episteme, they opened a set of problems that threatened to run the entire legacy of anti-colonial theory into ruins.

Starting in the late 1970s with Ahmed's critique of *Orientalism* and up to David Scott's critique of postcolonial studies at the turn of millennium, these thinkers have postulated that the discursive turn defining postcolonial studies signified a turn towards an engagement with

textualism, thus neglecting the real material problems of politics, rationality, domination, and resistance. Challenging Western disciplinary knowledge represented a victory, but these critics charged colonial discourse analysts with undermining the cherished values of the anti-colonial struggle by subjecting them to epistemological critique. These included the problem of truth and liberating knowledge, the spiritual recourses afforded by religious traditions, an oppositional radical subject, and critically, the problem of resistance, Marxism, the national revolutionary tradition and consequently the postcolonial nation state. For these critics, postcolonial studies, 'writing in the wake of Edward Said', has largely been a deconstructive enterprise, performing anti-essentialist critiques of colonial constructions of cultural, racial, and national homogeneity and realist schemas of representation (Scott: 1999, p.14). By deconstructing the notion of an essentialist Orient which reciprocally conditioned its opposite, Said undermined the very existence of received notions of substantive Western identity. Additionally, according to Trevor Hulme, as colonial discourse developed as a field of textual research investigating the epistemic conditions of colonial knowledge formations, it would eventually include non-Foucauldian elements that provided it with a distinctive, diagnostic form.

'As work on colonial discourse becomes more extensive and sophisticated, it will remain crucial to keep in play that inflection of the unconscious, which is at the root of the symptomatic reading yet alien to the positivities of the Foucauldian discursive formation. The volatile, yet potent metaphor of the textual unconscious holds together the socio-diagnostic program whose possibility Fanon trailed nearly forty years ago. If the paranoia inseparable from white racism is to be read in the historical record of European colonialism then this rubric remains the most attractive rubric which would track in the documents of civilisations, the pathology of cultural communities' (Hulme: 1989, pp.17-18).

For Ranabir Samaddar, the early reception and deployment of Michel Foucault by postcolonial thinkers was mediated by cultural studies. He laments that reconfiguring colonialism as a textual paradigm meant that 'novels were dissected, discourse was the object of analysis, maladies and mentalities were investigated' (Samaddar: 2011, p.27). These investigations, he argues, obscured the more radical aspects of Foucault's work, and clouded the reality of colonialism as a material system of domination. However, other postcolonial scholars have argued that colonial discourse analysis is more than an exercise in textual deconstruction. Although Neil Lazarus (1993) has similarly taken issue with the way resistance and political and epistemic sovereignty have been configured in a textualist sense within postcolonial

studies, he proposes that reducing colonialism to a system of material domination ignores the more subtle aspects of cultural control and hegemony (Lazarus: 1993, p.67). Furthermore, I argue the binary distinction between textual idealism and a material referential reality has obscured the way Foucault's notion of discourse has transformed contemporary understandings of representation in postcolonial studies. The value of treating racism as a discursive formation is that it is 'designed to show how methodologically, socio-economic materiality and ideological conception are codetermining' (Goldberg: 1993, p.52)

For Bhabha, the colonial text does not represent a referential reality, but rather is a discursive theory of reading in which 'meaning is a systematic production within determinate institutions and systems of representation - ideological, historical, aesthetic, political' (Bhabha: 1984, p.311). Bhabha argues the production of meaning cannot be reduced to the intention of the author, or a pre-given reality than can be mimetically reflected. He uses psychoanalysis to read colonial discourse symptomatically. Reading its statements allows for an interrogation of the psychic, 'social, cultural and political forces which traverse it' (Bhabha: 1984, p.312). For Hall, discourse analysis enables a constructivism more radical than that promised by semiotics. He argues that while semiotics refers to a science of the arbitrary relationship between signs that made the first step in overcoming intentional and referential theories of representation. However, discourse analysis in the cultural and social sciences went further by demonstrating that the material effectuation of signifying practices transgresses the classical epistemological boundaries between representational thought, language and social practices to produce both objects of knowledge and political subjects of control.

'The discursive approach is more concerned with the effects and consequences of representation - its 'politics'. It examines not only how language and representation produce meaning. but how the knowledge which a particular discourse produces connects with power, regulates conduct. makes up or constructs identities and subjectivities. and defines the way certain things are represented, thought about, practised and studied' (Hall: 2003, p.16).

While it may be easy to reject claims that the discursive approach to colonialism neglected either the greater problems of politics or material reality, the question remains: to what extent is the deconstructive project that undertakes a symptomatic reading of colonial discourse closely aligned with an analysis of colonial rationality, and how is the problem of resistance formulated under these conditions? The operation of colonial hegemony did not merely consist of a series of constructivist dissimulations but was constitutive of a set of cultural norms regarding the essence of rational human development from Aristotle to Kant as the only way

to ensure the transition to modern human maturity, effected through discursive practices of cultural exclusion (Said: 1978, p.151). In order to create a transparent link between European culture and universal human nature, the construction of the literary canon in its various national European iterations wholeheartedly excluded the aesthetic products of non-Western cultures as pre-modern, marginal or peripheral to what would constitute a truly human experience (Ashcroft et al: 2003, p.8; Said: 1983, p.16; Viswanathan: 1987, p.23). Part of the problem for Scott, then, is the continued influence of Edward Said, and his reading of power/knowledge as being part of a cultural hegemonic bloc. In the traditional anticolonial conceptualisation of colonialism, resistance is traditionally configured as oppositional liberation from political, social and economic structures that repress the freedom and possibilities of self-determination in accordance with the transfer of sovereignty (Scott: 1999, p.11). For Parry, the problem with colonial discourse analysis, especially Spivak's deconstruction of oppositional consciousness (Spivak: 1994), is that it removes the capacity of resistance from those subjects most endangered by colonial and postcolonial domination, while giving all agency and autonomy to the discourse analyst as the producer of a counter-hegemonic form of writing (Parry: 1987, p.9). However, for contemporary scholars working in the postcolony, the issue is not whether resistance occurred, or whether the colonised were robbed of their agency. It is quite clear that resistance proliferated and is prevalent in differentiated forms in both the metropole and periphery, and that agency is as polysemic as a practice as it is as a concept. But according to Scott, when dealing with the relationship amongst the deconstruction of colonial discourses, colonial rationality and the contemporary existence of the colonised, anti-colonial resistance is no longer the central concern:

'Colonial power altered the terrain on which accommodation/resistance was possible in the first place. Attention now has to be turned, therefore, to a description of that terrain and the power that produces alteration, i.e. a description of modern power. Rather than the anticolonial problem of overthrowing colonialism (or the West), or the decolonisation of the West's representation of the non-West, what is more important is the practices, modalities and projects through which modernity inserted itself into the lives of the colonised' (Scott: 1999, pp.16-17).

According to Scott, what has not been addressed in postcolonial literature hitherto is, first, the complementary relationship between modern power and the introduction of Enlightenment reason into the colony. In his reductive reading of European presentations of the Enlightenment, Scott argues that the secular Enlightenment engendered a vision of human subjectivity in terms of rational understanding and self-interested action that was, by and large,

incommensurable with what it conceptualised as the premodern lifeworld's superstition and prejudice. Instead of trying to transform the consciousness of their subjects through pedagogical acts of progressive benevolence, colonial power sought to destroy such behaviour by deracinating the conditions of existence that engendered such cultural formations, and second, 'their systematic replacement by the inducement of new conditions based on clear, sound and rational principles' (Scott: 1999, p.33).

Second, these developments are inextricable from the colonial state and the modern European nation state. Considering the vast differences amongst different colonial projects, Scott claims that we cannot reduce the 'colonial state' to a singular rationality or indeed the Enlightenment notion of reason, but we must contend with the historicity of multiple political rationalities that have been constituted as the colonial project. By political rationalities of colonial power, Scott is deploying the Foucauldian conception of multiple relations of power/knowledge (dispositifs or apparatuses) that co-ordinated to articulate colonial strategies of sovereign rule (Scott: 1999, p.25). Michel Foucault's logic of governmentality is essential to understanding this process.

What gets elided is the emergence of a new, that is modern-political rationality in which power works ... through the construction of a subjectivity normatively experienced as the source of free will, truth and agency. It is this conception of a form of power, not merely traversing the domain of the social, but constructing the normative (i.e. enabling/constraining) regularities that positively constitute the civil society, that Michel Foucault tries to think on his work on governmentality (Scott: 1999, p.36).

Scott's move initiates an analytic shift from prior analyses of colonial power. In his response to both anticolonial theory and deconstructive postcolonial studies, he argues that his novel conceptualisation is of colonial governmentality as a distinctive political rationality that is organised 'to produce extractive effects on colonial bodies as governing-effects on colonial conduct' (Scott: 1999, p.40). Colonial governmentality inaugurates a process of rationalizing modernisation. Scott argues that postcolonial studies have hitherto ignored how this process of governing the conduct of the colonized population produces modes of subjectivity in accordance with racial and religious categories that enforce and legitimise colonial domination. Furthermore, within the political space consecrated by colonial governmentality, the only type of resistance that is intellectually qualified must conform to the foundational tenets structuring the rationalism that undergirds Western conceptualisations of a sound political revolution. By moving towards the enchanting domain of political spirituality, Scott is transgressing secular conceptions of political agency and subjective transformation, and instituting revolution in

terms that he considers incommensurable with the reality engendered by colonial rationalism. By introducing a serious Foucauldian distinction that sees power as productive, he is claiming that modernization is a constitutive process of colonial reality construction, inextricable from the creation and subjectification of racial religious subjects and isomorphic with the possibilities they can inhabit. Contrary to this, I argue that the problem that needs to be addressed, theoretically and in terms of the intellectual history of postcolonial studies, is that of colonial governmentality which was not originally posed by Scott but by Homi Bhabha, as an apparatus in his essay on colonial discourse in 1983 and subsequently in *The Location of Culture* (Bhabha: 2004). The colonial apparatus is a type of political rationality that I will explore, and which will continue to inform my analyses of racial subjectification in the South African postcolony for the remainder of the thesis. Nevertheless, Scott believes that he is overcoming the position of Said and his followers. He, and critics before him, have alleged that Said's followers continue to conceptualise Western political philosophy and literature as a singular structural and synchronic discourse, a form of textual idealism that is incapable of grasping the problems of the contemporary postcolonial world. By contrast, I will argue that the problem of colonial reason, which has been ignored by these commentators, has been central to postcolonial studies and is in fact closely connected to the deployment of colonial discourse analysis by cultural studies' scholars.

#### **4.3 Cultural Studies, Power, Deconstruction and Representation: Introducing Colonial Reason**

Problematically, the reason Scott (1999) has lumped the tropes of deconstruction, representation and anti-essentialism together is because, following Ahmed, Parry and Lazarus he reduces all of postcolonial studies to the influence of Edward Said's colonial discourse analysis. Although Said's text is considered seminal because of its Foucauldian methodological intervention and its epistemological critique of objectivity and cultural homogeneity, it is within the context of British cultural studies that the historical formation and deconstruction of colonial discourses were analysed. This was done in relation to different forms of power relations, constituting colonial and racializing forms of reason and a program of socio-diagnostic critique. British cultural studies was formalised with the founding of the Birmingham centre of Cultural studies in 1964.

The initial theoretical framework for British cultural studies is best understood as a program of literary studies organised by left-Leavisism in 1950s Britain. Leavis used the classical literary tradition to refine the cultural sensibilities of the British citizen and analyse the threat that mass culture posed to a balanced cultural life. Culture was simply thought of as of a way of life; a set of local practices which had been cemented into 'long standing cultural forms' (During: 1993, p.5). When the West Indian intellectual Stuart Hall became the director of the institute in 1969, the nature of cultural analysis and consequently cultural struggle shifted radically, introducing thematics about colonialism, racial and gendered identity. Although the notion of culture has very often been reduced to the superstructural sphere within the field of Marxist literary studies, Gilroy points out that, before the disciplinary formation of 'scientific racism in the nineteenth century, the term race was used very much in the way that culture is used today' (Gilroy: 1993, p.8). Cultural power and struggle were no longer seen as problems that existed between colonial societies - metropole and periphery - but as hegemonic relations within them. Under the guidance of Stuart Hall, and to a lesser extent Paul Gilroy, cultural studies developed two lines of research which were unified in their different attempts to explore the political effects of colonial discourses, the diasporic and the postcolonial projects.

'The diasporic position emphasizes spatial (as well as cultural) displacement within the nation-state ... The postcolonial position tends to operate on a temporal axis, emphasizing the historical connection between nation-states ... it tends to be more concerned with the modes of construction of emergent forms of national identity' (Stratton and Ang: 1996, p.411).

Despite the conceptual distinction, the relationship between the postcolonial and diasporic projects is mutually reciprocating. Problematically, critics of postcolonial deconstruction continue to deploy the same essentialist vocabulary deployed by colonial ideologues who envision cultures as pure racial unities. Masolo, like Scott and other anticolonial thinkers, lambasted deconstruction for endorsing 'non-referentiality' and 'anti-essentialism' (Masolo: 1994). However, Srygotski has pointed out that postcolonial 'deconstruction points to the unavoidable necessity of reference and essentialism but is concerned with accounting precisely how identity is constructed, inscribed or reinscribed' (Srygotski: 2008, pp.87-88). For Stuart Hall, the west had the creative power to make colonial subjects see themselves as other to the Western subject, who was the driving force behind rational historical progress and the normative exemplar or essence of the human being. Anti-colonial theories of subjectivity were framed by the alienation/realisation paradigm, which theoretically presupposed an essential conception of a true native self 'with a shared history and ancestry in common' (Hall: 1994,

pp.393-394). The main idea behind this paradigm was that the violent institutions of colonial power repressed and deformed a healthy native identity that must be recovered. As Hall notes, this cultural and discursive practice of reclaiming the essential black self was central to the Negritude and Pan African movements. Consequently, Negritude and Pan African movements have played a role in the construction of xenophobic postcolonial national cultures. For this reason, cultural studies as an 'academic project' began by challenging the relationship between Eurocentric ethnocentrism and nationalism – that is, the notion of a pure, white, 'essentially homogenous nation state' (Gilroy: 1993, p.5), and the moral inversion of this neurotic complex in the African situation, which has given birth to alarming political acts of violence. More importantly, regarding the problem of colonialism and the postcolonial subject, Hall claims that we should no longer attempt to rediscover our racial or cultural essence but analyse the production of subjectivity as diasporic.

The term 'diaspora' traditionally referred to 'the dispersion of a people of its original homeland. Until recently, the term was most closely associated with the dispersion of the Jewish people' (Butler: 2001, p. 89). Since the 1980s, scholars working in different disciplinary fields have offered definitions of diaspora in accordance with analyses conducted in various localities. In this context, the practices that legitimated the transatlantic slave trade and the discursive representation of blackness are problems internal to the West's history, and, like the Orient, its self-identity. Considering the African context, for example, the Atlantic slave deracinated the local practices holding African communities together, producing a diasporic phenomenon called 'kinlessness' (Mbembe: 2017, p.33). Instead of racism being conceived as an ideology, scholars in cultural studies argued that contemporary racial politics are conditioned by an older 'discourse of ethics and racial difference', which is inextricable from the West's conception of its own cultural and political history. Using Foucault to break with orthodox Marxism, Gilroy argues that discursive practices are not determined by any material base or infrastructure but are conditioned by the 'contiguity of racialised reason and unreasonable racism' that is a relation between a rationality and the production of desire (Gilroy: 1993, p.9). For Hall, this means that the subject is no longer characterised by an essential racial purity, but by 'heterogeneity and diversity ... constantly producing themselves anew, through transformation and difference; by hybridity' (Hall: 1994, p.393). This notion of subjectivity as hybridity requires an analysis of how colonial subjects were positioned and continue to position themselves within narrative discourses of the past.

The emergence of postcolonial theory, as delineated by Hall, can thus be read as an attempt to wrestle with this problematic notion of the subject in relation to the 'traumatic character of the colonial experience'. It is in relation to the traumatic character of the colonial experience that I will elucidate the neurotic and alienated structure of the colonial and postcolonial subject, which corresponds to Hall's two definitions of cultural identity, essentialist or diasporic (hybrid). For now, note that Hall argues that this positioning of diasporic subjectivity commenced with the subjection of the colonized to the West's dominant regime of representation by virtue of the emergence of several colonial, or rational, rationalities (historical complexes of power/knowledge). Following Foucault, Hall claims that each discursive regime of representation, and consequently forms of subjectivity, is generated through the relationship between power and knowledge. Analysing colonialism, Hall argues:

'The ways in which black people, black experiences, were positioned and subjected in the dominant regime of representation were the effects of the cultural exercise of cultural power and normalisation.... They had the power to make and experience ourselves as other. Every regime of representation is a regime of power formed, as Foucault reminds the fatal couplet power/knowledge. But this kind of knowledge is internal, not external. It is one thing to position a subject or set of peoples as the Other of a dominant discourse. It is quite another to subject them to that knowledge, not only as a matter of imposed will and domination, by the power of inner compulsion and subjective conformation to the norm.' (Hall, 1994, p.385).

Said claims that the project of identity is at the heart of his analysis in *Orientalism*. He claims that the process at work in Negritude, the moral revaluation of the colonial construction of identity, was replicated in the East: it 'occurred in India, in many parts of the Islamic world, the Islamic World, China, Japan, Indonesia and the Philippines, where the denied of repressed native essence emerged as the focus of, and even the basis of nationalist recovery' (Said: 2012b, p.561). If we look back at the writings of Leopold Sedar Senghor, for example, one still sees the traditional distinction where the European characterisation is based on 'discursive reason, selfhood, facts, logic and matter' (Senghor: 1994, p.28). The African self, based on the discourse of Negritude, is perceived positively as a spiritual being embodying the aesthetic and impulses of a moral universe. This identity, to paraphrase Said, amounts to nothing more than an essentialist form of negative difference. But what does one mean by identity here, and how does it relate to the Foucauldian understanding of subjectivity? By diasporic identity, Hall is not referring to an essentialist position that has a stable ontological reality. Rather,

I use 'identity' to refer to the meeting point, the point of suture, between on the one hand the discourses and practices which attempt to 'interpellate', speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which produce us as subjects that can be spoken. Identities are thus points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us (Hall: 1996, pp.6-7).

In Althusser's account of hegemonic subject formation in late modernity, the interpellation of individuals operated through an identification with an image of authority in which the subject recognises the way he is hailed or addressed by an interlocutor. To break with the orthodox model of economic determination, in which subjectivity is structured purely by an identification in relation to authoritarian modality reducible to class functions (Althusser: 2011, p.194), Hall uses the notion of discourse to explicate the creation of subject positions, such as race, gender, religion and so on. In his analysis of Foucault, the position of 'the subject is produced as an effect through and within discourse, within specific discursive formations' (Hall: 1996, p.8). For Hall then, the question of subjectification pertains to how 'subjects identify or (do not identify) with the positions to which they are summoned, as well as how they fashion, stylise, perform and produce these positions, and why they never do so completely, or once and for all.' (Hall: 1996, p.9) He argues that this enables us to reopen the question of the racial subject, not only in terms of a process of domination but also a process in which the discursive subject can re-appropriate and transform inherited practices. In order to understand this process of subjectification, I have to clarify one of the most important Foucauldian moments in postcolonial studies, with regard to the relationship between colonial rationality and the production of colonial and postcolonial subjectivity, which is Homi Bhabha's deployment of the colonial apparatus.

#### **4.4 Representation, Stereotyping and Subjectification in Said and Bhabha**

In this section, I argue that critics have missed a key moment in the postcolonial reading of Foucault – the shift from textualism to a coherent framing of the problem of colonial rationality – found in Homi Bhabha's critique of Edward Said in *The Location of Culture*. This misreading has been influenced by the idea that Bhabha is only a deconstructive thinker (Scott: 1999, p.14), and therefore that the apparatus affirms 'the centrality of (textual literary discourse) as the central frame of reference for postcolonial studies' (Nichols: 2010, p.122). Rather, the

apparatus has six features that render it irreducible to the forms of writing and speaking that distinguish textual practices. Following Foucault, Bhabha draws on the notion of the apparatus, as a novel mode of colonial governmentality (Bhabha: 2004, p.101), to explicate the multiple and intersecting relations of power knowledge (or political rationalities) that effectuate materialising strategies – seemingly neutral social intuitions and everyday tactics that coalesce to produce pathological racialised modes of subjectivity that are socially controlled in such a manner as to reproduce racial capitalism as a mode of production (Hook: 2012, p.237).

Bhabha begins his critique of prior treatments of colonial discourse by arguing that Said's treatment of the stereotype is overly simplistic. He argues the value of Foucault's notion of power/knowledge is it rejects the dualistic epistemology that characterised Western metaphysics. This dualistic critique maintains the epistemic between ideality/representation and essence/appearance that informs Said's claim that the Western Orientalist has stereotypically misrepresented the Orient. This has led critics to question the coherence of Said's approach, as, despite his focus on discursive constructivism, he also relies on a realist epistemology that is structurally similar to the realism endorsed by colonial discourse itself.

To invoke a Fanonian argument in the context of neoliberal coloniality by way of example, when racialisation or racial identity is understood as a mere effect of a material infrastructure or base (structural Marxism), race can only be 'understood as difference from a political or cultural norm, rather than a means of structuring social worlds' (Trafford: 2019, p.39). According to Bhabha, race has always been a problematic issue for sociology as a discipline. Historically, since Marxism became a dominant mode of critique, race or the ideologies of racialism or racism have been treated as superstructural or cultural problems, undergirded by a material base awaiting dialectical transformation. In this context, pre-postcolonial sociology dealt with race in two ways: first, as an issue of social stratification, and second, as a form of cultural identity (Bhabha: 2016). Problematically, this has led to a binary division in contemporary sociology. The latest representative of this tradition, Habermas, has conceptually refurbished this historical binary distinction into the system and the social. In this theoretical framework established by Western Critical Theory, 'race and ethnicity are taken as social, not as aspects of the system... they are not seen as integral to the market, bureaucracy, and state, but are understood as located in the lifeworld of analysis, of social meanings and values' (Bhabha: 2016, 961). Racialisation is thus theoretically subsumed into the Marxist conception of proletarianization, an orthodox economic and material reductionism that is incapable of elucidating that South's Africa's 'largest class' is now a 'black' lumpen proletariat, excluded

from an economy run by a white bourgeoisie with a growing capitalist black elite class. This leads to the question of the very meaning of political blackness in post-Apartheid, which Mare, following Paul Gilroy (see Chapter 5), identified as the crisis of raciology (Gilroy: 2000; Mare: 2014). South African sociologists have struggled to find a methodological model that can account for

‘The processes by which racial and ethnic differences are necessarily produced ... Usually understood as ascriptive identities which may modify or inflect the social orders and processes of modernity, but are not themselves regarded as central to, or constitutive of, those orders’ (Bhabra: 2016, p.961).

In Bhabha’s work, racism as a colonial discourse ‘creates the differences it claims to find’ (Byrne: 2009, p.73). Instead of seeing the stereotype as a misrepresentation and the colonizer and colonised as distinct ontological figures in a given reality, Bhabha argues that we need to understand the structure of stereotype within the contours of colonial discourse as ambivalent and productive: as the effective point of subjectification. He analyses colonial and postcolonial subjectivity as partial processes of multiple identifications with representations of otherness that emerge with the birth of the system of native administration in colonial India and return as hybrid subjects to *haunt* and displace contemporary relations of authority in the metropolis. However, my research question requires that I address the configuration of divided (neurotic and alienated) subjects in the African context in general, and post-Apartheid South Africa in particular. For this reason, I outline below the features of Bhabha’s colonial apparatus in relation to the operations of colonial and postcolonial modes of African rationality, so that I am eventually able to subsume the colonial apparatus to the more general notion of Black Rationality and Necropolitics in Chapter 5. This does not mean forfeiting the conceptual distinction between diasporic (hybrid) and essentialist cultural identity. Rather, it enables a diagnostic treatment of African postcolonial nativism from a more critical perspective that considers the way colonial discourses are saturated with intergenerational trauma

First, the colonial apparatus ‘functions, strategically, to create a space for ‘subject peoples’ through the production of particular forms of knowledge’ (Bhabha: 2004; Hook: 2012, p.237). The strategic function of the apparatus, Foucault specified, responds to a contingent, urgent need (EPK, p.196). The problem which every colonial state responded was: ‘how can a tiny and foreign minority rule over an indigenous majority?’ (Mamdani: 1996, p.16). Whether direct

or indirect rule followed, what was common to both was the rationalisation of segregation, and with it the exclusion of the ‘uncivilized’ masses from civil society and access to the full rights of citizenship. The colonial state ruled over a ‘racially defined citizenry’ of colonists who deployed brutally violent forms of coercion over native subjects. Although colonialism presented itself as a cultural project, it was rational in design, extractive and overly bureaucratic. (Mamdani: 1996, p.18). Colonialism has three central features worth drawing upon if we are to understand how ‘natives’ were rendered subject peoples through the production of forms of knowledge. According to VY Mudimbe,

‘it is possible to use three main keys to account for the modulations and methods representative of colonial organization: the procedures of acquiring, distributing and exploiting lands in the colonies; the policies of domesticating natives; and the manner of managing ancient modes of organisation and implementing new modes of production’ (Mudimbe: 1988, pp.14-15).

Thus, the relations of power/knowledge that concatenate to introduce novel forms of colonial governmentality ‘have determined the representation of Africa and Africans’ (Srygotzki: 2008, p.88). For early postcolonial discourse theorists Foucault’s constructivism, and the socio-diagnostic program afforded by a Fanonian reading of psychoanalysis could be deployed in a singular exercise without demarcating the foundational premises of a theory, but rather as a form of scholarly praxis dedicated to psychic and political transformation. The initial stereotypical representation of African inferiority was not conditioned by scientific discourses, but – like Said’s Orientalism – by missionary or Christian discourses. Later in colonial Africa, missionary discourses would be replaced by colonial anthropological discourses. However, the shift from one discourse to another did not effectuate a more scientific or scholarly depiction of African cultures. Instead, anthropologists constructed a reified imago of the African in need of cultural and religious conversion and correction. In this discursive field, the African subject was stereotyped as a subject with several overlapping derogatory characteristics informed by a Christian social imaginary: ‘Primitiveness, Pagan (evil), Naked (child), Cannibal (beast)’ (Mudimbe: 1988, p.63).

Second, Bhabha argues that the colonial apparatus, ‘produces types of knowledge through which surveillance is exercised and through which complex forms of pleasure/unpleasure are incited’ (Bhabha: 2004, p. 102). Bhabha is evoking the disciplinary mode of power/knowledge in the colonial context to elucidate the finer aspects of how forms of knowledge made possible by surveillance became explicitly invested in the normalization of racial governance. In Chapter 3, I demonstrated that instead of developing unilaterally in France, disciplinary power

developed relationally as a set of practices between periphery and metropole. Additionally, I was able to indicate a similar tendency in the development of biopolitics, but I omitted explaining how the two related as complementary, intersecting and overlapping modes of political technologies in the South African colony because of early criticisms of Foucault's apparent omission of race from his work. Although South African exceptionalists propose that South African apartheid and the transition to a democratic 'Rainbow Nation' represent a different political trajectory, epistemology and set of values than other African states, it is more accurate to argue that the Apartheid state refined the strategies of colonial rule. This form of governance is reflected terminally, in the formulation of racial policies and laws implemented by the national party that were initially proposed in the colonial period under the United Party. For example, eleven years after the formation of the Union, the minister of mines, Patrick Duncan, initiated 'the idea of national population register to allocate a fixed racial identity to every citizen' (Posel: 2001, p.97). Although his proposal was unsuccessful because of its exorbitant cost, in 1948 the Apartheid government made this idea foundational to its mode of racial governance, reflected in the passing of the Population Registration Act of 1950.

'The idea of a population census typifies the sort of comprehensive and systematic information gathering, coupled to modes of orderly regulation and surveillance, which Foucault identified as the hallmark of modern governmentality. However, the nationalists added their own distinctive imprint to this process, in making race the mould within which all this knowledge and power were constituted. Every social fact was racially coded; race became the unit of measurement for every social measurement' (Posel: 2001, p.104).

Posel's analysis of governmentality clarifies how race became normalised in Apartheid South Africa, insofar as the panoptic surveillance and racial categorization of South African society into four socially constructed racial groups (Whites, Coloureds, Africans and Indians) became a living reality for the majority of the population (Posel: 2001, p.109). She questions whether these factors – or rather, Foucauldian distinctions alone – are enough to explain why the majority of South Africans bought into these racial categories. Why, despite resistance to and dissolution of the Apartheid regime, do many South Africans continue to identify with the racial identities prescribed by the Apartheid state in the contemporary postcolony? For Homi Bhabha, the response to this question would be the ambivalent desire and anxiety that undergirds colonial discourse. Drawing on Freud's notion that unconscious desire is ambivalent in the sense of being an admixture of hostility and affection (Freud: 1985, p.124), he argues that 'without the attribution of ambivalence to relations of power knowledge ... those

terrifying stereotypes of savagery, cannibalism, lust and anarchy, ... are the signal points of alienation and identification in primal scenes of fear and desire in colonial texts' (Bhabha: 2004, p.104). The ambivalent stereotypical object of colonial discourse is not simply hated or derided but also desired, and in that sense it offers a model for an ambivalent identification through otherness. Thus, the colonial apparatus stereotyping modes of subjectification expresses an ambivalence in which the coloniser wants to articulate his superiority and domination over the colonised, but in doing so becomes deeply anxious about his self-identity through the desire for creating a 'reformed other' (Huddart: 2006, p.66). According to Hook, instead of envisioning the apparatus as purely rational technology, or indeed Bhabha's work as evidence of a naturalist psychology, we should consider his transformation of the apparatus as psychological technology. I follow Hook in proposing those psychological technologies – rather than natural psychologies – should be our critical presumption and our analytical focus. In the case of colonized subjects, technologies of domination or subjectification were of course not oriented towards ideals of self-improvement and the production and intensification of human capacities. Rather, were they not organized 'around images of dread and aversion, around points of denigration and disgust?' (Hook: 2012, p.258). In the notion of an affective technology of racism, then, extending this suggestion,

'we have a means of capturing not the whole of a racist persona, but an array of (often subliminal) 'procedural' elements, a means of tracing the flow of conventionalized formulas and affects of racism as they come to be conducted through an individualized ethics' (Hook, 2012, p.254).

Methodologically: first, at the bottom, disciplinary power signifies the micro-practices that constitute the general horizon of a normalizing society. Normalization constitutes the technological production of psychic life, with special emphasis being placed on a self-regulating mode of subjectivity with an ego-ideal that has introjected a racial imaginary. Second, from the top, biopower and (as I will explore in the next chapter) necropower are racializing schemas that intervene upon, regulate, and destroy the vital aspects of the species body of the colonized. As a go-between for these two levels, psychological technologies of governance and affectivity operate by responding to a problem, crisis, or urgent need, subsequently producing compliant modes of subjectivity by conducting formations of affect that induce investment in racializing images as sources of identification that enable personalized, racial ethics (Hook: 2012, p.223). Furthermore, when addressing technologies, I am not invoking the level of consciousness and ideological dissimulation. Technologies of

racism refer to 'registers of bodily spatial and performative routines, by which race is constructed...and enfolded in technologies of self' (Hook: 2012, p.217). Technologies are pre-linguistic modes of practical activity, which operate in relation to and deploy sign systems for their aim-oriented activity, marshalling a set of images endowed with affective and psychic energy. Foucault argues that 'there is a technology of the self, that cuts across symbolic systems while using them' (EEW3, P. 369).

Third, Bhabha argues, the apparatus 'authorizes the strategies of colonial rule by the production of stereotypical knowledge of colonizer and colonized, two orders of knowledge assessed and evaluated according to fundamentally different criteria' (Bhabha: 2004, p. 105). Following observations on the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the claim that colonization wiped out an entire civilization, which leaves the colonized without an ontological system of meaningful reference or structure of kinship, postcolonial thinkers have argued that the diasporic condition, or kinlessness, is indicative of that sense of corporeal fragmentation that constitutes the imaginary structure of Lacan's mirror stage. Lacan proposed that human beings are 'disadapted animals', in which the unity of the human body is perceived to have a unity that is the greater than the sum of its constituent parts (*gestalt*) (Lacan: 1994, p.14). Acknowledging the physiological incapacity and deficiency at the core of our existence, enables us to contemplate 'the re-markable proliferation of human cultural and psychic development' (Chiesa: 2007, p.6). The human infant, helpless, lacks any sense of unity across time that would be characteristic of what we called identity, a principal Lacan calls the mirror stage (Lacan: 1994, p. 94). The child does not only have to identify with an image of themselves; an image of another child or a portrait of Miley Cyrus will work perfectly well. The point being, at the same time child feels a sense of corporeal fragmentation and helplessness, the specular image affords the ego a sense of unity, meaning and self-identity that is simultaneously alienating because it can never be actualized or realized. In his work on the relationship between the ego and the superego, Freud failed to differentiate ideal ego from ego ideal. For Lacan, the ideal ego refers to a process whereby the subject projects a series of idealized images onto the external world. He argues that the ego ideal designates 'the subject's introjection of another external image that has a new deformative effect on the psyche' (Chiesa: 2007, p.23). The two do not operate in isolation but form a dialectic in terms of the constitutive deleterious effects of images in the subject's life. In Lacan's thought, the imaginary stage is akin to psychosis, and exists prior to the child's entry into the symbolic cultural codes that comprise the modern adult's entry into the community as a citizen. The imaginary reconciles Freud's themes of narcissism and aggression; the self

develops the notions of self-sufficiency and grandiosity through a unifying identification with a discrete specular image as an ideal ego, 'onto all outer objects' (Chiesa: 2007, p.34). In the colonial context, Bhabha demonstrated that, faced with the construction of the colonized other as a primitive, barbarous and childlike figure that required colonial governance to attain full human maturity, the colonized can very often, as Fanon's case studies illustrated, come to ambivalently identify with an image of whiteness that affords the colonized subject an imaginary sense of wholeness and unity (Bhabha: 2004, pp.52-91, Fanon: 2017; Greedharry: 2008, p. 67). The attractiveness of this unity is that it provides an imaginary rationalization for what otherwise would be a tacit sense of fragmentation, absurdity and meaninglessness. Thus, the 'mirror stage establishes a psychic dialectic between the subject and other that serves as a model for the entirety of the subject's chronologically successive imaginary identifications' (Chiesa: 2007, pp.16-18). Moreover, this is where Bhabha's account differs from other postcolonial thinkers, influenced by Said, who argue that the coloniser solely possessed power and exercised it intentionally, while being autonomously outside the gambit of colonial discourse. For Bhabha, it is historically inconsistent to argue that power was solely possessed by the coloniser. Rather one needs to assess how the stereotypes of colonist and colonised (black and white) were created through technologically produced imaginary schemas with no chance of dialectical synthesis, the very essence of colonial governmentality. The micro-practices that engendered psychological technologies of white racism consisted of a series of affective formations, built on foundations of racial purity, discourses of biological or 'white' supremacy, ethnic notions of sexual fidelity to one's race and duty to a geo-political Christological capitalist European empire. These values were encoded in racial technologies of the self, supporting the power of the colonial state. More importantly, these technologies survived its demise, and their power is consecrated in the discursive figure of the race traitor as an abnormal enemy that is internal to the 'superior' and normative race (Hook: 2012, p.221). In the anticolonial and postcolonial context, Hall argued that essentialized conceptions of Blackness offered by Negritude and the Pan African Movement in response to the construction of colonial subject have a similar psychic function.

'Such images offer a way of imposing an imaginary coherence on the experience of diaspora and fragmentation, which is the history of all enforced diasporas ... Such texts restore an imaginary fullness or plenitude, to set against the very broken rubric of our past. They are recourses of resistance and identity, with which to confront the fragmented and pathological ways in which experience has been constructed within the dominant regimes of cinematic and visual representation in the West' (Hall: 1994, p.394).

I argue that the forms of psychic idealization corresponding to celebrated notions of racial purity and superiority in African discourses of self-writing become objects of intense investment. Consequently, there is a strong link between this desire for racial purity and fascist practices of the black imaginary in the twentieth century (Gilroy: 2000, p.240). Imagos, or images, are signs that don't emanate from the representative faculties of the conscious subject, but issue from the linguistic and structural nature of the symbolic, which organizes desire, language, and human subjectivity (Homer: 2004, p.43). They are specifically alienating images in which the subject sees itself reflected, insofar as it produces a form of imaginary identification. The symbolic includes 'societies' traditional codes of morality, including positions of status, the accumulation of goods, commodities and titles' (O'Sullivan: 2010, p.56). According to David Pavon-Cuellar and Ian Parker, 'the apartheid symbolic system constructs and deploys a racist universe that includes all systems of culture and society' (Pavon-Cuellar and Parker: 2013, p. 319). Apart from the complementarity of Foucault's notion of discursive practice, and Lacan's signifying practices (in which signifiers only refer to other signifiers), the two thinkers also share an analytic focus on the relationship between the body and the 'symbolic system of knowledge (savoir)' (Pavon-Cuellar and Parker:2013, p. 319). For Lacan, there is always a traumatising and alienating disjuncture between the subject at the level of the imaginary and the symbolic. Since the unconscious symbolic designates the exteriority of the Apartheid system, the racialised, enunciated body is always alienated from the speaking subject', thus the body that is racially symbolized does not refer to the real subject (Pavon-Cuellar and Parker: 2013, p. 319). Thus, the real, the third level of reality, designates that space of lack in the unconscious that cannot be symbolized. For Lacan, it is the noumenal truth of our reality and the traumatic, and consequently the phantasmic core of our being. For postcolonial thinkers influenced by Lacan, such as Stuart Hall, the fragmentation and dispersal of the lacerated black body responds to the rootless trauma of being enslaved and shipped (which is unrepresentable in signifying discourse), the limits of the Lacanian real, through the discursive act of an imaginary national or racial unification which provides the postcolonial subject with an ahistorical unity and plenitude. But this, to reference psychoanalysis, is not an adequate solution. National reunification by means of discursive idealisation doesn't have the psychic capacity to engage with is the law of the father in a technological sense, in the postcolony after the civilising mission of the colonial 'father' has been thoroughly rejected. The trauma in the postcolony is transgenerational (defined by Abraham and Torok as a phantom and revealed in Achille Mbembe's neurosis of victimisation), as the original fratricide. For Mbembe, the fact that Africans elites traded their kin for material goods with

European slave traders, has been forgotten (repressed) – as the phantomic roots of the slave trade – but still continues to determine exclusionary, racist, nativist and xenophobic behaviour in the contemporary postcolony (Mbembe: 2017, p.144)(see section 5.4 and 8.4 for further detail). Identifying with the law of the father of the African postcolony, embodied in the figure of the African autocrat (such as Jacob Zuma), has deformative effects on the African postcolonial psyche, leading to the crisis of the postcolonial subject (Mbembe: 2015, p.113). Arguably, uncovering this little secret can demonstrate why whiteness or other African communities are used by the postcolonial potentate as a scapegoat, to escape fiscal responsibility, claim a moral position and exact xenophobic and class violence as an act of sovereignty (the internalised and inverted characteristics of colonial governance). Afro Marxists and Pan African discourses are imbued with a deep sense of resentment, and a neurosis of victimisation as the spectral resonance of intergenerational trauma. To take up a moral position, the self-declared black subject is required to define itself secondarily against an ‘evil white subject’ that is primary within the parameters of the colonial episteme. For Mbembe, this is equivalent to the first crisis of reason I will explore in our analysis of subjectivity in the postcolony in the next chapter, which contributes to various forms of ethnic violence. Following Hall and Mudimbe, he suggests that Afro-nationalism and nativism are neurotic discursive practices where the subject only identifies and creates itself based on a moral inversion of the Western construction of the African subject in the postcolony, a political and psychological crisis we will continue to explore in the next chapter (Diagne: 2002, p.623).

‘African discourses on the self-developed within a racist paradigm. As discourses of inversion, they draw their fundamental categories from the myths they claim to oppose and reproduce their dichotomies: the racial difference between black and white [...] the very conviction that race exists and is at the foundation of morality and nationality ... More fundamentally, behind the dream of political emancipation and the rhetoric of autonomy, a perverse operation has been taking place, the result of which has only strengthened Africans’ resentment and their neurosis of victimization’ (Mbembe: 2001, p.257).

Fourth, fifth and sixth, Bhabha argues the colonial apparatus remains successful insofar as it legitimates the colonial mission beforehand by maintaining the racist objective of construing the colonized as a population of degenerate types based on racial origin (Bhabha: 2004, p.105). With respect to South Africa, the Calvinist doctrine of Afrikaner nationalism naturalised the Afrikaners as a population native to South Africa, endowed with a God-given mission. Two other population groups, Indian and Coloured, were split geopolitically, with each population

group relegated to the townships of the ex-British provinces of Anglo-Afrikaner South Africa, with Indians located in Natal and Coloureds in the Cape province. The separation and relocation of racial population groups was thus entrenched by the Group Areas Act (1957), which formalised forced removals, constituting blatant property theft which ended less than a half century ago, denying all ‘non-whites’ civil and political rights, alongside purposeful property, and economic disenfranchisement. As these populations no longer formed part of a political community of rights-bearing citizens in a common world, they became ‘bare life’, politically speaking. There may have been a certain degree of ambivalence among the population groups, insofar as, before the strategic functions of the NG Kerk and the Carnegie commission and following the victory of the British in the Anglo Boer War and subsequent fall-out of the First World War and the Great Depression, many white Afrikaners became poverty stricken, which caused them to take up residence in ‘multi-racial slums’ (Jubber: 2006, pp.530-531). The creation of racially segregated townships played on already existing hostilities and prejudices to create South African communities of conviviality, but more importantly designated communities of enmity. Ambivalence gave way to hostility, and contemporary governmental policies of enmity are driven by the principle of destruction (death drive), which does still come into contact or, rather, a dilapidated state of tension with the principle of life (Mbembe: 2019, p.154).

Moreover, we need to understand this analysis as linked to Bhabha’s fifth proposition concerning the colonial apparatus. By legitimating colonialism, the colonist can affirm his superiority by justifying conquest, enabling the creation of separate institutions to govern and administer the lives of segregated racial population groups, represented in policies of enforced segregation (or what was called separate development). Within this discursive climate, the symbolic also needs to be understood as a racialised economic system or political economy. Following the nature of black reason (see Chapters 5 and 6), the black subject goes through a process of ‘symbolic material translation’, now a necropolitical commodity (Reyes and Chirindo: 2020, p. 4; Pavon-Cuellar and Parker, p. 324) Consequently, in the South African case, this marked out the colonised, as I have previously registered, into four population groups. Bhabha’s sixth proposition is that a subject population is considered economically, as their activity could be carefully governed and dominated for profiting from surplus value. Thus, as an economic system, the apartheid symbolic produced blackness as use-value, generating white wealth (exchange value) on the basis of black poverty (Pavon-Cuellar and Parker: 2013, p. 323; Marx: 2018, p. 17). The myth of historical origination endeavours to categorise race as

immutable types in terms of the purity of national cultures but produces a relation of misrecognition on the basis of violently ordering binary oppositions that characterise and reinforce the antithetical stereotypical invocations of colonist (superior, good, white, civilised) and colonised (inferior, evil, black, primitive) as mutually reciprocating. The key to this discourse of power and colonial governance is the stereotypical creation of the colonised in relation to the moralising strategies of the 'White Man's Burden or the Civilising Mission'. This teleological structure of colonial historiography therefore postulates, in an infernal circle of hermeneutic othering and discrimination, that colonial rule is necessary because the colonised is conceptualised as both the cause and effect of the colonial system (Bhabha: 2004, p.119). Postcolonial scholars in both African studies and Asia have noted that the Oriental or African was postulated as an inferior, self-destructive creature who required the tutelage offered by colonial power rationalities to reach the stage of human maturity and self-governance.

At this point in the argument, it is important to note that the Indian resistance to the South African regime did not challenge the racialised framework of South African society, but rather, after a strategic settlement with the British after the Indian mutiny of 1857, sought formal equality with whites. Gandhi, who owned a legal practice and a house with eight rooms in Johannesburg, argued that Indians should settle their interests away from other oppressed populations in South Africa. Being implicated with the British meant that the National Indian Congress 'pleaded for Indian rights specifically and pleaded against being bracketed with Africans' (Dhupelia-Mesthrie: 2014, p.199-200). Although racial categories, such as Bantu, were socially constructed, people/and populations were coerced to identify with their allocated racial categories through the conduct of their everyday practices which in turn shaped their material and affective modes of being by virtue of the practices that constituted the psychological technologies of affective racial domination. As a strategy for inculcating enmity, 'oppressive measures were justified through the discursive creation of the 'swart gevaar' [black danger] – an idea accepted by other racial groups, exhibited in the forcible expulsion of Africans from urban centres of employment (Maylam: 1995, p.22). The *swart gevaar* designated a new way of representing the threat of Black South Africans entering white political and private spaces, and of eventual desegregation. Discursive 'images of blacks as irrational and violent, stone-throwing and disorganised mobs' became commonplace to incite fear until the election in 1994 (Durrheim: 2005, p.450). According to Charlotte Lemanski, 'this

fear of difference formed the crux of popular phrases used to justify apartheid, such as *swart gevaar* (Black danger) and *skollie menace* (scoundrel coloureds) (Lemanski: 2004, p.103).

In contemporary South Africa, the colonial apparatus continues to operate in the South African postcolony. Indeed, the continuity between Apartheid and post-Apartheid can be understood as the way colonial rationality continues to engender the same set of symbolic relations, although they are constituted by a certain iterability. For example, in his analysis of the #MustFall movements, Wahbie Long argues that the call for a decolonised education was caused by ‘black’ students receiving a poor education at dysfunctional schools, and their failure to cope was blamed on the institutional culture of the university. At one level, he is right to point out the effects of the Apartheid unequal education system. However, the uncritical model of group psychology, per Le Bon (Freud: 2005), cannot account for the differences in identification in colonial and racial subjectivity. Such differences are irreducible to a to a racially, culturally, homogenous subject, which became clear after national sovereignty was formally transferred from coloniser to colonised. As Freud writes scathingly of Le Bon,

‘Le Bon thinks that the particular acquirments of individuals become obliterated in a group, and that in this way their distinctiveness vanishes. The racial unconscious emerges: what is heterogenous is submerged into what is homogenous’ (Freud: 2005, p.100).

An example of multiplicity and hybridity of racial identifications is the different forms of identification in Kopano Matlwa’s *Coconut*. Matlwa’s text, set in post-Apartheid South Africa, tragically portrays how two young ‘black African’ women on different sides of the material divide, Ofilwe and Fikile, grapple with both structural effects and the legacy of transgenerational trauma in colonial suburban schools and the poverty of Johannesburg’s townships. Fikile’s degrading experiences in the townships, combined with a youthful longing for the glamorous, leads her to feel: ‘I am not one of you. You are poor and black, and I am rich and brown’ (Matlwa: 2008, p.140). However, material circumstances are also not evidence of a well-functioning psyche. According to Gugu Hlongwane, one of the effects of the formerly elite White (Model C) school system is that those who live in extreme wealth can come out of such institutions extremely or even more psychologically scarred (Hlongwane: 2013, pp.12-13). Thus, even in the post-Apartheid context, we can see that in every ‘racist statement’, we see a continuation of the same binary social relations in which the denigration of black subjects is indissociable from the elevation of white subjectivity into a place of mastery and superiority (Pavon-Cuellar and Parker: 2013, p.325). Although there have been partial attempts to translate or subvert the apartheid symbolic (such as the TRC commission briefly alluded to in the

Introduction), these have not materialised into the formation of a new symbolic world (see section 5.4), and for this we reason I can already claim from a methodological standpoint, that the technologies deployed by the ANC to transform subjectivity have largely failed. I will explain why in Chapter 8.

Thus, even Althusser's model of the school as an ideological state apparatus fails by reducing interpellation to class positioning. I have argued instead that what is required is an analysis of how theories of political economy and the desiring subject emerged historically in Western scholarship, which I traced nominalistically using Foucault's genealogical rendering of historical ontology. I propose that interrogating South Africa's racial subjects via psychoanalytic concepts should not be understood as the result of any naturalistic psychology, but 'as the alienating effects of colonial governance' (Bhabha: 2004, p.62), that refers to 'the production of an (stereotypical) image and the transformation of the subject in assuming that image' (Bhabha: 2004, p. 64).

In this chapter I have explored how the problem of political rationality has been central to postcolonial studies since its emergence in British cultural studies under the guidance of Stuart Hall, and to a lesser extent Paul Gilroy. Their work enabled me to counter the argument that postcolonial studies developed primarily as a literary field - practicing a form of textual idealism through colonial discourse analysis that abjured the more serious problems of material politics. Thereafter, I demonstrated that the problem of colonial rationality has been best articulated by Homi Bhabha (2004) with his notion of the colonial apparatus – in my view, one of the central but most neglected moments in postcolonial intellectual history. I have shown in this chapter that, contra Said, Bhabha understood the colonial apparatus as a productive form of government that produced racially stereotyped subjects. The analysis of the apparatus centred on applying its six features to the to the South African context, to explicate the configuration of the racial subject as part of a political and psychic crisis that manifests in the contemporary postcolony. This means a shift from theories of base and superstructure to understanding colonialism as:

- 1) a particular type of rationality, deriving from black reason, colonial rationality, and governmentality technologies and constitutive practices that are inextricable from those which produce racial capitalism as a mode of production that commodifies racial bodies, which in turn are subjected for the purpose of producing commodities for an emerging world market (Mbembe: 2017, 2021; Scott: 1999). The productive power

relations, as a set of actions on actions (EEW3, p.331), control the conduct of colonised and later postcolonial subjects - deracinating a whole set of pre-modern possibilities and replacing them with a new set of possibilities required by modern racial capitalism.

- 2) An episteme or epistemic regime that has an immanent relationship to this form of rationality through a system of relations (EPK, p.206), which also been called the colonial library (Mudimbe: 1988; Mbembe: 2001; Said: 1978). Gaurav Desai argues: 'The most productive readings of the colonial library are bound to be those that read the texts not as reflections of particular colonial relations but rather as constitutive of them' (Desai: 2001, p.5). Thus, in his deconstructive reading of colonial discourse, there is not an omission of the issues of essentialism and referentiality. Rather, deconstructive reading of a colonial episteme or library, in relation to a form of rationality (power/knowledge), 'is concerned with accounting for precisely how it is constructed, inscribed or reinscribed' (Syrotinski: 2008, 88) – that is, how the stereotype as image is identified with in a process of subjectification, which is the strategic function of the necropolitical/colonial apparatus.

## Chapter 5. An Analysis of Black Reason: The Move from Colonial to Postcolonial Forms of Rationality

### 5.1 Introduction

In this thesis, I postulate that Foucault's ethical concepts, reflected in a rereading of Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy as an affective technology of the self, can transform and heal alienated and traumatized black subjects until we are met with the contemporary contradictions brought forth by necropolitical sovereignty and the becoming black of the world. This chapter therefore picks up where I left off in the last chapter with the analysis of the first of two racial crises. Furthermore, it links these crises in subjectivity to the second and third stages in the evolution of necropolitics and capital. A) The second stage refers to the first narrative and formation of black reason, and B) the third stage refers to the formation of the 'Black Voice', -the second narrative of black reason, which leads to victimisation as it is the inversion of the first narrative of black reason. The first narrative of black reason played a role in constituting the colonial neurosis or the inferiority complex discussed in Chapter 4. In this chapter, I will examine the postcolonial neurosis of victimisation. I explicate how this social pathology is produced by colonial and postcolonial rationalities, which are furthermore consonant with each of the two narratives of black reason. This necessitates an exploration of how the two narratives of black reason are connected by an intergenerational trauma which connects the African diaspora, and how Mbembe's hauntological psychoanalysis encodes these pathologies in African anticolonial and postcolonial discourses. Lastly, I conclude the chapter with a critique of Mbembe's misreading of anticolonial theory and reading of South African politics, drawing attention to the fact that Biko's politics has a transformative value as a politics without an explicit investment in the formation of a racial polis, but which paves the way for the transformation that can engage with both neuroses, a line I will expand on when exploring necropolitics to account for the technological production of the inferiority complex in Africa (in Chapter 6) and Black Consciousness as an affective technology of the self.

The title of this chapter may seem misleading, since my purpose is not to elucidate Mbembe's notion of black reason in its entirety, which would entail explicating how, in the age of the Anthropocene, the fourth phase in the evolution of necropolitics and capital, the amalgamation of human biomass exceeds the requirements of the labour market, generating surplus populations whose lives resemble the thing-like (objectified) black slaves of early modernity, a crisis Mbembe heralds as 'the becoming black of the world' (Mbembe: 2017, p.13). In the

context of a decolonial historical ontology, necropolitics and black reason are able to articulate the relationships between racism, capital and the constitution of the Anthropocene, tropes that will continue to animate my discussion for the rest of this thesis. This will eventually lead to an explanation of the precarity that defines ‘the becoming black of the world’. Reciprocally conditioned by contemporary neoliberalism and the rise of digitalised surveillance technologies, our existences as animate beings and our desires have been computed and manipulated into digitally coded data for the purpose of technological (in the dual sense) governance. In the process, we are no longer subjects, but a digitalised

‘becoming object-enslaved to a commodity relation ... The fusion of animate life and late capital, that is, the reversal of life into thing by which modernity once defined the reproductive social life [and] social death of the slave, is today at the heart of all social relations and desire’ (Marriott: 2018, p.64).

I will postpone discussing the problem of the becoming black of the world, and a sustained analysis of black reason, until Chapter 8 deals with decolonial historical ontology, as this will form part of the process of interrogating Biko’s notion of African homogeneity via a brief critical history. Mbembe’s characterisation of the becoming object of human life will reveal a crisis right at the heart of twentieth century thought, the problem of transforming the divided subject (Mbembe: 2019, p.183).

## **5.2 Black Reason, Commandment and Governance in Africa**

In Chapter 4, I introduced Homi Bhabha’s theorisation of the colonial apparatus to illustrate the formation of racialised subjectivity. In this section, I propose we can only understand how this apparatus operates in the African context by subsuming it as a modern extension of a more general phenomenon, identified by Achille Mbembe as ‘black reason.’ Understanding black reason enables me to explain the link between colonial and postcolonial forms of political rationality, and the second and third stages of environmental racism, which I will elaborate upon in Chapter 6. For Foucault, philosophy after Kant did not only consist of a fundamental epistemology, an internal critique of reason by itself delimiting the proper boundaries of human rationality. Hitherto, the history of philosophy was defined by pure reason’s fecundity for an unconditioned illusion by falling into an antinomial theoretical contradiction (Kant: 2003, p.156). Mbembe argues in *Critique of Black Reason*, that the figure of the black subject signifies the limit of Western reason (Eze: 1997, p.26; Mbembe: 2017, p.32). As soon as

questions of Africa and blackness are addressed, they can only create purely fantastical representations, with no question of whether ‘words represent things’ (Mbembe: 2017, p.13). Black reason is a means of conceptualising a certain type of political, overarching governmental rationality that regulates the colonised subject’s conduct, but does so, *contra* Scott, as a ‘means’ (not a subject capable of meaningful self-determination) of extracting surplus value. Most scholars of colonialism have traditionally focused on Europe as the sole source of the colonising reason, but for Mbembe, the African colonized subject has been subjected to a multiplicity of foreign forces prior to the regime of modern colonialism. For a start,

‘Black reason consists of a collection of voices, pronouncements, discourses and forms of knowledge, common sense, whose objects are things or people of African origin ... Composed of multiple strata, this form of reason dates back to the time of antiquity. Numerous works have focused on its Greek, Arab, Egyptian and even Chinese roots. From the beginning its primary activity was fantasizing. Black reason was not only a system of discourses and narratives with academic pretensions but also the reservoir that provided the justifications for the arithmetic of racial domination’ (Mbembe: 2017, p.27).

Black reason, as a form of instrumental reason, strategically disqualified the African as moral human being. It constructed the African, first, as an object/means denied the capacity of self-determination, called the ‘black man’, ‘man of metal, man of merchandise (means), man of money (exchange value)’ (Marriott: 2018, p.65; Mbembe: 2017, p.47), before being defined as a native (Mbembe: 2017, p.29). Prior to the formation of the colonial period and the characterisation of the African as the racial type ‘black man’, black reason had various roots that, dating back from the antiquity (Mbembe: 2017, p.27). Mbembe argues that black reason, marshalling the biopolitical discourses of social Darwinism and eugenics from the point when Linnaeus’s analysis of plant evolution and typology was artificially transplanted to the study of humans, framing the evolutionary problem of the relation between man and animals as one of reason and instinct respectively, ‘which in the tradition of Western metaphysics... signified that the African was not human’(Mbembe: 2017, p.31). Colonial discourses claimed the African could not distinguish him/herself from animals in the way the European subject distinguished itself from nature with instrumental reason. This distinction derived from a morally exclusionary, political tradition that distinguished the moral Greek citizen from the immoral barbarian (Goldberg: 1993, p.8). As the second phase in the evolution of necropolitics and capitalism, there are several developments worth mentioning when considering black

reason. First, slavery and colonialization were not only economic practices, but in relation to the perverse strategy of the White man's burden in colonial discourse/apparatus I introduced the last chapter, mechanisms of moralising control. According to this logic, racial inferiority legitimated European domination, and slowly the reproduction of necropolitical structures of 'slavery, colonization and apartheid spread globally' (Reyes and Chirindo: 2020, p. 5). Playing on Fanon's insights, Mbembe argues that this leads to a triple loss. Colonial domination, particularly the settler variant I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 6, was a form of annexation in which a) territorial restructuring is combined with forced dislocation, b) one's body became a possession, merchandise and eventually a commodity, which meant a denial of basic personal agency and c) the loss of any and political status in society, one became a minor. I will discuss the relationship between the death of nature (stage 1 in the evolution of necropolitics) and environmental racism in section 6.2.1, but for the moment, it is essential to note together-these two phases engender an entirely new set of ontological relations for the black subject, defined by precarity, waste (see section 8.4) and social death (see section 7.4), made possible by the mythological structure of Western logocentric thought.

I argue, using the insights of Horkheimer and Derrida as a point of departure, that traditional Western theory is a vertical and hierarchical logocentric structure of organised binary conceptual division, inculcated within propositions which move necessarily from lower to higher levels of generalisation that define an exclusionary onto-theological system. Since there has been no definitive split between logos and mythos, the West's sacred /profane cosmology becomes embodied in socio-political order, which, by the time of the emergence of modernity, was formulated as a racist capitalist theocracy, or rather racial capitalism, and is contiguous with necropolitics (Derrida: 2001b, p.254; Horkheimer: 2002, p. 271-288; Mbembe: 2017, p.56). In fact, the onto-theological trappings of Western thought extended into the ostensibly non-metaphysical realms of positivism, evolutionary theory or its derivative social Darwinism, which informed the discourses of racial and colonial governance. In his deconstruction of Western metaphysics, Jacques Derrida claimed that, within the metaphysical tradition from Plato, a central organizational agency engenders a structure, but this principle nevertheless remains unfettered by structuration as the centre, or what Heidegger referred to as 'ground' in his analysis of structuralism in the context of his historical ontology that I documented in Chapter 2 (Derrida: 2001b, p.352). Derrida claims that this principle is ancient, the heart of Western metaphysics. Thus, the idea of a structural episteme is as old as both Western science and philosophy and the central feature of the onto-theological tradition (Derrida: 2001b p.351).

The terms given for this organizing principle have been numerous – ‘transcendentality, consciousness, God, man, and so forth’ (Derrida: 2001b, p.352) – and formally calibrate the exclusionary, binary, antinomial order of Western rational metaphysical thought. For example, our common sense understanding of reality is shaped by a series of binary logics: consciousness/unconscious, man/woman, truth/illusion, and for our current purposes, colonised/colonizer and whiteness/blackness. For Gerber, this notion of ground, or structuration needs is re-interpreted as the transcendental racial Western subject in Mbembe’s thought. Consequently, the colonised (whether African or Orient) is the product of the being synthesized according to categories of understanding of the Western/colonial subject.

‘A grounding, or German: *begründenden*, ground that signifies the highest principle or first ground that unifies the whole and accounts for the theo- of onto-theology. Hence, it is this logic or onto-theo-logic, which accounts for the figuration of the Being of beings. Moreover, the space of the figure named and held by the Being of beings in this schema have in the history of Western thought subsequently been held and replaced by figurations like God, History, the Subject, Man, and most recently National Identities and Race. ...In other words, concurring with the onto-theo-logic of the Subject, the world including objects and others, are synthesised back into the unity of the Subject as highest and grounding reference point. The world is understood according to the categories of the Subject. Once more, the colonised other is synthesised into the categories of the Western Subject’ (Gerber: 2018, p. 5).

According to Mbembe, these accounts enabled the formative moment of black reason at the time of European colonial ventures, engendering ‘a colonial science of which Africanism ... contributed to the development of this reason into a common sense and habitus’ (Mbembe: 2017, p.13) for all racial subjects. For my purposes, transformation of the discursive construction of the inferior African into the constitution of the black racial subject could only strategically function by virtue of the operation of, in neo-Foucauldian terms, psychological technologies of domination. Black reason as a political rationality signifies ‘the technologies (laws, regulations, rituals) that are deployed – as well as the devices that are put in place – with the goal of submitting animality to measurement’ (Mbembe: 2017, p.31). Colonial governmentality and black reason can only come into being through the violent imposition of an episteme, but this is only its first element. Commandment, as the first political rationality of colonialism, does not only refer to an epistemic interdiscursive formation but its relationship to, mutual conditioning by and support from technologies of domination and control, within a framework of state sovereign violence (Mbembe: 2015, p.1). Concerning the formation of the colony, what became explicit in colonial discourse was that the native could never attain the

sphere of 'human possibility' (Mbembe: 2015, p.30). Despite the ostensible sincerity of the civilising mission, the goal of colonial governmentality, or Commandement was not only to control conduct, but extract as much labour, and consequently surplus value from the colonised as possible (Mbembe: 2015, p.28). Thus commandment, as a rationality does not only refer to an epistemic inter-discursive formation but its relationship and mutual conditioning and support by technologies of domination and control, within a framework of state sovereign violence.

'This form of government does not rest on a covenant, since, in Hobbes's words, covenants "are made of such things only as they fall under our deliberation". It does not compromise on its rights, on the contrary it plunders its object and deprives it of what used to be its own. Yet the colonial potentate also portrays itself as a free gift, proposing to relieve its object of poverty from its debased condition by raising it to the level of human being' (Mbembe: 2015, p.35).

For Mbembe, 'colonial rationality,' or Commandement, was constituted by an 'imaginary' of state sovereignty. Hiddlestone documents that the objectification of the African as, 'indigenants', was a general discursive 'subordinated category subjected to particular constraints and punishment... which stems from the empty, self-fulfilling drive to control direct and exploit' (Hiddlestone: 2011, 173). Colonial governmentality rests upon three types of violence – foundational, law enforcing and empirical violence. They all derive from a Kantian formula. Kant argued that we can fundamentally construct our position as moral agents by constructing our own laws (Kant: 2006, p.112). Similarly, states are sovereign if they maintain the autonomous or unfettered capacity to legislate. A state does not emerge out of an act of peaceful consent, but the laws that stipulate the obligations of the contract are instituted through a 'law making' or foundational act of violence. Benjamin argued that the violence that founds the law, and the deployment of violence that preserves the terms of the contract in the face of transgression can be kept analytically and ontologically separate (Benjamin: 1996, p.243-244). According to Derrida this ignores,

'the very violence that is the foundation or positing of law must envelop the violence of the preservation of law and cannot break with it. It belongs to the fundamental structure of violence in that it calls for a repetition of itself and founds what ought to be preserved' (Derrida: 2002, p.262).

Colonialism commenced through the first form, a 'foundational violence,' that authorised the 'right' to conquest through the institution of laws devoid of any liberal values. In this light, the colonial law did not treat the colonised as a citizen, but as 'indigenat': an object of violence

that could be utilised for the production of wealth, and the coarsest forms of enjoyment (Mbembe: 2015, p.32). Because this form of violence it is not enshrined in any contract, its definitive characteristic is the capacity to create and destroy its own laws arbitrarily without any sense of obligation or duty. The second form of violence does not follow the original founding act as its consequence but is linked to it as its necessary complement and support, legitimating the original violence of the law by preserving it. Traditionally, we assume that the deployment of language, as a rational source of deliberation and communication, is opposed to violence, but Benjamin's theory of violence (Benjamin: 1996, p. 246), which is taken to an extreme by Derrida, articulates an intrinsic yet excessive relation between the two (Derrida: 2002, p.270). Violence as a law instituting force institutes a surface of inscription – conditions of possibility which generate 'a particular mode of configuring appearances for reading or perception', constituting a violent scheme of legible meaning that defines notions of common sense (Caygill: 1998, p.4) and the enforceability of the law by authorising the mystical meaning of the original violent act. Derrida argues that, in the context of an authoritarian society, state power 'seeks to control the veracity of discourses' (Derrida: 2002, p.284). Accounting for the production of a Western episteme in Africa, Mbembe follows Derrida's re-articulation of Foucault within the framework of violent state power by arguing that, within the authoritarian colony, the intersection of law-instituting and law-preserving types of violence constitute an episteme and regime of truth that

'provide the colonial order with a language and self-interpreting models, to give it a meaning, to justify its necessity and its universalising mission – in short to help create an imagination whose effect was to convert the foundational violence into an authorising authority' (Mbembe: 2000, pp.6-7).

The third form of violence can be derived neither from Derrida nor Benjamin specifically, but from a reading of Fanon that is mutable. It refers to the everyday, empirical character of violence. The function of this type of violence was to constantly bind the colonised to the mythical nature of law-preserving and law-founding violence by a pervasive repetition of a culture of constant violation (Mbembe: 2017, p.163). Colonial governmentality comes into being through the violent imposition of an episteme that defines the symbolic and imaginary modes of discursive identification that characterise the African colonial relation. Foucault argued that liberal governance maintained a creative/destructive relationship to freedom. It produces liberties but must constitute apparatuses of security to maintain the general order of the white racial social body-politic and the agents of those liberties from internal dangers

(abnormalities) and external dangers (non-Europeans). The black subject was not afforded liberties (free conduct) but was seen as an external danger to be spatially controlled or expelled like lepers, from which security apparatuses had to protect white subjects (Mbembe: 2017, p.33). Unlike Said's portrayal in *Orientalism*, Mudimbe argued that instead of refuting Western discursive constructions of Africanness as invented misrepresentations, 'Africans themselves read, challenge, rewrite these discourses as explicating and defining their culture, history and being' (Mudimbe: 1988: p.10). As I showed in Chapter 4, this discursive practice was justified by the construction of the African as primitive and childlike. It followed a very particular set of stereotypical characteristics that justified a process of conversion of conduct: 'Pagan (evil), naked (child), cannibal (beast)' (Mudimbe: 1988, p 64). The discursive strategy employed is the notion of the irrational African as a child, and his mind and the land he inhabits as Locke's tabula rasa, which is seen 'a blank page or unwritten book', a cognitive and geographical void that can only be meaningfully inscribed by the sovereign use of reason (Ashcroft: 2008, pp.44-45).

I argue that race is not as an anachronistic remnant of a pre-modern worldview, but a necropolitical 'technology of governance' (Mbembe: 2017, p.35) that establishes a racial logic and racism as unconscious processes that constitute modern social reality, (Goldberg: 2001, p.108). Unlike classical Marxism, the racial, colonial and consequently postcolonial state is not bound to the logic of capital but, under the terms of colonial governmentality, both capital and the state enjoy a relationship of reciprocal autonomy. In the case of the Apartheid state, the logic of capital was subordinated to the logic of racial purity (Goldberg: 2002, p.106). It was the conception of the racial state that rendered possible the colonial project, and inversely, the materiality of the racial state is testament to the racializing success of colonial discourse despite the formal demise of colonialism (Goldberg: 2002, p.108). The European colonial state was characterized by governmental policies that 'manufactured homogeneity,' while the colonial state outside Europe concerned itself with 'managing difference, regulating the threat of heterogeneity, or anarchy (or statelessness)' (Goldberg: 2002, p.120). Although both types of colonial governance gave birth to racial subjects that outlived the end of colonialism, these formations not only differ in form and content but, in their racial mode of subjection, represent different modes of governance.

My claim is therefore that the ideologies of resistance and otherness in the twentieth century, 'negritude, the black personality and African philosophy' are not the expression of an innate creativity or an intrinsic will to resistance, but rather evidence that African anticolonial

discourses on the self-have come to internalise and invert the Western depiction of the African subject as ‘the other of history’ and therefore become the speaking subjects that have reified master/slave positions in nativist and Pan African discourse as regimes of truth in African anticolonial nationalist discourse in the colonial library or episteme (Diawarra: 1990, p.81). Mbembe designates this nativist/Africanist discourse as the second narrative of black reason (Mbembe: 2017, p.30). African scholars have transposed a Foucauldian analytic of power/knowledge to explicate that nationalist and contemporary African discourses on the black subject continue to rely on the colonial episteme, which we can also designate as the colonial library (Srygotzki: 2008, p.83). The second narrative of black reason constituted the early and mid-century aesthetic black imaginary, generating counter-discourses possessed by people subjected to and opposing the violent technologies of colonial governance. The black discourses constituting the second narrative of black reason opposed ‘racial hierarchies, slavery and imperialism’ (Mbembe: 2017, p.87). Although there were attempts to liberate human beings from any type of racial ontology and system of governance that produced racial subjects, this failed because nativist and Pan African discourses colonised African thought. These discourses inverted the racial logic of Western metaphysics, which problematically constitutes a neurotic form of negative difference, incapable of ethico-political transformation that is self-affirmative (Diagne: 2002). To take up a moral position, the self-declared black subject is required to define itself against an ‘evil white subject’ that is primary within the parameters of the colonial episteme.

The problem with the second narrative of black reason is that it fails to overcome the essentialist logic of the colonial library; but, as I demonstrated in the last chapter, it inverts it at the biogenico-moral level. This points to a deeper problem of a racial neurosis of resentment and victimisation that permeated the black imaginary of African anti-colonial movements and consequently postcolonial nation states, or postcolonies, and which are rooted in the trauma of the original consecration of the African diaspora because of the transatlantic slave trade and colonisation, which produced an inferiority complex and kinlessness. In Chapter 1, I demonstrated through a brief analysis of Fanon how the inferiority complex was the result of the internalisation of the racial gaze, and that this racial distinction enabled the unequal racial and spatial segregation that in turn produced a colonial neurosis, a process in which the colonized would identify with an image of whiteness, due to negative, primitive connotations associated with the colonial construction of blackness. In Chapter 4, I concluded with an explication of how this operated in the South African colony in a divide-and-rule colonial

strategy. I claimed that this was the first racial crisis, and that the colonised needed to reaffirm positive images of themselves as a means of engaging with inferiority.

The first crisis gave birth to the second, which can only be configured in relation to the other side of colonisation –the forced circulation of Africans and other colonised subjects from their original homelands. In Chapter 4, I analysed diasporic alienation via Hall’s appropriation of Lacanian terminology but did not delve into a deeper analysis of the non-Oedipal elements characterising this pathology, since, although the analysis does concern the topography of the Freudian and Lacanian models of the subject, it is not exhausted by it. By refusing to ground the Oedipal complex as the core of psychoanalysis, Mbembe moves away from the classically patriarchal, and racial foundational analytic principles of traditional psychoanalysis. This is because Mbembe practices a lesser-known version of psychoanalysis called hauntology, inflected with certain currents of colonial discourse theory and deconstruction. Psychoanalytic hauntology replaces the individual with a generational kinship group, and the trauma associated with the Oedipal complex is replaced by an intergenerational trauma that afflicts groups, in which neurosis takes the form of being haunted collectively and individually by phantoms.

‘The phantom represents a radical reorientation of Freudian and post-Freudian theories of psychopathology, since here symptoms do not spring from the individual’s own life experiences but from someone else’s psychic conflicts, traumas and secrets ... a collective psychology comprised of several generations, so that the analyst must listen for the voices of one generation in the unconscious of another ... We should engage in this unveiling and understanding of the former existence of the dead not because we may want to appease them ... but because, unsuspected, the dead continue to live an unsuspected, the dead continue to live a devastating psychic half-life in us’ (Abraham and Torok:1994 p.166).

Mbembe’s deployment of Abraham and Torok emphasizes that the secret of the ancestral phantom is a discursively constructed lie about the traumatic wounds of the African past that are perpetuated by Afro-Marxist and nativist discourses. But this secret should be illuminated to provide a form of knowledge that is therapeutic – an exorcism of the phantom. By uncovering phantasmic dissimulations in colonial discourse, the secret traumas and neuroses of the unconscious ‘can and should be put into words so that the phantom and its noxious effects on the living can be exorcised as a socio-diagnostic program’ (Davis: 2013, p.58). I will briefly deal with Mbembe’s argument concerning the root of the neurosis and its relation to anticolonial discourse before returning to the diagnosis in more theoretical detail in the final section of the chapter. Recalling Hall’s argument in Chapter 4 that the model of a true collective

self or the essentialist model of cultural identity was an imaginary response to the trauma of the slave trade and the traumatic wound of the colonial experience, Mbembe, in *African Modes of Self-Writing*, challenges what he considers the normative readings of the (self) constitution of alienated black subject, and the means by which it can attain full selfhood in African anticolonial and postcolonial theory (Mbembe: 2001, p.240). He argues that Afro-Marxism and Pan Africanism have presented the African subject without agency, always bound to the same set of historical forces – becoming a lifeless object. The African is always presented through the same superstitious and superficial narratives, bound to three essential events that define his/her history: the slave trade, colonialism and apartheid.

According to Mbembe, by privileging victimhood, the subject in Afro-Marxist and Pan African discourses falls into an animistic register, in which a series of fantastical discursive superstitions model the African as essentially good and the European as essentially evil to suit each historical conjuncture. Moreover, Negritude did little to dispel racial stereotypes, as it continued to agree with depictions of European as rational and the African as emotive and creative. However, it did serve the purpose of rehabilitating the image of the Black subject, presenting a view of a great African civilisation with Egyptian scientific roots from which Greek reason flowered. The purpose served by this secret lie and this racially homogenous discursive fabrication (stereotype), according to Mbembe, was that the transatlantic slave trade wasn't only the result of Western intrusions but also the effect of Africans selling other tribes and even their own family members for their personal and political gain before and during the European conquest. Marriot thus argues-as we may recall this quote in the introduction- that, for Mbembe,

‘The post-colony... isn't just simply a relation of domination ... but an accursed share based on a principle of sacrifice, wherein the enemy is always potentially also neighbour, brother or friend, an always-to-be sacrificeable racial subject’ (Marriot: 2018, p.70).

The original secret that engendered the phantomic haunting was not only the result of external intrusion but ‘also family killings: there were fratricides’ (Mbembe: 2017, p.144). Furthermore, the relationship between the death drive and the accumulation of wealth (a pleasure principle) plays an essential role in the unconscious phantomic haunting that inducts a repetitious neurosis that plays out in cyclical displays of violence against political minorities. The consequence of these discourses for Mbembe is that postcolonial modes of governance ‘have been formulated on a thin philosophical base’, fostering practices that are negative, racist, circular and xenophobic.

‘The conversion of human beings into commodities could even affect members of the potentate’s immediate or extended family. The objects received in exchange were subsequently incorporated into a double calculus: the calculus of domination (to the extent that the commerce of slaves helped establish centres of political power) and the calculus of sensual pleasures (smoking tobacco, seeing oneself in a mirror, drinking rum and other kinds of alcohol, dressing oneself, copulating, and accumulating women, children, and dependents). In African history there is, then, a figure of the commodity that has as its main signifier the ‘family member who was sold or handed over to be killed’ in return for goods’ (Mbembe: 2017, p. 117).

### 5.3 The Traumatic Subject and the Breakdown of Self and Community

In order to analyse transgenerational trauma and haunting, it is essential to conceptually differentiate it from individual trauma, in its historical and structural forms. Arguably, trauma studies have progressed from their Freudian origins because of the linguistic turn in the humanities. Modern structuralism, dating from Ferdinand De Saussure’s *General Course on Linguistics* (1907), fortified the move linguists had hitherto made ‘from naturalism to conventionalism’ (Dosse: 1997, p.46; Saussure: 1915, pp.58-61, pp.65-66). Saussure’s brilliance was not to introduce the arbitrary quality of the sign but to show that the structural nature of language produced a closed totalizing system of oppositional meaning constituting linguistic closure that led to a rejection of referentiality. Thus, the Saussurean sign only dealt with the signifier (acoustic-image) and the signified (concept-meaning). This shift finalised the structuralist idea that language was not an expression of transcendental subjectivity, but rather, that human thinking was the expression of a violent totalizing linguistic system of oppositional or binary meaning (Derrida: 1972, p.13). The linguistic turn meant that a colonial discourse analyst must first acknowledge that, while appearing as a form of realist representation,

‘Colonial discourse produces the colonised as a visible reality which is at once another and yet entirely knowable and visible. It resembles a form of narrative whereby the productivity of subjects and signs are bound in a reformed and recognisable totality are bound in a recognisable totality’ (Bhabha: 2004, p.101).

When seen as a form of realism and structural totalization, colonial discourse deploys a form of representation that can accurately define the nature of reality: traditional Western metaphysics. For Bhabha, this requires a shift to analysing how different discursive narratives shape social reality, notably the colonial and postcolonial state. This position became known as narratology in 1990s Humanities, a structure of ten formal elements (Brumer: 1993, pp.1-

21). Following this trend, Chris Van Der Merwe and Pumla Godoba-Madikizela propose that we turn our lives into stories or, rather, engender narrative structures to imbue our lives with meaning despite all the complexity that escapes our comprehension. Additionally, as authors of our stories, we try as individuals to wrestle with our narratives which we are born into, and in the process engender a sense of personal identity. Thus, we come into being already part of different narrative structures, some of which are beneficial, and others incommensurable, narrative structures (Van Der Merwe and Godoba-Madikizela: 2007, pp.1-5). In this context, trauma as an affect concern ‘the shattering of life’s narrative structure, about a loss of meaning – the traumatised person has “lost the plot”’ (Van der Merwe and Godoba-Madikizela: 2007, p.6). In early accounts of individual trauma, therapists conceptualised trauma as violent ‘unmaking’ of the self, a rupture of fundamental ‘integrity’, and a loss of dignity in which the self fundamentally loses its autonomy and its capacity to capture that abyssal experience in words, for there is fundamental loss of language because the intensity of the violent, intrusive act cannot be captured in words (Van der Merwe and Godoba-Madikizela: 2007, p.25-26). Traumatized and neurotic subjects are prone to delusions – compulsive behaviour, pleasure seeking or self-destructive or both – that depend on the intensity of the excitation that shattered the vital regenerative processes of the narrative structure of the individual person (Freud: 2005; Williams: 2005, p.183). Many of these traumatized subjects are produced ‘by historical trauma, which refers to a single huge disaster, which can be personal (for instance, a rape) or communal (like a flood)’ (Van der Merwe and Godoba-Madikizela: 2007, p.11). In the case of Apartheid, the township became, as Biko noted, an external machine of structural trauma, ‘which refers to a pattern of continual and continuing traumas’ (Van der Merwe and Godoba-Madikizela: 2007, p.11) that produced neurotics (Biko: 2008, p.61).

In the post-Apartheid South African context, the experience of the born frees at historically white university campuses has not been a historical trauma, but an experience of everyday haunting and intergenerational trauma for a collective of students who have not experienced the same event, or structural trauma. This renders historically White campuses – as microcosms of the macro-racial racial heterotopia that South African society is best conceptualised as – a psychic crypt. For students afflicted by intergenerational trauma, a psychic crypt signifies a disgusting, terrible ‘or shameful’ secret (a repressed memory) that continues to haunt future generations without their knowledge and without ever passing into consciousness. These uncanny secrets, phantoms, for Abraham and Torok, are a necessary addition to Freudian metapsychology, which, to reiterate, must be brought to light for therapy to effectively

commence. Indeed, as Abraham and Torok claim, the repetitive function holds a similar function to the exercise of the death drive, which I will explore in the next chapter on necropolitics (Abraham and Torok: 1994, p.166)

#### **5.4 Black Reason and African Modes of Self-Writing**

According to Jewsiewicki, ‘the point of departure from which Mbembe conceives of the subject and the enunciation of identity ... is the Foucault from the 1980s, ‘Writing the Self’ was published in 1983’ (Jewsiewicki: 2002, p.594). Writing the self, or self-writing, was conceived at the time that Foucault was working on technologies of the self as part of his historical philosophy of self-constitution, or subjectivation as a partial process in relation to subjectification. Mbembe follows Foucault by claiming that self-writing is not an analytic demonstration where the subject remains unaffected and identical through its scholarly endeavours. Discursive practice is rather a continuous transformation of the self via the act of writing as a technology, since ‘new utterances carry with them a series of modifications of the enunciating subject’ (EEW2, pp.405-406; Diagne: 2002, p.623; Naicker: 2019, p.72). I argue the second narrative of black reason, which engendered discourses of anticolonial and postcolonial resistance does not depart from-but forms the third stage in the evolution of necropolitics and capital in a decolonial historical ontology, first alluded to by Mbembe in *African Modes of Self Writing*. In this piece, Mbembe argues that two discourses, Afro-radicalism and Nativism have dominated African thought, in respect of their failed attempts ‘to determine the conditions under which the African self could attain selfhood and become self-conscious’ (Mbembe: 2001a, p.240). Later, in *Critique of Black Reason*, Mbembe refers to these discourses as the ‘the Black Voice’, -or the second narrative of Black Reason. It is within these discourses, that ‘one finds the seed of revolt, abolition and decolonization’ (Reyes and Chirindo: 2020, p. 6). Thus, the second narrative of black reason is ambiguous, and to an extent equivocal in its content. On the one hand, this narrative is associated with the emergence of both self-determination and writing or black authorship. For the first time, writers were able to challenge the way they were constructed as primitive, inferior and degenerate in colonial discourse, rearticulating relationship between representation and reality. Two, in providing a discourse on resistance, it enabled the subject to resist the necropolitical racial gaze, which produced an inferiority and dependency complex. On the other hand, the major problem with *African modes of Self-Writing* was that the two discourses, Afro-radicalism and Nativism never

disputed the fiction of the racial subject, and in doing so—merely internalised and inverted colonial discourse, specifically its metaphysics of difference as the Heideggerian notion of ground I mentioned in chapter 2 (Mbembe: 2017, pp. 89-91; Gerber: 2018, p. 6; Naicker: 2019, p. 73; Reyes and Chirindo: 2020, p. 6). In doing so, African postcolonies have endorsed a binary logic, inflected by Negritude’s inversion of colonial stereotypes, whereby sovereignty is premised on ‘autochthony, each spatio-racial formation has its own culture, its own historicity, its own way of being, and its own relationship with the future and with the past’ (Mbembe: 2002 ,p. 635). For Mbembe, is no form of black discourse or mode of ‘black critique’ that is capable of existing outside the racializing impact of colonial discourses. All forms of black radicalism are caught within the violence of Western Metaphysics, and as discourses (savoir) are reducible to the same colonial episteme. By inverting and internalising colonial metaphysics of difference, Nativism and Afro-radicalism become resentment laden and neurotic textual practices, setting up a good-evil schema, which engenders exclusionary and violent practices towards political minorities—most notably in the form of racism and xenophobia. The discourse of nativism in particular, traversing the disciplines of anthropology, ethnohistory and ethno-philosophy have articulated a set of dichotomies that are inversions of colonial discourse, ‘citizen versus subject, native versus settler, victims versus killers’ (Mbembe: 2019, p. 65). Mbembe defines this situation as the politics of enmity, whereby, the victimisation complex as a neurosis fabricates and attacks an enemy that has little or nothing to do with the original traumatic wound (Mbembe: 1999, p. 28). Mbembe’s argument is that it is not an affirmative practice of self-transformation for Africans to continue to ‘write back’ to the West and simply invert the representations of Africans in the colonial library that continue to equate race with morality, but a set of discursive practices imbued with resentment and with a neurosis of victimisation. These discourses are driven in biopolitical terms, by a drive to social engineering and the vision of a ‘pseudo revolutionary utopia’, in which Africa is ultimately thought of in theological terms, according to view of salvation and redemption engendered by pastoral power. Despite the epistemological inaccuracy of resentment within the context of Christian metaphysics, it still psychically structures the sovereign, necropolitical decision to decide who is disposable and who is not—that, is, who is constituted as bare life.

In such instances, power (which is not necessarily state power) continuously refers and appeals to the exception, emergency, and a fictionalized notion of the enemy. It also labours to produce these same exceptions, emergencies, and fictionalized enemies (Mbembe: 2019, p. 70).

Regrettably, scholars have neglected the question of how the neurosis of victimisation and resentment emerged. Far from being irrelevant, I would argue this is a central problem for both postcolonial studies and as I will show in the next three chapters, it applies those scholars that happen to be involved in the contemporary reformulation of Black Consciousness in the South African postcolony. Reflecting on anti-colonial and postcolonial movements, in a conversation with Kwame Anthony Appiah, Homi Bhabha argues that many of these social movements weren't constructed around a positive, and affirmative conception of identification-but rather a reactive, negative difference that can be identified as a politics of resentment. In this light, he stresses that 'the price of liberation is a struggle with resentment' (Appiah and Bhabha: 2018, p. 181). In *Critique of Black Reason*, Mbembe supplies a much-needed response to this question, by drawing on Abraham and Torok's notion of intergenerational trauma, thereby challenging the dominant narrative that African subjectivity is determined by a combination of Western power and violence, in the form of slavery, colonisation and apartheid. According to Mbembe, African discourses on the self, perpetuate the 'little secret', concealing the role that African's have played in their own subordination, a trope I will expand upon in the next Chapter, by analysing Bayart's notion of extraversion. Instead of having no agency, at the time of the slave trade-African's were actively complicit, to the point of selling or trading their own families for the basic commodities in the pursuit of pleasure, imbricating the death drive into the very nature of power and constituting a necropolitical symbolic that extends and is institutionalised into the very libidinal operations of the postcolonial potentate (Mbembe: 2017, p. 114-115). He writes,

‘As a result of the Atlantic trade, the relationship of Africans to European goods was rapidly structured around a triptych composed of the desire to consume, death and genitalia...African slave traders consumed European commodities in exchange for the expenditure of their own people, as a means by which to sublimate their own desire for death, which is a part of all power...The conversion of human beings into commodities could even affect members of the potentate's immediate or extended family. The objects received in exchange were subsequently incorporated in a double calculus: the calculus of domination (to the extent that the commerce of slaves helped establish centres of political power) and the calculus of sensual pleasures (smoking tobacco, seeing oneself in a mirror, drinking rum and other kinds of alcohol, dressing oneself, copulating, and accumulating women, children and dependents). In African history, there is, then a figure of the commodity that has as its main signifier, the “the family member who was sold or handed over to be killed” in return for goods”’ (Mbembe: 2017, p. 116-117).

As a colonial discourse analyst, Mbembe is still providing a socio-diagnostic analysis of the fantastical psychic effects of colonial and postcolonial governmental reason. His argument is that because of the little secret, blackness and black critique defaulted on its potential to create a universal humanism. Its phantoms are institutionalised into the very operations of the postcolonial potentate. Mbembe's work illustrates that the phantom can elucidate the transgenerational transference of horrendous secrets as fantastical motives for anti-social, violent and destructive behaviour. I argue his diagnosis 'enables us to understand how the falsification, ignorance or disregard of the past... institutionalised by a totalitarian state is the breeding ground of the phantomic return of shameful secrets of the level of entire nations' (Abraham and Torok: 2010, p.169). Because both narratives are subsumed under the logic of black reason, the radical proponents of anti-colonialism could overturn the colonial imaginary but capitulated to its power (Marriott: 2018, p.69). In the previous chapter I argued that the continuity between the Apartheid and the post-Apartheid period relates to problem of the symbolic. This is important because the emergence of the black voice signalled a new form of authorship that had the ability to create a new symbolic world (Reyes and Chirindo: 2020, p.6). Although there has been a challenge to the logics of racial slavery and anti-black racism (and thus a deconstruction of the Western consciousness of the black subject), the introduction of intergenerational trauma into the equation has meant that a new symbolic has not been formed, but rather the same discursive logic has been inverted in the form of neurosis of victimisation. Thus, the central problem that emerges is that 'we cannot speak about apartheid without speaking in Apartheid language' (Pavon-Cuellar and Parker: 2013, p. 320). In the South African context, the discourse of Negritude appropriated by black consciousness signifies nothing more than an internalisation and inversion of colonial, Western history, and signifies the institutionalization of a 'mystical black essence' (Marriott: 2015, p. 173). For Mbembe, the problem with the Black radical tradition (which I will explain in more detail in section 8.3) is that it continued to identify with the fiction of the racial subject, a product of the colonial episteme. In the following chapters, I will examine how this leads to 'the territorialization of identity on the one hand and the racialization of geography on the other' (Mbembe: 2017, p. 92; Reyes and Chirindo: 2020, p. 6).

## Chapter 6. Foucault in the Postcolony: Reconfiguring Necropolitics as an Affective Technology of Racial Subjectification and Domination in South Africa

### 6.1 Introduction

In the previous five chapters I have selectively traversed the historical development and trajectory of postcolonial studies from Edward Said and Cultural Studies to studies of governmentality in African studies. Furthermore, I have begun articulating the different stages in the evolution of necropolitics and capital, relating these stages to a governmental analysis of African states. I have emphasized the governmental problems pertaining to a comparative analysis with the European context. In the process, I scrutinised Foucault's concepts: political rationality, subjectification and subjectivation, historical ontology and ethics as mode of self-transformation. In this chapter, I show how Foucault's technologies of domination and technologies of the self might contribute to my position on the (post)colonial pathological condition of the subject and necropolitical governance, as well as gesturing towards a possible solution for the South African context in Chapter 7. In this chapter, I start deliberating on the fact that, instead of attaining a comprehensive solution, I am aiming for effectuating strategies of subjectivation that can ethically withstand, politically resist, and negotiate the force of necropolitical governance.

In this chapter, I exhibit how postcolonial and Foucauldian studies' scholarship has responded to the problem of the traumatised and neurotic racialised subject. The concept of a racially psychological and affective technology is discussed in Chapters 7 and 8 and enables me to inquire how a neo-Foucauldian ethics might transform racially alienated and traumatised subjects. In this chapter, I begin by arguing that, although biopower is capacious enough to explore the development of a vigorous (white) male and female sexuality (docile productive and sexually reproductive bodies in liberal European democracies), the same does not hold in situations more relevant to my analysis: genocidal camp logic, the violent strategies and tactics that comprised racial segregation and apartheid, and the contemporary spirit of destruction at the heart of liberal democracies and colonies in an era of global capitalism, namely, the *necropower* at the heart of contemporary postcolonial potentates. While I do not have space to discuss all the issues at hand, I have chosen to focus on how an analysis of necropolitics as a rationality enables me to create a framework for analysing South African necropolitical affective and psychic technologies that have produced intergenerational forms of traumatised

neurotic and alienated racialised subjects in colonial, Apartheid and postcolonial South Africa. It is necessary to indicate how the death drive is immanent in necropolitical rationality in the South African settler colony - that created these intergenerational traumas in the first place.

- 1) Necropolitical rationality commenced with a genocidal 'ethnic cleansing of the South African population', a consequence of the passing of the Native Land Act that reserved 87 percent of the land for whites and 13 percent for the 'native' population which was relegated to 'tribal homelands or reserves' (Mamdani: 2015, p. 608). This was followed by forced removals in the 1960s and 1970s during Apartheid. This created an urban-rural divide, as well as Manichean forms of racial spatialisation, a racial heterotopia that has contributed to producing an inferiority complex amongst all the colonised groups in South Africa.
- 2) The original fratricide at the time of the African slave trade produced collective neuroses in the form of a neurosis of victimisation, and the repetition of necropolitical violence via the inversion of colonial metaphysics: a neurosis of victimisation and politics of resentment. African political leaders who thereby identify with notions of racial homogeneity that are uncritically reflected in their appropriation of wider phantomic aspects of ostensibly leftist Pan African, Afro-Marxist and nativist discourses produce xenophobic and misogynistic practices – a devitalised conviviality.

The debates currently surrounding hauntology resonate with problems in the postcolony that have been analysed through the lens of intersubjectivity (Mbembe: 2017). Following my introduction in section 5.3, I argue that hauntology attempts to (re)establish a broken relation to another or to oneself after a traumatic relation (as a form of healing past traumas that have produced an alienated subject), an alienated subject that has been silenced, excluded, forgotten and even buried.<sup>ix</sup> However, the problem that has emerged in commentaries on hauntology (Davis; 2013; Gordon: 1990; Oelofsen: 2020; Peterson: 2019; Wale et al. 2020) is that, instead of postcolonial scholars producing a form of thinking and being that is reciprocal, their work (O'Riley: 2007) disintegrates into an problematic reification of the colonial past, a somewhat frozen, strange fetishization of struggle and the neurosis of victimhood; a transgenerational trauma or phantom, as outlined in the last two chapters, that is not relational or indicative of a transformative subjective ethos or planetary humanism in any notable sense.

Although I do not have space to explicate the entirety of biopolitics here (see the analysis in Chapter 1), it is essential to discover the ‘bare’ dynamics that differentiate Mbembe’s deployment of necropolitics from Foucault’s biopolitics as a liberal strategy of rule, and its effects on the subject, namely the threat to autonomous subjectivity and, consequently, the ‘hollowing out’ of the principles of liberal democracy. Governmentality in South African Apartheid, instead of being antithetical to colonial rationality, was a refinement and systematization of colonialism and its fascist, racial and colonial spatial practices. As I hope to demonstrate in section 6.2, although South Africa did not conform to the traditional parasitic economic system between metropole and periphery as established by Sartre (Sartre: 2006, pp.36-55), it had all the hallmarks of an internal, special colonialism, which I will elaborate upon below. In section 6.3, I will supply examples to show that the relationship between ruler and ruled in South Africa has been one of conviviality, thus producing a devitalized, irrational subject. Lastly, in engaging with this aspect of necropolitics, I articulate the relationship between the first stage of environmental racism and the Anthropocene, that is, the process by which capitalism destroys both nature and human beings.

In section 6.3, I intend to reintroduce Biko’s work as solution to the issue of revitalizing the African subject. The difference I am introducing is to employ Biko’s philosophy of Black Consciousness, rather than Fanon’s theory of violence, as a technology of the self, which I will argue, is far more effective in the South African situation. Biko’s thought is valuable because a) his black theology as a form of political spirituality has the capacity to overcome alienation and neurosis, revitalizing the subject; and b) it has the potential to effectuate a synthesis or engender recognition among formerly racialised groups, instead of a capitulation to violence – the final logic of postcolonial conviviality and the neurosis of victimisation in *Necropolitics* (Mbembe, 2019). For these reasons, I propose that Biko’s method is more valuable for this project than Fanon’s.

I conclude the chapter by reiterating some of the basic differences between Biko and Fanon’s work. This will allow me to differentiate Biko’s racial and affective technique of the self from Fanon’s notion of cathartic violence, which has informed most phenomenological readings to date.

## **6.2 Colonial Rationalities and the Necropolitical Production of Racial Subjectivity and Psychic Relations in South Africa**

After the turn of the millennium and the 9/11 event, a shift in strategies of war and politics commenced. A new set of scholars argued that Michel Foucault's reformulation of sovereignty, biopower and governmentality, although useful, was inadequate for analysing contemporary forms of sovereignty and biopolitical control. However, whether Butler and Agamben were correct to question and reformulate Foucault's conceptions of, respectively, sovereignty and biopower is not the question I am dealing with here (Morton: 2008, p.132),<sup>x</sup> Rather I focus on how necropolitical, not biopolitical, technologies illustrate the production of pathological racialised subjects in the South African postcolony.

Foucault's work on race was revolutionary for its time, insofar as he did not see racial discrimination as the effect of class relations. This may appear to stand in contrast to traditional Marxist sociology, which has always seen history as driven by class conflict (Marx and Engels; 2008, p.31; See also McLellan: 1971) In his 1976 lectures on historiography, Foucault argued that, as subjugated knowledges, the discourse of race war preceded and made possible the later discourse on class struggle. In sociology, race has historically been treated either as an issue of social stratification or as an issue of identity. Both modes of analysis neglect the manner in which technologies of governance expose the 'underlying processes by which these differences are necessarily produced' (Bhambra: 2016, p.961). Foucault used 'war as a grid of intelligibility for historical processes, but this is a war understood as a war of races' (SMD p.248). This aristocratic vision of a binary society composed of two different physical types at war with one another was replaced at the time of the French Revolution with the notion of 'national universality'. When the state appropriates the discourses of race as 'state racism', the biological notion of a racially monist population becomes the explicit problem of political governance. When the human population becomes conceptualised in medical terms, the focus of governing pivots on the forms of biological degeneracy intrinsic to a national population. Colonialism began in 1492, but the treaty of Westphalia and the fortification of European territories only commenced in 1648. Notably, European incursions into and annexations of non-Western territories were legitimated before the emergence of 'scientific race' as a category of dehumanization, that would eventually be mobilised to apportion African territories in accordance with the economic needs of the great European empires.

When analysing governmental rationality in South Africa, it is important to remember that the state passed policies that emphasized the production of racial purity ('manufacturing white Anglo-Afrikaner homogeneity'), organising different racially defined populations as well as containing the threat posed by anticolonial resistance, threat-anarchy (Goldberg: 2002, p.108). While most European historians have focused on the internal history of biopolitics as an element of liberal governmentality in the emergence of European industrial democracies, as I showed in Chapter 3, Laura-Ann Stoler convincingly demonstrated that race and biopolitics have a longer, more complex and sadomasochistic relation in the colonies. To reiterate, for Foucault, racism 'is primarily a way of introducing a break between the domain of life that is under a power's control: the break between what must live and what must die' (SMD, p.254). More importantly – and this is central to this thesis – Foucault argues that 'racism first develops with colonisation, or in other words, with colonising genocide' (SMD, p.257). For Morton, this sadistic relationship between racism, genocide and the colony, so resonant with issues concerning the death drive, leads him to question whether biopolitics is in fact a useful analytic tool for the foundation and development of the settler colony called Apartheid (Morton: 2008, p.123). In this section, I detail Mbembe's critique of Foucault that biopower cannot account for the multiple procedures by which political regimes exercise the power of death, in the form of colonialism, the war on terror post-9/11 and contemporary postcolonies. Thus,

'for Foucault, death-politics is always a negative by-product that occurs in the pursuit of life, Mbembe's concept of necropolitics suggests that there are forces of killing that exceed the governmental task of fostering life. To the extent that we are able to identify correlations and resonances between heterogeneous death-political practices, the juxtaposition allows us to orient the inquiry to how various death-worlds (spectacular as well as mundane forms of killing and of 'letting die') are created globally, without lapsing into a global (read: totalizing) analysis' (Gressgard: 2019, pp.13-14).

From the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, there were several internal critiques of Western democracies from the perspectives of the proletariat and the lumpenproletariat, who were subject to the brutal violence of primitive accumulation and the normalising constitution of recalcitrant biological organisms into docile bodies, or labour power (DP, p.26). However, these critiques miss the two-faced nature of democracy with its solar body in the West and its nocturnal body in the colonial world: a necropolitical rationality comprising the emergence of colonial empires and states that actively promoted and practiced slavery. It was the practice of racial slavery, derived from black reason, which would eventually produce the labour power

and raw materials required for industrial capitalist production, engendering the contemporary necropolitical order in which the decimation of nature is congruous with the emergence of the Anthropocene, and the development of the modern global order of racial capitalism. To deliberate on a discussion of necropolitical technologies is also to entertain the emergence of racial capitalism. This has to do with the primary role that negation can play in the formation of colonial historical ontology as a basic death practice – a key shift in my analysis of postcolonial historical ontology. For Bataille, ‘Man is the animal that negates nature: he negates it through labour, which destroys it and changes it into an artificial world; he negates it in the case of life-creating activity; he negates it in the case of death’ (Bataille: 1993, p.61).

According to Dipesh Chakrabarty, one of the problems of dialectical historiography that has ruled the humanities, including Black Consciousness and postcolonial studies, is that it separates natural history from human history. By separating our social practices from the natural world, history as a discipline has not been able to trace the effect of humanity on the natural world-in the form of climate change (Chakrabarty: 2009, p. 201-204). For my purposes, Chakrabarty argues that climate change does not only challenge the model of anthropomorphic, progressive subjectivity deployed in modern Hegelian historiography, but more importantly, ‘the analytic strategies that postcolonial and postimperial historians have deployed in the last two decades in response to the postwar scenario of decolonization and globalisation’ (Chakrabarty: 2009, p. 198). One of the tenets that the historical work of Biko, Heidegger, Foucault and postcolonial studies share, is that by separating humanity from nature, they articulate social, economic, or political histories of human beings alone, even in the case of sexuality. Furthermore, all these thinkers share, in some sense, in their historical work, the endorsement of freedom as the telos of history-a value of the enlightenment (Chakrabarty: 2009, p. 208). But this neglects the impact of negation on the living environment.<sup>xi</sup> Moreover, once black slaves are seen as merchandise or natural resources that can be turned into labour power, the links between necropolitical technologies, capitalism and racism become clear as an entire political rationality - black reason.

‘Nature must die — through negation and translation — to become a resource. That resource must die again to become a commodity. Those commodities then circulate in service to the logics of capital, which include the unquenchable need for more capital (more surplus value) These twin pillars, the normalization of necropolitics and the abstract notion of labour as both means and obstacle, enable the rise of ‘Black reason’, the second phase in our evolution. The birth of the racial subject—and therefore of Blackness. The ‘Black slave’, however, names

more than a subject position; it marks and helps one trace a whole discursive formation, a whole rationality — one which enabled the rapid extension of both Western capitalism and necropolitics’ (Reyes and Chirindo: 2020, pp.3-4).

These are the first two stages in the evolution of the necropolitics of capital, stage 1: translation, where the human negates nature; stage 2: the formation of black and the normalisation of necropolitics, which eventually leads to stage 4: the Anthropocene and the becoming black of the world, which I will discuss in section 8.4. For now, it is important to note that in the context of settler colonialism, these two stages, in a genocidal fashion pivot on the notion of territory. As Wolfe notes, the most important thing to a settler community is not race or wealth, but rather it is territory that justifies murder (Wolfe: 2006, p. 388). The central principle that I want to invoke here is *terra nullius* (nobody’s land) – a forsaken space still within the thrall of nature. For Mudimbe, by denying non-Christians, and by extension non-Europeans, the right to self-determination on the land of their birth, Dominator Domitus legislated ‘God’s will’ to which all pagan subjects of planet Earth were bound in a relation of landless domination. From this time, by imperial decree, only Christians of European-defined statehood were entitled to the material resources of Earth. But the idea of *terra nullius* was far more significant than simply dispossessing foreign people from the homes they had always known, setting up a global precedent for invasion, conversion and annexation that would form the staples of future global history. *Terra nullius* designates ‘an absence which is also a region of imagination and desire, a tabula rasa on which imperialism can fulfil its mission. It is at the same time the uninscribed, a land of fabulous possibility, and a land of the barbarous and sub-human’ (Ashcroft: 2008, p.39; See also Mudimbe: 1988, p.59).

After internal revolts within Europe and the West, the French Revolution put an end to the idea that God was the sole source of legislation on Earth. In 1789, the Declaration of the Rights of Man coincided with the Age of Enlightenment, and an intensification of the colonising mission. Thus, when biological discourse became dominant, replacing language as representative of the intellection of God, the figures of the heretical pagan and virgin lands were replaced by a forsaken space un beholden to any form of reason – the heart of darkness, wherein dwelled sub-humans in need of a civilising mission, the central ruse of the colonising mission. Since human rights and the inherent dignity of ‘man’ was not bound to any external form of authorization, sovereignty was predicated on ‘man’ being subsumed as a member of a national people, whose interests were represented by a set of laws comprising the national collective will. The image of ‘man’, then, was not that of an atomistic and nomadic individual unbound to any nation

state. The image of man was already that of an emancipated sovereign people, in a family of sovereign nations, that, following Foucault, was responsible for the survival of its population on the basis of biopolitical governmentality. The formation of secular law and national equality before the law were bound together in a modern paradox.

‘If a tribal or other ‘backward’ community did not enjoy human rights, it was obviously because as a whole it had not yet reached that stage of civilization, the stage of popular and national sovereignty, but was oppressed by foreign or native despots. The whole question of human rights, therefore, was quickly and inextricably blended with the question of national emancipation; only the emancipated sovereignty of the people, of one's own people, seemed to be able to insure them. As mankind, since the French Revolution, was conceived in the image of a family of nations, it gradually became self-evident that the people, and not the individual, was the image of man. The full implication of this identification of the rights of man with the rights of the people in the European nation-state system came to light only when a growing number of people and peoples suddenly appeared whose elementary rights were as little safeguarded by the ordinary functioning of nation states in the middle of Europe as they would have been in the heart of Africa’ (Arendt: 2013, p. 83).

For Eurocentric scholars, the defining characteristic of modernity was the development of the modern nation state as the normative political unit (signifying a shift from a state of immature subjecthood to mature ‘rights-bearing’ selfhood – presupposing the central figure of the human as one of rational self-interest). African societies were defined as primarily irrational and childish, but more importantly, tribalistic. ‘Territoriality, primitive government through elders and chiefs, and a primitive subsistence economy emerge as the primary features which distinguish a tribe’ (Mafeje: 1971, p.257). Within colonial discourse, European political scientists and African nationalists concurred that tribalistic values were irreconcilable with those of modernization, and consequently those of nationalisation. For Comaroff, these societies were conceptualised as being ruled by a static tradition, ordered for millennia by rudimentary customs incapable of industrial and technological development. For lawless cultures to be subsumed into the grand teleological narrative of universal rational progress, ‘they had to be subordinated into a superior European legal order’ (Comaroff: 2001, p.684). Without recourse to a nation to claim as their own, those inhabiting the territories of South Africa and sub-Saharan Africa not only became landless, but also lost access to human rights and became subjects bound to sovereign domination. Concerning colonial governmentality, law was used as a technology of domination to coercively control the indigenous, rightless population.

In the context of settler colonialism in Apartheid South Africa, Achille Mbembe understands racism as a ‘technology’ that enables bio-political power to enforce the old sovereign right to enforce, regulate and distribute death (Mbembe: 2019, p.44). He argues that racism functions ‘as the condition for the acceptability of putting to death’, and that biopolitics and racism are constitutive of the ways all states function in modernity. Although Foucault acknowledged that biopower is a life enhancing power that invests in the health and biological growth of a racially homogenous state, he also argues that there was a negative or inverse side to biopolitics. The state is obliged to take care of its citizens, however, ‘for its own sake’, as the state’s existence is predicated on the survival, strength and vitality of its own population. However, since the state only considers the population as a means, ‘the state is entitled to slaughter it if necessary, so the reverse of biopolitics is thanatopolitics’ (EEW3, p.416). Following this first agreement, Mbembe differs from Foucault by arguing that bio-power is different from his notion of necropolitics, insofar as the former is ‘insufficient to account for contemporary forms of subjugation to the power of death’ (Mbembe: 2019, p.62).<sup>xii</sup>

The first point of difference between Foucault and Mbembe’s argument, as Stephen Morton (2008) notes, is that the latter, building on Fanon’s essay *Concerning Violence*, states that the civil society that enables the biopolitical governance of the European-settler population, characterized by a series of interventions that invest in, modify and enhance the life of the population, does not hold for the relationship between colonizer and colonized. Instead of civil society being defined as a transactional space of conduct and counter-conduct (BB, p.18; Pykkonen: 2015), it becomes subsumed into a combination of foundational violence and the language of law-preserving violence that relegates the colonised subject to a state of domination (Morton: 2008, p.133). This leads Mbembe to combine Foucault’s notion of governmentality with Benjamin’s notion of founding violence, to explicate how Fanon’s conception of violence plays a foundational role in the constitution of the colony. Thus, power in the colony resides in the expression of sovereignty, characterized ‘by the capacity to dictate who may live and who may die’. Biopolitical power gives way to ‘necropolitical control, or the threat of violence and ultimately death by the colonial ruler’ (Mbembe: 2019,p. 46).

The second point of difference is that Mbembe combines Foucault’s notion of territory and Fanon’s spatial reading of the colony to explain how necropolitical sovereignty has the political capacity to ‘let die’. Following the Population Registration Act of 1950, every aspect of life for each individual in South Africa was governed by race, from employment, taxes and property ownership to the right to travel on state trains and use other public amenities (Posel:

2001, p.93). There are several forms of law that are essential to this process. Mbembe argues that ‘the writing of spatial relations’ produced new architectural relationships, reframed geographical boundaries, modified property relations and ultimately classified and consequently moved people into specially designated areas (Mbembe: 2019, p.54). Moreover, splitting the colonizer and colonized into racial, spatial and geographical compartments followed a racist and economic logic of capital accumulation that is saturated with violence. According to Sidney Lockett (1977), in 1910 the South African government acquired sovereignty from the British metropole through the Union Act of South Africa – but this only gave the ‘surface appearance of decolonisation’; all colonised groups were politically disenfranchised, leading to the formation of a racially exclusive state ‘as fundamental to White South African law, coupled with the 1913 Land Act which forms the basis of the blatantly inequitable division of the territory’ ( Lockett: 1977, pp.1-2). Additionally, he argues that several more laws were implemented that served to cement South Africa’s autonomy and sovereignty from Britain with the statutes of Westminster in 1931, but more importantly, to entrench the nature of coloniality and white supremacy laws, the Hertzog and Native Land Trust Bills were passed, which, by removing all political rights from the colonised, rendered them bare, precarious life, the primary affect of necropolitics – and in doing so laid the cornerstones for what would come later in the Apartheid regime, specifically forced removals and the relegation of people to Bantustans and ‘townships’.

Liberal scholarship has argued that Cape Town, following the tenets of Anglicanism, was the most racially integrated city in the country before Apartheid (Bickford Smith; 1998, p.37). There are many recordings of nostalgic and idealised memories of racially desegregated communities such as District six, composed of white, Coloured and sometimes Indian/Asian and African communities. While there may be some verifiable truth to these memories, it would be more exact to say that, with notable exceptions, Cape Town – like every other South African city – had been a space of systematic racial segregation and inequality since the nineteenth century. The Group Areas Act did not fundamentally transform the racial and spatial configuration of South African cities, and the notion of the United Party working towards racial desegregation was part of a liberal British mythology. Therefore, the Apartheid ‘blueprint’ for a racial future was already influenced by policies drawn up by the United Party, but now with a greater degree of systematization and unified centralisation with a clear policy on how to conduct the future of the white race (Maylam: 1995, p.28).

In the context of Apartheid, ‘the township became the structural form and the homelands (or Bantustans) became the reserves (rural bases), whereby the flow of migrant labour could be regulated and held in check’ (Mbembe: 2019, p.55). The separation of South Africa into four provinces, in which property and political rights were exclusively reserved for whites, thus coincided with the deliberate and methodical decimation of ‘the enemy’s societal and urban infrastructure’ and ‘the appropriation of land [and] water’ (Mbembe: 2019, p.49). Of course, since the concept of citizen overlapped with that of nationhood, the colonised, being reduced to the status of subjecthood, ‘became a stranger in his home’ (Mbembe: 2017, p.35). Mbembe’s claim is that the Apartheid technology of racism, by racializing and spatializing class relations, secured and invested in enhancing the biological vitality of the white population, while systemically manufacturing, denigrating and degrading the black population as the social and biological enemy that whites had to be protected from by force. The instinct of destruction

...is the very way in which necropower operates. The town belonging to the colonized people is a place of ill fame, peopled by men of ill repute. They are born there, it matters little where or how; they die there, it matters not where or how. It is a world without spaciousness; men live there on top of each other. The native town is a hungry town, starved of bread, meat, of shoes, of coal, of light. The native town is a crouching village, a town on its knees. In this case, sovereignty means the capacity to define who matters and who does not, who is disposable and who is not (Mbembe: 2019, p.52).

Necropolitics is not differentiated from biopolitics simply because of modified techniques of war and the intensification of violence. Rather, these techniques effectuate whole new worlds (death worlds) and the pathological forms of subjectivity and social relations that constitute them. In this light, necropower and necropolitics primarily designate the modalities by which weapons of annihilation are deployed to inaugurate ‘death worlds’. Death worlds, in turn, configure novel and singular types of social being ‘in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of the living dead’ (Mbembe: 2019, p.71).

### **6.2.1 The Death Drive, Necropolitics and a Decolonial Historical Ontology:**

If the object of Foucault’s later traditional historical ontology is basic ‘practices’ (EEW1, pp.9-11; AK, p.132), from which forms of desire and pleasure derive from the systematic relations that are constituted as a result of these practices in rational formations *pouvoir/savoir*

(apparatus), then a colonial historical ontology changes the focus towards practices imbued with desire, except now the priority of biopolitical power is displaced by the primary role attributed to ‘death practices’. Thus, if Foucault’s basic practices in modernity are considered ‘life practices’ broadly speaking, then I can argue with some certainty that death practices are not an inversion but also, as articulated in EAK, comprise a general series of discursive practices that form not a totality but singularities with global interconnections in a field of neoliberal governmental rationalities.

However, this does not mean that there is no conceptual dispute between Mbembe and Foucault regarding the role of life and death in political processes. Of course, the notions of life and death I am drawing from here are from the psychoanalytic tradition, conceptualised as drives. After many years of research on the unconscious, Freud concluded that there was a drive (*trieb*), that preceded and went beyond the unconscious pleasure principle, the death drive. Indeed, most French thought in the twentieth century became influenced by this naturalistic definition of power, to the extent that Derrida conflated Foucault’s position with Freud’s conception of death driven power as a ‘drive for mastery’ (Grace: 2013, p.246). However, as we can see, power in Foucault’s oeuvre works differently, as a set of immanent productive forces, framed nominalistically as a set of actions upon actions in his later career. The key difference between Foucault and Mbembe is that the latter, following Deleuze’s work in *Coldness and Cruelty* (1989), sees thanatos as prior to and a condition for the repetition of eros, essential to his conception of politics as the work of death (Deleuze: 1989, p.34). Mbembe wants to uphold the productivity of governmental power, but also show that these practices are immanent with the death drive – necropolitical technologies – comprising of death practices capable of engendering singular forms of being, an existence characterised in Fanonian terms as a living or social death (see section 7.2). In the next section I will explain how these relationships play out in the South African postcolony.

### **6.2.2 Convivial Corruption: Problematizing Intersubjective Relations and Subject Production in South Africa**

The first part of governmentality in the postcolony is the strategy of extraversion and the authoritarian and assimilative strategies of clans, factions, and private entrepreneurs into a network of unaccountable elites. For Bayart, a postcolonial governmental analysis conceptualises African states as neither the constitutive subject nor determined objects, but

rather emphasises the ‘conduct of Africans’ in terms of the transactions of external and internal conditions of politico-moral existence as a historical process (Bayart: 1993, p.20). He argues that governmentality as a mode of analysis can elucidate how African elites were not simply installed, or mere collaborators. Rather, to write a history of African societies as agents of their own conduct means acknowledging that African political and economic elites have deployed a strategy of extraversion, deploying external relationships with foreign partners to create their own relations of domination at home even if it meant being subordinate to a ‘foreign power’ (Bayart: 1993, p.37).

In the South African postcolony, these death practices linked inextricably with the neurosis of victimisation, which, in hauntological terms, had become institutionalised as a phantom state by the time of Zuma’s regime. As I argued in Chapter 5, this occurs when a collectively repressed traumatic secret (a phantom), becomes institutionalised into modes of governance while transferring inter-generational, transgenerational trauma, which signifies, in necropolitical terms, a haunting neurosis of victimisation that symptomatically attacks an innocent bystander (See Chapter 4). When South Africa became a democratic republic in 1994, it opened its borders to the global world (Comaroff and Comaroff: 2006, p.2). This was in stark contradiction to Apartheid law, and expectedly-within a few years a host of people, beholden to the fantasy of Mandela’s miracle from around the world came to either seek accommodation or, in the face of transitional security forces and an inexperienced judiciary, develop forms of organised crime which became ingratiated with State governance, or private indirect governance. In the Phantom state, marked by shadows, local gangs, and organised crime-the state defaults on its primary activity of governing- a characteristic of modern neoliberalism, opening the state to several racketeering enterprises (Comaroff and Comaroff: 2006, p.274). The phantom state is a state

‘in which organized crime performs for citizens the functions once provided by government. In these circumstances, the official edifice becomes the counterfeit, predation the reality’ (Comaroff and Comaroff: 2006, p.16).

In their article, *Criminal Obsessions after Foucault: Postcoloniality, Policing and the Metaphysics of Disorder*, Jean and John Comaroff provide an articulation of the South African postcolony as a phantom state. If we remember Fanon’s analysis of the township in the colony, it is a place permeated by violence, in which the violence imposed by the colonised regime finds an outlet amongst the colonized themselves (Fanon: 2001, p.41). Apartheid South Africa was no exception, with security forces and police strategically using gangs as useful

delinquents to quell political descent until the present, creating a precedent for the organised crime that would follow (Koga: 2014; Pinnock: 2017, p.934; Stander: 2003). Indeed, since the late 1980s, and more importantly the end of Apartheid, the violent crime that saturated 'township death' worlds have now shifted into hitherto secure white suburbs, making South Africa one of the most violent countries in the world, with the highest rates of murder and rape in Africa (Pinnock: 2016; Comaroff and Comaroff: 2006, p.273). Furthermore, following the demise of the Cold War and the enforcement of the US Patriot Act after 9/11, terrorism and organised crime have started to merge, as they pursue common lucrative ventures in drug smuggling, poaching and the trade of rare wildlife, weapons smuggling and human trafficking. Indeed, although these problems afflict the sovereignty of each state, pervasive lawlessness and chaos mixed with an influx of organised crime, local gangs, and corrupt government officials has brought the existence of the new postcolonial South African nation state and its basic capacity to govern into question (Comaroff and Comaroff: 2006, p.275). This is not new to the South African postcolony, for example, the ever-elusive Vito Pazzalozo, global secretary of the Sicilian mafia, sat at the 1985 National Party (NP) conference amongst Apartheid government ministers as a guest of honour (Van Vuuren: 2017, p, 6). Furthermore, as Mandy Wiener has demonstrated, the relationship between organised crime, gangsterism, senior police and government officials preceded, if not indeed made possible, the Zuma era. Before the formation of the HAWKS, the Scorpions (an independent institution set up to investigate organised crime in South Africa) were investigating the head of Interpol and the highest police officer for charges of corruption, smuggling, racketeering and conspiracy to commit murder, which implicated other senior figures.

'As a result of the Selebi investigation, the country's most senior prosecutor, the head of the National Prosecuting Authority, Vusi Pikoli, was placed on suspension by then President Thabo Mbeki. This was ostensibly to make sure Mbeki's friend was to be protected from a corruption trial. Mbeki, however argued that it was Pikoli who had authorised deals with self-confessed hitmen Mikey Schultz, Nigel McGurk, and Faizal 'Kappie' Smith in the sensational assisted suicide of businessman Brett Kebble in 2005' (Wiener: 2019, p.25).

The illicit corruption and conviviality between the now-late Kebble and Selebi set a precedent for a larger scale operation between the Zuma and Gupta families which I will discuss in this section (Wiener: 2019, p.67). What is important to note about the Kebble saga is that potential whistle-blowers were killed, and none of the serious players were prosecuted, including the infamous drug baron and smuggler, Glenn Aggliotti.

I will analyse the poverty in the South African postcolony in closer detail in the next section, and in Chapter 8, section 8.3, but for now it is important to note that, because of extreme poverty and precarity, many South African subjects liberated from Apartheid are simultaneously considered the enemies of the state for ‘choosing’ a life of crime, a classic moralising premise of liberal governmentality and its creation of the criminal. In this context, the figure of criminal or gangster, which had positive connotations before 1840 in Europe, and in 1920s prohibition America, becomes a model of identification in South Africa, a complex that isn’t simply desired by the poor, but also by members of the upper classes (EPK, p.156; Comaroff and Comaroff: 2006, p.280). Does this mean that the South African postcolony is now truly post-Foucauldian, in the sense that Foucault’s work on political rationalities do not resonate with South African political life, and therefore has no relationship to an emancipatory politics, as Michael Neocosmos has suggested (Neocosmos: 2012)? I will answer the latter question in Chapters 7 and 8, but I argue in the strongest terms, following the Comaroff’s, that we can answer the first question in the negative. They point out that the contemporary South African government does not have the power to punish (in the sense of a corrective or rehabilitative measure), nor does it have the power to discipline. Regarding postcolonial governmentality, it is important to remember that liberal rationality undermined the tactics of trade unions by actively enabling protective rights for workers. This enabled the creation of the ‘employment contract’, ‘in which [there is a] move from a situation in which man defines himself as a worker confronting capital to one in which he is an employee of society (whether in work or not)’ (Donzelot: 1991, p.194; Gordon: 1991, p.44). In the postcolonial potentate, the salary becomes an explicit strategy of anti- ‘disciplinary’ domination. A salary is normally considered monetary ‘remuneration for work done or service or duty performed’ (Mbembe: 2015, p.45)-it produces economically productive and obedient subjects. But in the postcolony, there is no intrinsic relationship between labour and remuneration; the salary was specifically deployed as a disciplinary tool to purchase obedience. In *Writing the Decline*, Richard Pithouse documents how this occurred under the Zuma regime. Since the emergence of his role as president, the ANC has become a ‘private enrichment scheme’ to lend the former president support (Pithouse: 2016, p.96). Thus, instead of employment being issued to those who deserve it because of the credentials necessary to be part of a productive society capable of engendering some form of national hegemony, millions of rands (the South African national currency) have been spent on government jobs, and even the most basic forms of employment require the same type of unquestioning loyalty to the necropolitical sovereign (Pithouse: 2016, p.97).

Furthermore, neoliberal governance for Foucault and Mbembe transforms the principles of classical liberal governmentality and the structure of African State domination. In classical liberal governmentality, the state still had the task of supervising the market according to the dictates of economic processes, but ‘now the market represents the principle for organising and regulating the state’ (BB, p.100). The market is no longer a natural reality that relies on innate human competitiveness, but rather the freedom of the human individual producer/consumer must be artificially organised to inculcate ‘the entrepreneurial and competitive behaviour of rational individuals’ as human capital (BB, p.175). However, if the state is incapable of governing, it does not have the human capital to support a productive economy, and if the disorder is too rampant for governance to occur, the state can no longer take care of the well-being of its population, and consequently its mode of policing becomes brutal, a figuration of violent spectacle from the era of sovereign power, but now the state performs itself through fantastical drama and outright necropolitical violence, not a rejection but an inversion of the Foucauldian schema (Comaroff and Comaroff: 2006, pp.289-294). Evidently, not only precarious miners are killed, but defence lawyers, businessmen, members of political parties, lawyers, and every racial citizen. As Pithouse reports, the situation in Khayelitsha township has become so disorderly that there are reportedly 80 vigilante killings every year, mostly at the hands of police (Pithouse: 2016, p.94). The postcolony is defined by a condition called the accursed share, a principle of enmity where every racial subject, from friends, parents and sexual partners to children, can be sacrificed (Marriott: 2018, p.72). The latest example of such necropolitical violence which led to the eruption of colonial and apartheid intergenerational traumas was the Marikana massacre where poor black miners, afforded wages, or ‘salaries’, which could not afford their daily needs, were desecrated in the pure service of capital accumulation (Du Preez: 2015, p.424; Long: 2021,p.121; Walter: 2016, p.24). Thus, in the dialectic of law and (dis)order constituting the contemporary necropolitical technology of domination as a power formation in the South African postcolony, there is a singular practice worth addressing that underlies the entire formation. It may be underlined in genealogical terms in Nietzsche’s principle of *entstehung*, which constitutes the emergence of a practice of power with lowly, humble origins but which has become dominant, legitimate, and conditional in an invented South African imaginary space that cannot be sublated, a condition of reciprocal negation and misrecognition in Bhabha’s definition of the colonial apparatus (EEW2, p.371; Bhabha: 2004, p.105).

‘Anybody can kill anybody else. This possibility is perceived, if not as legitimate, then as a common practice or generally accepted rule ... The functional character of fright, panic and terror and makes possible the destruction of all social bonds other than the bonds of hostility ... It is equally this bond of hostility that allows the idea to be instituted and normalised according to which power can be acquired and exercised only at the cost of lives of others, and essentially, one can only live together politically, at the cost of the death of the Other’ (Mbembe: 2006, pp.321-322).

Bayart’s and Mbembe’s work attempt to show that, despite initially following the traditional principles of Western totalization and individualisation, two key differences in the African context can be agreed upon: first, African governmentalities produce original state cultures through a mixture of multiple discursive practices, local and foreign. Second, a historical analysis of African governmentalities challenges the nationalist perception of anti-colonial resistance as total heroism. To take account of the reciprocal determination of contemporary African authoritarianism and the ideological portrayal of the postcolonial generation as politically apathetic and ungrateful benefactors, scholars have to interrogate the historical trajectory of colonialism, independence movements and the periods of national liberation in more critical terms (Bayart: 1993, p.249). By uncovering the dynamics of this process, it is theoretically possible to configure a historical genealogy in which Africa’s relationship to the world market comes to be de-dramatized through relations of conduct and counter-conduct. Bayart argues that governmentality and power in the African context can be given a special characteristic: ‘the politics of the belly’.

According to Ilana Van Wyk, ‘the politics of the belly’ has been used in scholarly literature to account for ‘grassroots adulation of a morally suspect leader’. In the South African case this could refer to former president, Jacob Zuma (2009-2018), and is also equated with the convivial zombification I discuss below. But more importantly, in the South African postcolony as we will see in Chapter 8, ‘the politics of the belly’ is conditioned by a ‘racialised politicisation of economic aspiration’ (Van Wyk: 2019, pp.113-114). For Van Wyk, to comprehend the politics of the belly as a mode of governmentality in postcolonial South Africa, it is essential to understand its relationship with conspicuous consumption. The notion of conspicuous consumption was used by social theorist Thorstein Veblen, as a criticism of the materialistic culture of the United States of America in the nineteenth century. For Veblen, American society was morally decadent insofar as ‘the need for personal recognition – or honour ... was vested in the acquisition of material goods’ (Posel and Van Wyk: 2019, p.1). Despite the economic

growth and rise of a large middle class across Africa due to growing consumerism and an increase in entrepreneurship, this has not equated to a growth in incomes across the continent. In the case of South Africa from 2009 to 2014 (the first tenure of Zuma's presidency), a study conducted by the University of Cape Town showed that South Africa's black middle class (see Chapter 8, section 8.2) had grown from 1.7 million to 4.2 million, while the white middle class had grown from 2.8 to 3 million over the same period. More pressingly, 71 percent of South Africa's youth aged 15 to 34 years, with the majority being black, are untrained and uneducated (Erasmus: 2015, p.5). I will explore what this means in Chapter 8 regarding the notion of precarity as the primary affect of necropolitical neoliberalism. Thus, Posel and Van Wyk argue that the middle class has become far more concerned with its own economic success than just living conditions for all (Posel and Van Wyk: 2019, p.2).

Despite its brutal and rapacious nature, Mbembe argues that the mode of colonial rationality was quickly re-appropriated by Africans by the time of independence. In fact, the authoritarian nature of this transgenerational imaginary was so pervasive it invested itself in the body of anti-colonial movements, inscribing its schemes of meaning into the very constitution of the postcolonial state and transforming the existence of what we would traditionally call civil society.<sup>xiii</sup> Thus, following the schema laid out by Bayart, conspicuous consumption and its associated values enables us to understand the three other denotations that pivot on the politics of the yoke.

The second meaning of 'the politics of the yoke refers to the politics of intimate liaisons, and mistresses are one of the 'cogs of the postcolonial state'. In this light, the belly distinguishes men in power, and the phallic nature of the postcolonial capacity to eat, consume and eventually discard objects, as in ancient and modern societies women are still considered objects of wealth. 'Eating in this sense refers to the idea of accumulation, opening up possibilities of social mobility, and enabling the holder of "power" to "set himself up" through not political but familial and customary relations' (Bayart: 1993, p.xxii). I will discuss Zuma's rape trial in Chapter 8, but for now, what is important to discuss is the role that a certain toxic masculinity plays in the constitution of social, economic, religious and political life in contemporary South Africa. Applying Veblen's theory of conspicuous consumption to the governmentality of the belly that defines the South African postcolony enables an interesting perspective:

'rich men who committed fraud to maintain their quality of life were often treated more sympathetically ... leaders like Julius Malema defend their extravagances as an effective weapon against the tenacious economic domination of the white minority' (Van Wyk: 2019, p.116).

Zuma's excessive lifestyle must also be seen in this light, particularly the way he has reasserted the values of ostensibly traditional Zulu patriarchy. In this context, we must remember that Zuma's sexual appetites, which led to four wives and 22 'legitimate children', costing the taxpayer half a billion rand a year, were not seen to signify moral depravity, but rather being 'blessed by God', per the values of the prosperity bible propounded by Pentecostal churches in post-Apartheid South Africa (Van Wyk: 2019, p.112). I will return to Pentecostal churches shortly in this section, but now I just want to illustrate that what this tells us is that, in the context of racial capitalist systems that continue to define the transition from Apartheid to post-Apartheid South Africa, women are not seen as autonomous subjects by White or Black men, but go under a process of thingification, and within the discourse of biopolitical liberation, become sexual things with a hierarchical and oppressive gendered division of labour (Morris: 2006, p.79; Gilroy: 2000, p.273). This is a point that Richard Pithouse has also made in his analysis of rape in South Africa. It is commonly proposed that such rampant misogyny is something that only exists within the underclasses, the proletariat and the lumpenproletariat – those subjects that have been identified as waste in the South African postcolony. Rather, Pithouse draws attention to the fact that sexual violence permeates all levels of our society (Pithouse: 2016, p.100). As he notes, what must really be investigated are the forms of patriarchal and misogynistic culture that make sexual violence normative. As Mandy Wiener has noted, rich white men in Johannesburg, many of whom are married, consider the late Lolly Jackson, head of the strip club Teasers, to be of legendary status for providing them with an array of trafficked (White European) women forced into sex work, an escapist and sadistic phenomenon that did not exist in Apartheid (Wiener: 2019, p.52).

To conclude this section, and move on to the next, the other figure of interest is another new phenomenon in South Africa, the Black diamond. In his novel of the same title, Zakes Mda explores the lifeworld of the contemporary Black middle class, their conspicuous consumption, their relationship to the poor, their gender roles and relationships, and the process by which ANC cadres became rich due to neoliberal BEE policies (for an examination of BEE, see Chapter 8). The example of such a character in Mda's novel is not the ethical protagonist and former freedom fighter, Don Mateza, whose girlfriend Tumi, an elitist materialistic model, wishes him to be an aspiring black diamond, but rather the object of his envy for much of the text, Dr Molotov Mbungane, or, as he is denigrated, Comrade Capitalist. As Mda describes his character, which is worth quoting at length because it opens to the next problem of conviviality:

‘He was able to morph from a poor kid up in the village of Encgobo in the Eastern Cape to a Marxist guerrilla to a political prisoner to a member of parliament and cabinet minister in the first Mandela government. In the last stages of that process he accumulated the political capital that he was able to convert to financial capital and equity in some of the biggest corporations of the land as soon as he left government service. It is the political capital... In less than five years he was the owner of some of the most lucrative diamond, gold and platinum mines, and had interests in the banking, health care, wine and engineering industries. When his former comrades’ gossip about him in the township taverns they say that it didn’t hurt its palpability at all that he was married to an Afrikaner woman. During their days in political power the Afrikaners knew how to create affirmative action for themselves. Now they are teaching the art of accumulation to their son in law – Dr Molotov Mbungane’ (*Mda: 2013, p.17*).

The reason I included the excerpt about the Black diamond, Comrade Capitalist, marrying an Afrikaner woman is not out of any nativist or racist sentiment. For it is clear he does not love her, evidenced by his attempts to pry Tumi away from Don. Rather, in any primitive culture that has just instituted an Oedipal regime, such post-Apartheid South Africa, women (of all classes and creeds) are traded as objects, to improve the economic positions of the men that control them from one kinship institution to another.

The third meaning of the politics of the belly is probably the most important for our discussion and follows from the previous notion of ‘black diamond’. Although the South African postcolonial state can create a set of institutions that may seem to engender an excessively administrative bureaucracy, it is a shield to hide the fact that money is used being used to by factions to situate a vast network of nepotism. Economic production, and the questions of reason of state, become indistinct zones (Bayart: 1993, p. xii).

Indeed, unlike Don, Comrade Capitalist has lost all respect for the Marxist values that he hitherto stood for, and, more importantly, his existence is an allegory for the fact that the transition from Apartheid to a new South Africa was not any type of revolution per se, but an economic pact under global neoliberal conditions amongst South African white, black, and foreign elites. Mbembe argues that social theory at the end of the twentieth century was preoccupied ‘with the phenomena of identity, social control and resistance’ (Mbembe: 2005, p.24). He argues that his major theoretical and political objective in the postcolony was to displace and transform this traditional schema by illustrating that the notion of ‘mutual corruption and conviviality unites both rulers and ruled in a single episteme’. This episteme is not only conceived as what distinguishes a field of scientificity, but as a symbolic order

constituted by two types of drives that become clear when we look at conspicuous consumption in the South African colony, exhibited, first, by ‘the unlimited desire to acquire goods and wealth...and b) the stupefaction experienced in pleasure...The dialectics of power can be traced back to the Atlantic slave trade’ (Mbembe: 2005, p.24) – an exact example of hauntology’s diagnosis of transgenerational pathological and neurotic processes. This does not mean that civil society in Africa does not exist, but rather ‘the evolution of civil society in African postcolony is intricately interwoven with an account of the material bases of the indigenization of civil society and the production of social networks’ (Quayson: 2002, p.149).

For Mbembe, this evolution occurs through three practices – violence, transfers and allocations –which together allow us to comprehend both the structure of African authoritarianism in the postcolony, and ‘the process of decomposition of African states. Just prior to the ANC entering power, an Indian business family trading in computers moved to the affluent suburb of Bedford View, in 1993, before purchasing the property they rented in 1997’ (Myburgh: 2017, pp.32-33). Now, although some commentary suggests that the relationship with the ANC was enabled by a Zuma faction within the party, Myburgh’s account indicates they had significant inroads into the country prior to Zuma coming to power, and indeed, their interventions are rather astounding, and would require serious support at the national level. My task is not to elaborate upon this here, but merely to distinguish the convivial relationship that takes place amongst elites and the looting of the state. The reason Zuma became vulnerable to the Guptas was a result of being unable to pay his debts, alongside pervasive greed.

As South Africans have recognised since Mandela’s relationship to rugby, sport plays a hegemonic role in postcolonial nation building insofar as it can constitute a general will by aligning what would be diverse interests, and its activities are generally recognised as apolitical, in theory at least, as one consents to practices that would generally afford one a good life, philosophically speaking (Mbembe, 1992a). It is no mistake, then, that the Gupta family had purchased three national cricket stadiums by 2004 and were instrumental in enabling the country to host India’s world-famous IPL in 2009 (the year Zuma took power). To the dismay of the country’s cricketing authorities, not only did they make the country’s 23-year-old captain, Graeme Smith, their brand manager (Smith became a multi-millionaire overnight), but they took active control of Cricket South Africa (CSA) before the Zuma presidency, creating new relationships among cricket’s star players, managers and the cricketing (and business) fraternity on the Indian subcontinent. Moreover, the Guptas appointed their staff at CSA, to the extent that, by the end of 2004, Shaun Pollock, Jacques Kallis, Makhaya Ntini, Boeta

Dippenaar, Jacques Rudolph, Martin van Jaarsveld and Neil McKenzie all signed on to become 'brand representatives' of Sahara (Myburgh: 2017, p.63), and by 2005, they had enough power to choose where the country's team would tour and shift national policy; they had successfully captured a national sports team (Myburgh: 2017, p.64). Thus, instead of the national team actually being transformed as resistance to the way white supremacy had dominated the sport, transformation was window-dressing only at the highest levels, in typical Gupta fashion, a sign of conviviality amongst cricket's managerial and sporting elite. It is only now, Myburgh notes, that CSA is investigating the extent to which it was captured, and funds looted.

According to Kaelstrom, conviviality replaces the traditional notions of resistance, counter-conduct or counter-hegemony that dominated late twentieth century politics. By contrast, conviviality is a condition that leaves both ruler and ruled in a mutual state of 'zombification' without any vitality or power, conditions required for the provocation of freedom and the exercise of resistance in the first place (Kaelstrom: 2003, p.60). The key difference between Mbembe's deployment of governmentality and that of Foucault is that, because of the nature of violence and domination, freedom is denied and, with it, counter-conduct and forms of transformation. The reason it is worth mentioning cricket here is because the 'Zuma operation' was no different. On the one hand, the public protector Thuli Madonsela's 'state capture' report found that Zuma had broken 'the Executive Members' Ethics Act 82 of 1998, which sets guidelines, boundaries and protocols for the conduct of those elected to government positions. President Zuma was required to select and appoint Ministers lawfully and in compliance with the Executive Ethics Code' (Myburgh: 2017, p.247). Under the guise of radical economic transformation, a form of resistance that would economically enfranchise the poorest of the poor, the Gupta family appointed ministers loyal to them and former president Zuma, who would consequently appoint their allies in strategic places such as Eskom, the site of tender fraud which is named 913 times in the 'state capture' report. Thus, corruption in the Zuma regime took the form of financial obligations and structural and administrative nepotism that ought not to be conflated with affirmative action. It consisted of setting up family members, friends and mistresses in state structures. This often led to members of the government handing out 'tenders' to friends and networks who could stand in mutual benefit (Mbembe and Roitman: 1995, p.337). A tender signifies a legal obligation where, 'by contract, the former makes a commitment to the latter to realize, either for their benefit or under their surveillance, work defined by a common accord, or to furnish goods and service' (Mbembe and Roitman: 1995, p.338). The problem was that 'this system allowed public contracts to be concluded with firms

which had not presented any submission'. The public services these public or private 'companies' were contracted to provide never appeared, and thus the sites of half-built buildings, destroyed railways networks and the collapse and privatisation of national electronic grids have become a common phenomenon (Mbembe and Roitman: 1995, p.336). Thus, in the report, Mcebisi Jonas confided that the Guptas had told him they had provided economic support and protection to other 'comrades', 'black diamonds so to speak'. In the process, the Zuma family and the Guptas had lifted R6 billion to R8 billion from the state's treasury (Myburgh: 2017, p.248).

In order to dispel the reports of Zuma's corruption, the cohort hired a British PR firm, Pell Pottinger, to paint 'White Monopoly Capital' as the enemy, reinstating a racial politics of resentment at the time of the student protests, which in many ways reopened the transgenerational traumas left by Apartheid and colonialism, despite the fact that the black middle class had doubled over the past several years, while the white middle class had grown by only 0.2 million, less than 10 percent. In the process, the state's public resources were used to create illicit private networks and local and international alliances. And conversely, public officials in positions of influence and authority could be bought by private interests, international and foreign, shifting the nature of national policy and destroying any possibility of formulating a reason of state. The conditions that led to this state of affairs, Mbembe argues, do not render possible radical social transformation or revolution, but are rather the result of state officials, who have abdicated their duty to govern, introducing a situation of 'extreme material scarcity, uncertainty and inertia' (Mbembe: 2015, p.1).

Last and fourthly, governmentality as the politics of the belly transforms the state into a site or mechanism for sorcery: it enables a form of discursive dissimulation that allow elites to manipulate 'invisible' strategies and forms of coercion that fabricate a fantastical, excessive reality bordering on baroque levels of excess and sadism (Bayart: 1993, pp. xvii-xxvi). For scholars, it seemed strange that the Zuma regime had caused huge amounts of financial damage and huge unemployment, but the poor continued to vote for him. For Van Wyk, this misses the religious aspect of Zuma's conspicuous consumption, which is related to the prosperity bible. For those who endorse this theological vision,

'For Christians who believe in the reality of the spiritual war, the rich and powerful have achieved their blessings through individual spiritual strength and mighty spiritual intercessions rather than through individual labour. While material possessions mark spiritual victories, they also invite jealous spiritual work from enemies that could undermine these fortunes ... In this

worldview, conspicuous consumption is interpreted as a celebration of divine favour and is strongly encouraged as an act of faith' (Van Wyk: 2019, p.117).

Zuma is famous amongst Pentecostal churches in South Africa who endorse the prosperity bible, having been named as honorary pastor in 2009. Contrary to the legal secularism that defines the South African constitution, Zuma has constantly broken the legal boundaries between church and state, casting his enemies in theological language as evil, while sanctifying his victories as blessings from God against elements of South African civil society, pesky journalists, the 'corrupt' legal apparatus and malicious White South Africans, instituting a binary politics of good and evil that played to a nativist distinction between good indigenous subjects and evil foreign others (or coconuts – see Chapter 4 – supporting white capital) (Mbembe: 2001, p.2, p.257). He therefore employed an animistic register, treating his enemies as evil spirits who had to be expelled, conforming to neuroses of victimisation and fantastical resentment discourses of Afro-nationalism and Negritude that underly Mbembe's critique of the racial inversion of Western metaphysics in African modes of self-writing.

### **6.3 The Problem of Necropolitical Violence: Moving from a Fanonian to a Black Consciousness Framework in Contemporary South Africa**

Frantz Fanon is an iconic figure in postcolonial studies. He has been cited, with Edward Said and Aimé Césaire, as one of the original progenitors of colonial criticism, and for some, of postcolonial studies itself (Spivak: 2005). In fact, before the shift effectuated by the emergence of postcolonial studies in the Western academy, and for many outside the 'Third World', Fanon had already become a theorist with global analytic import. According to Henry Louis Gates Jr, Fanon is valuable because of his psychoanalytic analysis of colonialism and the production of racial subjectivity (Gates: 1991, pp.457-458).

More relevantly, Fanonian scholarship can be divided into two camps of interpretation on the role of violence in Fanon's work. The orthodox position is that violence is revolutionary, cathartic and a therapeutic force. It positively transforms the previously dependent, lifeless object or thing, endowed with an inferiority complex, into a new form of human subjectivity, no longer bound to a colonial historical ontology. The alternative psychoanalytic reading of Fanon, which problematizes the role of violence in the transformation of the subject, responds diagnostically to this original fascination with transformative effects of violence as a dilemma in which the introjective and projective aspects of the unconscious exceed the premises of

structural determination, a problem that will animate our discussion in the last chapters. Many questions are raised in the interstices that are mostly irrelevant to our discussion – for example, the continuity in Fanon’s work and the position in which he ultimately locates himself.

For now, what is important is to acknowledge that Fanon’s work, despite its engagement with psychoanalysis, does engage with the Hegelian tropes that presuppose his work on violence. In the last chapter of *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon provides a colonial reading of Hegel’s master/slave dialectic. In Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, he provides a framework for both the evolution of self-consciousness and the historical transformation of socio-political relations. Influenced by Kant’s reading of rational self-determination, Hegel argues that subjects can truly become individuals if they are treated as ends, mutually recognised as rational beings that can freely determine and actualise their own rational and historically afforded possibilities in the state’s social institutions (Kant: 2010, p.106). At the beginning of the struggle, each self-consciousness views itself as free and independent. Although it views the other self-consciousness as another human being, it considers such a figure to be more like an object or thing that hinders its own autonomy. To guarantee its freedom by not being determined by another thing, each consciousness risks its life by entering a life and death struggle with the intention of killing the other. According to Hegel, in struggle, the victor realises that by killing the other, he would be robbing himself of the recognition, freedom and self-certainty that he desires. Henceforth, he decides to keep the conquered as a bondsman or slave, from which he requires both recognition and labour. By endlessly consuming the products of his slave’s labour, the master or lord eventually becomes dependent on his slave to satisfy his will. Conversely, the slave realises his own self-independence through working on the independent aspects of ordinary things that satiate his master’s will, in the process realising his own humanity and capacity for self-determination, a possibly independent consciousness (Hegel: 1977, pp.102-104, pp.116-117).

For Fanon, the first shift from Hegel’s dialectic is the relationship between the white master and black slave in the colonial situation. The white master doesn’t want to be recognised but worshipped, a problem that is further complicated by colonialism’s rejection of the colonised’s human status. Reciprocal recognition is untenable because of the animalisation of the colonised, and because the colonial lord, unlike the master, does not even want recognition from the colonised, but more labour and satisfaction. Moreover, this is complicated by the fact that, because the colonised have not fought for their freedom, they have, as Fanon famously put it, been given a subsidiary seat at the masters table, consequently forced to continue

endorsing the superiority of his values (Bulhan: 1985, pp.114-117). As this colonial confrontation moves from Fanon's alienating experiences in post-war France to the Algerian Civil War, in the context of Fanon's own career as a psychiatrist, Fanon distinguishes two sides of the colonial order (Fanon: 2001, p.26). Split into a Manichean necropolitical order defined by a governmental regime of destructive and systemic violence, with the coloniser locked into his superiority and the colonised psychologically and spatially locked into inferiority, to reclaim his humanity and freedom, the colonised is forced to return to the life and death struggle and take up violence against the colonial order, a process of cathartic detoxification (Bulhan: 1985: p.147).

This position on cathartic violence has traditionally been endorsed in orthodox Fanonian scholarship (Gibson: 2003, 2011; Gordon: 2015). However, it has been argued that the last chapter of the *Wretched of the Earth* represents a shift from Fanon the revolutionary to Fanon the psychiatrist, or rather to be more specific a vacillation between the two (Gibson and Beneduce: 2017). Instead of endorsing violence, Fanon is said to take a step back and observe the effects of colonial war on the psyches of those involved. First, as Wandelisa Xaba has pointed out, without drawing on Fanon, the violence that contemporary Fanonian scholars and activists endorse is the same type of military masculinity that was prevalent in the very exercise of colonial and postcolonial phallic domination and patriarchy (Xaba: 2017, p.101). Previously, Neil Lazarus had argued that, for Fanon's intellectual to overcome his alienation in *Wretched of the Earth*, he needs to fall back on an essential, native self as transformative violence takes shape around the colony (Lazarus: 1993, p.75).

For this reason, in Chapter 3, I demonstrated that David Scott chose to read Fanonian violence as a technology of the self, but without considering that subjectivity is always a process, and therefore subjectivation always relates to a process that is alienating and traumatizing. Lastly, through a thorough reading of the subjects in Fanon's final chapter, thinkers such as Hall (1996) and Mbembe (2019) have argued that, instead of violence having a therapeutic effect, it actually further poisons the wound and produces a new pathological identity; hence Mbembe's reference to the ancient term *pharmakon* (Mbembe: 2019, p 3). Indeed, Said claims that the process at work in Negritude, the moral revaluation of the colonial construction of identity, was replicated in the East; it 'occurred in India, in many parts of the Islamic world, the Islamic World, China, Japan, Indonesia and the Philippines, where the denial of repressed native essence emerged as the focus of, and even the basis of nationalist recovery' (Said: 2012a,p.377).

‘Colonial war, like other forms of war, rests upon a funerary economy — killing and getting killed. Men, women, children, livestock, poultry, plants, animals, mountains, hills and valleys, streams and rivers, an entire world is placed in the situation laden with the atmosphere of their having seen death. They had been there when others were put to death. They had witnessed the murders of presumably innocent people. In reply, they enlisted in the struggle. One of the functions of struggle is to convert the economy of hatred and the desire for vengeance into a political economy. The aim of the liberation struggle is not to eradicate the drive to murder, the desire to kill, or the thirst for revenge, but to bend this drive, this desire, and this thirst to the commandments of a superego of a political nature, namely the advent of a nation’ (Mbembe: 2019, p.152).

As I have demonstrated and will take up again in Chapter 8, violence does not so much liberate the subject as produce a national form of identification and a superego prone to a victimisation complex that produces new forms of discrimination and violence. I argue in the following chapters that this is not the path to the forms of social consciousness that postcolonial theory and contemporary human beings require to overcome the pathological legacy bequeathed by colonialism.

#### **6.4 Moving from Fanon: Addressing a Technology for the South African Context: Distinguishing between Biko’s and Fanon’s Methods**

To solve the necropolitical problems that have afflicted South African society in the past and present, I turn to a thinker who engages with the Fanonian problematic that Mbembe has defined in necropolitical terms in the South African context: the black theology of Steve Biko. I argue in this section, and demonstrate in Chapter 7, that Biko’s thought is valuable firstly because his Black Theology, as a form of political spirituality, has the capacity to overcome colonial alienation and neurosis and revitalize the subject; and secondly, it has the potential to effectuate a synthesis or engender recognition amongst formerly racialized groups instead of a capitulation into violence – the final result of postcolonial conviviality (Mbembe, 2000) (see Chapter 5). To assess the potential of Black Consciousness to work as a postcolonial ethos that could transform the constitution of the subject and greater South African society, I need to apply it to engage with the realities of the South African necropolitical postcolony. I suggest that by rereading Biko’s Black Consciousness philosophy as a racial affective technology of the self in the framework of productive power relations, it has the potential to effectuate subjective transformation. Instead of violence, the goal or telos of the exercise is to produce a

freely envisaged self, one that is capable of a greater synthesis into a non-racial Azanian society. This position was first mentioned in Biko's writing, but then later appropriated by AZAPO (Alexander: 2008).

The difficulty I face in this endeavour is how to transform Biko's philosophy from the way it is traditionally read into one that can achieve this telos. When Biko is read as a philosopher by Africana philosophers, decolonial scholars and postcolonial scholars, he is interpreted as an existentialist within the phenomenological tradition engendered by Edmund Husserl (Gordon: 2008; Lamola: 2016; More: 2008). As a consequence of debates in France, particularly the impact of Alexandre Kojève's Hegel lectures, with a materialist reading of the master/slave relationship (Butler: 1987, p.32-55), the dialectic was incorporated into existentialist tropes in Fanon's work, leading to Biko's celebrated formation between a thesis of solid white racism and an anti-thesis of solid black unity, which through a process of dialectical sublation would, over time, eventually engender a synthesis - a non-racist society (Biko: 2008, p.32).

In the *Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon described a Manichean society, in which political power structures society according to the logic of skin. Manichean racism, in Fanonian thinking, is a theological system of binary thought, where goodness becomes associated with whiteness, and evil consequently with blackness (Gibson: 2003, p. 13). For Thiven Reddy, Biko's conception of a 'white power structure' is an attempt to apply Fanon's social psychology to the context of Apartheid South Africa (Reddy: 2015, p. 66). Although Biko never uses the word 'unconscious' in *I Write What I Like*, he attributes the latent development and manifestation of the inferiority complex to an 'identification' which can only take place at the level of the unconscious, and therefore to the introjection of a positive image of white society after the negative image of his/her heritage is presented through the institutions of church and school. Biko follows Fanon's socio-genic method when he claims that the total white power structure that undergirded these racially coded pathological relations were not limited to workers, but included all aspects of South African society, the complexities of student life, and opposition to the Apartheid government. According to Wilderson, Fanon and Biko both analyse subjectivity by attending to three levels, 'preconscious interests, unconscious identifications and structural positionality' (Wilderson: 2008, p.106). He argues that the level of preconscious interests designates the features of the divided subject and subjectivity that exist and are engendered within language: 'that the subject can enunciate about him/herself'. However, for this process to commence, Biko is quite clear that an alteration in the subject's mode of being, both white and black, is necessary.

One of the weaknesses of the phenomenological account is that by only investigating consciousness, it omits to analyse how colonialism affects the body. If we recall Foucault's critique of Marxism (Chapter 1), he pointed out that Marxism neglects the problem of how labour power is constituted, thereby omitting the body from social analysis. As David Marriott has brilliantly shown, contrary to the phenomenological in Fanon's writings, the body has special importance, which I suggest opens the question of the body in Biko's analysis of the inferiority complex. According to Achille Mbembe, when engaging with the problem of labour in South African colonialism and capitalism, it is necessary to take account of the related history of race and the body (Mbembe: 2021, p.29). The racism that is intrinsic to colonial discourse engenders a racialised body. For Marriott, 'this body is formed through racist doctrine and belief, and is the channel and point of transmission through which a racist notion of humanity is inherited and passed down' (Marriott: 2015, p. 163). In Fanon's work, there are multiple ways that the body is racialised: 'epidermalization, petrification, sociogeny and a post humanistic account of the human' (Marriott: 2015, p. 163). Sociogeny, which is relevant here, questions the essentialisation of the body in psychoanalysis, as it demonstrates that the imago that racializes the body is engendered through social and political processes (Marriott: 2015, p. 171). Problematically, once a body is racialised-it inculcates a limitation whereby it cannot belong to a self. Fanon's goal is to move from a racialised body to a new humanism. This equates to overcoming an identification with whiteness (the inferiority complex) and an identification with a black essence (victimisation complex).

However, my argument in this thesis is that Black Consciousness is an anti-colonial technology of the self, which cannot merely be folded into postcolonial and colonial rationalities but may provide a possible bridge from which these historical limitations can be overcome. Fundamentally, despite his cosmopolitan portrayal of African history and his critique of nativism, Mbembe couples the figures of blackness and Africa without ascertaining that historically, in South African anticolonial thought, there is a political and affirmative conception of blackness that signifies a transformative politics and not a merely scholastic one (Marriott: 2018, p.67). Biko's advance on Fanon, which I describe in the next chapter on Necropolitics, was to consecrate a purely political identification with blackness that overcomes the metaphysical and epistemological conundrums of reciprocal recognition, first as a national, but consequently as a transnational, imagined community. If Fanon's concern was with reciprocal recognition, then Biko's was focused on the problem of agency. I argue that, despite Mbembe's attempt to grapple with the torturous terrain of the neurotic postcolony, his major

weakness is his reductive reading of anticolonial thought.<sup>xiv</sup> Furthermore, in relation to this shortcoming, Mbembe fails to isolate in his genealogy of black reason, as several thinkers including Said have noted, that anticolonial black radicalism is the highpoint of nationalism, (Said: 1994, p.226).

‘the rigorous attempt to articulate a thought of difference that is not yet a racial concept, and one whose task is to go beyond the racial proprieties of anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, classics, theology, literary studies and psychoanalysis wherein blackness is always deemed secondary, belated, or merely empirical’ (Marriott: 2018, p.71).

I examine Biko’s work in the next two chapters, to formulate a new affective technology of the self-as an ethical mode of subjectivation that has the potential to overcome the experience of social death and an inferiority complex. I argue that, in Foucauldian terms, Biko’s evocation of Black Theology is an instrumentalised racial and affective technology of the self or subjectivization that can lead the subject from a state of perceived inferiority, timidity and fear to one of courage. By designating a set of spiritual practices that culminate in a ‘warrior ethics’, Biko’s transformed subject is able to confront the necropolitical distribution of death by speaking truth to power, deploying a strategy of material conscientisation which, in turn, is meant to effectuate a similar revolutionary disposition amongst the adherents of Black Consciousness. In doing so I will also consider how Mbembe’s thesis on the becoming black of the world in the context of decolonial historical ontology undermines Biko’s African essentialism, and also how continuing to approach human subjects as divided racialised beings in an era of Anthropocene limits the therapeutic potential of the political spirituality associated with the Black Consciousness Movement and Black Theology.

## Chapter 7. Black Consciousness as an Affective Technology of the Self

### 7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I argue, contrary to the traditional Fanonian models that have hitherto been portrayed strangely as Foucauldian technologies in postcolonial studies ( Scott 1999; Mbembe; 2001), that it is in Steve Biko's project of Black Consciousness, and the masked form of revolutionary political subjectivity it engendered in the enigmatic figure of Frank Talk, that we find an anti-colonial tactical manual that comes closer to Foucault's notion of political spirituality and care of the self in general, and parrhesia in particular. In this chapter, I argue that Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy, when read through Foucault's technology of the self, has the capacity to overcome the inferiority complex that has been bequeathed to the South African postcolony via the narratives of colonial and apartheid trauma. Furthermore, by reading Biko through care of the self, I can develop a model able to overcome the essentialist alienation/liberation paradigm by nominalising Biko's strategy via a combination of historical ontology and genealogy. In Chapter 8, I exhibit the limits of Biko's transformative model, problematizing his notion of African homogeneity, which includes a politically problematic metaphysics and legitimation of patriarchy, via a genealogy of the radical African tradition.

Although Fanon, Senghor, Césaire, Memmi, Cabral and Nandy are cited as the key influences for postcolonial theory, Biko's role is often neglected, with the odd exception (Veriava and Naidoo: 2008, p.236). However, in the past decade in the South African context, we have seen the public re-emergence of Biko as a figure and Black Consciousness as an ideology – although Black Consciousness had almost completely disappeared from the public domain in the late 1980s and early 1990s as result of electoral, geo-political and demographic factors (Reddy: 2012). In this context, it might appear that Biko's work signifies no more than a simplistic application of the Fanonian problematic to the South African situation, with no great depth or ethical shift on Biko's part. That said, it would be accurate to claim that Biko was influenced by the Negritude movement and its predecessors in Europe and North America, as indeed was Fanon. Additionally, in contemporary post-apartheid South Africa, the iconography of Biko as a figure and Black Consciousness as a fashionable ideology ('corporate black consciousness') has been (mis)appropriated to affirm the interests of the new black bourgeoisie, the result of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE). One needs to ask how, when his legacy has been

abused and reduced to the most vapid commodity fetishism, can Biko be useful to the project of this thesis?

To reclaim Biko's work on Black Consciousness as a form of ethical heritage in the Foucauldian sense, I concur with the claim of Ahmed Veriava and Prishani Naidoo that, 'Steve knew, perhaps better than any of us, that the "method" of death could itself be a politicising thing' (Veriava and Naidoo: 2008, p.233). They argue that the value in Biko's political work was his method of living and dying, which, I argue, is akin to the ancient stylistics of existence that Foucault defined as ethical technologies of the self in his later work. More importantly, I argue that Biko's approach to reconstituting the black subject in Apartheid South Africa resonates with Foucault's reading of the care of the self, parrhesia, and can be comparatively analysed in terms of Socrates' trial and death, which was the result of Biko's philosophical way of life. In this context, Frank Talk is a figure that has hardly been touched upon in Biko scholarship. He is simply cited as a pseudonym for Biko, but the latter's reasons for not writing under his own name have not been disclosed or considered worth serious investigation within South African or international Biko scholarship. In my view, this is certainly a problem worth investigating, because firstly, Biko was only banned from writing and public speaking in 1973 but had already signed off as 'Frank Talk' in articles circulated publicly from 1970. Instead of reducing this to a mere political gesture, I argue that this move has philosophical undertones which resonate with Foucault's historical ontology of parrhesia in ancient Christian and Greek thought, death and the care of the self: tropes that have not, to my knowledge, been used to decipher Biko's life and thought. In other words, I am suggesting that Biko's praxis as a practitioner of Black Consciousness movement and his promulgation of Black Theology is comparable to Socrates 'virtuous corruption' of the Athenian Youth in Plato's posthumously edited collection, *The Last Days of Socrates*. Like Socrates and the early Christian political revolutionaries who Foucault studied in his lectures on *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Biko 'died as he refused to live, refusing to allow power to set the terms of the discussion, living proudly in the face of death' (Veriava and Naidoo: 2008p.234). Moreover, there are further similarities with Foucault's conception of political spirituality, insofar as living politically designates a (modern) form of subjectivity that is beholden to and characterised by innumerable acts of resistance, in order 'to rise up against the present so that we may see ourselves living differently in the here and now, to see ourselves as living as otherwise' (Veriava and Naidoo: 2008, p.238).

But this means, in line with an early Christian conception of parrhesia that Biko adopted, that to forge a political culture, new generations of young South Africans would have to engage with an ancient paradox that determined colonized political life, namely that learning to live means learning to ‘settle the argument with death’ (Veriava and Naidoo: 2008, p.235). Consequently, I suggest that, in the South African context, Biko’s project and style of life as political sacrifice is more valuable than Fanon’s. I make this argument at the end of this chapter, where I will show that, instead of capitulating to cathartic violence as a means of overcoming the inferiority complex, Biko’s analysis eventually promises, through a particular technology of the self in Foucauldian terms, the production of a form of revolutionary subjectivity or subjectivization via an affective and psychic technology that can overcome a neurotic and alienated inferiority complex. In the case of Biko, this is the masked figure of Frank Talk. However, it is only through a set of practices that the subject can access the truth and speak the truth to power under fear of death. This becomes evident in the trial of Biko, and its resonance with an earlier trial in political and philosophical history, the trial of Socrates. Biko’s work was concerned with alleviation of an inferiority complex in the colonised subject, and consequently, the potential alleviation of the narcissistic superiority complex in the coloniser. I will argue that, by diagnosing the interrelation between these complexes, Biko’s work provides the potential for a coherent type of social integration and collective liberation that presupposes ethics as the ‘conscious practice of freedom’ (EEW1, p.284), and the eventual overcoming of racial categories in South Africa.

## **7.2 Considering South African Apartheid: The Fragmentation of Resistance and the Production of the Inferiority Complex as Subjectification.**

### **7.2.1 The Banning of Traditional Resistance Movements**

Twenty-two years after Apartheid began, on 21 March 1960, 7000 African people gathered around the Sharpeville police station, south of Johannesburg, in Apartheid South Africa’s Transvaal province. Their goal was to protest Apartheid and the pass law system that had successfully operated as a mechanism of disciplinary surveillance which had been implemented in the colonial period from 1760 to control slaves, and now regulated the migrant labour system that grounded Apartheid’s system of racial capitalism (Sisulu: 1956, pp.12-14). Although the protest was peaceful, the security forces opened fire on the protestors, shooting many in the back, killing 69 and wounding 180. The massacre was an expression of Apartheid sovereignty,

a manifestation of the necropolitical ‘capacity to dictate who is able to live and who must die’ (Mbembe: 2019, p.66).

The Apartheid government banned all protests and anti-Apartheid movements, notably the PAC and ANC. The Unlawful Organisations Act (1960) banned the official oppositional political organisations, the ANC and PAC. In response to this exercise of necropolitical violence, the ANC formed an underground military wing, *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (Spear of the Nation) in 1961. Led by Nelson Mandela, the movement went into exile to receive military training, but soon after returning they were arrested, which led to the Rivonia trial (Mamdani: 2020, pp.163-164). The spectacle of the trial<sup>xv</sup> ended with the incarceration and deportation of the ANC’s top brass to Robben Island, an issue addressed in Chapter 8. For Biko, the historical context that determines his diagnosis of black subjectivity is Apartheid (1948-1994) in general, but more importantly, the historical events that occurred after 1963 and 1964 in particular. In contrast to the anti-colonial revolutionary events that criss-crossed the rest of the globe in the 1960s, the South African situation appeared to be ‘anything but revolutionary’. For white South Africans, the late 1960s was a time of ‘political calm, rising living standards, prosperity and sharing in the economic boom of that period’ (Badat: 1999, p.77). The period 1963 to 1967 was one of political and psychological destitution for African people in Apartheid South Africa. In the vacuum left by the violent overthrow of student militant resistance by the Apartheid state’s security police, students, afflicted with an inferiority complex, gave into ‘heavy drinking and sexual promiscuity’ (Stubbs: 2008, p.177). In ‘Our Strategy for Liberation’, Biko recounts how such vicious Apartheid violence and repression ‘led to some kind of political emasculation of the black people’ (Biko: 2008, pp.162-163, pp.36-37). Biko links the social alienation (Biko: 2008, p.60) and neurosis of the colonised subject (Biko: 2008, p.61) to a condition he defines as ‘spiritual poverty’ coupled with material want (Biko: 2008, p.30). The fact that Biko introduces the notion of spiritual poverty and emphasises its analytical and diagnostic value over the old notion of material want is an important move.

‘The fact that Apartheid has been tied up with white supremacy, capitalist exploitation and deliberate oppression makes the problem much more complex. Material want is bad enough but coupled with spiritual poverty it kills. And this latter effect is probably the one that creates mountains in the normal course of the emancipation of black people ... The logic behind white domination is to prepare the black man for the subservient role in this country ... Convinced of the futility of resistance ... a slave, an ox bearing the yoke of oppression with sheepish timidity.

This is the first truth, bitter as it may seem, that we have to acknowledge before we can start on any design to change the status quo' (Biko: 2008, pp.30-31).

In the mid-1970s in South Africa, Marxism was the dominant mode of oppositional scholarship. Of course, the problem with Marxism for many black scholars at the time was that it reduced race and the political problems of racial discrimination and oppression to the 'materialism of class'. Thus, just like Fanon, and Du Bois, Biko was dissatisfied with a purely materialist analysis. In this light, Biko's shift to race (and emphasis on spiritual poverty) instead of class meant that traditional analyses of exploitation would be enmeshed in, if not subsumed into, a social psychological analysis of the effects of racial oppression that led to the production of an inferiority complex (Ally and Ally: 2008, p.175).

### **7.2.2 The Inferiority Complex as Clinical Diagnosis**

The orthodox or dogmatic view in Biko scholarship is that he was primarily an existential thinker, within the tradition of Western phenomenology that had its primary roots in Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit* (Gibson: 2011; Gordon: 2008; More: 1996; Wilson: 1991). With the notable exceptions of Derek Hook's (2004) characterisation of Black Consciousness as a psycho-politics and the exemplary analysis by Frank B Wilderson (2008), Biko's work on the inferiority complex is hardly analysed from a clinical perspective. Yet I argue that, following Fanon's notion of a 'situational diagnosis' (Shohat: 2006, p.251), this is what he was attempting to accomplish in the context of Apartheid. As stated in the introduction to this chapter, it is questionable how one would move from a clinical register that characterises Apartheid's pathological modes of racial subjectification to a non-racial synthesis, if the pathologies that augment asymmetrical and dependent relationships between black and non-white and self-negation have not been addressed (Biko: 2008, p.32). My argument is that Biko's analysis operated at different, even disjunct, levels that require elucidating and reordering.

Lamola argues that Biko's deployment of Hegelian dialectics is an illogical and incoherent ideology (Lamola: 1996, p.193). He argues that Biko neglects the reciprocal nature of a dialectical process, insofar as the total white power structure crumbles as result of the black subject reaching the envisaged self. However, by reducing Biko to Hegelian and existentialist tropes he misses a key aspect of Biko's thought that I will later use to unpack the reciprocal nature of whiteness at a psychic level. This is the value, I would argue, in reading Black

Consciousness as an affective racial technology of the self that leads one from a position of neurosis or alienation ‘to an envisaged self’ that renders synthesis tenable.

The history of medicine can be analysed according to two principles. The first considers the history of illnesses, their frequency, diversity, and intensity, as well as the corresponding therapeutic techniques that develop as a result. In the second, the doctor does not define the disease instantly as a singular unit: s/he presents a clinical picture by either dissociating symptoms that were hitherto linked together or she connects symptoms that were previously thought of as distinct. Consequently, in the history of nosography,

Progress from this point of view generally means a tendency towards greater specificity and indicates a refinement of symptomatology ... Great clinicians are the greatest doctors: when a doctor gives his name to an illness this is a major linguistic semiological step, inasmuch as a proper name is linked to a given group of signs, that is, a proper name is made to connote signs (Deleuze: 1989, pp.15-16).<sup>xvi</sup>

In Biko’s psycho-political register and diagnosis of racial subjectivity in Apartheid South Africa, there are three signifiers that are key: white, non-white, and Black. A key element of Apartheid strategy, deriving from earlier Roman deployments of divide and rule, was to separate the South African population into four distinct and artificial racial groups: white, Indian, coloured and Bantu. For Penfold, ‘Afrikaner nationalism stressed a god-willed diversity of people with each fostering a unique cultural identity or volksie [folk]’ (Penfold: 2017, p.18). Furthermore, Apartheid South Africa was a bifurcated state, deploying forms of indirect rule in tribal chieftaincies called Bantustan’s where the majority of the African or ‘Bantu’ population was kept (Mamdani: 1996, pp.16-19). This theological discourse prescribed each racial group their ‘rightful’ position in a hierarchical naturalist ontology. Although colonised South Africans resisted colonial rule and Apartheid, they identified with the discursive racial stereotypes constructed by the Apartheid colonial apparatus. The majority of South Africans adopted a position called racialism, meaning they believed in the distinct reality of biological races with unique cultural aptitudes (Appiah: 1993, p.5). Therefore, although resisting Apartheid, they conformed to South African colonial discourse, which defined white South African citizens primarily in relation to non-white subjects (Epstein: 2019).

These forms of racial subjectification were, no doubt, linked to the Group Areas Act and the racial and spatial segregation of every aspect of South African life, which, according to Biko, was part of the external machine that simultaneously produces the inferiority complex by

controlling the everyday conduct of the colonised. Biko's diagnosis is predicated on his everyday inductive observations of the racially coded everyday relationships and practices between ordinary South Africans as signs or symptoms of an underlying series of affects and pathologies that compliment and reinforce a racially oppressive status quo constituted by relations of hostile enmity. Biko argued that the pathologies he found in 'Black' workers, were mutually enforced and reciprocated by the pathologies inhabiting the psyches of White South Africans. 'Blacks', he argues, 'were made to feel that the white man was some sort of God that could not be doubted' (Biko: 2008, p.75), and whites had come to identify with this idealized image of themselves as inherently superior. He surmised that 'black' subjects were forced to develop a two-faced attitude which ultimately symptomized a form of self-abnegation to and political dependency on the paternalizing civilising mission – an inferiority complex.

'The black man is subjected to two forces in this country. He is first of all oppressed by an external world, through institutionalised machinery, through laws that restrict him from doing certain things, through heavy work conditions, through poor pay, through poor living conditions, through poor education, these are all external to him; and secondly, this we regard as the most important, the black man has developed within himself a certain state of alienation, precisely because he attaches the meaning white to all that is good, in other words he associates white with all that is good, and good with all that is white' (Biko: 2008, pp.110-111).

Biko invokes the 'external machine' as one of the primary causes of the black subject's traumatic alienation. I argue that these conditions of existence that constitute this machine signify the production of colonised existence in the township, the death world, that Mbembe describes in his Fanonian reading of necropolitical Apartheid South Africa. Lived existence in the township, which Fanon described as a social death, is traumatic. Trauma as an affect signifies 'the shattering of life's narrative structure, about a loss of meaning, the traumatised person has lost the plot' (Van der Merwe and Godobo-Madikizela: 2007, p.6). The traumatised subject becomes haunted by the lacerating experience. He/she is rendered incapable of self-determination and freedom, leading to a lack of control distinguished by neurotic, irrationally compulsive and repetitive behaviour that is destructive of self and others (Van der Merwe and Godobo-Madikizela: 2007, p.2). In the case of Apartheid, the township becomes a space of structural trauma, 'which refers to a pattern of continual and continuing traumas' (Van der Merwe and Godobo-Madikizela: 2007, p.11). In this context, Biko claims that the most 'important' state of alienation emerges because the socially and individually fragmented subject 'attaches the meaning white to all that is good'. He attributes the latent development

and manifestation of the inferiority complex to an 'identification', and therefore the introjection of a positive image of white society after the negative image of his/her heritage presented within the institutions of church and school, a Fanonian position. Fanon argued, in quasi-Lacanian terms, that the inferiority complex is a result of the internalisation of the Manichean racial gaze. Internalising the racial gaze is 'a product of the deracination of local structures and the transference of the European collective unconscious to the colonised populace through the imposition of colonial structures as the "sum of prejudices, myths and collective attitudes of a given group"' (Naicker: 2019, p.67; see also Fanon: 2017, p.159). In Biko's situational diagnosis of Apartheid, the term 'non-white' refers to a subject who desires to be part of white society because of a feeling of a social and corporeal fragmentation because of colonial stereotyping, but is barred access, structurally, to human recognition by white society because of the racial signifier: his/her 'black' skin or pigmentation. It is important to remember that Biko that writing at the time when racial categories were essential to Apartheid governance, and his work is already an attempt to undermine the social metaphysics that legitimated racial segregation (Epstein: 2018, p. 98). His diagnostic term, 'non-white', as a pathological subject position, also designated a structural dynamic where the colonised subject came to take up influential positions within the total white power structure, as policemen, administrators, clerks, complaint intellectuals and informers. This structural position enabled forms of indirect rule and political espionage that enabled the reproduction of the Apartheid system for nearly fifty years. According to Brian Epstein, Biko's conception of black (as we shall see in section 7.3), and non-white are useful socio-psychoanalytical concepts, insofar as they deracinate Apartheid's forms of racial classification (Epstein: 2018, p. 107). He points that the key difference between Fanon and Biko was that the former's concern was that the former was concerned with reciprocal recognition, whereas the latter's concern was the lack of agency for those discriminated against by Apartheid. Thus, 'Biko's aim in introducing the category black is to break out of the white/non-white dichotomy, replacing the category non-white with one that is neither derivative or negative' (Epstein: 2018, p. 108). The notion of blackness is therefore more than a simple identification, but a means of reclaiming freedom and consequently, as I will demonstrate in the next section, a mode of subjectivation. On the other hand, the notion of non-white designates a segment of the South African population that cannot be white because of pigmentation, but more importantly, are incapable of political agency. In the rural Bantustans and urban areas, 'non-white' South Africans were implicated, if not complicit, in subjecting the South African population to a condition of a social death – a precarious condition in which the possibility of being murdered was ubiquitous, the

possibilities of not being subject to discrimination and exploitation were impossible, and the colonised were cogs in an necropolitical racial machine (Biko: 2008, p. 32). According to Sarah Juliet Lauro, the figural notion of social death is a

‘powerful proclamation of the operations of necropower at work today, one that begs the question of whether the phantom-like status of enslaved peoples has been transmitted to the free citizens who are their descendants. The ‘precarious life’—to invoke Judith Butler’s term of the black citizen is felt under the crush of recent instances of police brutality... This crisis is but one among many examples of contemporary necropower, in which some lives are deemed salvageable and others expendable....That police officers are continually acquitted of any wrongdoing in cases What makes these men and women so ‘dangerous’ in the eyes of the law as to justify the use of deadly force is only the colour of their skin, the same property that justified ownership of their bodies under the institution of slavery’ (Lauro: 2018, p. 38).

Furthermore, the symptoms of an underlying neurosis which produced social alienation and death for Biko, personally, were reflected in the constitution of South African political and civic institutions. Arriving as a young medical student at Durban University in 1966, he realised there was no black leadership in student affairs, and this was reflected in the attitudes of both white and black students. The only opposition to the Apartheid government came from white organisations, which in the case of student politics was NUSAS (National Union of South African Students). After receiving a notably more advanced education communicated formally in English, white students conducted themselves with a sense of superiority. In contradistinction, Biko argued that the main obstacle in black student life and politics was a ‘psychological feeling of inferiority that was deliberately cultivated by the system’ (Biko: 2008, p.163). Ironically, white students were both central figures in the oppression of black students as well as the main opponents to that system. He argued that the colonized populace of South Africa did not only require political liberation from the exploitative and ‘necropolitical’ ‘total white power structure,’ but also psychological liberation from the modes of racial subjectification and identification instituted by the colonial apparatus, encapsulated in his famous statement that ‘the most potent weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed’ (Biko: 2008, p.74). Following this general strategy, key tactics included the hierarchical distribution of educational training, vocational opportunities and social status in accordance with the perceived capacities of each racial group, which for Bhabha is how the colonial apparatus legitimates Apartheid before the fact. Of central importance was the policy of Bantu education, which created a curriculum that only trained African’s into occupational

locations that amounted to a position of servitude to white masters. Furthermore, the Extension of University Education Act (1959), prolonged Bantu education into tertiary studies. This law designated particular universities for each ethnic group and made it impossible for any non-white student to attend a white university, fortifying separate and unequal development (Penfold: 2018, p. 18).

### **7.3 The Ethical Substance as Black Consciousness**

#### **7.3.1 Consciousness as the Substance of Ethical Work: An Introduction to Biko's Foucauldian Ethics**

I argue in this section that Biko's response to the problematic of overcoming the inferiority complex – the idea that the colonised and their cultures are inferior, savage and irrational, which means they require tutelage by the white coloniser to reach a human maturity made possible by the institutions of modern progress – should be viewed in terms of Foucault's definition of technology, a practical rationality governed by a conscious goal (EEW3, p.246). In the context of Biko's psycho-political program of Black Consciousness (Hook: 2004), I reconceptualise it as *Techne*, which, 'in the sense of practical rationality is a mode of intervening upon becoming within the context of the social order, a mode of conducting events in order to determine precisely those aspects of the future that are not knowable in advance' (Altamirano: 2014, p.16). The first part of Foucault's schema is the determination of the ethical substance: this designates the way each individual subject delimits a particular part of himself or herself as part of his or her 'moral conduct' (HS2, p.26). The essential distinction between the early elitist anti-Apartheid movements and the combination of workers and students that eventually organised as the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970s was that the latter did not believe in the existence of races, which I have already called racialism (see Chapters 4 and 5). Biko, adopting a Fanonian position, considered race a social construction in which the subject becomes psychically invested in order to reproduce the order of racial capitalism. But reframing Biko's thought in Foucauldian terms suggests that Biko sought to outline the 'the determination of the ethical substance', in the form of 'a consciousness or a mental attitude' that both a) unified all oppressed groups, and b) acted as a conscious, subversive and ethical technology that would liberate the oppressed subject from psychic and political bondage – in other words, the inferiority complexes that took hold during the course of Apartheid social practices and which consolidated the consent of the oppressed classes.

For Manzo, the common-sense conceptualisation of power in South Africa that derives from political economy is that the colonised subject is an object, position (of sovereignty), property or commodity to be traded and possessed. Manzo argues that, from a Foucauldian and Deleuzian perspective, there are two problems with this conception of power 'in which the capitalist economic framework is the total determinant of social change' (Manzo: 1992, p. 26). The first is that the notion of transformation, in any sense, can only occur in South Africa when whites hand power over to blacks. According to this theory of power, blacks are fundamentally powerless because they lack both rights and any control over the means of production. The second is that because blacks are powerless, they cannot be considered the agents of progressive social change. I argue that both problems are manifest in the work of Biko. The first problem is that both white and black are treated as natural and static phenomena, rather than epistemic constructs, and 'identities constituted through social practices and whose meaning, over time, has been ever fluid' (Manzo: 1992, p.25). Power therefore has the capacity to produce an epistemological reality, and, within that reality, certain constitutive elements, such as individuals with capacities or a lack thereof, in the sense of an inferiority complex. Second, the traditional theory of power cannot explain why blacks have 'forced changes in both the mechanisms of domination and in the discourses of normalisation deployed to sustain them' (Manzo: 1992, p.26). Black Consciousness is not only an example of resistance, but a mode of exercising power and actively engendering social change through the production of a new politics of truth and a new set of practices (the inward-looking process and conscientisation) that changed the meaning of the term black, which affectively altered the subject's mode of being. If we remember Foucault's formulation in HS1, resistance is not external but internal to relations of power (HS1). If power is conceived as a possession and a property, that is, as political sovereignty, then it becomes untenable to explain how psychological liberation becomes a prerequisite for later political transformation. Thus, for Biko, the question of unity amongst blacks is related to adopting a political ethos that will overcome the Apartheid system of divide and rule, which still exists today (Biko: 2008, pp.56-57). It was the notion of 'blackness', as a unifying mode of subjectivation for each of South Africa's colonised groups that enabled a transformation from a prior affiliation to derogatory racial categories, engendering a political identification (and not an identity in psychoanalytic terms) that would provide South Africa's national anticolonial struggle for self-determination with an international dimension (Biko: 2008, p.34) As Erasmus notes for Biko, 'Black was not a race category or classification, but a global political identification premised on resistance to oppression in contexts of white supremacy' (Erasmus: 2015, p.2).

### 7.3.2 Blackness as a Mode of Political Unification and Subjectivization

Foucault's French notion of *assujettissement* allows one to overcome the traditional binomial distinction between objecthood and subjecthood. The common translation of this term in most English scholarship has been 'subjectification', which denotes a simply passive process of subjection or subjugation based on a true discourse, producing an obedient form of subjectivity. Thus, one becomes subjectified through being objectified in terms of 'true' scientific notions such as racially degenerate, mentally ill, homosexual or criminal. *Assujettissement*, however, also denotes the active element of power relations in terms of the self's relationship to itself as subjectivation. It refers to the numerous ways a subject can relate to itself and can construct itself on the basis on what one knows to be true. An example is the formation of the colonised constructing a discourse of what they considered their experiences under Apartheid and the common conditions of oppression that unified them as a group. In this process, they refused the norms of subjectivity that had been imposed on them by Apartheid to reformulate new individual and collective modes of being through the construction of a counter memory, through two techniques: the inward-looking process and conscientization. Biko presented Black Consciousness as a mode of oppositional politics intrinsically tied to revaluation of the cultural and religious values of colonised communities. Drawing on Fanon's critique in *Black Skin, White Masks*, he argued that part of the colonial strategy of creating compliant, neurotic and alienated colonized subjects endowed with an inferiority complex was to distort and destroy the past of colonised communities, presenting their cultures and traditions as barbaric and inimical to self-governance and progress (Biko: 2008, p.75). With the destruction of their past, and with it the anchor of any meaning in an abyssal present, the black subject lost a disposition towards the future and with it any hope, a living in death as opposed to a being-towards death (Biko: 2008, p.76). More importantly, his revaluation of culture had nothing to do with simply returning to an archaic past. In order to engage with the inferiority complex, Biko argued that Africans and other colonized groups had to present a corrected, affirmative image of their cultures. It is a fact that he unquestionably assented and identified with some of the central values of Negritude, characterising African culture as the inverted (Humanist, communal, emotional, artistic, egalitarian, creative) image of a pathological, spiritless, rational, individualistic and modern colonial culture (Biko: 2008, pp.46-50). This outlined a new politics of truth that was incorporated by the subjects through two forms of ethical work mentioned above: the inward-looking process and conscientisation. I argue that Biko's real concern was

modernising African culture into an oppositional, spiritual and political force, in a manner that would honour the humanistic impulses of the great Africanist, WEB Du Bois. Du Bois argued that Africa's contribution to the world would be moral, aesthetic and spiritual (Du Bois: 2009, pp.104-111). This meant presenting African culture in a moving continuum that did justice to the historically subversive regimes of truth in which it is evolving, constantly intensifying subjectivity through incorporation of new techniques. Thus, Biko enmeshed the communalistic, aesthetic, religious and ethical tropes of African culture (according to the Negritude thinkers) with Western concepts, into an oppositional culture characterised by

‘defiance, self-assertion, group pride and solidarity. This is a culture that emanates from a common experience of oppression ... This is the new and modern black culture that is responsible for the restoration of faith in ourselves and therefore offers a hope in the direction we are taking from here ... We reject the power-based society of the westerner that seems to be concerned with ever perfecting their technological know-how while losing their spiritual dimension. We believe that in the long run the special contribution to the world by Africa will be in this field of the human relationship’ (Biko: 2008, pp.50-51).

#### **7.4 Forms of Ethical Work: The Inward-Looking Process and Conscientization**

The differences that pertain to ethical subjectivation relate to ‘the mode of subjection’, or the particular form subjectification takes for each individual subject. For Foucault, it signifies ‘the way the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognises himself as obliged to put into practice’ (HS2: p.27). Other pertinent differences in the relation between moral prescription and ethical subjectivization articulated by Foucault are constituted ‘in the forms of ethical elaboration, of ethical work’. His claim is that ethical work isn’t simply measured in terms of compliance to given dictums, but instead incorporates his definition of spirituality, insofar as one deploys forms of conduct to ‘attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one’s behaviour’ (HS2, p.29).

In his work, I argue, Biko provides two techniques, or technologies, which would lead the subject from an inferiority complex to the telos of the ethical subject, the free, liberated or envisaged self that is evidenced in a figure that embodies the hallmarks of political spirituality, Frank Talk. For Foucault, spirituality refers to ‘the subject’s attainment of a certain mode of being and the transformations the subject must carry out on itself to attain this mode of being’ (EEW1, p.294). I argue that these forms of ethical work comprise the heart of his technologies.

In Biko's account, they provide the essential affective elements required for a modification of the subject's being that enables it to confront the limits of power by speaking the truth. As Biko illustrated in his trial with Soggot, Biko argued that blackness had always been given a negative meaning, 'rejected and unwanted by society'. Biko's active attempt to alter the meaning of 'black' to a phrase such as 'black is beautiful' (Biko: 2008, p.114), like the Black Power movements in the United States, is a double movement: it represents, on the one hand, an alteration in the subject's mode of being through an inversion in the affect associated with the term black, and on the other, by invoking the tropes of negritude, the production of a new politics of truth. As Foucault notes, to 'take care of the self is to equip oneself with these truths' (EEW1, p.285) as a constant form of political and social preparation.

'The determination of students to recover what Foucault calls subjugated knowledges suggests that black opposition to Apartheid has been as much about the recognition of a particular truth about South Africa's people, their history, and their identity, as it has been a demand for better facilities or representation in the state. This is why Black Consciousness leader, Steve Biko, insisted that 'blacks' must rewrite their history and produce in it the heroes that form the core of resistance to domination' (Manzo: 1992, p.47).

Therefore, the construction of a counter-memory in postcolonial politics requires an engagement with affective and psychic elements to overturn a relationship of self-hate, disgust and destitution. This is because, for Biko, mental and psychological emancipation were 'prerequisites' and inextricable from the realisation of political liberation (Hook: 2004, p.105). This endeavour consisted of an initial separation from white society, which meant black students working together to replace centuries of negative stereotypes, which comprised a series of negative effects through the portrayal of African culture as barbaric, primitive and subhuman. Although he was never totally opposed to an integrated South African society, Biko argued that blacks needed to overcome the effects of the psychological and political oppression before any type of synthesis between cultures was possible.

For Biko, in a manner like Foucault, the subject does not have access to truth unless it embarks on a series of spiritual practices. The inward-looking process was therefore conscious, reflexive, based on introspection and entailed, in an intellectual sense, 'correcting false images of ourselves in terms of Culture, Education, Religion, Economics' (Biko: 2008, p.57). According to Oliphant, the inward-looking process constituted 'a form of introspection...that was directed ...to the arduous task of reconstituting African society [which] necessarily required rediscovery of African heritage and culture as a necessary condition for the liberation

of Africans' (Oliphant: 2008, p.229). The recovery of heritage includes, in Foucault's terms, a resurrection of African systems of subjugated knowledges 'that have been disguised within the body of functionalist and systematising theory and which criticism which obviously draws upon scholarship has been able to reveal' (EPK, p.82). By recuperating these buried informal knowledges that lie below the level of scientificity, Black Consciousness effectuates an epistemological insurrection and psychological therapy designed to engender a series of positive enunciative affects that will heal and liberate the colonised psyche from the internal psychic damage it suffered under racial oppression. By correcting and presenting positive images or images of blackness that effectuate an oppositional and revolutionary culture, black consciousness, as a technology, deploys a politicised notion of race that initiates a shift in the psychic constitution of the colonised subject. Like Foucault, Biko supplies a political education that can effectuate a revolutionary and oppositional culture – but one that is not prescriptive and totalising. It is a practice of freedom and liberty, an ethos or style of life directed towards a political and ethical transformation (Koopman: 2013, p.536).

However, one of the considerable weaknesses of Biko's position is the essentialist conception of African humanism as colonial discourse. In Chapter 5, I exposed how the stereotypical configuration of the 'inferior' African was a result of the first narrative of black reason, justifying colonisation before and after the fact via developmental discourse. It was one of the goals of anti-colonial theory to supply an affirmative image of blackness, the second primarily aesthetic narrative of black reason, embodied by African diasporic intellectuals who became involved in projects of national reconstruction and the transfer of national sovereignty to secure the national self-determination of the South African people. As I showed in my analysis of Mudimbe's work in Chapter 4, the problem with these constructions is that they were, quite simply, inverted copies or mirror images of negative representations, based on the affirmative yet stereotypical portrayal of the 'African personality' by Negritude thinkers. However, the characteristics of this African personality in Biko's work, following a binary logic that is central to the Western metaphysics and the configuration of the colonial episteme, is irrational, but more importantly, emotive, communalistic instead of individualistic, creative instead of rational and humanistic instead of immoral (Biko: 2008, pp.32-34; pp.52-56). The problem with this African discourse on the self is it merely reinforces colonial stereotypes, even if they are differently evaluated. This has given birth to some problematic descriptions of African society, which sit in contradiction to postcolonial realities that we will explore in the next chapter: First, that gendered relations between men and women in African society are equal, or

that gender relations in African society are not patriarchal, and not organised by any authoritarian values; Second, that Africans are essentially good victims and Europeans essentially evil conquerors. This follows from Hall's (1996, p.444) critique of an essentially good African and black subject produces authoritarian visions of black cultural homogeneity, which unfortunately have negative political effects for minorities within the diasporic community when this vision of African (national) homogeneity becomes institutionalised in the postcolonial state (Mbembe: 2002, p.241).

#### **7.4.1 Conscientization**

The success of Apartheid relied on discursively naturalising a White mythology of Eurocentric progress and racial superiority that had historical and theological roots in the philosophy of Hegel (Butler: 1987, p.33; Young: 2004, pp.1-32) by means of a strategy of divide and rule. The major strategy that defines black consciousness as a psycho-politics, or racial technology of the self, is what Biko called conscientisation. This entailed making colonised subjects aware of the historical, political and contingent conditions of their oppression: the racial order that forcibly segregated black, coloured, Indian and potentially progressive white South Africans was subjected to a complementary process of demystification and potential political unification, which presupposed a political definition of blackness. I argue that it is the strategic deployment of 'conscientisation' that enables the transition from a timid to an obedient subject and embodies the parrehsastic subject position that Biko and his adherents take up. First, it is worth noting that in psychoanalysis, neurosis – comprising an assemblage of delusional perceptions and compulsive practices ordered by the pleasure principle and different forms of trauma - is cured by the talking cure. Through an engagement with traumas that have been repressed (and can only be elicited by the psychoanalyst), the analysand can address the source of the neurosis, and if they overcome it in the classical Freudian sense, they are able to obtain a certain degree of autonomy and independence (Freud: 1999, pp.315-322). The analysands guilt-ridden confession is therefore always guided by the meaning attributed to it by the analyser, and therefore conforms to a traditional pastoral relationship, where access to the truth of oneself is defined by mistrust and deficiency and being liberated from one's pathology requires the authoritarian guidance of an-other. I argue that it is quite telling that for Biko, the 'elaboration of ethical work' that characterises the processes of conscientisation involves parrehsastic modes of counter-conduct that represent, if not an alternative, then a solution to

the authoritarian, institutionalized and confessional nature of the psychoanalytic enterprise. Biko referred to conscientisation as 'protest talk' (Biko: 2008, p.125). In his trial, Biko stated that his engagement with conscientisation began in 1972, as a research project in Durban carried out with Barney Pityana and Jerry Modisane having to do with 'literacy' (Biko: 2008, pp.124-125). Quite simply, Biko saw the practice as a means to unify the oppressed by bringing 'them to the ideas of black consciousness'. But it had a more specific meaning. Even the student engaging in 'protest talk' can maintain a position of independence, 'courage and sincerity' through cultivating critical literacy. Literacy in this light does not simply refer to the act of reading cell phone messages, newspapers or print publications. Following the work of Paulo Freire, real literacy designated a knowledge of social conditions that would translate, through pedagogical praxis, 'into the creation of autonomous selves' (Cooper and Luckett: 2017; Freire; 2017, pp.76-80; Magaziner: 2010, p.128).

'We do make reference to the conditions of the black man and the conditions in which the black man lives. We try to get blacks in conscientisation to grapple realistically with their problems, to attempt to find solutions to their problems, to develop what one might call an awareness of their situation, to be able to analyse it and provide answers for themselves' (Biko: 2008, p.127).

Conscientisation has the capacity to overcome external division. Methodologically, conscientisation consisted of observing and listening to 'the ordinary conversations of ordinary people' who were criticising the effects of white oppression on their lives. But it went beyond listening and included a dialogical relationship in which the oppressed obtained critical knowledge, or literacy, of the social conditions that rendered them oppressed beings. By entering a frank discussion with other members of the community, the main purpose of this political strategy was, therefore, to build up the humanity of a defeated population, providing hope, security and potentially courage in order to effectuate a culture of resistance. Conscientisation, according to Hook, 'is a political strategy of resistance in which an attempt is made to develop a heightened awareness of oppressive political conditions of existence' (Hook: 2004, p.105). Essentially, I argue that both forms of ethical work engender a qualitative transformation of the character of the ethical substance and the consciousness of the oppressed from one of servitude and fear to one that begins to hope and borders on courage. In this context, the dialogical practice of conscientisation should be read as a way of grappling with the fear that saturated South African politics. As Veriava and Naidoo argue, as a practice it is an 'open process, determined in a fractured process of meaning among oppressed people' (Veriava and Naidoo: 2008, p.243). As a psycho-politics, conscientisation operates as a

‘method that lets subjectivity shape social practices and takes as its battlefield the lives of ordinary rebels’ (Veriava and Naidoo: 2008, p.248). The effect of such practices points towards a therapeutic transformation of individual and collective subjectivity: he/she becomes self-responsible for their choices or is self-reliant, expresses group pride and solidarity, and learns to commit a to a series of authentic possibilities in which a free self can be ‘envisaged and realised’.

### **7.5 The Christian Mode of Subjection: Black Theology as Ethical Subjectivization and Political Spirituality**

It is by analysing Biko’s engagement with the role of churches that we can see how ‘Black Theology’ can be considered a form of political spirituality and subjectivization. In his 1972 article, ‘The Church as seen by a Young Layman’, he noted that, except for Afrikaans churches, ‘most of the churches have 70, 80 or 90% percent of their membership within the black world’ (Biko: 2008, p.62). Nevertheless, Churches were still mostly in the control of White leadership. Biko’s problem was that the White leadership knew little or nothing of the plight of black South Africans, and therefore he reckoned that it could not hope to know or represent their interests. For this reason, he argued that if Christianity continued to be structured along Western lines, it would be irrelevant to the African situation. Furthermore, the system of Western Christianity sat at the heart of the inferiority complex and spiritual poverty – an internal, disturbed relation with God and self that was conditioned by the relations of power that constituted white domination in Apartheid South Africa. Since Biko considered people essentially religious, the development of moral conscience and cultural persona of individual and community was a necessary requirement:

‘in a country where black people are made to feel like the unwanted step children of God ... they ... develop daily into neurotics through a sheer inability to relate the present to the future because of a completely engulfing sense of destitution’ (Biko: 2008, p.61).

Biko had a problem with institutionalised Christianity in South Africa, insofar as the relationship between God and black worshippers was mediated by white leadership, which in Biko’s thought, as we have seen, simply led to a further authorisation and maintenance of colonial bias. As a result of the way necropolitical power operated in Apartheid, racial subjectification operated by means of a process whereby technologies of domination and affectively endowed psychic images intertwined to produce a moral white or black subject,

who would believe – or in the last instance be compelled to assent to – white authority and superiority and separate as divinely instituted and part of the natural, ontological order of things, a point I first made in section 7.2..2. It is important to contextualise Biko’s views on the relationship between politics and theology. South Africa only became a secular country with the advent of democracy in 1994, hitherto Church and state were not separated. According to Magaziner, ‘as NP [National Party] loyalists saw it, their 1948 election only validated the fact they had been selected by God to bring Christianity and civilisation to Africa’ (Magaziner: 2010, p. 60). As I pointed out in Chapter 4 with my analysis of VY Mudimbe, colonial discourse drew its stereotypes from Christian theology, producing dichotomies between Christian/Pagan, White/Black, Good/Evil and Civilised/Savage that characterise that violence of Western Ontotheology. For Biko, although White church leaders claimed to care for African people, their disposition was informed by a ‘White saviour mentality’ (Biko: 2008, p. 63). The notion of a ‘white saviour’, implies a onto-theology in the colonised can only be a dependent subject, inferior to the European subject which becomes ontological ground, the condition of progress in history. Consequently, Biko envisioned Western Christianity as a white mythology which produced docile subjects. To reclaim the spiritual heritage of Christianity, he rearticulated the religion as a mode of political and spiritual agency, in order to transform the subjectivity of the colonized-as a mode of subjectivation. The concern now is less with the moralising notions of sin and salvation, due to the modes of self-mortification. The objective now, is rather to reinterpret Christianity as a mode of resistance, Black Theology read through a Foucauldian lens becomes a form of warrior ethics. As a context-laden interpretation of Christianity, Black theology does not only attempt to overcome spiritual poverty but shifts the focus to overcoming oppression and fear by articulating a radical social program of transformation.

‘Black theology seeks to show that Christianity is an adaptable religion that fits in with in the cultural situation of the people to whom it is imparted. Black theology seeks to depict Jesus as a fighting God who saw the exchange of Roman money-the oppressors coinage-in His Fathers Temple as so sacrilegious as to merit a violent reaction from him’ (Biko: 2008, p. 34).

In the following two sections, I will demonstrate how the notions of political spirituality and Parrhesia correspond to Biko’s project of Black Consciousness. In the above passage, Biko’s important move is to reinterpret Jesus as a fighting God, which I suggest can be read as an evocation of Plato’s notion of thymos, which if recalled refers to the rage and zeal of a warrior. Christianity as black theology becomes a passage to both psychic and political liberation. As a

form of political spirituality, Black theology produces a form of subjectivation in which parrhesia becomes equivalent to the notion of the Black Messiah-and a shift from Western ontotheological metaphysics.

### **7.5.1 Black Theology as Political Spirituality: An Introduction to Biko's Deployment of Parrhesia and vision of African Politics**

The student movement Biko helped to constitute, South African Students' Organisation (SASO), had theoretical underpinnings not only in the Pan African Movement and Negritude, but also locally in the University Christian Movement (UCM), through a different reading of Christianity called Black Theology (Maluleke: 2008, p.117). The UCM was established in 1967 as 'an interdenominational organisation' concerned with modernising Christianity, and the 'practical application' of Christian moral principles to transform Apartheid South Africa. The Apartheid legal system was argued to be symptomatic of an immoral, pathological and exclusionary society rather than divinely instituted (Biko: 2008, p.15). The majority of attendees at the first UCM conference were black. As black student relations with NUSAS were breaking down, the UCM boasted of having 25 branches consisting of 3000 members. However, 'despite the name of the organisation, the UCM was not restricted to Christians alone, and students of all faiths or no faith were welcome to join' (Badat: 1999, p.84). Nevertheless, although many members of the UCM were black, the leadership remained white. As a result, Biko and thirty other prominent black student representatives meeting at Marianhill, Natal, in 1968 broke away from the UCM, giving birth to SASO. Following his program of Black Consciousness, Biko's intention was not to reform the current structure of Christianity, but to produce an alternate theology, called Black Theology, that would invoke a Christianity that was based far less on authority and moral codes than on a form of ethical subjectivization.

Black theology first attempts to eradicate the image of Christianity as a white mythology, by destroying the Eurocentric image of God which colonial missionaries promulgated. Additionally, Christianity must no longer be conceived as justifying oppression, but rather rearticulated from the perspective of the Black masses. This means reinterpreting Christianity as a form of warrior ethics, which has resonances with Foucault's notion of parrhesia. This means no longer conforming to a politics and culture of sin and seeking to transform the status quo. This means overcoming an abject material culture with spiritual poverty and reinterpreting the Bible as a source of liberation for Black South Africa (Biko: 2008, pp.34; Maluleke: 2008,

p.120). It is noteworthy that Biko rejected Western dualism, refusing to distinguish between Durkheim's sacred and profane spheres. In contrast to the Western metaphysical view that dichotomised all aspects of life into sacred and profane, he advocated for a holistic 'African worldview' (Duncan: 2008 p.291). In a manner akin to Foucault's deflation of political and spiritual spheres in his analysis of Sufi martyrdom at the time of Iranian revolution, Biko presented Black Consciousness as a mode of oppositional politics intrinsically tied to reevaluation of the cultural and religious values of colonised communities.

In his final lecture, Foucault argued that when parrhesia meant 'courageous boldness' in antiquity and early Christianity, it denoted a politically revolutionary relationship to the self and to others that could border on martyrdom, insofar as it was conditioned on the subject having an open relationship with God. In this earlier iteration of the meaning of parrhesia, the political courage that defined the self was similarly rooted in a revolutionary courage and trust in God. According to Foucault, when the Church became an institution, it replaced the meaning of parrhesia as courageous boldness with a new set of denotations: a sense of political timidity, corresponding to a mistrust in self that derived from the psychology of inherent sinfulness. Consequently, one now no longer could have an open relationship with God. Any relationship to God dating from the third century would have to be mediated by an authoritarian figure, the root of pastoral power (GSO II: pp.333-334).

A key analytic trait that Biko's and Foucault's methods share, despite the traditional reading of Biko, and what differentiates them from phenomenology, is that they do not begin from the position of an isolated individual or the presence of individuated consciousness. Rather, 'solitary individuals are not to be taken as starting points; the relations that bind them to one another are' (Luxon: 2008, p.279). And, as we have seen, Biko did not only question the relationship between black and black subjects, or white and black subjects, but also the relationship between God and black subjects in Apartheid theology. Thus, I argue that similar to the understanding of parrhesia in ancient Christianity, Biko wanted to reconfigure the relationship between blacks and God as central to his reformulation between political subjects. First, Biko argued that a belief in God would not translate into victory over Apartheid; faith would need to be inseparable from oppositional political action. He claimed that blacks could not be dependent on God to sort out their political problems. Biko reminded other Christians that 'God is not in the habit of coming down from heaven to sort out people's problems on earth' (Biko: 2008, p.65). But the consequence of this realisation was not a further separation between God and black South Africans. He argued for a closer or open relationship, 'uniting

the black man with his God' (Biko: 2008, p.104). In this light, black theology is meant to address how the Christian God can relate to the everyday problems of blacks in Apartheid South Africa. This consists of not only grappling with political and existential problems in order to revolt against the system, but in doing so to 'bring God back to the black man and the truth and reality of his situation' (Biko: 2008, p.104).

Analysing Biko's doctrine of Black Theology as a form of political spirituality first entails a comprehension of his break with traditional Christian asceticism. Instead of taking up traditional Christian tropes, his praxis is closer to the Stoic notion of *askesis*, which does not designate any form of 'renunciation ... but a mastery over self through the acquisition of truth' (EEW1, p.238). The telos that *askesis* follows is an access to the reality of this world. It designates a complex assemblage of practices by which the truth of one's conditions can be recalibrated into an endless principle of political action. Therefore, Heidegger's Greek understanding of truth, *aleithia*, as the unveiling of possibilities is transformed into a politico-spiritual ethos, a mode of being and behaviour that signifies a revolutionary intensification of political subjectivity (EEW1, p.239).

'Black Consciousness therefore takes cognisance of the deliberateness of God's plan in creating black people black. It seeks to infuse the black community with a new-found pride in themselves, their efforts, their values systems, their culture, their religion and outlook to life. The interrelationship between the consciousness of self and the emancipatory program is of paramount importance. Blacks no longer seek to reform the system because doing so implies acceptance of the major points around which the system revolves' (Biko: 2008, p.53).

## **7.6 The Ethical Telos: The Free Envisaged Self and the Non-Racial Society**

### **7.6.1 Parrhesia in Biko and Socrates**

The final distinction between the moral code and ethical self-transformation, or between subjectification and subjectivation, pertains to what Foucault calls the *telos* (goal or aim-oriented practices) of the ethical subject. He argues that an action is never categorised as 'moral' in isolation but receives its distinction based on its location 'in a pattern of conduct'. Entering a scheme of moral action never merely entails a simple volitional conformity to moral norms, but instead refers to the production of a certain mode of being 'a mode of being characteristic of the ethical subject' (HS2, p.28).

In *I Write What I Like*, Biko argued that ‘what Black consciousness seeks to do is to produce at the output end of the process real black people who do not consider themselves appendages to white society’ (Biko: 2008, p.55). Here, I suggest that Biko is playing on an ethical distinction in Kantian and Hegelian philosophy. He is relating this to a Marxist-inspired critique of the industrial system of racial Apartheid, in which the black subject can only hope to be an alienated cog in an infernal, racist machine. Biko was arrested and detained under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. The discourse of terrorism, under Apartheid, drew on a racialised rhetoric that emphasised the ‘*swaart gevaar*’ (black danger) as the greatest (communist) threat to White and Afrikaner national prosperity in the global context of the Cold War. Within this discursive formation, terrorism named any objectivized form of black protest against the racial governance of Apartheid, as a form of a primarily disorderly conduct ‘that was ungovernable’ (Turner: 2008, p.71). Recalling that Foucault’s ethics were premised on an ‘art of not being governed’, the care of the self operates as a pivotal point of conversion, ‘a way of limiting and controlling power’ (EEW1, p.288). The term parrhesia can be translated as ‘truth-telling’ or ‘frank speech’ or ‘fearless speech’ or ‘free speech’ (Koopman: 2013, p.535). After formulating the tenets of Black Consciousness in SASO’s policy manifestos, it is more than significant that Biko signed off and identified himself at his trial as ‘Frank Talk’. By engaging with the security state in such a manner, Biko would have been fully aware that he was not starting a fight or promoting armed insurrection but resisting by confronting the limits of power through *parrhesia*, which in necropolitical terms is the distribution of death.

Socrates seemed to have a pre-conceptual knowledge or a politico-spiritual intuition – as did Nelson Mandela at the Rivonia trial of 1967, and Biko nearly a decade later – that the risk of death and self-sacrifice enveloped in parrhesiastic speech in the face of power becomes an event that has the capacity to reverse the relations of forces (EEW2, p.371), and therefore institute new conditions of possibility. In the South African case, for example, this reverses the metaphysically grounded meaning of institutionalised practices under Apartheid so that they no longer appear as a moral system of separate development but as an inhumane system characterised by racist cruelty and exploitation. Mandela’s and Biko’s speeches were able to show that the bare lives exposed to these necropolitical systems were stripped of human dignity (Agamben: 2013, p. 137), and in the face of such sadistic depravity, it is only by giving oneself to death that the philosopher/warrior can open a new horizon that effectuates new schemas of meaning, intelligibility and possibilities of action.

Interestingly, Biko and Socrates were both brought before a court of law for challenging the morality of the state and actively introducing new values that would corrupt the youth (in the case of Biko, making them 'ungovernable'). In that sense, they were both imprisoned for committing a legally defined injustice. In Socrates' case, this corresponds to the charge on behalf of Meletus that he had corrupted the young, and the introduction of new deities through the teaching of philosophy (Plato: 2007, p.13). In the case of Biko, the charge was terrorism but the tactics that underlie parrhesia are embodied in Black Consciousness as a racial technology that deploys conscientisation as a strategy of critique – the banned writings and acts of community building on behalf of Frank Talk – and addressing the limits of Apartheid necropolitical power, the distribution of death – seen in his frank discussion with Judge Boshoff. Consequently, in the context of trying to draw parallels between Biko's and Socrates's manner of death, there is a concerted attempt, not to disavow the operations of power relations, but rather to reorganise these power relations in an anti-authoritarian manner by speaking truth to power. However, there are limits to these parallels and interrogating these limits can disclose why Biko's approach to death is more political than metaphysical. Acknowledging these limits will also tell us what unifies their approaches. Biko (and Mandela before him) both saw the Apartheid state as legitimate. In the case of Biko, he (as I will demonstrate in the next section), he was active in his opposition towards the state, first by speaking the truth to power-and then actively opposing state security forces who imposed illegitimate force upon his body. In the case of Socrates, although he viewed Athenian laws as unjust, in no way did he claim that they were illegitimate (Nails: 2009, p. 331-333). Socrates, in promulgating a metaphysical theory of the immortal soul, chose to die passively at the level of his mortal body. However, in doing so, he like Biko opposed the injustice of the polis, or the apartheid state. Thus, the key similarity, in response to the problem of injustice (for Socrates the matter of justice is ultimately a dispute on the nature of the Gods, whereas for Biko injustice refers to human relations that are result of racist oppression), both freely accept death, and overcome the fear of death in order make an ethical point concerning the limits of power. In his trial, Biko explained his eventual plan for a new social reorganisation of power:

We see a completely non-racial society. We don't believe, for instance, in the so-called guarantees for minority rights, because guaranteeing minority rights implies the recognition of portions of the community on a race basis. We believe that in our country there shall be no minority, there shall be no majority, just the people. And those people will have the same status before the law and they will have the same political rights before the law. So in a sense it will be a completely non-racial egalitarian society (Biko: 2008, p.161)

## 7.6.2 The Political Role of Death in Parrehsastic Thought

For Veriava and Naidoo, Biko knew that death was a politicising method:

‘And the method of death can itself be a politicising thing ... So if you can overcome the personal fear of death, which is a highly irrational thing, you know then, you’re on your way ... My attitude is, I’m not going to let them carry out their program faithfully ... So if they had meant to give me so much of a beating, and not more, my idea is to make them go beyond what they wanted to give me and to give back as much as I can give so that it becomes an uncontrollable thing ... You see the one problem this guy had with me: he couldn't really fight because it meant he must hit back ... He was given instructions on how to hit, and now these instructions were no longer applying because it was a fight. So he had to withdraw and get more instructions. So I said to them, ‘Listen, if you guys want to do this your way, you have to handcuff me and bind my feet together so that I can’t respond. If you allow me to respond, I’m certainly going to respond. And I'm afraid that you may have to kill me in the process even if it’s not your intention’ (Biko: 2008, p.174).

The idea of death has always played an important role in religious, philosophical and socio-political traditions. For Martin Heidegger, death is a primordial condition of our existence, with Dasein being conceived as a being-toward death (Heidegger: 2008, p. 68). The incapacity to acknowledge our finitude, leads to a forgetfulness of Being, and an inauthentic entrapment in ‘present modes of Being in the world’, categorized by technical, modes of metaphysical modes of thought. (Barash: 2003, p. 166). Acknowledging finitude, enables one ‘to pierce through the veil of everyday actuality’, and open a space of freedom, which Heidegger calls epistemological indeterminacy (Barash: 2003, p. 167). According to Robert Nichols,, ‘what metaphysics causes us to “forget” is this indeterminacy... derived from the fact that it is our capacity for aspectival modification that makes world-disclosure indeterminate and transformable in the first place’ (Nichols: 2014, p. 74). Heidegger is not proposing that it is possible to completely overcome metaphysics. He is also not concerned with whether metaphysical representations, even in the critical tradition of Descartes and Kant, accurately correspond to reality, because they always approach the question of Being through *beings*. However, his point is that by assenting to metaphysical thinking as normative and immutable, we place ourselves ‘in an unfree relation to ourselves and the world’ (Nichols: 2014, p. 75). Consequently, traditional philosophy becomes inadequate to address the problem of

metaphysics, and the two together (philosophy and metaphysics) form the roots of the current problem of humanism (Nichols: 2014, p. 76).

Foucault does not consider death to be a primordial condition, but he began by historicising it in relation to the formation an archaeology of modern medicine, a biopolitical form of power-knowledge. Life, according to the parameters of medical discourse, merely becomes ‘the set of functions that resist death’ (BC, p.28; Lawlor: 2003, p. 16). In his later career Foucault sought to configure the notion of reflexive experience in relation to the care of the self but more importantly for my argument - pastoral power, and as I explained in Chapter 2, a shift in the meaning of parrhesia and the decline of the care of the self, an event with political consequences. In antiquity, there were two types of subjects that could be subsumed in the category of the care of the self: the free man (whose general practices were tied to the traditional domestic principles of oikos nomos) and the philosopher. Regarding the latter, being concerned with oneself was always tied to political action (EEW1, p.231). Rather than death being antithetical to life, its end or negation, its acceptance as self-sacrifice based on parrhesia becomes the apotheosis of the politico-spiritual- life. For Foucault, with the shift to Christianity and the emergence to pastoral power, the political focus on caring for the self as an aesthetics of existence was replaced, albeit in a nuanced manner, with a de-politicised concern with the eternal salvation; and knowing thyself became subordinated to that aim. For Foucault, following Nietzsche, with regard to history, metaphysics assumes a ‘suprahistorical’ perspective, designated by two names: Platonism and Egyptianism, unified by the figure of Socrates, the source of philosophical optimism (as recorded by Plato). Egyptianism refers to the metaphysical belief in the immortality of the soul and the belief of an existence past our finite constitution. Platonism signifies the philosophical founding of this religious belief in philosophical form, ‘by means of universals, objectivity and the certainty of absolutes’ (Lawlor: 2003, p. 15-16).

‘Q. But doesn’t the human condition, in terms of its finitude, play an important role here ? You have talked about death: if you are not afraid of death, then you cannot abuse your power over others. It seems to me that this problem of finitude is very important; the fear of death, of finitude, of being hurt, is at the heart of the care of the self?’

MF. Of course, And, this is where Christianity, by presenting salvation as occurring beyond life, in a way upsets or at least disturbs the balance of the care of the self. Although, let me say it again, to seek one’s salvation does definitely mean to take care of oneself. But the condition required for attaining salvation is precisely renunciation...Among the Greeks and Romans...it

can be centred totally on the acceptance of death...This type of moment before death, when nothing more can happen is different to the death one finds among Christians, who expect salvation through death' (EEW1, p. 289).

My claim is that Biko can be read as an example, if not an exemplar, like Socrates, that Foucault's notion of the care of the self is in fact a deeply political form of praxis, when combined with parrhesia, and not a form of cultural nihilism or part of a new modern individualism or dandyism (Macintyre: 1999, p.163). Unlike Plato, Socrates and most of the Western tradition, Biko and fellow Black Theologists may not have advocated a metaphysical dualism (Duncan: 2015, p. 291). Although some practitioners may have advocated for transcendence, the concerns of Black Theology were notably earthly, the theology of hope and the theology of liberation (Magaziner: 2010, p. 106). Of course, many Christians have been hesitant to accept this idea, even those working within the liberation tradition. For to seemingly deflate the political into the spiritual has been considered a retreat from more traditional religious concerns. However, through dialogical reflection, thinkers such as David Magaziner have realised that the dualistic attempt to dissociate sacred and secular, derives from an incapacity to conceptualise the immanence and wholeness of human life (Magaziner: 2010, p. 122). Consequently, the tropes of self-affirmation (i.e., the idea that blackness is beautiful in opposition to the idea that God made black people inherently inferior) and political liberation (to produce a truly humanist society, in opposition the fascist mode of separate development that defined Apartheid) defined Black Theology as a liberation theology in a politicised rendering of scripture in the South African context. Central to the values of political, psychic and transformation was the ideal of the Black Messiah, which includes the role of death. The ideal of the Black Messiah was not unique to Black theology, but a trope that circulated amongst the two diasporic sides of Black Atlantic (see Chapter 8). Within the African American archive, the Black Messiah as a figural saviour has embodied several prominent figures from Marcus Garvey to Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. This figure, in line with a political reinterpretation designates a political actor, who would lead the people to a promised land, which in the earthly context of Black Theology, meant from one earthly condition to another (Magaziner: 2010, p. 114-115).

'One may ask, who is this Black Messiah? ...He is the Holy Spirit of Black Consciousness and Black solidarity. He is our power...Power was wielded infrequently in Black Consciousness talk. Its use here marks the transition at stake: from individual consciousness, through theology, to talk of collective power, to what this new mood would be...BCP's National Organizer,

Nkwenkwe Nkomo, described the Black Messiah not a specific organization nor a specific person, nor Christ, but as a feeling, a non-determined entity to which activists were faithful disciples' (Magaziner: 2010, p. 118-119).

At the beginning of this thesis, I argued that necropolitics engenders a subject defined by social death. In this Chapter, I have explained how social death and the inferiority complex defined black South African life after the Sharpeville Massacre. Drawing on Fanon's analysis, Biko argued that after the Sharpeville Massacre, fear was a major determinant of South African political and psychic life, to the extent that the dependency complex was characterised by obedience to white authority, cowardice and fear of death (Biko: 2008, p. 83). Thus, like Foucault, Biko considers fear of death to be antithetical to the formation of ethics. For Veraviah and Naidoo, political courage, specifically in relation to death was central to the form of ethics Biko espoused (Veraviah and Naidoo: 2008, p. 234). Of course, an essential aspect of necropolitics is the imbrication of violence and power, insofar as there is no civil society and relations between coloniser and colonised are mediated by brute force. In this political climate defined by racialised precarity, death becomes an important trope, philosophically speaking, because of Fanon and Biko's implicit Hegelianism. In Hegel's thought, 'human death is essentially voluntary. It is the result of subjects consciously assuming risks' (Mbembe: 2019, p. 68). Human subjectivity is differentiated from animality, insofar as the subject consciously confronts the risks and negativity that characterize death. The best illustration of this theme is the master/slave complex. Early in the confrontation, enslavement occurs because the slave, having lost to the master, chooses servitude over death, that is, freedom. Consequently, for the slave to attain any form of self-consciousness even to the master, it must first conquer its fear of, and confront death by risking its life as an act of freedom (Lauro: 2018, p. 43). Black Theologians built on these themes, encapsulating death within a theological lexicon with political consequences. According to Magaziner, 'Black Consciousness's focus on the correct way to be, the distance between banning's social death and commitment's final test-the struggle unto death was not great' (Magaziner: 2010, p. 173). Within this discourse, death is equivalent to a sacrifice, which in turn is defined as a victory-which I argue resonates with Foucault's characterisation of parrhesia and thymos as courageous boldness in early Christianity and Platonic thought respectively (GSO II, p. 334). For death to be a politicising method, Biko and fellow Black theologians reinterpreted the dead of Sharpeville as martyrs in line with the ideal of the Black messiah (of which they were disciples), signifying 'irrepressible dignity/undying

courage/ a fervent belief / in themselves' (Magaziner: 2010, p. 176). The aim of this reinterpretation was to politicise the youth, by advocating the parrehsastic spirit of sacrificial militancy. This reversed the attitude of fear that pervaded the 1960's in South Africa, replacing memories of horror with that of victorious sacrifice, inculcating an attitude of 'courageous boldness' that was forward-looking, concerned with building a truly human future, that is, a new world (Magaziner: 2010, p. 177). Political martyrdom was not only celebrated by members of BCP, even the funerals of freedom fighters in Apartheid South Africa were seen as occasions for conscientisation and the further politicisation of the youth.

Historically speaking, in retrospect the ideal of Black Messiah did not only apply to Sharpeville, but to Biko as well. Prior to Biko's death, the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1976 the Soweto uprising was an event that certainly shifted political consciousness, but it is unimaginable without a consideration of way Black Consciousness Philosophy and Black Theology promulgated a form of political spirituality that centred on a courageous acceptance of death. Biko's death therefore had a similar effect on the youth of South Africa, politicising a new generation of revolutionaries who would be willing to sacrifice themselves as an act of freedom to engender a different world, new discourses and novel modes of governance (Magaziner: 2010, p. 178-179). Biko was detained under section 6 of Terrorism Act, from August to December 1976, and then again from August to December 1977 (Turner: 2008, p. 70). The date of Biko's death is 12 September 1977, and as the excerpt at the beginning of this section prophesied, he died because of police brutality. Even though Biko was considered the spiritual leader of the Black Consciousness Convention, as he would have expected, 'his followers projected only a cold, precise, unrelenting and rational approach to his death' (Magaziner: 2010, p. 182). Instead of being cowered by his murder and becoming apathetic, Biko's death spurred many others into action, and his writings became a source of politization and conscientisation. Biko's mask, Frank Talk, found a way to talk Truth to Power (or talking frankly as parrhesia) that produced a momentous shift in moral perspectives, engendering as Maluleke claims, a new world in which the notions of freedom and liberation became possible.

'it was through his death that many of us discovered about Steve Biko. In this way, to borrow Biko's own words, his method of death was itself a politicising thing. Another consequence of the news of Biko's death was that copies of his articles and essays became most sought after and would be passed from one student to another. We were both amazed and inspired by someone who, in that atmosphere of fear and intimidation, had decided to 'talk frankly' about

the South African situation. It was as if a whole new world was opening up to us. For the first time, liberation and freedom felt like attainable goals to our young and angry minds' (Maluleke: 2008, p. 117).

## 7.7 Conclusion

After a lengthy discussion, I can now address the question of whether Biko's philosophy of Black Consciousness, reformulated as a Foucauldian affective technology of the self, can engage with and eventually overcome the racially divided – that is, alienated and neurotic – subjects produced by colonial rationality. First, I am not suggesting that death or the active act of dying, in the case of Socrates and possibly of Biko, is a technique whereby alienation can be overcome in a manner that resembles the theological unification with an estranged immortal soul at the moment of death. Neither am I claiming that martyrdom, in the sense of a mortal sacrifice, could be considered some form of cathartic release, which resembles Bulhan's influential interpretation of the psychologically liberating effects of Fanon's thesis on revolutionary violence. As I have suggested above, Biko did not share Fanon's emphasis on violent catharsis, and therefore the success of dialectical change rested on addressing inferiority and superiority complexes. In Fanon's reading, it is the animalisation of the colonised that forecloses the potential of a dialectical synthesis and paves the way for revolutionary violence. In *The Wretched of the Earth*, he posits that, in order for the colonised to overcome alienation and for 'a thing to become a man', no reconciliation between spheres is possible (Fanon: 2001, p.28). In turning towards violence, Fanon also prevented the possibility of an ethical, common world in the African context (Mbembe: 2006, p.31), even if taken up as an afterthought during a consideration of problems endemic to postcolonial nationalism, that is, a shift from a national to social consciousness (Said: 1993, p.230).

But for Biko, addressing the inferiority complex and attaining the envisaged self as an ethical telos always remained central to his political psychology. Like Foucault, his method presupposes that psychic and social 'division is present, is variously constitutive of individuals, and is on many accounts what impels moderns towards political and ethical responsibility. What remains then, is the challenge of living with, overcoming, or transforming these divisions' (Luxon: 2008, p.378). Foucault and Biko, I argue, envisioned parrhesia as part of a technology and care of the self that would enable overcoming these dilemmas that afflicted the subject, both 'psychologically' and politically. Consequently, Biko provides Black South

Africans with ‘an affective racial technology of the self’ that provides subjects with the capacity to become self-reliant by healing themselves through consciously and individually deploying a political education that embodies the subversive values of black consciousness. As we have seen in the course of this chapter, this process of healing is constituted by the two types of ethical work or elaboration. One is conscientisation, a dialogical and collective strategy whereby the oppressed become cognizant of the conditions that render them oppressed psychologically and politically. The other is the inward-looking process, an individual technology which effectuates a politicised, ethical inversion of the racial stereotypes that are the fundamental strategy of colonial discourse, turning images of disgust, immorality and derision into images that designate group pride, affirmation, self-reliance, morality and beauty.

## Chapter 8. Africa, Blackness and the Problem of Nativist Essentialism

### 8.1 Historical Ontology and Ethics: Reinterpreting Biko

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated that my reading of Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy as a technology of the self was an application of Nietzsche's and later Foucault's principles of monumental and antiquarian history in a method that I defined at the beginning of this thesis as historical ontology, or a critical ontology of ourselves. In this section I will be arguing that my reading of Biko's work still requires a certain degree of decolonial historicization, as thus far I have been discussing his work as a form of ethical heritage without problematizing its relationship to the present and its own historical constitution in the contemporary South African postcolony. Biko's work still needs to be subjected to an epistemological critique, or critical history – the genealogical mode of Foucault's historical ontology that reveals contingencies, forms of domination and coercion at the heart of our certainties, namely, regimes of truth. The purpose of illustrating this epistemological distinction is to argue, from a postcolonial perspective, that Biko's model of African unity might still be bound to the colonial episteme, and therefore might be antithetical to contemporary democratic values.

The purpose of conducting an epistemological critique on Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy is to expose and refine the ethical heritage that I discussed in Chapter 7, as well as those norms and practices that I argued were considered apolitical in Chapters 5 and 6. I argue that failing to perform an epistemological critique of Biko's work would risk reifying traditional aspects of the past, and not allowing historiographical work to service the advancement of present and future life towards the formulation of a postcolonial ethos. One of the problems that preoccupied my analysis from Chapters 4 to 6 was the historical formation of the postcolonial victimisation complex, an intensified neurosis that takes shape as a pharmacological infection from the national-racial discourse and the myth of transformative, cathartic violence. This complex tends to haunt liberation struggles attempting to overcome colonial neurosis or an inferiority complex, regrettably replacing the colony with the constitution of an exclusive racial-national superego: a necropolitical postcolony.

As Mbembe exhibited in *Afropolitanism* (1999), in many cases this neurosis is acted out violently against an innocent foreign bystander from Africa, one who has no relation to the original wound but in many cases belongs to communities that supported the liberation struggle

materially and symbolically. The difference is that I am examining the configuration of such a state in the South African postcolony under the political influence of indirect private governance and the new ‘necropolitical’ nativism, and ultimately the becoming black of the world (Mbembe: 2017, p.33). Instead of equating Fanonian violence with liberation and cathartic transformation from a being in itself to a being for itself, my claim in Chapter 6 was that violence would intensify the wound, now imbued with a neurosis of victimisation in Afro-Marxist and Pan African discourses that have been institutionalised in statist and social practices.

In Chapter 7, I argued that the political ethos and practices that constitute Biko’s Black Consciousness philosophy, as a form of monumental and antiquarian heritage, may enable the subject to engender a transformative relationship to his/her past, overcoming the colonial condition through the production of a ‘freely envisaged’ self that becomes a condition for the creation of new governmental practices. However, part of the problem that can emerge at this historical conjuncture in contemporary post-Apartheid South Africa is, as I noted in relation to the above, the naturalisation, or rather the reification, of certain practices, categories and modes of subjectivity that continue to conform to colonial rationalities. Second, this produces complementary colonial epistemic and symbolic structures as a result of some of the most reactive elements of the ANC liberation movement (amongst others) and other elements of colonial culture that constitute the national superego. In this light, my task in this last chapter is to ascertain what elements of Biko’s practices and concepts remain bound to a colonial episteme, and which can form a postcolonial ethos that exceeds and transgresses the field of possibilities and dividing practices that demarcate power/knowledge relations in the South African postcolony.

## **8.2 Moving towards an Epistemological and Genealogical Critique**

In Nietzschean terms, a critical history would be essential to deconstruct the ‘metaphysical imagination’ of both the coloniser and colonised. It would illustrate the contingency, epistemic limits and manipulability of the series of practices, and consequently stereotypes as points of identification, which govern and produce contemporary modes of racial subjectivity. As a form of critique and history of the present, I argue that historiography as genealogy is a critique of all contemporary and past values as the embodiment of contingent processes that are not derived from any form of transcendental subjectivity (EPK, p.52; Deleuze: 1983, p.1).

According to Colin Koopman, genealogy may be considered an intellectual tradition, akin to phenomenology or existentialism. However, genealogy as a methodology is not defined by a set of shared commitments (Koopman: 2013b, p. 58). Historically, the best exemplar of the genealogical tradition-and the thinker who influenced Foucault's work more than any other is Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche's genealogy in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, is subversive of contemporary moral values, different from the vindictory genealogy of *Truth and Truthfulness* written by Bernard Williams. Both genealogies attempt to make normative claims concerning a particular set of values, which differs from the 'patient grey genealogy' that Foucault writes. Lastly, Foucault's genealogy is different from the simpler subversive and vindictory genealogies-his genealogies are articulated as problematizations (Koopman: 2013b, p. 59). In fact, his historical approach is not motivated by providing a judgment in Kantian terms. For Koopman, as problematization, genealogy analyses how 'certain practices, beliefs, and conceptions have become problematic in the history of thought due to the contingent intersection of a complex set of enabling and disabling conditions' (Koopman: 2013b, p. 95). As a non-judgemental historiography, genealogy does not articulate normative or prescriptive solutions to the problems that it brings into focus (Sheehey: 2020, p.68). If genealogy does have a purpose, in Nietzsche and Foucault it is not only to convey contingency and exhibit the relation between power and the will to or political regimes of truth respectively, but more importantly it is a reparative type of critique for all those who have been rendered pathological subjects by historical processes. Genealogy thus does not conclude, or finalise critique, but initiates it. The aim of Foucauldian genealogy is to articulate problems that contemporary subjects confront that motivate them to transform themselves, as a process of self-overcoming (Koopman: 2013b, p. 95; Scott: 1989, p. 128).

'It is, however, a reparatively concerned exercise in the sense that it aims to mark out possibilities for transforming those practices that constitute problems for our present selves. The difference between a normatively ambitious project and a reparatively concerned one can be grasped as that between a mode of critique that aims to judge and one that aims to 'take care' (Sheehey: 2020, p.68).

By articulating a narrative of subjugated knowledges that pivot on the care of the self, my aim is that one might resurrect a counter-memory and ethos of non-prescriptive self-care that could be self-transformative for those postcolonial casualties who lead nihilistic, meaningless lives in a regime of truth defined by the moralising forces of colonial rationality. In Nietzsche's genealogy, he investigated 'the conditions of this morality of truth'. Similarly, Foucault's

genealogy is closest to Nietzsche, when he explicitly focuses on the value or question of truth (Koopman: 2013b, p. 74). In the South African context, this would also enable an interrogation of the traditional narrative of national liberation and the formation of the South African postcolony bequeathed to us by the ANC, and the political regime of truth that emphasizes the process of reconciliation by virtue of the founding metaphor of the rainbow nation. The relationships amongst the categories race, class and gender are key to the process of understanding the multiple configurations of power and domination in Apartheid and post-Apartheid society, as well the potential for individual and social transformation. The latter must include a redistribution of resources as well as political redemption, for structural inequality in SA is entrenched such that everyday life is a tragedy for some. As I discussed in Chapter 6, transposing the Hegelian/Marxist master slave narrative directly into the colonial and postcolonial context has been proved problematic due to the multiple forms (gender, class, religion, nationality) of colonial relations, modes of being and domination. What became clear to feminist scholars in the eighties and nineties was that the essentialisation of black identity was problematic. Traditionally, a critique of the essentialisation of black identity is justified through the concept of intersectionality. This concept, originally drawn from the work of Crenshaw (1989) and Hill-Collins (2000), has been a foundational notion in feminist, postcolonial and student movements because it signifies ‘the overlapping/intersection of socially constructed hierarchies to impact one’s lived experience’ (Njamnjoh: 2017, p.265). However, the problem with the intersectionality thesis is that it calculates certain types of social oppression and experiences of domination and victimhood as more authentic than others. Thus, instead of envisioning oppression as a matrix of relations, proponents of intersectionality reify the experience of racialisation, ‘fixing them in a racial historical schema that denies for others the range of possibilities that they are and could be’ (Njamnjoh:2017, p.264).

Bhabha’s work falls into this category, insofar as forms of hybrid subjectification are produced within the interstices of these, albeit constructed, categories. As Moore-Gilbert (2000) points out the hybrid ‘newness’ effectuated by Bhabha’s narrative agency may not be able to alter power relations and the field of possibilities they support in the periphery, that is in the colony and postcolony. These measures can only be reformist within a transitional space, ‘an in-between’, in which hitherto subaltern subjects return as hybrid subjects to disturb relations of authority in the metropole (Moore-Gilbert: 2000, p. 460-461; Bhabha: 2004, p. 161), and it is questionable whether these reforms can alter the system of racial discrimination that undergirds the first narrative of black reason. According to Jean and John Comaroff, the political

‘shadiness and brutality of the postcolony’, is no mistake, it is intrinsic to the relations of conduct and counter-conduct that constitute the contemporary global order (Comaroff and Comaroff: 2006, p. 17). Additionally, the synchronic notion of intersectionality ignores the local relations and historical practices between the subjects that have been racialised (for example, the difference between the definition of ‘coloured’ in South Africa and the United States), and the historical forms of power and implication that have normalised such asymmetrical relations as a matter of common sense, both in the colony and now, as we will see, in the postcolony. Despite the move to a post-Apartheid society, the Apartheid racial categories used to classify human populations have continued to play a central role in the racialisation of the everyday lives of most South African citizens. They have become reified social constructs who have become psychically invested in public and private social practices producing the idea of race as a material, psychic and socio-political reality. Keeping in mind that race is the driver of the necropolitical process, it is entirely questionable whether continuing to adhere to it as a standardised principle of inequality for the purpose of economic redistribution is a tangible mode of social transformation.

‘By compelling us to declare whether we belong to this or that ‘race’, the state forces us into a racial mould, whether we like it or not ... We take it for granted that we belong to this or that race and eventually we assume the relevant racial identity. This is what happened during the colonial Apartheid era; and this is preposterously what continues to happen in post-Apartheid South Africa, allegedly in order to benefit the oppressed and exploited majority’ (Alexander: 2012, p.160).

I argue that intersectionality, as a mode of structuralism, treats these social categories and the practises they embody as given, synchronically. It does not trace the coalitions, diachronic historical relations and subjectivities that have fostered such a world of categorical constructs into being through a set of background practices imbued with productive power that engenders objects and forms of life below the radar of phenomenological or transcendental consciousness. In Foucault’s work, archaeology and genealogy are not opposed to one another, but are deployed as complementary methodologies (Davidson: 1986, p). This becomes particularly important when considering the relationship between racial subjectification and subjectivation in the contemporary South African postcolony. In this context, Mbembe’s work in *Critique of Black Reason* is particularly instructive and relevant to my analysis of the South African condition in this thesis. In an interview with David Theo Goldberg, he argues that his book, like this chapter is an attempt to analyse both ‘African American history and archive from a

continental perspective' (Goldberg: 2018, p. 206). The text provides the occasion to read, and reinterpret this archive from another place, which in this Chapter relates to the constitution of contemporary South African political discourses on the constitution of racial subjectivity. For Mbembe, the essential difference between European and African conceptions of subjectivity is that 'at the heart of this archive-and that of modernity at large-is slavery or, to put it differently, the question of unfreedom, of captivity, of the longing for redemption' (Goldberg: 2018, p. 206). In this rest of Chapter, I will explore how these tropes are enmeshed with the discursive construction of the African subject, a construction that still in invested in within the context of the contemporary South African symbolic. Genealogy, within the framework of a historical ontology, can enable a deconstructive approach to such forms of epistemological objectification and subjectification. It does so by showing that discursive regimes of truth are not merely given, nor are they the achievement of a new conceptual synthesis for transcendental sovereignty.

'One has to dispense with the constituent subject, to get rid of the subject itself, that's to say, to arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework. And this is what I would call genealogy, that is, a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history' (EPK, p.117).

Rather, regimes of truth are effectuated by complex networks of power relations, technologies of domination and technologies of the self. Historically, this is a diachronic analysis that does not emphasize the gap between the discursive and non-discursive, but rather shows the blending of power and truth, action and language, and a historiography that can elucidate the emergence of different meaningful categories and subjects across historical periods. This method of historicizing ontology permits a shifting of relations between victims and perpetrators – those who were previously disadvantaged and the beneficiaries of systems of oppression – under the category of implication, which is a primarily politico-psychic process (Schrift: 1995, pp.37-38). This requires a history that is not governed by an essentialist African transcendental subject, that over time comes to rediscover their essential self after a process of historical estrangement. Following this Foucauldian intervention, my task in the next two sections is to engage genealogy to exhibit the limits and contradictions of Black Consciousness philosophy as a transformative technology of the self. In this context, Brett Bowman and Derek Hook argue is a critical mode of historiography that account for the various contingent

categories that constitute local modes of subjectivity or ‘personhood’, constituting a micro-history of the apartheid archive that produces a particular present (Bowman and Hook: 2013, p. 239).

### **8.3 The Invention and Reinvention of Africa – A Genealogy of Africanity and Blackness: The Colonial Episteme**

It is a simple truism that all cultures are ethnocentric (Mignolo: 2011, p.29), but it was only at the time of the modern Enlightenment that Europe declared its unquestionable superiority based on race and the teleological development of human reason – the only means of attaining civilised maturity. Biological notions of race were absent in premodern times. The fifteenth century saw the emergence of unprecedented naval expeditions – specifically, finding the Cape of Good Hope in 1642, which was reciprocated by the development of the concept of race in European consciousness (Goldberg: 1993, pp.21-24). It was only in modernity that race became part of newly emerging biological discourses – as a source of degeneracy that either required regenerative forms of biopolitical technologies, or necropolitical technologies of decimation and destruction to ensure the revitalisation and supremacy of the coloniser as the epitome, or apotheosis, of humanity. VY Mudimbe’s celebrated claim is that key figures in the African intelligentsia and modern nationalistic movement copied and internalised the way they had been racially represented by missionaries and anthropologists. If Africa was an invention of a European unconscious disseminated in academically questionable texts, it now formed part of an extensive colonial library which, in the twentieth century, became the discursive site of identification, or interpellation, for African nationalist movements and scholars. According to Mudimbe, the nationalist conceptualisation of an authentic African subject at the time of political decolonization continued to derive from a Western episteme (Mudimbe: 1998, p.54). Indeed, Biko’s Black Theology and Black Consciousness philosophy derive from a genealogy that begins with the slave trade that gave birth to the Black Atlantic, a two sided process I articulated in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. As Mbembe(2018) and, earlier, Hall (1994) have acknowledged, the combination of slavery, the civilising mission and being separated from their cultural roots was used to create ‘docile slave bodies’, with differing effects on either side of the Black Atlantic. Africans who survived the slave ships to the Americas were forcibly separated from their cultural roots, including speaking their mother-tongue, adherence to old religious and customary rights and, mostly, their old communities. In the African case, when

tribal communities were allowed to exist, it was only in a culturally mummified form; they were not viewed as a living, mutable and historical collectivity. As Biko and Fanon have similarly intimated in the cases of Martinique and South Africa, colonised subjects were taught to despise their heritage and traditions and were punished for speaking local languages in local communities.

On the side of the colonisers, black villains featured prominently in children's comics, and children were taught, if not coerced, to identify with an imago of whiteness; heroes were portrayed as European saviours from African cruelty, imbued with theological images of sin, debauchery, and barbarism, if not outright evil (such as the original rendering of Tarzan). Interestingly, early African American slaves appropriated the Christian religion imposed on them by slave traders as a means of civilising through exploitation and oppression, conceptualising it as force of political insurrection, justice and moral redemption. It also informed the moral disposition of the progenitors of Africana philosophy to the parrehsastic figures of Biko, and Martin Luther King amongst others. Africana philosophy signifies the writings and speeches of 'African and peoples of African descent collectively ... tradition-defining reconstructive efforts which are to be regarded as philosophy' (More: 2014, p.178).

'Shut out from literacy from the pain of death, slaves taken from Africa by force used the same biblical narratives we have already encountered to comprehend their situation and slowly and at great emotional cost, to build what we might call a new sense of identities. They too, imagined themselves to be a divinely chosen people. This meant that the suffering visited upon their proto nations in bondage was purposive and their pain was oriented, not merely towards heavenly freedom, but toward the moral redemption of anyone prepared to join them in the just cause of political liberty and individual autonomy' (Gilroy: 2000, p.122).

Two historical developments occurred via the process of the slave trade which have not been commented upon with any real scrutiny in Africana philosophy. First, the central feature of pastoral power, and consequently Christian technologies of domination, and later the technologies of the self were imposed on subjugated African people. The latter implies that each individual has a true self from which s/he is divided by their sinful or secular moral transgressions, inculcating a sense of self-mortification. Recalling Foucault, the purpose of confessional technologies was to arrive at a vision of a true self, guided hermeneutically by an interlocutor, so the analysand is no longer encumbered by the delusions brought up by neurosis or the broken and meaningless relations with self and other that characterise alienation. The division of the self in the form of racial-national self-mortification was appropriated in WEB

Du Bois's early work to configure racial oppositional consciousness from the very beginning into the very constitution of the colonial episteme. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois, the 'Negro', is always split by two warring forces, one American and the other Negro. The suffering engendered by this condition renders the African American as a being in itself – s/he has no true self-consciousness, and thus no possibility of meaningful appropriation. S/he can only be viewed from an external viewpoint (that of the white subject) as a stereotypical object viewed with derisory and hostile contempt – a social pathology characteristic of Western twentieth century thought. Obviously, then, in line with the code of traditional modern ethics (OD, p.370), 'the history of the American Negro is the history of this strife – this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self' (Du Bois: 1996, pp.4-9). I want to emphasize Du Bois's gendered language at this point in relation to the notion of a true self, a trope that will reappear in the conclusion of this chapter.

The second historical development followed the first. In relation to the idea of a postulated 'true Negro' (male) self, Du Bois accepted the existence of races. Although he was critical of the racial technologies of domination that enforced exploitation and discrimination, noting that the most serious problem in the twentieth century was the colour line, he nevertheless equated each race with an immutable natural essence, unique 'traits and talents' that required cultivation if the race was going to contribute to civilisation. This racial technology of the self is folded into racial technologies of domination, and its corresponding colonial regime of truth. Despite Du Bois's emphasis that the Teutonic race shares common traditions, customs and religious dispositions, he admits that, like other races, 'there are forces that bind them together... as the nations are by their race identity and common blood' (Du Bois: 2009, p.106).<sup>xviii</sup> For Du Bois, then, each race has its ideal, its ontological and transcendent intellectual essence, which it strives for, contributing to the intellectual and cultural betterment of humanity as a whole. He frames this problem, as is common in modernity, in biological discourse, or biopolitical terms, claiming that, as of yet, scientists are incapable of adjudicating to what extent Egyptians are Negro. As the Negroes are one of eight races, one which in his estimation has 'not yet given to civilisation the full spiritual message of what they are capable' (Du Bois: 2009, p.107). What he proposes is nothing less than the development of the capacities of the Negro race.

'And such a people must be united; not united merely to protest and pass revolutions, but united to stop the ravages of consumption among the Negro people, united to keep black boys from loafing, gambling and crime; united to guard the purity of black women and to reduce that vast army of black prostitutes that today is marching to hell ... This is the reason for being which

the Negro academy has. It aims at once to be the epitome and expression of the intellect of the black blooded people of America, the exponents of the race ideals of one of the world's great races' (Du Bois: 2009, p.109).

I argue that this sanctimonious and misogynistic structure set up by Du Bois in this passage would influence the problematic of technologies of domination and, more importantly, technologies of the self, capable of resisting the constitution of alienated and neurotic African (male) subjects in Africa, which effectively leads to necropolitical violence. I elaborate on this below in the context of the becoming black of the world in the final sections of this chapter. Several years later, also writing in the context of American oppression, the celebrated revolutionary and cultural icon, Marcus Garvey like Du Bois, presented a view of conflict-driven social relations in which the role of race was central to the organisation of society. For Garvey, modern society was driven by 'industrial, economic and political competition among peoples of different races' (Garvey: 2004, p.60). He argued that racial conflict eventuated into group prejudice (the formation of stereotypes), but more worryingly, relations of enmity and hostility ended up, in necropolitical terms, in massacre and genocide of the weaker (black) race by the superior (white) race. In the American context, this led to a condition of psycho-social enslavement, a way of conceptually organising the practices that Du Bois had hitherto found unsavoury amongst the African American community. For Garvey, the promise of any sort of political reconciliation was untenable in White America as whites had affirmed a superiority complex and would not tolerate the interests of the weaker or inferior race. The only way to overcome this condition of psychic slavery was not a mere 'Negro-improvement association' in the United States that would eventually lead to reciprocal recognition, which was one of Garvey's aims. Instead, he postulated that 'all Negroes the world over gets together and build up for the race a nation of our own on the continent of Africa' (Garvey: 2004, p.62). Unlike the goals of the early Du Bois, Garvey's focus was on a return to Africa to build a homogenous 'Negro state' (Garvey: 2004, p.63). In this sense, Garvey exhibited Bhabha's point that the racial stereotype is not a mere misrepresentation of an essence, but a point of subjectification – the strategic function of the colonial apparatus, a function that will continue well into the production of postcolonial states. Notably, Du Bois and Garvey are considered the founders of the Pan African movement.

If the work of Garvey is associated with the back-to-Africa movement, then it was Alexander Crummel who inaugurated the back-to-Africa movement as a disciple of Blyden. Crummel had emigrated from America to settle in Liberia and Sierra Leone, early in the second half of the

nineteenth century, the time of the infamous scramble for Africa (Ndletyana: 2014, p.150). Mudimbe's analysis of this movement shows that the move back to Africa was not merely considered as a return, but as a form of cultural regeneration for a degenerate and fallen creature. For Crummel, scholarly knowledge and conversion were the characteristics of civilisation – which required the cultural and religious conversion of the peoples of West Africa (Mudimbe: 1988, p.144). Lastly, for Crummel, this was ultimately a matter of class – only Africans from the elite spheres of society with a history of ruling would be appropriate for the act of governance (Ndletyana: 2004, p.149). Consequently, what would become a Pan African vision of a nation of Africans for Africans was essential to developing a unique sense of abilities, capacities, power and genius (Garvey: 2004, p.63) that still fitted neatly in the categories and modes of being of Western and colonial discourse. The development of these forms of thought, an Africana discourse, is reflected in the Negritude movement. According to Reiland Rabaka:

‘Negritude holds a prominent place in Africana intellectual history because it was able to synthesize a wide-range of black and white radical perspectives, as well as leave a controversial legacy for future anti-racist, anti-colonialist, and anti-capitalist radicalism ... As a theory and movement of continental and diasporan African cultural continuum, Negritude was expressed most eloquently by Aimé Césaire and Léopold Sedar Senghor .... An extremely important ... third stream of Negritude was also controversially conceptualized by the acclaimed French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, who undoubtedly introduced and helped to popularize the theory amongst white Marxists, leftists, and academics’ (Rabaka: 2009, p.112).

Thus, the first two streams of Negritude conformed to the emergence of a culture of ‘true’ collective selves (Hall: 1994, p.394). As I stressed in Chapter 5, this is the second narrative of black reason that attended to the reconstruction of the African self – the transfer sovereignty, making national self-determination possible to secure decolonisation. Their authors were majorly *evolues*, privileged French colonised subjects, provided with a classical colonial education for the purpose of administrative functions and public services in the colony. The Negritude movement engaged with Africana philosophy from the United States, surrealists, Marxist existentialists and psychoanalysts in France, and African scholars, leading to a rich theoretical vocabulary. Before engaging with Sartre, the pivot of Fanon and consequently Biko's dialectical relationship between a white thesis and black antithesis, it is worth interrogating how Negritude contributed to a genealogy of the African technologies of the self. But before attending to such a central problem, it is worth re-emphasizing that Negritude,

following the model of unified imaginary mode of identification, claimed in a somewhat nativist fashion that racial discrimination and capitalist institutions corrupted a healthy form of precolonial social organisation, which must be recovered. Negritude thinkers such as Aimé Césaire were not only Marxists standing in a contentious relationship to the traditional orthodox economism upheld by the Stalinist French Communist Party but became deeply influenced by WEB Du Bois's notion of double consciousness and the search for a positive image of self-affirmation that enabled a psychological reconstruction of social and individual agency. This was a style of thought that would influence existential motifs of anticolonial movements throughout Africa, notably the Black Consciousness movement in South Africa. But the paternalist idea that colonisation consisted of the contact between inferior and superior civilisations, Aimé Césaire would argue some years later, was nothing but the most toxic form of capitalist mystification. Césaire argued that the ideological proclamation that Negro civilisations were without accomplishment or technical invention, and pre-modern, was in fact a distortion of a real problem of African proletarianization that, through an act of violent domination, reduced the African to the status of an alienated thing-like worker who could only hope, at best, to reproduce his daily existence without being killed. He argued that the colonised were turned into objects, alienated from the means of production and meaningful traditions by a process of forced removal, robbed of the conditions that would allow them access to any historical agency. However, in his writings on Negritude, we again find this radical impulse of individual and social reconstruction operating in relation to a rather patriarchal vision of African culture:

‘For my part, I make a systematic defence of all the Non-European civilisations ... They were communal societies, never societies of the many for the few. They were societies that were not only ante-capitalist, as has been said but also anti-capitalist ... They were democratic societies always. They were cooperative societies, fraternal societies. I make a systematic defence of the societies destroyed by imperialism’ (Césaire: 1994, p.64).

In Senghor's work, on the other hand, the black subject is defined in a typical Western binomial theoretical relationship to white subjectivity. The historical discovery of great African civilisation, forms of aesthetics and social values meant, according to Senghor, at least that the African would no longer be dealt with under the guise of primitiveness, but instead an Otherness, or alterity (non-oppositional difference) that signified emotive honourable values in contrast to the spiritless mechanisation of rational European culture. But for Fanon, all this amounted to at the theoretical level was acceptance of European superiority, for what

advantages could an inability to deploy reason and technical thought justifiably amount to? Furthermore, Negritude presented an essentialist, ahistorical view of African identity despite centuries of diasporic transmutation, reducing it to nothing more than a phenotypical reduction of behavioural capacities, that is, racialism. Additionally, continuous recourse to the African past implied that Africans were incapable of aspiring to the heights of contemporary European rational development. In Fanon's terms, race or racism is primarily an insult impervious to rehabilitation; it is based on a doctrine of inequality or planetary destruction amongst human beings. Furthermore, in *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon makes a key move that separates his work from the more simplistic versions of racialism in the work of Du Bois, Garvey, Senghor and Césaire. By adhering to the vision of racial imaginary geography, Negritude (and its ideological brother Pan Africanism) fit firmly into colonial discourse and its episteme. Furthermore, it ends up reconciling the colonial categories with a dependency complex, which does not sufficiently transform the inferiority complex, socio-economic inequality or the political rationalities that produced them.

'Neither the claim to Otherness nor the paternity of rationality refutes the colonial discourse: What Africans can brandish as their unique and glorious achievement invariably turns into an inferior performance of what Europe realized better a long time ago. Far from achieving rehabilitation, the whole idea of reviving the past becomes a confirmation of inferiority and an invitation to a defeatist attitude' (Kembede: 2001, pp. 545-546).

The most problematic aspect of Negritude was Sartre's reduction of it to an antithesis in a Western (and thus universal) dialectical history. In *Black Orpheus* (1943), Sartre analysed colonialism as a unified totality of historical relationships with the tools afforded to him by existentialism, Hegelian and Marxist dialectics. Extending the dialectical categories of master/slave and bourgeoisie/proletariat to conceptualise the relationship between colonizer and colonized, he argued that white racism constituted the central thesis of the capitalist stage of development. Sartre consequently reduced the Negritude movement, the problem of race and the anti-colonial struggle to a necessary but concrete and particular antithetical moment of the dialectic, to be sublated (*aufhebung*) into the objective, universal phase of a proletarian society: the only set of historical conditions that would enable the realisation of the potential of human nature 'in a raceless society', thereby overcoming a phenomenological understanding of alienation (Sartre:1943, p.51). This transition would be the only way, as Sartre, influenced by Hegel, Marx and Lenin in *Being and Nothingness*, argued, in the terms of phenomenological materialism, that the 'Negro' would move from a class position of a being in itself (like an

object or rock bound to natural forces), that is an object that could be negated by an autonomous self-consciousness, to a being for itself, one endowed with the capacity for human reason, self-governance and determination (Sartre: 1991, pp.31-34).

While there are differing accounts in Fanon scholarship, Bhabha, Hall and Mbembe, instead of agreeing with Sartre, argue that Fanon generally deferred the category of sublation to a concrete analysis of the problems within historical and cultural situations (Syoritski: 2008, p.125). For Fanon, it was quite clear that the Algerian situation would not amount to any type of higher synthesis, but the only tangible solution, despite its negative effects (which Fanon was well aware of and studied in the final chapter of the text, the most unremarked), was burying the colonist in the depths of the earth. This was not straightforwardly advocating violence, but a clinical pessimism that diagnosed the dehumanizing and pathological effects of pharmacological, psycho-affective violence while being tortured by the necessity of the moment for the overall liberation from colonialism.

By reducing Negritude to a merely dialectical moment, Fanon broke contact with Sartre misunderstanding the pathological and alienating effects of racialisation as simply being part of the teleology of European consciousness. In fact, Negritude was required at a psychological level – although Fanon did eventually concur that it was and would further amount to a political problem (Bernasconi: 2012 p.342). The question of placing the African revolution and cultures as minor elements within the contours of European history furthermore undermined any attempt for the African to reach self-determination without the aid of patronising paternalism, fortified at the level of dialectical metaphysics. It is this trope that signals Fanon's break from Europe and the search for a new 'man' (Fanon: 2001, p.255).

Moreover, if we wish to reply to the expectations of the people of Europe, it is no good sending them back a reflection, even an ideal reflection, of their society and their thought which from time to time they feel immeasurably sickened. For Europe, for ourselves and for humanity we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try set afoot a new man (Fanon: 2001, p.255).

One of the problems I alluded to in Chapter 3 was Fanon's misunderstanding of the Algerian society in which he found himself. A specific concern is Fanon's miscomprehension of gender relations in an Algerian Islamic society in *A Dying Colonialism*, an aspect of Fanon's work I touched upon in Chapter 3 (Ghamari-Tabrizi 2016, p.54). One of Fanon's more controversial positions was the theoretical context in which he advocated the veil and hijab as a means of

concealing weapons for conducting war. By specifying the Western woman as the normative referent of a universal theory of human nature, the French used this norm as a criterion ‘by which to encode and represent cultural others’ (Mohanty: 1994, p.201). The idea of a return to the veil frustrated European expectations of womanhood, rendering them invisible under the scopical gaze. The veil had been prohibited in the colony, but in the liberation struggle it retained centre stage as a technology of camouflage – not merely for blending in and delivering packages, but for exacting brutal violence upon settlers, regardless of whether they were soldiers or citizens. Problematically, Fanon rejects the influence of patriarchy in the Algerian society, both in a state of war and whatever a state of normality entails. The problem is not an oppressive religion and postcolonial national culture, but the colonial/Western construction of womanhood and the rights it would potentially afford them. Fanon’s portrayal of the Algerian female conforms to Spivak’s reading of the subaltern, insofar as the objectification of the female subaltern is not only part of Western imperialist discourse legitimating colonialism but exists at the intersection of nativist and religious discourses of womanhood, or rather the patriarchal idea of the docile, good wife or the loyal sister in arms (Spivak: 1994, p.67).

Here again, a new technique had to be learned: how to carry a rather heavy object dangerous to handle under the veil and still give the impression of having one's hands free, that there was nothing under this haik, except a poor woman or an insignificant young girl. It was not enough to be veiled. One had to look so much like a ‘fatma’ that the soldier would be convinced that this woman was quite harmless (Fanon: 1994, p.61).

As is becoming evident, twentieth century African thought on black existence has been notably patriarchal in its constitution as a discourse, and more importantly its conceptualisation of the black subject. Only in Mbembe’s work in *Necropolitics* (2019) does ‘de-vitalisation’ – a reference to the emasculation of the Black subject – get questioned, a trope that is similarly held by Biko (Mbembe: 2019). Notably, regeneration also commences with rhetoric on recovering or attaining a true self which had become estranged from itself under the force of colonial rationalities. In the South African context, a key figure was Pixley Seme whose 1906 declaration on the Regeneration of Africa was vital in the promulgation of the nationalist goals of the ANC. In conversation with Du Bois, Seme links African civilisation to its roots in Egypt, and argues that other great African civilisations have made great contributions to the universal community. Writing only in male pronouns, Seme proposed that the regeneration refers to the initiation into a new form of life, developing into more complex stages. Development presupposes the dominant factor of regeneration, which ‘resides in the awakened race

consciousness' (Seme: 2011, p.12). The ANC thus promoted a racially essentialist process of awakening consciousness, which followed similar ideas of the time: an induction into European academic schooling, forms of rationalisation, 'power/knowledge' meant for the governance of their native country at the time of decolonisation. Indeed, like his scholarly brethren engaged in Africana philosophy from across the Atlantic, Seme attributed the spirit of progress to the 'triumph of Christianity that teaches men everywhere in this world that they have a common duty to perform to one another' (Seme: 2011, p.14).

Thus, race consciousness and Christianity played a significant role in the constitution of the regeneration of African men on both sides of the Black Atlantic, a regeneration that played on internal class dynamics and gendered notions of political community within South African oppositional political organisations. According to Sydney Lockett, 'the founding fathers of the ANC (history only records the involvement of men) adopted a notion of 'race' that meant 'ethnic group' and they used the term 'native' which was replaced by the term 'African'' (Lockett: 2008, p. 2). Thus, although Pixley Seme critiqued racialism, his problem was with the division of 'natives', into different ethnicities. Thus, his vision looked at uniting different ethnicities into one African political party. These values, although remaining latent during the period of the Cold War, gave birth to a culture of Christian patriarchal leadership. Although there were coloured and female members of the ANC by the 1930s, strictly speaking, 'the constitution of the ANC spoke of an organisation open only to African men', and signified elements of a masculine brand of liberatory politics (Suttner: 2014, p. 133). In contrast to this vision, successive colonial and Apartheid deployed race-based legislation as the cornerstone of necropolitical governance. These policies led to the formation of the classical liberal four nation thesis, where the population was separated in White, Black, Coloured and Indian. During the 1940's the four-nation thesis became a received orthodox, which was adopted by the ANC youth league in the 1940s. This form of thinking continued to permeate ANC until the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955, which led to the unification of the four congresses into a non-racial unity (Lockett: 2008, p. 2). No doubt this was met with some condemnation, which led to the PAC breaking away from its ally. However, these developments were short lived, as the banning of the PAC and ANC led, in Biko's terms, to the emasculation of the African man, and consequently, the emergence of new student revolutionary organizations in South Africa, which in turn led to the formation of SASO and eventually Biko's philosophy of Black Consciousness in the late 60s and early 70s. More argues that:

‘this philosophical dimension is traceable from a long line of a discursive field predicated on the lived experiences of African and African descended people in the diaspora and recently given expression by a philosophical tradition known as philosophy ... Afrikaner philosophising consists of not only African or African-American thinkers but also embraces the philosophy of all people of African descent’ (More: 2014, pp.178-179).

As a psychological and affective transformative technology of the self, Biko’s definition of Blackness had the capacity to exceed the imaginary of coloniser, colonised and colonial settings of domination. As discussed in Chapter 7, Blackness in Biko’s definition upholds the constructivism of Fanon’s reconceptualization of race in *Black Skin, White Masks* but repurposed to South African conditions and the Apartheid government’s divide and rule strategy. Thus, due to the influence of the Black Consciousness movement, the ANC came to adopt the two-nation thesis after Mandela’s speech at the Rivonia trial. This thesis came to represent the ANC’s approach to the ‘national question’. Following the intellectual guidance of the SACP (South African Communist Party), the notion of racial struggle was subsumed into the class struggle. Furthermore, the 1980’s saw the birth of the UDM (United Democratic Front), and with it the aspiration of a non-racial nation-state, which is reflected in former President Thabo Mbeki’s ‘I am an African’ (1996) speech (Luckett: 2008, p. 3). These honourable values were decimated by the ANC’s return to the four-nation thesis to address inequality in 1998 (see section 8.4).<sup>xviii</sup>

In Chapter 7, I argued that Biko’s death, the telos of a form of the care of the self, was a politicising method. As such, the parrehsastic subject engenders the possibility of a postcolonial ethos, a shift in practices and character, but more importantly, a revision and transformation of the values that govern a society hitherto. Although Biko focused on the relationship between race and class, the problem of gender was absent from his writings, a problem tied in with the secondary discourse of black reason (Mbembe: 2017,p.33). His language, obviously gendered, focused on the emasculation of the black (male) subject; he never engaged with the particular experience of black women under Apartheid or in the struggle against Apartheid. This is, of course, typified by the phrase, ‘Black man you are on your own’. According to Matandela, ‘AZAPO’s BC philosophy added anti-sexism to its Hammanskraal Manifesto in 1984... This was the first time that gender was documented alongside this liberation philosophy, which goes beyond Biko’s (1996) writings and definition of BC’ (Matandela: 2017, p.123). Furthermore, according to Neville Alexander, when leading members of SASO were released from Robben Island prison by the Apartheid state at the

beginning of the 1980s, negotiations amongst prominent members of the Black Consciousness movement and other anti-Apartheid socialist groups led to the formation of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), a political party that promoted itself as the embodiment of Black Consciousness ideals with a socialist bent (Alexander: 2008, p.164; Reddy: 2008). One of the reactionary weaknesses of Biko's vision was his economic vision of the future, which endorsed Black-African communalism, which consisted of an incoherent combination of 'ubuntu and liberal-individualist democratic principles' (Alexander: 2008, p.160). At this historic conference, AZAPO formulated the 'Manifesto of the Azanian people', the BC equivalent of the ANC's Freedom Charter.<sup>xix</sup>

Lastly, although Biko challenged an essentialist distinction of blackness by trying to politically unify racialised groups that had been divided by Apartheid categories, he ended up essentialising aspects of African culture, often through the fantasies of Negritude and the notion of an essentially good black subject in contrast to the notion of essentially immoral whites. The contradiction between the freely envisaged self and parrhesia come into stark contrast with African-unity essentialism and, as I will show in next and final section of this chapter, the problem of resentment, victimisation authoritarianism. It is at this point that I argue that a freely envisaged-self conflicts with the becoming black of the world and the limits of African essentialism and patriarchy within the context of growing nativist Necropolitical governance in postcolonial Africa.

'The oneness of community is at the heart of our culture. The easiness with which Africans communicate with each other is not forced by authority but is inherent in the make-up of African people ... Again this is a manifestation of the interrelationship between man and man in the black world as opposed to the highly impersonal world in which Whitey lives' (Biko: 2008, p.32).

#### **8.4 Reason, Power and Politics; The Enduring Legacy of Black Reason and the Necropolitics and the Becoming black of the World**

Despite incorporating gender into their conceptual apparatus in 1984, the political formation of Black Consciousness, Azapo, fell into disrepute under the pressure of the upcoming transition to a democratic system and the demise of the Soviet Union (Chari: 2015). The Apartheid system began losing control of the social, political and economic fabric of the country. Under the pressure of internal and external resistance, the National Party sought

negotiations with its political enemies. Both AZAPO and the PAC rejected the negotiations, and in their place the ANC captured a resounding majority in the 1994 elections, becoming and remaining the governing party ever since. AZAPO's and the PAC's inability to engage in negotiations and the subsequent election led to them being sent to the shadows of South Africa political arena until the events of the last decade (Reddy: 2012). However, several scholars working in the tradition of Biko scholarship are critical of what has been registered as South Africa's shift to a rainbow nation, arguing that what has transpired is a failed liberation, dissimulated by the hyperreal forms of representation that obscure the ensuing capitalist and racist forms of domination with the adoption of neoliberal forms of governance, mythical violence.

'The degeneration of South Africa's liberation into neoliberalism and social conservatism on the one hand and ethnic traditionalism was presaged from the start ... By the 1990s, the goal of deracialising civil society was uncoupled from the goal of fundamentally restructuring the economy. In other words – post Apartheid South Africa would create a multiracial set of beneficiaries that included some of the leaders and former leaders of the liberation movements but would not include the majority of Apartheid's victims' (Gibson: 2011, pp.84-85).

I argue that in the South African postcolony, we have an order of conviviality (Mbembe: 2015, p.133). Originally, at the drafting of the final constitution, the ANC adopted the political practice of affirmative action from the United States. In this context, race or blackness is synonymous with 'previously disadvantaged or previously discriminated against' (Mare: 2014, p.74). According to the Employment Equity Act of 1998, blackness is an inclusive category for 'previously discriminated against', thus maintaining the social constructivist tenets of Biko's revolutionary definition of black to include African, Coloured and Indian. Two complementary processes subsequently occurred, which altered the nature of redress forthwith. The director-general of the Department of Labour, Jimmy Manyi, shifted the interpretation of the Employment Equity Act by introducing the notion of 'correct race demographics'. From this point onwards, black designated a 'hierarchy of disadvantage', predicated on a return to the four-nation thesis and Apartheid race categories African, Indian and Coloured, with Africans viewed as the most previously disadvantaged, 'and therefore first in line for any employment or promotion policies' (Mare: 2014, p.85; Erasmus: 2014, p. 6). Races, now conveyed as distinct specimens, had to be proportionally disseminated across the vocational and geographical spectrum of the South African racial political landscape. For Beetar,

‘The ‘excessive powers’ of the department over ‘extremely vulnerable people’ has meant that its legal administration of migration matters and rampant ‘bribery, extortion and corruption’ (Steinberg, 2012: 354) within the system have seen it act as an agent in the systemic hegemony... of South African necropolitics’ (Beetar: 2019, p.130).

The Employment Equity policy came to be interpreted in ridiculous and fundamentalist ways. For example, if the ‘coloured’ population accounted for 54 percent of the Western Cape, but only 9 percent of the national population, that population group would need to be employed across the country in proportional groupings of nine percent across all vocations and class dynamics – a necro-economy). The second process that favoured a narrow interpretation of Blackness emerged with the passing of the Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003, a top-down approach to economic redress where those considered hitherto disadvantaged would come to play an essential role in ‘capitalist ownership and management’. The reasoning behind this was that a black African bourgeoisie would endorse patriotism, as well as continue to hold the ideals of the liberation struggle dear. The overall effect of the ANC’s drafting of BEE policies, argues Gerhard Mare, was ‘to sanctify the struggle of black individuals to become filthy rich ... without asking them to take notice of the millions of other equally formerly disenfranchised citizens who have not been liberated from their former impoverished society’ (Mare: 2014, p.115). The new South African bourgeoisie and political class derived from ANC cadreship do not ultimately signify a rupture with Apartheid in the postcolony, but are indicative of a new postcolonial, ethnic-tribal political bourgeoisie who share the same practices as those of the white elite of Apartheid and post-Apartheid – a condition termed conviviality: an intimate and grotesque relation of mutual corruption (Mbembe: 2016, p.133).<sup>xx</sup>

The reality is that South Africa’s ‘revolution’ was a negotiated settlement. Facing the fall of the Berlin Wall at the end of the 1980s forced the ANC to disavow its communist alliance. The 1994 settlement left most capital in White owned enterprises but enabled certain privileged ‘cadres’ to procure influential positions in national government, the private sector or local municipalities after the electoral victory of 1994. Following the work of Mamdani (1996) and Gibson (2011), I contend that the administrative forms of rationalisation which the ANC inherited is necropolitics as systematized under the leadership of the National Party. The ANC had to concede to the National Party’s continued role as an urban party. Furthermore, to maintain the support of the rural masses, it continued to support (through large state salaries) a relationship with the tribal chiefs who had been placed in positions of authority under the Apartheid regime’s Bantustan system. For Mamdani, what this has consequently meant is that

the majority of urban South Africans have access to civil rights, but rural South Africans – specifically women and the rural poor – remain tribal subjects bound to customary law. Chiefs do not attain power through any act of legitimacy but rule by force – the votes in the rural areas for the ANC that secure its majority are primarily a result of intimidation. As studies have shown, women are barred from owning private land in the rural areas, a form of institutionalised patriarchy that I cannot expand on at this point but will address as a trope throughout this chapter. One of the important points to note from this preliminary analysis of early post-Apartheid politics is the role of the law in the South African postcolony. Although the constitution endorses equal rights amongst all citizens,

‘poorer citizens – who are by definition marginalised politically – are not treated as citizens but as temporary sojourners (to use the language of Apartheid) and are more likely to have their rights trampled on. Though constitutionally a democracy, South Africa is not a liberal democracy in the sense of one law and one set of rights for all its citizens’ (Gibson: 2011, p.87).

This phenomenon is not exclusive to rural areas; many of the urban poor continue to suffer similar misgivings. including the homeless, those still living in ‘black, coloured or Indian slums’, and shackdwellers (Gibson:2001, p.87). Social stratification in South Africa continues to be informed by Apartheid categories, and the unequal relationship between citizen and subject continues in a nebulous grey zone. In this light, the predominant affect of necropolitics is precarity (Reyes and Chirindo: 2020, pp.3-4). According to Judith Butler, we have to understand that precarity does not simply name a floating ‘affect’, an unconscious feeling that is natural. Rather, as I have demonstrated earlier in this thesis, psychic conditions are allocated by non-intentional affects that are produced through governmental rationalities. In this light, Butler notes that precarity is an affect of a living within a hegemonic regime of being governed and governing ourselves (Butler: 2018, p. vii). Neoliberalism has engendered necropolitical psychic technologies that effectuate precarization as essential to the interiorization of psychic affect that constitutes subjectification and, more importantly, ‘insecurity as the central preoccupation of the subject’ (Butler: 2018, p.viii). Instead of resistance, the increased insecurity drives citizens to strive for security, specifically Hobbesian personal and state security as ideals. According to Lorey, there are three specific meanings of precarity. At the conceptual level, precarity designates uncertainty, fragility and vulnerability; precarity is a social and existential condition that we live on a day-to-day basis. Precariousness on the other hand designates an intersubjective endangerment, like the slaves who worked plantations. Third, ‘precarity as an affect of necropolitical governmental practices makes it possible to

problematize the complex interactions between an instrument of governing and the conditions of economic exploitation and modes of subjectivation' (Lorey: 2018, p.15).

The contemporary South African postcolony is an exemplar of post-Cold War politics that has become a growing site of lawlessness, or rather is defined by a complex dialectic of law and disorder in which democratization has brought with it an intensification of violence and crime (Comaroff and Comaroff: 2006, pp.1-10). Decades after Apartheid, the disenfranchised continue to be disenchanted by polices that protect the accumulation of 'White capital' in the new 'rainbow' Apartheid, in which the masses have begun to realise the pot of gold is reserved for the precious few. And, in many ways, this has led to the co-optation and appropriation of Biko's legacy by the new South African elite. It means that blackness has become incoherent. It was originally formulated as discourse of political resistance, but now it is completely beholden to the phenotypical enfranchisement of blackness via an unquestioned belief in race, state and capitalism. For Biko, blackness was inherently linked to political, economic and social disenfranchisement – precarity. The problem with Biko's vision of blackness, is that this original vision of precarity, no longer applies to the singular black subject, but has been universalised. In Chapter 5, I introduced the problem of the becoming black of the world-which now I will treat in relation to the Anthropocene: the fourth stage in the evolution of necropolitics and capital. Although I introduced the Anthropocene in 2006, I want to treat it in more detail. One of the deficiencies of Chakrabarty's account is his inability to conceptualise Anthropocene diagnostically as a social phenomenon. According to Achille Mbembe, the precarity that defined both the life of slaves and the inferiority complex that characterised Fanon and Biko's colonised subject, has been replaced by a new condition called the Anthropocene, and the becoming black of the world-the fourth evolutionary phase of the relationship between necropolitics and capital. For Reyes and Chirindo, the Anthropocene is

“marked by the globalization of markets, the privatization of the world under the aegis of neoliberalism, and the increasing imbrication of the financial markets, the postimperial military complex, and electronic and digital technologies” (Mbembe, Critique 3), has effectively generalized the experience of precarity previously focused on Black bodies and spaces' (Reyes and Chirindo: 2020, p. 7).

Originally, the proletarianization of the colonised consisted of reducing them to a thing-like status, a useful and docile body whose labour was extracted for the purpose of surplus value. This was an essential part of machine capitalism, which enabled the colonised to escape from a complete social death. Mbembe points out that instead of writing from the perspective of social death, a genealogy of freedom, which serves the purpose of restoring the democratic

project in South Africa, must take ‘as its point of departure... how to retrieve the human from a history of waste’(Goldberg: 2018, p. 207).<sup>xxi</sup> Nevertheless, Mbembe’s position is that capital has generated ‘machine technology’, that is rendering human labour superfluous. If capital first needed to maintain a parasitic relationship to human labour to grow, now it doesn’t require it all to function. Simultaneously, Mbembe documents the growth of the Anthropocene as an ecological catastrophe that threatens extinction for the human species (Reyes and Chirindo: 2020, p. 7). Although, he does claim, following Bhabha, that migrancy will continue to structure future conflicts, he still universalises precarity via the becoming black of the world, and in doing so omits the differential impact of the Anthropocene on certain sectors of the population. According to Nancy Tuana, there continues to be a silence on race, and environmental racism in discussions on Climate change (Tuana: 2019, 2). For Tuana, ecological exploitation and racism are intricately a connected (Tuana: 2019, p. 12), an issue I introduced when discussing the formation of black reason as the second stage in the development of necropolitics and capital. For example, the effects of coal and other fossil fuels as greenhouse gases that heat up the planet when they are burnt are well documented, but next to nothing has been written on coals entanglement with racism. According to Tuana, in the United States of America, coal mines have a ‘disproportionate negative impact on Black and Latin American communities due to the siting of plants in neighbourhoods with high percentages of people from one or both groups’ (Tuana: 2019, p. 14). Of course, this situation is not unique to the USA. In South Africa, the racialisation of space has created a divide between those, historically white who have lived in green and leafy suburbs, and ‘black’ South African’s who live in townships that are often close to industrial areas, and away from the protective infrastructure provided by the city. Regarding the Anthropocene, those who are living in the suburbs may suffer property damage from the ensuing effects of climate Change in South Africa-but for the moment-the effects are manageable. In the townships however, life is not merely precarious, but with the heavy rains brought on by climate change over the last South African winter, many of the poor have already had their ‘makeshift’ homes decimated, already making them climate refugees in their own country- a national microcosm of the global Climate Apartheid we find ourselves in. As Desmond Tutu has noted, the poor in this situation have no chance of adapting, in fact in such a context, adaptation ‘becomes a euphuism for social inequality (Tuana: 2019, p. 5). He argues

‘Climate change impacts on every aspect of life and it is widely accepted that the world’s poor are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Even relatively small changes, such

as inexorable temperature increases, shifts in seasons and unpredictable rain patterns can destroy livelihoods and plunge people into poverty. Furthermore, poor people usually live in areas most prone to potential disasters from flooding, cyclones, droughts, etc' (Tutu: 2009, p. 24).

Post-Apartheid South Africa remains a racial heterotopia, with race being the driver of the necropolitical process. The notion of heterotopia ought to be analysed in relation to *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality 1*, Foucault's genealogies which analyse processes of subjectification and the discursive construction of reality by technologies or rationalities of government (Villet: 2015, p.14). In general terms, a heterotopia designates a place or space which people are thrown into (Heidegger: 2008, p.103), and it is this field of discursive practices and play-space (*Spielraum*) that regulates their behaviour on the basis of certain norms in seemingly apolitical terms, on a strict daily basis. The paradox of the heterotopia is that a space or place of dwelling becomes a heterotopia only when it is 'defined by its otherness in relation to other spaces, places and even experiences' (Villet: 2015, p.16; See also Nichols: 2014, p.133). Thus, there is a phobic doubling, if not inverse mirroring, of the two racial heterotopias in the South African postcolony. The management and administration of space after Apartheid has largely reproduced the racialisation of spatial zones and enclaves that were operative in colonial and Apartheid South Africa. Divided between white suburbia and poor black townships (and rural and urban), it is an exclusion of racial otherness that conditions the way these spaces' function, regulating daily practices, constituting ethical (ethos) and precarious experiences and subjects of a vastly different kind, but who are related through similar political and geo-political schemas. Because of the migrant labour system, many young South Africans grew up fatherless. Just like Latino, and African American men, Black South African's have felt the disproportionate effect of coal on their lives. For generations, their fathers were kept in mining hostels, where they often formed relations with other women and started new families, picking up various STDs and respiratory conditions along the way (Manzo: 1992, pp.28-30). But more importantly, the mines – the Manichean structure enforced by barracks and inhumane working conditions – signified that these men had become bare life, mere degenerative biological life, that could be disposed of without hesitation or simply because of the conditions, could be left to let die. These policies, reflected around different aspects of the country, were intended to break down the structure of the family and inoculate the non-European population, a strategy whose apotheosis culminated and terminated in Project Coast. Thus, there is a definite connection between environmental racism, ecological and economic exploitation in

the Anthropocene, and psychic problems that lead to patriarchy and xenophobia. In this light, the enmity-driven negation which was operative in precarious postcolonies as a death practice, following the use of negation in Apartheid and colonialism, also engendered novel racial classifications used to describe foreign Africans (and others) by the offensive term *makwerere*. This racial discourse began in political circles, highlighting the practical struggle for survival in the South African townships, in which the indigenous subject deploys racial/ethnic and linguistic categories of identification in a discourse of rainbow nationalism in order to generate a comically racially homogenous nation state – not a simple form of exclusion but a historically constituted form of intersectional domination (that I am depicting through a genealogical rendition of colonial historical ontology) that has dangerous consequences for a surplus population hardly protected by human rights. According to Achille Mbembe, we can consider this as the new nativism. This form of nativism was evident in the 2008 and 2015 necropolitical attacks against foreign Africans (Beetar: 2019, p.127). Following a thesis upheld by Bhabha, Achille Mbembe argues that the diasporic process of migration undermines cultures of racial unanimity, and in most places, plurality has become the norm. The focus is ultimately on social engineering (strengthening of the race), and the theoretical construction of revolutionary, sacrificial utopias – both of which derive from biopolitical and necropolitical rationality in the postcolony (Mbembe: 2001, p.3). For Beetar, this form of necropolitics is tied to rainbow nationalism, an inversion of Apartheid’s stereotypical characterisation of the *swart gevaar*:

‘The presence of ‘foreigners’ in ‘the new South Africa’ was, and remains, a risk to the agenda of nation-building and creating a rainbow nationalism. Thus, just as the white apartheid government used the ‘threat’ of blackness as foreignness to create an enemy of the nation, so ‘in the eyes of the state and the politically empowered, non-nationals are the functional equivalent of black South Africans two decades ago’... In this, one sees the need to differentiate, however precariously, between race and nation in this context ... Politics, in this regulation of subgroups, functions ‘as the work of death’ (Beetar: 2019, p.132).

In concluding Chapter 6, I noted that the liberation struggle does not remove the relation of enmity or hostility – that is, the desire to kill. Instead, it transforms these drives and desires into a political economy, and furthermore a political superego, which would constitute the advent of a nativist convivial postcolony. Within this murderous South African superego, three values were added, but not without precedent, as South Africa introduced itself the global world of trade and commerce as a liberal democratic state: the adoption of the rational values of the Enlightenment, entry into the market by virtue of labouring practices and, most importantly for

my purposes, Christianity – which is notably marked by an African syncretism.<sup>xxii</sup> It is at this point that we can examine whether Biko's attitude to gender can be reformed or argued for in contemporary society, and whether it is acceptable to a black imaginary community, a multitude of transnational forces transgressing the current colonial epistemological and ontological order through a politics and identification of affective and resistant identification (See Chapter 7; Bhabha: 2004). Regarding the problem of women, Freud argues that in traditions derived from Christianity, the image or imago of the woman is split or doubled. On the one hand, the woman signifies an ideal she can never live up to, the Virgin Mother (The Virgin Mary). Nevertheless, identifying with the figure of the dutiful, loyal and faithful mother was designated the only acceptable figure in these traditions, a role that Maginizer predictably attributed to women in the politics of Black Consciousness (Magaziner: 2010; see critique by Morreira: 2015). Indeed, notions such as 'mothers of the nation' attest to this imagery of women as the supporters of emasculated men, ever since the message of Black Consciousness has been recoded by the ANC's corporate elite's neo-colonial appropriation of colonial rationality. In its phenotypical, masculine, religious, tribal enfranchised articulations, it is compared in Western metaphysical binomial terms, following the negative characteristics of Eve as a temptress or seducer, which means that in postcolonial South Africa, the woman is a sexual thing (Mitchell: 1990, pp.121-136; Morris: 2006). Within this formation, we can already see the mixture of Christian and local ethnic values. For example, four years before he became president of the Republic of South Africa, Jacob Zuma was accused of the rape of his friend's daughter, a 31-year-old HIV positive activist and educator, Fezekile Ntsukela Kuzwayo, affectionately known to friends and family as Kwezi. It is worth briefly recording Zuma's sentiments before exploring the distribution of a living and social death via the act of rape.

'Inside the courthouse Zuma was similarly playing the card of traditional Zulu culture. Giving his testimony in Zulu, he said his accuser had invited his sexual advances by wearing a knee-length skirt. He said she came to his bedroom and climbed into his bed. He said that according to Zulu culture, a man cannot refuse a woman's invitation to sex. 'I was obligated to have sex with her,' he said, under oath, through an interpreter. The woman gave a dramatically different account of their encounter. She said Zuma surprised her in her bed in the guestroom and when he massaged her she said 'No' twice. She said she froze when he forced himself on her' (Meldrum: 2006, p.211).

After this statement, it is worth considering its effects on Zuma's supporters, who in enunciating their statement take a certain political and social identity.

‘Rape is not a crime. In our traditional culture it is not a crime. It is only since the end of apartheid that they are trying to make it a crime. This woman is only trying to make trouble’ (Meldrum: 2006, p.211).

Although both speakers drew on their Zulu culture, it is the trope of the short skirts as a passive form of seduction and temptation that is so resonant with Western/Christian patriarchal depictions (if not all cultures) that it invites further scrutiny in relation to native legality. (Injunction against rape is, of course, not considered a commandment in major religions in South Africa). The question of legality is interesting because, as Rosalind Morris argues, in the dialectic of law and disorder that constitutes the postcolony, the rise in crime as aforementioned had become seen as a political crisis in the first decade of South Africa’s democracy. And this is totally correct: rape continues to be a huge problem in South African society. It is noted that it is one of the ‘rape capitals’ of the world. Morris argues coherently that the rise of sexual violence is indicative of a failure to manage crime, but more importantly, of a public sphere that has failed to adequately transform and reform the colonised family, which is still terribly disfigured (Morris: 2006, p.57). The major mark of this is absent or abusive fathers, and the multiple traumas they can cause. For psychoanalysis, the father stands at the beginning of the personal origins of the development of subjectivity, at least in specifying the primary moral criteria that are internalised as a personal superego (Freud: 1995, p.158). But according to the law of the father, and its displacement, those who do not receive love do not develop guilt, and thus are not psychically invested in any social contract whatsoever, except – as we have seen – to drive the desire for murder into a political superego that constitutes the conditions of existence of a phallic nation. More importantly, this form of displacement paves the way for a search for more father figures. In the case of many African authoritarian regimes, we have the figure of the autocrat or president who takes the place that a father traditionally would, as he promises the protections and parades the authority only held by a father. According to tenets of Lacanian psychology, these imagos have a further deformative effect on African subjects, not only psychically in terms of dependence but also by consecrating a misogynistic and patriarchal imaginary.

Instead of ending the alienation and neurosis as Biko’s method promised, it appears as if the perpetuation of everyday psycho-affective violence in the postcolony – a consistent effect of necropolitical violence – has led to the formation of a country that is xenophobic, racist and violent, as is evident in the xenophobic attacks that rattled the country for the last decade and a half. In Rothberg’s decolonization of trauma, he argues that the event model of trauma (the

Oedipus complex for example) must be ‘supplemented’ by the conception of everyday trauma that is imbued in our day-to-day violent practices and psychic relations (Rothberg: 2012). By succumbing to its degenerative power, many South Africans continue to live in a deeply racist, xenophobic and misogynistic country, and that is a result of morbid death practices that have resulted in an identification with someone who, Fanon warned, would present himself as the ‘man of the people,’ but ends up looting and laughing behind their backs – leading to the disintegration of the legitimacy of the state and a return of all Apartheid’s unresolved haunting phantoms. In the conclusion, I will consider whether Biko’s work can still contribute to the problem of engaging with xenophobia and the becoming black in the world. I will argue that there are serious limits on his transformative technology of the self in the contemporary world.

## **8.5 Conclusion**

To conclude this chapter, I have argued that Biko’s gendered language, his focus on African unity and his links to Christianity endanger the transformative potential of his political spirituality, and of Black Consciousness philosophy as a technology of the self. Without using the language of precarity, Spivak (2005, p.235) argued some time ago that the shift to neoliberal technologies produced a new universal subaltern which, in some ways presages the condition Mbembe is articulating in his ‘becoming black of the world’. Initially, when Biko as a layman challenged the church for its spiritual poverty, he led a revolution that challenged the morality of obedience of Christianity, which he sought to combine with an African-man centred culture (Biko: 2008, p.34). While some of these practices were the spirit of his times (*zeitgeist*), perhaps necessary for revolution, at this point, such values are not worth resurrecting.

However, despite his essentialism, Biko’s reference to the African struggle and his objective of reclaiming the wonders of African civilisations through historiography are a part of his fundamental Azanian ethic that transcends racism and xenophobia. As Hook (2004) has illustrated, the country that Biko envisaged is still not ready to come into being, because both black and white groups still require a form of psycho-affective transformation before political liberation and a non-racial synthesis can become into being. This brings us to the question of whiteness. Several years ago, despite being harassed by students for raising this question, Xolela Mangcu asked in an article whether white people can become black. Theoretically, if removed from Apartheid, this question is pertinent. For, despite the attempt by the Zuma faction to conjure an old enemy with fabrications of ‘white monopoly capital’ and its response,

radical economic transformation, it is fairly clear that although many white South Africans remain beneficiaries of Apartheid, the convivial class has emerged as a consequence of BEE compounded by the Zuma clique's predatory schemes. This phenomenon alone lays to rest the claim that black people are victims of a conspiratorial system of settler perpetrators.

However, since Apartheid, a marked spatial and racial inequality remains (Robinson: 2012), issues which can only be addressed by fair redistribution. Nevertheless, current conditions of existence designate that we are all now vulnerable members of a radically changing Anthropocene, and our condition is global (as well as local), as any citizen now has the potential to become a climate refugee, a form of bare precarious life. Furthermore, Biko's political definition of blackness opens a politics of identification and affinity, no longer restricted to those with a certain pigmentation, but also for those with a growing sense of precarity due to being discriminated against, at the very least, economically – a global condition. Blackness now has the capacity to become a universal marker of a revolutionary tradition, made clear by the Black Lives Matter movement in the USA, and their respectful collaboration with Antifa.

Most importantly for this project, it is Biko's politicising method of death that is of most value to contemporary generations. The capacity to form oneself in a life of struggle, to stylise oneself as a work of art and know thyself while refusing to be controlled and disciplined racially, and to be willing to risk one's life to change moral positioning (parrhesia), is the point where power, as Foucault noted, reaches its limit. I believe this is the message that South Africans should learn from Biko: blackness should continue to be cultivated as a revolutionary tradition and disposition, but one that needs to be sufficiently inclusive (following Bhabha, Gilroy and Erasmus) to create a transnational and celebratory tradition that includes all migrant and surplus populations around the world, a black cosmopolitanism. The postcolonial ethos really rests on a form of subjectivation that attempts to create an international community which is oppositional, yet also transformative and celebratory. As Mangcu puts it,

The challenge is whether we can have a national consciousness that respects the historical experiences of African people, as we do the historical legacies of Irish or Jewish people. These are not biological identities but historical ones. What is so difficult about extending the same logic and respect to black people while creating a transnational community? (Mangcu: 2001, p. 10)

## Conclusion

In this thesis, I have deliberated on whether Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy can be reread through Foucault's ethical practices to transform pathological, divided subjects who have been racially alienated and neurotically traumatized by necropolitical forms of colonial and postcolonial governmental rationality in the South African postcolony. This involved, first, uncovering the way governmental rationalities produce racially alienated and neurotic subjects in the South African postcolony. Second, it required the transformation of a Eurocentric historical ontology to a decolonial historical ontology of South Africa as a racial heterotopia. Third, and lastly, I excavated Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy as a form of antiquarian and monumental history, and as a racially affective technology of the self, capable of transforming an inferiority complex into a state of self-determination. Finally, I subjected Biko's work to an epistemological critique, explicating the limits of his work within the contexts of 'death practices', African homogeneity and Christianity.

The first three chapters engaged critically with Foucault's work. Chapter 1 explored Foucault's transition from governmentality to the art of not being governed, or political spirituality. In the second chapter, I expanded my interrogation of political spirituality to a full-blown discussion of Foucault's 'warrior' ethics, which, I argued in Chapter 3, were predicated on an Orientalist discourse. I concluded Chapter 3 with an introduction to postcolonial studies and a reworking of Foucault's ethics in terms of the notion of *parrhesia*, which appears in both Greek and early Christian traditions. In Chapters 4 to 6, I provided a brief intellectual history of postcolonial studies, which included an analysis of the work of early postcolonial scholars that have a relation to the thesis' problem via the notion of political rationality and the apparatus. Next I specified how governmentality has operated in the African colony and contemporary postcolony. In Chapter 7, I provided a rereading of Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy as a therapeutic model for necropolitical governance, before explaining the limits of such a transformation in Chapter 8.

At the end of Chapter 3, I introduced the idea of decolonising historical ontology, which has 4 stages. Only by engaging with these 4 stages, could I determine whether Black Consciousness can be constituted as a postcolonial ethos.

1. The first phase was called 'translation', a process of negation before colonial capitalism, that was subsequently enhanced with the emergence of colonial capitalism.

‘Translation designates the process in, “which the human negates nature”, where negation operates by reducing the natural world to human needs. Additionally, human beings in modernity negate the natural world by transforming “the negated element, through labour - thereby constituting a social world filled with commodities (Mbembe: 2019, p. 14; Reyes and Chirido: 2020, p. 3). Learning to exist as a subject society presupposes an awareness that humanity is prone to violence. Such an awareness occurs simultaneously with the normalization of necropolitics, characterized by an acceptance that the ‘core of commodification is symbolic-material death’ (Reyes and Chirido: 2020, p. 3). For further discussion see Chapter 6.

2. The second phase in the development of necropolitics and capital is the emergence of what Achille Mbembe has called ‘Black reason’. Black reason consists of two narratives, that I explicated in detail in Chapters 5 and 6 where I showed how they have been related to another throughout modern colonial history. The first narrative appeared with the development and intersection of the ‘normalization of necropolitics’ and the ‘abstract notion of labour’, constituting a systematic form of instrumental rationality, Black reason. In this rational schema, colonial discourse ‘represented blackness as the sign of death’, thus necropolitics is constituted by a racial principle of division, in which all life under colonialism is distinguished by a Hobbesian state of nature, which creates for a black subject, a new ontology defined by precarity. This ontological precarity is synonymous with a “triple loss” consisting of “absolute domination, natal alienation and social death” (Mbembe: 2019, p. 21; Reyes and Chirido: 2020, p.5).

3. The second narrative of Black reason, or the emergence of the ‘black voice’, is the third phase in the evolution of necropolitics and capital. In section 5.4, following Mbembe’s *African Modes of Self-Writing*, I argued that the emergence of anticolonial discourses, which, despite deconstructing the Western discursive representation of blackness and constructing important ideas such as ‘revolt, abolition and decolonization’, have failed to counter the effects of both machine capitalism and colonial discourse. It was through a process of nationalist internalisation of the latter during the twentieth century that the fourth phase in the development of necropolitics arose: The Anthropocene (Reyes and Chirido: 2020, p. 7). The Anthropocene, as an analytic category, has undermined the distinction between natural and social history that was presupposed in the Humanities and Social Sciences until the turn of the millennium.

4. In Section 6.2 I introduced the notion of the Anthropocene, the fourth phase in the evolution of necropolitics and capital and explicated its relationship to translation and the first narrative of Black reason. Thereafter, in section 8.4, I provided an analysis of how industrial capitalism and population growth have rendered the human population a geological force, which has the potential to alter, and ultimately destroy the earth's ecological systems that support life, raising the spectre of planetary extinction. This means that the precarity that was reserved for the Black subject becomes a global condition – ‘the becoming black of the world’ (Chakrabarty: 2009; Mbembe: 2017, p. 33; Mbembe: 2021, p. 20-21; Reyes and Chirrido: 2020, p. 7-8).

In this thesis, I have argued that there were two types of human subjectivity which came to influence modern philosophical and sociological scholarship until Foucault's radical break. First, there is an immutable form of human nature, with essential attributes – the most notable being reason (first nature).<sup>xxiii</sup> Then there is a second form of human nature which differs from the first insofar as it can be manipulated by the naturalisation, or rather reification, of doctrine and custom, that is, as forms of social control, which Marx called ideology. In this imaginary it is the rational ability to overcome a deficient capitalist ideology that has produced alienated subjects as second nature, which enables subjects to return to their first true nature (Hawkes: 2003). As I pointed out in my analysis of Scott's reading of anticolonial theory in Chapters 3 and 4, following Fanon's reading of the Western metaphysical tradition's concepts, second nature and first nature conform to the modern distinction between alienation/liberation. The implication for nativist politics is clear. The idea is that colonialism and Western institutions violently deracinated native systems of being, imbued with their own internal, essential, and healthy logics, understood as a ‘founding violence’, discussed in Chapter 6 (Benjamin: 1996; Derrida: 2006, p.170; Veracini: 2018, p.34). Second, ideology, as a form of ‘law preserving violence’ which operates through manipulative capitalist-colonialist linguistic and practical structures, creates an inferiority complex amongst the colonized populace. Third, in traditional Fanonian scholarship drawn from Afro-nationalist and nativist discourses, it is only through revolutionary violence, an African extrapolation of the master/slave complex (Mbembe: 2017, p.164-167, 2019, p.45), that the thing-like object - pathologically distorted by colonial-capitalist instrumentalist rationality- can become a ‘man’ (Bulhan: 1985, p.233; Fanon: 2001, p.28; Gibson: 2003; Gordon: 2015).

I explained how the pathologies of this discourse became clear to me during the 2015-2017 student protests. It was for this reason that I turned to Foucault's framework on technologies

of domination to explicate how racial forms of subjectivity were produced in the South African Apartheid colony. This led me to consider how Foucault's technologies of the self might be employed to reformulate subjectivity through a rereading of Biko's Black Consciousness as an ethical mode of resistance. By wanting to keep a distinction between pure and political knowledge, Said ran into the problem of whether colonial discourse misrepresented 'a real Orient'. This problem has a historical genealogy that emerges from anti-colonial discourses such as Negritude, Pan Africanism and Afro-Marxism (Mbembe: 2001). In this conception of subjectivity, national African cultures are defined in terms of 'one shared culture ... one true self, an essential self with the same set of representational codes, values, ancestry' (Hall: 1994, p.393). This conception of subjectivity is, in fact, drawn from Aristotelian philosophy and was essential to the Marxist idea of overcoming ideology and its implications for human subjectivity. In classical Aristotelian thought, with which Marx was more than familiar, there is an intrinsic relation between nature and custom, insofar as the distinction requires a division between the two into 'innate' or 'acquired' characteristics. By moving away from a Marxian superstructure and base, and the problems of ideology, alienation and liberation we have a new understanding of colonialism that derives specifically from the postcolonial reading of Michel Foucault from Edward Said to Achille Mbembe.

'Colonization was not only a particular form of rationality, with its techniques and mechanisms. It also conceived of itself as a certain structure of knowledge, a structure of belief, and as Edward Said emphasized, an epistemic regime...It is an approach one may choose to ignore, but it is a legitimate one, just like the nominalist and philosophical critiques of colonization formulated through historical, literary, psychoanalytic or phenomenological analyses' (Mbembe: 2021, p. 128-129).

As I demonstrated in Chapter 4, conceptualised as an apparatus, colonialism must be understood as a political machine or technology that crosses the boundaries between the natural/artificial, mind/body and psychic/material dualisms. Foucault's notion of a technology, or *techne*, is a practical form of reason that is governed and responds to an urgent historical need by means of a strategic function. It allows us to overcome the idea that the colonizer and colonised are distinct, pure types that existed before colonialism. The strategic function of the apparatus responds to the historical problem in question by producing a regime of subjectivity. The apparatus therefore allows us to envision that power is not held by the coloniser but produces both the colonizer and colonised as racial stereotypes in relations of domination,

resistance, misrepresentation and non-reciprocity. As Foucault's turn to governmentality also represented a shift to historical ontology and the transformation of the subject, similarly a shift to governmentality enables an understanding of how those European discourses not only constituted racial subjects but provided the conceptual and discursive formations for the emergence of anti-colonial discourses that historically were drawn upon as a revolutionary, historical heritage in the attempt to transform the pathological state of the racial subject. In Chapter 7, I drew upon a neo-Foucauldian framework to demonstrate how Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy may be readdressed to resist contemporary modes of intergenerational neurosis produced by this tradition of Black reason.

In Chapter 5 I opted for the more nuanced transgenerational theory of traumatic unconscious alienation, which I demonstrated has a corporeal, immanent and mutually reciprocating relationship to the Foucauldian concept of technological practices of domination in which capitalism is reproduced as necropolitical Black reason. Following this schema, I avoided the problem of naturalising the psyche of the modern European male by engaging with a diagnostic deconstruction of Western metaphysics. Furthermore, following Foucault, I have argued that following one of the most serious problems of materialism, orthodox Marxist phenomenologists fail to address the question of the body, as the site of politico-economic, reproductive and psychic investment. As shown in Chapter 4, a key illustration of this problem is the gratification Fikile feels from being seen as an object or sexual thing by older white men, while ignoring the sincere friendship of a wealthy 'black friend' who brilliantly 'Talks Frankly' about the state of the nation.

In writing Chapter 7, I argued that Biko's work, when reread as a political technology of the self, has the capacity to effectuate a transformation in the subject's mode of being towards a freely envisaged subject, as well as altering the affective constitution of the subject from one of politico-racial self-negation to self-affirmation. However, in Chapter 8, I problematized Biko's relationship to gender, as well as deconstructing the problems with his rendering of African homogeneity, or an essentially 'good black subject' (Hall: 1996, p.444). It is African homogeneity, an incoherent combination of liberal individualism and *ubuntu* metaphysics, which causes Biko's work to run into a series of problems or paradoxes (rather than contradictions) as it entered the politics of the early 1980s and then the post-Apartheid period, or rather, the neoliberal South African postcolony.

In Chapter 7, I argued that Biko's attack on Apartheid's divide and rule system of racialism (Appiah: 1993 p.5) and his subsumption of all racialised groups into a political conception of blackness, comprises the ethical substance of his critique of colonial governmentality and its racializing technologies of moral domination. Psychologically, this has had a positive affective effect in the South African postcolony. However, to problematize my reading of Biko, and as I argued in Chapters 6 and 8, the political compromise of 1994 meant that while there was a formal transfer of sovereignty, the majority of capital continued to be held largely in white hands, with the emergence of a small black elite as a product of BEE policies: a devitalising conviviality. Thus, I argued that instead of a systemic programme of social transformation, the ANC has reappropriated colonial rationality in the postcolony, recalibrating necropolitical forms of racialisation. By deploying the same administrative and bureaucratic system as their predecessors, the ANC government has ended up reappropriating Apartheid racial categories as a measure of reparative redress for economic inequality, which, instead of obviating race, has perpetuated it as a social reality, with the consequence that the majority of 'black' subjects still inhabit death worlds called townships, distinguished by extreme forms of precarity (Butler: 2004; Mbembe: 2019). At the heart of this precarious existence is the way in which necropolitical rationality produces a necro-economy.

Furthermore, in the age of the Anthropocene and climate change, neoliberal capitalism has engendered surplus populations: the 'becoming black of the world', an 'unwanted' excess population that cannot even be exploited as labour power, a consequence, not of normalisation required to run a political economy, but rather being required to be 'managed precisely through their exposure to deadly dangers and risks...it is a permanent and painful condition' (Pele: 2020, p.3).

In this thesis, I have attempted to contribute to debates in South African social science by offering a post-structuralist and postcolonial reading of contemporary formations of pathological racial subjectivity in South African society. This task also consisted of portraying an intellectual history of the relationship between Foucault and postcolonial studies, an undertaking that might contribute to both Foucault studies and postcolonial theory. I have also archived or listed thinkers who have previously used postcolonial or post-structural theory or both to analyse South African society, or who are relevant to my concerns, but who have not, to my knowledge, previously been grouped together in a single framework. Moreover, I have introduced and applied Foucault's theory of governmentality and ethics as my point of departure for introducing Achille Mbembe's notion of necropolitics. Focusing on the primacy

of death practices over Foucault's and Heidegger's basic (or life) practices (Gressgard: 2019: Reyes and Chirrido 2020), I argue, enables a shift from contemporary Eurocentric understandings of historical ontology to a decolonial historical ontology of South African society. Most importantly, I have worked to resurrect Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy from the depths of a fetishized, de-politicized, de-historicised, racially enfranchised conception of blackness, not as a form of phenomenological existentialism (More: 2008) but as a neo-Foucauldian therapeutic technology of the self. Through this rereading of Biko's psychopolitics (Hook: 2004), I deployed some of Foucault's insights, but to execute a coherent diagnosis, I had to expand his definition of technology to include a model of affected subjectivity that explicitly focuses on the traumatic constitution of the subject. Furthermore, this has meant that, in the case of Biko, I have explored Black Consciousness philosophy as a technology of the self and a therapeutic model that enables a transformation of the psychic and affective constitution of the alienated and neurotic subject from a means in an infernal racist machine to a freely envisaged self, capable of producing new governmental practices. Through this method I hope to have made a contribution to contemporary South African scholarship on Biko.

In Chapter 8, however, I provided a genealogical reading of Biko's relationship to African discourses of the self, problematizing the contradictions that emerged as Biko's writing/thought was employed to grapple with the reality of the new South African postcolony and deconstructing stereotypes. This meant showing how Biko's work becomes questionable as a model because of an unacknowledged patriarchy which was addressed at the (Hammanskraal) conference in 1984 (Matandela: 2017, p.12) but remains problematic in contemporary South African political discourse. Second, I argued that Biko, although offering a politically nuanced definition of blackness, defaulted to a rather conservative, homogenous and stereotypical definition of Africanity that risks postulating an essentially good black subject. I have read this as a symptom of the neurosis of victimisation and the politics of resentment that sets up an opposition between good native selves and foreign evil (white) subjects, still prevalent in the postcolony. Third, in its worst necropolitical manifestations, the neurosis of victimisation can lead the afflicted to exact violence on an innocent bystander, somebody who had nothing to do with the original wound, which, I argue, are psychic and, more importantly, technological mechanisms. This analysis would account for the xenophobic attacks on predominantly African migrants – their bodies and businesses – in 2008 and again in 2015 (Beetar: 2019). It is worth noting that necropolitical xenophobic technologies continue to function in South Africa today,

informing policy and its ‘implementation’. According to Paul Gilroy, Foucault’s notion of political technology, or rationality, is essential to understanding the separatist foundations of the Apartheid state and its mode of racial governance in the postcolony (Gilroy: 2004, p.16).

As I documented in Chapters 6 to 8, the supposedly transformative aspect of Fanon’s thesis on violence has been transformed into a diagnostic analysis within colonial discourse that focuses on how transgenerational traumas from colonialism and Apartheid became institutionalised in postcolonial forms of governance, producing haunted, traumatised and alienated subjects endowed with two overlapping and intersecting complexes, due to the nature of the violent entanglement of temporalities in the South African postcolony, or what Bhabha calls the in-between space of negotiation and translation. Reiterating Mbembe’s argument in *Necropolitics* (2019), instead of the discourse of revolutionary African nativist violence being a cure, as a pharmakon, it has further poisoned the wound (Mbembe: 2019, p.3). The diagnosis of two overlapping and intersecting complexes was explained as follows. The first pertains to a Foucauldian and Lacanian re-reading of Fanon and Biko that focuses on the development of the inferiority complex, a structural trauma established by colonialism, refined by Apartheid and continued into the postcolony because of the nature of South Africa’s racial heterotopia (Van der Merwe and Godoba-Madikizela: 2007, p.12; Villet: 2015). The second complex I discussed, is the neurosis of victimisation, a transgenerational trauma that results from the repression of traumatic secrets, or phantoms, in colonial discourse that need to be illuminated for therapy to occur. This is a hauntological position that posits that those primarily haunted are not the direct victims of Apartheid (those that lived in between 1948-1994), but those who were born with ‘no memory’ of the period – the generation referred to as ‘born-frees’. There are two intergenerational traumas addressed in this thesis:

- 1) The original fratricide at the time of the slave, producing collective neuroses in the form of the neurosis of victimisation, and the repetition of necropolitical violence via the inversion of colonial metaphysics – a neurosis of victimisation and politics of resentment. Politicians and scholars thereby identify with notions of racial homogeneity that are uncritically reflected in their appropriation of wider phantomic aspects of ostensibly leftist Pan African, Afro-Marxist and nativist discourses, producing xenophobic and misogynistic practices – a devitalised conviviality.
- 2) The national partitioning of land. Although settler colonialism in South Africa was undergirded by a genocidal impulse or death drive, the meagre European population rendered the total destruction of the native population untenable. Necropolitical

governance ensued via the dispossession and annexation of land, first in 1913, and then through forced removals from the 60s to the 70s (Mills: 1997; Thompson: 1990, p.37). This created both an urban-rural divide and Manichean forms of racial spatialization (Mamdani: 2015, p.596) that have engendered the inferiority complex with which South Africans are familiar.

Lastly, in the postcolonial potentate, the notion of technology enabled me to understand how the victimisation complex, a neurosis, is institutionalised in governmental practices. As noted in a previous paper (Naicker and Luckett: 2022), the ‘narratives, legends and stories’ that were drawn around the Black Atlantic from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century became a political rationality insofar as institutional, psychic and material relations were immanent in productive power/knowledge relations that took shape with the formation of the first narrative of Black reason. This tradition/ discourse was built on in the second narrative in the form of anti-colonial and postcolonial discourses (Mbembe: 2017). Thus, these narratives ‘were transformed into genuine systems of knowledge and institutional practices whose effects have endured until today’ (Mbembe: 2002, p.631).<sup>xxiv</sup> In section 5.4, I argued that these nativist and Afro-Marxist discourses provide, at best, an intellectually weak foundation for the governance of contemporary African populations, fostering a notion of victimisation over subjecthood. The contradiction of Biko’s technology of the self is that it does, at one level, provide a politicised route out of the necropolitical forms of governance and the first form of Black reason that permeated colonialism. Although AZAPO did address class and gender issues in the 1980s, in the context of the #MustFall protests, it became evident that the historical pathologies related to a stereotypical identification with African homogeneity and a neurosis of victimisation were reactivated in contemporary student politics. For example, a form of violent masculinity was produced in South Africa’s historically most elite university that mirrored the misogynist behaviour of the Jacob Zuma, which designates the socialisation of patriarchal, ‘big man’ politics (Gqola: 2015, p.146). This can lead to conspicuous forms of consumption, mutual forms of conviviality or intimate, xenophobic, and patriarchal forms of violence – problems which continue to undermine the formation of rational subjectivity and the birth of a truly democratic and equal society.

There is one last question to be addressed in conclusion to this thesis, the problem of death. Of course, this can never be completely answered, in the same way as complete closure and fulfilment are impossible. By re-reading Biko’s Black Consciousness philosophy as a Foucauldian technology of the self that pivots on the problem of *parrhesia*, death always

becomes a risk that the subject has to take. However, as I have shown in my analysis of necropolitics in Chapter 6, in the context of settler colonialism in South Africa, death practices are indeed primary, and therefore we might need to acknowledge, as Achille Mbembe has, that with the becoming black of the world, and the regime of the Anthropocene, life has become extremely precarious, not only for South Africans, but for the entire planet; although it remains true that the poor, throughout the world, will face the worst consequences. This means that life and death are no longer opposites, if they ever have been. As Freud demonstrated, the two reciprocally condition one another. This precarity, which in its extreme proportions may be experienced as a living death, is something that I believe cannot be shattered by any form of violence, divine or otherwise – for violence is merely another death practice.

In concluding, I would like to emphasise one lesson to be learnt from the care of the self, which pertains to the xenophobic and patriarchal dangers intrinsic to Biko's metaphysical notion of African homogeneity. One of the premises of Heidegger's work, and Foucault's notion of the care of the self, is that the inability to comprehend one's own mortality has led to the production of Western religious metaphysical systems (an ontotheology) which, as I have argued, are violent, exclusionary and indissociable from the racial ideology of colonisation. For Foucault, the shift to Christianity and the focus on salvation after life meant that the care of the self was forgotten (as was Being for Heidegger, with the advance of Plato's discourse on the immortality of the soul and the forms). Thus, we lost a disposition that was philosophical and ethical (insofar as one could only care for others if one also cared for oneself), and most importantly, a self-relation in which a certain harmony (between *logos* and *bios*) and serenity could be attained, which enables virtues such as courage to form. As Achille Mbembe has already warned, African thought – Bikoists included – has internalised and inverted Western metaphysics, which has been expressed in a politics of resentment in which many young South Africans remain mired. My concluding argument, following section 7.6, is that facing death via care of the self, when exercised properly as *parrhesia*, has the capacity to shift moral and metaphysical systems so that we may be aware of the epistemological indeterminacy and the rivers of time that both shape us into who we are, and one day, as we slip into the void, take us away. Perhaps living hand in hand and facing our own death – our precarity and that of the planet – is a pre-requisite for an ethical politics that can no longer be grounded by a metaphysics that, as a form of wish-fulfilment, renders us incapable of engaging with an otherness, human or otherwise. Doing so could allow us to become different subjects, no longer haunted by the phantoms of yesterday.

Thus, I argue, in response to my research questions set out in the Introduction, that the value of Biko's work is that he creates a political identity that, when refined through genealogical problematization, engenders a mode of self-transformation predicated on a celebratory and affirmative politics of difference, affinity and identification, constituting a transnational diasporic community that overcomes national consciousness, thereby attaining Fanon's social consciousness. This rereading could overcome the problems with Biko's account - his focus on African homogeneity (or the metaphysics of negritude) and its relationship to patriarchy. Such an approach is necessary for a postcolonial ethos to be constituted, that might enable the construction of new worlds and a new horizon of possibilities for a truly just and sustainable future.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> In this thesis, unfortunately I cannot provide a singular and simple definition of discourse. This is because the meaning of the term changed throughout Foucault's career and took on more and somewhat contradictory connotations in the course of the development of postcolonial studies. In the process of writing this thesis, I have examined the notion of discourse, and colonial discourse from different angles dependent on particular problems, and thinker(s) in question. My intention in writing this footnote is to sketch a general outline of the essential components of the term, first by Foucault and then by postcolonial theorists. In Foucault's archaeological period, Foucault explicitly articulates discourse as a nuanced form of linguistics, insofar as his central term, the statement 'is the modality of existence of signs' (EAK, p. 114). According to Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, a comparison between Foucault's notion of the statement and the concept of 'speech acts, of John Austin and formalized by John Searle is 'highly illuminating' (Dreyfus and Rabinow: 1983, p. 45-46). Unlike Searle, Foucault is not concerned with 'every day speech acts. Rather, Foucault is interested in just those types of speech acts that are divorced from the local situation of assertion and from the shared everyday background so as to constitute an everyday realm' (Dreyfus and Rabinow: 1983, p. 46-47). In Foucault's archaeological period, these statements are rules that regulate a discursive formation, with rules defined as the relations between statements (EAK, p. 126; Dreyfus and Rabinow: 1983, p. 52). Thus, Foucault moves away from earlier theories of language that were primarily concerned with the relations between signification and mental representations, to focus on the materiality of discursive practices that constitute objects that are spoken about (Dreyfus and Rabinow: 1983, p. 62). According to Gary Gutting, Foucault claims there are 'rules of "discursive formations"' (the bodies of discourse that express the scientific and would-be-scientific disciplines), beyond those of grammar and logic. These rules materially constrain the possibilities of what can be said and define a limited conceptual domain in which the thought of a certain period about a given subject-matter must operate' (Gutting: 2015, p 12).

Foucault's concern in his earlier career is knowledge and not thought, therefore it is possible to think outside of discursive rules and claim that there is a purple dragon breathing fire in the sky, which would have counted as knowledge in the renaissance episteme governed by the resemblance of the sign (OD, p. 43; Gutting: 1989, p. 6). In his archaeological period, Foucault's discursive domain is autonomous insofar as discursive relations unify and impose order by 'stablishing relations' between primary relations (relations 'between institutions, techniques, social forms') (EAK, p. 52) and secondary relations ('those found in the way practicing subjects reflectively define their own behaviour'-such as individual theories (Dreyfus and Rabinow: 1983, p. 63; EAK, p. 52-53). In his archaeological period., Foucault's method exposed deep synchronic structures, 'or the epistemic unconscious' (Gutting: 2015, p. 12), discursive formations that created discontinuity in the history of knowledge. However, the problem with rendering discursive formations autonomous was an inability to explain how these rules were formulated inductively (in this light, the problems of transcendental idealism were replicated), with the notion of agency and change being subordinated to the autonomy of discursive relations. With the shift to his genealogical methodology, Foucault moved on to discontinuity to acknowledging discursive ruptures and recuperation in the history of thought (SMD, p. 135; Stoler: 1995, p. 23). By emphasizing the interrelation of social power (as non-discursive relations), and discursive relations, genealogy is thus a 'diachronic technique for understanding the emergence of new disciplines and the discursive formations that structure them'(Gutting: 2015, p. 12). Apart from the work of the early Said which is close to Foucault (see Chapter 3), postcolonial scholars from Hall to Bhabha to Mbembe differentiate their analysis from Foucault's later work by incorporating psychoanalysis into a primarily diagnostic register. By combining psychoanalysis and discourse analysis, postcolonial theorists focus on three tropes: othering, agency/transformation and a diagnosis of the colonial and colonised subject (Mills: 1997, p.105-129; Mbembe: 2001, p. 257). However, the articulation of the tropes, and their relation to one another is dependent on the form of psychoanalysis used and a particular understanding of the social which will become apparent throughout the course of this thesis.

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ii By pessimism, I am not referring to the opposite of a pre-philosophical optimism. Optimism, as I understand it, philosophically signifies the belief that by removing the logical contradictions that engender social suffering, one can remove them, a position that holds from Socrates to Hegel. By pessimism, I am referring to the hyper-activism advocated by Foucault, where everything is not necessarily bad, such as bourgeoisie conceptions of love, but it might be dangerous. Specifically, Mbembe defines pessimism as a philosophical disposition emanating from the French tradition 'in which to think (*penser*) is the same as to weigh (*peser*) and expose', which corresponds to the traditional German conception of man as *mensch* (he who measures and consequently evaluates). Consequently, critique in its Nietzschean version is total; nothing is spared, even our dearest beliefs. As Mbembe clarifies, the term 'critique is witnessing as well as endless vigilance, interrogation and anticipation, we recognise the moment of pessimism when the layers of the past and the present fall into the void, that a place that is not a place', the postcolony (Mbembe: 2015, p.xv).

iii The notion of resentment was common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Frederic Jameson reminds us that the French bourgeoisie deployed it as an idealistic and psychological category to explain the 'destructive envy the haves-nots feel for the haves' and justify their system of hierarchical privilege in the face of popular and mass uprisings (Jameson, 2002, p.189). Friedrich Nietzsche appropriated this term as a critical concept to deconstruct and diagnose the history of Western metaphysics, morality, and subject formation. He argued that resentment, 'corresponds totally to Judeo-Christian morality' (Nietzsche, 2003, p.146). As he recounted in his genealogy, Judeo-Christian values signified a pathological inversion of noble, aristocratic life affirming values, notably embodied in pre-Socratic tragedy. Christianity engenders several problems, but two are especially malignant. First, Christianity is a reactive life denying force, as it argues that the healthy, pantheistic values that defined aristocratic communities based on honour, enabling natural life to ascend, grow and affirm the harsh conditions of our natural mortal existence were characteristics of a morally evil individual. Thereafter, everything that allows life to ascend becomes evil, and slavish values associated with mediocrity, weakness and herdlike conformity become signs of a harmless good subject. All subjects and cultures that henceforth attempt to establish different values are considered mad or evil. Second, as Gilles Deleuze illustrated formulaically, this represents a shift in the way subjecthood is constituted. The noble subject defines himself as good, as an affirmative act, and only considers other subjects as an afterthought, as bad. The Christian value system on the other hand, does not emanate from an outflowing of self-affirmation, but begins with an apprehension of an 'external hostile' world as evil, before rendering himself as harmless and good. As VY Mudimbe reminded us, colonisation commenced via Christian discourses which stereotyped the African as the symbol of primitive evil (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 64), which instead of being refuted by the oppressed, were internalised and came to form a synthetic combination with African cultures to produce new forms of racial subjectivity. According to Achille Mbembe, African discourses on the self have continued to operate within this Christian discursive framework, to the extent that the racial and colonial categories continue to be used but now the values behind such categories have been inverted and internalised, signalling the creation of nativistic conceptions of an essentially good homogenous subject, defined in response to a hostile world of evil others, mostly whiteness, which in the South African postcolony becomes a phobogenic object, albeit one that vacillates between desire and derision. Therefore, African discourses are reactive because they are only concerned with writing back to the west, instead of creative forms of self-affirmation and creation (Nietzsche, 1989; Deleuze: 1983; Mbembe: 2002; Diagne, 2002, p.623). For further information, see my analysis of the concept in, Naicker, V. 2019.

Resentment in the Postcolony: A Nietzschean analysis of Self and Other, in, *Angelaki: Theoretical Journal of the Humanities*, (24) 2, pp 61-77. For further clarification please see, Naicker, V and Lockett, K, (forthcoming) 'Haunting in a Postcolony: Race, Place and the Confessional Production of Evil on a South African Campus', in, *Memory and Identity: Ghosts of the Past in the English-speaking World*.

iv Some scholars may find the sociological application of the term, 'postcolony' to the South African post-apartheid context problematic. Although the term was initially used in the African novel, Achille Mbembe transposed it to the fields of political and social research, in his classic text, *On the Postcolony* (2001). Richard Pithouse argues that the Zuma regime in South Africa (2009-2017) exhibited the features of a postcolony: particularly its rot and melancholia. Although Pithouse justifies the use of the term to explicate the Zuma years, the term had been discussed some years earlier in a collection of essays ('Law and Disorder in the Postcolony') derived from a conference organised by the Comaroff's, which, in conversation with Mbembe and other prominent postcolonial scholars, sought to establish the term 'postcolony' as a general feature of postcolonial societies. Thereafter, the term was used to analyse the South African post-apartheid context by the Comaroff's (2006), Morris (2006) and Mbembe (2006) prior to the emergence of the Zuma regime, in order to emphasize the features it shared with other postcolonies in Latin America, Asia and Africa. For my purposes, the use of the term firstly signifies a disavowal of the idea of South African exceptionalism.

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More importantly, I argue that the postcolony -although characterised by rampant inequality, illegality, spectacle, violence and disorder - is the product of a distinctly postcolonial rationality, which is always a particular appropriation of the rationalities constituting a particular iteration of colonial governmentality. Conceptualising colonialism as a mode of governmentality, or a rationality is consequently a different approach from Marxist political economy, structuralism, or phenomenology. It seeks to understand how political rationalities, such as necropolitics and epistemic relations produce a colonial subjectivity as a lived reality. Although I have marked Necropolitics as a global problem, essentially, what is distinct about the South African postcolony is the historical concatenation of a settler colonial variant of necropolitics, temporally entangled with a growing evangelical politics of the belly (Posel and Van Wyk: 2019). As Suren Pillay has demonstrated, the development of Apartheid as the systematization of colonial logics both enforced assimilation and difference through complex forms of racial ‘stereotypical governance’ - which I suggest necessitates less an analysis of the national, or ethnic traditions in South Africa - but rather of the colonial apparatus (rationality or dispositifs) that has produced them (Pillay: 2021).

<sup>v</sup> Although I have cited Chapter 2 from Mbembe’s text ‘*Necropolitics*’ (2019), the original essay from the text was published as ‘*The Society of Enmity*’, in ‘*Radical Philosophy*’ (2016).

<sup>vi</sup> My use and definition of capital in this thesis corresponds to a broadly Marxist understanding. According to the sociologist, Anthony Giddens, capital is ‘simply any asset that can be invested in so as to secure further assets: it thus includes money, the most fluid form of capital of all, and the means that makes production possible: workshops, tools and so on; and, after the phase of industrialisation, factories and machines.’ (Giddens: 1986, p. 34).

<sup>vii</sup> According to Judith Butler, ‘the formulation of subjection as both the subordination and becoming of the subject, power is, as subordination, a set of conditions that precedes the subject, effecting and subordinating the subject from the outside. This formulation falters, however, when we consider that there is no subject prior to this effect. Power not only acts on a subject but, in a transitive sense, enacts the subject into being. As a condition, power precedes the subject. Power loses its appearance of priority, however, when it is wielded by the subject, a situation that gives rise to the reverse perspective that power is the effect of the subject, and that power is what subjects effect. A condition does not enable or enact without becoming present. Because power is not intact prior to the subject, the appearance of its priority disappears as power acts on the subject, and the subject is inaugurated’ See Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1997, p.13). I argue that Foucault’s dual notion of subjectification/ subjectivisation (which both translate to the badly translated French terms *assujettissement*) displaces the traditional metaphysical distinction between first and second nature into two partial processes – a technology of domination in which a subject is passively objectified and goes through a continual process of subjectification. Secondly, the subject is not only passive, but maintains an active relation of power to the moral codes that govern society, an ethical technology of the self.

<sup>viii</sup> I have demonstrated from my analysis of Stoler’s work, that the constitution of modernity and colonialism are inextricable. Through her analysis, I have demonstrated Foucault’s analysis of race, and its relationship to biopolitics and colonialism. Through a careful analysis, I demonstrated how many of Europe’s modern institutions, specifically those that can be distinguished as panoptic practices, were developed in the process of colonialism, and were then imported back home.

<sup>ix</sup> The notion of the supernatural is not considered literally but presupposes what Weber calls the disenchantment of the modern world. Consequently, what was classified as a supernatural phenomenon comes to be distinguished from the natural, which is consequently redefined as the realm of the empirically real, where objects of knowledge can be ascertained. ‘The uncanny arises out of the supposedly and necessarily empty category of the supernatural ... it seems to testify to something fundamentally alienated and dislocated that is pervasive within the modern conception of selfhood’ (Jervis and Collins: 2008, p.2). According to Luckhurst, for the past twenty years, Western culture has been redefining the contemporary subject in relation to Freud’s reading of the uncanny, under the same master trope, trauma.

<sup>x</sup> According to Biehl, ‘Following Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault, philosopher Giorgio Agamben argues that the original political element of sovereign power in Western democracies is “not simple natural life, but life exposed to death”’ (1998: p.24). In *The Human Condition* (1958), Arendt argued that after World War II, political action has been increasingly focused on the control of natural life and biological processes. Agamben points out that the determinant structure of our modern inherited ways of ordering public spaces and political relations is in relation to a ban. “The ban is essentially the power of delivering something over to itself, which is to say, the power of maintaining itself in relation to something presupposed as nonrelational. What has been banned is delivered over to its own separateness and, at the same time, consigned to the mercy of the one who abandons it – at once excluded and included, removed and at the same time captured”’ (1998: pp.109–110). In the body of *homo sacer*, political and social forms of life have entered into a symbiosis with death without it belonging to the world of the deceased. The original political element of sovereign power is ‘not simple natural life, but life exposed to death’ (Biehl: 2006, pp.262-263)

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<sup>xi</sup> This artificial separation of culture and nature was challenged in the mid twentieth century by environmental historians, who sought to minimise the conceptual cleft between natural and human history, by conceptualising human beings as primarily biological agents. This division was eventually closed at the turn of the millennium, when the term Anthropocene was issued to describe an entirely new ecological and social configuration which depended on a shift in conceptualisation, from human beings as biological agents to the notion of human beings at the species level, as geological agents or more pointedly, a geological force (Chakrabarty: 2009, p. 206). For Chakrabarty,

‘There has been no point in history when human beings were not biological agents. But we can become agents only historically and collectively, that is, when we have reached numbers and invented technologies that are on a scale large enough to have an impact on the planet itself. To call ourselves geological agents is to attribute to us a force on the same scale as that released when there has been a mass extinction of species’ (Chakrabarty: 2009, p. 206-207).

Two issues are worth elaborating upon. One, although some scientists date the Anthropocene to the birth of agriculture, there is a consensus that the global warming of the planet can be dated to 1750, coinciding with two other serious events: a) the creation of the steam engine - setting of the first wave of industrialisation that we associate with the birth of the modern world; b) the institutionalisation of philosophical debates on freedom, which continue to permeate the humanities despite our current condition as a geological force. Consequently, Chakrabarty does not differentiate between capitalism and socialism, insofar as both have had the same position towards fossil fuels - presupposed by a categorical distinction between nature and human society that masters an unchanging natural environment (Chakrabarty: 2009, p. 209-210). Two, while Chakrabarty may have a point, since the 1980’s scholars have documented the collapse of socialism as a global force, and the expansion of neo-liberal capitalism, which has led to a new condition mentioned in Chapter 5 - the ‘becoming black of the world’ which describes how the evolutionary relationship between capital and necropolitics has produced the Anthropocene.

<sup>xii</sup> In *Necropolitics*, Achille Mbembe argues that necropolitics is predicated on the sovereign decision to decide ‘who is disposable and who is not’. Mbembe’s concept of sovereignty is drawn from the work of Carl Schmidt, indissociable from the latter’s friend/enemy distinction which structures the ‘sovereign power’ to choose the exception, which is exercised via radical forms of exclusion (Gressgard: 2019, p. 11). In the case of Apartheid, my analysis conforms to Mbembe’s traditional idea that a state of exception is effectuated by the state’s decision to declare a state of emergency. According to Stephen Morton,

‘In the narrow terms of South African law, the state of emergency has its provenance in the South African Public Safety Act. In some respects, the language and principles of the Public Safety Act of 1953 may appear to mirror the emergency legislation of other governments... the Public Safety Act empowered “the state president to declare by proclamation in the Gazette that a state of emergency exists within the Republic... The president’s powers under this Act included “the prohibition of gatherings and processions, the dispersal by force of illegal gatherings, the detention of persons without trial or access, broad and sweeping crimes and the suppression of publications and organizations” (Morton: 2010, p. 492).

The total power of the Apartheid state would thus be vested in the figure of President, enabling him to use the naked force of military and security apparatuses without adhering to any standard law. Officially, the state of Emergency was declared after the Sharpeville massacre, where 67 peaceful Black protestors were murdered by the State security forces (Morton: 2010, p.492). The justification behind such a move is the ostensible ‘safety’ or ‘security’ of the population, that is, white South Africa citizens. The essential difference between necropolitics in Apartheid South Africa and post-Apartheid South Africa, or rather the postcolonial potentate is that ‘it is not necessary to declare a state of emergency in order to legitimize exceptional politics’ (Gressgard: 2019, p. 12). Instead of subsuming necropolitics into emergency politics, it is more insightful to articulate a genealogy of normalized death practices that include, ‘racial slavery, apartheid, colonial occupation and splintering urbanism’ (Gressgard: 2019, p. 14). These practices cannot be read in a purely linear fashion as splintering urbanism was a part of colonial occupation and apartheid. Splintering urbanism is central to understanding the racialisation of space that characterises necropolitical territorialisation. Splintering urbanism is defined as the ‘regulation of protected urban zones that are disconnected from the overall city – from circuits of exchange and interaction.. thus effectively depriving spatially confined populations of rights, protection and legitimacy’ (Gressgard: 2019, p. 15).

<sup>xiii</sup> Taylor has argued that an autonomous civil society and public sphere are central to the moral order of the modern social imaginary. Within these spaces, free expression and discussion are cherished as liberties outside the gambit of the control of the state or any arbitrary abuse of power (Taylor: 2006, p.26). Gramsci’s notion of hegemony has been central in social theory in the West because the institutional structures of civil society were more advanced than in Eastern Europe or Russia. Western civil society had the two-fold capacity to gain mass consent for bourgeoisie policy and act autonomously and question whether way the modern state governed its citizens tilted toward domination (Gramsci: 1971, p.406). Foucault’s work on governmentality operates within this historical tension, as the ‘transactional sphere’ (BB, p.18) of conduct and counter-conduct, a field of freedom. However, in many parts of the formerly colonised world, or the postcolony, subjects of the state do not enjoy the liberties of a secular public space or autonomous civil society that can resist the authoritarian

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domination of the state (Taylor: 2002). For an analysis of this phenomenon in the postcolonial world, specifically the Indian context see Partha Chatterjee's neo-Gramscian distinction between civil and political society. In Chatterjee's analysis, only the minority, such as nationalist elites and the urban middle classes have access to the liberties of civil society. For more on political society as the novel space of postcolonial governmentality in India see: Chatterjee, P. 2004. *Politics of the Governed: Reflections on popular politics in most of the world*, Columbia University Press, New York; and Chatterjee, P. 2011. *Lineages of Political society: Studies in Postcolonial Democracy*, Permanent Black, New Delhi.

<sup>xiv</sup> To make a transition from the neurosis to a reciprocal and humanist space of recognition called Afropolitanism and a space of the in-common of belonging, Mbembe declares

'There is no way we will overcome the neurosis of victimization if, by transferring the past into our subjective present, we root our identities in injury alone ... Successful transition can only be effected under conditions of sustained economic growth ... A renewal of the virtue of intellectual curiosity has to replace the current syndrome of victimization. Bridges have to be built between a new social science and the various domains of the humanities, including philosophy, the arts, music, architecture, film and design. Such would be some of the attributes of an Afro-cosmopolitanism firmly rooted in the continent, but mindful of the force and wealth Africa's multiple internal and external diasporas represent' (Mbembe in Holler: 2007, p., x).

<sup>xv</sup> Please see my analysis of death in section 7.6.2 *The Political Role of Death in Parrehsastic Thought*.

<sup>xvi</sup> In psychoanalysis and social psychology, the analysis of the unconscious is concerned with meaning and therefore with the relationships between signs and different pathological symptoms (Freud: 1999, p.103). Thus, the foremost evidence for the concept and neurotic diagnosis of the unconscious 'occurs in specific forms of behaviour, particularly: hypnosis, dreams, jokes, slips and everyday life, art and psychoanalytic case histories' (Easthope: 2003, p.7).

<sup>xvii</sup> See Chapter 2 of Kwame Anthony Appiah's *My Father's House* (1992) for an analysis of the tensions in Du Bois's theory of race

<sup>xviii</sup> In this thesis, as part of the method of historical ontology my strategy has been to reread and resurrect Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy through the lens of antiquarian and monumental history. This necessitates contrasting BC as a technology of the self with the way it has been constituted in accordance with the ANC's mode of racial governmentality. In Chapter 7, I argued that reconstructing Blackness as a technology of the self, and as mode of agency presupposed the existence of an apartheid system that legally oppressed and disenfranchised the historically colonised. As a form of identification, blackness constitutes a psychic transformation (in Biko's classical terms liberation) that would overcome Apartheid classifications that were used to divide and rule the colonised population. Specifically, BC's conception of a shared blackness was not meant to favour any 'defined subset of the oppressed'(Mare: 2014, p.114). According to Gerhard Mare, with the advent of democracy, South Africa's historically disadvantaged population groups are no longer disenfranchised legally. But matters were further complicated when the ANC adopted the four-nation thesis in combination with race-based modes of redress to the detriment of progressive economic considerations. Within the BEE policy framework employed by the ANC, certain 'black' individuals have become morbidly wealthy (a politics of the belly), without any consideration for those who have not been economically liberated from the structures of Apartheid impoverishment. Veriava and Naidoo argue that in the South African contemporary context, governed by the ANC's 'brand' of racial neoliberal governmentality, Black Consciousness loses its radicality, commodified as 'Black Corporate Consciousness' and the 'Black Pride' of the new elite. I am not claiming that there is any continuity between BC and the ANC's policies on race. Rather my objective has been to resurrect Black Consciousness as critical political heritage in response to the way it has been distorted under ANC neo-liberal hegemony, which Gerhard Mare rightly calls an inversion of its original aims (Mare 2014, p.115). Under ANC racial rule, BC is no longer part of the dialectical-Marxist radical Afrocentric tradition and becomes more closely affiliated with the neo-conservative anti-Western radicalism of Cheikh Anta Diop (Ekpo: 1996, p. 4). At an epistemological level, it also designates a shift from Fanonian constructivism towards a culturally essentialist position associated with Negritude.

<sup>xix</sup> \*Antiracism and anti-imperialism.

\*Noncollaboration with the oppressor and its political instruments.

\*Independent working-class organisations.

\*Opposition to all alliances with ruling class parties.

In accordance with these principles, the oppressed and exploited people of Azania demand immediately:

\*The right to work.

\*The right to form trade unions that will heighten revolutionary worker consciousness.

\*The establishment of a democratic, antiracist worker Republic in Azania where the interests of the worker shall be paramount through worker control through the means of production.

\*State provision of free and compulsory education for all and this education be geared towards liberating the Azanian people from all forms of exploitation and ignorance.

\*State provision of decent and adequate housing.

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\*State provision of free health, legal, recreational and other community services that will respond positively to the needs of the people.

\*Development of one national progressive culture in the process of struggle.

\*The land and all that belongs to it shall be wholly owned and controlled by the Azanian people.

\*The usage of the land and all that accrues to it shall be wholly owned and controlled by the Azanian people.

\*The usage of the land and all that accrues to it shall be aimed at ending all forms and means of exploitation.

In order to bring into effect these demands of the Azanian people, we pledge ourselves to struggle tirelessly for:

\*The abolition of all laws that discriminate against our people on the basis of colour, sex, class, religion or language.

\*The abolition of all influx control measures and pass laws.

\*The abolition of all resettlement and group areas removals.

\*Reintegration of the Bantustan human dumping grounds into a unitary Azania' (Alexander: 2008, pp.168-169).

<sup>xx</sup> Thus, 'the ANC government's turn towards neoliberalism has not only left the legacy of massive inequalities and structural poverty inherited from apartheid but has actually exacerbated them' (Madlingozi: 2007, p.97). Thus, although the South African constitution claims to make room for socio-economic rights such as 'housing, healthcare and security services' and access to the institutions of civil society, these have been largely neglected (Madlingozi: 2007, p.78). Contextually, we need to understand that, historically speaking, social movements against the ANC date back to 1996, but it was really #RMF that drew attention to the pervasive colonial culture that exists within South Africa and highlighted how the intergenerational traumas of colonialism and apartheid continue to permeate this country alongside the intensification of material inequality and deprivation (Long: 2021, p.102; Madlingozi: 2007, p. 86).

<sup>xxi</sup> In agreement, Pithouse argues that the Eurocentric notion of progress required that some classes of human beings were reduced to waste. Furthermore, this notion of waste is the 'other' of the capitalist notion of value. For political modernity to be born, human waste needed to be turned into labour power, exploited by the wage relation (Pithouse: 2012, p. 482).

<sup>xxii</sup> For a reading of African syncretism, see Chapter 4 of VY Mudimbe's *The Invention of Africa* (1988).

<sup>xxiii</sup> At this point I am using Foucault's later understanding of truth, which is related to his later, ethical works. Foucault's work on truth is primarily a critique of post-Cartesian (modern) theories of truth. My project is in no way an endorsement of relativism. Like Hegel, Foucault's later period is concerned with a history of truth, but not one predicated on a progressive teleology that leads to absolute knowledge (Deere: 2017, p.517). According to Deere, Foucault's 'philosophy of truth is certainly not one that seeks to provide a theory of truth as such. It is instead a critical history of different truth regimes, with the aim being not to show that any particular regime is true or false but to demonstrate the rules of construction and the effects and constraints that these regimes have on the subject' (Deere: 2017, p. 526). During his reflections on antiquity, Foucault became explicitly critical of the Cartesian and scientific vision of truth that proposed that the subject has direct, unmediated access to a transparent, independently knowable object. For Foucault, this stands in direct contrast to the relationship between subjectivity and truth that was mediated by 'spirituality'. In his later work, Foucault defines spirituality as 'the set of necessary requirements for the subject to access the truth' (Deere: 2017, p. 523). Foucault's later theory of truth is a critique of Heidegger's notion of *alethia* (the revealing or disclosure of truth). Instead of *alethia*, Foucault uses the term *alethurthy*, which 'combines the Greek word for truth, *aletheia*, with the verb for work or production, *ergon*' (Deere: 2017, p. 523). Thus, for Foucault, there is no independent and objective truth to be found, but rather truth 'is produced through rituals and practices where the subject manifests, recognizes, speaks, or forms an obligation to truth' (Deere: 2017, p.523).

<sup>xxiv</sup> See Naicker, V. and Luckett, K., (forthcoming) 'Haunting in a Postcolony: Race, Place and the Confessional Production of Evil on a South African Campus', in, *Memory and Identity: Ghosts of the Past in the English-speaking World*.

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GSO *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France 1982–1983*, trans. Graham Burchell. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

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