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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCING THE SELF: MBEMBE'S SUBJECT FORMATION

Introduction

This thesis is inspired by the current epistemic break. It is breaking from the knowledge that has been dominant for the past 500 years. This thesis argues that this knowledge was uselful but it is now exhausted in accounting for the lived experience of those who are at the underside of Euro-North American episteme. This thesis is written from the decolonial epistemic perspective—a political, philosophical and critical theoretical approach—which inaugurates the epistemic break from Euro-North American centric episteme which is more about crisis rather than solutions to the human condition. This thesis privileges the existential and experiential sites of humanity of those who have been oppressed, inferiorised, excluded, racialised, and dehumanised. This then speaks to the exhaustive and limits of Euro-North American centric epistemologies and methodologies. Therefore, this thesis is not a descriptive study and it is not about procedures and methods. Rather, it is a political intervention where decolonial critical analysis is deployed as a methodological point of departure as opposed to conventional and dominant methodologies of the Euro-North American centric episteme.

In specific terms, the subject of this thesis is the expostulation of Achille Mbembe as a subject and his subjectivity. While the study is on his subject formation it also reflects on his contribution to African politics. The starting point of this thesis is not a biographical account, but the location of the subject *qua* persona—that is, understanding Mbembe's subjectivity and how his positionality enhanced and shaped his contribution to African politics. But central to this study is the subjectivity of Mbembe as an African subject and how in turn he articulated the African subject's subjection, and subjectivity. In short, the originality of this contribution hinges on the understanding of subjectivity, more so that of the African subject as articulated by Mbembe.

Theoretically, this thesis is specifically informed by decolonial epistemic perspective. This epistemic perspective is deployed as the epistemological foundation underpinning this thesis. Through this epistemological foundation, Mbembe's thinking and ideas are closely examined as they have a bearing on his understanding of the African subject, its subjection, and subjectivity in the postcolony. Pertinent themes that feature in Mbembe's varied work include modes of self-writing, power in the postcolony, politics of violence in Africa, Frantz Fanon's political thought, and the idea of South Africa. These aforementioned aspects feature in the chapters that constitute this thesis and they are examined in detail to bring to the fore the evidence that could advance the frontiers of knowledge. The foundational question of this study is: What is Mbembe's subjectivity, and in which ways does he engage the ontological and epistemological conceptions of the African subject in relation to subjection?

This chapter seeks to understand the political thought of Mbembe, and this is framed not in biographical terms, but in a form of a political critique. This is done by asking who Mbembe is as a theorist and African scholar, and this is framed along the lines of the emergence of the subject. To gain a nuanced understanding of Mbembe, it is important to understand his educational voyage and some of the conical texts that influenced him, and how influential are they to the development of his political thought. In addition, the movement of Mbembe from Cameroon, to France, to the United States and back to Africa—the tri-continental move—is important to examine. Decolonial critical analysis as a method is introduced as the intervention in researching the African subject, its subjection, and subjectivity.

Locating the subject

Achille Mbembe is a social and political theorist, a philosopher and public intellectual. He originates, by birth and nationality, from Cameroon where he acquired elementary education, then proceeded to Paris as a student and moved to New York as a young scholar and then back to Africa in Senegal (Oboe 2010). In Senegal he was the Executive Director of Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA) and is now a research professor of history and politics as the University of the Witwatersrand's Institute of Social

and Economic Research at University of the Witwatersrand (WISER) in Johannesburg, South Africa. Mbembe is also a visiting professor at Duke University and also Harvard University. Mbembe's contribution as an African scholar to African politics is well known and his seminal and controversial essays among many others 'Provisional Notes on the Postcolony', 'African Modes of Self-Writing' and his book *On the Postcolony* have made a distinct contribution to African politics. To answer the question of who is Mbembe, the answer is—'one of the most original voices in contemporary culture and thought' (Oboe 2010: 1). Gordon (2008: 238) states that 'Mbembe is perhaps one of the greatest living prose-writers in contemporary African thought'. On that note, the persona of Mbembe is that which is linked to intellectual roots.

The intellectual location of Mbembe, his intellectual positionality is important for an understanding of Mbembe's take on various aspects of the African condition. This is because he is the public persona; for that reason the private will not be essential since this is not a biographical account, but Mbembe's thought on the African subject, its subjectivity and subjection. Mbembe has made a huge contribution to African politics to set the agenda and also to pace debates and discourses. However, his locus of enunciation is rooted in the French archive and also the colonial library that constrain his understanding of the African condition and subjectivity. Mudimbe's (1994) conception of the colonial library denotes the capture of Africa in the Euro-North American literature and epistemic practices in general. Mbembe's interventions are not free from the Euro-North American dominant archive. Mbembe is not reading and reaching Africa from inside as he deliberately locates himself in the colonial metropolis rather than in Africa as the locus of enunciation. The African archive is relegated to footnotes in his analysis of the African condition and he adopts the Hegelian approach that lends authority and priority to modernity, imperiality and coloniality as taken-for-granted universalisms.

It is essential then to provide a brief exposition of the concept of the subject both ontologically and epistemologically. The self in the form of the figure of the Western subject is in the *imaginaire* of the power structure that created it, its face and physicality, and to think and act in that image. In this form, this creates the basis of subjection in multitudinal terms. It is essential to discover the subject

position of Mbembe within this context of the subject, to ascertain the direction of subjectivity preoccupying his political thought, hence the problematic of Mbembe's interventions on Africa. The reason behind this is that Mbembe (2002a) has stated his stance of marginality, the figure of the subject who is the subject of free choice—the self-defining subject at the level of identity assumed by the African subject. It is important to point out then how possible is it for Mbembe to be alien to Africa and theorise it from outside. Mbembe can hold, it seems, on to the assertion that 'subjectivity begins only with separation' (Layton 2008: 62). The figure of the subject exists in particular material and existential conditions—that is, the subject position predicated on the politics of identity as fluid and not fixed.

Identity can be understood in at least three aspects for the purpose of this study. The first is identity in the form the self that has free choice, that is, the self that makes itself a subject. Secondly, identity can be understood in the form of imposition, the very thing of creating the "Other" who constitutes exteriority. And thirdly, identity can be understood in the form of social engagement rules. These aspects of identity are essential when it comes to the African subject and also when it comes to the understanding of Mbembe as the self-defining subject. The self-defining subject is that of self-creation and subject-in-the-making. These aspects mean different things to the Western subject, the self-defining subject and the African subject. The African subject is in the worst condition when it comes to the level of identity, and as such an identity is imposed because the African subject is the product of the Western subject's construction and definition.

> The self that views itself has a sharp awareness of the fact that what it sees beyond the material screen is indeed itself or, in any case, a reflection of itself. This power can be called the *power of reflection.* The same self can, after the act of looking at itself, remember more or less clearly its own reflection or shadow (Mbembe 2003b: 4; emphasis original).

Mbembe's identity of the self as self-defined subject seems to suggest that he has the power, just like the Western subject, to define and to assert himself in the world in general, and the world of the Western subject in particular. The Western subject transforms itself into a master subject. It completes itself by imposing the

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lack and void to the 'Other', the very basis that explains subject and the subjectivity that emerges through imposing subjection on the 'Other'. In Lacanian terms, the Western subject develops fantasy, it develops the imaginary, it develops symbolism and it develops the figure of the 'real' (Neill 2008). This is at the hub of operationalising a high proportion of signification to the Western subject.

In relation to the above, it is clear that the colonial encounter is important in understanding the structural positionality and the emergence of the African subject. The colonial encounter is also related to the process of self-mastery by the Western subject-as-Master reference. Mbembe's political thought is therefore central to understand the notion of the subject, from the theory of the African subject. This justifies the political project that Mbembe advances in the field of African politics. This, by and large, is through the means of textuality. Mbembe as a subject cannot be understood in a vacuum but is essential to state the subject formation of the African subject. This does not, however, suggests that Mbembe is the African subject for that this is what he rejects, even though not outrightly, as he locates himself in the Atlantic sense of the self. The aspect of the political is the subject and its subjectivity. For Dunst and Edwards (2011) though, the subject is the political. The act of the subject is the political act. The political act means the emergence of the subject. Though this has been the total domain of the Western subject, it is essential to engage Mbembe's intervention that puts to the fore the subject that Layton (2008) regards as the divided subject, the subject divided against itself.

Mbembe (2001a) advocates for, at least, what can be understood to be the 'subject of free choice', the self-defining subject. This subject, as Mbembe (2001a) states, chooses and asserts itself in the world, the world of good neighbourliness. This subject constitutes what Layton (2008: 62) calls the 'signs of a separate subjectivity from the outset'. The self finds itself in multiplicity of locales and re-connected, not as the part of the local but part of the global shaped by the unstable lived experiences (Housley 2009). Indeed, there will be a challenge to ask Mbembe if he is an African subject, without necessarily imputing essentialism.

The Western subject and the construction of the African subject

In the dawn of Western modernity that, by and large, is the rapture moment of the colonial encounter, there came the Western subject. According to Neill (2008), the notion of the Western subject is *cogito* grounded on the canonical reading of René Descartes. This is the self as searching, and in a moment of constant skepticism. Descartes with the notion of 'cogito ergo sum'—that is, 'I think; therefore I am' constitutes the basis of the Western subject, the 'Other' who is the lacking subject. As Mudimbe (2013: 245) notes, '[t]he *cogito* is a machine, quasi-literally, that is very Cartersian'. According to Neill (2008: 326), '[t]he *cogito* advances a notion of the self as located in thought'. This then brings the question of what features in is thought—more so, about the African subject. The ontology of the Western subject comes into being simply because it is the ontology of the rational being, the being that engages in the continuum of thought through self-doubt, it seems though, indefinitely. In short, the Western subject is defined by rationality and is the master of reason.

The entry point therefore, is that of the positionality of the Western subject. It is important to understand the Western subject and not to reject such a subject and its subjectivity outright, since this will not permit the understanding of the African subject in the point of its existence and its emergence. So, the construction of the African subject at the level of subjectivity is key to understanding its positionality. So then, the subject position of both the Western and African subjects can provide a conflicting interpretation of material and existential conditions that exists. The Western subject assumes the ego ideal of the 'I'—the autonomous self, the hybrid self in contrast with the primitive, static, backward, deviant, sexually licentious and so forth—the Other self that is not the self in full essence since it constitutes lack and/or the incomplete subject so to say. All these create the African subject and such a subject should be understood in relation to the Western subject in the point of emergence.

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For, Mbembe emphasises the individualist concepotion of the self as opposed to the self as a collective entity, it then means that his meditations of the self are within the conception of the Western subject. Of course, it is not explicit on how the conception of the 'Other' in Mbembe's meditations of the conception of the self is framed. For Lacan (1978: 37), the concern is 'the correlative of the subject is no longer the deceiving Other, but the deceived Other'. The Lacanian intervention is not *cogito* but thought as the self and social (Neill 2008). The thinking transcends Descartes for that the Western subject thinks with the 'Other'. It is asserted by Neill that Lacan had the colonial encounter in mind, though not of the Western subject and the African subject—but the class antagonism of the Western subjects. As Hudson (2006: 303) explains, '[a]ntagonism, qualifies the coefficient of self-identity of subject-positions, but doesn't erase the need for the subject—subject position distinction itself'. So, the antagonism of the African subject should be understood within the realm of a fully identical subject—to itself. But then, Hudson's explanation is not sufficient when the African subject which is said to constitute lack and void existence, when the element of incomplete existence is introduced. These even latches on to Lacan's ego identification, though it can be stretched to suggest the misrecognition of the 'Other'—that is, the African subject at the receiving end of degrading comparison: nothing compensates the subject position of the African subject.

The state of comparison is ego-identification—the Western subject inferiorising the African subject to fill its incompleteness and void—that is, the construction of its completeness. Neill (2008) argues that in Lacanian terms, the subject constitutes lack and void. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013a), subjection creates a kind of African subjectivity that is enclaved with the colonial stereotype of being characterised by lack and deficit. As these are constitutive features of the Western subject, they get transposed to the African subject to negate its subjecthood and rendering such a subject that constitutes lack and void, to the point of course, of its subjetion. Subjection, as Butler (1997: 2) defines it, 'signifies the process of becoming subordinated by power as well as the process of becoming a subject'. As Butler further notes, subjection constitutes the paradox of referentiality in that it must refer to what does not exist—that is, the

African subject. Subjection when it comes to the African subject involves ontological suspension (Butler 1997).

The Western subject is the subject of self-mastery, discovery of the worlds and mastering the 'Other'—that is, the subject that differs from the Western subject. The Western subject stands in the positionality of mastery *qua* broader terrains of ontology and epistemology that together constitute the grounds for constructing the African subject outside the realm of its own existence. According to Said (1989), the Western subject masters the world through colonising and changing the terms of engagement by having the arbitrary fashion of defining, naming, categorising, labeling, identifying and mapping. This is because the Western subject has its own laws that are imposed through subjection in various degrees of being—direct and indirect. The idea of the Western subject means the sovereign subject who invades in arbitrary fashion, hence the Westen subject's privilege to construct the African subject.

What then, is the relevance of the African subject in this colonial ontological and epistemological schema of the Western subject? Three answers are essential in explaining this phenomenon that is essentially that of subjection. Firstly, it is the filling of the void and lack to the 'Other', the African subject. The representative and conceptions of the African subject as the lacking subject continue to stigmatise it is as such. Dunst and Edwards (2011) call for the reconceptualisation of the subject to say that the constitutiveness and contestation of the subject explains how the subject formation takes place. This of course, is different when taking the African subject into account, hence the concern of the study to understand the emergence of the African subject. This is how Said echoes this point:

> Thus the status of coloni[s]ed people has been fixed in zones of dependency and peripherality, stigmati[s]ed in the designation of underdeveloped, less developed, developing state, ruled by a superior, developed, or metropolitan coloni[s]er who was theoretically posited as a categorically antithetical overlord (Said 1989: 207).

The notion of lack, void and deficiency of the African subject means the category of lesser beings, inferior things in many different places and in different times. The conception of the world is that of the Western subject as a complete subject

and the African subject as incomplete. The Western subject, according to Mbembe (2001a) requires itself as the marker of difference, and it is the self that is endwed with reason and aspiring for transcendence. For Mbembe, the Western subject regards itself as a living being, and it is obvious through this constant comparison with the African subject that the latter will be the figure of the negative. What the African subject is said to lack among other things are morals, civilisation, epistemologies, peace, cognitive strength, Christianity, industrialisation, sexual mores, democracy, and human rights, to name but a few. This laid the justification of colonialism, to absolve it and to humanise it to say that its purpose was to transform and bring salvation to the African subject who was in the brink of self-mutilation, auto-destruction and therefore depletion. The African subject 'belongs to the *universe of immediate things*—useful things when needed, things that can be molded and mortal, futile and superfluous things, if need be' (Mbembe 2001a: 187 emphasis original). In short, the purported intention of the Western subject was to transform the African subject from the barbarian to a citizen that would then make the African subject to be a complete subject. Yet it is known that this is an illusion since the African subject was and is prevented from becoming a complete subject, a human being.

Secondly, the Western subject creates a split consciousness in the process of subjection directed to the African subject. In this instance, there is a total rejection of the self and embrace of the Western subject. This becomes useful in understanding the discourse of alterity. This is where the African subject rejects itself and aims to collapse itself in to the totality of being of the Western subject. If the African subject experiences the lack and void as imposed by the Western subject, the African subject fails to recognise the fact that the Western subject is incomplete itself. Thirdly and finally, the African subject responds to subjection by resisting the discourses of extroversion and alterity. The romanticist idea that is rejectionist and nostalgic becomes nonsensical. With these discourses, the void still cannot be closed and the lack cannot be filled. What is common though, between the Western subject and the African subject is that they both constitute lack and void. The predicament in this commonality though is that power relations are not the same, but asymmetrical. The Western subject innovates to try and close the void and fill the lack in order to realise completeness. On the

other hand, the African subject is told by the Western subject what is its lack and void and how impossible they are to close and fill, thus rendering immutable the subjection.

According to Housely (2009), the subject position is constituted, shaped, and positioned in relation to the lived experience of subject. If this intervention was to be located in the lived experience the explanation would have been different as the subject position of the African subject is determined from without (Fanon [1952] 2008). The subject position of the African subject is that of structural positionality where the African subject is at the receiving end of the self that is given and determined for it. It is this self that is under constant surveillance at the level of the body. As Layton (2008) argues, subjects comply with demands defined and imposed by subjectivity of creating the world. These demands are results of oppressive socio-political norms embedded in structure—that is, subjection. It seems that the notion of the self should comply with the demands of such a world to fit into the notion of 'ideal proper'. The ideal proper can be seen, at the level of the African subject as the starting point of subjection as it works through the logic of imposition.

The self in this process is part of political activity, and the subject position, by and large, is a political project and the one that is intrinsically linked to the identity of the subject. This is connoted in terms of identity, the very basis of subject formation—subjectivity (Pitcher 2011). The identity that Mbembe advocates is that which is in the making and transcends identity markers imposed on the subject. As the self-defined subject, Mbembe (2011) subscribes his identity to a kind of 'worldliness'. As the self-defined subject he claims to challenge identity formation in the politics of belonging. The notion of the self-defined subject, when that subject is not the Western subject presents some problems that will be highlighted. Mbembe's notion of the self-defining subject who is the self as a subject is engaged in multiple and complex existential conditions—that is, the subjectivity in continuum supposes the reclaiming of the subject in full essence. This is amplified by Housely (2009) who argues for the active subject who explains the structural positionality of subjectivity and its relational aspects. If the African subject was be to such a subject—that is, the

active subject perhaps, the predicament still remains on why such a subject cannot disentangle itself from subjection.

That being said, it is essential therefore, to locate the figure of the Western subject in the vortex of power relations that have colonial routes starting from the colonial encounter. So, what should be understood, at least in sketchy terms pointed to above and for the purpose of this study is the Western subject and the construction of the Western subject. The self of the Western subject and the way it has been thought, conceptually and historically is that of the thinking self. This is done in sketchy terms by Van Zyl (2012: 1) who puts it in four senses, that in a way, resonates with the self that is akin to Mbembe. The first is the differentiation of the self that is the individual self, that is, the self that differ from each other. The second is the self at liberty where in that the self is free to choose and also to think. The third includes the self as a citizen who is free to act and the self that has or bears rights. The fourth is the self as self-conscious, the self that has a sense of self-awareness, self-understanding and autonomous. These four senses that Van Zyl mapped out are indeed constitutive and part of the Western subject. They have a sense of interconnectedness.

The Western subject, its subject position assumes the universal self, which is autonomous and rational and, of course, equally free. The Western subject, having this sense of the self, means that the subjectivity of such a subject is indeed that of emergence, existence and authority. The values conferred upon the Western subject are not that of the African subject, to the latter they take the opposite turn, the one that is excessive in terms. So, the self of the Western subject is what creates the ideal of the universal, and its values of enlightenment, democracy and universal human rights (Van Zyl 2012). These are seen as good for any form of a subject, and for that matter, the ones that the African subject should gravitate towards. But then, such subjects having to subscribe to such values cannot in any way attain the full subjectivity of the Western subject, no matter how hard enough they try to fit in the ideal of the universal, or gravitatively imposing themselves towards it.

Žižek (2005) maps three assumptions of the Western subject with its propaganda tool called liberal-capitalist human rights. The first assumption is said to be the

opposition to modes of fundamentalism; second, the propaganda of freedom of choice and the allied freedom to operate in the pursuit of one's pleasure; and lastly, serving as a defense to the excess of power. Žižek warns of these three assumptions in the following account. He states that those who are fighting against fundamentalism, that is regarded as the one thing that trumps human rights, are in fact, those who advocate their own form of fundamentalism. This therefore, means that fundamentalism is a form of elimination of the 'Other', the very thing that constitutes the Western subject in its execution of subjection. Žižek also points out that freedom of choice equates to pseudo choice, so this means that freedom of choice is a limited choice, or a choiceless choice. The African subject's assertion of the self is that which is only allowed if it does not threaten the subjectivity of the Western subject. The choiceless choice as put forth by Žižek (2005) is the psychological subject; perhaps this also applies to the notion of the *cogito*. Žižek further remarks that just like the notion of choice, the pursuit of pleasure is different for both the Western subject and the African subject.

The African subject is excluded and also harassed not to tamper with pleasure that is pursued by the Western subject. According to Žižek (2005), to strive for pleasure is to engage in the pathological, so the super-ego of pleasure, its surplus, goes hand in hand with the cult of self-sacrifice. As Žižek (2005: 121) remarks, 'duty is my pleasure, and doing my duty, is located in the formal space of the "pathological satisfactions"'. This means as Said (1989) aptly states, the 'othering' of the African and for that matter, the African subject. It is the externalisation that leads to the ruination of subjectivity of the African subject, or what Fanon ([1961] 1990) captivatingly refers to as 'the damned of the earth'.

Political (re)presentation is done by the Western subject on behalf of, and despite its 'Other'. The African subject is left on the predicament of incompleteness, the subject that constitutes lack, deficit, and void. It is the ontologically obsolete subject as it is rooted out of the logic of the subject. The very definitive conditions of existence assume the differences of existential conditions for both the Western subject and the African subject. Žižek (2005: 123) notes that '[a]t the level of the law, the state power merely represents the interests of its subjects; it serves them, is responsive to them, and is itself subject to their control'. Even if

this proposition would be true and valid in a political community, it is entirely different when it comes to the African subject. Mouffe (1993) points out that the political is inherent in any human society and part of the ontological condition. Even though the gains of democratic revolution are hard won and must be defended as Mouffe states, they apply to the Western subject more than they are relevant to the African subject.

The relationality of the Western subject towards the African subject is what Žižek (2005) refers to as 'obscene excess'. The obscene excess symbolises and actualises the structural asymmetry between the Western subject and the African subject. It suggests, as Žižek (2005: 123) notes, 'a series of catastrophies that precipitated disastrous violence on an unprecedented scale'. Taking the distinction of 'enemy' and 'adversary', as espoused by Mouffe (1993), the opponent should not be regarded as the enemy to be destroyed, but the adversary. According to Mouffe (1993: 4), the adversary is of good importance 'whose existence is legitimate and must be tolerated'. This is problematic in two senses as far as the African subject is concerned. In the first sense, the African subject in the sense of ontology is non-existent. So, therefore, that which is non-existent cannot be tolerated, hence the subjection of the African subject. In the second, and at least the final sense, if the African subject engages in the act of emergence, this suggests subjection—the enemy to be destroyed. Therefore, it is clear that the African subject is not the amenable adversary, but the enemy proper. The idea of political community is not applicable in both the colony and the postcolony. The African subject does not even fit in the polity of what Anderson (1991) refers to as 'imagined communities'. Mouffe's remarks are revealing thus:

> When there is a lack of democratic political struggle with that to identify, their place is taken by other forms of identification, of ethnic, nationalist or religious nature, and the opponent is defined in those terms too. In such conditions, the opponent cannot be perceived as an adversary to content with, but only the enemy to be destroyed. This is what pluralist democracy should avoid; yet it can only protect itself against such a situation by recogni[s]ing the nature of the political instead of denying its existence (Mouffe 1993: 6).

Even if the idea of the political is acknowledged in its complexity as Mouffe suggests, the African subject, however, is not part of the political for that this subject is in the space of subjection that makes it the enemy to be destroyed. This is largely based on the fact that it is a subject that constitutes lack and void—the object. When it comes to the African subject there is not what Mouffe (1993) calls 'the ethical nature of the political association'. The political is the absence of ethics, the very nature of subjection. So, the self that Mbembe subscribes to is the subject figure of Western self, even though Mbembe can claim to not associate with it. It is the self that views the African subject non-existent *qua* subjectivity. It is, therefore, clear that African subject unlike the Western subject is problematic in relation to subject constitution. It is the marauding self paraded as an 'Other' that is deviant from itself and in need for creation and paternalism from the Western subject, the self! The identity in racial form, the very criteria used for subjection makes the self-defining subject and the African subject to be reducible to sameness. This sameness leads to incongruence for the fact that the African subject is the one that the self-defining subject often claims to be different from, hence begging to be included in the structures of subjection.

Furthermore, the mere fact of being racialised means that the self-defining subject and the African subject are the same. But then, the self-defining subject survives subjection by explaining and defining itself as being distinct from the African subject. According to Mouffe (1993: 66), '[t]o belong to the political community what is required is that we accept a specific language of civil intercourse, the *respublica*'. Again, this points to the irreconcilable differences between the Western subject and the African subject. This language that Mouffe proposes seems to suggest the idea of the universal; it borders on the vertical movement from the colonial to the colony, that is, from the Western subject to the African subject. This is subjection in the form of imposition of the universal. As Mouffe (1993: 67) justifies, the *respublica* is 'a community without a definitive shape or a definite identity and in continuous re-enactment'.

The self-defining subject cannot be or reach the state of completeness. This amplifies the fact that the identity is imposed by the Western subject. This is the subject that possesses the power to define, create and to master the African subject. The African subject, if it dares to emerge by means of (re)formation of

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the self in its own terms, is ontologically and epistemologically denied. The race of Mbembe, the black race for that matter, suggests that he is a racialised subject. Even though race might be minimised, denied or trivialised—or least to say, the call for it to be rendered impotent through the propaganda of post-racialism, non-racialism and race transcendence, but then, the subject of free choice has limitations as subjection is both material and existential. The sameness that the subject of free choice can claim cannot be in the full essence that can be like that of the Western subject. The origin of the subject of free choice is from the criminalised world, the world that is at the receiving end of subjection. The radicalism of the self-defining subject has minimal impact if it intends calling for reinvention of identity since this is done by the Western subject. The self-defining subject is racialised just like the African subject.

Subjectivity has to do with the mode of identification. The identity of the African subject is in broader terms that of aberration and negativity. As Said (1989: 213) points out, '[t]he fetishi[s]ation and relentless celebration of "difference" and "otherness" can therefore be seen as an ominous trend'. This stems from the stance of being judged from the act of reasoning of the Western subject, its subjectivity that possesses the power to judge. Therefore, this makes the African subject to be caught in the state of permanent injury and pain because the judgment coming to its direction is the wrath of the reasoning of the Western subject. Thus, this assumes the form of identity of being wrong, hence the judgment of the Western subject by mean of subjection. Said (1989) argues that the colonial interculator, the compliant African subject is the apolitical subject in absence of the agency to confront subjection and liberate itself. Power relations regulate subjectivity. They stand in the industrial complex of confrontation, antagonism, complicity and co-optation. The African subject in that form is what Said (1989: 206) refers to as that which 'presents its own brand of votality'.

It is in this instance that the emergence of the African subject, or at worst, its problematic existence suggests the state of negation as Mbembe (2001a) correctly notes. That is, there cannot be any sense of emergence to counter lack and void, for that the African subject exists in the existential plain full of restrictions and prohibitions. Therefore, reprociticity, recognition, mutualism and status fall on the wayside. The civic definition of the African subject means the

standard measure through which such a subject must be recognised by the Western subject. Though these codes still exist as a form of subjectivity necessary for every subject, they hide in them guises of subjection that disadvantage the African subject. The Western subject, by the mere fact of existence confers life to the African subject and determines what can be done and not. This is the exteriority of the African subject—the "Other", a lacking and a void subject. The 'I'—in the form of *cogito* shall still form the ontological base of the Western subject, and it relating to the "Other". The question of the subject is the colonial invention and this is not only ontological, but epistemological.

On subjectivity: the voyage and canon formation

The education system that Mbembe received is the French education system. Due to the colonial system, even in the period of independence that has been the everlasting legacy of France in Cameroon. The education of France, the very nervous system of colonialism, was such that the idea of 'France the Great' was a propaganda form that paved way for many in the colony to migrate from the colony to the metropolis, Paris. As Bjornson (1992) notes, African subjects undergo double alienation wherein the French doctrine of assimilation is implemented in them and at the same time they are rejected as fully French.

The idea of France the Great was such that school children romanticise France and demonise Africa and, as Thomas (2007: 47) states, they 'were motivated toward a forced complicity in the dissemination of colonial propaganda ideology'. The whole idea of this propaganda is that the African subject should see the idea of France as the standard of civilisation—the very essence of modernity and to entrench the colonial practice in that those of the colony needs to accept, if not complicit to it. This then forms part of, and also becomes constitutive of, the forms of thinking and living. This form of thinking and living takes place in the colony, hence Cameroon is still a French colony, even though there was flag of independence in the name of decolonisation. It is in Cameroon that the idea of France the Great was propagated to the point that it becomes embedded in the psyche of the colonial pedagogy and school curricular (Thomas 2007). The psyche of colonial pedagogy and its curriculum creates the condition of centering of the metropolis and decentering the colony. Such condition simply

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means 'the prevailing dictates and imperatives of assimilation and integration' (Thomas 2007: 43). That is, through the process of assimilation and integration, the idea of France the Great is the epicenter of the political life and thinking of the African subject.

> Colonial education and the dissemination of the myth of French universalism and cultural superiority created a logical desire among colonial subjects to travel to the metropole, the result of an acquired francocentrism that in turn contained the promise of the cultural capital. (Thomas 2007: 51)

The discourses of justice, equality and liberty, the very ideals of the universal, fall in the wayside as soon as the African subject emerges. This is simply because what inform the subjectivity of the metropolis is its relation to the African subject, hence subjection through the idea of racial superiority that stamps in colonial practice of racism. As Thomas (2007: 42) states, '[t]he voluntary or forced displacement of the African subjects has a long history'. The project of colonising the African subject was also featured with the civilising mission, to make the African subject the extension of France. This however, is something that is even pervasive in the postcolonial period. The idea of being located in the metropolis assumes authority from the colony, of disassociating from it and not being part of it. The colony is the other space, the other life that the African subject who is located at the metropolis is seen as the hope for Africa. For the fact that the African subject is located in the metropolis, it means that the ideas of that subject are authoritative in that they can deride the colony from the vantage point of the metropolis. The location being in the metropolis even to the fact of having accomplished the French imperial ambition—that of being superior to other African subjects.

Mbembe describes how he got to Paris from Cameroon as 'very much of a self-confident and optimistic character' (Oboe 2010: 1). It is in this encounter where Mbembe points out of not having experienced any form any form of upheaval. This means, Mbembe did not encounter what Thomas (2007: 51) refers to as 'experiences of alienation, disillusionment, and exile that are intrinsic to the broader experience of transnational mobility'. It is not clear that Mbembe heeded the call that Du Bois ([1919] 1998: 159) makes when he writes 'I have seen the

wounds of France'. Thomas (2007: 24) notes that 'Paris is the key topographic site to which protagonists travel, but also operates as an interchangeable metaphor for France itself'. It is in Paris where Mbembe obtained his doctoral education. Having gone to New York, Mbembe taught at Columbia University and Pennsylvania and also The Brooklyn Institute.

It would seem that it is in Paris where the educational voyage of Mbembe had a profound impact. Taking into account the idea of the universal, in a provincial sense that France has to be understood, is to say that which informs the idea of the universal, France the Great is the perpetual myth that it is the centre of humanity. Perhaps it is to those who are not in the margins, or in the colony where humanity is denied. The ideal of liberty, equality and freedom are as cosmetic as France is the principal colonial power (Thomas 2007). Paris, the metropolis the most dreamed of from those in the colony as the centre of the universe, is indeed a particular local specificity. This is partly because the idea of the universal, the idea of France the Great is a mere scandal of locality—the very crude form of imperial nativism.

The idea of having to be located in the metropole while originating from the colony is an interesting move as far as subjectivity is concerned. According to Housely (2009), the complexity of the socio-political is explained where there is a call to deepen subjectivity, but then, it is essential to ask where is the African subject and how is it deepening its subjectivity, and to what end. This means the preoccupation with the subject to explain the industrial complex that entangles the African subject. This explanation 'represents a complex site, open to interpretation and scrutiny through the relation of the world of discourse, power and politics to the interior expanse of the unconscious and desire' (Housley 2009: 70).

The industrial complex of subjection in this sophisticated form, it is the manner in which power reproduces itself to elude and mask asymmetrical lines of subjection. Subjectivity becomes interesting if it is reconnected along asymmetric lines, it still reveals that subjection still continues.

> One of the decision features of individuali[s]ation process, then, is that they not only permit, but demand, an active contribution to individuals. As the range of options

widens and the necessity of deciding between their groups, so too does the need for individually performed actions, for adjustment, co-ordination, integration. If they are not to fail, individuals must be able to plan for the long terms and adapt to change, recogni[s]e and improvise, set goals, recognise obstacles, accept defeat and attempt new starts. They need initiative, tenacity, flexibility and tolerance of frustration. (Heelas 1996:27)

According to Dunst and Edwards (2011), subjectivity exists in a universe and it is necessary to reflect on the fact that the universe is an exclusive domain couched as inclusive, the African subject's exclusion withstanding. The subjectivity of Mbembe in his attitude towards Africa betrays the fact that the African subject and subjectivity is indeed profound. What then is of importance is to trace the routes and genealogies, the very root of Mbembe's positionality. This also involves the understanding of his subjectivity, the conical textual that he imbibed to inform his intellectual standing and also the theoretical tradition. The subject for this study is Mbembe, but to understand Mbembe the study undertakes to engage his subjectivity—and, that can give effect to the theoretical tradition. It is this tradition that will, in some way, explain how Mbembe (the subject) uses his own influence and influence upon him (subjectivity) to understand the African subject who is entangled in subjection.

Mbembe in response to the question of posed to him about the criticism of being an Afropessimist is simply that of responding that his work is poorly misread and then misunderstood. Mbembe argues that his theoretical tradition is that which forces us to think, weigh and expose (Oboe 2010). Mbembe also adds that:

To think critically is to work with faultiness, to get in touch with the chaotic touch of the world, to bring it to language, to write its singular plurality. In any case, the relationship between critique and pessimism is very complex and critical pessimism is not capitulation. (Oboe 2010: 3)

Mbembe is asked on his intellectual culture and the sense of influence and contribution to his work (Oboe 2010). Mbembe responded by stating that the conical images are actual places and cities. This means that their narratives and texts are embedded and influential to Mbembe. The major influence that Mbembe highlights is the one that he coins thus: 'I have been influenced by post

war French thought and culture—Merleau-Ponty, Blanchot, Klossowski, all of whom I read by myself' (Oboe 2010: 4). Though having a huge breadth of theoretical canonism and textuality, the ones that Mbembe seems to have highlighted have had a profound influence on him. It is against this backdrop that it can be stated that his thought is rooted in the French political tradition. Badiou (2005) argues that the philosophical underpinnings of French political tradition— or French philosophy to be specific—its style, operations and origin are rooted in literature. It is the political philosophy at the level of the literature and also the lived experiences—that is, philosophy that is engaged in-depth with political questions.

According to Badiou (2005:71), 'philosophy was seeking a new relation between the concept and the production of forms—artistic, social, or forms of life'. It is clear that French philosophy that had the major influence in Mbembe is deeply rooted in the literary style and as such, African existential conditions are reduced to a style. Therefore, style is considered more important and that is why Mbembe fashions himself differently in the way he engages Africa. That is to say, Mbembe engages Africa's existential conditions in literary, aesthetic and poetic terms. Such engagement reduces Africa's existential conditions to mere abstractions, and this partly explains why Mbembe is somewhat hostile and indifferent to Africa's subjectivity. Mbembe writes:

> But if in Paris I had been introduced to French tradition of abstract universalism, it is in New York that I was able, for the first time, to enter into contact with the global world. For instance, New York allowed me to reali[s]e how the French version of universalism expressed itself in a language that was, in the end, quite narcissistic, monocolo[u]red and provincial... Here I encountered far more than in Paris an African counterpart in the African-American (Oboe 2010: 4).

It is clear that for Mbembe, subjectivity in Africa is largely that of exteriority in the marginal sense. In no way is Mbembe's canon rooted in or made reference to Africa. The idea of the universal is rooted in the Euro-North American canon, from the provincialised French to the 'global' universal of North America. The latter has left the impression mark on Mbembe, and in particular, New York. This is what Mbembe has to say: '[a]s a city and as a movement of the mind, I was literally seduced by New York' (Oboe 2010: 4). It is profoundly telling that

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the idea of the universal is very much that of exteriority even if the African-American who inhabits New York is seen in the terms of what Gilroy (1993) refers to as the 'Black Atlantic'. Mbembe identifies with the idea of the Black Atlantic with the blend of French political thought of course. Mbembe and Oboe (2010: 1) state that 'Mbembe's work is a sustained and at times critical dialogue with the French philosophical tradition, with the postcolonial theory of Anglo-Saxon origin, and with black diaspora though in the United States.'

The engagement with black radical literature, black music, black art and black theatre to name just a few are an addition—or so to say, an appendage to Mbembe's French political thought. It is clear that the centre of Africa is nowhere to Mbembe in the account of worldliness he gives. Africa is not only marginal to this worldliness; it does not exist. Its subjection even though challenged by those in the centre of the metropole pointing the need for radicalisation of social and institutional practices will have little effect. This is largely because, they will have no effect so long as they do not call for the African subject that the intent of dismantling the structures hidden in the physics of power that subjugate it.

Mbembe responds thus to his familiarity with the black canon of intellectual thought: '[t]his is a very complex archive and I cannot pretend to have mastered it in any comprehensive manner' (Oboe 2010: 4). The black canon, it seems to Mbembe, is not available in Africa as he states that it 'has been and is still, dominated by "Western blacks"—the descendants of the African slave in the New World' (Oboe 2010: 4). What then also emerges from Mbembe's subjectivity is that it is in the 'New World' where there was the black canon. This, therefore, means that Africa—the 'Old World'—had nothing to in terms of the black canon. Subjectivity in its formation, through the coalition of many lived experiences is that which is still trapped in the idea of the universal, with the New World as its shrine. To call for the universal emancipation and systematic change is something that reflects the locale of this New World, the one that casts Africa to barbaric and exotic margins.

Mbembe's political tradition is rooted in French political thought with other political thought traditions—and that of the North-America also taking a

profound shape. This then gives Mbembe much arsenal to project, represent and articulate Africa in the manner that is external to its locale. Such externality is that which supposes speaking with authority on and about Africa from the Euro-North American metropolis. This is like the manner that is colonialist as it is that of "Othering". Though Mbembe might claim to be exceptional due to his 'critical pessimism'—that still counts against him that Africa is decentred, the African subject is made impotent due to constituting the form of lack from the point of Euro-North American canonicality. The mode of theorising that emerges is that the subject that constitutes lack cannot theorise, hence the absence of the black canon in Africa—the place where subjection is rife.

It is of interest to note however that a gesture is made to suggest that there has been a contribution from the 'black canon'. Mbembe names the likes of V.Y. Mudimbe, Kwame A. Appiah, Paul Gilroy and Ntongela Masilela. Those who come from the nationalist front who confront the colonial enterprise head-on are non-existent. This is known, as it will be explored later in the study that the nationalist black conical tradition is engaged in what Mbembe (2002a) famously labelled as faked philosophies that are flogging a dead horse. This is made clear in his essay 'African Modes of Self-Writing', that he is in opposition to them; hence Mbembe labels them as nativist, Afro-radicalist and Afro-Marxist.

What seems to emerge is that the black canon that Mbembe is concerned with is the one that is located in the 'new world', hence the Black Atlantic. Going further, Mbembe's theoretical tradition is indebted to Christianity and also Jewish thought, the latter that he claims to be personally attached to (Oboe 2010). Mbembe also mentions the works of Frantz Rosenzweigh, Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch and Jacques Derrida. What is absent in Mbembe's canon is the Africanist black political thought, that he nevertheless dismisses outrightly. 'Mbembe does indeed acknowledge his debt to Western social and critical theory' (Ralphs 2007: 21). Mbembe in subjectivity in Africa is to extrapolate its subjectivity using a variety and combination of analytical tools, across disciplines and theoretical approaches. What remains then is that such are drawn from the Euro-North American canon, the very act of exteriosiring the African subject and subjectivity—the very condition that creates and normalises subjection. Such subjection in a theoretical sense assumes the superiority of the

Euro-North American canon and suggests that there is no canon in Africa. This means that the African subject cannot emerge.

The Euro-North American canon is about the centredness of the Western subject that by the very sense of its existence means the non-existence of the African subject. It follows that what does not exist cannot emerge. The Euro-North American subject canon with its tool of 'objectivity' is something that Mbembe even admits that it has failed to capture the sensory experience of the African life (Oboe 2010). But then, the sensory experience mean nothing as long as it is a sense that does not allow the emergence of the African subject. The sensory experience that Mbembe refers to, seem not to explain the existentialist condition of the African subject under the subjection of the Western canon and also the erasure then of the African subjectivity by the Euro-North American canon.

The tri-continental move: still in search for the Black Atlantic 'self'?

What is Mbembe's thought in relation to Africa, and in particular, how has the tri-continental move impact on his thought? The tri-continental move is what Zeleza (2005: 36) refers to as 'the triangual systems of Africa, the Americas, and Europe that make up the Atlantic world'. The tri-continental move in this case, with reference to Mbembe of course, is the move from Cameroon to Paris, then New York to Dakar, then Cape Town to Johannesburg—the latter which Mbembe regards as his centre of gravity, the watchtower, also including New York through that he looks at the world. The tri-continental move is not just a move, but the move that constitutes the intellectual agenda, the subjectivity of the subject in mobility. In this move, the subject assumes the identity of the wandering subject, the subject that has no unique form or content, but that wich change constantly depending on life events (Mbembe 2003b). As Gilroy (1993: 2) states, 'modern subjectivities and the movements they articulated *have* been left behind'. This is simply because the power of such a move in the world as powerfully grown, with the African subject at the centre of this move.

According to Gilroy (1993), the tri-continental move—Black Atlantic—is the politics of global coalitions that make an intellectual journey across the Atlantic. Indeed, this movement must have had and still has the ways in that it has a profound influence on Mbembe's thought in relation to Africa in general and the

African subject in particular. But then, having seen the perversity of the postcolonial period in Cameroon, this should tell more about the reasons of moving to Paris, with Cameroon having been the colony and Paris been the metropolis is still the centre of French political thought. It is in this thought that Africa has and still locates the negative—the African subject as the lacking subject. The tri-continental move seems to be some fulfilling a task of completing the subject, the African subject that constitutes a lack and a void. Mbembe writes that:

> I arrived in South Africa after having travelled the distance of the Atlantic Triangle—from Africa to Europe, from Europe to the New World, and from the New World to West Africa initially and then to the southern hemisphere (Mbembe 2007a: 144).

Mbembe sees his movement as unique for that he saw the idea of the universal—the New World. This new world is indeed to the Americas, for the city of New York Mbembe holds in his esteem for that he saw in it the idea of the universal contrary to that which he has been cultured to the ideal of provincial universalism of France. Seeing such a 'new world' suggests a moment of rapture and intellectual stimulation as '[m]any African intellectuals dream about the Old World' (Mbembe 2007a: 144). What is interesting about Mbembe's tri-continental move is that its contact point seems to fail to meet the exact contact points, particularly in Africa. To point out, after having left Cameroon to Paris and then crossing the Atlantic, to make Cameroon a contact point has not been part of this tri-continental move. Coming back to Africa has been not to make contact with Cameroon. Mbembe provides an account in an interview to say that:

> I should nevertheless confess that of late, I have only been able to speak about it (Cameroon) by stammering—in the manner of forced speech. Because of the emotive distance that now separates me from my birthplace, I no longer find its name and address easy to grasp. I find it harder and harder to come to grips with the place where I was born (Oboe 2010: 1).

This might sound polemic and fall on the way side. If read closely, the statement suggest the sense of nostalgia, and by extension, the moment of grief in the face of stoicism. Or perhaps, as Pettinger (1998: xvi) notes, 'the anscestral bond has

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become almost meaningless'. The locatedess of the subject, as Dixon and Durrheim (2000) posit, relates to its subjectivity and that in a way relates to the agency and the identity of the place. They assert that place identity is a mental identity and its nature and intensity vary from one individual to the other. The moment of breakage has been that of 'exile'—whether imposed or self-imposed. But then, Mbembe (2003b) still insists to say that the subject lives life in a fleeting mode, with no bonds to any other context. For Mbembe, the subject can be reproduced, splitted, and retrieved if necessary. The idea of permanent exile has been problematic aspect of the self, the self in the sense of wonder, even though Mbembe justifies it by saying:

> But there is no body except in and through movement. That is why there is no subject but a wondering one. The *wandering subject* moves from one place to another. Journey as such does not need a precise destination: the wanderer can go about as he pleases. There can be predetermined stages for the journey. But the path does not always lead to the desired destination (Mbembe 2003b: 17).

Beck and Beck-Gernshein (1996) point out to the issues of being confronted with complexity of social interconnection, which by and large, makes it the onus of the subject, in its individual sense, to choose his or her own interests, morals and new making of the self. The making of the self in this instance is a deliberate choice outside constrains imposed from the externality of the self as a subject, the social. Beck and Beck-Gernshein further assert that the social becomes the instinct substitute, as the self as a self-defining subject is caught in ambivalence, hybridity, conviviality, complexity and multiplicity to name just a few. The tri-continental move should have been Cameroon as the point of link for it to be a 'proper knot'. It can maybe be justified by Beck and Beck-Genshein's idea of the self as a deliberate choice outside constraints. Indeed, the tri-continental move in Africa is that of complexity. It lacks the sense of the real, unless if it is looked in the broader geographic sense of the moving.

> Behind the celebration of 'nomadic' identities often lurks a rather patroni[s]ing, even contemptuous, attitude towards those 'still' in the grip of nationalist loyalties—replacing the assertion of the superiority of one country over another with a similar assertion of the superiority of cosmopolitans over nationalists. Yet such an attitude is not very helpful for someone fighting a deportation order (Pettinger 1998: xvi-xvii).

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It is then sufficient to quote Mbembe again in some brief length when he says, '[m]any African intellectuals dream about the Old World. I made the opposite choice' (Mbembe 2007: 144). The opposite choice would then mean that Mbembe dreamed and still dreams, in the search for the self—the 'New World'. It is not clear in what sense, is the Americas and New York to be exact, the New World. To take note from Pettinger (1998), the idea of the New World, the one that opens the possibility of world citizenship is romanticist. The modes of the self and belonging are mobilised in order to fit in the universe, the New World so to speak. No attempt is made by Mbembe to break the structures or disentangle the industrial complex of subjection to create space for the emergence of the African subject. This can be largely attributed to the idea of the self-defining subject since the subjectivity of such a subject ratifies the industrial complex of subjection.

Against this backdrop, the tri-continental move should not therefore, be romanticised. The self-defining subject, peddling the idea of the tri-continental move as if it is a project of liberation, will not change anything but being the African subject at the receiving end of subjection. According to Housley (2009), self-defining subjects are not of importance as they are evasive, while subjection continues. Beck and Beck-Gernshein (1996) introduce the idea of a non-social sphere that is the condition of labyrinthic complexity where the subject exists in the sense of individuality. Subjectivity here is the attitude that refuses to see the under-sufficience of life. The state of the subject is that of permanent continuity.

> As the range of options widens and the necessity of deciding between the groups, so too does the need for individually performed actions, for adjustment, co-ordination, integration. If they are not to fail, individuals must be able to plan for the long term and adapt to change; they must organi[s]e and improvise, set goals, recogni[s]e obstacles, accept deafeats and attempt new starts. They need initiative, tenacity, flexibility and tolerance of frustration (Beck and Beck-Gernshein 1996: 27).

What is not clear in Mbembe's account is how he manages to deal with the hostilities that the New World directs at those whom it peripheralises. The New World is the world of intensification of racist infrastructure and the surveillance of the bodies that it 'Otherises'. Taking the context of the tri-continental move into account, Mbembe did not go back home—that is, Cameroon like some of the

exiles who disjoined themselves from home. He went to Dakar, Senegal instead of Cameroon. Mbembe (2007a: 153) states that '[a]nd yet I left my country early on, and I have never returned—at least not to live and work'. It is not clear whether it was by choice or circumstance. To say that was by opposite choice would be also debatable. With regards to being born in Cameroon and having to disconnect from it Mbembe says: '[o]f my country of birth, I should say that I have not been living here for more than a quarter of a century. But I still remember its name and care about its fate'. (Oboe 2010: 1)

It is clear that the move to Dakar was a job to be the Executive Director of CODESRIA. This can be said, by the means of choice the decision to take on a job and not having gone to Cameroon.

> For four years I served, in Dakar, Senegal, as the executive director of an organisation whose official mission was to promote social science research on the continent. It was the most frustrating experience of my entire life. Perhaps that is why this city at the crossroads, bordering the Sahel and the Atlantic, and steps away from the Old Continent and the New World, remained mute in my soul (Mbembe 2007: 159).

After Dakar, then he moved to South Africa—that Mbembe (2007a: 144) claims to be his 'centre of gravity'.

> I left Dakar knowing that, when Africa was concerned, it was better to plunge in with eyes wide open. I could have returned to France and the United States and pursued the experiences of universality that Paris and New York hinted out. Instead I found myself in one of the strangest cities in Africa, Cape Town (Mbembe 2007a: 160).

Cape Town was strange for its the margins. It has claimed its Africanness while excluding African subjects. The tri-continental move is the move that in the sense of Mbembe creates a form of citizenship. This citizenship is what Mbembe coins as Afropolitanism, meaning that having travelled in the tri-continental form, Mbembe is the Afropolitan citizen. According to Mbembe (2007a: 144), the Afropolitan is the citizen 'keeping the centre of gravity in Africa (and not necessarily where one was born), retains the possibility of circulating through the world, in the context of his profession'. It seems that geographic attachment is

not a priori. But what is problematic is the centre of gravity in Africa whereas that to Mbembe is some form of exteriority.

What about the passport then? The passport has the power to determine the status of citizenship in terms of inclusion and exclusion, and also equality and inequality. As Gilroy (2005: 49) notes, '[t]he passbook and the identification card were the innovations that characteri[s]ed the new order'. It depends on what kind of identity the subject possesses and this will also determine how the power of the passport as a technology is used. The identity of the African subject is attached to criminalisation, the very basis of its subjection. This creates a situation where the African subject must always explain itself. The possession of the valid passport and visa does not mean that the African subject is immune from subjection. The racist practices by security personal at international airports serve as testimony to this. This also includes the process of visa application which also racist in its practices. So, the self-defining subject can experience subjection even as it embraces worldliness, its mutuality, interconnectedness, hybridity and hospitality.

This means that the self-defining subject with its sense of exceptionalism and being in the position of claiming co-presence and co-existence with the Western subject has to, by all means explain itself to be accepted in the universe of the Western subject. The sense of having to explain and to define itself has to do with the fact of not wanting to be excluded. This suggests that the self-defining subject that claims to be the free agent is stigmatised like the African subject. The failure of the self-defining subject to explain and define itself can lead to subjection in the form of being relegated to the margins just like the African subject.

What renders the tri-continental move problematic is that even if the African subject can claim worldliness to the world that rejects such a subject, it will always try to fit into it. The means fought for is not creating another world, but to be recognised by the forces of subjection, and to be an exceptional subject. It is in this tri-continental move that the subject is still 'mobili[s]ed, managed and constituted' (Thompson 1996: 76). It is in these constrictions that the African subject while in pursuit of the tri-continental move wants to be recognised.

Mbembe calls for 'a form of subject-subject relating in that each subject is able to both assert its own subjectivity and recognise the subjectivity of the other' (Layton 2008: 63). This is problematic when it comes to the African subject since it does not materialise into reality. Layton articulates this conundrum that bears relevance to Mbembe thus:

> For, I believe that we weave our subjectivity—in complex and non-linear ways, to be sure—from our conscious and unconscious responses to the *two* kinds of relational experience that most of us have: one in that we are treated as objects by the significant figures in our lives and one in that we are treated as subjects (Layton 2008: 65).

This dual complex, to say the least, is aggravating when it comes to the African subject and no amount of mobility and creolisation can remedy this complex. The need for recognition by the African subject proposes being part of the tri-continental self, the complex and overchanging one, should reject negative labels imposed upon them, and this should be made through asserting themselves in the world (Mbembe 2001b). They should be, as Layton (2008: 110) argues, 'in favour of new self-representation of their own making, jettisoning internali[s]ed, negative identities and joining collectively to produce a self-affirming culture of their own'. What is said to emerge out of this is that recognition will emerge in this worldliness that is the constitutive part of the tri-continental move. This cannot be left untouched since it is pertinent to ask in what terms will worldliness yield recognition of the African subject and by who? The answer is less affirmative in the sense that the roots of injustice are traceable in this tri-continental move—the route of commoditisation of African bodies, the Atlantic slave route. The idea of the new self, the complete African subject in this means that even if the African subject asserts itself it is not in its terms, hence the terms are accommodationist in nature and wanting recognition from the 'Other'.

Recognition for it to be relevant to the African subject should be in the terms of the African subject, one that recognises the African subject in its own subjectivity and not malleable to the industrial complex of subjection that features in the tri-continental move. The African subject should root out in the tri-continental move, injustices in the form of modes of misrecognition mutating in forms that are invisible and undetectable. As Layton (2008: 115) states,

'[r]edressing injustices requires de-institutionali[s]ing that value pattern and replacing it with an alternative that promotes parity'.

Mbembe states that he is not a South African citizen but saying that '[b]ut now South Africa is my centre of gravity' (Mbembe 2007a: 144). It is not clear whether Africa is the centre, or there is something exceptional about South Africa, which is just an ordinary country in the postcolonial African condition. That been said, the idea of Afropolitanism connotes that South Africa is the hegemon of the whole continent because it is the watchtower of looking at the 'world'. But again, this also points to the fact that Afropolitanism is at stake. The passport is a colonising tool in that it regulates, controls and restricts the movement of the people. It is in the geographic sense that the idea of circulation of the people is something that exists within the strictures conferred by the passport.

It is in Africa that the circulation of the people, more especially Africans is very much difficult and on the contrary very simple from those from the colonial metropolis to move. This is very much so if they are holding the European Union passport or American ones. This is to say that the requirements are different and yet difficult for Africans to circulate. The tri-continental might be presented as the easier and more convenient move, more especially when the idea of Afropolitanism is put in the picture. Afropolitanism is an illusion if it is constrained by and confined to the belly of the passport. It symptomises colonial Africa in the sense of the passport and this must have an impact on the 'Afropolitan citizen' to say to such a citizen is an oxymoron. What passport is Mbembe holding? If it is the European Union passport then mobility is viable for him since this is the passport that signifies privilege and freedom of movement.

Mbembe states of not being permanent resident in South Africa. This is how Mbembe (2007a: 144) puts it, '[h]aving kept my birth nationality—I am Cameroonian—I am required every three years to renew my residency permit'. Though Mbembe advocates the idea of the Afropolitan citizen the passport is still the technology of subjection. For the mere fact of stating that by birth and nationality, this boxes him into being Cameroonian. As a result, he is subjugated

to constraints of the passport. This is the very thing that makes it difficult for free circulation due to the visa requirement.

> I did not hate my country. But I always had an uncomfortable relationship with the country where I was born. For instance, I did not know how to speak the street language without that one could not gain full membership into one's age group (Mbembe 2007a: 153).

This cannot be a sole reason, there are, maybe, ones that Mbembe could have elaborated on to be justifiable. As it stands, this is not justifiable—the inability of speaking of street language to make one to turn this back on the native land. In the other side of the Atlantic, Mbembe (2007a: 157) notes, '[i]n New York, for the first time I discovered a metropolis founded on a simple idea—the idea of hospitality—and a contradiction—segregation along the 'colour line''. Though this encounter was a contradiction—it was also a fascination and charm to Mbembe. The city and New York is only hospitalible in terms of privilege and race. Mbembe's experience of hospitality has been removed from the lived experience of the city and also the wretched of the city. It could be said the only fascination was indeed—non-provincialism and another understanding of the universal. The idea of the universal in this sense is the antithesis to Africa.

> Through close contact that people, travel and, above all, reading, I discovered France, an old country that was so aware of its history—which it tended to glorify constantly—and so jealous of its traditions. My Parisian years also allowed me to see that behind every established culture—and especially the established colonial cultures—there is always a nocturnal, side hiding behind a mask of reason and civility (Mbembe 2007a: 156).

This, strangely, does not permit Mbembe to see the noctural in terms of the cause behind the problematic positionality of the African subject that he sees from the colonial gaze.

> Where Paris and France were concerned, I thus considered myself a foreigner, or to be precise, someone on the way to some people place else, a passer-by. But at the same time, by virtue of acculturation into the country's language, tastes and mores, and by socialisation into major aspects of its literary and academic culture I ended up becoming an inhabitant—an heir (Mbembe 2007a: 156).

Johannesburg for Mbembe ferments the politics of hope. 'It was then that I discovered an African country the very Africanness of that followed from its transitionality' (Mbembe 2007a: 167). Appadurai (1990) points to many worlds that are imagined that can be contested and subverted. It is not clear if the notion of the 'worlds' is that which centres the African subject. The subject positionality of the African subject is said to be the deteritorialised self. Mbembe, like Appadurai's notion of the deterritorialised subject is that which opposes homogeneity and in favour of heterogeneity. Appadurai notes that there is a fear of experiencing absorption by larger polities in the metropole since this will lead to subjects indigenised anyway. It seems that the route to be followed is that of the tri-continental move, the permanent state of adapting, mimicking and stylising with the dictates alien to the subjectivity of the subject. Mbembe (2007a: 167) regards South Africa as a 'diasporic nation' and articulates it thus:

> For me the place that stands for South Africa's deepest potential, in the eyes of the world at any rate, is first and foremost Johannesburg. Just as Paris was my window onto a way of thinking, and New York my watchtower onto the global world, so the South Africa of my political and intellectual reflection is, above all, Johannesburg (Mbembe 2007: 168).

It is essential therefore, to take Zeleza's point into account when he suggests that:

> Diaspora is simultaneously a state of being and a process of becoming, a kind of voyage that encompasses the possibility of never arriving or returning, a navigation of multiple belongings. It is a mode of naming, remembering, living and feeling group identity moulded out of experiences, positioning, struggles and imaginings of the past and the present, and at times the unpredictable future, that are shared across the boundaries of time and space that frame 'indigenous' identities in the contested and constructuted location of 'there' and 'here' and the passages and points in between (Zeleza 2005: 41).

Mbembe is fond of South Africa for that it has the potential of being like the Western metropolis. 'It is here that I started, for the first time, to seriously think about what the African modern, or African forms of wordliness could actually look like' (Oboe 2010: 6). The notion of the wordliness suggests that the African subject participates in the process making the world in the form of hospitality. However, what is clear is that the positionality of the African subject is at the

receiving end of the world it inhabits—the very world that confers life and death to it. In other words, it is the world that is the creation of the Western subject—the subject position that has the right to live. What needs to be pointed out is that Mbembe's advocacy for worldliness is not the creation of many worlds, but the universal in the Western subject sense of the term that needs to accommodate subjects marginal to it, the African subject notwithstanding. The idea of self-making as advocated by Mbembe (2011) is supported by Fraser (2000) who points out that there is a need for the struggles that assert denied identities for the purpose of recognition.

It seems this is the centre of making the marginalised to be recognised is to engage in the accommodationist project of wanting to be included in the metropole, posturing the world as if it cares for 'all'. Recognition seems to be a matter of irrelevance to the African subject, the idea of the worldliness withstanding. The tri-continental move ratifies the world where the many world do not exist, but what exists is the super-ego ideal of the Western subject and its subjectivity being the sense of reason that makes the political. The tri-continental move does not, in the first, imagine the unmaking and remaking of the world to have plural worlds. Secondly, it affirms the idea of wanting to ratify the universal and denying the existence of the African subject. And thirdly, it propagates the idea of modernity—the one benchmarked on the basis of the African subject being the appendage of the universal.

Mbembe's conception of the Old World and the New World suggests that he sees the world from the metropolis, New York—but this cannot in any way be equivalent to the subjectivity of the Western subject. The act of seeing the world is to see the world of the Western subject, not the worlds of the African subject. Being located in the metropolis—his identity is still imposed from, contrived within and inagurated through the canon of the Western subject. Such imposition therefore suggests that the African subject, by the mere inferred essentialisation of lack, is an aberration. It is clear that the tri-continental move, the act of subject making, subjectivity so to speak, is indeed subjection. This move is subjection for the mere fact that it means the absence of the African subject—that is, there is no subjectivity from that which is inferiorised. Even if the tri-continental move can be linked to the idea of the Black Atlantic as espoused by Gilroy (1993), this

means a mere subjectivity not in the sense of its own emergence, but the one created by the Western subject wherein the African subject must collapse itself and get creolised.

As Gilroy (1993: 15) notes, 'the idea of the black Atlantic can be used to show that there are other claims to that can be based the structure of the African diaspora into the western hemisphere'. The black Atlantic, that is more or less identical to the tri-continental move owes its genealogy from the Atlantic slave route, the commoditisation of the African subject due to its racialised body that was a mere aberration suitable for building the world of the Western subject. The African subject cannot be proud of the route, and even go to the extent of romanticising it. To the contrary, Masilela (1996) persistently argues that there has been a contribution by Africa to the black Atlantic, the contribution that he implicates Gilroy of erasing and also decentering. Mbembe's tri-continental move is akin to the Atlantic Triangle—the mere movement of slaves, the paradox being the issue of non-return. The return to Africa does not, however, account for the making of the African subject.

Brief notes on the difference: postcoloniality is not decoloniality

It is important to highlight that there is often confusion between postcoloniality and decoloniality. Also because Mbembe is a postcolonial theorist not a decolonial one. Though both critique the colonial condition, this is done differently and both do not share the same genealogy, trajectory and horison— and thus, they do not have the same understanding of the colonial condition. Mignolo (2011a: xxiii) amplifies thus: '[A]lthough both projects drink from the same fountain they are grounded in a different genealogy of thoughts and different *existentia*'. The distinction will be done briefly on three accounts of genealogy, trajectory and horison. The genealogy of postcoloniality can be traced from the canonical works of Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak who still remain prominent even though the trajectory of postcoloniality varies (Ashcroft et al. 2006). In elucidating this point, De la Campa (2008: 438-439) states that 'Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, though widely different in theory approaches, fashioned a long-award deconstruction of Anglo-American hegemony in their own terms'.

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The contours that shape the landscape of decoloniality can be traced from Steve Biko, Bernard Magubane, WEB Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, Ihechukwu Madubuike, V-Y Mudimbe, Paul Zeleza, Anìbal Quijano, Linda Alcoff, Archie Mafeje, Walter Rodney, Kwame Nrumah, Cheikh Anta Diop, Aimé Cesairé, Ramon Grosfoguel, Ngũgĩ wa Thingo'o, Chinweizu, Walter Mignolo, Enrique Dussel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and Lewis R Gordon to name but a few. The aforementioned thinkers come from different thought traditions and different geographies but they pursue one mission that is intentional in their work—decoloniality.

According to Hume (2008), postcoloniality is the body of work that attempts to break with colonial assumptions of Euro-North American political and cultural criticism—that is, the resistance of the imperial power by the subjects who are wronged by that power. Postcoloniality is caught within the Euro-North American matrix, while decoloniality is operating outside that matrix by emphasising the locus of enunciation (De la Campa 2008). Postcoloniality originates from the Euro-North American English academic departments and its epistemic locus is counter-hegemonic by form and content. It is the Third World voice inside the Euro-North American empire. Postcoloniality has been concerned with 'identifying the *locatedness* of European theoretical vocabulary as a way of challenging the easy and false universal claims made by that theory' (Hume 2008: 395). Though postcoloniality advocates for the 'marginal subject' or 'the subaltern' from what it refers to the epistemic location of the Third World, decoloniality stands outside the Euro-North American empire through border-gnosis.

While postcoloniality privileges culture and discursive practices in a form of a text, decoloniality privileges power, knowledge, and being as tools that maintain coloniality that creates humanity that lacks of ontological density. Decoloniality, as Mignolo (2011a) states, privileges people as subjects of history and their existential conditions rather than privileging cultures and texts as postcoloniality does. The question of being, that might be understood as the 'Other' in postcoloniality is reduced to the processes of dislocation, exile and identity. In opposite to this conception, decoloniality takes the ontology of the subject as the starting point in order to question the mode of existence and how knowledge and

power practices create the being whose humanity is always questioned. The being is not only the 'Other' in decoloniality as it is the case with postcoloniality, but a subject that must constantly liberate itself through decolonial practices. While postcoloniality calls for the transformation of the structure to solve problems, decololoniality calls for the structure to be destroyed to create new forms of lives. Decoloniality as Mignolo (2011a: xxv) aptly points out 'became an epistemic and political project'.

According to Maldonado-Torres (2008b: 382), postcoloniality 'has left one of the stronger expressions of modernity/coloniality untouched'. Postcoloniality constitutes some efficiency of radical critique and tends to maintain the superiority of the Euro-North American epistemology intact. Postcoloniality does not see modernity from its darker side whereas decoloniality does not take modernity for granted and understands modernity as coloniality—that is, the darker side of modernity. Decoloniality as opposed to postcoloniality does not in anyway, rehabilitate modernity. Its modes of criticism are not within modernity as in the case of posctoloniality, but outside modernity. As Ashcroft et al. (2006: 1) state that postcoloniality constitutes 'different indigenous local and hybrid *processes* of self-determination to defy, erode and sometimes supplant the prodigious power of imperial cultural knowledge'. Though for postcolonialism colonialism is something that is transcended; to decoloniality colonialism is something that is still informing the present and existing in the form of coloniality that is the constitutive part of modernity. Scott (2009) argues that postcoloniality assumes the anticolonial posture and it is being concerned about exposing the negative picture of colonialism.

According to Maldonado-Torres (2008b: 382), decoloniality 'positions some of the imperial underpinnings of modernity'. Decoloniality is attentive to the colonial structures, its expressions and effects that are in the form of coloniality and that are combated consistently. Simply put, decoloniality is a constant critique of modernity/coloniality and it continues to do so, to the extent of being labelled as 'preoccupied' or 'obsessed' with coloniality. Decoloniality unmasks coloniality wherever it seeks to hide itself. The major aims of decoloniality are to render coloniality visible by exposing both its rhetoric and reality. Decoloniality as a standpoint does not hide its geography and biography of where the critique

emerges from (Mignolo 2011a). Decoloniality is not fiction but legitimate in a sense that it authorises the lived experience of those who are at the receiving end of subjection and commands such subjects to declare their locus of enunciation. Decoloniality moves away from the deceit of coloniality that hides behind objectivity, neutrality and free-bias and argues that these are the devices alien to the lived experience of the subject more especially the one who suffers from subjection.

Decoloniality emphasis the need to work towards decolonial futures. Decoloniaity pursues decolonial futures and not the preoccupation of colonialism as a problem to produce postcolonial futures (Mignolo 2011a). It means that the task of decoloniality does not end and it is indefinite in so far as coloniality perpetually exists. It calls for the end of the universal as it is in favour of many worlds—that is, the world into that many worlds fit—pluriversality. This is articulated by Mignolo as pluriversal worlds and where the idea of the universal does not feature in that it reifies the conception of the world informed by coloniality. To hasten the distinction between decoloniaity and postcoloniality, Mignolo (2011a) insists that each approach carries with it a way of in the world and not just a way of operating with concepts or telling stories about colonialism.

Notes on methodology: decolonial critical analysis

Decolonial critical analysis will be deployed as foreground methodological interventions of this study. This intervention will then be applied to explain, examine and contrast concepts and main arguments in this thesis. Decolonial critical analysis is relevant to this thesis as it is thematically structured to engage Mbembe's political thought. The themes of this thesis, namely modes of self-writing, power in the postcolony, the politics of violence in Africa, the political thought of Frantz Fanon and the idea of South Africa will be analysed through decolonial critical analysis which is is rooted in decolonial epistemic perspective and it is intended to confront and grapple with power issues in their sense of complexity. Its key concepts are coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being—also to include the synthetic de-colonial turn—which will be weaved in the relevant parts of the aforementioned themes in order to enable a closer reading of Mbembe's ouvre.

At the nerve centre of decolonial critical analysis, it is the concerted effort to engage in the process of liberating the African subject and of course, the study of the African subject being the one that opens the possibility of liberation since the African subject is at the receiving end of subjection. It is, therefore, important to point out that decolonial critical analysis is informed by the continued pursuit of liberation. Santos (2014: 53) correctly points out that 'ideas must be rooted in the aspirations of oppressed peoples'. In articulating the necessity of decolonial critical analysis, Santos (2014), a method that emphasies the knowledge that is existential and experiential and also both resilient and flexible. In its application, it aims to disrupt, question, displace, rattle and unsettle the guardian of the status quo—that is, qualitative, quantitative and triangulation methodologies. This thesis will not deploy any of the popular methodological interventions that are conventional in the Euro-North American simply because they are alien to the lived experience of the African subject, its subjectivity and they ratify subjection. It is in these methodologies that the African subject becomes the object of study.

This thesis is not foregrounded on the old ways of thinking, and taken-for-granted epistemological foundations of the Euro-North American episteme are confronted through a critique of method. The latter inaugurates the epistemic break from the static methodological mould of Euro-North American episteme. This is necessary is necessary as the thesis is informed by the necessity to shift the geography of reason—that is, the methodological choices being done from the standpoint of the African subject. Decolonial critical analysis is methodologically unique in that it gives primacy to the lived experience of the African subject. As a methodological intervention, it 'it questions the truth of authority, techniques to reveal the figures of power that operate in dominant discourse or ideologies *of Euro-North American episteme* (Hardt 2011: 19 emphasis mine)'. The figures of power that are engaged upon are specifically those that ratify subjection and which negatively affect those who are in the lived experience whose knowledges have experienced epistemicide. It does not borrow methodological tools from the Euro-North Ameriacan episteme to blindly apply them to the lived experience of the African subject. Decolonial critical analysis inaugurates the subjectivity of the African subject as a necessary condition to

combat subjection. It is through this subjectivity that the political thought of Mbembe will be approached.

It is pertinent for an elaborate account of decolonial critical analysis as a critique as method to be undertaken. It is not a critique for its own sake, but a critique that lends the possibility of the African subject to make a political intervention to the methodological domains that ratify the status quo. As Ake (1982: 125) posits, these methodologies are contaminated with 'ideological bias of the mainstream Western social science'. These are known methodologies that constitute part of the project of modernity—the latter being even tired due to its inability to deal with socio-political phenomena pertaining to the African subject and the problems that feature in the contemporary. Out of their resilience and their paranoia of censure, they engage in what Ake refers to as sciences of equilibrium, that shows that they are in opposition to change. According to Ake (1982), sciences of equilibrium negatively refer to other methodologies as inferior, deviance, unscientific, myth and crisis to name a few. This is the methodological and ideological bias loaded with negative connotations that justifies the status quo. Decolonial critical analysis runs the risk of being admired or disqualified, if only to be celebrated while liquidated or at worst mutilated.

Decolonial critical analysis emphasises the decolonisation of research methodologies, but such decolonisation does not suggest they must be reformed, but wholly changed if they are used to study the African subject. Decolonial critical analysis also emphasis new ways of researching the African subject, and this is only possible if the African subject is studied from within, and of course, as a subject and not an object to be ethnographically extracted and hypothetically tested. This has been perversely done and even still done by the route of methodology that partakes of an a priori by means of that the African subject is studied as mute and, as such, remains an object. According to Brun and Lund (2010), decolonising research methodologies is linked to research agendas of, about, and by the African subject. Brun and Lund call linking theory and practice—praxis. According to Brun and Lund (2010: 825) '[l]inking theory and practice means getting closer to the society that independent research is supposed to critically explore'. But then, this does not account for that getting closer to the communities can indeed not yield the desired result of decolonising

methodologies. Sklar (1993: 85) is correct to say: '[t]he quest for new agenda-setting propositions may have to transcend research hori[s]ons that are familiar to political scientists in most, if not all, parts of the world'.

Decolonial critical analysis has to be engaged seriously at the moment of rupture and emergence. As Mignolo (2011a) posits, all thinking is located and it is important to understand the African subject in its location and the location of the articulation of subjectivity and the location that points to the direction that subjection comes from. The African subject has to struggle to (re)present the hitherto 'Othered' self. The subjectivity of the African subject has been that of double-consciousness and bad faith (Gordon 2010). The African subject has always attempted to emerge in his or her own terms, but for this emergence to emerge there must be some paternalism of within that the African subject is the appendage of the Euro-North American canon. The subjection of the African subject has been that of power relations where the Euro-North American power has the epistemological upper hand.

Decolonial critical analysis is necessary as it offers other modalities of understanding the African subject and its subjectivity. It is informed by what Mignolo (2011a: 55) refers to as 'a constant and coherent ethical-political critique'. This is because it confronts the Euro-North American epistemology that stands negative to the African subject. As Mignolo (2011a: 56) argues, 'the starting point of epistemology founds and sustains imperial reasons (theo- and geo-politically)'. This is the fertile ground that enables the 'othering' the African subject to the point of objecthood.

Comaroff and Comaroff (2006b: 92-93) introduce three decolonial critical analysis operations. The first is the mapping of the substance of the phenomenal landscape that grounds any discursive flows and following the traces of that flow to whatever direction they might lead. The second involves the extensions of the phenomenological landscape through geographical dimensions where the discursive flow constitutes itself. Such mapping is multi-sided or multi-dimensional. The third and final methodological operation involves tracing the passage of the discursive flow in terms of its nature, rapture and continuity to ascertain local genealogy and comparative archaeology of its locality within a

wider phenomenon. Smith (1999: 140) states that '[n]egotiating and transforming institutional practices and research frameworks is as significant as the carrying out of actual research programmes'.

The Euro-North American canon methodologies—that is, qualitative, quantitative and triangulation ran out of steam in terms of understanding the African subject, and as such have become constrictions rather than sites that are open multiplicity, even though combined by means of triangulation. They are often rigidly followed for the basis of scientific merit, research validity and realiability; but little is considered in terms of their suitability in studying the African subject. The contention is that the African subject should be interrogated also from the location of decolonial critical analysis to take the question of the existence of the African subject seriously. The Euro-North American canon methodologies have not yet given the African subject subjectivity but instead a kind of subjection that makes the objecthood out of the African subject.

There is no need to actually outwardly dismiss the Euro-North American canon methodologies. Rather, it should suffice to challenge them as being ineffective in revealing the power structures that tamper with the contribution to the body of knowledge by the African subject in own terms. Adding to this, Louis (2007) asserts that research on the African subject is a contribution to the body of knowledge for that it is a research different from the one originating from the Euro-North American canon. The dominant methodologies serve as testimony to the fact that research in Africa and about Africa is need for liberation from the domination of the Euro-North American canon. Even though there has been some research that is Africanist in the process while being entangled in the Euro-North American methodology with its own modes of judgments and devaluing others, the one foregrounded in the locus of enunciation of African subjectivity is necessary.

Bates et al. (1993: xxi) write: '[w]e seek to create such tensions in order that the contribution of African scholarship be valued, recorded and institutionali[s]ed *by the African subjects and through their own modes of methodological subjectivity* (emphasis added)'. As a methodology of the alternatives knowledges, in confrontation with epistemicide permitted and perpetuated by the mainstream

methodologies in studying the socio-political phenomena of the African subject, combative methodology is by its very nature disobedient. As such, it is what the status quo does not want and exposes what is hidden in modernity, hence the quick dismissal without understanding it. As Moore (1993) points out, the African subject has suffered the bane of ahistorical and selective constructions. Moore adds that the African subject has been the 'exotic Other'—the figure of attraction and fascination. It is not enough for Moore to state that the African subject is transforming and should be studied in the dynamic of the transformed nature. This is because it is not clear on whose interests that transformation is.

According to Gordon (2010: 202), method against method is a 'position of embodied interrogatives, of human being re-entering a relationship of questioning'. This should expose the hidden within method, and that creates the justification of subjection and the hellish existential conditions for the African subject. As Smith (1999) notes, exclusionary devices are used such as not vigorous, not theorised, not valid, not reliable, not real are deployed as a template of judgment. To amplify this, Porsanger (2004) argues that the mode of knowing is alternative since the methods call for decolonisation that is often rejected as irrelevant, primitive, subjective, essentialist and unscientific to name but a few. Vaughan (1994) asserts that African politics has been dominated by imported methodological tools ranging from normative, neo-liberal, neo-Marxist, postmodernist and poststructuralist paradigms. What is needed are methods that can explicate hidden and complex phenomena in a profound manner and that in a way provide understanding of power relations—that is, the industrial complex of epistemic power hidden in dominant methodologies. Necessary methodological tools are needed for creating and recreating decolonised methodologies. Thus, this will minimise what Vaughan (1994: 149) refers to as 'the cult of scientific prediction' that pervades the study of the African subject. It is this cult as Vaughan argues that limits the understanding of the complex African social world and the Africa subject.

When confronted with methodological tools questioning and challenging convention, fierce opposition from the status quo emerges and to the point of calling to halt that which is seen as a threat. 'Research contributed to, and draw

from, these systems of classification, representation and evaluation' (Smith 1999: 43). To add on this, this is what Porsanger has to say:

> In the Western understanding, research in general may be defined as an investigation or experiment aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts. Research includes collecting information about a particular subject, revising accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, and the practical application of such new or revised theories or laws (Porsanger 2004: 2).

The African subject has been static and dynamic at the same time. The dynamism has, however, been caught and paradoxically resulted in bondage discourses. Louis (2007) in in reference to African subjects notes that '[o]ur voices may have started out as a low murmur from the margin but it has now become a distinct and unified cacophony of resistance and distrust'. This affirms that decolonisation is reaching a higher pitch. Comaroff and Comaroff (2006b: 79) evoke what they call 'an endemically coloni[s]ing enterprise' that entails 'a pre-emptive seizure of authority, of voice, of the right to represent and, incidentality, to profit—or, worse yet, an activity, founded, voyeuristically, on the violation of "the" other'. The subject position of the African subject, subjectivity and subjection can be understood in terms of this colonising enterprise that Comaroff and Comaroff alluded to. The African subject, they contend, does not inhibit social contexts and it can be extended to the pain that relates to livelihoods that justify subjection that make the African subject an object.

The methodological issues been rigid and instruments that the African subject be understood is that which needs not only to be rethought, but unthought. The positionality of the unthought exposes the scandal of subjection hidden in Euro-North American methodological canon. According to Sexton and Copeland (2003: 53), 'the positionality of the unthought can only be imagined through its affective dimension[s]' by those who are at the receiving end of subjection. It is against the notion of politics of consensus propagated by the canon of methodology that such positionality can be imagined. Since the existential questions pertaining to African subjects are not in the register of these politics as being but objects, then the whole applicability is a collapsible scandal. In adopting this form of subjectivity, that is, the positionality of the unthought

enabled through decolonial critical analysis; the African subject is charting a new terrain of struggle for liberation.

What is essential in researching the African subject is the emphasis of the locus of enunciation, that Mignolo (2011a), coins as *I think from where I am*. This is the location of the subject in terms of being, power and knowledge, and so to say, from the limits of such since the African subject is located in the zone of non-being. Being located in the zone of non-being, the African subject should, in relation to the locus of enunciation, shift the geography of reason. The need for the shift of the geography of reason stems from the fact that even if people occupy the same space, they will not necessarily occupy the same life. The canon of methodology as we know it hides its locus of enunciation by claiming to be objective, totalising and universal.

The locus of enunciation positions the African subject to oppose fundamentalist position of comparing, measuring, evaluating and judging human experiences (Mignolo 2007). This opens the possibility to 'search for other possible knowledges and worlds' (Walsh 2007: 234). This search by the African subject is the one that informs subjectivity to counter subjection as it is directed to the African subject. The world inhabited by the African subject is a place that is in the receiving end of the darker side of modernity. It is then important to explore what this system called modernity produces in terms of its darker side. It produces weaker governments that produce corruption, authoritarianism and disabled history. The shift of geography of reason is necessary for the African subject who is denied of ontology to think from the limits of being in order to allow the emergence of the being, the full subject in its own making.

The self-defining subject is that of self-creation and subject in the making. These aspects mean different things to the Western subject, the self-defining subject and the African subject. The African subject is in the worst condition when it comes to the level of identity as such an identity is imposed, because the African subject is the product of the Western subject's construction and definition. The subjectivity of the African subject is important in understanding coloniality of knowledge. Mignolo (2009) suggests that the subject position is important in terms of understanding subjection. Mignolo further suggest that the knower

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should be questioned rather than the known to understand the very epistemic foundation of subjection. This means questioning the very apparatus and the locus of enunciation of the knower in relation to the known.

The subject is the very basis of maintaining the locus of enunciation (Mignolo 2009). This unveils the concealment of the Western epistemology that suggests the knower in contrast with the unknower who happens to be the African subject. For Mignolo, the subject controls and dictates the rules of knowledge—so be it such figure is implicated and there is no objective or detached being from epistemology. Adding the African subject in this explanation suggests the problematic of the subject that constitutes lack and bears no any form of epistemic privilege. Knowledge is always situated, and Grosfoguel (2007) articulates the notion of the locus of enunciation in terms of that what matters is the enunciation, not the enunciated. The African subject's vantage point it is enunciated to understand its subjectivity in relation to subjection that comes into effect through the manner in which knowledge is used as an instrument of subjection. For this to be framed properly, it is important to state that the locus of enunciation of the African subject can be problematic if the subject is geographically located in Africa but engages Africa from the loci of the empire. The empire here means, the political subject that controls global exchanges, and it is a sovereign subject that governs the world (Hardt and Negri 2000). This is what strengthens coloniality of knowledge that often hides its locus of enunciation to normalise subjection.

The locus of enunciation of the African subject thinks with the African subject and from the African subject's subjectivity. It is not thinking for the African where 'theory was still located in the North while the subject [or object] are located in the South' (Grosfoguel 2007: 211). The locus of enunciation, as Walsh (2002) articulates, is about thinking and speaking from the geopolitical and historical location. This affirms the importance of subjectivity of the African subject, being at the centre of the modes of self-undertsanding. This is informed by colonial difference that guides the reflection and offers a lens through that to view the world. The locus of enunciation as Walsh (2007) articulates, is also 'epistemologically diagrammed spaces' that offer a possibility where other

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knowledges exists—pluriversality and regimes of truth. In amplification of this Mignolo states:

> The enunciator does not name an existing entity but invents it. The enunciation needs an enunciator (agent), an institution, for not everyone can invent the anthropos; but in order to impose the anthropos as the other in the collective imaginary it is necessary to be in a position to manage the discourse (verbal, visual, sound) by that you name and describe an entity (the anthropos or the other) and succeed in making believe that it exists (Mignolo 2011b: 275).

In addition to this, Grosfoguel also observes that:

> The fact that one is socially located in the oppressed side of power relations, does not automatically mean that he/she is epistemically thinking from the subaltern epistemic location. Precisely, the success of the modern/colonial world-system consists in making subjects that are socially located in the oppressed side of the colonial difference, to think epistemically like the one on the dominant position. Subaltern epistemic perspective are knowledges coming from below that produce a critical perspective of hegemonic knowledge in the power relations involved (Grosfoguel 2007: 213).

This clearly demonstrates the fact that there is no such thing as objectivity, neutrality and truth. The Western myth that knowledge is divorced from its subject that aims to gain truthful knowledge as a forms of epistemic virtue is deception. Everything is situational and embedded, and the locus of enunciation determines from that side of the global system or formation is the knowledge situated. The Euro-North American global design strategy is informed by binarism and hierachisation that keeps the imbalances of power and the colonial legacy intact. These are the very forms of epistemic violence that excludes, marginalises, demonises and even eliminates forms of episteme that differ from modernity (Grosfoguel 2007). Knowledge distinction has been that global history has an unchanging and always in favour of modernity and keeping silence on its darker side.

The strength of decolonial critical analysis is the exposure of what Euro-North American canonical methodologies seeks to hide—that is, the processes of subjection within these methodologies. It is in this study that the emphasis is

placed on understanding the African subject on the basis of locating its beginning to the colonial encounter and also in the postcolony. Even in these time lines, things have not fundamentally changed since hegemonies continue the act of subjection. What decolonial critical analysis brings to the forefront is the opening of silent epistemes and unthought thinking—that is, the politics of knowledge infused with the emergence of the African subject. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013a) emphasises an agenda of decoloniality which is rethinking the very constitution of the present and the construction and reconstruction of African subjectivity as an important project today than ever before. This means that this is the time where in that African subjectivity needs to be taken seriously. Decolonial critical analysis constitute the application of decolonial options as the liberation tool. It resonates well with the study of the African subject, the subject that is under the yolke of being 'Othered' and being under the tentacles of technologies of subjection. According to Sklar (1993: 103), research themes in African political thought 'refer to an aspect of intellectual, political, or social life in Africa'. The African subject should be studied through methodologies that are decolonised in themselves. This study aims to articulate liberation issues that are fundamental to this research. They should contribute to a different understanding of the world in general and the African world in particular.

Since this research is about the centredness and emergence of the African subject, the manner in which the African subject is studied has to change definitely, that then, necessitates the relevance of the African subject. The importance is that of articulating research outside the Euro-North American canon. This canon is suitable for understanding the Euro-North American subject. It is therefore necessary to bring the African subject at the centre of ontology and epistemology for that they are empowering and liberating initiatives towards the study of the African subject. All these initiatives form part of decolonial critical analysis, and they are centred on the emergence of the African subject, subjectivity and are antagonistic to subjection of the African subject. Decolonial critical analysis confronts the subject matter of the Euro-North American episteme, and advocates the centredness and emergence of the African subject. Decolonial critical analysis constitutes oppositionality to

subjection and, it opens options and advances the turn of decoloniality—decolonial moves.

Relevance and contribution of the study

The contribution of this study is three fold and—that is, methodological, theoretical and empirical. Firstly, in terms of methodological contribution the study carries with it the element of innovation by introducing decolonial critical analysis to explain the socio-political phenomena of, or that is relevant to the African subject, its subjection, and subjection that entangles it. The research is about the contribution to the body of knowledge in African politics. The nature and boundaries of the existing methodologies discussed above were challenged and contributed to open ways of possibility and that of centredness of the African subject. The relevance and contribution of methodological innovation by the means of combative methodology is timely in the era where there is crisis of 'the political' and the crisis of ideology, by and large, as pertaining to the African subject.

Decolonial critical analysis allows the unravelling of physics of power that makes power to be this complex network in the form of the unrecognisable feature—the normal state of affairs. It seeks to disentangle the nerve centre of power that is constitutive part of the mainstream methodologies, the power that has made them to have universal applicability. The physics of power are what are hidden in qualitative, quantitative and triangulation methodologies, hence their irrelevance in understanding the African subject in its point of emergence, emergence in its own terms in the postcolony. This is simply because they are transplanted from the Euro-North American epistemic centre to the African subject and African socio-political phenomena regarded as epistemologically inferior—or, at worse, epistemologically void.

The emergence of the African subject cannot be understood through methodologies that are constrictive since this constriction is the condition of epistemicide of alternative methodologies that open possibilities for alternative methodologies centrering the African subject. Decolonial critical analysis is the nodal point as well as a contribution and relevance of this study will allow the new understanding of the African subject, through its own subjectivity and also

combat the subjection of the mainstream methodologies. So this means the edge of contribution is new in that the new understanding of the African subject, its subjectivity and subjection that entangles it through its many guises and mutations in the postcolony will emerge.

Secondly, in terms of theoretical contribution the study is rooted in decolonial epistemic perspective that is the scholarship that is centred on the new ways of knowing and thinking—and also, unthinking the world as it is. The unthinking of the world is that which means the world that is not created by so-called *cogito*, but the one created by the human beings. Decolonial epistemic perspective is derived from the long history of African resistence to colonial subjection and Latin American thought that is applied in African politics, and it is important to highlight that decolonial struggles in Latin America and African or any other part of the world are different. Suffice is to say that decolonial epistemic perspective has been the central feature in the African political scene that has been preoccupied by resistance where subjection exists and intensifies.

The central question will then be: how relevant is decolonial epistemic perspective to Africa, and how helpful it is in understanding the African subject, its subjection, and subjectivity? Key responses to this will be made by highlighting that Africa has a different experience of colonialism. Linked to that, Africa is the last continent to be colonised and also the last to be decolonised— its weaknesses withstanding. Therefore, Africa in its living conditions and that of the African subject suggest that colonialism and, by extension, coloniality, is the lived reality in the postcolony. Sklar (1993) warns that the African political experience should not be ignored, for it is important to understand the marginality of the African experience and Africa itself.

Moreover, this perspective is flexible enough to accommodate new and innovative approaches seldom adopted by political scientists. Like scholars in other disciplines, the time has come for political scientists of Africa to ask the question whether there are aspects of indigenous African socio-cultural expression that can assist in strengthening our understanding of the complex realities of these African countries (Vaughan 1994: 148).

Furthermore, the contribution of this study at the theoretical level is to borrow the three conceptual pillars from decolonial epistemic perspective, namely coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge, and coloniality being to understand the African subject, its subjection, and subjectivity. This affirms the new contribution to the body of knowledge that borrows from the decolonial models to engage in further decolonisation of the African subject. The contribution of this study is essentially to engage in the shift of geography of reason from Euro-North American content to the decolonial content with the strong emphasis of the Africanist perspective in relation to the emergence of the African subject, its subjectivity and the technologies of subjection that confronts and haunts this subject. The African subject point of emergence in the form of decolonial epistemic perspective is visibly dealt with strongly in the epistemic interventions that emerged from the lived experiences and struggles from slavery to colonialism to imperialism and today's coloniality in the postcolony.

Decolonial epistemic perspective has a rich history in African political context and decolonial struggles like pan-Africanism, Negritude, African Personality, Ethopianism, Black Theology, African Humanism, Black Consciousness, Afrocentricity, African Renaissance and Africana existentialism just to name a few. These have also been paradigms that informed the key role players in those struggles. These struggles took place in different contexts and spaces in Africa, and they constitute differences and also different degrees of the modes and methods of being decolonial. They have different histories, genealogies, narratives and philosophies. This is to highlight the fact that decolonial epistemic perspective is and has been relevant to Africa. The contribution of this study is to understand coloniality of the African subject in the postcolony and the paradigm shift from Euro-North American content as highlighted is therefore essential. The contribution of this study rests on engaging a critical theory of Africanist scholarship content with the decolonial bend. The relevance and contribution of this study is to put a case that Africanist thought is not a fundamentalist and essentialist political intervention, but the intention fused with liberation intent. But then, that which is informed by alternative of critical theory with decolonising the African subject is the nerve centre.

Thirdly and lastly, the empirical contribution of the study examines Mbembe's political thought. This is not a biographical study, but the study of certain elements constituted in Mbembe's political thought. This is done by problematising three things—the African subject, its subjectivity and subjection antagonistic to it. The contribution of this study is to ascertain the ways in terms of that there is a discernible advancement of the frontiers of knowledge in Africa by unravelling the intellectual location of Mbembe's thought. In patricular, an effort is made to dissect how he understands the African subject and, therefore, his unique contribution to the theorisation of and about Africa. Since the study is informed by other modes of knowing it engages in the empirical to explain the socio-political phenomena as pertains to the African subject.

The empirical nature of this study rests on weighing Mbembe on what he has written with regards to Africa, in prompting an understanding the African subject, its subjection, and subjectivity in the postcolony. There are many themes in African politics and the ones relevant for this study, and to Mbembe's political thought in particular are the African intellectuals in the postcolony, power in the postcolony, violence in the postcolony, black political thought in the postcolony and the politics of hope in the postcolony. The themes are not exhaustive and a *capita selecta* is made on the basis of distilling the thought of Mbembe with regards to the African subject, subjectivity and subjection in the postcolony. The empirical nature of this study affirms the unique contribution in the sense that the thought of Mbembe was written on the African subject in different discursive levels and contexts. Decolonial epistemic perspective is deployed to unravel Mbembe's political thought on the African subject, its subjection, and subjectivity weaving them with the *capita selecta* of themes pertinent to this study.

Limitations of the study

The limitations for this study are as follows: in the first, and the pertinent one, Mbembe mostly writes and publishes in French. This study has chosen to focus on the works that Mbembe published in English. Even though Mbembe writes in French, he makes the corpus of his works translated by using translators. And also, there are many that he writes in English without using translators. This then

overcomes the limitation of this study in that there is a sufficient body of work by Mbembe in English. The second limitation is that this study is not a biographical political engagement, but the examination of Mbembe's works resonating or relevant to the themes pertinent with the study, namely, modes of self-writing, power in the postcolony, the politics of violence in Africa, the political thought of Frantz Fanon and the idea of South Africa. Since Mbembe is the eclectic and prolific thinker, it would be difficult to capture his whole thought in a signle study as he vascillates between various disciplines and topics. To overcome this limitation, the study will only focus on the aforementioned themes. The third and last limitation is that Mbembe is still continuing to write and publish, and his thought might even change. This means that the continuity of his work might affirm and contradict the points of critique of this study. To overcome this limitation, this study focuses on themes that are related to Mbembe's works and it will be feasible to identify how these themes still evolve as part of his political thought.

Chapter organisation

The thesis is constituted by eight chapters. The second chapter is the theoretical framework and decolonial epistemic perspective is applied to serve as a torchlight for this study. Chapter three engages Mbembe on the modes of self-writing, with specific reference to coloniality of knowledge. Chapter four seeks to examine Mbembe on the notion of the power in the postcolony and this will be explored through the notion of coloniality of power. Chapter five examines Mbembe's notion of violence through the notion of coloniality of being. Chapter six unpacks Mbembe's reading of Fanon and this is done through de-colonial turn. Chapter seven then examines Mbembe's idea of South Africa and also through de-colonial turn. Chapter eight then is the conclusion for this study and maps further trends of research to be pursued.

CHAPTER TWO

DECOLONIAL EPISTEMIC PERSPECTIVE: A THEORETICAL INTERVENTION

Introduction

This chapter seeks to map out decolonial epistemic perspective as a theoretical intervention. By mapping the theoretical basis of this study, this chapter foregriunds this as the intervention to examine Mbembe's political thought, which is the node of this study. Decolonial epistemic perspective is essential as a theoretical intervention in that it analyses and investigates hidden power structures and articulations that affect the lived reality of the African subject as a result of coloniality. The aim of this chapter is to understand how coloniality works and to deploy and reflect on the structural positionality of the African subject, its subjectivity and its subjection in the postcolony. Decolonial epistemic perspective cannot be fully understood without a clear distillation of its conceptual pillars, and the ones relevant for this study include coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being. In addition to these three, the synthetic conceptual pillar of de-colonial turn will be applied.

The first conceptual pillar of decolonial epistemic perspective is coloniality of power. It addresses the manner in which power is articulated to characterise, label, classify and organise the world according to the racialised Euro-North American perceptions of the African subject. The second conceptual pillar is coloniality of knowledge. It refers to the manner in which knowledge systems were formulated and totalised by the Euro-North American empire and how African subject were silenced and excluded. The third is conceptual pillar is coloniality of being. This one speaks to how being of the African subject was re-articulated according to the racialised stereotypes of Otherness that enabled and legitimised violence directed to the African subject because of its supposed and externally imposed inferiority. Lastly, the chapter deploys the concept of de-colonial turn to further explore how coloniality opens new vistas of thought to understand the possibilities of another world outside coloniality. Decolonial

epistemic perspective is used as a barometer for this study to understand Mbembe's positionality on the African subject, its subjectivity and subjection in the postcolony.

Charting the terrain of decolonial epistemic perspective

As a theoretical intervention, decolonial epistemic perspective is relevant for this study as it is deeply situated in the broad framework of modernity that in its broader discursive constitutes two faces—the one face is the one that promises to civilise the African subject and the other face is that of subjection. These faces of modernity operate in tandem, and this strengthens the relevance of decolonial epistemic perspective to say that it is deeply situated in the underside of modernity called coloniality. The latter is the concept that interrogates the darker side of modernity to understand the whole technology of subjection. To understand colonial matrices of power it is important to interrogate the notion of subjection which is the constitutive part of modernity. This chapter engages coloniality in at least three forms of its conceptual pillars—namely, coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being. These conceptual pillars are vital in providing a deeper understanding of how the subject—the political, is made and unmade. So, the subject in general and the African subject in particular cannot be understood outside these conceptual pillars. This by extension will provide the understanding of the subjectivity and subjection of the African subject.

Coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being are essential in understanding Mbembe's subject positionality—that is, his political thought with reference to the African subject, its subjectivity and subjection in the postcolony. Firstly, Mbembe breathes coloniality. This means that Mbembe is the modern subject who propagates coloniality without being aware of it. Secondly, linked to the first is that Mbembe is not critical of the matrices of power embedded in coloniality—that in this 21st Century, still target the African subject to the point of eternal subjection. Thirdly and finally, Mbembe seems to be critical of Africanist resisters and in favour of conformists. All this is because Mbembe is not combative, while Africanist scholars he volarises are indeed combative towards subjection. Decolonial epistemic perspective is deployed in

this study to understand terms used by Mbembe to engage the African subject, its subjectivity and subjection. The strength of decolonial epistemic perspective lies in the ability to explain the socio-political phenoma of subjection, and what kind of subjectivity it produces.

Furthermore, decolonial epistemic perspective's strength lies in its relevance to capture the crises of the 21st century and this will even help to understand Mbembe's positionality. These criss serve as testimony to the fact that the century inaugurated the crisis of ideology, the crisis of identity, the crisis of epistemology and crisis of the political just to name a few. It can be broadly stated that Euro-North American thought and knowledge is in crisis today. It has even been felt from its body, the empire itself. As such, there is a need for new ways of knowing and thinking. Quijano (2007) declares that the critique of European modernity is now more urgent than ever. The important question pertinent in this era of political existence is whether there are other knowledges that can serve humanity better. For Africanists and African intellectuals the concern is about how to recover those knowledges that were displaced by means of epistemicides of various kinds predated by Euro-North American epistemology during its heyday of claiming to be the only universal way of knowing. This necessary step is essential to critique Euro-North American epistemological imperial superiority in the 21st Century. Decolonial epistemic perspective as a form of critical socio-political theory is not fundamentalist. It is mobilised to revisit the silences and epistemological violence, epistemicide that resulted in the globalisation of Euro-North American knowledge while displacing other knowledges.

Decolonial epistemic perspective suggests that global imperialist designs did not dismantle other alternative meeting points and sites of resistance. That is why Mignolo (2007a: 155) defines decolonial epistemic perspective as 'critical thoughts emerging in the colonies and ex-colonies'. Decolonial epistemic perspective visibilises the underside of modernity—it is the critique of criticism. Meaning it criticises the theories that are also critical of modernity, but that are within the bounds of modernity like poststructuralism, postmodernism and postcolonialism. This is the thought that responds and critiques modernity in its mutating form—that is, coloniality as it hides its locus of enunciation by

claiming to be objective, totalising and universal. As a particular kind of critical thought, it unpacks critical theory and its genealogy of thought and opposes fundamentalist position of comparing, measuring, evaluating and judging human experiences (Mignolo 2007a). Decolonial epistemic perspective is not a theoretical dead-end but the 'search for other possible knowledges and worlds' (Walsh 2007: 234). This search by the African subject is the one that informs subjectivity to counter subjection as it is directed to the African subject. The world inhabited by the African subject is a place that is in the receiving end of the darker side of modernity. It is then important to explore what this system called modernity produces in terms of its darker side. So far, it continues to produce weaker governments that produce corruption, authoritarianism and disabled history.

Decolonial epistemic perspective gives account to the lived experiences, and that of the African subject. Subjection makes the African subject to be oppressed, excluded, marginalised and to be at the receiving end of injustice. According to Mignolo (2011b), decolonial epistemic perspective originates from the Third World, and it diagnoses and searches for a project of political imagination to give new forms of life denied to the African subject that is in the belly of oppression. Decolonial epistemic perspective constitutes a different agenda that places itself in the darker side of modernity and exposes what modernity hides (Mignolo 2007a). If modernity is salvation why is it that it creates inequality, injustice, and exploitation—the very basis of the ex-colonised death? It is the role of decolonial epistemic perspective to reveal a lie embedded in modernity project. Modernity creates evils that shackle the African subject, and there is a problem in such a world with its postcolonial condition to re-appropriate and reproduce the colonial structural tendencies that are embedded in modernity.

According to Walsh (2007), there is a need for new communities of thought embedded in the structural positionality of the African subject—that is, the subject that should be understood in terms of its structural positionality being oppressed, marginalised and subjugated as it is in the periphery of the Euro-North American empire. So, decolonial epistemic perspective informs the continuous struggles that claim and practice their affinity with the African subject, with its existential conditions as a lens. It is a form of a political project

that aims to raise the possibility of new and other worlds. Such are those that are informed by a form of thought and existence that is decolonial in orientation (Walsh 2007).

Decolonial epistemic perspective is deeply rooted in genealogies of understanding coloniality that is the long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism and that define social, economic and cultural conditions in absence of the colonial administration (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). This means coloniality is the result, survival, metamorphosis, continuity and maintenance of subjection. So, this makes it necessary for decolonial epistemic perspective to be grounded in histories and lived experiences created by colonialism and sustained by coloniality and as such, it aims at breaking away from coloniality that ratifies subjection. For this to be possible, decolonial epistemic perspective in its totality is informed by and entails praxis of a different kind: a confrontation of the hidden and cobwebbed deceptions of coloniality found in power, knowledge and being.

Coloniality should not be seen as colonialism, but rather the epoch that survives colonialism (Mignolo 2000, 2007a; Escobar 2007; Maldonado-Torres 2007, 2008a). Coloniality emerges from the contact points or the colonial encounter that articulates the modes of operation and appropriation of restructuring the world to give the same effect as colonialism did, and make way for subjection to be strengthened. Walsh (2007: 229) amplifies this thus, '[w]hile colonialism ended with independence, coloniality is a model of power that continues'. This means it is the encounter and this is seen through its indefinite continuity and metamorphosis. For Walsh (2007), coloniality is both a concept and a lived reality. Similar to Walsh, Maldonado-Torres (2007) has it that coloniality should be understood within the realm of war, conquest, and violence—the conditions of misery that always see the ex-colonised at the receiving end. It means that coloniality still carries with it the baggage of colonialism, but it seeks to modify itself by hiding what it is. This is done by means of naturalising, normalising and institutionalising injustices to the subaltern. In other words, it hides its true essence, leaving the status quo intact. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a) coloniality, just like colonialism through the pretension of modernity, radicalises and naturalises the ethics of war.

Coloniality produced the very antithesis of life with regards to the African subject. The form of life lived by the African subject is inherited from the technology of subjection that maintains the structures that reproduces it. This technology can be the forces that do shape the psychic—that is, the subjectivity of the African subject, a particular kind that perpetuates subjection. The African subject cannot shape the structures that it did not create. In most cases, the African subject emerges from existential structure of being marginalised and excluded. The purpose of this is to make the African subject to be incomplete and to gravitate towards adaptive existence to the structures keeping the status quo of subjection intact. In relation to these structures, there are two options the first being to destroy or create the new ones, while the other one that is pervasive is to adapt and transform these structures. With regards to the second option, it clearly indicates that the African subject cannot imagine the re-making of the world outside the structures of subjection.

There is a need to rethink and even to go beyond thinking not to repeat even to the point of exhaustion. There is a dire need to deploy the other ways of seeing. Decolonial epistemic perspective 'provides a framework for debates on modernity, globali[s]ation and development; it is not a change in the description of events, it is an epistemic change of perspective' (Escobar 2007). Cartographically, Africa is a place for the African subject who suffers from the ethic of war of the empire both directly and indirectly; visibly and invisibly; overt and covert, and this makes it a place where human beings are dehumanised. Africa does not possess a life, but it is landscape of a hellish condition. The world in such a situation needs to be understood as a social formation. Ideas and people have led to the historical formation and elaboration of the world. The social formation of the world should be understood on the basis of a global imperialist design that makes coloniality possible today. In other words it should be understood in terms of colonial encounters, where 'othering' emerges to create disorder as if its order—the very basis of modernity. Decolonial epistemic perspective highlights the fact that every problem has a cause. It is the very same cause that makes this perspective not to get caught in competing imperialisms. Africa has been and continues to be a pawn in global systems of power—that is,

Africa is still in the belly of coloniality. It is within coloniality that Africa did not turn colonialism upside down, but only focused on civil political rights only.

Firstly, decolonial epistemic perspective is known to be a genealogy of resistance. The case of anti-colonial resistance can best understood when applying decolonial epistemic perspective to the African experiences. This resistance is rooted in the lived experiences of slavery, mercantilism, colonialism, apartheid and neoliberalism. Secondly, decolonial epistemic perspective refuses to be apologetic to modernity and it works to take full account of the darker side of modernity and physics of power embedded in coloniality. The European struggles happened outside Africa and in the side of modernity not revealing its darker side. The victims who are at the receiving end of the darker side of modernity are often blamed for this darker side. This is the problem that modernity seeks to hide. What decolonial epistemic perspective reveals is what modernity seeks to hide. Finally, the tools of decolonial epistemic perspective and its contribution are linked with the African social, political and historical experience. This epistemic perspective is timely as there is a struggle to understand the African subject. This in simply means that decolonial epistemic perspective with regards to the African subject, its subjectivity and subject is to understand the meaning of liberation.

Coloniality of power

Coloniality of power is articulated by Quijano (2007) who refers to it is a genesis of the domination of power, and it is a form of power that constitutes the basis of the ruling classes. The constitution of the global order is 'a global power covering the whole planet' (Quiljano 2007: 168). Colonialism is the imposition from outside and imperialism is the articulation of power to create asymmetry. As Quijano posits, the colonial structure of power creates forces of social domination and discrimination. As such, coloniality of power should be understood through the logic of the new global order, and also to account how coloniality of power borders on colonial domination and it being the rationality of Euro-North American logic of the empire. The formation of the Euro-North American empire can be pointed in the logic of the state formation that is linked and distinguished by coloniality of power (Quijano 2000). This has created the

impression that the world should be brought into totality, for the logic of the empire to penetrate and destruct the local imagination and histories.

Coloniality of power will be used in this study to distill how Mbembe's political thought will be examined in relation to the thematic area of power in the postcolony, which is the fourth chapter of this thesis. Coloniality of power operates through its snares that make it to be a matrix form of power. Thus, it is a form of power that cannot be pointed directly since it hides itself with its effect felt as it affects every sphere of social existence and also the lived experience. One of the exhibitions of coloniality of power can be traced in the logic of the imperative to form and maintain the modern-nation state that came into being through the mode of imposition. According to Quijano (2000), coloniality of power organised people into the homogeneity of the nation-state, in order to effect and exercise authority in all spheres of life. Such an organisation made effective the mode of domination and classification, race being the priori as the organising principle, including the geographic location that was marked by means of the nation state.

According to this view, coloniality of power carries with it colonialism, but the one that tries to wear a humane face, but that is given away by its effects, that are inhuman. They are inhuman as coloniality of power is the elaboration of colonialism through a modified form, but with structures that perpetuate subjection. Coloniality of power is able 'to impose its colonial dominance over all the regions and populations of the planet, incorporating them into its world system and its specific model of power' (Quijano 2000: 540). The logic behind coloniality of the power is its directionality of seeking to impose and also having the power to define. Such power enables it to singularise the planet in a singular mode of universalism where heterogeneity is not that of the local difference, but the difference that is only recognised by and within universalism.

Thus, the multiple forms of splitting and projection that go on between those in dominant and those in subordinate positions in the social hierarchy have psychic consequences for those 'below' that reverberate back onto those 'above'; the split polarities of omnipotent assertion and hostile dependence will tend to mark

the form of relations between dominant and subordinate subject (Layton 2008: 68).

Therefore, coloniality of power is a model of power that is centred and circulated around the idea of race as the organising principle—'a mental category of modernity' (Quijano 2008: 182). It is through the idea of race where there are hierarchies and classifications. This also includes the idea of who belongs and who does not—the logic of inclusion and exclusion. The idea of race determines how coloniality of power operates, since those who are considered inferior races will be at the receiving end of subjection. The idea of race has proven to be longstanding and durable and it 'presupposes the element of coloniality' (Quijano 2008: 181). This is because those who are raced are located in the geo-stratum of the lacking subject and coloniality of power has the same effect with that of colonialism but in a way that is indirectly human. In other words, colonialism was overt in its dehumanising project, but coloniality of power assumes the covert role, but with the same devastating impact of subjection. Subjection is ratified upon the African subject by making it to comply with the demands defined and imposed by coloniality of power. It is in this state of affairs where subjection of the 'Other' is dramatised (Layton 2008).

Coloniality of power operates through modernity that is a Western paradigm founded on tensions between social regulation and social emancipation (Santos 2007). Emancipation in this sense is the freedom that is a form of a gift, given by the oppressor to the oppressed, not to liberate but to create an impression that the oppressed are free, while they are not in a genuine sense. There is discrepancy between current experiences of the oppressed who are finding themselves in the darker side of modernity and the fallacious promises that comes with modernity. As Santos (2007) states, modernity spreads globally violating all forms of life on the other side of the abyssal line.

The asymmetry of power is also visible in the level of conversation. According to Walsh (2002), the asymmetric process of interaction is visible between the relationality of the local level and the global level. Coloniality of power is the form of power that entangles and traps. This is a form of subjection in that the African subject is singularised to legitimise its otherness on the basis of its

subjection. This takes form of a matrix that makes it difficult to point out and articulate subjection and normalising it. So, the articulation of social and political power inequality and asymmetry should at least be the basis to understand coloniality of power (Boiden et al. 2011). This should open the possibility of understanding how power is cobwebbed in institutionalised and systematic forms that ratify subjection. Colonial of power hides behind the normal existential conditions and presents itself as it is normal, whereas it is not as it still perpetuates the logic of colonialism in an implicit form that cannot be challenged since that is the part of reality.

Coloniality of power is still a form of domination today even after the colonial political order was destroyed (Quijano 2007). Colonialism was explicit in its political formation, existence and execution, something that coloniality of power seeks to hide, and selling the idea of the new world order that seeks to demonise colonialism, but still attached and complicit to it. 'Coloniality of power has proven to be longer lasting than Eurocentred colonialism' (Quijano 2007: 171). The logic of coloniality of power is informed by the imposition of power by the strong on the weak, with the empire as the centre of control and the ex-colonised in the margins. As Kleinman and Fitz-Henry (2007) state, subjection affects those exposed to institutionalised power and structural violence as they are in the outskirts of the empire. The empire might be absent as a form of geography and discourse, by it is present in the logic through that coloniality of power, with its snares composed in a matrix form to conceal itself to make subjection not to be accounted for.

Coloniality of power accounts for the sphere of control by mean of imposing the colonial model of domination in the implicit form. It is the systematically and structurally linked to the process of elaboration of power. Coloniality of power does not open the multiple narratives outside its own canonical hegemony that is propagated by modernity. So, in this lens, the world is the creation and the property of the empire. The empire is the dominant design of singular modernity (universalism) through the process that have 'shaped and sutured empire, nation and globali[s]ation' (Dube 2002: 197). So, the presentation of modernity reflects it as the creation and constitutive part of the empire. Friedman (2002) idea of 'symmetrical inversion' that suggest the emergence and assertion of those at the

receiving end of subjection does not account for the asymmetry of relations with regards to the African subject and the world.

Quijano (2008) identifies four elements of structure of power in terms of control of labour and its resources and products; control of sex and its resources and products; control of authority and its modes of violence; and lastly, control of inter-subjectivity and knowledge. For there to be power, there must be control and authority. This can be enforced by co-operation, hegemony and violence. All four elements of structure of power are directed towards the African subject, and affect it in devastating ways. Coloniality of power 'dismantle[s], simultaneously, existing forms of social organi[s]ation and ways of life' (Mignolo 2007a: 157). Power structure is entangled that makes colonial matrices of power to reproduce what Grosfoguel (2007: 215) articulates as, the 'social, economic, political and historical conditions of possibility for a subject to assume the arrogance of becoming God-like'. Adding to this, Dube (2002: 209) refers to 'the economy of power of the modern nation-state'—that is, that which gave ways to create hierarchies and open ways for politics of exclusion and oppression, the very basis of subjection.

Coloniality of power articulates the basis of state formation, since 'societies are power structures' (Quijano 2008: 205). The independence of Africa did not mean the independence of the African subject. This independence was just a gesture of giving the Euro-North American subjection a human face, now the brutality being executed by the African subjects themselves and also subjection, through its structural positionality, being directed to the African subject. Africa in particular is informed by Euro-North American liberal discourses that did not break Africa from the shackles of colonialism. According to Quijano (2008) political independence was prone to make newly found states that were based on inheritance and still bound to colonial linkages weak. The African subject is still trapped in the snares of colonial matrices of power, since the African subject is perceived as incomplete. Coloniality of power is entangled form of power that proved to be durable and stable with regards to its colonial character through its matrix form (Saldivar 2007). Such a formation presupposes the element of coloniality that is hidden in everyday forms of life making subjection invisible, and as a result, legitimate.

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According to Grosfoguel (2007), coloniality of power is the continuity of colonial power structures and it is a form of a system of domination in the absence of the colonial administration. For Walsh (2002: 79), coloniality of power operates '[t]hrough strategies of manipulation, co-optation, division, and control'. This logic of the dominant apparatus has been that of controlling and auguring that coloniality of power will remain intact. It is the restructuring and metarmophising of modernity with the aim of maintaining subjection. This is made possible also by the logic of patronisation that aims to control by converting and integrating the local experiences into the global order (Walsh 2007). This pacifies the agency of the local experiences that are located in the existential realities that are negative to them as the cause of the global power designs. As such, the needs and warranties located in the local histories and imaginations of the African subject will be abandoned. This then defects the whole purpose of the struggle by the African subject against its dehumanisation and injustice hidden in matrices of coloniaity of power.

The local experiences will then have the global design as a site of political subjectivity with the imagination of feeling as if such experiences are in the centre of the global power designs, but that in any way, put them in marginality. So, the whole thing about interconnection and belonging to the global is just a myth since coloniality of power keeps the colonial situations in place (Walsh 2002). So, hierarchisation and classification of the world continues, to effect asymmetric power relations. According to Saldivar (2007), coloniality of power has the capacity to hegemonies, marginalise and interpellate the African subject as minor. For Saldivar, coloniality of power denotes a modern regimen of power. This should be understood on the basis that power is about (re)domination. This is why the world still remains polarised and such is necessary for the survival of the centre of power—the Euro-North American empire. Such reality is kept in place to make coloniality of power inevitable and also preventing any form of antagonism or revolt against it. Coloniality of power still draws a clear line between the privileged and dispossessed, since it is in its nature and origin polaristic. Such a global design assumes the 'contingent and hegemonic functions' (Walsh 2002: 83). Coloniality of power is a perverse form of power in that the global order is made artificial, while it is real as it is planned, justified

and naturalised (Lander 2002). In its predatory form, it is linked though in a covert form, with the myth of civilisation.

Grosfoguel (2007) adds that coloniality of power produces and maintains colonial situations. These are located in the cultural, political, sexual and economic oppression or exploitation directly affecting those who are subordinate. According to Walsh (2007), the site of existential condition of the African constitutes both the political and social realms. This affirms the fact that the existential reality and the material conditions of the African subject cannot be singularised since this is subject of multitudes, but its singulalisation made by coloniality of power. Walsh also adds the fact that coloniality of power has the power of othering by means of racialisation and subalternisation being the connecting points emanating from the colonial encounter. Dube (2002) confirms this by unmsaking the subtle aspects of the colonial othering process by showing how the project of power moulds the provisions of progress, shapes and constructs histories and imaginations by singularising them under the guardian and control of the empire. This creates a situation where pacification of critical thinking and critical ways of political life are totalised by coloniality to enable coloniality of power to operate with ease.

Similarly, Santos (2007) argues that the cartography of modernity with its abyssal line of thinking should not be messy since it may lead to messy practices. The practices are however messy in that ethics are abandoned in the other line of the abyssal thinking. So this is the cartography of modernity that does not show its darker side. In Santos understanding, the existence and the drawing of the abyssal lines are both literal and figurative. Also, for Santos, the co-presence of these two abyssal lines of thinking suggests the deeply going impossibility of co-presence. This lays testimony to the fact that differences are running deeper and deeper, and these are the differences that represents the form and content of power relations. It is clear that in this state of affairs, power relations are asymmetrical. This is the cartography that is the constitutive part of subjection.

However, further to disabuse the notion of symmetrically at the heart of methodologies of equilibrium, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013b) deploys the notion of a myth of decolonisation to suggest that the legacy of colonial power continues

through coloniality of power seen through the juridical political decolonisation, that is the infamous Africa's independence that produced postcolonial Africa. As Grosfoguel (2007: 219) adds, '[t]he heterogeneous and multiple global structures put in place over a period of 459 years did not evaporate with the juridical—political decolonize[s]action of the periphery over the past 50 years (or so)'. The colonial matrices of power are still in place and they trap and authorise the mode of political, economic, cultural and environmental freedoms in the parts of the world that have been colonised. As a result, the residue of colonialism and its structures, in the absence of the colonial administrations, remain intact and this makes the status quo to remain. The effect of change in the part of the worlds formerly decolonised through juridical-political freedoms, remain just cosmetic shells of freedom. This means, the period has moved from colonialism to coloniality.

Coloniality of power is the continuity of colonial structures through subjection. It is the restructuring and the metarmophosis of colonialism through the amoebic, but purposeful structure of modernity with the sole aim of maintaining hegemony. Coloniality of power produces what Grosfoguel (2007: 220) refers to as 'colonial situation', that is:

> Cultural, political, sexual, epistemic and economic oppression/exploitation of subordinate raciali[s]ed/ethnic groups by dominant raciali[s]ed/ethnic groups within or without the existence of colonial administration (Grosfoguel 2007: 220).

Coloniality of power as Mignolo (2000) argues is the (re)constitution and (re) configuration of the planet and its continental divisions articulated through the production of knowledge and the logic of classification. For Mignolo, it is important to understand the global designs through that the empire narrates itself to control and authorise itself in order to exercise domination, exploitation and oppression. Coloniality of power should be understood from the locus of enunciation of the ex-colonised, to unravel the asymmetrical power relations that give effect to the continued injustices of colonialism. It is through coloniality of power where knowledges and local histories are rendered obsolete as they are outside the logic of coloniality. When they are outside they are those kinds that

are informed by continued resistance to coloniality of power, that in turn continue to negate and renders such resistance obsolete.

It is clear that coloniality of power is a global hegemonic form of power that seeks to totalise every sphere of existence and the lived experience. It deprives the African subject the capacity to define and articulate its lived experience and colonial situation. To really challenge and understand coloniality of power that claims invisibility is to unravel the darker side of modernity (Mignolo 2009, 2011b). The lived experience of the darker side of modernity is that of 'colonial histories and millenary struggles to confront the social, political, epistemic, racialised and existential effects of these histories' (Walsh 2007: 231).

Understanding coloniality of power should go beyond the understanding actors, but structures that give life to this form of power. Walsh (2007) calls for power structures of the global designs to be interrogated through understanding the modes of operation of coloniality as the axis of reflection. This is a form of an initiative that produces critical thought that seeks to understand power structures through another mode of critical theory that is outside and the alternative to modernity and its—'ism'(poststructuralism, postmodernism and post colonialism). Such structures are the ones that militate against the agency of the dominated. The thinking from below is the very basis that seeks to untangle the (re)constitution and (re)confirguration of the planet as done by coloniality of power.

Coloniality of knowledge

The subjectivity of the African subject is important in understanding coloniality of knowledge. Mignolo (2009) suggests that the subject position is important in terms of understanding subjection. Mignolo further suggest that the knower should be questioned rather than the known to understand the very epistemic foundation of subjection. This means questioning the very apparatus and the locus of enunciation of the knower in relation to the known. For Mignolo, the subject is the very basis of maintaining the locus of enunciation. This unveils the concealment of the Euro-North American epistemology that suggests the a priori of the knower in contrast with the unknower who happens to be the African subject. For Mignolo, the subject controls and dictates the rules of knowledge—

so be it such figure is implicated and there is no objective or detached being from knowledge. Adding the African subject in this explanation suggests the problematic of the subject that constitutes lack and bears no any form of epistemic privilege.

Coloniality of knowledge will be used in this study to distill how Mbembe's political thought will be examined in relation to the thematic area of the modes of self-writing, which is the third chapter of this thesis. Knowledge is always situated, and Grosfoguel (2007) articulates the notion of the locus of enunciation. In terms of the locus of enunciation what matters is the enunciation, not the enunciated. The African subject's vantage point it is enunciated to understand its subjectivity in relation to the subjection that comes into effect through the manner in which knowledge is used as an instrument of subjection. For this to be framed properly, it is important to state that the locus of enunciation of the African subject can be problematic if the subject is geographically located in Africa but engages Africa from the loci of the empire. This is what strengthens coloniality of knowledge that often hides its locus of enunciation to normalise subjection. The locus of enunciation of the African subject thinks with the African subject and from the African subject's subjectivity.

It is not thinking for the African where 'theory was still located in the North while the subject [or object] are located in the South' (Grosfoguel 2007: 211). The locus of enunciation as Walsh (2002) articulates is about thinking and speaking from the geopolitical and historical location. This affirms the importance of subjectivity of the African subject, being at the centre of the modes of self-understanding. This is informed by colonial difference that guides the reflection and offers a lens through that to view the world. The locus of enunciation as Walsh (2008: 61) articulates, is also 'epistemologically diagrammed spaces' that offer a possibility where other knowledges exists—pluriversality and regimes of truth.

Coloniality of knowledge should be understood geopolitically. Euro-North American global design strategy is informed by binarism and hierachisation that keeps the imbalances of power and the colonial legacy intact. These are the very forms of epistemic violence that excludes, marginalises, demonises and even

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eliminates forms of episteme that differ from modernity (Grosfoguel 2007). Knowledge distinction has been that global history has an unchanging and always in favour of modernity and keeping silence on its darker side. Coloniality of knowledge creates mechanistic narratives that are informed by dominant tendencies informed by subjection that discards other subjectivities differing from its own. As Walsh (2007: 225) points out, '[t]o speak of the geopolitics of knowledge and geopolitical locations of critical thought is to recogni[s]e the persistence of a Western hegemony, that positions Eurocentric thought as 'universal', while localising other forms of thought as at best folklore'. Coloniality of knowledge originates from epistemic violence and racism that dates back 500 centuries ago. To add to this view, Lander (2002: 257) has it that coloniality of knowledge 'legitimi[s]e ongoing practices involving the coloni[s]ation of people, culture, and the environment'. This clearly shows the multitude of forces involved to make subjection possible in so far as knowledge is concerned. Grosfoguel puts it these simpler historical terms:

> We went from the sixteenth century characteri[s]ation of 'people without writing' to the eighteenth and nineteenth century characteri[s]ation of 'people without history' to the twentieth century characteri[s]ation of 'people without development' and more recently, to the early twenty-first century of 'people without democracy' (Grosfoguel 2007: 214).

These characterisations are part of the Euro-North America global design systems, the forms of characterisation in centuries with regards to coloniality of knowledge more especially to the Africa subject. Knowledge has been that of Western canonism that is in need of transplants and appendages that reproduce such knowledge. The subjectivity of the African subject has been at the margins of Western civilisation as the sole purpose of this civilisation was to engage in epistemicide. 'Knowledge-making in the modern/colonial world is at once knowledge in that the very concept of "modernity" rests and the judge and warrantor of legitimate and sustainable knowledge' (Mignolo 2009). For Mignolo, knowledge-making entrenched modernity with its imperialist purposes largely informed by subjection.

Coloniality of knowledge creates a situation where epistemic members in the colonies reproduce information from the empire's locus of enunciation, in the

fashion that Mbembe consciously or unconsciously does. It is in this schema that the African subject is reduced to the agent of docility who defines and dictates what constitute knowledge and what does not through the subjectivity alien to itself. This is done in the hidden locus of enunciation where claims of objectivity and detachment from the empire will be advocated, whereas the reverse is true. The subjectivity of the African subject rests in a state of lack, void and deficiency that justify subjection on the basis of marginality and racialisation. The knowledge that comes from the African subject is stigmatised, since the subjectivity of such a subject is framed similar to the subject. That is, for that the African subject is stigmatised and this makes it to be inferiorised and misplaced. According to Mignolo (2009:18), 'coloniality of knowledge rests in the depositor, warrantor, creator and distributor of universal knowledge'. The sole purpose of modernity is to serve the interests of empire. As Walsh (2008) states, the sites of knowledge that are necessary for other regimes of truth are repressed, marginalised, disciplined and destroyed.

The epistemic decolonial shift that is the movement of the geography of reason clearly indicates that knowledge about Africa should be looked through the locus of enunciation of Africa not that of the empire—that is, Euro-North American imperial global designs that are the constitutive parts of modernity, modernity that is also the constitutive part of coloniality, since both cannot survive without the 'Other'. Modernity is informed by the expansionism of Western civilisation that is seen as the absolute civilisation that is the only process than other forms of civilisations. This goes hand in hand with hegemonic narratives projected as absolute to mask the injustices that come with subjection. Such a condescending attitude is informed by the logic of coloniality of power that sees other forms of knowledge as not being capable of producing knowledge as they are outside the bounds of Western modernity (Boidin et al. 2011). So, this means for them to constitute knowledge, they must be within Western modernity to qualify as knowledge.

'Coloniality of knowledge is precisely the affirmation of the zero-point and the success in silencing or relegating other epistemologies to a barbarian margins, a primitive past' (Mignolo 2007a: 162). Maldonado-Torres (2004) calls for knowledges that are the very antithesis of modernity. Such knowledges of

course, are that put the African subject at the centre, and taking cognisance of the subjectivity of such a subject to counter subjection. For Maldonado-Torres, these are alternative knowledges that find their locus in the cracks of the continent, in borders, in the global south, in diaspora, in movements of people as well in death and suffering that may face at the violent hands of the defenders of violent states.

Santos (2007) submits that knowledge is not conceived in abstractions but practices and interventions—that is, knowledge is a political project. Knowledge is not created, produced and socialised for its own interest sake, but to reach particular ends, and with the political project of modernity—to organise the world and to ratify subjection of the African subject. As Santos (2007: 37) posits, knowledge is '[e]mbedded in different Western and non-western cultures, such experiences used not only different categories, symbolic universes, and aspirations of a better life'. The understanding of coloniality of knowledge should be through the lens of understanding the world system that has been constructed by hegemonic Eurocentric paradigm for the past 500 years with the purpose of domination, exploitation and oppression (Grosfoguel 2007).

According to Santos (2007), modernity is the epistemic empire with the mutual interdependence exhibiting the accomplished manifestation of abyssal thinking. This means, modernity promotes monopoly of universal abstraction that is embedded in the dichotomy of true and false (Santos 2007). In the darker side of modernity lie other forms of truths, that is, in the other line of abyssal thinking. The colonised zone of existence is said to constitute beliefs and practices that are exotic, marginal and idolatrous in practice—that cannot be considered forms of knowledge. So the relegation of other knowledges on the other line of abyssal thinking suggests that they are barbarian since they are said to be devoid of Western civilisation. As Lander (2002) points out, such relegation amount to knowledges of abyssal epistemology being reduced to myths and superstition. Abyssal epistemology discredits other forms of knowledge and its fundamentalism is hidden behind the codes of objectivity, universality, scientific truth with the notions of verifiability, reliability and validity. Lander (2002) amplifies this perspective in pointing out that Western knowledge is known as scientific knowledge that is embedded in truthfulness, universality and

objectivity, while it relegates other forms of knowledge outside the conception of knowledge itself.

Coloniality of knowledge is a form of world and knowledge, and on the opposite side of it, there are forms of the worlds and knowledges otherwise, the very antithesis of coloniality of knowledge (Escobar 2007). Knowledge creation and transformation is a hegemonic project that always responds to actors' desires and needs as well as institutional demands, the very basis that informs and strengthens modernity (Mignolo 2007a). It is clear that theorising the African subject in spaces within modernity negates the radical content of the critical theory that is essential for the subjectivity of the African subject. The likes of Antonio Gramsci, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, to name but a few, acquire the canonical status to the extent that they are used as theoretical tools to study Africa. This form of canon loses sight of the languages and narratives that are located in the subaltern location of the world, because they are a form of critical thinking located within modernity. This really implies that it is a form of thinking that is alien to the lived experience of the African subject, and its knowledge bears not much relevance even if the application or duplication is made much to fit into the subaltern.

Also, the African subject runs the risk of reproducing modernity in the subaltern by asking questions similar to that of modernity. This really implies that the project itself is limiting and self-defeating as far as Africa as a geography of reason is concerned. Africa as the ex-colonised zone, and now a zone of that inhibited by the African subject should not be understood as a mere object of study, but a geo-political location that has its forms of knowledge and forms of regimes of truth that claims no universality by a view of the world that should co-exist with others. Such co-existence does not imply being integrated in the global design systems, the very sites of epistemic violence and racism, but the one that (co-)exists in its own right. In other words, Africa should not be understood as a region, but an epistemic space. It is in these epistemic spaces where counter-hegemonic discourses exist that question the very basis of modernity and its concealment of its darker side. As Escobar 2007) posits, epistemology and philosophy include the need to understand subject position to assert the construction of meaning to reflect and understand the darker side of

modernity. This is what Maldonado-Torres (2004: 30) calls radical diversality that refers to 'a critique of roots that bring into light both coloniality and the epistemic potential of non-European epistemes'.

It is important to understand genealogy of thought in order to understand its mode of operation. According to Mignolo (2011a; 2011b) modernity, postmodernity and altermodernity have their historical grounding in the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Decoloniality has its historical grounding in the Bandung Conference of 1955 in that 29 countries from Asia and Africa gathered. According to Mignolo (2011b) postmodernity unlike modernity has many fractures or various paths since it is claims to be informed by multiplicity, complexity and hybridity. But then, it is important to point out that postmodernism is located within a moment of crisis of modernity and it is a critique of modernity within modernity.

Postcolonialism is also trapped within the critique of modernity within modernity. Postcolonialims came into being building from the epistemic blocs of poststructuralism and postmodernism. Postcolonialism differed with poststructuralism and postmodernism in that it articulated the lived experience of the Third World, however, just like poststructuralism and postmodernism, it was trapped within modernity. So, the 'posts' in their modes of critique—that is, poststructuralism, postmodernism and post colonialism are not liberatory but emancipatory. In other words, they do not overhaul modernity and its continued structure, coloniality—but then, the interest is just to reform the very basis and rationality of epistemic violence embedded in modernity. This as a result, keeps epistemic racism and violence intact since these—'posts' and 'isms' are critiques of modernity within modernity. Epistemic racism and violence is so pervasive that even critical theory fails to take into account the naturalisation, intransigence, complicity and blindness of the long standing effects of coloniality that by origin and character can be traced from colonialism itself (Walsh 2007).

According to Quijano (2008: 189), modernity diluted and dominated all forms of culture, human life, spirituality, 'especially knowledge and the production of knowledge under its hegemony'. The logic behind this was to make sure that the dominated do become appendages of modernity. This means that by reproducing

and appropriating modernity as if it is their own. It is clear that this has the devastating impact of creating in self-deception of the colonised. Such is true in the fact that the colonised are alienated from modernity, even if they can claim to its agents, they are mere appendages. Modernity is exclusively European and the expansionist project of modernity claimed to redeem the primitive, barbaric, dark, dirty, oversexed, inferior past of the colonised. Mudimbe (1988) amplifies to say that African subjects are 'viewed as primitive, simple, childish and nonsensical'. 'The mythical portrait of the coloni[s]ed therefore includes an unbearable laziness, and, that of the coloni[s]err, a virtuous state for action' (Mimi 1965: 80). This deception is a greater charm as it was able to make most blacks to turn them from savagery into being, the charm that gained the status of irrefutable truth. It is the dominated who suffer from the ontological crisis that is created and sustained by modernity in the colonies. This is epistemic violence that is devastating and over-lasting (Quijano 2008).

The status of poststructuralism, postmodernism and post colonialism has been that of Western canonism, the very strength of modernity. The use of Western canonism in the name of poststructuralism, postmodernism and post colonialism are indeed radical, but their radicalism is the one with epistemic limits since it is the critique of modernity within modernity. Their use as theoretical intervention in application to Africa poses some epistemic problems on the basis that it is a theoretical apparatus that negates radicalism and agency of the forms of knowledges that have been silences and marginalise by modernity. There should be instead, the co-existence of knowledges where different epistemologies will exist. Knowledge in the margins of modernity is still knowledge and the Eurocentric modernity always regards knowledge as that which circulates in the hegemonic discourses.

The perspective of modernity in relation to knowledge gives the impression that knowledge is hegemonic, colonising and overcoming (Quijano 2008). Other non-European knowledges are not regarded as knowledge as they are not sharing the same epistemic lens and geography of reason with that of modernity. Modernity (re)produces itself as a culture and history, also to add, a reality. Coloniality of power constitutes modernity in its Eurocentric origin and character. As Quijano (2008) states, modernity as the agent of epistemic violence and epistemic racism,

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it naturalises itself through the lived experience of the colonised from those who find themselves in the logic of power.

According to Walsh (2007), coloniality of knowledge renders invisible and subaltern other forms of knowledge in a form of subjection that is systematic and continuous. The problem is not the epistemic frames but the manner in which they have 'historically worked, to subordinate and negate "other" frames, "other" knowledge, "other" subjects and thinkers' (Walsh 2007: 224). The problem when criticising coloniality is the epistemic trap of reproducing meta-narratives of coloniality—while ignoring the local knowledges and historical imaginations. As Walsh (2007: 224), states, this does not 'depart from modernity alone but also from the long hori[s]on of coloniality'.

Coloniality of knowledge gains much ground as it considers other epistemologies outside modernity as inferior. The epistemology of the West has been cemented by the power to define—the very basis of its domination and its conception of the world (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). According to Santos (2007), modern ways of Western thinking treats other knowledge ecologies as abyssal. The abyssal thinking is the system of visible and invisible distinctions consisting of exclusion, degration, exploitation, and dehumanisation of the African subject. According to Santos (2007: 3) '[t]he exclusionary character of this monopoly is at the core of the modern epistemological dispute between scientific and non-scientific forms of truth'. This means the epistemic status of the knowledge on the other side of modernity—the other line of abyssal thinking are indeed non-authoritative knowledge and are at worse, labelled as things that are outside knowledge. It is clear that knowledge is what only mimics modernity, or its transplant. What modernity requires qualifying other knowledge outside modernity is that modernity is 'the same abyssal cartography [that is] is constitutive of modern knowledge' (Santos 2007: 8).

Maldonado-Torres (2004: 51) calls for 'radical diversality' that refers to the 'effective discourse and critique of the roots of a decoloni[s]ed and non-racist geopolitics of knowledge. Radical diversality is a genealogical approach informed by the purpose of uprooting modernity. Radical diversality is at the core of the African subject subjectivity that is not concerned about symptoms of

the phenomena, but its technologies of subjection. It is also a form of learning from the silenced and marginalised discourses that were rendered invisible and impotent by modernity. The rationale behind radical diversality is why other epistemes are rendered barbarian and not a form of knowledge.

There is need for the forms of knowledge that is criticism of modernity outside modernity in the form of meta-criticisms. These are geo-politics of knowledge that responds and confronts the empire from the ex-colonised zone (Quijano 2008). This will bring to light the darker side of modernity that is hidden in coloniality of knowledge. Modernity consists of colloralies that are the constitutive part of the Eurocentric hegemony that then implicates modernity as the part of modernist enterprise (Escobar 2007). The canonism of modernity within modernity corresponds exactly with the power of modernity to silence, or to render invisible knowledge and subjects that are critical of modernity, more especially its darker side. So this means, if knowledge of the ex-colonised is declared non-existent, so to the modes of existence of the ex-colonised. As Boidin et al. (2011) state, this is a marginal pursuit of knowledge that is informed by agency and consciousness. Such epistemic sites are necessary to open way for de-colonial criticism that is necessary as it exposes the darker side of modernity. The ex-colonised experience is a necessary centre for critical thinking and action.

Coloniality of being

The third pillar of decolonial epistemic perspective, namely coloniality of being was conceptualised by Maldonado-Torres (2007) tracing its genealogy from the link between ontology and power, and also the link between being and colonial history. Maldonado-Torres (2007) also adds that coloniality of being is also linked with the understanding of coloniality of power and also in addition to it coloniality of knowledge. That is to say, coloniality of power plus coloniality of knowledge is equals to coloniality of being. Maldonado-Torres offers the explanation that the concept of being in terms of the articulation of power, coloniality, came from the relationship between power and knowledge that are the constitutive parts of modernity. Coloniality of being emerged as Maldonado-Torres (2004) points out from the reflections of modernity/coloniality and the conception of the modern and colonial world.

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Coloniality of being will be used in this study to distill how Mbembe's political thought will be examined in relation to the thematic area of the politics of violence, which will be the fifth chapter of this thesis. The question of coloniality of being in this perspective can only be understood on the basis of exploration and the discursive interventions that questions power relations and the logic and the configuration of the world. Also in addition to understand the structural positionality of the African subject in that process of subjection. The notion of being is that of racial invention where the notion of race is used as the organising principle through the combination of power and knowledge, the very constitutive parts of subjection. These were the arsenals used to create the Other, the Other of Europe, the aberration of the norm, the non-being whom there will be no penalty or justice is such a human figure is dehuminised.

This is what makes African subject to be the *damne* or 'wretched' or the condemned of the earth who are rendered otherwise, as they are indeed the other (Maldonado-Torres 2004). The damned of the earth are those who are excluded and they are considered the aberration from the norm. In this form, they are found in the outskirts and wastelands of the empire, the geography that is seen as devoid of any content of being and notion can come out of it. In this logic of modernity, there is what Maldonado-Torres (2004) refers to as 'forgetfulness of coloniality', that is simply that, modernity tends to forget that it is the sole creator of the damned of the earth who are trapped in structural violence. The damned of the earth also exists in the condition that are designed, maintained and decorated by the configuration of power—that is, the colonial matrix of power.

Coloniality of being in relation to the African subject means that this subject is a non-being—an ontologically void subject. 'Coloniality of [b]eking suggests that [b]eking in some way militates against one's own existence' (Maldonado-Torres 2004: 43). The fundamental point is that the structural positionality of the African subject is that of being racialised, implicated, criminalised and persecuted. The African subject is the aberration from the norm and for it to be dealt with it has to be eliminated and excluded in the anti-black world. The stereotypes that inform the invention of African subject are still alive to the state of attaining some form of conical truth that then put the majority of blacks in their own place—exclusion and marginalisation of the hellish conditions.

People who are subject to the most profound human experiences—suffering massive violence and incomprehensible cruelty, the routine degradation of poverty and despair, the terrors of madness and life-threatening disease or even facing the impossible dilemmas of providing care, whether surrounded by the highest technologies into remote abstractions, discursive forms, or subject positions (Biel et al. 2007: 13).

The logic of the African subject being the damned and condemned of the earth is specific in so far as the lived experience of the African subject is concerned. It is in this condition that the African subject is dispossessed of ontology, and this creates an object where the raw power of subjection is justified. The African subject experience is tied with these forms of dehumanisation that relegate it to the hellish zone of non-being; hence the impossibility of the African subject articulating its own lived experience in terms of what has made it hellish in the practice of everyday life. The everyday life of the African subject is that which has lot of demands in that its state of damnation cannot be fixed by mere reconciliatory gestures or political treaties. The living of the African subject damned of the earth, is itself that which constitutes political demands. The political demands of the African subject are difficult to compensate, and for that to be such a reality there should be destruction of the universal, the very impossibility that can only bring blacks to the state of being human.

The African subject can become human by the very basis of destructing coloniality of their own being. Coloniality of being carries with it the logic of violence that creates pathologies, the very things that make sure that the African subject is the sole target of industrial complex of subjection. So in this logic, being is associated with the empire is seen as the mode of survival for the African subject (Maldonado-Torres 2004). The African subject even if it can receive patronage from the empire, it is still trapped in the hellish world, and it is in this logic that coloniality of being can be understood in its perversity and excess of subjection. What is essential to point out is the fact that the existence of the African subject is that of uncertainty.

According to Maldonado-Torres (2004: 41) '[b]eing and [e]mpire are closely linked in that they are limiting, rather than limited. They give ontological and

geographical expression to the imperatives for expansion, power and control'. Coloniality of being is centred on the idea of race, with the African subject being racialised of course, that then determines the nature of space and time. Human differences and structures of power create difference that is exhibited through inequality and the hypocrisy of utopia propagated by the empire that by any means, excludes the African subject in actual terms. This hypocrisy of modernity that has gained a conical status in the contemporary life is founded on the trinitarian slogan of liberty, equality and fraternity. The promises in this slogan go hand in hand with the racialisation, exploitation and elimination of races that are dehumanised by the empire—that is, the industrial complex of subjection at best.

Modernity hides damnation—that is, its darker side from the view informs its redeeming practices that are a worse form of hypocrisy. The empire with its narrative of Western civilisation is violence for the fact that it is armed with what Maldonado-Torres (2004: 43) calls 'the logics of domination' to organise the world around the idea of race. Coloniality of being means the African subject who is constructed by the empire. Coloniality of being is not only the extra-ordinary event of violence, the manner in which modernity continues as part and parcel of geo-political and body-political history (Maldonado-Torres 2004). In short, modernity, that is essentially subjection, is the constructor of the lived experience of the colonised. As Maldonado-Torres 2004: 44) argues, 'coloniality of [b]eing could become one possible way to theori[s]e the basic fundamentals of the pathologies of imperial power and the persistence of coloniality'.

Death is part and parcel of the colonised beings as modernity is the non-ethics of war. Power relations and effects on human condition in society are features by colonial reality and the racist crimes that are the living legacy. The death of the African subject is part and parcel of human life, the life that is dehumanised in its form. The forms of lives that are assumed by African subjects are structurally a form of death since the death of an object cannot be accounted for. Thus, death is the ordinary life that is seen as normal because it is the death of the subject that constitutes lack, void and deficiency. The ordinary life explains itself through the chasm of coloniality (Maldonado-Torres 2004). The modernist project, through its darker side is anti-ethical to the worst extent as ethics do not apply when

coloniality systematically directs itself with the African subject. Coloniality of being is informed by both deception and self-deception. The lived experience of the African subject finds itself within self-imposed veil that generated the misrecognition of humanity, fomented self-deception, and legitimated colonisation (Maldonado-Torres 2004). In amplification, Césaire (1972) puts the state of equation which means that 'colonisation = thingification'.

It is in this context of the said thingification Maldonado-Torres (2007) shows that coloniality of being cannot be fully understood without paying attention without it being a form of realm of war, conquest, genocide, lynching that have been the embodiment of the lived experience of the African subject. The genocidal attitudes that were to render the African subject its victim are turned into objecthood in need of subjection as the African subject is devoid of ontology. Coloniality of being as an ontological dynamic is informed and rationalised by the violent and genocidal attitudes of seeking to obliterate and dehumanise blackness in the face of the anti-black world. This was perceived as just and proper since the darker side of modernity outplayed itself in the colonies. As Maldonado-Torres states, the code that exists in the empire is not applied as in the case of the colonies. Basic conditions for human life to do not apply, and the modernist project, that is violence par excellence, justifies this as necessary under the pretension that they are creating a just world.

Similarly, Mignolo (2009) argues that body politics are politics articulated by those considered humans. They are the politics of the darker side of modernity. The African subject is regarded as alien, not human, and this makes the lived experience to be centred on agency and continued struggle to be located in the loci of politics of emergent. The African subject wants to realise humanity and such humanity is not in its existential plane is not the same with that of modernity and its myth of Trinitarian slogan. As Mignolo (2009) has it, they are resisting the arrogance of modernity that decides to label non-human and to dehumanise people it dislikes. Maldonado-Torres (2007) argues that coloniality of being cannot be understood without seeing non-ethics of war regulate actions of the colonisers. Exception to ethics come into being and become a norm from colonialism that has been superseded by coloniality. In the logic of modernity ethics are suspended or dislocated in favour of the advocacy of war that is the

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hellish disaster and a worst form of dehumanisation. As Maldonado-Torres (2008a: xii) puts it, naturali'[s]ation of human difference brings difference in the articulation of ethics and gives a form of justification to the 'production of hell and zone of non-being'.

In other words, non-ethics of war become transformed and normalised. The code of conduct is altered to justify slavery, constitutive of colonised and even their dehumanisation. The non-ethics of war as Maldonado-Torres states regulate the actions of the colonisers, but such regulation is that of imposition and not of deterrence. This is because the non-ethics of war are directed towards the black body, the body that implies a scandal as it is always suspected and can be dehumanised at will in this anti-black world. Non-ethics of war are a constituent part of coloniality of being and they are armed with a huge load of both direct and indirect violence. They are in this form, targeted towards the non-being that cannot be accounted for, in the sense, non-ethics of war are a direct political project with the advocacy to eliminate the non-being and if there is no elimination, the purpose is to render the existential condition a hellish zone of non-being. Non-ethics of war justified slavery, constitutive of the blacks who are not only the non-wage products, but those outside the grammar of things human, the very basis of their dehumanisation. The African subject in the eyes of coloniality of being symbolises people as property because they are devoid of ontology, they are mere objects. They can be killed, enslaved, jailed, humiliated, and lynched with impunity. The life of the African subject is nearest to death and also, a hellish existence.

> To be sure those who suffer the consequences of such a system are primarily Blacks and indigenous people, as well as all of those who appear as colo[u]red. In short, this system of symbolic representations, the material conditions that occur therein, that are also at the same time derivative and constitutive of such a context, are part of a process that naturali[s]es the non-ethics of war. The sub-ontological difference is the result of such naturali[s]ation (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 256).

Conquest and colonisation were centred on the issue of race (Maldonado-Torres 2007). The problematic of coloniality of being as a starting point should be the issue of the colour line (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). This can be attributed to the fact that coloniality of being is the paradigm of war that is informed by non-

ethics of war (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). It is clear from Maldonado-Torres thinking that in the world of war and violence, ethics are at stake. The world has been trapped in the logic of a death world for the African subject since it cannot claim injustices due to its lack, void and deficiency at the subject level. This world is the empire that turns excessive violence against the African subject in a direct form through the industrial complex of subjection. The non-ethics of war have assumed a legitimated form of political life, the life that excludes the African subject in that war is declared against it. This is made possible through the nature and the logic of structural violence with its crude ability to make the abnormal normal. This is the form of violence that is selective and exclusively directed towards the African subject due to its sense of objecthood. Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 240) argues that '[i]n modernity, this fundamentally anti-ethical genocidal modality has become naturali[s]ed through racism of various kinds'.

Coloniality of being means nearness or always walking next to the shadow of death since it is, through its paradigm of war—homicidal and genocidal through its modalities of violence. The propagation that modernity is a civilising mission aiming to save the barbarians from their own fatalistic forms of political life that are in the dark made it to a regime of truth and redemption. The deception of modernity was not seen, that should be understood on the basis of tracing and accounting from the deception of modernity by revealing its darker side. The darker side of modernity is the exhibition of the project of racialisation in its dehumanising form (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). Modernity is not the civilisation of inclusion as it projects, but that of exclusion and dehumanisation as it denies the basis of co-existence of beings. The existential condition of the African subject is 'tragedy, death and sadness' (Fischer 2007: 427).

As Maldonado-Torres (2008a) states, for coloniality of being to succeed, the formative of the anti-black world should come into being in a forms of identified agent, that is, racialisation of black bodies that are non-existential in the ontological sense. It is in this world where there is, as Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 240) puts it, 'unethical excess of signification' to give way to the world of what he also calls 'community of masters'. The notion of community of masters valorises ethics of power needed to maintain the pathos of domination and self-control that keep the structure of coloniality of being intact (Maldonado-Torres

2008a). This means, the notion of community of masters is the master morality that is constitutive of modernity, from its beginning, its changing faces and to the present. The code of conduct of the community of masters has been the same and that is, being 'complicit with the paradigm of violence and war' (Maldonado-Torres 2008a: 53). The logic of conquest and domination more so towards the black bodies and to create the anti-black world is seen as necessarily justifiable since the civilisation mission as stated before, is necessary for the barbarians. The interests of civilisation was and is only benefiting the community of masters, and the very opposite of what they claim to serve.

It is the forgetfulness of coloniality that sees modernity as only a redemptive discourse and the rescuing mission infirmed by good will to make a difference to the lives of the damned of the colonised. Coloniality forgets that when it kick-starts its operation it attacks the African subject, and in doing so, the mission is to make it docile and even to dehumanise it to keep the project of modernity going. As Maldonado-Torres (2004) states, coloniality of being also find themselves in the plane of excess of being where violence and genocidal tendencies find prominence. Coloniality of being calls to the attention to look seriously into the devastation caused against the body of the African subject and also the continued acts of oppression, where racism is manifest.

Coloniality of being shows that racism is both ontological and epistemic, and its singular purpose is to render black inferior and maintain privilege enunciatively. Coloniality of being points out then that inferiorising and assimilating the African subject to the point of docility is a priori. Coloniality of being is concerned with the lived experience of those who suffer from subjection (Maldonado-Torres 2007). Maldonado-Torres thoroughly deploys the thought of Frantz Fanon through existential phenomenology to account for the understanding of the lived experience of the African subject. That is, Fanon is applied for the purpose of 'thinking ontology in the light of coloniality and the search for decoloni[s]ation' (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 242). It is clear that the locus of enunciation of coloniality of being is both phenomenological and existential. Both are the very basic tools to understand the subjection of the African subject who happen to find him or herself in the world that is the antithesis of its being and existence—the anti-black world. The idea of race in

modernity reaches the pathological point of naturalising the non-ethics of war. '[T]he colonial side of [b]eing sustains the colo[u]r line' (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 251).

Abyssal thinking presents that impossibility of meeting points and co-presence of the two sides of the line. Beyond abyssal thinking there is, as Santos (2007: 2) states, 'non-existence, invisibility, non-dialectic absence' that really apply to Africa, a place that habits the human life that is dehumanised. According to Santos, non-existence means not existing in any relevant or comprehensible way of being. Whatever is produced as non-existent is radically excluded because it lies beyond the realm of what the accepted conception of inclusion considered to be its 'Other'. As Maldonado-Torres (2007: 253) puts it, '[t]he absence of rationality is articulated in modernity with the idea of the absence of being in others. Misanthropic scepticism and racism work together with ontological exclusion'.

Acccording to Maldonado-Torres (2007) coloniality of being appears in historical projects of modernity that represent the face of civilisation with the sole interest of advancing the imperialist project, without any consideration of the lived experience of those who have a different outlook than that of the empire. The idea of race is seen as a priori and it is a starting point of the project of coloniality in general and coloniality of being in particular is directional as race as a point of departure. Ontological differences are produced with the basis of 'Othering' the colonised through the fundamental existential characterisation and symbolic realities, which turn to materialistic conditions that define social existence along the racial lines.

It is clear from Mignolo (2011b) that the anti-black world cannot listen to the complaints of the African subject. The demands of the African subject are impossible to meet since blackness is denied justice due to its non-belonging. The existential experience of the African subject is unique since they the African subject is the racialised individual who have his or her existence being always questioned. In the world characterised by subjection of the African subject, the existential experience is considered not important since it is the experience of the object. Coloniality of being means that the being of the African subject is a being

of an object that does not have agency and existence. Santos (2007) argues that non-existence manes not existing in any relevant or comprehensible way of being. Whatever is produced as non-existence is radically excluded because it lies beyond the realm of what the accepted conception of inclusion considers its other.

Coloniality of being is about the lived experience of the African subject, and for coloniality of being to be engaged, there should be agency and consciousness. According to Maldonado-Torres (2004) there is a need for critical accounting of the Euro-North American typology of being—not being in the world imposed by modernity that renders being into non-being. The revoking of the being is necessary to affirm presence, that is possible through ontological existence for the African subject, not object. The African subject should be a subject infused with ontology and lived experience surrounded by a continued struggle for liberation.

Towards de-colonial turn

From coloniality of power, knowledge and being as constitutive parts of modernity and also as a rallying point of critique, it is important to introduce the synthetical moment of decoloniality that is coined as de-colonial turn. This is to foreground the fact that the African subject's subjectivity is de-colonial turn and to affirm the positionality of the ways of thinking and doing that get rid of coloniality. De-colonial turn refers to a process and undertaking of 'producing a radical and alternative knowledge' (Grosfoguel 2007: 211).

De-colonial turn will be used in this study to distill how Mbembe's political thought will be examined in relation to the thematic areas the political thought of Frantz Fanon and also the idea of South Africa, which form part the sixth and seventh chapter of this thesis respectively. De-colonial turn is located at border thinking and delinking, meaning that they are not part of modernity and they are not criticisms of modernity within modernity, but outside it to expose its darker side. Hardt and Negri (2009) claim that: '[t]o understand modernity, we have to stop assuming that domination and resistance are external to each other, casting antimodernity to the outside, and recogni[s]e that resistances mark differences that are within'. It seems then that antimodernity is not a decolonial project as

Hardt and Negri fault that decoloniality is antimodernity. Decoloniality on the contrary is on the outside of modernity, it is not within and it engages the darker side of modernity. Modernity form the standpoint of decoloniality is not seen only as power relations and the unfinished project as the perspective of Hardt and Negri suggest—modernity is the constitutive part of coloniality. Modernity *qua* antimodernity is a mere reformist agenda and in this shape it has the capacity to arrest resistance and contain within.

Decolonial epistemic perspective is a 'pluriversal epistemology of the future; an epistemology that delinks from the tyranny of abstract universals' (Mignolo 2007a: 159). The location of looking at the world should be rounded in localised experiences. It is the epistemological breaking ground should not be mediated, but the one informed by the lived experiences of the subject emergent who are opening up the new vistas of knowledges and the modes of understanding worlds around them outside the totalising project of modernity. According to Walsh (2007: 226), 'Western thinking must be confronted and a different thought constructed and positioned from "Other" histories and subjectivities'. Decolonial horisons are necessary to be imagined and engaged so to create a path leading to decolonisation. Decolonisation is the action that aims to undo the complex colonial matrices of power. Exploitation, domination, colonialism and genocide among others, require another form of politics that are anti-politics. This means, politics that are outside the realm of institutionalised politics informed by the experiences of the people and they are informed by the resistance tradition as they challenge subjection of coloniality that is part of the violence that rewards, disciplines and punishes.

Anti-politics are anti-hegemonic politics of struggle against structural violence that is unethical. They are politics of the critical discourse that form political intervention since politics are informed by discourse—but then, the discourse not that of modernity. The starting point of this discourse is that the empire through the colonial encounter is the very cause of the colonial condition. Decoloniality rather than postcoloniality is the heart of delinking. This is what Maldonado-Torres has to say:

Decolonisation itself, the whole discourses around it, is a gift itself, an invitation to engage in dialogue. For decoloni[s]ation, concepts need to be conceived as invitations to dialogue and not as impositions. They are expressions of the availability of the subject to engage in dialogue and the desire for exchange Decolonisation in this respect aspires to break with monologic modernity. (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 261).

The genealogy of de-colonial turn can be traced to array of thinkers of liberation like Aimé Cesairé, Amilcar Cabral, Thomas Sankara, Steve Biko, Frantz Fanon to name but a few who confronted coloniality and its principal apparatus and its management, as well as its maintained ossification. De-colonial turn is a particular manifestation of scepticism towards coloniality that seeks to re-introduce the new conception of the world to bring accounting to historical and contemporary injustices (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). At the centre of de-colonial turn is the subjectivity of the African subject, the subjectivity that is combative in nature as it is directed towards subjection. For Maldonado-Torres, the roots of de-colonial turn are critical responses to racism and colonisation as articulated by racialised and colonised subjects.

The de-colonial turn highlights the epistemic relevance of the enslaved and coloni[s]ed subjectivities into the realm of thought at previously unknown institutional levels. It introduces questions about the effects of coloni[s]ation in modern subjectivities and modern forms of life as well as contributions of raciali[s]ed and coloni[s]ed subjectivities to the production of knowledge and critical thinking (Maldonado-Torres 2008a: 8).

As Walsh (2007) points out, the absence of colonial experience does not allow any articulation of such an experience and neither there will be any form of agency. This also includes the impossibility of being located in any epistemic location of colonial difference. Such a form of agency and articulation of thought is ignored and at best, also suppressed since it is not a critique of coloniality within coloniality, but a critique of coloniality outside coloniality itself. De-colonial turn advocates new ethics of humanity and recourse that are directly pointed towards the bankruptcy and hypocrisy of the empire that is scandalised by its tendency of being unethical and negating the humanity of the African subject. De-colonial turn in emphasis is about constant search for humanity, and

in this instance, the humanity of the African subject. Phenomenologically it is about giving a new philosophical basis of confronting coloniality and searching for truth to realise liberation (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). This attacks the very basis of the crisis of modern Euro-North American imperial condition. De-colonial turn is informed by the principled stance of dismantling social injustices, pushing for radical transformation, and the construction of the new society in that there will be the self in the African subject.

De-colonial turn aims to expose modernity and its Euro-North American hypocrisy. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 5), '[d]ecolonial theory and praxis do not emerge from "wonder" in face of a strange world, but out of scandal and horror in face of the "death world" of coloniality'. This is found in condition of 'hell' that is the world the condemned and excluded find themselves and they are made to live in that world by means of structural violence. The African subject is the existential element in de-colonial turn. It is in such living condition that it is robbed of its existence through dehumanisation.

> The [coloniser] proves that coloni[s]ation… dehumani[s]es even the most civili[s]ed man (sic), that colonial activity, colonial enterprise, colonial conquest, that is based on contempt for the native and justified by that contempt, inevitably tends to change him (sic) who undertakes it; that the coloni[s]err, who in order to ease his (sic) conscience gets into the habit of seeing the other man (sic) as an *animal,* accustoms *himself* (sic) into an animal (Césaire 1972: 41).

The African subject is turned into a being who has no claim to value, even essence. De-colonial turn means conceptualising and theorising beyond modernist lenses (Maldonado-Torres 2007). For Walsh (2007), theory is a tool of struggle in that the representation of thought is informed by perspectives from the subaltern. It is in this condition where attention is placed on structures of social reality and theories seeking to understand such reality. As Walsh argues, such realities are political and de-colonial in character opening up spaces that are offering decolonial possibilities.

According to Maldonado-Torres (2007: 262), '[d]e-colonial turn involves interventions at the level of power, knowledge, and being through varied actions of decoloni[s]ation'. De-colonial turn ensures that the experience of the African

subject—that of being enslaved, colonised and oppressed is combated by injecting subjectivity infused with consciousness through critical thinking and subject formation. De-colonial turn is the important site of creating a new world based on the new imaginaries of gender, nature/environment, new economy, political and cultural sites of existence. For this to be possible there is a need for a clear and renewed subject position to assert the construction of meaning of the world. Quijano (2008) argues that de-colonial turn is the struggle against exploitation and dehumanisation. It is a destruction of coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being. It is not a matter of putting an end to modernity, but to render it impotent after its destruction in the face of the oppressed world. According to Walsh (2007: 233), the aim of de-colonial turn is 'to build new critical communities of thought, interpretation and intervention'.

De-colonial turn opposes paradigm of war that is constitutive part of modernity—the paradigm that has made the social formation of the world (Maldonado-Torres 2007). According to this perspective, modernity is the scandal of war, death and dehumanisation hiding behind redemptive and salvationistic tendencies. Political and epistemic intervention as Maldonado-Torres argues should come from the condemned of the earth. De-colonial turn exposes the darker side of modernity, and also brings into being decoloniality. It introduces forms of de-linking that Maldonado-Torres (2004) regards as a radical dislocation of Europe and its roots.

As Mignolo (2011b) makes clear, decoloniality from the Third World is a necessary thought to rethink, re-create and re-constitute Africa. Mignolo (2011b) posits that decoloniality presents itself always as an option and opens up a way of thinking that delinks from the chronologies of new epistemologies of new epistemes or new paradigms. Grosfoguel (2007) amplifies this view by pointing out that there is a need to read and write Africa outside poststructuralist, postmodernist and postcolonialist Western canons—but think, read and write Africa from a decolonial critique that is outside modernity. According to Mignolo (2007b), de-linking is about theorising and engaging the global imperial designs out of the fringes and also criticising and articulating knowledge outside modernity. It means challenging the hegemonic and dominant forms of knowledge with specific reference to economy, politics, culture to name but a

few. It means moving in a different direction outside of the global imperialist design.

'By presenting itself as an option, decolonial critique opens up a way of thinking that delinks from the chronologies of new epistemologies or new paradigms' (Mignolo 2011c: 273-374). Delinking as Mignolo articulates it, means not accepting the conditions imposed upon the oppressed self and the option of delinking opens the option of decolonisation. For this to happen, the critique of modernity should be outside modernity. For delinking to be possible, there should be epistemic disobedience (Mignolo 2011c). Delinking means politics of interruption in the sense that coloniality does not what to be interrupted, but needs a mild criticism, that is criticising modernity within modernity that is a scandal. As Maldonado (2007) captures it, opposition to scandal is the very process of delinking. For delinking to be possible, there should be epistemological disobedience. Modernity constitutes epistemological canonism that totalises the regime of truth and then projecting itself as the sole truth—that is, epistemological canonism that cannot be questioned due to the myth of modernity as universality.

Delinking as the constitutive part of the locus of enunciation for the subjectivity of the African subject is informed by as Mignolo (2000, 2007b, 2011c) refers to as 'colonial difference'. Colonial difference is a privileged site that entails knowledges and worlds otherwise—that is, the worlds that are marginalised, silenced and discredited since they exist in the exterior borders of modernity (Escobar 2007, Mignolo 2007b, 2011c). Colonial difference brings to the fore the persistence of contested forms of knowledge and power that are a direct attack to modernity. Colonial difference is informed by exteriority, a way of thinking and its locus of enunciation is the 'ethical and epistemological perspective of a liberation philosophy framework: the Other as oppressed, as woman, as racially marked, as excluded, as poor, as nature' (Escobar 2007: 186). The right to own the self, that is located in the 'Other' developing ones modes of life of politics, economy, culture—is often ignored or denied by modernity and its hegemonic discourses. In other words, the very basis of liberation is denied. Colonial difference exposes the epistemic and cultural hegemony of modernity and how these as processes of subjection affect the African subject.

Colonial difference questions the modes of recognition that are conferred by the empire. These are not genuine but arresting discourses and conditions. The restoration of the human being to take its place is absent, and what colonial difference shows is the necessity to promote active and progressive effort outside modernity to advance and realise decolonisation. This is only possible by thinking from the limits of being and being rooted in the cries of revolt that are commonised by the lived experience of racialisation, oppression, exploitation and elimination (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). The struggle that informs colonial difference confronts non-existence, racist colonial structures, systems and institutions in the political formation that is informed by praxis (Walsh 2007).

According to Mignolo (2011c), colonial difference justifies the state that decoloniality has the aim of not only changing the content of the conversation, but the content and character of the conversation itself. It means the overhauling the whole structure of conversation to open up space for a new kind of thinking that is located in the site of the colonial difference. Decoloniality does not mean breaking with the colonial relation, but the very action of delinking with coloniality (Maldonado-Torres 2007). This means the opposition to and confrontation with the darker side of modernity. This is the side that is entangled with colonial power relations that are informed by 'the racial, gender, and sexual hierarchies that strengthen Euro-North American modernity and give further elaboration to enslave, exploit and subjugate' (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 261).

Escobar (2007) articulates the notion of colonial difference to argue that it the reside thought that alternatives should be theorised and imagined outside modernity to endure that the alternative thought is the one that opens the vistas of decolonisation. According to Escobar, then, colonial difference is a privileged site where social transformation can emerge through engaging both epistemology and political space. The issue is to allow new ways of thinking and such ways cannot emerge is they are within the prism of modernity, but they should be outside modernity. That is, decolonial epistemic perspective is interested in other forms of modernity, but also the alternatives to modernity (Escobar 2007). As Walsh (2007) has it, colonial difference creates the collective sense of belonging and unlearning dominant narratives by stretching the horisons of political imagination.

Mignolo (2011c) identifies three scenarios of global features. The first is rewesternising and the unfinished project of modernity. This is the imperial project rehabilitating western hegemony to control authority and economy. This is done on the basis of reforming the project of modernity on the basis that the locus of power will always continue to perpetuate coloniality where the western hegemony will always be in operation. In other words, asymmetrical power relations will always remain intact. The second feature is dewesternisation and the limits of western modernity. In this feature, exploitation and imperial politics of emerging economic giants gain much ground.

This shows that modernity is not coming from Euro-North America only, but through emerging economic fronts and the tendency of neo-colonialism sets the ground. The third and final is dewesternising and the emergence of the global political society delinking from rewesternisation and dewesternisation. It is in these forms that the resistant political tradition is in total opposition to modernity. Justification and motivation of society delinks from rewesternisation and dewesternisation. Mignolo (2011c) re-articulates colonial difference that is necessary to have the existence of trajectories that are both dewesternised and decolonised. The dewesternised trajectory is about thinking from the empire, while the decolonised trajectory is about thinking from and with Africa. As Mignolo argues, decolonised trajectory calls for thinking exteriority that defies the directives of the empire. Since border thinking introduces the new terms of epistemic formulation and engagement it is seen as a threat to modernity since modernity has controlled the terms of epistemology. Colonial difference is the thought that leads to ways of thinking and doing in the global political society de-trapped from modernity (Mignolo 2011c).

De-colonial turn is not fundamentalist, or some form of a new abstract universal. It is not claiming to improvise on the building blocks of rewesternisation (Mignolo 2011a; 2011c). Both aim to maintain the episteme of modernity that they claim to criticise. Grosfoguel (2007) also opposed any form of fundamentalist epistemic project but argues for pluriversality of epistemologies. The very basis of decolonial thought is critical dialogue and broader cannon of thought. This clearly shows that there is no singularity but multiplicity, wherein, modernity's absolutism that hides behind diversity is exposed by pluriversality.

The idea as stated is 'to propose an alternative decolonial conceptualisation of the world system' (Grosfoguel 2007: 212). The world system is part of modernity as it is constructed by hegemonic Euro-North American paradigm. It is in this paradigm where modernity for the past 500 years 'assume[s] a universalistic, neutral, objective point of view' (Grosfoguel 2007: 213). This is a fallacious positionality that has been propagated to the extent that it has been a regime of singular truth. Mignolo further introduces the notion of de-colonial option that he articulates thus:

> The de-colonial option is the singular connector of a diversity of de-colonials. The de-colonial path has one thing in common, the colonial world, the fact that regions and people around the world have been classified as underdeveloped economically and mentally. Racism not only affects people but also regions or, better yet, the conjunction of natural resources needed by *humanitas* in places inhabited by *athropos* (Mignolo 2009: 3).

The experience of being connected has meant that people and regions have been singularised, and have been reduced in atomistic and mechanical terms. This gives modernity the leverage in its epistemic privilege spread its singularity in the world as if there are no pluralities. De-colonial turn as Mignolo (2009: 3) states, constitutes agency as people in the subaltern position refuse to be told what to think, do and feel. They even do not have to adhere to the paradigm of modernity or look up to it to get a sense of recognition. De-colonial turn questions the very basis of modernity including its civilisation of death hidden underneath. What informs it is the audacity that breaks the epistemic silences hidden in Western epistemology (Mignolo 2009). It questions the control of knowledge to challenge the very basis of the rules of the game—that is, the logic of modernity that sees its criticism as something that should be within itself—critic of modernity within modernity.

Engaging in the de-colonial option is not being fundamentalist—but engaging in shifting the geography of reason with a clear locus of enunciation. Shifting of geography of reason is 'unveiling and enacting geopolitics and body-politics of knowledge' (Mignolo 2009: 14). The power to name and define must emerge in the discourses of geo- and body- politics. These are politics informed by epistemic disobedience. This means that the purpose is to reverse the injustices

of the past the initiative that should be understood in political and strategic terms (Walsh 2002). As Mignolo (2009: 15) has it, 'for this simple reason, the task of de-colonial thinking and the enactment of the de-colonial option in the 21[st] Century starts from epistemic de-linking: from acts of epistemic disobedience'. Delinking from webs of imperial knowledge is to form the African subject who is not caught within the 'racial matrix of modern/coloni[s]ed world' (Mignolo 2009: 17). The world that blacks are free from being cursed, racially profiled, racialised and despised—the dismantling of the anti-black world. Political agency arises as a matter of response and destruction to this racial nature of modern and colonial world—then, the epistemic de-linking and epistemic disobedience if the nature of this politics of emergent black subject. In this form, the de-colonial option takes root. As Walsh (2002) states, delinking aims to recover and reconsider knowledges distorted and lost during the colonial encounter and process. This calls for the need to redefine and resisting the imposition of modernity through its imposed superior civilisation and superiority of social institutions.

Maldonado-Torres (2008a) also introduces the notion of de-colonial reduction that simply means skepticism towards modernity. This is the instigator and perpetuator of the paradigm of war. De-colonial reduction exposes the deceptions of the empire by revealing its hidden dimensions—that is, the darker side of modernity. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 245), '[t]he de-colonial reduction is, therefore, performed in praxis and not only in theory'. This shows that coloniality is the fundamental axis of reflections. As Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 245) states, '[v]anquishing Eurocentrism in its many forms becomes one of the most urgent tasks of the de-colonial reduction'. This is necessary because people who are at the receiving end of coloniality emerge from dehumanised world both culturally and epistemologically.

According to Maldonado-Torres (2004: 36), '[d]ecoloni[s]ation is about the creation of a new symbolic and material order that take the full spectrum of human history, its achievements and its failures, into view'. This is a process of creating a new being. Also, it includes responding to the damned of the earth and injecting critical consciousness—a process of revolutionary learning. Forgetting about the damned of the earth is an inherent part of modernity, as a form of

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sickness that has afflicted other forms of decolonisation, fundamental to reproducing modernity. Such forgetfulness creates 'a state of amnesia that leads to murder, destruction, and epistemic will power—with good conscience' (Maldonado-Torres 2004: 36). Opposition to such forgetfulness is necessary to create space for alternative critical thought that call for the creation and sustaining of a new being—a being in the world instead of a non-being in the anti-black. This is the world where the non-ethics of war are naturalised and legitimised.

The ethics that are being called for in the world of beings are that of de-colonial turn. Their desire is not rooted in the locus of enunciation of the Euro-North American empire. De-colonial turn is not only a response to modernity with its non-ethics of war. Rather, it is about unpacking the lived experience embedded in racialisation and colonisation (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). The de-colonial turn is informed by praxis that is the radical confrontation with the empire and the new conceiving of the subject self-voices of critique that do not seek to transform but informed by agency and intention to vanquish coloniality. This promotes alternatives to dehumanist, racialist, non-ethics of war—the very products of the anti-black world that comes with colonialism and elaborated and sustained by coloniaity. The intention of de-colonial turn is to open new vistas of thought to further advocate expansion of borders of thinking, the ones that are de-linking from coloniality.

Conclusion

This chapter engaged three pillars of decolonial epistemic perspective namely - coloniality knowledge, coloniality of power and coloniality of being. The aim was to give an exposition of the colonial situation that, in contemporary form, can be understood as coloniality that puts the African subject in the structural positionality vulnerable to the industrial complex of subjection. This means coloniality continues to hide colonial relations by naturalising, institutionalising and normalising subjection. Coloniality emerges from the contact points or the colonial encounter that articulates the modes of operation and appropriation of restructuring the world to give the same effect as colonialism did, and make way for modernity to be strengthened.

Decolonial epistemic perspective is in the same line of the political, social and theoretical interventions that sought to challenge injustices and inhumanity of the subaltern, just like other anti-colonial struggles, but then, placing the African subject at the centre, to understand its subjectivity and subjection. Decolonial epistemic perspective continually challenges coloniality that singularises the world through the notion of universality by looking at the world from the darker side of modernity as the site of reflection.

As a synthesis to coloniality, this chapter has deployed de-colonial turn that is a political project that aims to chart a way for a continuous liberation confronting coloniality. The de-colonial turn is informed by border-thinking, delinking, colonial difference and de-colonial option all that are directed at searching for other possible worlds and thinking that are counter to coloniality and that are leading to decolonisation. Such a decolonisation is a decolonisation of power, knowledge, and being that are, as a result of modernity, trapped in the loci of the Euro-North American empire.

So, it is necessary to engage in the form of thought that counters coloniality, and the form that configures what coloniality hides. Such a world is the possible worlds that can be realised by engaging in continuous praxis that charts the terrain leading to liberation that will see the emergence of the African subject after subjection has been combated. The subsequent chapters will deploy coloniality of knowledge, coloniality of power, coloniality of being and de-colonial turn respectively and apply them to the political thought of Mbembe. Their deployment serves as testimony to the fact that Mbembe stands on the side of coloniality and this reifies subjection.

CHAPTER THREE

MBEMBE AND THE MODES OF SELF-WRITING

Introduction

In this chapter, decolonial critical analysis is deployed to examine Mbembe's intervention with regards to modes of writing and representing the African subject. Mbembe's intervention has been that of adulation and criticism. He takes a controversial position in terms of how the modes of writing African should be. Mbembe is very critical of the modes of self-writing done by African subjects. The question then is: who should then write about Africa? The self-writing of the African subject is the emergence of the subject. The simple question is whether Mbembe's criticism of African subjectivity as it is, is the criticism that is in defence of the Euro-North American episteme and canon, or whether it is the criticism that advances the frontiers of knowledge in Africa? Decolonial critical analysis is used here to unmask Mbembe's conception of African modes of self-writing and to argue that they are perpetuate coloniality of knowledge.

The first entry point in this chapter is to analyse Mbembe's criticism of populism. Secondly, and linked to the first, the chapter unpacks politics of naming and vulgarity as a tool is used by Mbembe to describe, rather than explain, the subjectivity of the African subjects. Thirdly, the chapter problematises the critics of Mbembe's African modes of self-writing, mapping out their differences in terms of their modes of criticism. Fourthly, the chapter engages the notion of cosmopolitanism and Afropolitanism, the latter that is coined by Mbembe and the chapter argues for the necessity of the geography of reason. Fifthly and finally, the chapter argue that Africanity that is criticised by Mbembe is indeed the necessary mode of writing Africa.

In defence of populism

In his conception of African modes of self writing, Mbembe's (2002a) core and pertinent issues which bares critique to African subjectivity consists of a number of pointers. Mbembe warns that Africa should get out of the 'epistemic ghetto'

and embrace epistemic practices of the 'worldliness'. This means Africa should move into the world and it should not have the polemic relationship with the world. For Mbembe, the epistemic crisis that are placing Africa at the gridlock, which are coined as faked philosophies that are bordering of victimhood and have nothing to offer to the world are Afro-radicalism and nativism. They are, as Mbembe labels them, 'narratives of loss' and these are narratives that govern African discourses. These are discourses which are still caught in the colonialism, slavery and apartheid as meta-narratives which should be transcended if not abolished altogether, and that is something that hampers Africa not to bring anything new in the epistemic realm.

By implication, it means that these are narratives that are making Africa not to write itself, and as a result, Africa has no narrative of its own since it is caught in victimhood. This them creates self-inhalation of African subjectivity where in which the metaphysics of difference, as Mbembe claims, make African subjectivity to be caught in authenticity the point of it being an illusion. It means that for Mbembe there is nothing exceptional about the modes of writing that he coins as Afro-radicalism and nativism. Therefore, the mode of writing *qua* African subjectivity that Mbembe advocates is Afropolitanism as Africa is moving towards worldliness. Arguably, it seems to Mbembe that what characterises African subjectivity of those whom he labels as Afro-radicalists and nativists and deligitimising their epistemic practices is that which is akin to populism. By implication and as Mbembe's critique stands, there is nothing philosophical and nothing that holds epistemic virtue that comes from populism.

It is essential in this context to interrogate the manner in which Mbembe (2002a) frames populism and how such framing trivialises the very essence of populism as a political project of decolonial critical analysis predicated on African subjectivity. The framing that Mbembe applies trivialises the subjectivity of the African subject that in the effect of being named degenerates into the form of what Césaire (1972) 'thingification'—that is, that which renders the African subjectivity as a thing and that is not of benefit but a mere populism in its empty sense. In this sense, as Mbembe affirms, populism cannot be the subjectivity of the African subject and therefore, not any form of knowledge. This is coloniality of knowledge that is the concerted effort to deny other subjectivities and that

must be qualified by means of mimicking Euro-North American discourses and cannon and not to have any epistemic privilege of their own. Also, it follows from Mbembe's perspective, that there is nothing of epistemological essence with regards to populism, but it is just a faked philosophy. The verdict that Mbembe has is that such knowledge from African subjectivity is that if it is knowledge, then it is populist and not truth. The regime of truth, it seems, resides outside populism. It is of interest to note the fact that populism or being populist seems to suggest that which borders on the absurd.

There is nothing, according to Mbembe, that is truthful or original that can come out of populism. Also, it is not clear how populism is defined in terms of its terrain—the terrain of being located in Africa in relation to the African subject. This is coloniality of power, the concerted effort to deny other subjectivities subjectivity and for them to have subjectivity they must be disciplined through the mimicry of the Euro-North American canon. If they resist such mimicry and assert their own subjectivity, they are referred to as populist. Populism if it were to be positive and not a pejorative term that relegates the subject to the politics of absurdity and irrelevance, it would attribute the form of politics of necessity in terms of the way the African subject engages in decolonial critical analysis. Populism seems to assume the attribute of the negative in Mbembe's subjectivity and this is the liberal conception of coloniality of knowledge that delegitimises other forms of subjectivities. In this liberal conception, populism is seen as archaic, primitive, dangerous, and exotic—in this form, populism assumes the level of the occult.

The notion of populism can be traced through variety of histories, trajectories and horisons. Populism, according to Laclau (2005) is the way of constructing the political. In amplification, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2008: 12) posits that it 'has no single parentage, no single origin, no single genealogy and is watered from many springs, some local and some global'. Scott (1985: 23) argues for ideological edifice where '[t]he ideological work of repair and renovation is never-ending'. It is the ideology of critique embedded on how things should be in vision and how they should be in their attainment. The construction of the political is both articulation and re-articulation of the existential conditions of the African subject

qua subjection. Populism suffers from what Laclau (1977) refers to as 'theoretical nihilism'—that is, the concept that has been denied of content.

The African subjectivity that Mbembe (2002a) labels as Afro-radicalism and nativism is the form of subjectivity as decoloniality, the mode of writing from the locus of enunciation of the African subject that also suffers from theoretical nihilism. This theoretical nihilism stems from the fact that populism is regarded 'as pathological symptom of some social disease' (Canovan 2004: 241). Such a stance towards populism calls for it to be negated because it is autochthonous and occult. This therefore suggests that populism does not have any other beneficial political essence. Populism has degenerated as a term of abuse that is a weapon to silence those who are in opposition to its ideals (Cowen 1984). Theoretical nihilism towards populism created the impression that 'assumed that nationalist politics did not raise any interesting theoretical questions' (Gavin 2004: 241).

Mbembe is clear, through his theoretical nihilism with regards to the African subject being engaged in faked philosophies. That said, this renders African subjectivity a faked philosophy, the very thingification with no epistemological essence. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2008), it is simplistic to dismiss Afro-radicalism and nativism as faked philosophies and antiracist racism. What Ndlovu-Gatsheni calls for is that they should be understood as having developed in the intestines of colonialism and having to rupture in the postcolony. Being in fierce opposition with these two streams of populism, Mbembe (2002a; 2002b) is concerned with the idea of the world, omitting the fact that this is the world that is autochthonous to the African subject.

The African subject writes itself not as an individualist exercise, but the writing that engages Africa from the point of view of the having to grapple with the complex nature of subjection as coloniality of knowledge that afflicts the African subject's existential conditions and this is of course, denied. The mode of writing that Irele (2001: 67) advocates is 'an effort toward an expressive grasp of the world in which that experience unfolds'. This, as Irele points out, is based on the concrete reality of history that bears on existential concerns. The mode of writing

predicated in African subjectivity is informed by the spirit of antagonism and this is caused by the existential reality of African subjectivity is.

> Since these are definitions of a discursively produced resurgent subjectivity that is volatile, polyglot, and unconcerned with discovering the persistence of the original state, it would seem that critics who continue to volari[s]e the identity of the struggle and the realm forms of situated agency asserted in the struggle over presentation, do so without returning to the notion of an ahistorical essential and unified self (Parry 1999: 219).

What Parry argues for is the importance of understanding the locus of enunciation of the African subject. The African subject constructs, tells and speaks it the manner that is contextual and circumstantial (Parry 1999). According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007: 176), '"populism" alludes to a kind of contradiction that only exists as an abstract moment of an ideological discourse'. Mbembe's theoretical nihilism does not take into account the existential conditions, complex as they are, that are part of the African reality. Mbembe (2001a) suggests complexity, conviviality, multiplicity in among other things as constitutive parts of the African reality. Populism cannot be, without any qualification, the abstract thingification that is made for its own sake; there is a reason to it and a fundamental one of course. This has led Laclau (2005: 19) to state that 'populism has not only been demoted: it has also been denigrated'.

In defence of populism through decolonial critical analysis it is essential to draw from Laclau (2005) reconceptualisation of the concept from its negative connotation, it is essential to argue that populism is in this sense, a political logic presupposing the epistemological intervention for the purposes of African subjectivity—rather it being reduced to a movement. Populism as a political logic, it is, as Laclau (2005: 117) states, related to 'institution of the social'. Populism cannot just be dismissed as faked philosophy—but it is informed as the construction of the political (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007). Existential conditions and socio-politico realities need to be engaged from the very forces of subjection. According to this perspective, it follows then, that populism should be understood on the basis of exclusion. As such, populism is one of the important ways of constructing the political, in this case, the subjectivity of the African subject.

It is essential to clarify that the populism being defended is not populism in its general sense of the term. This means the populism of evoking emotions that borders on delivering of speeches that are devoid of content and bearing no relevance of bringing liberation to fruition (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007). Laclau (2005: 3) argues that, "populism' intends to grasp something crucially significant about the political and ideological realities to that it refers'. It confronts, as Laclau states, the ontological limits and absence of analytical tools to understand, or to solve its mode of articulation in that the African subject emerges. Such emergence is the very formation of the political. This formation eventually leads to the affirmation of political, the very basis that informs the subjectivity of the African subject. The latter here is the subject not the object at the receiving end of subjection, but rather, the subjects that exposes and combats coloniality of knowledge *qua* subjection.

Mbembe (2002a) regards African subjectivity by the mode of writing of the Africanists as faked philosophies only interested in metaphysics of difference. To suggest that African subjectivity in relation to Afro-radicalism and nativism promotes faked philosophies and also engaging in dead-ends means that its epistemic grounding is the fake one—*the thing in itself*. In support of Mbembe, Appiah (1992: 56) states that nativism constitutes 'us, inside, them, outside. That is all there is to it'. Even if that is the case, as both Mbembe and Appiah suggest, it seems that they are limited to engaging in reductionism and not engaging the complexities of the Afro-radicalism and nativism. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007) also adds that populism should have a nodal point. It is constitutive of the political— the African subject as a political being—is essentially grounded, located and populism enables its emergence by means of decolonial critical analysis.

As Stanley (2008: 96) argues, 'the intuitive association of populism with negative traits discerned against the backdrop of mainstream normality'. It seems as if the power of the occult, when looked in this sense, makes populism to be named as a fake philosophy. In other words, the occult is nothing but the mere deceit and betrayal in the epistemological sense. Populism in this sense is the mode of writing that possesses much potency, and for that matter, the occult one that promotes faked philosophies. What Mbembe (2002a) continues to argue has long being engaged by Parry who writes:

> When we consider the narratives of decoloni[s]ation, we encounter rhetorics in that 'nativism' in one form or another is evident. Instead of disciplining these, theoretical whip in hand, as a catalogue of error, of essentialist mystification, as a masculinise appropriation of dissent, as no more than are antiracist racism, etc., I want to consider what is to be gained by an unsententious interrogation of such alternatives that, if often driven by negative passion, cannot be reduced to a mere inveighing against the iniquities or a repetitive of the conical terms of imperialism's conceptual framework (Parry 1999: 221).

In support of Parry's argument, Laclau (2005: 12) opines that, 'the imprecision and emptiness of populist political thought cannot be dismissed so easily: everything depends on the perfomative at that such emptiness is all about'. The question then comes in terms of who defines and through what criteria. Who defines philosophy in terms of its authenticity or otherwise in relation to the subjectivity of the African subject. The African subject for its philosophy not to be fake, it seem that it must be authentic and it is of interest to inquire about who determine the philosophy of the African subject, something that is of concern with regards to the manner in which Mbembe engages it in relation to the mode of writing done by Africanist thinkers and intellectuals. It seems that to Mbembe the African philosophy for it to be original, it must draw and mimic the Euro-North American philosophy. This is a clear indicative case of coloniality of knowledge that suggests that African subjectivity cannot claim subjectivity of its own. As Appiah (1992) claims, the attack of universalism, that is by implication the West, by means of particularism, is in fact universalism. Being in defence of the West, Appiah criticises Chinweizu et al. (1980) by stressing that: railing against the West by nativists suggests that the latter are propagating it as they are the products of it (Appiah 1992). Mbembe amplifies Appiah thus:

> [I]t has been amply demonstrated that even where they start as a counter-reaction to European vilification, most of the counter-discourses are always deeply embedded in the conceptual structures of the West (the arch writing). To a large extent, the West is their roots. They draw, in their wake, key elements of imperial discourse (Mbembe 2006b: 148).

Even though the Afro-radicalists and nativists are products of the colonialism—that is, the source of subjection and the distorted subject formation through

coloniality of knowledge, it does not necessarily follow that they are propagating it in their modes of criticism. Chinweizu et al. (1980) emphasise the importance of working from the standpoint of Africa and not from some abstract universalism, that by the way, excludes them. The problematic here is that the African subjects seem not to have their own subjectivity and cannot write in their own terms. The only thing that is of concern to Mbembe is that the mode of writing Africa should not be different or in opposition to that of the Euro-North American episteme. It is, instead, that which is determined for and what is essential is to save it from itself not to become populist. So, the emergence of the African subject should be measured in the authentic philosophical sense, as opposed to it being a faked philosophy that renders it fake in its mode of writing. That is to say, the African subject cannot in its mode of writing, authorise or represent itself. Doing so seems to Mbembe, to amount to populism. Epistemologically, it is not been authorised by Mbembe who possesses the tools to authorise what is fake and what is not. It seems the authenticity of the African subject is that of exteriority and total irrelevance. These pejorative labels of coloniality of knowledge have assumed the status of normality.

According to Vincent (2009), populism comes through moral panic and legitimises a dangerous political culture. Such a form of populism, she argues, legitimises oppressive conformism that delegitimises other forms of subjectivities. Populism, according to Vincent (2009), is the 'politics of lowest denominator'. Laclau (2005) dismisses this alarmist approach that perceives populism as abnormal, dangerous, deviance, manipulation, irrational and undefinable. The formation of the subjectivity of the African subject is denied. Populism suffers from what Laclau (2005: 14) refers to as 'elitist dismissal' that forms part of 'processes of simplification and emptying attempt to perform'. What is being advocated by Mbembe is the populist onslaught that its basic purpose is to hide subjection.

As decolonial critical analysis shows in opposition to Mbembe, what is populism in its negative sense, of course, is defined and determined by coloniality of knowledge—the very source of the Euro-North American episteme. When populism rooted in Africanist thought it is perceived as '[t]he presentation of an unchanging and static set of "tradition"' (Vincent 2009: 218). Populism from this

rigidity of coloniality of knowledge is seen as the mechanism that resists change. But then, from the stand-point of decolonial critical analysis it needs to be interrogated by asking rhetorically: what change and in whose terms, and what is static and in whose terms? This is how Laclau (2005: 16) clarifies the point being made that: '[i]f populism is described merely in terms of "vagueness", "imprecision", "manipulation" in its procedures, and so on; there is no way of determining *differentia specifica* in positive terms'.

Mbembe relegates the subjectivity of the African subject to the Euro-North American canon as a source with its tools or arsenal to define. The African subject emergence is therefore denied subjectivity and this is coloniality of knowledge proper. The denial stems from the proposition that it is populist and its knowledge claims are not truthful—faked philosophies. The power of this knowledge is marginal in the whole cannon. Mbembe seems to be concerned by the power of populism that is infused in the Africanist thought and to suggest that it possesses some form of hypnotic power that will inevitably hypnotise all the African subjects who are at the receiving end. To accuse populism as being autochthony, the accusation should account for the fact that populism simplifies the political space through decolonial critical analysis in order to unearth and expose coloniality of knowledge as a form of subjection. Laclau makes the following claim.

> So we can say that progress is understanding populism requires as a *sine qua non*, rescuing it from its marginal position within the discourse of the social sciences—the latter having confined it to the realm of the non-thinkable, to being the simple opposite of political forms dignified with the status of a full rationality (Laclau 2005: 19).

Epistemologically, it seems to Mbembe that the knowledge from the Africanist frontier is singular and no contestation features. It also seems as if the epistemological cult in the occult and exotic form where subjectivity is agency. For the fact that the colonial encounter meant different experiences, it follows that forms and degrees of subjection differed as well. Then, it is important to state that populism is not occult as Mbembe seems to suggest. Still, it is not clear how Mbembe accounts for differing perspectives that do exist within the locus of what he refers to as populism and its supposedly faked philosophies. For that

these are philosophies, simply suggest the need for pluriversalising or to say the least, differing perspectives. Populism differs for what it is; it does not suggest a common name since it is embedded in radically different experiences (Minogue 1969). The pluriversal nature of the political or philosophy *qua* original as Mbembe advocates will mean the need the problematisation of populism, and not reducing it to a homogeneous whole. This means, there are many forms of populism and not all of them are of the negative, there are positives ones too. But also, it is problematic to suggest that they are promoted to the same particular end. As Cowen (1984: 72) opines: '[i]f the paradox is to be unravelled then another tradition of populism should be brought into play'.

Populism *qua* faked philosophies, if they are not epistemologically valid as Mbembe seems to suggest, seems to border on the notion that the Euro-North American episteme is the authentic one—that is, the foundation of original philosophies. For this reason, the Euro-North American episteme is the source of truth that African subjects should strive for instead of searching for their own, and in their own epistemological terms they must ensure that they must derive everything from Euro-North American episteme. The truthful nature of such epistemology is that it should be used by the African subject for it to be truthful and of course, getting itself rid of the occult of populism. To be precise, the mode of writing by the African subject should be a clone of the Euro-North American epistemic locus. Such means the knowledge coming from such a locus is not faked philosophies; and it is essential to point out that this is coloniality of knowledge.

It is not clear from Mbembe's claims whether the African subject in order for it to emerge at the point of its subjection that it should revive itself from the ashes of subjection by seeking guide and wisdom from that which subjects it. Put another way, should the African subject be dependable to Western subjectivity or its own subjectivity? If that is indeed the case, and on the affirmative of course, it should be stated that the existential conditions of the African subject do demand that there should be their own liberators from subjection and that would call for their own epistemological demands and their mode of writing. This being the necessity will require that they have their own analytical and conceptual tools to explain the subjection that confronts them. Their power, if it is occult and

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mystique cannot be accused of being fake for that its mode of writing is not dependable to the approval of the Euro-North American episteme. If that is the case, it will therefore be correct to see Mbembe as being serviceable in denying the subjectivity of the African subject to emerge and as the advocate of coloniality of knowledge. For Mbembe to call for stylising the self seems akin to be mimicry that seeks inclusion in the Euro-North American episteme without changing the existential condition that comes with subjection of the African subject. In is in the juncture of stylising the self where the African subject 'interprets subjectivity as time' (Mbembe 2002a: 242).

Subjectivity change with move of time, since to Mbembe time is on the move, the same to subjectivity. This means that Afro-radicalism and nativism deal with slavery, colonialism and apartheid, things that to Mbembe are irrelevant in time and also in subjectivity. To stylise the self therefore means, to transcend—that is, subjectivity that is much preoccupied with the present and the *imaginaire* of the future. To stylise seems to border on the notion of abdicating responsibility and having nothing to do with the past and its plague on the present. To stylise the self as the mode of writing does not engage head-on with the assumed hidden and amoebic forms of subjection. If populism is negative, it might not be the case of universalism that Mbembe defends. Even locality still holds much relevance.

Further still, it is important to ask whether Mbembe accepts that the African subject and the subjection that afflicts it should be the arrested discourse under the guise of the stylising the self. It seems so for that the mode of writing the African self should be stylised to suite the Euro-North American canon, that by implication, is not populist and faked, but truth and authentic. It means that forms of subjection should not be combated through decoloniality, and the self should just stylise itself and deny that subjection still exists. This is aversion that is the flight from responsibility, and that amounts to bad faith (Gordon 1995). For the fact that Mbembe (2002b) acknowledges that there is power in the false, it means contextuality, something of the opposite effect. The African subject is truthful in its confrontation through decolonial critical analysis to epistemological and ontological frames of its subjectivity in relation to subjection. So then, the criterion of defining cannot apply for African subjects, because they are rendered with the incapacity of not defining, but must be defined. For the mere fact of

being defined and authorised—Mbembe by implication, of not being aware maybe, justifies subjection that afflicts the African subject.

The mode of writing by the African subject within the frame of the arrested discourse means that it is not located in Africa, but elsewhere. As Mbembe seems to suggest, such a subject embraces the notion of worldliness. It is in the interest of the Euro-North American episteme to embrace the notion of worldliness as the world is their property, their plantation with slaves as well who are of course, a form of property. The idea of worldliness does not take into account the forms of subjection that are in the matrix form that continue to attack African subjects. The Africanist frontier with its mode of writing is in constant antagonism form of decolonial critical analysis to suggest, of course, the predicament of the African subject that can be rooted from subjection. Being worldly as far as African subjects are concerned, when subjection still exists is to engage in the form of deception. It is, therefore essential to ask if such a form of deception is not a faked philosophy itself perhaps.

Mbembe as a disciple of Michel Foucault could have at least engaged the notion of the regimes of truth. What is truth is something that is relative and often at times context-specific, and the same applies to what is false. This, of course, depends on the epistemic location of the subject and the realm of subjectivity prevalent in that context. What is truth is a regime and truth cannot assume the status of singularity. Foucauldian regimes of truth typology suggest plurality of truths. Mudimbe (1994: 212) argues that 'the will to truth in Europe seems to espouse perfectly a will to power'. If taken seriously, this suggests multiplicity of truths and falsifications will also be that of multiplicity. As stated, both truth and false assume the matter of relativity and context. Then, to regard African subjectivity as faked philosophy when it confronts subjection will therefore mean fakeness of the Euro-North American episteme that Mbembe want the African subjectivity in its mode of writing to embrace and of course, not to critique.

The point here is that there are regimes of truths. To move beyond Foucault, to give the populist label to African subjectivity in its mode of writing should be in African terms. This does not mean that there should be not any form of criticism, there should be. However, it cannot be that which suggest that African

subjectivity should be dependable to the Euro-North American episteme. Indeed, this has been part of the Euro-North American epistemological DNA to suggest and propagate that Africans are perpetual children and they cannot think. That sad, and being entrenched to the point of being pious—the African subject in the form of antagonism, should write itself in its own term. This has indeed, proven to be something blasphemous, hence the politics of naming that condemns African subjects writing themselves.

The African subject in writing itself through populism as a forms of decolonial critical analysis is faced with epistemic violence—that is, subjection that even haunts the stylising of the self even if it evades responsibility through bad faith. In terms of what Mbembe advancing the frontiers of knowledge in the mode of the African subject writing the self, the attribution of populism *qua* fake philosophies to demean the agency of the African subjectivity means that the African subject will always be trapped in coloniality of knowledge. Populism, being subjectivity of African subjects, essentially means that it is a subject-position. It is of interest to note that this attack comes through the politics of naming and vulgarity. Populism has been relegated to the margins as a result; it keeps resurfacing in a potent force. The marginalisation of the African intellectual thought is partly one of the main reasons why populism keeps on resurfacing. This can be partly explained by stating that Africans were and are still being acted upon, and when they want to act for themselves they are criminalised. The burst boil of populism can also be explained by the continued subjection, that incapacitates any forms subjectivity that is about to emerge from the African subjects. The criminalisation of populism occurs through politics of naming and vulgarity, and the sole purpose of this is to impose censure.

The politics of naming and vulgarity

At the heart of Mbembe's critique is the mode of writing where in which the African subject writes itself by means of African subjectivity. African subjectivity, 'is exactly the result of political subjectivity' (Ramphalile 2011: 8). Therefore, populism is the formation and the emergence of African subjects. According to Laclau (2005), the politics of naming and vulgarity degenerate into rigid designators. The politics of naming in their intent, aim to delegitimise what

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it names so that what is named can be tamed if it was antagonism. Laclau (1977) refers to politics of naming and vulgarity as politics informed by censuring alternative ideas—dismissing them as populist. African subjectivity is given names and such naming is in a way, suggest that African subjectivity is archaic and therefore unnecessary. Politics of naming and vulgarity lead to the mode of representations that are embedded in practices and institutions (Laclau 2005). Mbembe argues that the mode of writing the African self through the discourse and narrative of Afro-radicalism and nativism is governed by what can be referred to 'narratives of loss' (Mbembe 2002a: 239). Mbembe charges that these narratives of loss led to dead end philosophies.

Mbembe sees Afro-radicalism as mere instrumentalism and political opportunism and nativism is metaphysics of difference around the idea of race. Both Afro-radicalism and nativism are seen by Mbembe as modes of writing the African self that contaminates the subjectivity of the African subject by binding it to victimhood. As Mbembe (2002a: 240) states, 'the contemporary African modes of writing the self are inseparably connected with the polemics of self-constitution and the modern philosophy of the subject'. To Mbembe, they do not offer much as they are glued in contradictions and as such having nothing to offer. In articulating the mode of writing adopted by Mbembe, Robins has this to say:

> Mbembe's writings are a provocative challenge to African scholarship. His works is strongly influenced by European theorists such as Derrida, Foucault, and Bakhtin, and African anti-imperialist and dependency theorists such as Samir Amin have no place in his intellectual Patheon.

> Rather than critique of neo-colonialism and global capital, Mbembe writes about the excess of the postcolony, including the connivance of "the masses" in rituals of state power (Robins 2004: 20).

For Mbembe, the modes of writing that are grounded in the existential conditions of the African subject, that often points to subjection, they are the mode of writing the self that are propagating victimhood. This is amplified by Adeeko (2002), who states that Mbembe rejects the ideologies of refutation as they do not explicate clearly the existential conditions of the African subject. For Mbembe,

as Adeeko states, they are ineffectual. According to Mbembe (2002a: 243), both Afro-radicalism and nativism are 'permeated by the tension between voluntarism and victimi[s]ation'. Therefore, they are of irrelevance to explain Africa as it is.

> For Mbembe, the ways in that the Africans write their experiences of the postcolony through these languages of life are precisely the ways in that Africans create meaning for themselves in the world. In this distinctive sense Mbembe challenges nativists and Afro-radical models of African self-writing (Ralphs 2007: 23).

It seems that in the light of Mbembe's view, Afro-radicalism and nativism should be abandoned as they even lack self-reflexitivity. What Mbembe is in favour of is the exploration of the possibility of writing the African self located 'on common discursive terrain' (Mbembe 2002a: 245fn). This being the African subject who is at the receving end of subjection that marks difference and othering, Mbembe still insists on sameness arguing that the African subject is like any other being. Little effort is made though to problematise subjection that creates the zone of distinction and the response of the different mode of writing coming to those African subjects who wholly resist subjection. Wickramasinghe has this to say:

> So what leads Mbembe to locate his thinking about identity within the framework of an elusive and imagined Africa rather than for instance in the nation-state is perhaps nothing less than the feeling that an African identity is an identity not only coming into existence but also that exists already in a incorporeal sort of way (Wikramasinghe 2001: 41).

It is essential then to ask this question: beyond naming things and valgurising them, what is Mbembe's contribution in understanding the subjectivity of the African subject and what does this tell? The politics of naming as engaged by Mbembe, in the sense of contribution can be seen as a form of vulgarity towards the subjectivity of the African subject in relation to Afro-radicalism and nativism. The politics of naming calls names and as such, they possess the descriptive power, like vulgar itself. They provoke a sense of imagination since descriptions in their own carry the meaning that is easily associational with reality, and again, like vulgar itself. But to Mbembe, the politics of naming are the tool of vulgarising the subjectivity of the African subject from the point of its own emergence—that is, subjectivity emerging from the locus of enunciation of

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the African subject. As Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) states, Afro-radicalism and nativism are both products of colonialism, and they are at the heart colonial and decolonial issues.

Mbembe does not point out how colonialism produced Afro-radicalism and nativism. What Mbembe assumes is that both these discourses created themselves. So, Mbembe does not offer hope or a remedy or even a political project rooted in the African subjectivity in its own right (Wickramasinghe 2001). The emergence of the African subject is vulgarised through the politics of naming for the purpose of rendering it impotent. It is clear that the large corpus of Mbembes attack, loaded with the politics of naming and its vulgar was regarded as the last testament to the end of African narratives that question the basis of the their existential predicament, hence this led Mbembe to be audacious enough to proclaim that they are dead ends. Mbembe evokes the politics of naming and vulgarity to regard Afro-radicalism and nativism using Friedrich Nietzsche's perspective to dramatise them as 'frivolity and hallow, vanity, gluttony and envy, the excess of the flesh and of the senses' (Mbembe 2002b: 630).

According to Mbembe (2002a), both Afro-radicalism and nativism revolve around slavery, colonisation and apartheid. It seems to Mbembe that slavery, colonisation and apartheid—the basis tenants of subjection in its primitive and contemporary form, should not be feature in the African subjectivity. For Mbembe (2002b: 630), Afro-radicalism and nativism 'falsify the event itself (whether slavery, coloni[s]ation, or apartheid) in the very act in that they claim to name it and to decode its signification'. It seems wrong and philosophically false for Mbembe that Afro-radicalism and nativism remain tenacious to articulate their existential condition in relation to subjection. Mbembe regards subjectivity of Afro-radicalism and nativism as not truth—therefore, as dead ends. Mbembe (2002b: 631) state that '[t]he philosophical poverty of these discourses is notorious, and several isolated attempts to correct this shortcoming have not succeeded'. From the stand-point of decolonial critical analysis it is of interest to know in whose interests have these attempts have been made and who defines what is philosophical poverty and notorious—or perhaps, what is a better

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philosophy that does not constitute dead elements for the benefit of the African subject.

By the virtue of opposing the idea of slavery, colonisation and apartheid, Mbembe opposes the idea of subjection. What concerns Mbembe is that they should not be present in the mode of writing the African self that is impacted and shaped by subjection. There is no singular African subjectivity but subjection in its singularity and its directionality is clear—the target is always the African subject. Decolonial critical analysis shows that subjection has devastating effects when applied to the psyche and body of the African subject. The desire for the African subjects to write themselves to counter coloniality of knowledge cannot be understood without confronting subjection that has created them. Therefore, the mode of writing must be that of emergence of the African subject and that can only exist by confronting subjection and dismantling it instead of wanting to reform it, or at worse, collapsing the self into it. The subjectivity of the African subject should not be demised through politics of naming and vulgarity as if they are just concerned with recapture the past. Vincent (2009: 219) who agrees with Mbembe, argues that populism is preoccupied with 'narratives of return... [that] always seek legitimacy by appealing to a putative original state that has somehow been distorted'.

It is clear from this distinction that Mbembe (2002b) suggests that they are irrelevant. But then, Mbembe does not point out why these naming are so essential with regards to Africa and also African subjectivity. Since vulgarity has no positive aspects to it or any attributes, derogatory in intent, Mbembe's treatment of Afro-radicalism and nativism is indeed in the negative light. This is to ensure that what they are called borders on vulgar. Mbembe seems content with the fact that there is a lack of synthesis in subjectivity of the African subject, and what only preoccupies it is instrumentalisation and metaphysics of difference. As such, this renders them useless and of no purpose for any form of African subjectivity like coloniality of knowledge does. They are seen as invented for the sole purpose of assuming victimhood. Such victimhood is casted in such a way that it negates colonial wounds and its psychic injuries. For Mbembe, the state of injury is called by those who feel the pain that in turn is named and vulgarised as something reduced to the state of victimhood.

The African subject, in its mode of writing, should not, according Mbembe, mention any form of injury and pain that comes with subjection. If it does, it is named and vulgarised. The politics of naming are used as an arsenal to attack the African subject's subjectivity at the point of emergence, the emergence that assumes the forms of politics of antagonism. For the fact that African subjectivity through Afro-radicalism and nativism are still standing in the face of politics of naming and its vulgarity, the fact remains that they are concerned with subjection that afflicts the African body politic. Subjection seems to be minimised in Mbembe's analysis with regards to African subjectivity. Mbembe justifies his stance to introduce the notion of self-reflexivity, as opposed to the African subjectivity that he accuses of being caught in the ghetto. This state of being caught in the ghetto makes African subjectivity not to embrace worldliness. As such, Mbembe hastens to say that being ghettoed make African subjectivity to fail being in the complexity of time as subjectivity. This is precisely because, for Mbembe (2001a), time is the phenomena that is on the move since subjectivity is multiplicity, coalitions, calibrations, and concartinations. African subjectivity if it stems from Afro-radicalism and nativism is regarded as autochthony for that is articulate in racial terms and also out of time. As Mbembe puts it:

> Philosophically, the Hegelian thematic of identity and difference, as classically exemplified in the master-bondsman relationship, is surreptitiously reappropriated by the ex-coloni[s]ed. In a move that replicate an unreflexive ethnographic practice, the ex-coloni[s]ed assign a set of pseudohistorical features to a geographic entity that is itself subsumed under a colonial name (Mbembe 2002a: 244).

It is against this background that Mbembe provides the politics of African solidarity are important, and it is essential to pin down why they get so named and vulgarised. It is not enough for Mbembe to name Afro-radicalism and nativism as residing in the negative, without problematising why they are in such a state. It is impossible for them to be positive to subjection, and being in the negative is explainable. It is not by choice being negative, but by circumstance.

Mbembe seems to omit the fact noted by Gordon (2000) that the world is organised in racial terms, and therefore, race is the organising principle. For the fact that the primacy of race features in African subjectivity means that it is

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engaged in the battle of racial antagonism. This racial antagonism suggest that the subjection that is antagonistic to African subjectivity is comes through the prism of race, and is targeting the specific race that happens to be the black race. So, therefore, the making of race as a focal point cannot be, in simplistic terms, be labelled as victimhood. The subjection of the Africans subject is justified in racial terms. Race is what burdens the African subject. Hence the formation of subjectivity that wants to rid itself of subjection is the one that is the solidarity of race against subjection that attacks race in specific terms. The subjection can be said to be racist and to resist it, it will require the racial solidarity, in its form of the strongest. There is nothing wrong to have the solidarity based on race and the existential conditions that are experienced by the African subject are racial.

The evoking of race or engaging in race cannot be subjected to the politics of naming and its common feature of vulgarity for that these are just politics that border on the blackmail of the African subject when it attempts to disentangle itself. The politics of naming and vulgarity are used to label the African struggles for subjectivity as anachronism for the fact that such struggle mark themselves in racial terms, that is of course of necessity. The construction of the African subject in relation to the notion of subjection has been that of the racial other, the other with no subjectivity and who should be acted upon. Subjection is the act of self-justification and that should not be antagonised by those who are abject. African subjectivity through the narratives that are labelled as Afro-radicalism and nativism seek to de-otherise the African self and infuse it with ontological essence rightful to it through decolonial critical analysis. Indeed, such a task to ontologise the African subject will not be apologetic in its mission to see its emergence. African subjectivity being named and vulgarised, instead of being interrogated from its locus of enunciation seems to be what is missing in Mbembe's attack to it. This attack by Mbembe is tantamount to coloniality of knowledge in that it denies African subjectivity from the stand-point of decolonial critical analysis.

The politics of naming framed within the locus of enunciation of Mbembe's critique seems not able to advance the frontiers of knowledge in understanding the mode of writing of African subjectivity. What features in the thought of Mbembe is that it is trapped within the discourse of naming and vulgarising. This

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amounts to the incapacity to explain that degenerates into dramatisation. In addition, a vast array of names being called against African subjectivity amounts to just naming and vulgarity. The politics of naming and vulgarity are a technique used in the hegemonic fashion, for that it in their rhetorical sense, generalised and non-contextual. Therefore, they assume the state of high moral position is delegitimising the other. The politics of naming and vulgarity hide behind rationality and universality as they project themselves as the standard marker of truth. They approach Afro-radicalism and nativism as those that constitutes lack and as the aberration of rationality.

Mbembe's politics of naming refuses to empathise with those who are in the locus of abjection *qua* subjection at the point of interrogating. It could have been essential for Mbembe to interrogate why those who are in this existential predicament continue to be of relevance in even in the 21st Century. To merely reduce them to politics of naming and vulgarity suggest that they are a bane to subjection and their cause should allow the archive of ethical politics to be interrogated. If not, it would be correct to suggest that the what is of centrality to Mbembe's capacity to engage in politics of naming and vulgarity, is not interrogation, but scratching the surface, hence the power to describe and not to explain. Therefore, to name does not mean the interrogation of the phenomena, but to vulgarise it.

Mbembe (2002a) claims that African subjectivity that is Africanist and decolonial in intent, creates a polemic relationship with the world. It seems as if the idea of difference is created by the African subjects themselves, while he opposite is fundamental true. If this is the case as Mbembe suggests, then it means that the world that Mbembe is in defence of, did not create a polemic relationship with Africa. In short, there is no form of subjection that existed and kick-started on the attack on the African subject. So then, African subjectivity from the existential condition of abjection is just there to distabilise the world that is at peace. The African subjectivity has nothing to challenge in so far as subjection is concerned. Such a challenge is of course, the one that might justify the politics of naming and vulgarity. It seems, then, that it is normal to name and vulgarise what is agency from the abject that are entangled within subjection. Contrary to Mbembe, it is worth mentioning that it is the world that created and

still sustains the polemic relationship with Africa. It is in the nature of this polemic relationship that the state of constant comparison, as the abject being devoid of subjectivity and having no capacity to articulate its own grammar of suffering (Wilderson 2010).

For the fact that the African subjects have no grammar of decolonial critical analysis—that which Mbembe labels as diabolical triad of slavery, colonisation and apartheid why is it then that African subjects act the way they do? Mbembe suggests that in the contemporary, the thematic of Afro-radicalism and nativism thesis are exhausted. As they are based on race, Mbembe argues that what makes them outmoded is that in this era of subjectivity as time, race assumed surreality or multiplicity. Mbembe provides two reasons, the first is that the thematic of race is undergoing various shifts, and secondly, whiteness is not potent as it was. Mbembe (2002a: 266), boldly declares that '[t]he forms of racial consciousness are changing all over the continent'.

In contradiction, Mbembe acknowledges that the notion of radical different was used to exclude the African subject. He writes:

> Because of this radical difference, it was deemed legitimate to exclude them, both de facto and de jure, from the sphere of full and complte human citizenship: they had nothing to contribute to the work of the universal (Mbembe 2002a: 246).

It is essential to add that:

> Their objective was to canoni[s]e difference and to eliminate the plurality and ambivalence of custom. There was a paradox to this process of reification. On the other hand, it looked like recognition. But on the other, it constituted a moral judgement, because ultimately, custom was only made specific the better to indicate the extent to that the world of the native... could not serve as the basis for a praxis of living together in a civil society (Mbembe 2002a: 248).

As Mbembe states, the African subject had to be converted, for that this was a condition for recognition. This is how Mbembe puts it:

> African subjects could have writes and enjoy them, not by virtue of their subordination to the rule of custom, but by reason of their status as autonomous

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individuals capable of thinking themselves and exercising reason, the perculiary human faculty (Mbembe 2002a: 248).

This recognition, contrary to Mbembe's claim, did not mean the absence of subjection—thus, the recognition did not take away the condescending attitude of coloniality of knowledge that the African subject lacked subjectivity. For the African subject is regarded through subjection as the lacking subject, such a colonialist stance simply suggests that there cannot be any other form of subjectivity that can come out of the African subject, even if it existential conditions suggest otherwise. In other words, if subjectivity emerges from the African subject, it must be denied. Decolonial critical analysis in its application and amplification of subjectivity has ontological essence necessary for the African subject. African subjects, through equivalence of differences are excluded 'equivalent in their common rejection of the excluded identity' (Laclau 2005: 70). This then automatically triggers subjectivity of African subjects to rise—as through subjection—African subjects are regarded as what Laclau (2005: 70) refers to as 'totality as object' that is 'a failed totality'.

According to Laclau, the logic of equivalence subverts difference. So the denial of African subjectivity is effective as it is made through the politics of naming and vulgarity. These are used as a form of disciplinary mechanism to silence what antagonises subjection. As such, this is the denial of African subjectivity. The mode of writing that is characterised by any relation to subjection and also in opposition to it through decolonial critical analysis is disciplined through naming and vulgarity. Mbembe (2002a) however acknowledges that civilisation made the category of the human and the non-human. The latter of course, is the African subject who is structurally positioned inferior to the human who executes subjection. So, how then, should African subjects who are not infra-humans write themselves? The essential point to make is that their mode of writing that is disciplined through coloniality of knowledge is the one that is indeed essential and worthy to be resisted through African subjectivity that Mbembe fundamentally opposes through naming and vulgarity.

To take this to another level, it seems as if the politics of naming and vulgarity are a form of subjection since they reinforce coloniality of knowledge.

Subjection at this level, takes the form of complicity and disciplinarity. Being complicit with subjection is subjection, and disciplining those who oppose subjection is subjection par excellence. So, subjection can also be understood on the basis of antagonism and in opposition to the emergence of subjectivity of the African subject. As such, Mbembe seems to imply that subjection should not be challenged. In other words, if there is no African subjectivity this means that there is nothing that is going to challenge subjection. If the African subject is accused by Mbembe of rejecting the world and being in the ghetto, why is it like this in relation to the world it inhabits? Put another way, why is it that African subjectivity in the mode of writing that Mbembe names and vulgarises act the way it does? Mbembe seems to suggest that African subjectivity emerged out of nowhere and it is not the result of subjection that makes it to have the polemic relationship with the world. The African subject cannot be expected to stand still as an object as it has been perceived against subjection. The African subject is not an object and on that basis it must write itself in the mode of emergence—that which is necessity.

The African subject is the subject that should write itself in its own mode of decolonial critical analysis. Even though politics of naming and vulgarity have such a dramatising potency and the power to tame as disciplinary mechanisms, the African subject must nevertheless write itself in its own modes. As such, Africa will never be the problem to be solved, but the voice that speaks to, for and about itself to antagonise subjection with its mode of silencing what is antagonistic to it. Mbembe in his politics of naming and vulgarity does not allow the African voice to be heard, and this is of course subjection. This is not just a voice that is preoccupied by narratives of loss as Mbembe suggests, but the voice that aims to dismantle subjection. The figure of the African subject is reiterated in the manner in which it speaks for itself (Mbembe 2002a). For Mbembe, such liberation of the Africa subject in terms of its speaking cannot be legitimate at the level of subjectivity since this is seen, by Mbembe, as the subjectivity of fabrication. The narratives of loss should not be criminalised for that they explain the existential condition of dispossession of land, humanity and labour of the African subject.

As Mbembe (2002a: 235) fiercely argues, '[s]elf-affirmation, autonomy, and African emancipation—in the name of that the right to self-hood is claimed—are not new issues'. For the mere fact that they are not new issues, it logically follows that there is a force that prevents those issues that Mbembe says they are not new. In short, they are not new since subjection is still old, and if it is old, how can issues be new? So, in addition, if they are not new issues they point out that what they confront still haunts the present—a spectre. These are the issues that keep on rising again and again in opposition to subjection. It is will be self-defeating to say that these issues should not feature, including of course, the pursuing of genuine liberation for the emergence of the African subject. Therefore, to move beyond the yoke of old and new, suffice to say that the narratives of loss are a bane to subjection since they aim to expose it, no matter how amoebic and invisible it pretends to be. The subjectivity of the African subject means that the African subject is concerned about the liberation of Africans from subjection.

Africa, its subjects and their subjectivity are in the world that is pervaded by subjection. This is the real world in existential terms, not a fictionalised one as Mbembe politics of naming and vulgarity seems to suggest. There is no way that the African subject can resist just for the sake of resisting. For that there is African subjectivity that antagonises subjection, simply means there is subjection out there. Even if African subjectivity can be named and vulgarised, the fact still remains that subjection still exists and it is antagonistic to African subjectivity.

Mbembe's contribution, despite its flaws, has made those who advocate African subjectivity under the umbrella of the heterogeneous Africanists, to rethink their positionality that essentially led then to strengthen it amid the politics of naming and vulgarity. The politics of naming and vulgarity as advanced by Mbembe, do not advance the frontier of knowledge but they serve to entrench coloniality of knowledge. It is not even clear what modes of self-writing should African subjects pursue to combat subjection if they abdicate the responsibility to do so.

The politics of commendation and criticism

Mbembe's 'African modes of self-writing' provoked a lot of reaction and to note this is to look to two forms of this reaction by modes of criticism. These can be

formulated as *Public Culture* critics and *CODESRIA Bulletin* critics. It is worth noting that these are forms of critics that are different in terms of their structural positionality—that is, their subjectivity and their locus of enunciation brings to bear the different understandings of Mbembe's essay. The structural positionality of the reactions to Mbembe's essay are worthy of attention for the mere fact that the essay was an attack to the African nationalist scholarship, that Mbembe subjected to politics of naming and vulgarity.

Public Culture critics were featured in the journal that Mbembe published his essay and the issue did not in a way include the Africanist but people from the poststructuralist, postmodernist and postcolonialist bent, similar to the intellectual identity of the essay itself. That is to say, their subjectivity and their modes of commendation and/or criticism are the ones that Mbembe comfortably associates with. The journal, *Public Culture* and its space was indeed in a way, given to those with more or less ideological congruency. The journal itself does not, by the manner of its ideological slant, give space to Africanist thought, the thing that can be expected from journals anyway in relation to the identity of the scholarship. As such, Mbembe and the critiques entertained each other in the absence of the Africanists thinkers who were subjected to Mbembe's attack. It is ironic that people who responded in *Public Culture* are not the people whom Mbembe directed the attack to. Also, there is no way that the articles that contain decolonial critical analysis could have found their way in the pages of *Public Culture*. It is impossible for even *Public Culture* to entertain Africanity as the mode of writing. It is essential to interrogate the politics of publishing, and of course, the much muted issue being that of censorship. For the mere fact that Mbembe regarded African subjectivity being caught in the ghetto, such subjectivity cannot be allowed in *Public Culture*.

The whole content of the African modes of self-writing indeed is having a serious problem with African subjectivity. The criticisms in *Public Culture* do not give sufficient attention to Africanity and its modes of self-writing. Neither nor did they entertain the manner in which African subjectivity has been subject to politics of naming and vulgarity. The writing of the African subjects and its subjectivity did not form part of the argument of most parts the *Public Culture* critics. The reason for this is their structural positionality that has no concern for

subjection that afflicts the African subject and this is a clear case of coloniality of knowledge.

Quayson (2002) agrees with Mbembe on autochthony, that he locates to slavery, colonialisation and what he refers to rabid globalisation. Also, Quayson points out that Africans contribute to their own woes and predicament that are part of the postcolony. In engagement with Mbembe, Quayson (2002: 586) rightfully asks: 'why does this explanatory impulse persist in African modes of writing up to the present time?' This is the fundamental question that, depending on the frame of the context and the locus of enunciation, can be the one that will fundamentally explain the reasons that African subjects who are concerned with subjection write the way they write. This question, is rightfully posed in reaction to Mbembe's criticism on the modes of writing of the African subjects, but then, it seems that the answer that it warrants is not the one that will expose subjection that befall the African subject. The reason for this is, of course, are the questions that Quayson framed, that were aimed at interrogating Mbembe. They are framed thus: 'are Africans somehow so compulsive in their dreams of a pure and nativist identity they fail to conceptuali[s]e the issue in any other way? Why this obsession?' (Quayson 2002: 585-586).

The manner in which subsequent questions are framed, serve as testimony to the fact that in relation to the one they derive from, the locus of enunciation of Quayson and Mbembe alike, of not being grounded in the existentialist conditions of the African subjects in their combat of subjection. Subjection is not central to Quayson, and therefore, his critique on Mbembe is not in relation to subjection in its concrete terms. Quayson engages in politics of naming by stupefying the epistemic and ideological content that informs African subjectivity. For Quayson to refer to Africanity—one component of African subjectivity concerned with subjection and in favour of the emergence of the African subject—as 'compulsion and dream' is to negate the force it has, and to misdirect it not to confront subjection. Perhaps, it could be agreed that it is a compulsion but it cannot be a dream for a per se as it confronts and is confronted by something that exists—subjection. It is also not a dream to return to the pre-colonial past, but the combative engagement starting from the colonial encounter.

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Quayson, in relation to the aforementioned question he formulated, he polemically responds to them to say: '[t]here are no blacks in Africa' (Quayson 2002: 586). According to Quayson, in agreement to Mbembe, African subjectivity is said to be caught by 'denominative excess' that limits the African modes of writing to adopt a transcended mode. To transcend, for Mbembe and Quayson alike, is to avoid subjection, and not even mentioning it in the modes of writing Afrcan subjectivity. However though, Quayson (2002: 587) points out the need to 'contemplate the total negation of Africa means—before we can put it to any good use of post-slavery,—colonialism, and—apartheid'. The whole discourse of wanting to define and re-defining, or for that matter, discovering and rediscovering what Africa is, or means, is not of primary importance since this will not be of any help. The existential conditions that befall Africa, as a result of what Africa is, really point to the need of countering subjection. What is Africa? Africa is subjection. This means, therefore, the importance of combating subjection. The act of combating starts first with interrogating what is subjection, that forces inform in and how does it work in its multiplicity and metamorphosis forms? These are existential questions that Mbembe and Quayson are not concerned about.

As such, they only promote the 'post'; they are futuristic to suggest that there was a clear break between the past and the present. The present cannot be effectively futuristic if the past is featuring in the present. This perspective is naive in that it does not take into account that the past, present and the future are linked. There is no breaking point in so far as the existential conditions are concerned. The avoiding of subjection in the modes of writing by the African subject means turning away from what Africa is—that is, the mode of writing Africa should raise concern about subjection as long as it exists. Subjection is not, as Mbembe (2002a) states, 'fictionalised conspiracies'. Subjection *qua* coloniality of knowledge is conspiracy itself. Quayson's (2002) call for transcendence can be seen as the accomodationist project. The project of transcendence is limited for the fact that subjection does not allow any negation—but denying it.

As such, the self-blaming of the African subjects comes to the fore, and as such, the impression is that African subjects are equally responsible for subjection that

afflicts them, and they have only themselves to blame, and also, they have agency. Of course, these remarks are made in the light that does not make any mention to subjection. Therefore, does it mean then, that the negation that Quayson points to is to absolve subjection and its continuity? For Quayson to point out effects of what he calls the 'culture of impunity'—does this suggest it pervades the whole of Africa, or if it were a country, the whole of it? This will then mean that the African subject is homogeneous. Since Africanity is multiple, the same to African subjectivity. This multiplicity is of course, framed not on the basis of conviviality, fragmentation and displacement (Mbembe 2001), but the multiplicity of African subjectivity that confronts subjection. The existential conditions that befall the African subjects are not the same, and their course is multiple forms of subjection, hence the justification for the multiple forms of subectivigty of the African subject. For Quayson (2002) to note '[b]ut the attempting to free ourselves from calcified process of thought is surely the crucial first step'.

Jewsiewicki (2002), who differs from Qauyson, points to Mbembe's reluctance to deal with the African subject. In relation to the route that the African subject takes, in relation to subjectivity, Jewsiewicki writes:

> This is the route taken by Mbembe to unmask these theories of the African subject that situate slavery, coloni[s]ation, and apartheid as ordeals. Passage through these ordeals is supposed, in these theories, to have united African aspirations to sovereignty, dignity, and knowledge (Jewsiewicki 2002: 595).

Jewsiewicki continues:

> Mbembe argues that there is no African subject who, as a victim of injustices, has a particular mission whose accomplishment could confer an identity and a duty to for uniting. For him, there is no African subjectivity that constitutes a collective destiny forged by history, whether the latter is written in terms of laws or contingencies (Jewsiewicki 2002: 599).

Jewsiewicki being concerned about the denial of Africa subjectivity in its own terms highlights the state of paternalism, where the African subject assumes the subordinate position. The African subject's subjectivity should be derived from those who execute subjection. Subjection is what defines the positionality of the

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African subject, this also includes, the formulation and enunciation of subjectivity. Subjectivity is, as Jewsiewicki (2002: 592) points out, 'constructed in relation to the other'. The other of course, is rightfully positioned to be at the receiving end of subjection. As such, this points out to asymmetries that exist in relation to subjectivity. These asymmetries make subjection to be justified, and of course, the African subject is the target. Subjection was informed by what Jewsiewicki (2002) referred to as colonial indiscipline, that even produced indiscipline in the postcolony. The African subjects find themselves in time and space that is modicum of discipline.

Guyer (2002) argues that the modes of writing, according to Mbembe, points to the lack of the African subject to embrace modernity. The mode of writing that Mbembe calls for is the one rooted in modernist thought. This borders on coloniality of knowledge as the African subject must draw from, and also mimic the Euro-North American mode of writing. Thus, coloniality of knowledge still perpetuates the alienation of the Africa subject from its existential conditions, the very thing that informs the modes of its own self-writing. According to Guyer (2002: 600) Mbembe places 'failure at the feet of African scholars and thinkers who have not aspired ambitiously or desperately enough, have not imagined at the limits of possibility, unlike others in the face of profound existential challenge'. To think of African predicament as comparable to others, as Mbembe does compare it with Jewish experience, the existential challenge still remains and this comparison is no way profound to really unearth the existential conditions of the African subject in relation to subjection. The subjection that afflicts the African subject is beyond comparison, for that it is sustained and continued through coloniality of knowledge. Being beyond comparison can be partly explained by the African subject being in wretchedness of existential condition.

Thus, Mbembe does not even allow the interrogation of subjection and what is prioritised is how African subjectivity, that is regarded as mechanistic, must adopt the mode of writing that is informed by modernity. Guyer's (2002: 601) view that 'Africa existence demands risky and ambitious thought' resonates with African subjectivity writing itself and in its own terms. The subjectivity that informs this is of course, stands the risk of being named and vulgarised. This

risky and ambitious thought does not necessarily mean a particular kind of thought—for example, Mbembe's thought embedded in coloniality of knowledge where the mode of writing should gravitate towards the universal. In the face of naming and vulgarity, being trapped within this, African subjectivity should nevertheless adopt the locus of enunciation that is ambitious and risky. It seems to Mbembe that African subjectivity deserves to be censured and mutilated as long as it points to subjection. As such, it is important to ask then: why Mbembe does not tolerate it then? The fundamental question to ask is: who is Mbembe writing for and why is he engaged in the desperate attempt to make African subjects to follow his mode of writing that is complicit and apologetic to coloniality of knowledge?

For Vergés (2002: 607), Mbembe 'proposes a reformulation of the project of modes of self-writing'. This means that what Mbembe proposes, is something different in relation to the manner in which writing is done. This would mean that the manner in which the writing is should be different. But then, it is important to point out that Mbembe approached the mode of writing by the African subject as something that is homogeneous and of course, in absence of subjectivity. This generalisation borders on Hegelian racist stereotypes and ignorance of Africa. Mbembe fails to take into account the contestations within that the African subject writes itself, and its existential conditions. Perhaps, the mode of writing that is fundamentally opposed is that which Mbembe refers to as being the one concerned with 'fictionalised conspiracies'. Vergés (2002: 608) argues that '[t]he task would be to rewritten the economy of Africa, escaping the twin pitfall of dependency and underdevelopment'. The mode of writing perhaps will point to new challenges that are facing Africa. The argument can still be made that dependency and underdevelopment discourses are not pitfalls, and that, as any other forms of paradigm, has its own strength and weakness. Also, the argument can still be made that they confronted subjection that was able to metarmophise itself, and it still remains that subjection that still continues.

The African subject with its intellectual intervention militating against coloniality of knowledge; its mode of writing should not be negated as the burden of pitfalls, but that which should be built upon. Vergés (2002) rightly argues that 'Africa is not locked in the past. Rather, many of its strictures pre-

figure things to come'. For Mbembe to label African subjectivity as archaic means for him it is locked in the past and modernity is rupturing in the present. On the contrary, the reverse is true. The effects of the past still haunt the present, and that is part and parcel of modernity. The past is not buried; therefore, the spectre of the past will continue to haunt Africa's presence and future. With regards to the present, Vergés (2002: 609) remarks, '[d]issonance, disharmony, and friction constitute our present'. The past, from the colonial encounter, has been about subjection. Subjection still haunts and the African subject is the one haunted since subjection is the militancy of existence of the African subject. If the drive is the mode of writing the Africa's future without dealing with subjection, it follows that subjection will continue to haunt the future. This is mainly because coloniality of knowledge is the scandal of the past and it continues to haunt the present and also the future if the African subject cannot write itself from the stand-point of de-colonial analysis.

In response, and in affirmation to Mbembe, Dirlik (2002: 611) writes, '[a]nti-imperialism does not make much sense when colonialism as a system has disappeared from much of the world, and it is no longer all that easy to distinguish coloni[s]ers from coloni[s]ed in configurations of global power'. Dirlik fails to take into account the global matrices of power, that continue to engage in subjection, and this is easily evident in the asymmetrical global power arrangements. What is also of concern for Dirlik, is the African modes of writing that are concerned with the past.

> But a pre-occupation with the legacy of the past may also obstruct recognition of the problems that have emerged in the present—problems that, however new, also recast our understanding of the past (Dirlik 2002: 614).

The nature of the problems that still feature in the present are not new, they are part of the continuity of the past. As stated before, there has not been a breaking moment between the past and present hence the continued existence of coloniality of knowledge. The problems that exist in the present did not just emerge naturally, they were and they are still created—and they will be still re-created as long as subjection still features. Dirlik (2002: 614) in support of Mbembe, states that '[a]bsorption of the past without recognition of

transformation in the present is not the best way to direct'. For the mere fact that subjection still continues, what matters is not understanding the problems of the present and omitting the past, the present should be understood in line with what concerns the African subjects who are concerned with subjection. The arrangement of the present is seen as innocent from any form of subjection, and the African subject is not a driving force behind those arrangements, but an object deserving subjection.

Perhaps, Dirlik could have asked why the anti-imperialist discourses keep resurfacing when imperialism has been claimed to have disappeared. To merely regard the anti-imperialistic senseless is to name and vulgarise it as Mbembe does, and not interrogating it and explaining it. What should be taken into account is that those whom their existential conditions are informed by subjection, it is easy then, in opposition to Dirlik, to argue that they are colonised. They are colonised by subjection, and this means the continuity of colonialism, and that has assumed another form of subjection that is hidden behind structures and institutions. Put simply, colonialism 'disappeared' and there is there is neo-colonialism that still perpetuates the system of colonialism itself. Dirlik defends his argument that is in support of Mbembe to say:

> The vast majority of the populations of formely coloni[s]ed societies have in conditions of despair, to be sure, but it is no longer very plausible to offer colonialism as an explanation of their condition. Marginali[s]ation, rather than any systematic colonial exploitation, better explains it (Dirlik 2002: 611).

It is clear that this is the simplification of subjection that is reduced to trivialisation. Dirlik should also point out that marginalisation of African subjects is something that cannot be explained outside colonialism, and its continuities *qua* subjection. The marginalisation of the African subject is not something new it came with colonialism, and for the fact that it remains, as Dirlik argues, as an explanatory factor, this mean that colonialism continues. Dirlik (2002) even acknowledges that colonialism was systematic this should explain its complexity. Such complexity creates and re-creates structures and institution that in their configuration, militate against the ontology of the African subject, and also its subjectivity. The existential condition of the African subjects cannot be

thoroughly explained by omitting subjection that entrench itself through coloniality of knowledge. There are a variety of networks through that subjection works. To land the blame to those who still continue to point out subjection, is also to absolve subjection. Dirlik (2002: 612) is right to say, '[a]s with colonialism, so with nationalism'. The attempt has been made by Dirlik and Mbembe alike to disentangle the two, and the failure to acknowledge that nationalism, as Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) points out, that it is product of colonialism.

According to Dirlik (2002: 613), '[a]nti-colonial ideologies no longer make sense, as they appear hindsight not only to have been futile but also to have shared it the assumptions of the very colonialism they sought to overthrow'. Those who fought colonialism under the banner of nationalism many became the agents of colonialism. There must be an explanation provided by Dirlik and even Mbembe that nationalists did not, in most of the time exercise absolute discretion and they were still in service of the colonial project. They were in power not to decolonise, but to replace colonial masters to become the managers of colonial structures that led to the continuity of subjection. Subjection at this level can be understood as those who were managers of the colonial system, became intermediate points between the colonial masters and the African subjects. In other words, they were subjecting their own to subjection in service of the colonial masters that also subjected them to subjection. They were subjugators who were also subjugated. In opposition to Dirlik (2002) proposition that nationalism was in totality—the liberation of all Africans, the liberation of Africans has not been experienced, and there will never be such liberation as long as subjection continues. For the mere fact that there are continued struggles of various kinds by African subjects, and new questions coming out of these struggles, this suggests that subjection still continues and it is necessary to have those kinds of the struggles continuing. So, it is important to ask Dirlik and Mbembe alike: is colonialism gone or is it still persisting through a masked face?

According to Segall (2002) the notion of trauma, of course as a result of subjection, still continues to haunt the present. As Segall states, trauma erupts from the narratives of the victims of subjection, and he puts the notion of law on the basis of the disruption of is construction. It is essential to point out that the

construction of law by the African subjects who are at the receiving end of subjection is not of good help. Segall opines that:

> While the *victim* may capture the helpless psychological position of a subject during the moment of torture and terror, the second performance of identity under the structure of law enforces a continued victimisation role (Segall 2002: 619).

The notion and the construction of law has been the disciplinary tool. This tool to discipline has been that of legitimising subjection, and in the configuration of the law itself—the state of impartiality and reason—the law is the end itself, the absolute truth. There is no law that is akin to justice for African subjects as their existential conditions expose the suspension of law. Subjection was exercised by the permission of law, and such subjection was justified and this was made to moralise torture and terror of the African subjects. The torture and terror that took place as the mechanisms through that subjection enforced itself, this was enforceable by law. In other words, the law is subjection and, subjection is law. So, where there is subjection, there is law.

> The contemporary globali[s]ation of national law, local adoptions to it, and the resistance of postwar trauma set the conditions for what might be termed a *postcolonial performative of victimisation* (Segall 2002: 617-619; emphasis added).

It will be argued, contrary to Segall, that the modes of writing by the African subjects in contestation to subjection are not the performance of victimisation. The notion of victimisation, as advocated by Mbembe (2002a, 2002b) borders on the politics of naming and vulgarity. The notion of victims is used in this sense to label the African subjects as responsible for their own existential predicament. African subject do not perform as the colonial gaze would have it, under the rubric of African subjectivity they are engage in the struggle against subjection. This is not the struggle for its own sake, but the struggle to make the African subject to emerge as a fully human being as subjection dehumanises. Contrary to Segall and Mbembe alike, this struggle is not the one that is involved in performing victimhood, but the one that is informed by unmasking subjection and opening vistas of imaginations on how to combat that subjection for the emergence of the African subject.

Jules-Rosette (2002) questions whether Mbembe is not prophesying doom for Africa. It will be argued here that this is something that has been done in the process of subjection. Such prophesy of doom was that of making subjection to be viable, as it will be easy for African subjects to hate themselves and their space, and not being capable to resist subjection. According to Jules-Rosette, Mbembe provides a blanket criticism against African subjects mode of writing and does not engage the spaces of cultural resistance that this writing opens. The blanket criticism happens at the unfortunate juncture in that Mbembe is silent of subjection. According to Jule-Rosette (2002: 604), '[t]his development is not a product of proletarian nostalgia as Mbembe suggests, but merely a fact of daily life'. For the fact that African subject points out clearly what puts them in the existential predicament they happen to find themselves, Mbembe does not entertain and out rightly dismisses them through the politics of naming and vulgarity. What African subjects then face as the result of Mbembes mode of writing the African self, is that their choice must be choice-less. The African subjects 'occupy an empty space of creativity where new ideologies and cultural strategies are shaped and deployed' (Jule-Rosette 2002: 604). All these allow the creation of African subjectivity informed by the existential conditions the African subjects find themselves in and striving how to negate subjection. These empty spaces, locate themselves in the traces of slavery, colonisation and apartheid, that Mbembe vulgarises for affirming themselves by exposing subjection for what it is. Their mode of writing is writing themselves and writing for themselves in order to get liberation. In opposition to Mbembe's naming and vulgarity, Jule-Rosette writes:

> In his critique of traditional essentialism, Mbembe downplays the fact that traditions were, indeed, transmitted across the Middle Passage and may be revived, and even reconstructed, for legitimate cultural purposes (Jule-Rosette 2002: 605).

For Jule-Rosette, the mode of writing the African self *qua* African subjectivity lies in the creative spirit. What is essential then for Mbembe to engage is this creative spirit, that will then suggest the changing nature of the African modes of self-writing in its own terms and own canon, and of course, is own existential conditions. Diagne (2002) argues for keeping Africanity open and regards this as beneficial for the purposes of creativity. It is, therefore, essential to ask what

qualifies Mbembe to hold the monopoly of defining what is creativity and what is not, and through what canon *qua* Africa subjectivity? It will be argued here that there should be no such monopoly and what should be emphasised is that creativity is contextual. Creativity *qua* the modes of writing by the African subject should be defined and deployed in their own terms that are of course resonating with the existential condition that is contextual. This contextuality is explained by the fact that subjection operates differently in different contexts, and what explains these contexts is subjection. Diagne (2002: 621) is concerned with the notion of authenticity and argues thus: '[a]uthenticity here conveys the idea that meaning does not come from the past (the figure of tradition, or repetition); that it is not a projection of tradition on the present and the future'.

For Diagne, authenticity still persist to project itself in the future and towards the world by means of anticipation. According to Diagne, the dead-end of the invented self that should be avoided and escaped as the mode of writing is the one that panders on authenticity. Whatever the cause or intent, the notion of authenticity and tradition are colonial inventions. What is of concern for African subjectivity is the mode of writing that unmasks subjection. Authenticity even if it was the cause and intent worthy of pursuit, it will not help matters since subjection cannot be unmasked by returning to the pre-colonial past. Diagne also cautions that authenticity is not exploration in the sense of self-writing. Diagne (2002: 622) argues for 'inauthentic understanding of subjectivity' that contributes to 'understanding Africanity in an ontological sense'. For Volger:

> Real socioethical philosophy seeks to reveal the ethical grounds for individuals' actions, projects, self-conceptions, and so on, by situating the individual in the world in a way the way that makes sense of selves in their circumstances. And congeries of similarity situated individuals may share systematic modes of self-presentation (Volger 2002: 626).

If this is indeed the case, why African subjectivity is name and vulgarised by Mbembe? The idea of the universal, of monolith truth as propagated by Mbembe does not hold. Vogler argues for the understanding of African subjectivity in relation to its existential conditions. What African subjectivity is also concerned about is making sense of these existential conditions and engaging them in order to deal with subjection with pathologises existential conditions. Vogler is

concerned with Mbembe's blanket criticism that regards African subjectivity as 'an unproductive trope of victimisation' (Vogler 2002: 626). This does not help matters if Mbembe does not point out the necessity of African subjectivity to continue to write itself in the manner in which it has been written. The mode of writing has been changing, and due to the multiple site of struggles launched for the emergence of the African subject. For Vogler:

> To note the need for a new African imaginary, and to suppose that philosophy might be of service in articulating it, do not require assuming that congeries of disturbed lives will have to be remade individually from the inside out in order to allow for more effective modes of collective (Vogler 2002: 627).

The locus of enunciation of *Public Culture* critics is not that of African subjectivity and it will be unfair to expect from them to treat the subject matter of Mbembe's essay with what is not an existential condition to them. The *CODESRIA Bulletin* critics saw it necessary to use their own intellectual outlet that is accommodative to their thought that its locus of enunciation is Africa. This was in order to engage the Euro-North American epistemic centre that Mbembe was propagating that for, while he was in opposition to African subjectivity. *CODESRIA* critics indeed have a scathing attack to Mbembe, as it engages the politics of naming and vulgarity deployed by Mbembe. Mbembe seems to have touched the raw nerve and especially of his former collegues arch rivals. Mbembe's essay is engaged in the confronting manner and not in the evasive form that the *Public Culture* critics took. This is the form of critics that originates from African subjects and through their subjectivity—the mode of writing Africa itself.

The mode of writing by the African subjects is advocate by those who emerge from the *CODESRIA Bulletin* front, the very ones that Mbembe (2002a, 2002b) directed his attack to. It is essential to engage their response and/or engagement to Mbembe, since this has not featured in the pages of *Public Culture*. *CODESRIA Bulletin* critics are informed by opposition to liberal framing of reality, problems and solutions that are not in support of the liberation of African subjects (Soyinka-Airewele and Edozie 2010). The mode of writing that are advocated by the African subjects cannot be reduced only to slavery, colonisation

and apartheid as Mbembe suggest, these move beyond that. The mode of writing advocate by the *CODESRIA Bulletin* frontier is concerned with the construction and reconstruction of:

> [N]ew strategies of resistance and change at the local and global levels and supports the struggle to transform both the objective indicators of crises on the continent while embracing the struggle for "voice," "representation," and "agency" of coloni[s]ed peoples from internal and external forces of oppression and exploitation (Soyinka-Airewele and Edozie 2010: 28).

These modes of writing cannot be reduced to what Mbembe suggests. They even go further to interrogate the local and the global situation. To argue that the mode of writing by African subjects is preoccupied with the authentic past and nostalgic return to it is a gross misrepresentation. This is the view held by Scott (2009: 7) who writes: '[w]e need, in other words, to give up constructing an image of colonialism that demands from us an attitude of anticolonial longing, a longing for anticolonial revolution'. Since the oppositional tradition has become the mode of writing for the African subject, and also the mode that is angry, as Falola (2005) defends, it is essential to reiterate that this mode of writing the African self is informed by decolonial critical analysis to expose the continued subjection that befalls the African subject. Not only is this blamed from the external, but internal as well.

So, it is the critics of both the internal and external form to subjection. In an attempt to challenge subjection and to free themselves from it, African subjects should name, reflect and act upon subjection (Alschuler 1980). For Alschuler, by naming subjection, African subjects will the capacity to identify and this is the way of defining a problem; by reflecting on it is to understand the causes of subjection and by acting on it is to engage in measures to resolve it. It is important in their modes of writing that African subject should name, reflect and act on their existential conditions that are clouded by subjection. Therefore, they should not be denied the manner in which they articulate these modes of writing and the position they purport and defend. The politics of repetition cannot emerge from these modes of writing as Mbembe (2002a; 2002b) suggests, but they can only emerge is if the African subjects depend on the oppressor to free them from subjection (Alschuler 1980). If they rely on the oppressors ideology to

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free them from subjection they are bound to reify subjection, the politics of repetition par excellence.

The contention by Zeleza (2010) is the glibly dismissal of African difference and world significance by those who had the disempowering theories in relation to African subjectivity. Zeleza is critical and in opposition to the accomodationist project that is advocated by Mbembe that African subjects must embrace worldliness. Of concern to Zeleza (2010: 75) is the 'gestures of intimate familiarity with Western intellectual fads or for refuge from dealing with the structural deformities of the postcolonies and postapartheid South Africa'. What is of concern to Zeleza (2003) is Mbembe's disdain for Africanist scholarship and also his denial of African authenticity, identity and difference.

On the contrary, Mbembe (2002a) and Dirlik (2002) view that colonialism and imperialism are exhausted and subjection in its various forms is disappearing is reinforcing the idea that there should be no resistance to coloniality of knowledge. Zeleza (2003) acutely points out that Mbembe's essay was a desperate attempt to couch African subjectivity to be included in the universal and that it should abandon is demands of uniqueness, sovereignty and self-determination. These are political demands that are part of African subjectivity and they will never wane, as long as subjection continues. Zeleza highlights, in response to Mbembe's concern of ghettoisation of African subjectivity that the question is about the terms of engagement, and those should be, of course, dictated by the African subjects themselves. The idea of opening up to the world should be done in the terms of the African subjects. Zeleza (2003) correctly point to Mbembe that the international that Mbembe refers to, is the very same one that marginalised and continues to marginalise Africa. As such, gravitating towards it, in order to get out of the ghetto, seem to suggest the complete surrender to it, and become the appendages of the international.

Murunga (2004) argues that Mbembe's attack on African subjects, particularly their Africanist scholarship is based on the fact that they are trapped in the self-imposed ghetto that has steeped them into a dead-end. These borders on the stereotypes that are being bandied around that African subjects cannot think. For

them to do so, they must be acted upon. It is clear that Mbembe is, by and large, in total opposition to African subjects writing themselves. As Murunga states:

Whatever strategy the [p]ostcolonialists/culturalists adopt, three conclusions are inescapable. First, because they disengage identity issues from the broader domain of human social experience, they end up treating culture as if it were suspended above economic and political realities. Their works are largely ahistorical, they treat identity as a sign or text inscribed with multiple meanings that need only to be deconstructed as an exercise in mere intellectual curiousity and elegance. By laying out the notion of identity as multiple, shifting, entangled and intersecting, it becomes possible to render a permissive idea of Africanity as a tabula rasa on that one can create an identity at will, devoid of any relation to historical and social reality (Murunga 2004: 27).

It is clear that Mbembe's mode of writing, or the one that he criticises African subjects for not adopting, is the mode of writing that is not centred on Africa. African has been reduced to a footnote by Mbembe and this is coloniality of knowledge at its best. As Murunga asserts, Mbembe is silent on the mode of writing that objectifies Africa, the mode of writing located in the Western canon, that is loaded with the negative view of Africa. In light of Murunga's view, the idea of multiple ancestries as propagated by Mbembe and also by extension, other postmodernist thinkers, avoids the polaristic nature in that Africa is put at the receiving end of subjection. 'As often as possible, the smothering is accompanied by equally deceitful slogans of peaceful globalisation or an accommodating multiculturalism in that African identities are allegedly equally paired with other identities globally' (Murunga 2004: 27). There can be no pairing whereas there is subjection. African identity is the other, and in no ways it is regarded as equal with other identities. If not, there could have not been any subjection. But subjection exists to correctly point out that there is no pairing.

The mode of writing that African subjects must adopt, its canon is irrelevant in explaining the existential condition that still traps African subjects. What is essential for Murunga not to ignore the totality of the African experience as Mbembe does. Combativeness of African subjectivity is dismissed by Mbembe, while he imposes pliant sameness. As Murunga argues, resistance to subjection

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cannot be confused with resistance to change. The change that should not be advocated is the change that supposes that subjection should be avoided in pursuit of another ideal. It is clear in African existential conditions that subjection is part of the problem and it must be engaged. 'With regards to self-writing, there can be no doubt that the pernicious effects of racism, their connection to capitalism and empire have influenced African cultural identities and generated specific modes of self-writing' (Murunga 2004: 16).

Zegeye and Vambe (2009) argue that African subjects are castigated and faulted for using their own epistemological devices of decolonial critical analysis to challenge subjection. Subjection, that Zegeye and Vambe (2004: 10) coin as 'the unequal historical relationship between Africa and Europe' is something that cannot just be ignored or wished away. It is still embedded in the modes of writing by the African subjects. The modes of writing that calls for the emergence of the Africa subjects are quickly criminalised as the return to the purist pre-colonial past. Even if these modes of writing are not in that nostalgic sense, they are quickly criminalised as such. This is done for the sole purpose of silencing them, and them not engaging subjection. When the modes of writing by the African subjects borrows from the globalised canons they are accused, and when they call for the rethinking of the precolonial past, the same predicament of being criminalised applies (Zegeye and Vambe 2009). The mode of African writing that dares to pronounce precolonial will be met with fierce criticism of being archaic, primitive, romantic and static to name but a few labels that are also meant to vulgarise. Zegeye and Vambe refer to this strategy as creating a 'political and ideological cul-de-sac' to immobilise African modes of writing.

For Mbembe (2002b), African modes of writing have failed to write Africa for itself, and he regards the mode of writing by the African subjects who write about themselves being plagued by the crisis of language (Zegeye and Vambe 2009). It is clear that for Mbembe (2002b), the mode of writing should be externally authorised, and be embedded in the Euro-North American canon. There cannot be any form of authorisation and writing by the African subjects themselves. Their actions are criminalised when they write themselves, and it seems as if they must get authorisation and confirmation from the Euro-American canon and episteme on how they must write themselves. The African

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modes of self-writing are no singular but plural, due to the context specificity of subjection. As such, these mode of writing if they are rooted in the existential conditions of the African subjects, cannot by any means, avoid subjection that informs their subject-position. This does not mean stasis, but the 'new ways of thinking about and for Africans' (Zegeya and Vambe 2009: 28). The new ways will not mean avoiding subjection, since new problems are still informed by coloniality of knowledge and decolonial critical analysis is essential to engage in the mode of writing that is embedded in African subjectivity.

On the geography of writing: cosmopolitanism and Afropolitanism

Mbembe (2002a) puts forth that Afropolitanism is practices of the self—in that the politics means the continuous shift—that is, stylising the self. The mode of writing the self takes the self as the nomad and sees difference as the moment of rapture. Difference is appreciated as it is seen as the bridge that will lead to the striving of sameness. Mbembe's modes of writing suggest that Afropolitanism is the appropriate mode of writing. Osha (2005: 154) purpots that 'Mbembe is reflecting on the state of academic discourse on Africa [that] seek to differentiate his own discourse from existing crtitical formations'. The term, Afropolitanism was coined by Mbembe, and it is often identified with him. The mode of writing in the Afropolitan sense embraces 'culturally hybrid existence' (Kwabe 2011: 49). In no way does Mbembe's conception of Afropolitanism problematise coloniality of knowledge and this is mainly because it is created and exists within the rubric of coloniality of knowledge. By manner of amplification on what is Afropolitanism and its mode of writing Mbembe passionately argues that:

Awareness of the interweaving of the here and there, the presence of the elsewhere in the here and vice versa, the relativisation of primary roots and memberships and the way of embracing, with full knowledge of the facts, strangeness, foreignness and remoteness, the ability to recognise one's face in that of a foreigner and make the most of the traces of remoteness in closeness, to domensticate the unfamiliar, to work with what seem to be opposites—it is this cultural, historical and aesthetic sensitivity that underlies the term "Afropolitanism" (Mbembe 2007b: 28).

Mbembe also continues to hasten that:

Afropolitanism is an aesthetic and poetic of the world. It is a way of being in the world, refusing on principle any form of victim identity—that does not mean that it is not aware of the injustice and violence inflicted in the continent and its people by the law of the world (Mbembe 2007b: 28- 29).

It is clear from this conceptual framework by Mbembe that Afropolitanism is the politics of newness, and as such, politics that are futuristic and, paradoxically alien to the subjectivity of the African subject. According to Mbembe, Afropolitanism is the creation of another way of being in the world. It means that the configuration is the new mode of writing the African self. Afropolitanism is that which connotes the personal, and identity formation signification (Kabwe 2011). It seems that Afropolitanism as the mode of writing regards this interweaving of worlds as the opportunity for African subjects to seize, but then, being silent to coloniality of power. The notion of Afropolitanism has been inspired by Mbembe's encounter with cosmopolitanism. According to Appiah (1997), cosmopolitanism is being the citizens of the world—that is, the cosmopolitan patriot. Even to Mbembe, Afropolitanism means being the citizen of the world, that of course, being Africans who are accommodated in the cosmopolitan configuration. It essentially means, the cosmopolitan project done in Africa. Appiah (1997: 619) writes: '[c]osmopolitanism and patriotis, unlike nationalism, are both sentiments more than ideologies'. Even though there are various interpretations of what cosmopolitanism is and what is patriotism, what remains to be explained by Appiah is the place of subjection in this formulation.

Cosmopolitan patriotism suggests the citizenship of belonging to nowhere in specific geographic terms—it is mobility in the forms of circulation of human beings. Appiah (1997: 618) argues that this comes with the sense of enjoying 'migration, nomadism, diaspora'. Bentley and Habib (2008: 4) argue for cosmopolitan citizenship as 'the essential foundation for, the outcome of, a globalised world'. This is seen as the realisation of citizenship, not only in the global sense, but also on the site of political existence. 'The political co-existence of citizens depends on being able to agree about practices while disagreeing about their justification' (Appiah 2006). Appiah calls for the universal values as a site of social exchange among different units of citizens to create a whole citizenship. Such values do not necessarily have to be agreed upon, rather they

are negotiated and contested towards reaching a mutual understanding and if not, tolerance. 'We can live together without agreeing on what the values are that make it good to live together, we can agree about what to do in most cases, without agreeing about what is right' (Appiah 2006: 71).

Cosmopolitanism is propagated as a response to globalisation a response in that it imagines the possible on what globalisation was to become. That is, globalisation saw the homogeneity, convergence and divergence of economic boundaries and yet undermining the character and form of the nation-state. Cosmopolitanism went further to chart a way for political imagination—the politics of sameness among citizens in the world. The major claim is that cosmopolitanism is a world of ethics, embedded in humanity, recognising differences and living in tolerance. Cosmopolitanism is said to shape the political discourse to bring to life the politics of imagination. This is the imagination that is lived through the pursuit of building non-racial communities that are non-nationalist. That is, a condition where differences are not a barrier and characteristics like race are transcended and what is important is the human value and ethics. Cosmopolitanism claims to lives in the state of values that are universal in nature, at the same time they have their locality. The emphasis of cosmopolitanism is to work towards the politics of sameness—that is, living together in difference and diversity. Appiah (2006) warns however that respect for human diversity does not necessarily mean that everyone is a cosmopolitan. At key is the celebration of cosmopolitan citizenship, the citizenship that has transcended race—the cosmopolitan citizenship (Bentley and Habib 2006).

Cosmopolitanism sees the existence of the state as necessary but not in a Westphalian sense. That is, the state is tamed but is necessary precondition of the global order. Appiah (2006) argues that the cosmopolitan value of living together and of importance is to fight for common good. Politics of belonging or of being rooted to a specific geographic area (a nation-state in this sense) is featured with ambiguity, since belonging is not at the centre, but what is at the centre is to find oneself in that ambiguity—belonging and not belonging. Appiah (2006) emphasises the 'web of relationships' that are important in determining the political life. It seems from this that cosmopolitanism suggests the universal, finding commonalities everywhere, but the actors who are in conversation are the

ones that are (re)shaping the understanding of the political and the worlds attached to it. 'Still, engagement that strangers is always going to be engagement with particular strangers; and the warmth that comes from shared identity will often be available' (Appiah 2006: 98).

The mobility of cosmopolitan political actors is that of mobility, they are creating the new world, the world of possibilities. Archibugi (2004: 465) is of the view that cosmopolitanism calls for 'institutional reform in a democratic sense as opposed to the neo-/proxy-imperial global governance that America often calls'. Looking at the European model as a one of the examples of cosmopolitan formation due to its supranational structure, he states that such a formation is based on consensus between states. That is, the integration of states who share common interests (as the European Union as a regional body) but however warms that the European Union case cannot just be spread and applied everywhere without taking the localities into account. Archibugi (2004) in what he refers as 'cosmopolitan democracy'—an initiative to globalise democracy and at the same time democratising globalisation, is a move in that there is a total overhaul in the ways in that democracy, globalisation and cosmopolitanism are understood. As such, this even calls for the leading Euro-North American liberal states.

Cosmopolitanism is claimed to be the interruption of territory and it brings the politics of the new living. It connotes the new forms of life, the life that consists of those who are making it in the world as nomads. That is, those with no sense of geographical attachment—the travelers, self-stylised individuals and the exiled who reduce the world into the abstraction (Mbembe 2001b). In a political sense, cosmopolitanism, it will be argued here, struggles to grapple with the pressing issues like migration, racism, xenophobia just to name a few. As such, the world is just reduced to abstractions and the concrete issues and the challenges that are facing the world are overlooked. Since so much emphasis is on the politics of transcendence, opening up to the world—the destruction of the local identity. Of primary should be the issue of humanity at large, something that calls for negation of race, gender, class, ethnicity to name a few.

It is clear from the notion of cosmopolitanism that Afropolitanism as formulated by Mbembe (2002a, 2007b) is the transplant of cosmopolitanism into Africa. Afropolitanism like cosmopolitanism from that it is indebted to, centre on the idea of migration and subject formation. 'Afropolitans are a community of international wanderers who vacillate between feeling at home anywhere and nowhere' (Kwabe 2011: 48). This means that the African subject must embrace the condition of belonging nowhere, as if the world is so accommodating for the African subject to belong nowhere. The African subjects by the virtue of being raced, often at times become homeless as the world that Afropolitanism says they must embrace is the very antithesis of their existence. The idea of belonging anywhere and nowhere is an illusion in existential terms of the African subject. There is no mode of writing that belongs nowhere. Though this is a fashionable claim, it borders on the absolute fallacy and deception of non-situatedness and this is coloniality of knowledge at best.

More pointingly, even those who still embrace the idea of Afropolitanism, they are often reminded by the world they so wish to embrace as the same that they are still the dehumanised of this world. To suggest that African subjectivity should transcend space and time and engage in globalist imaginary discourses is scandalous. Kwabe (2011: 46) argues that Afropolitanism is 'the project of probing issues of cultural identity and perfomatively investigating the nuances of a particular kind of subjectivity in order to creatively validate ways of being in the world that are becoming more increasingly common'. Zeleza (2010: 75) argues that Afropolitanism sells the idea of 'to bring together the Africa-for-the-world and Africa-for-itself'. Those who propagate Afropolitanism avoid, as Zeleza states, of showcasing the African difference to the world, but cast around minute cases of exceptionalism in order to be accommodated in sameness to the world. The idea the commonality of the world and the culture of sameness downplays the asymmetric global power patterns. It is also essential to state that the idea of sameness or common is dictated by those whom asymmetric power global patterns are in their favour.

Mbembe (2007b) argues that there are interweaving of worlds, and this creates the different conception of the world as that of asymmetry and subjection. The argument being advanced by Kwabe (2011) and Mbembe (2007b) alike is that

the project of probing subjection fails to take into account luminal spaces, hybridity, conviviality and so on, and being reduced to binary cultural poles. The responsibility of the African subjects is to embrace this world, and what is not mentioned is how the principles of embracing difference, hospitality and tolerance are realised. These are mere liberal values that bear no relevance to the African subjects who are at the receiving end of subjection. It seems then, that the manner in which this world is re-configured is something that does not signal change in any form, but the masking of subjection—that is, the continuity of the past.

Afropolitanism argues for politics that are not burdened by the past, and that is, of course, tradition. As such, being aesthetic and poetic, these are politics embedded in creating the African subject *qua* modernity. Mbembe (2002a: 265) captures Afropolitanism as a '[p]roject of reenchanting tradition [that] is based on a set of fragmentary ideas and social practices—on an *imaginaire* that draws its referents from both local and global sources'. Mbembe also adds that:

> Another vehicle for reenchanting tradition and recycling local identities that is coming to the fore is the market. The market's role in the process is particularly apparent in the contexts of tourism and the politics of heritage (Mbembe 2002a: 266).

The world, in the Afropolitan sense, is not seen as a threat. The world is claimed to be seen as that of uncertainty embedded more in the politics of possibility. As Mbembe (2002a: 258) puts it, 'on the contrary, it is imagined as a vast network of affinities'. In the Afropolitanism sense, the world is that of familiarity. The imagination of the world, its state and also that of becoming, should be reasoned along these lines. Mbembe argues that everyone can imagine and choose what makes them African. For Mbembe, being African is a matter of choice, not that of a historical accident. For there to be a matter of choice for being African does not apply when the African subject want to be European or American. Even if the African subject is born and bred in the Euro-North American setting, the burden of being African still applies. The African subject is faced with subjection, that stems from the autochthonous and xenophobic nature of the world that Mbembe seeks to embrace. Why then, should those who are not

Africans have the right to choose whether they are Africans or not, but for Africans not being the matter of choice?

According to Mbembe (2002a), Afropolitanism is that which is detached from essence and attached to the nomadic, since the self is created on the basis of continuity and also, uncertainty. Being attached to the nomadic means that the experience of uncertainty and, being in that of the adventurous nature, this gives the world a completely different configuration. Afropolitanism draws its 'power from the rehabilitation of origins and membership' (Mbembe 2002a: 265). This of course, is happening at the belly of the empire—globalisation.

> It can be further stated, under contemporary processes of globali[s]ation, the idioms of kinship deployed it the process of claiming citizenship-relations such as filiation, genealogy, and heritage—can be converted into recyclable resources (Mbembe 2002a: 266).

The drive of Afropolitanism is of course to Mbembe's appraisal, the conversion to the 'international lexicon of rights' (Mbembe 2002a: 266). It is important to note that as far as the subjection of the African subject is concerned, Afropolitanism seems to be a mirage. It is a mirage in the sense that it does not deal with the existential condition caused by subjection. According to Mbembe (2007b: 29), 'we need to move on to something else if we want to revive the intellectual life in Africa'. Being in favour of this move seems to be the move to nowhere in as far as African subjectivity that is supposed to be grounded through decolonial critical analysis. Though Mbembe justifies this move of 'something else' on the basis of Africans being dispersed around the world, this does not exonerate Africans from experiencing subjection, and of course through coloniality of knowledge. Even if the world can be seen as that of mobility, or what Mbembe (2002a) refers to as the 'world in movement', this does not take the explanation way that subjection is still the feature of this world. If this subjectivity is not grounded, and while being concerned with subjection, it will defeat the whole purpose of making the African subject to emerge. Mbembe makes a concluding note that:

Attempts to define African identity in a neat and tidy way [have] so far failed. Further attempts are likely to meet the same fate as long as criticism of African

imaginaries of the self and the world remain trapped within a conception of identity as geography—in other words, of time as space (Mbembe 2002a: 271).

Francis Fukuyama's 'end of history' thesis is akin to Mbembe who writes:

> From that conflation has resulted a massive indictment of the twin notions of universalism and cosmopolitanism, and in their place a celebration of autochthony—that is, a construction of the self understood in terms of both victimhood and mutilation (Mbembe 2002a: 272).

Afropolitanism seems to be the mode of writing that is 'flexible' and its geography is fragmented and not identifiable to Africa is the locus of enunciation. The locus of enunciation being something that is arbitrary of course. This arbitrary nature is because of having the ability to imagine, since there are no borders of imagination, and rightly so, to choose. Mbembe's stance is that the mode of writing for the African metropolis is the writing of possibility, complexity, and conviviality to say the least. Afropolitanism is basically the mode of writing advocating coloniality of knowledge and with its claim of locating such a space on par with that of the rest of the world. What is not mentioned by Mbembe is that Afropolitanism is the mode of writing Africa from the Euro-North American canon; the very thing that reinscribes coloniality of knowledge. It is in this mode of writing where those who are in Africa and at the receiving of subjection must embrace modernity as it is, even if it is in crisis and does not even apply to their existential domain mainly because the existential condition of the African subject being that of exteriority par excellence.

The mode of writing should not even affirm decolonial critical analysis stance—oppositional and resistant—to that of the Euro-North American canon that Afropolitanism advocates. The myth of coloniality of knowledge is the narcissistic image of the Euro-North American episteme and how it sees itself in writing Africa and not Africans writing themselves. Afropolitanism as the mode of writing does not take epistemological considerations of the African subject *qua* decolonial critical analysis into account. The geography of reason is not in Africa and it is elsewhere, since Afropolitanism calls for hybridity and non-situatedness. The African subject must continue to follow that mode of writing. Though Afropolitanism is on the point of emergence, it requires the African

subject to speak to the world. Afropolitanism being that of the worlds—the African subject and is subjectivity—it puts emphasis on, to name but a few, the notions of neighbourhood, brother/sisterhood, responsibility. Also, the mode of writing of Afropolitanism is preoccupied with citizenship, democracy and humanity.

> Mbembe states that Afropolitanism is infused with the African modes of writing that constitutes a capacity for narrative synthesis—that is, a capacity to generate as many stories as possible in as many voices as possible—can sustain the discrepancy and interlacing multiplicity of norms and rules characteristic of our epoch (Mbembe 2002a: 272).

According to Mbembe, Afropolitanism is the globalised way of thinking and writing Africa. That is why he regards Africa writing itself to the world, and in doing so, African subjects must assert themselves to the world. This assertion to the world has been done by African subjects in various trajectories of their struggle against subjection. Since they have been expressing themselves in the modes of writing that Mbembe does not approve, and that even unmask Afropolitanism as an illusion, that is why they are referred to as traditional, which is to suggest that they have not written to the world. Even though Mbembe (2002a), calls for the mode of writing that is in 'wayward form', it lacks the 'within form'. For Mbembe, Afropolitanism presents a new form of writing and/or re-writing modernity. It is the mode of writing that transcends borders. It is the mode of writing of the interconnection and the in-between. The mode of writing that takes the within form takes seriously the existential condition in that the African subjects find themselves. It is the form of writing that is not obsessed with subjection, but committed in exposing it for what it is.

It is not clear from Mbembe, that element is important in relation to Afropolitanism, whether it is African or cosmopolitanism (Ohwovoriole 2011). Although Afropolitanism claims being rooted in Africa and then speaking affirmatively to the world, it is essential to ask how Africa affirms itself while it belongs nowhere. The world is not universalist as it is represented. The world is the solidarity of continents, the Euro-North American formation sees itself as the world and, as a result, other worlds are peripherised and/or at worse, are rendered not to exist. Afropolitanism, in its gravitation, seeks to gravitate towards the

Euro-North American world, hence Mbembe's defence of coloniality of knowledge. Afropolitanism is then, that which advocates for the accomodationist project in the asymmetric power dynamics of the world. This partly explains the censure of subjection, but the advocacy of sameness, rights and responsibilities. This accomodationist project is deliberate construction of modernity that does not allow subjection to be problematised since this will bring material realities into the fore, something that calls for the opposite of what is anticipated. In other words, taking into account the questions of justice and reparation, that are denied by modernity *qua* subjection, this will disrupt the whole project of Afropolitanism.

Bringing the questions that systematically problematise subjection, the answers to these questions are the ones that will disrupt the whole project of modernity that is advocated and defended by Afropolitanism. The nature of these questions, that are concerned with subjection are so potent that they collapse the very logic of exclusion and deception of modernity. If Africa must affirm itself to the world, the questions of subjection must feature, to collapse the asymmetrical world. Afropolitanism will just be reduced to a myth and fantasy if subjection, that it detests, does not form part of the equation Therefore, there is nothing different on Afropolitanism and cosmopolitanism since Africa is still in the margins and non-existence—the very configuration of coloniality of knowledge.

Africanity: the mode of writing as necessity

Mbembe (2002a) is in total opposition to Africanity as a mode of writing, and such opposition trivialises it through the politics of naming and vulgarity. Africanity as the mode of writing by African and for themselves is justified because of its popularity among those who are experiencing subjection and it is a way of negating coloniality of knowledge. What Mbembe advocates is the universalistic move that claims that humans are the same. This, Mbembe knows that is deception of coloniality of knowledge that claims that all humans are the same whereas they are not. In short, humans are not the same and the idea of the universal is exclusive as it only caters for those who think that they are human than others. Mbembe regards Africanity as something that is trapped within the mode of writing that celebrates the glorious past. It is essential to point out that

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Africanity is not what Mbembe regards it to be. It has many genealogies, trajectories and horisons that are rooted in decolonial critical analysis. It is not, also, that which is trapped in the law of repetition that often leads to murderous violence. For Africanity to function, Mbembe (2002a) states that it is based and largely depends on superstition. Mbembe even goes further to charge Africanity as hatred of the world at large. According to this perspective, Africanity wants a world where others do not exist. For Mbembe then, it essentially means that Africanity should embrace the world, even such a gesture means submitting to subjection.

As defined by Mafeje (2000), 'Africanity is an assertion of identity that has been denied'. For Mafeje, being ahistorical is something fashionable, and this is propagated at the greater risk of historicity. Asante (2007) defines Africanity as 'generality to all of the customs, traditions, and traits of people in Africa and the diaspora'. Asante also affirms that Africanity broadcasts identity and being as modes of self-writing. As a determined historical project, Africanity asserts its identity for the purposes of epistemological and ontological autonomy of the African subject. The moment in that subjectivity of the African subject exists, it struggles to emerge and subjection prevents it from such an emergence. For Mafeje, Africanity proffers a new form of identity, the emergence of the African subject. As Mafeje (2000: 67) states, '[t]o evolve lasting meanings we must be "rooted" in something'. This emphasises the importance of the African subject thinking from where it is, its locus of enunciation. The locus of enunciation is 'rooted in the present and the past' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007: 12). This is not only in geographical terms, but of importance, the epistemic location. This confirms the fact that knowledges are situated and the content and intent of Africanity is informed by its epistemic location.

The epistemic location is concerned with the existential conditions of the African subject. This makes Mafeje (2000) in opposition to Mbembe, to argue that the 'free-floating signifier' is an illusion since all epistemic projects are grounded in the lived experience. To amplify Mafeje, Asante (2003) argues that Africanity is a place to stand on, a base that militates against the idea the floating signifier. The two reasons that Mafeje provides suggests the following: firstly, no epistemology and cognition takes place outside the existential conditions.

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Secondly, historical juncture defined epistemology in social and intellectual form. Africanity is rooted in rebellion. It is, as Mafeje (2000: 67) asserts, 'a conscious rejection of past transgressions, a determined negation of negations. Initially, such representations will not be credited by those who uphold the status quo'.

Essentially, Africanity is the mode of writing that opposes and combats subjection. The mode of writing Africanity advocates for 'is the affirmation of African political thought' (Mudimbe 1988: 87). The mode of writing that Adesina (2008) proposes the African subject to gravitate towards is endogenity. Endogenity 'refers to an intellectual standpoint derived from rootedness in the African condition; a centering of African ontological discourses and experiences as the basis of one's intellectual work' (Adesina 2008: 135). This is the mode of writing that is 'grounded in and driven by the affirmation of African experiences and ontological accounting for the self' (Adesina 2008: 134). Endogenity is the mode of writing that is derived from within the Africa and affirms the subjectivity of the African subject and from the epistemological and ontological point of African subjectivity. The mode of writing that Mbembe proposes is what Adesina refers to as extraverted account that borders on 'the status anxiety of wanting to be cosmopolitan' (Adesina 2008: 146). Africanity as the mode of writing *qua* endogenity is as Adesina (2008: 148) notes '[a]n unapologetic and relentless commitment to Africa'.

Mafeje (2000) insists that Africanity is the politics of refusal. Such refusal stems from the mode of writing that is informed by 'the conscious refusal to be turned into "free-floating signifiers"' (Mafeje 2000: 67). Mbembe (2002a) still contends that Africanity is based on primordial reading propagated as democratic, progressive and radical. Africanity is the politics that creates 'the neurosis of victimi[s]ation [that] fosters a mode of thought that is at once xenophobic, racist, negative, and circular' (Mbembe 2002a: 252). According to Butler (1997), [t]he insistence that a subject is passionately attached to his or her own subordination has been invoked cynically by those who seek to debunk the claims of the subordinated'. African subjects are often blamed and also accused of being responsible for their own subjection. The attribution of blaming the victims of subjection seems to be common place in Mbembe's thinking. Shivji (2003: 9)

argues that 'Africanity and Africanness are demeaned if not demoni[s]ed, as the so-called "victimhood" mentality of the Africa'. This attribution of blame is done in the manner that it absolves subjection. As Bouris (2007) states, victim blaming has made the lives of victims tremendously difficult in a sense that victims are not allowed to articulate their suffering. This further victimises the victim instead of assisting such a subject, moreso in the context where subjection persists. The tendency of blaming the victims of subjection reifies subjection and as such, it is advocated to exonerate the perpetrators form responsibility.

> But then our philosopher Mbembe detracts from his insight by giving the impression that both the subjects and the objects of racism are guilty of the same crime. Rejecting racial subordination or being treated as the other cannot be construed as the reverse side of the same coin (Mafeje 2001: 15).

Africanity exists because of subjection—a racist one for that matter because it de-ontologises the African subject. The structural positionality of the African subject is problematic in the sense that it is at the receiving end of subjection. So, it logically follows that subjection in its mode of operation creates the victimhood. Mbembe argues that the notion of victimhood is the one that makes the Africanity to be trapped in to the ghetto. 'At the heart of the postcolonial paradigm of victimi[s]ation, we find a reading of the self and the world as a series of conspiracies' (Mbembe 2002a: 251). It means for Mbembe then, the existential conditions that are pathological par excellence in their dehumanisation projects are a series of conspiracies when they are problematised. In opposition to Mbembe, Parry writes thus:

> If we look at the work of contemporary critics recounting figures of colonial resistance, not from rhetorical strategies of the dominant discourses but by revising dispersed and connotative informal sources, these projects do not appear as preoccupied with victimage, or as enacting a regressive search for an aboriginal and intact condition/tradition from that a proper sense of historicity is occluded— charges that have been made against such undertakings (Parry 1999: 217).

To Parry, the outright criticism of discourses like Africanity, without engaging them is premature and it borders on coloniality of knowledge. Taking for granted the potency of subjection leads Laclau to opine, in defence of Africanity that:

Such institution, however, as we already know is not an arbitrary *fiat* but proceeds out of social demands and is, in that sense, inherent to any process of social change. This change, as we also know, takes place through the viable articulation of equivalence and difference, and the equivalent moment presupposes the constitution of a global political subject bringing together a plurality of social demands (Laclau 2005: 117).

This then means, as Laclau stresses, that political logic is context specific, so as Africanity. Africanity is recreation and finding life for liberation from subjection. On the contrary, Mbembe (2002a) argues that it is in Africanity where the distinction between authentic and inauthentic is made. This distinction is the one that Mbembe warns that it can lead to violence and the paranoia of the native and the settler. Autochthony is linked to the politics of space and identity (Dun 2009). Dun even goes further to suggest that autochthony is even linked to violence that informs the continuity of conflict. Dun regards autochthony is the producer of violence and violence in this sense has seductive power to evoke paranoia of ontic uncertainty. 'Within autochthonous violence there is an implicit discursive and performative connection between clarity and purity' (Dun 2009: 123).

It is important to then highlight that this distinction, of the native and the settler is not valid since there can be authentic and inauthentic within each of them. Also, the distinction between authentic and unauthentic cannot automatically lead to autochthony. It is not clear from Dun, that Africanity that suggests the authentic African subject at the level of its subjectivity and the existential condition that it finds itself, whether that leads to autochthony. For Mbembe (2003b: 629), Africanity 'proposes a return to an ontological and mythical "Africannes"'. Contrary to Mbembe, Africanity goes beyond reversal, corrective and celebratory discourses and it should not be reduced to 'fantasies and unnecessary mystifications' (Mafeje 2001: 14). Duns (2009) is, however, correct to point out that autochthony is not new and is also not exclusively African as Mbembe seems to suggest. Autochthony is inherited from colonial practice as it 'continued after independence' (Dun 2009: 114). Appiah writes:

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The reason that Africa cannot take an African cultural or political or intellectual life for granted is that there is no such thing: there are only so many traditions with their complex relationships—and, as often, their lack of any relationship—to each other (Appiah 1992: 80).

In opposition to Appiah, Mafeje (2001: 14) argues that 'Africanity is an expression of a common will'. Africanity, on this basis, does not claim any form of purity and it is not fundamentalist, it is concerned with African subjectivity *qua* subjection. Africanity is the discourse that crystallises around the politics of grievances, and as such, it is concerned with the manner in which they must be articulated and advocated by those who are experiencing subjection. In short, they must speak for themselves and in their own terms of decolonial critical analysis, as they are the one who are experiencing subjection. This can even be articulated in Laclau's sense who writes:

> Under the circumstances, a natural reaction would be to assert the symbols and ideological values of society from that he (sic) has come, in order to express his (sic) antagonism towards the new society that exploits him (sic). Superficially this would seem to be the *survival* of old elements, but in reality, behind this survival is concealed a transformation: these "rural elements" are simply the raw material that the ideological practice of the new migrant transforms in order to express new antagonisms (Laclau 1977: 157).

This opposes the point persistently made by Mbembe that Africanity is fixed and trapped the past. To amplify this opposition, Chinweizu et al. (1980) write:

> This cultural task (Africanity) demands a deliberate and calculated process of sycrenism: one that, above all, emphasi[s]es valuable continuities within our pre-colonial culture, welcomes vitali[s]ing contributions from other cultures, and exercises inventive geni[o]us in making a healthy and distinguished synthesis from them all (Chinweizu et al. 1980: 239).

This debunks the claim propagated by Mbembe that Africanity is archaic and static, and resists change. What is key in Africanity is that, it is 'flexibility' in its own terms, not those externally imposed, but its own. Africanity as Chinweizu et al. point out is informed by the process of experimentation. Experimentation serves 'the purpose of moderni[s]ing and revitali[s]ing the tradition' (Chinweizu

et al. 1980: 239). To modernise and to revitalise are in the own terms of Africanity and this suggests that the whole process of experimentation is not the nostalgia of the pre-colonial past. It is clear that Africanity is concerned with the existential conditions in that it finds itself, and the primary thing being on how to dismantle subjection. To dismantle subjection, Chinweizu et al. argue that the mode of writing by Africanity makes existential conditions that are incommunicable to be communicable.

The antagonisms in it, do not only want to transform subjection, but to destroy it in order to create new forms of lives. Africanity is not reformist, but combative in intent. Such a stance justifies the need in of pursuit of liberation and as Chinweizu et al. (1980: 239) remark, 'our culture has to destroy all encrustation of colonial mentality'. Mbembe (2002a) is correct to warn against the nativity of authentic and inauthentic subjects as they can degenerate into other forms of othering. But to point further than Mbembe, these other forms of othering often happen among the African subjects themselves, hence the causes of xenophobia among African subjects. There have been minimal cases in that the natives otherise the settlers. What is common is the settles othering the natives, through subjection, and the natives otherising themselves within categories given by the settler. It seems, in Mbembe's view that Africanity should not confront and combat subjection, but avoid it and pretend that it does not exist. This is what Mbembe has to say about Africanity:

According to this point of view, the history of Africa can be reduced to a series of subjugations, narrativi[s]ed in a seamless continuity. African experience of the world is supposed to be determined, a priori, by a set of forces—always the same ones, though appearing in different guises—whose function is to prevent the blooming of African uniqueness, of that part of the African historical self that is irreducible to any other (Mbembe 2002a: 243).

The absence of grammar of decolonial critical analysis creates the problem in African subjectivity. The fear to exorcise subjection seems to suggest that the latter should not be seen as the source of the former. So, the mode of writing that should exist, as Mbembe suggests, is that of co-presence and creating the future for 'all' humanity. The amount of subjection afflicted upon the African subject,

is not comparable to any other form of suffering. So to Mbembe, subjection should not be linked with suffering. It seems then to Mbembe that suffering should be that of absence. If this is the case, the African subject even when such a subject can suffer from subjection, should not in any way point subjection out as the source of suffering, the right thing is for the victims of subjection to blame themselves, and not saying anything about subjection.

According to Mbembe (2002a: 252), Africanity 'is based on masks that are retained by remodelling them to suit the needs of each period'. He continues to argue that the politics of Africanity are based on 'diabolic couple formed by an enemy—or tormentor—and a victim' (Mbembe 2002a: 252). Dun (2009) seems to be in agreement with Mbembe to suggest that the modes of opposition by Africanity—or what Mbembe refers to as metaphysics of difference lead to accusations being launched against Africanity as victimary economy. Such economy is said to give explicit violence legitimacy and such violence is directed to those who are casted as unauthentic. It means then, whatever discourse that is structurally oppositional to subjection, and in favour of Africanity, is bound to be autochthony that leads to violence. It is here, as Mbembe suggests, that the enemy must be wiped out. So, it means that Africanity is the form of subjectivity that is preoccupied by absolute violence and total destruction. In addition to this, Mbembe also argues that the politics of sacrifice take precedence. To Mbembe it seems that this is what Africanity is all about. If indeed, that is the case, Mbembe attributes the naming to Africanity as murderous or by extension, that which is genocidal in tendency since it loathes the enemy. To Mbembe (2002a: 252) it simply means 'politics as sacrifice and history as sorcery'. Mbembe seems to be silent though, about subjection that is murderous and genocidal, with the African subject as its target.

Africanity does not degenerate into subjection as Mbembe claims, neither is does it trigger autochthony. Africanity as Mafeje states:

At no stage did *Africanity* imply a desire to oppress others: the underlying sentiment has always been *self-liberation and autonomy of the African subject'*. It is a straightforward political and social issue determined by the march of times (Mafeje 2001: 14; emphasis added).

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Mbembe seems to suggest that Africanity is responsible for the continued crisis that still befalls the continent. But then, it is essential to question whether the victims of subjection should indeed be blamed for the crisis that is befalling them, and that uses some of the elements within the victims themselves to ratify subjection. This is not, of course, to exempt the African subjects, the victims of subjection that also have the responsibility, but then, to question the hierarchy and sophistication of forces of subjection at play. According to Bouris (2007), 'freeing the victim identity from its past simplicity is no doubt a radical departure from earlier victimi[s]ation discourse that posits the victim as an innocent and implicated subject'.

Though this is true, is it, therefore, incorrect then for Mbembe to imply that African subjects are responsible for their own misery, and the presence of Africanity is something liable to that. Even then, it also seems that Mbembe does not engage subjection, something that in relation to Africanity, see as fiction driven by paranoia and not existential condition of the African subject. Mbembe (2002a) rejects the view that suggests that the long history of subjection seem to define the African subject. Mbembe dismisses the legacy of history that befalls Africa as a basis through that they should write themselves. It means then, the lived experience and existential conditions that Africanity engages should be ignored to suggest criticism against 'naive critical attitudes with regards to the so-called struggles for national liberation' (Mbembe 2002a: 243).

Mbembe's (2002a) critique of Africanity is rested on the following points. Firstly, he argues that Africanity is not seriously the colonial disruption that eroded the authentic African subject. Secondly, Africanity produces those who keep on enjoying and pursuing material benefits of colonialism. Thirdly, Africanity is criticised for inventing the narrative of liberation around premodial ideals and utopia. Fifthly, its notion of liberation borders on the obscene of acquiring power. Sixthly and finally, Africanity is not reflecting on the slave trade and colonial domination. To lump Africanity as the homogenous and mechanistic episteme by Mbembe's critique, loses the fact that Africanity is a contested terrain and cannot be reduced to the points of criticism put forth by Mbembe. Mbembe (2002a) regards Africanity as the politics of sacramental practice that are premised on destroying everything that the master has.

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As such, politics required a total surrender of the individual to a utopian future and to the hope of a collective resurrection that, in turn, required the destruction of everything that stood opposed to it. Embedded within this conception of politics as pain and sacrifice was an entrenched belief in the redemptive function of violence (Mbembe 2002a: 251).

Africanity like many forms of Africanist epistemological interventions calls for the solidarity of African subjects, who happen to be, by virtue of circumstance, being at the receiving end of subjection. The solidarity of the African subjects has been a favourite response and antagonism to subjection (More 2009). African solidarity is racial simply because subjection is racist. Solidarity of the African subjects involves the question of how to combat subjection. At the centre of it, it calls for justice and humanity that is of necessity for the African subjects. For the fact that African subjects are at the receiving end of subjection, their subjectivity means that they collectively resist and combat subjection.

In dominant African narratives of the self, the deployment of race is foundational to difference in general, but also to the idea of the nation since racial determinants are supposed to serve as the moral basis for political solidarity. In the history of African being, race us the moral subject and at the same time an imminent fact of consciousness (Mbembe 2002a: 254).

Solidarity shows that Africanity is a bane to subjection. As such, subjection being a scandal avoids being exposed and it trivialises. According to Depelchin (2005), [t]he promotion of individualism has paradoxically resulted in the silencing of individuals when faced with assigning responsibility for crimes against the community'. What Mbembe does is the form of negating Africanity and making it to disappear, and deligitimising it—hence the loathing of racial solidarity—since what solidarity confronts is subjection, that is racial in its modes of operation. Africanity is not in collusion and complicit with subjection. Africanity gives power to form, to make the subjectivity of the African subject to be fuelled with agency to combat subjection. The African subject's subjectivity lies in Africanity as it is a combative ontology. If it does not combat subjection, the African subject cannot emerge and the spirit of combat comes with solidarity that is strength. Africanity is, according to Canovan (2004) typically confrontational and oppositional in style. This is of course, criminalised.

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Africanity that is criminalised for most part of being angry in its modes of writing is defended by Fayola who writes:

> Contemporary Africans have a right to be angry, but they must also probe into the reasons for institutional failure, the roots of that lie in the colonial past. They must question the inherited forms of government, economy, and relations between Africa and the West. They must situate the African condition in a global context: a poor continent supports the industriali[s]ed West with its labo[u]r, raw materials, and service payments on debts, among other mechanisms that transfer wealth abroad. They must situate African politics in the context of colonialism: modern political institutions are derived more from the colonial past than the pre-colonial (Falola 2005:4).

It is clear from Falola that the right for the Africans to be angry is justified and as such, such anger is rooted in the existential conditions that Africans find themselves. To criminalise the anger of Africans is not justified since this criminalisation, as Mbembe does through politics of naming and vulgarity deliberately chooses to ignore the existential conditions of the African subjects and chooses to name events. Slavery, colonisation and apartheid are not only the events and they are the lived experience of those who are at the receiving end of subjection and there is no way that they should not be mentioned or referred to in the modes of affirming Africa subjectivity. These are the events of dispossessions and these are the events that produced angry subjectivities which are justified. As such, slavery, colonisation and apartheid should be subjected to critique, even though such a critique is angry. As Mafeje (2000) argues, Africanity would have not existed if there was no racism. The anger that is featured in the modes of writing Africanity critique the colonial and the neo-colonial, the latter that have taken over from their masters but still serving them. Africanity is concerned with the postcolony's inheritance of the colonial virus that kept the infrastructure of subjection intact. To realise autonomy is to be liberated from subjection, and his is what is essential for Africanity that wants the liberated African subject. Liberation can be realised through solidarity, since Africanity is the act of the political. That is, for Africanity to emerge, the struggle for liberation must be pursued in collectively due to the collective nature of the existential conditions.

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Africanity *qua* African solidarity exists because subjection negates and denies them personhood. The modes of writing deployed by Africanity are that of necessity and as such, the practice of naming and vulgarising such modes of writings is of no help. Mbembe (2002a) states that the modes of writing Africanity is the mobilisation that is in the service of a partisan struggle. As More (2009) points out, the critics of African solidarity dismiss it as racially divisive, irrational, morally objectionable and racist. It is important to point out that the struggle of the African subjects should be partisan if need be since subjection singularises the African subjects in its modes of operation. According to More, Mbembe is of the view that any race based solidarity—and that is, by blacks attempting to solidarising themselves—that it is racist. Mbembe avoids the 'fact that racists consciousness always operated at the level of the collectives' (More 2009: 34). In other words, African subjects are racialised through subjection for the mere fact of being black.

> If, as it is commonly agreed, racism is predicated on the assumption of the existence of race, if race refers to a collective or group of human beings with certain socially identifiable physical traits, then racism cannot be a phenomena directed against a single individual; its reference to a group. Consequently, to the racist consciousness, human beings always exist as collective wholes and their identities inhere in those collectives (More 2009: 34).

The writing of the self, of that of the African subject through Africanity, should not lose sight of solidarity that Mbembe labels as partisan struggle. More (2009) asks the following fundamental question: '[h]ow should human beings react when others constitute them into a collective based on certain features deemed to warrant hostile and negative treatment of those so characterised?' The answers to this question indeed justify Africanity as the mode of writing, as necessity of course.

The modes of writing by Africanity are that sutures fractured pieces of ontology and epistemology of the African subject. To suture is to intensify solidarity that is necessary for restoring African subjectivity. So, the mode of writing cannot be that of the African self to be stylised, but the African selves to be liberated from the tentacles of subjection. Africanity asserts that the African subject is the figure of solidarity—not that of nomadic fragmentation, displacement, difference and

hybrid and these are things that perpetuate coloniality of knowledge. The opposition to solidarity borders on the idea that there is no subjection and the world is hospitable and accommodating. Subjection is the antithesis of solidarity, and the manner in which it operates constitutes the unitary face that singularises the African subject in the unified whole to disfigure and destroy it. Since Africanity calls for solidarity on racial grounds, subjection operates though the racial logic that criminalises the African subject ontologically and epistemologically.

So, for there to be a point of emergence of subjectivity, solidarity of the African subject is of necessity. What attacks this solidarity seeks to maintain subjection. The case being of course, such solidarity has the strength to confront and counter subjection in fierce terms. Africanity, rightfully so, advocates solidarity on the basis of necessity. It is clear that solidarity does not emerge in a vacuum, but out of circumstances of subjection. The African subject is ain a structural positionality of being made the subject of survival, something that Africanity opposes. Such opposition makes Africanity, as Mbembe does, to be criminalised. More (2009) explains the fact that those who are in opposition to African solidarity cry racism. Mbembe who is the critic of African solidarity says nothing about subjection that is something resisted an combated by those who advocate African solidarity. The famous question that is seen as a desparate attempt to evade subjection and criminalise African solidarity as More (2009: 22) puts it is: '[s]hould we not just reject black solidarity and embrace interracial or cross racial antiracist solidarity instead?' This question is a form of bad faith, the flight from responsibility (Gordon 1995). It is the question that pretends as if subjection does not exist, and it is aimed at creating the impression that those who are advocating for African solidarity are in pursuit of a worthless cause. African solidarity, a worthy cause, is informed by the need and quest for liberation—the very antithesis of subjection. As More (2009: 27) puts it, '[s]olidarity is a product of positive reciprocity'. It does not aim to execute subject as Mbembe suggest that it is a mere autochthonous practice.

Subjection, in terms of Africanity is that which should be combated. The mode of writing through solidarity, as Africanity does, suggests the necessity of the emergence of the African subject. The tool of naming and vulgar are also

confronted in showing their limits, and as deployed to Africanity they are assume words like 'regression', 'autochthony', 'reverse racism', 'victimology'. This is done just to cast Africanity in a negative light as coloniality of knowledge done when African subjectivity engages in politics of antagonism. This is what Mbembe says:

> We are told that African history is essentially governed by forces beyond Africa's control. The diversity and the disorder of the world, as well as the open character of historical possibilities, are repeated in accord with conspiracy always fomented by the forces beyond Africa's reach. Existence itself is expressed, almost always, as a shuttering (Mbembe 2002a: 251-252).

Africanity, with what Mafeje (2000) adds that it is combative ontology, also emphasise the point that it is of necessity. The mode of writing as necessity is decolonial critical analysis and, as More (2009) points out, it is wedded with African solidarity, and it is not just a mere pledge, but intent that translates into actionality. It is the mode of writing that shows that African subjectivity is the site of resistance and politics of commitment. It is not a mere response, but resistance infused with a combative spirit. For the fact that there is resistance, it means there is subjection.

> Thus, for example, if one examines the historiography of resistance in Africa, the interest is focused on the facts of resistance, and less on how the resisters defined and understood in their flesh, so to speak, what they were resisting. The fact that those histories were not written either by those who actually resisted or their descendants did make a difference. The questions they would have liked to be asked tended to be pushed aside, and covered, silenced by questions reflecting the interests of professional researchers (Depelchin 2005: 5).

African solidarity is advocated and defended by Africanity against subjection. If Africanity was responding to fictionalised conspiracies as Mbembe states, there could have been no fierce ratification from those who are not at the receiving end of subjection. According to Parry (1999: 222), 'while the reciprocity of the colonial relationship is stressed, all power remains with the Western discourse'. This is what Africanity is combating. It is not as Mbembe claims, that Africanity fights against what does not exist—fictionalised conspiracies. It has to be interrogated why so much effort is made to name and vulgarise Africanity

instead of it being left alone, if it is a fictionalised conspiracy. Such fierce attack to Africanity simply means that those who engage in coloniality of knowledge and are complicit to it do not want the African subject to emerge. Mbembe insists that Africanity with its politics of sacramental sacrifice is characterised by two tensions of the move. The first is the universalising move that is informed by the politics of sameness. The second is opposed by politics of opposition—the particularistic move. According to Mbembe (2002a: 253), 'the latter move emphasi[s]es difference and specificity by accenting, not originality, as such, but the principle of repetition (tradition) and the values of autochthony'.

Africanity interrogates through its resistance, dissent and combat, the manner in which subjection masks itself in coloniality of knowledge. This masking serves the purpose of mystifying the existential conditions of the African subject, and reducing the claims that point out to subjection to mere ridicule, and at worse, naming and vulgarising them for the purpose of negation. Africanity as a form of subjectivity stands in opposition to pacification. This oppositional character stems from the fact that 'the colonised were never successfully pacified' (Parry 1999: 215). According to Parry, problematising the subjection is indeed the work of oppositional practice. Africanity is the counter-discourse, with its combative modes of writing that creates the African subject who is not pacified. This is not opposition for its own sake—but it is subjectivity that makes the African subjective to move to the affirmative position. Subjection makes the African subject to fail 'to contest the conventions of that system of knowledge it supposedly challenges' (Parry 199: 216).

What explains such an effort can be attributed to the fact that Africanity exposes the scandal of subjection. The scandal is made to such an extent that the life of the African subject is made normal. 'The idea of Africanity that is not black is simply unthinkable' (Mbembe 2002a: 256). In response to Mbembe's charge Mafeje (2000: 70) responds thus, 'Africanity cannot be nurtured outside Africa'. So, therefore, this charge by Mbembe is indeed correct, and there is nothing wrong with Africanity being unthinkable outside the lived experience of the African subject. For the fact that Africanity is affinitive to decolonial critical analysis, this tells something about the existential condition of the African subject.

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Africanity, according to Mafeje (2000: 69), 'is an insistence that the Africans think, speak, and do things for themselves in the first place'. As Mafeje has warned, Africans who are at the bottom of the pile should think from the standpoint of Africa, and not the universal that bears no relevance to their existential conditions. Even though Mbembe also charges Africanity of being preoccupied with race and autochthony, he does not give genuine reasons why Africanity is like that. It is worth mentioning that Mbembe is silent on the Western subjects, and them being contaminated with subjection—the very thing that Africanity is in opposition to. Subjection is preoccupied with race, because for it to function, it must racialise African subjects. To amplify this, Mafeje (2000: 68) writes: '[f]or people who has been degraded and accorded a sub-human status, it would not take much effort to fathom this reflex'.

What Africanity confronts is the dehumanising project. It confronts what empties the ontological content of the African subject and such a project is racism. It is pivotal to point out that subjection survives because of racism. This racism *qua* subjection, attacks African subjects collectively. African subjects are subjected to subjection on the basis of being raced. That is, subjection becomes self-justified on the basis that is dehumanises that is raced, and that cannot be human. As More (2009: 36) elaborates, '[r]acism is dehumanisation and human alienation par excellence'. Subjection cannot hide its scandal if it is directed towards that which is human; it hides towards that which it dehumanises. For that the African is said to constitute lack, void and inefficiency that are the very basis of dehumanisation, subjection reigns with impunity. This is because there is nothing to be accounted for what is not human. Dehumanising in a way humanises subjection, a scandal.

Africanity re-humanises the African subject and its subjectivity. This cannot be done only on the basis of recovery of tradition as Mbembe suggests. Mbembe argues that the recovery of tradition is so central that the African subjects have the anxiety of reaching the past to confront the humiliation of subjection. So, for that to take effect, there is no need for that which is not the African subject and not in the receiving end of subjection to dictate when and how the African subject should be humanised, if it denies the existence of subjection as the tool for dehumanisation. Subjection dehumanise subjectivity, the latter that is the

component of the articulation and re-articulation of the political. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007), articulation and re-articulation constitute contradiction interpellation—both that can, on the other hand, form the body of subjection.

Africanity is not a type of mobilisation of social reality or existential conditions different from itself— but, constitutive of itself (Laclau 2005). If social reality or existential conditions are contaminated by coloniality of knowledge, the Africanity is the mode of writing as necessity. It is the mode of writing formed with the intent of combating subjection. This mode of writing is informed by making political demands. Africanity is a form of political demands. These demands, as Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009: 1141) argues, are turned into legitimate aspiration since they are the 'way of constructing the political'. As Laclau (2005: 74) argues, these are demands that are plural in nature that 'constitute a broader social subjectivity we will call popular demands—they start, at a very incipient level, to constitute the "people" as a potential historical factor'. These demands by African subjects through Africanity are articulated in 'anti-status quo discourse ... [that] inscribe their demands as one more equivalent link' (Laclau 2005: 75). It is worth noting Laclau's emphasis of political demands who writes:

> [T]he emergence of the "people" requires the passage—via equivalence—from isolated, heterogeneous demands to a "global demand" that involves the formation of political frontiers and the discursive construction of power as an antagonistic force (Laclau 2005: 110).

Adding to this, Mafeje notes:

> Therefore, it comes as no surprise that those African intellectuals who insist on Africanity do not think of it only as a necessary condition for resisting external domination but also as a necessary condition for instituting social democracy in Africa (Mafeje 2001: 16).

Africanity is decolonial critical analysis proper and it is embedded in the politics of commitment. As Chinweizu et al. (1980) argue the responsibility of the writer who is informed by Africanity is the mode of writing that is akin to socio-politico commitment. The mode of writing *qua* commitment is the locus of enunciation of the African subject and is largely concerned with the existential conditions caused by subjection. As Wa Thing'o (1997) notes that the way power in society

is organised and constituted can affect writers and their writing in several ways. The writer as a human being is a product of history, of time and space. The mode of writing form the African subject *qua* Africanity is informed by the collective experience of those who do not deny that there is subjection and it should be combated. Hence Africanity is a combative ontology (Mafeje 2000). Chinweizu et al. (1980) criticise the mode of writing that is informed by privatism that is pre-occupied with abstractions alien to the existential conditions. As Wa Thiong'o puts it:

> What the African writer is called upon to do is not easy: it is demanded of him that he recogni[s]e the global character of imperialism and the global character and dimensions of the forces struggling against it to build a new world. He (sic) must reject, repudiate, and negate *subjection and be in pursuit of African subjectivity* (Thiong'o 1997: 75; emphasis added).

Privatism is the mode of writing that does not like to engage with the lived experience as they are much closer to trigger subjection, that privatism masks or avoids. Africanity as the mode of writing is informed by commitment that advances the courses of combating subjection. 'Thus, Africanity, if properly understood, has profound political, ideological, cosmological, and intellectual implications' (Mafeje 2000: 67). Africanity as the mode of writing that constitutes indefinite antagonistic articulation and re-articulations—is to understand the existential conditions that still traps the African subjects. Subjection is still intensifying. To suggest that the past, as Mbembe always stresses, is open ended does not mean the absolving of subjection. Africanity is the mode of writing as necessity for that the liberation of the African subject is of much importance.

Conclusion

In this chapter, decolonial critical analysis was deployed to shows that coloniality of knowledge is inherent in Mbembe's conception of African modes of self-writing that propagates the notion that Africa should be written from the epistemic loci of Euro-North American canon. This has been demonstrated by defending populism as the mode of writing *qua* African subjectivity, and that it has various genealogies, trajectories and horisons. As such, it is necessary to

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understand populism from Laclau's conception that removes it from the conventional pejorative understanding that borders on the politics of labelling and vulgarity. Mbembe is critical of African subjectivity in relation to the modes of writing and reduces it to two camps, namely: Afro-radicalism and nativism— that he labels as occult or autochthonous practices, or to say the least, labelling this mode of critique as synonymous to flogging a dead horse. It has been demonstrated that in doing this Mbembe criminalises African subjectivity to be institutionalised, normalised and naturalised and this is coloniality of power.

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the modes of writing that Mbembe proposes for the African subjects are problematic in so far as they negate the possibilities of autonomy of the African subjects from subjection. It has been demonstrated that the manner in which Mbembe's essay has been engaged in *Public Culture* and *CODESRIA Bulletin* raises some problematic areas. *Public Culture* critics were not the ones that Mbembe attacked and they chose to respond, and the response has not been that of those who were attacked. The responses in *Public Culture* are enunciated from poststructuralists, postmodernists and postcolonialist canon's that Mbembe is comfortable with. Mbembe entertained such critiques, while censoring the Africanist that he criticised. The *CODESRIA Bulletin* critics, the Africanists, were not treated in the spirit of engagement by Mbembe, but outright dismissal. It means, for Mbembe then, they were, and they are not worthy of engagement. The closing out of Africanists from *Public Culture* debates is ironic.

The mode of writing that Mbembe proposes for the African subject is the one that embraces worldliness and stylising of the self. Afropolitanism is proposed as a way by Mbembe, and it has been demonstrated that it is not uniquely African, and it is transplanted from cosmopolitanism. So Afropolitanism is coloniality of knowledge and it avoids the existential condition of the African subject that is plagued by subjection. Afropolitanism will remain an illusion as long as subjection continues. The mode of writing that is relevant is the one that still draws from the anti-colonial critique, and that is concerned about the existential conditions of the African subject. Africanity, as the mode of writing that is of necessity, aims to understand the existential condition of the African subject from within as Mafeje insists.

The existential conditions being articulated are part of the lived experience of the African subject and the necessity of them articulating those conditions in their own terms for the purpose of their own liberation. Mbembe's attack on Africanity as the mode of writing is akin to denying Africans to be angry of abuse. The anger of Africanity that is decolonial critical analysis is the mode of writing that is informed, to say the least, by political demands, construction of the political, enunciation existential conditions from within, and combating subjection—and this does this mean the creation of another form of subjection, but the emergence of the African subject. In the following chapter, coloniality of power will be challenged by examining Mbembe's conception of power in the postcolony.

CHAPTER FOUR

MBEMBE ON POWER IN THE POSTCOLONY

Introduction

In this chapter, decolonial critical analysis is deployed to examine the notion of the postcolony as formulated by Mbembe to understand the performativity of power, the autocrat and the fetish, politics of eatery by the comprador bourgeoisie, the character of the African state and also, unmasking the notion of mutual zombification. This is done on the basis of understanding the conceptual underpinnings of Mbembe's notion of the postcolony. Decolonial critical analysis is used here to unmask the notion of coloniality of power that is the subjection of the African subject. This pathology is attributed to the fact that the condition in the postcolony is dictated on external basis.

This chapter will firstly explore the notion of performativity of power in the postcolony. It does this by asserting that this can be understood based on entanglement that is the defining feature of the postcolony. Secondly, the figure of the autocrat and the notion of fetishism will be analysed to account for the understanding of how power is performed in the postcolony in relation to the notion of *commandement.* Thirdly, the chapters will then examine the politics of eatery and the zone of accumulation. The argument is that there is no symbiotic relationship between the autocrat and the aristocracy surrounding him, but relational parasiticity and the zone of accumulation is global in scale and with the autocrat as its appendage. Fourthly, the chapter considers the idea of the national project and the character of the African state by arguing that the past, present and future should be understood in terms of interconnectivity instead of being atomised. Fifthly and lastly, the chapter seeks to unmask the notion of mutual zombification as articulated by Mbembe and argues that the ruled are not complicit to their own oppression, but are subjects whose resistance is informed by agency.

Performativity of power in the postcolony

The major contribution by Mbembe (2001a) is that of coining the concept of the postcolony that does not mean after colonialism but rather, sedimentation of epochs in one history. The postcolony is the interpenetration of epochs—that is, pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Africa. What is the meaning of the postcolony, something that can be accounted for with much difficulty, to Mbembe it is the relatively easy in terms of resolving. For Mbembe, the 'post' does not mean after colonialism, the postcolony, therefore, is a history of stasis, the one that is caught in a singular space. The contribution of Mbembe also is that of not looking at these epochs in linear and separated terms, they are layers of a similar problem.

> Mbembe introduced the concept of the "postcolony" which is useful in capturing the mind-set of a particular calibre of leadership and a particular configuration of power and the unique of mode of postcolonial governance (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013b: 79).

Mbembe's contribution is indeed profound, but it does not trace the mechanistic and dynamic tools to understand how power in the postcolony is the constitutive part of asymmetrical relations and the structural logic that sustains the face of the empire and the postcolony being reduced to mere docility and the state of madness. In short, Mbembe does not engage the manner in which coloniality of power is constituted and also its mechanics. Decolonial critical analysis is deployed here to unmask coloniality of power in order to account how coloniality of power works. Bayart (2009: 106) agrees with Mbembe noting that '[t]he lines of concatenation, from the pre-colonial to the colonial and postcolonial phases have been added to the previous linkages'. The postcolony constitutes 'puzzles and complexities bearing on old devils and new devils, chiefly African but also European' (Davidson 1992: 320). The problems in the postcolony register the incomplete and mutilated African state and its existential conditions. As Mbembe (1992a: 3) opines, '[t]o be sure the postcolony is chaotically pluralistic, yet it has nonetheless an internal coherence. It is a specific system of signs, a particular way of fabrications simulacra or re-forming stereotypes'. The postcolony according to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009: 235), is 'imbricated in the colonial, nationalist, and even pre-colonial history and politics'.

The postcolony as it is, is still trapped in coloniality of power and this is showed by the paradox being that, the metropolis being the symbolic reality that weighs heavily in the colony. In addition, a better understanding of the postcolony is to locate it in the global order of colonial matrices of power—that is, the macro political scene. This will allow the intervention of understanding the locale within that power in the postcolony exists, and the global within that power in the postcolony is subjected to. Power in the postcolony should be understood in the manner of its performativity. Performativity, according to Mbembe (2006b: 143), refers to 'the sensory life of power in the postcolony'. For Mbembe, it is in the postcolony where power corrupts all senses. Performativity of power in the postcolony is in the manner of subjection to ensure that asymmetries remain intact. According to Butler (1997), power should be understood as forming a subject. For Butler, the subject is initiated through a primary submission to power, that reflects the omnipresence of power. The hierarchies of power are invisible but are alive as the African subjects who are at the receiving end, but cannot point them out can feel them. This then explains the condition—the postcolony, as the entangled time and space.

For Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009), the postcolony originates and is a product of colonialism. Therefore, being the product of colonialism, the postcolony is still in the state of perpetual abyss. Such abyss can only be understood by unravelling the complex of the postcolony within coloniality of power using decolonial critical analysis as a rallying point of critique. The postcolony is a 'terrain of conquest, violence, police rule, and authoritarianism' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009: 259). The postcolony is the antithesis of liberation. To add to this, the newly independent Africa after colonialism as Davidson (1992) points out produced a form of nation-statism that did not continue the liberation project. According to Davidson (1992: 10), 'liberation led to alienation'. This therefore does not mean there was liberation, but rather, its unbecoming led to alienation. In short, liberation did not materialise in the postcolony. As Olson (1993) argues, no society can work well in the absence of peace, order, stability and provision of public goods. The simple fact to denote from Mbembe (2001a) is that, the postcolony is the arrested discourse. There is no moving forward, centeredness,

and moving forward. What then features in the postcolony is the sense of disorder that makes it unanimous consent not to exist.

Therefore, the postcolony as Mbembe suggests is the state of entanglement. In such a condition, the more attempts are made to disentangle; the more entanglement takes place. Thus, according to Mbembe (2001a: 14), 'the postcolony encloses multiple *durées* made up of discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another: an entanglement'. The postcolony as it is an entanglement, points clearly to the fact that it is a dangerous structure. It is the era of harmful frontiers, the continent being an artificial framer—that is, entanglement. It is a place as it characterised by violence, coups, plots, clientelism, corruption, factionalism and succession uncertainities. As such, the postcolony is the era of instability. As Ralphs (2007) notes, entanglement and displacement are two sides of the same coin, where the positionality of the African subject is the entanglement of time. The opposite of the postcolony should have been that of 'peace order, stability and nonmaterial security' (Jackson and Rosberg 1982: 18).

For Mbembe (2001a), conflict in the postcolony arises very easy simply because it is entangled and this is the entanglement of the phenomena that is chaostically pluralistic. In the postcolony the stakes are high when it comes to power and as such, power is pursued and actualised in whatever means necessary. For Mbembe, the postcolony lacks uniformity or commonality; it is shaped and reshaped in arbitrary terms. The postcolony is the inheritance of colonialism—the mode of the state and its institution found on colonial model. 'So these, being alien models, failed to achieve legitimacy in the eyes of a majority of African citizens, and soon proved unable to protect and promote interests of those citizens, save for a privileged few' (Davidson 1992: 12).

Power in the postcolony is regarded as its own making—that is, the postcolony has power and its own power. Power in the postcolony and the way it is performed is that of mimesis—however improvised. The power of the postcolony and its performance has been borrowed from colonial technologies of subjection, but that are still targeting the postcolonial subject. Therefore, power of the postcolony is not power in itself, but the power imposed. The postcolony

inherited, reinvented, refashioned and improvised colonial practices and methods of power. The postcolony has not seen competitive regimes, and also, the spectre of viable succession continues to haunt it. The postcolony when it comes to its own authenticity as far as power is concerned, is an illusion for that it draws from different methods and practices of power. So, power in the postcolony should be understood in the manner of its performativity. Mbembe (2001a) attributes the notion of entanglement in the postcolony and such attribution clearly shows the complexity of power.

What exists in the postcolony is the full grip of power, and even if there is political change there has not been a huge mark of absence of political agency, but deadly conflicts. The postcolony can be said to be, as far as power is concerned, that which is fraught with controversy and melodrama. Power in the postcolony is performed on the basis of authoritarian tyranny. It is such that its absoluteness borders on the actual state of subjection. Power is performed in such a manner that it produces the regimes of rigidity that stipulates and dictates the political. Power is not legitimised but it is a tool to repress, punish and discipline. One party system is a form of governance and this make the postcolony to be a party state. Even though there is a multiparty system, the technology of one party is still intact since the ruling power can even subject the opposition to the level of timidity. Such nature makes the colonial structures to remain intact as they are institutionalised, naturalised and normalised becomes banal (Mbembe 1992b; 2001a). 'Surges, abrupt cancellations, abundance, scarcity, inconsistency, and unpredictability are endemic to postcolonial life' (Cole 2006: 201). Power in the postcolony takes the form of what Mbembe (2011a) refers to as the hybrid model of governance that constitutes of three elements namely: paramilitary, civilian and pseudo-customary. The hybrid model suggests the combination in that brutality and coercion is the paramount resource of governance. This model is replicated in the postcolony, such that it has the after-life.

The postcolony is the era of the non-resolution, and as such, it has been a spectre. This essentially means the postcolony is not only entangled, but the era of further entanglements. The postcolony is fraught with incompleteness, it is that of the *de-facto* position. What is clear as Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013b) points out is that the

postcolony is still trapped in coloniality of power. This can be traced far beyond the colonial encounter, and it can be understood in terms of how the making of the world constitutes the making of the 'Other'. The existential condition for the other is in the postcolony. It is the condition of crisis that has normalised and institutionalised itself in the form of permanent crisis. The postcolony cannot be understood outside the realm of coloniality of power. The postcolony, to go beyond Mbembe, should not be understood as the phenomenon inaugurated by the African leaders and their elite when they failed in the state making project, but the sedimentation of epochs.

Performativity of power in the postcolony is the manner in which coloniality of power works. This, therefore, means that the performativity of power in the postcolony as much as it can be a hybrid model as Mbembe (2011a) characterises it, its mode of improvising ratifies absence of power. This absence of power means that the power dynamics in the postcolony are indeed that of constant subjection from the colonial metropolis. In the postcolony, the modes of subjection are directed at those who are supposed to be liberated from coloniality of power. According to Mbembe (2001a), the postcolonial state institutions and political machinery are in place to ensure disciplinary power as the mechanism of governance. This is what Mbembe refers to as *commandement* and this connotes the idea that subjection and discipline are a priori. *Commandement* is the postcolonial regime that is informed by authoritarian domination (Robins 2004).

Commandement is the system of rewards and punishments, its mechanism of coercive force finds place for the sole purpose of obedience and docility. According to Adeeko (2002), *commandement* as Mbembe theorises it, shows the parameters of the relations of subjection. As Butler (1997: 6) posits, 'attachment to subjection is produced through the working of power'. What is necessary is to affirm the position that Mbembe's reluctance to acknowledge the postcolony as the condition that created itself, but that which is design by colonialism, and even in its symbolic end, that will continue with the colonial legacy through coloniality of power. Performativity of power in the postcolony is the state of continuity, state of permanence. According to Decalo (1985), ruthlessness is institutionalised through *commandement* and as such there is little regard for human life. *Commandement* as Davidson (1992: 88) points out was 'found to be

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sufficiently reasonable in proving explanation, and sufficiently persistence in extracting discipline'. This has been befalling the postcolony and the emergence of the postcolony has been that of entanglement. Mbembe points succinctly that:

> [*Commandement*] embraces the images and structures power and coercion, the instruments and agents of their enactment, and a degree of rapport between those who give orders and those who are supposed to obey them without, of course, discussing them (Mbembe 1992a: 3).

In the postcolony, *commandement* is the 'authoritarian modality par excellence' (Mbembe 1992a: 3). In short, *commandement* denotes colonial authority. The postcolony that Mbembe is concerned with is that state power creates its own meaning and institutionalisation of meaning. It is, the improvisation, re-making and reconstituting the colonial state in the postcolony. Hence the processes of making a universal code of meaning in the postcolony (Mbembe 2001a). *Commandement* has to be extravagant to show potency of performativity of power. It, as a form of technology of subjection and mechanism of discipline, it does not have enough power as it did under colonialism, except to say that it is has been improvised. And as such, to improvise does not necessarily mean projecting potency, the opposite is also true. In other words, the *commandement* in the postcolony might be improvised and made to appear potent—but it is just that, negation. 'According to 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' (Butler 1997: 13). For Butler, power on one hand is external to the subject and on the other it is the arena that the subject assumed or located in. This is because the becoming of the subject is indebted to power. This is through resistance, agency, complicity and ambivalence. Therefore, the emphasis is essential to put that the subject cannot be understood outside the realm of power.

Nevertheless, the nature of the postcolony is such that, in its tenacity, to make *commandement* to be potent as far as the projection of power is concerned. The simple reason is making the performance of power to be felt by the postcolonial subjects. *Commandement* can assume the state and the level of sorcery, and sorcery here should be understood as a technology of power. Such technology as

Ciekawy (1998) argues, applies to both the colonial and the postcolonial condition in Africa. It can be for Ciekawy (1998: 119) 'both processes of state formation and the new forms of magic and the occult'. Ciekawy states that there are five technologies of power that ratify the notion of *commandement*. The first technology of power is witchcraft by *commandement* is the manipulation of discourses of witchcraft using the state apparatus. This often creates the impression that the state of that of the collective sense of being, whereas that is not the case since there are competing interests. The state apparatus can act in bad faith and charge witchcraft against those they perceive as a threat to the state and subject them to disciplinary power.

The second technology of power involves the policing discourse of magical harm using the state apparatus. This is largely used to constrain and influence the subjects to act in the manner that is commendable by the state. As Ciekawy (1998: 128) has it, [s]tate agents have the power to prevent, survey and intervene'. The African subject in the postcolony is in a difficult position to defend itself against the might of the state apparatus that is often atagonistic to it. The third technology of power is the creation of sets of ideas and practices about the power of the state. This technology illustrates the ability of the state and its apparatus not only to repress or police, but creating dialogues of rule. Arenas of conviviality in those dialogues are created between the rulers and the ruled (Mbembe 2001a). The fourth technology concerns the negotiation and creation of common moral discourse—that is, a false sense of collectivism and consensus. The state apparatus emerge as those who can detect and identify mystical harm and its agents. The fifth and final technology is the production of 'Othering'— that is, naming and labelling 'witches' who should be eliminated, punished, or disciplined. These are politics of categorisation.

These five technologies of power help to create the state both in the colonial and postcolonial epoch—though in differing degrees due to periodical and contextual issues (Ciekawy 1998). This is because these two periods are not linear, and indeed there was collaboration, co-optation and resistance. So in the postcolony, these modes of political action have created differentiality, though there has been a ratification of *commandement*. For Ciekawy, technologies of power are augmented by other overt technologies of power like political assassinations,

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criminalisation of dissent, attacks by the state apparatus on protests, strikes and marches and detention of opposition leaders and members. This is done all in the name of *commandement*, at best; performativity of power in this sense is that of creating docility. According to (Ciekawy 1998), statecraft is paradoxical in that witchcraft and statecraft emerge dialectically, and in the continuous process. This suggests the fact that the idea of the state, both in colonial and the postcolonial sense, is embodied in or it embodies *commandement*. The impression created is that the five technologies of power, the very process of *commandement* are informed by interests of the ruled and the rulers and also preventing any form of harm. According to Decalo (1985), authoritarian patterns of governance have become a permanent feature in African political life. Authoritarian rule has become normalised and institutionalised.

As Mbembe (2001a) notes, the postcolony in terms of performativity of power is particularly revealing, also dramatic where subjection and discipline are common place. The state in the sense of the postcolony relies on what Ciekawy (1998) refers to as technologies of magical power. The postcolony is clouded or pre-occupied by performativity of power and the manner in which power is used to subject and discipline. This is the only way the postcolony can see itself. This is a form of banality of power 'because it is made up of repeated actions and gestures' (Mbembe 1992a: 3; 1992b: 1). This form of predictability means that the performativity of power is banal simply because it is known how power is performed and what will take place as the result of that performance. As Karlström (2003: 59) argues, '[t]he postcolonial state stages itself through public spectacles and imaginary—lavish presidential send-off and homecoming, proliferating national holidays, and elaborate state-sponsored titles and honours'. Ritual and routines of the state create subjectivities and identities that are tied the nature of governing citizens and ruling subject (or object) (Nuijten 2004). Mbembe has this to say:

> The signs, vocabulary, and narrative that the *commandement* produces are meant not merely to be symbols; they are officially invested with a surplus of meanings that are not negotiable and that one is officially forbidden to depart from and challenge. To ensure that no such challenge takes place, the champions of static power invent entire constellations of ideas; they adopt a distinct set of cultural repertoires and

powerfully evocative concepts; but they also resort, if necessary, to the specific political consciousness into being, but to make it effective (Mbembe 2001a: 103).

Mbembe (2001a) claims to evoke the elements of the obscene, vulgar and grotesque that lurch on three things. Firstly, it is the timing and location of the occasion where the state power dramatises itself. Secondly, its actual material is used to project the majesty of power. Thirdly and finally, it is the invitation of the gaze by those who are watching the performance of power—that is, subjects in the postcolony. This is how Ciekawy puts it:

> Witchcraft technologies constitute a discourse of power concerning magical harm directed by human beings that is employed by people who have accesss to particular political and economic resources of the state that enable them to exert a dominant influence on the politics of magical harm (Ciekawy 1998: 123).

The power of the state and its apparatus exists in a form of omnipresence by finding 'ways of getting into its subjects most intimate spaces' (Mbembe 2001a: 121). The autocrat is said to have a spell. According to Adeeko (2002: 5), the autocrat 'enjoys his tenure only because he has created some means of subjecting the citizens'. Power intensifies and improvises disciplinary mechanisms inherited from colonialism. Power intensifies and improvises itself to become the institutional, natural and normal state of affairs. Magical harm in the postcolony is that which corrupts all senses (Mbembe 2001a). The magical harm of the autocrat in a fetishist sense is actualised through the coercion of the state and its machinery. This makes the magical harms of the autocrat to assume a pervasive character and affect all forms of lives in the postcolony. The magical harm of the autocrat is embedded in local, regional and national political processes—that is, the process of state formation (Ciekawy 1998).

The administering of pain by the state power and through its apparatus is to administer it to the point of excessive proportions (Mbembe 2001a). This is to make sure that power is capacitated to the extent that it corrupts all senses. Pain should, as Mbembe (2001a) states, be systematically applied to produce the imagery of fear. Performativity of power in the postcolony is that of excess and such cannot stand dissent that is regarded as witchcraft and therefore, in need of subjection resulting from *commandement*. Decalo (1985) argues that the policies

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of the postcolony are circumscribed by external factors beyond the authority of the postcolony. This points out to the constitutive nature of coloniality of power. African actions are not taking place in their own forms and in a vacuum. They are clearly orchestrated and they are controlled and directed externally by coloniality of power.

The intervention needed is that of understanding the power dynamics in both macro and micro sense. The form of power and the manner of its performativity in the postcolony says little with regards to the performativity of power in totality. Decolonial critical analysis shows how power dynamics form the basis of linkages and entanglements of the postcolony. Power in the postcolony is indeed problematic more in the manner it is directed to African subject in that this signifiers subjection. Performativity of power in the postcolony serves the machinery state. The state is, therefore, the machinery that is answerable to coloniality of power by the manner in which it relates to African subjects as its practices power are in a form of subjection. Such performativity bares testimony to the fact that in the postcolony there are objects, who must in all time assume the role of docility and bow to the might of the state. The postcolony enjoys negative sovereignty that is institutionalised inside and manifested in normalised and effective internal control and popular acceptability' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013b). The sovereignty of the postcolony is not sovereignty from the empire, but the sovereignty that it must perform power with impunity upon itself perpetuating coloniality of power.

It is of interest to note that the foundation of the state in the postcolony is the state that is not the state in the real sense. It is the state that performs power in absolute terms within its own boundaries, and such power is not powerful externally. Therefore, such a state of affairs suggests that power that is conferred to the state in the postcolony is the external power that constitutes colonial affinities. It is the power that the postcolony should be accountable to. That is, the power of the postcolony in the manner of its performance is only limited to its internal control forms of subjection. Its power is limited power in the macro sense of the political because the postcolony cannot assert itself in relation to the colonial metropolis which is the real arsenal of power. As much as the state in the postcolony objectifies its subjects, it is also subjected by the external power

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structures and its forms of relations. Performativity of power is the contested source of legitimacy in the postcolony for that the manner in which it is exercised is seen as been oppositional to the expectations of African subjects in the postcolony.

According to Mbembe (2001a), the manner in which performativity of power is in the postcolony is that of destruction, the one directed at those who are powerless. Performativity of power is linked to the legitimating of a particular ideology, but that which is potent in the fictional sense for that it does not liberate from coloniality. What the use of this ideology is, it is the very fact of legitimising the performativity of power. It is the ideology of self-interest, self-adulation and self-importance. The manner in which it is imparted is that of subjection to ensure the visibility of power. Performativity of power in the broader sense of the political is not potent since its potency is internal only and externally it is accountable to coloniality of power. As such, it is directed at the powerless subjects. Performativity of power in the postcolony is 'powerless but reveals itself in the guise of arbitrariness and the absolute power to give death anytime, anywhere, by means, for any reason' (Mbembe 2001: 13). This serves as testimony to the fact that the postcolony in terms of performativity of power, a sense of technology domination. Subjection, the very essence of the colonial project, has been improvised in the postcolony and it still persists in greater proportions.

The autocrat and fetishism

The performativity of power is the function of plurality of state institution and machinery, but what is central to such functionality is that of the embodied form around that power crystallises—the autocrat. In terms of the African leadership in the postcolony, there are various types of leadership in the African political scene. What is of interest for this study is the figure of the autocrat, as such a figure has been the main focus of Mbembe. To cast the net wider to look at African leadership in general will not do justice to understand the notion of the autocrat in concrete terms. Jackson and Rosberg (1982) have provided a typology of the prince, autocrat, prophet and a tyrant to understand the nature and

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character of personal rule in Africa. But then, this typology has been that of personal rule.

To extrapolate in brief terms Jackson and Rosberg explain these forms of personal rulers in these terms. The prince is the ruler with the ability to create loyalty, cooperation and support through skilful manipulation and personal charm. The autocrat dominates the whole political scene and does not share or cede power. Prophets are leaders infused with a visionary ideology that is linked to the conduct of their political rule. The tyrant is the extreme form of ruler who has not constrains in the exercise of power—that is, the political is the arena of arbitrariness. It must be pointed out that there are no clear distinctions of this typology in so far as the African political landscape is concerned.

This typology is fluid, in that the characteristics of one type or more can be found in another. The autocrat might fuse the characteristics of a tyrant, prince and prophet in tandem and use them in the context he deems fit in the regime. For the purpose of this study the autocrat is the main focus of this study. The figure of the autocrat in the regime is the president for life (Mbembe 2001a). Arguably, the autocrat is the centre of political life. The presence of the autocrat through the performativity of power in the form of *commandement* is made to be felt in the postcolony. *Commandement* is a fetish, it demands power and projects it is a form of excess—it means, therefore, the absence of power in the real sense of the term.

> In the postcolony, fetishistic power invested not only in the person of the autocrat but also in the persons of the *commandement* and of its agents—the party, policemen, soldiers, administrators and officials, middlemen, and dealers (Mbembe 2001a: 111).

The image of the autocrat as projected is that of potency that assumes the character of the omnipotence and this frequently conflicts with a reality that is much more complex and less clear cut. The autocrat's power is, in this form, limited since not everyone in the postcolony is reduced to docility. According to Decalo (1985), the autocrat and his authoritarian system by the very nature of its foundation and content, is superficial. This sense of superficiality is seen through the claims of the autocrat claiming to rule by divine right (Olson 1993). The autocrat, in a way, assumes the form of power that is often closer to that of

sorcery or witchcraft. As Decalo points out, the power of the autocrat is largely based on ratification of the non-existent societal controls by mean of *commandement*. According to Geschiere (1998), sorcery and witchcraft have been the idiom for understanding power relations. The idea of sorcery and witchcraft is used in the sense of understanding the taming of the ruled—if there is such a case in point. The modes of action and political implications of sorcery and witchcraft are available. What then is profound is the fact that sorcery and witchcraft found themselves in the level of the political and they have so much profound impact. The power of the autocrat, as the autocrat would like it, should be seen in divine terms, the power that rightfully belongs to the autocrat and no mode of justification is needed. Power and the autocrat should not be seen as separate entities, but one.

The nature of power in the postcolony in relation to the autocrat is that of hallucination. The autocrat must be able to have the power to seize all senses of power and create a drama in that the space of power should be in the state of the sacred. The manner in which power reaches the hallucinated form, as Mbembe (2001a) states, is that the figurative is turned into the real. As Mbembe (2001a: 165) argues, 'power in the postcolony can be said to be a construction of a particular type: hallucinatory'. Focusing on the following yesteryear autocrats: Idi Amin of Uganda, Francisco Macias of Equatorial Guinea and Jean-Bedel Bokasa of Central African Republic, Decalo argues that, '[a]ll three tyrants, moreover, implicitly or explicitly, relied on soothsayers, sorcerers, and diviners top spread the myth of their omniscience and divine powers'. (Decalo 1985: 224)

These three political figures have in the sense of projecting their power that is often said to be intensified by sorcery or witchcraft. This magical prowess induces fear for its omnipotence and immortality—the very sense of assuring greater powers. According to Geschiere (1988: 49), '[t]he knew state elite seem to view the sorcery and witchcraft complex as a diffuse but omnipresent threat to the new relations threat to the new relations of domination'. The manner in which power is performed in the postcolony seems to be tied to sorcery and witchcraft depending on divine intervention. Sorcery and witchcraft can be seen as a reason that is counter-state and therefore the *commandement* of the state can eliminate those whom are considered the enemies of the state.

Systematic institutionalised violence, routine massacres, brutal liquidations, and reigns of terror may be merely alternative means of societal control in the context of a vacuum of political legitimacy and authority within [those] insecure dictators pursue their goal of paramount power (Decalo 1985: 231).

The autocrat is the law and cannot be subjected to any other form of law. The autocrat is the ruler and cannot be ruled. The power of the autocrat is the arsenal that explains the manner in which power is exercised. The power of the autocrat should be that of potency in the manner in which it is exhibited and projected—for that this practice should in consequence strike fear in the postcolony. The potency of such power is such that it should resemble the magical craft—that is, witchcraft that is famous in the postcolony and something that is connoted in negative terms. The power of the autocrat is fetishism to such an extent that the fear it carries the potential to bewitches the subjects both in realistic or in figurative terms. The power of the autocrat in its actionality is such that it carries the ability to induce magical harm (Ciekawy 1998).

The magical harm, the power to bewitch can also be as far as it relates to the autocrat and how it is understood and interpreted is to speak or not to speak about it. As Nuijten (2004) states, the exercise of power is marred with incredible stories and fantasies. 'These fantasies, desires and spectacles produced by techniques of governmentality, rather than producing rationality and coherence, generation enjoyment pleasures, fears and expectations' (Nuijten 2004: 211). As such, they are not primitive, backward—or being the symptom of traditional society. To speak about the power of the autocrat demands, then, the regulation of speech. That is to say, to speak positively is permitted and to speak negatively will be regarded in blasphemous terms—that is, it is out rightly banned. The autocrat rules by excess—by the way that interest him. Restrain is not that of the interests of the African subject in the postcolony.

Therefore, excess take the toll and for there to be excess it will be discretion of the autocrat. This form of excess shows that the autocrat has the ability of making fiction to be reality. It is, in a sense, the evidence that the autocrat is detached from reality and as such alien to the citizens that must be governed. So, what is brought into being as far as the autocrat is concerned is to make sure that

power is used in the sense of regimentation. Regimentation then, is to rule subjects in the postcolony in a more controlled form, who must in return be allegiant and patriotic to the regime of the autocrat.

Furthermore, the controversy that comes into being is that as much as there can be subjects in the postcolony, what the autocrat in the fetish sense seeks to have are objects. The manner in which the autocrat rules is not fit for citizens and/or subjects, but only for objects. The figure of the autocrat possesses power and will to impose. If citizens emerge in the postcolony, the autocrat will subject them to violence, for that this is the form of violence that seeks to blind, silence and deters any opposition. The excess of the autocrat should be excess par excellence for that its interruption is the invitation of violence. 'This type of ruler tends to dominate the oligarchy, the governance, and the state without having to share power with other leaders' (Jackson and Rosberg 1982: 78). Jackson and Rosberg point out that the autocrat possesses discretionary power to direct the state apparatus and its principle is that of excess. They write:

> Autocracy depends on the fortuitous confluence of circumstance and ability. Fortune favo[u]rs an Autocrat in part by not creating rivals of comparable skill and determination to dominate. But autocracy depends most notably on the strength of will and ability of the ruler to dominate, as well as his ability to confine and largely limit the process of politics to issues completely within his immediate competence and control (Jackson and Rosberg 1982: 78).

This is amplified by Bratton and Van de Walle positing that:

> Authoritarian leaders in power for long periods of time establish rules about who may participate in public decisions and the amount of political competition allowed. Taken together these rules constitute a political regime. Regime type in turn influences both the likelihood that an opposition challenge will arise and the flexibility that incumbents can respond (Bratton and Van de Walle 1994: 454).

Decalo (1985: 212) amplifies thus: they 'create a vast societal void within that they often enact their personal and whims, a vacuum that is particularly destabilising for successor regimes'. As Bayart (2009: 256) points out, 'the spatial hold of the [s]tate is incomplete'. This sense of incompleteness is seen in the manner in which the national project of Africanisation is pursued by the

autocrat. The autocrat will often link his excessive of power in the manner that will be said to resemble the pre-colonial Africa. Fed with populist impulses, the autocrat will even project the fallacy of a symbolic Africanist (Decalo 1985). Indeed, Africanisation is used by the autocrat to mask brutality or even to justify it. Africanisation in its pseudo form is a fetish populistically mobilised. The aim, as Bratton and van de Walle (1994) argue, is that, the autocrat aims to create a unitary organic ideology to direct political mobilisation in highly controlled form. If such control is weak force will be applied to strengthen it and yet to put the face of the autocrat in power and all form of political life. Both Bratton and van de Walle contend that the coercion of the autocrat undermines legitimacy they often to get from the subjects they rule. The system of obligations in the postcolony are embedded on loyalty and dependence, where in that the autocrat if the primary figure with a godly status—a fetish.

Decalo (1985: 212) argues that the autocrat rules in an absolute imperial manner often for the sole purpose of self-gratification or glorification and everything working to his sole advantage in the disadvantage of others. Decalo adds that ruthlessness is institutionalised and there is little sensitivity shown for human life. The privilege and prerogative of the autocrat is a priori. The autocrat has monopoly and '[h]e will use his monopoly of coercive power to obtain the maximum take in taxes and other extractions' (Olson 1993: 569). For the autocrat to exist, it seems that there is a need for violence to prevail. This is the violence that is reinforced with the power that the autocrat has. The autocrat exercises the regime that is rooted in common law, where the law is created, ratified and exercised in arbitrary terms. This law has its form of life in the political, the very essence of power. As such, such power is exercised by the extended form of power—that is, the machinery of the state with its might weighing down on the subjects in the postcolony to discipline and punish them if they resist or disobey.

The power of the autocrat is not potent and in this sense it is the power that operates in the manner in which it depends on the collective. Then this is the collective that in the sense in the one that gets collapsed to the individual. The individual therefore, does not mean that the power is wielded by the individual; the individual needs the machinery of the state and its agents. It is this collective

who are in a way able to make the power of the autocrat to be exhibited, to be seen, to be felt. As such, the power of the autocrat is the power of the cell that constitutes the technologies of subjection. According to Decalo (1985: 212), 'the personal dictator possesses maximum power to the extent feasible within a given society'. As Mbembe notes:

> Postcoloniality could be seen behind the facade of a polity in that the state considered itself simultaneously as indistinguishable from society and as the upholder of the law and keeper of the truth. The state was embodies in a single person, the president. He alone controlled the law, and he could, on his own, grant or abolish liberties—since these are, after all, malleable (Mbembe 2001a: 105).

The main threat to the autocrat is the possibility of removal from power. Popular vote cannot remove the autocrat from power but 'only assassination, rebellion or military coup can contradict the principle of indefinite rule by one leader' (Mbembe 2010: 1). The autocrat surrounds the self with the might of the state apparatus and uses it as a tool to deter those who have aspirations. The hand of power of the autocrat is the state apparatus that is an effective tool of technology of subjection. What surrounds the autocrat is the atmosphere of paranoia.

> On top of unrestrained licentious is the unending exercise of brutality. The autocrat is quick to anger. The slightest thing can annoy him to the point of losing all self-control (Mbembe 2001a:162).

This is informed by the fear of the autocrat being deposed from power. 'The autocrat goes into a blind panic and can take no more' (Mbembe 2001a: 151). The fear of the autocrat should be dealt with by exercising violence for the source of this fear. This is even applied where the source is imaginary or real. Nevertheless, there should be violence of some sort, and the nature of this violence should satisfy the autocrat in that it should assure that the source of fear is dealt with. The machinery of the state, rather than the hand of the autocrat commit such violence. But then, it is still the same since this violence is carried out with the prerogative and in the name of the autocrat. This is only possible in the realm of power as the state machinery is the embodiment of power. It is only with power that the autocrat can exist and engage in the political technology of ruling.

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In the postcolony the discourse of defying power underground has been common place. 'Under cover, therefore, of official slogans. People sang about the sudden erection of the 'enormous' and 'rigid' presidential phallus, of how it remained in this position and of its contact with 'vaginal fluids'' (Mbembe 2001a: 106).

> The body of the despot, his frowns and similar decrees and commands, the public notices and its communiqués repeat over and over: these are primary signifies, it is these that have force, that get interpreted and reinterpreted, and feed further significance back into the system (Mbembe 2001: 106).

Mbembe also adds to say:

> It is the conscious of avoiding such trouble that ordinary people locate the fetish of state power in the realm of ridicule, there they can tame it or shut it up and render it powerless. This done, the fetish takes on the status of an artefact, an artefact that is a familiar friend, a member of the family, for the rulers and for the ruled (Mbembe 2001a: 109).

'The dramati[s]ation of the postcolonial *commandement* takes place especially during those ceremonies that make up the states liturgical calendar' (Mbembe 2001a: 119). The coming into power of the autocrat has actually meant the continuity of atrocity of the postcolonial subject. In this state of affairs, the state becomes militarised to make 'the society terribly traumatised and deeply polarised' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009: 231). The anticipated hope of change for the better since colonialism was declared as over did not mean the end of misery for the postcolonial subject.

According to Mbembe (2001a: 123), '[c]eremonies have become the privileged language through that power speaks, acts, coerces'. This power has been enforced in the postcolony to the point where it assumes the character of immortality that is linked to the persona of the individual, the autocrat. The figure and the persona of the autocrat is something familiar with the postcolony. What then is missing from Mbembe is who names or labels them as such and through what criteria. It is then interesting to know why are they labelled as such and they are allowed to stay in power for long—to the state where they claim the sense of the mortality—the president for life phenomenon. As Bratton and van de Walle (1994: 474) argue, '[t]he strongman may even pre-empt his own removal

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from office by declaring himself president for life'. According to Mbembe (2001a), the autocrat claims immortality in the sense of being in power and only death can do part between the autocrat and power and, life of course, is the state of close affinity.

What sustain the autocrat in power cannot only be the complicity of the people, but the orders and the interests of coloniality of power. Indeed, the imposition of autocrats in most of the African states has not been the will of the people, but the interests of coloniality of power. It is the simple case of the colonial father and the perpetual child who will make sure no to disobey the orders of the patriarchal figure. On the other hand, the disobedience of the autocrat to the Euro-North American empire is not considered a threat as long as it does not unsettle the interests of colonial relation that are based on plunder, control and exploitation. The existential condition of the African subject is often worsened by these state affairs, and as such, this calls for resistance or opposition. 'Thus there were avenues of escape from the *commandement*, and for longer or shorter periods of time, whole areas of social discourse eluded control' (Mbembe 2001a: 105).

Such opposition from the vintage point of the autocrat is seen as a form of insubordination that will then invite the wrath of the autocrat through his apparatus. The state apparatus is intensified to such an extent that it its form of subjection is made be feared and to symbolise the power of the autocrat. In this form, the state apparatus is answerable to the autocrat and the autocrat as a puppet is answerable to Euro-North American empire—that is, coloniality of power.

> What is clear is that the use of security organs of the state in a partisan manner, and the use of combative units of a particular political party and particular personality, are violations of standing constitutional structures governing security forces (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009: 226).

The power of the autocrat is not all might as it is dependent to the will of the people, the will of obedience even if it comes into being through other means necessary. What sustains the autocrat is the subjectivity that they engage in the form of populism that at times is often bad faith. It is bad faith in the sense that the autocrat claim to understand the plight of the people whereas this is just false

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pretence of buying their legitimacy, and this is made to be effective as possible. If not, the technology of subjection will be applied.

Subjection is at the heart of the postcolony, more so because the autocrat demands legitimacy. Subjection is an injunction that keeps the spirit of the autocrat alive in the imagination and existence of the postcolonial subjects. It is, according to Lewis (1996), a matter of political manipulation employed through rhetorical skill and personal charm to convince the nature of reformist intentions of the autocrat. The autocrat promises subjects, with often of course, empty promises just to win their hearts and also to ensure obedience. If not, coercion is used since the autocrat can survive without legitimacy and popular will. As Lewis (1996:102) states, subjection was melded with predatory rule. When legitimacy dissipates subjection is improvised, the very ratification of *commandement*. This does not matter whether the postcolonial like the autocrat or not, the autocrat will become alive and well as long as he is protected by the state apparatus.

The autocrat can be perceived as not to be accountable to anyone. This is not entirely true as the colonial matrices of power assume the invisible character but functional enough to make the autocrat and the postcolony to be reduced to their whims. Democracy hides its imperial impulses that are informed by coloniality of power. It originates from the location of the empire and constitutes colonial impulses that can in a neutralised form, claim high moral ground. According to Olson (1993), a democrat and the autocrat are informed by the same impulse of the self-interest. They are both aiming for accumulation of huge surplus in their terms of political office. The difference is that the democrat is constrained and can be removed by popular will. But then, this does indicate that the democrat might accumulate while in office to have abundance when the political term or career comes to an end.

> Democratic political competition, even when it works very badly, does not give the leader of the government the incentive that an autocrat has to extract the maximum attainable social surplus from the society to achieve his personal objectives (Olson 1993: 571).

The power of the autocrat in the fetish sense is absolute power; therefore, there cannot be any source of power. Promises of the autocrat are ambitious and they are never fulfilled. The autocrat cannot be held accountable even betraying those promises, since he is the ruler. He rules without being accountable and answerable —for that those who are ruled are objects. 'The regime ultimately created its own rhythms of time, work and leisure, and from them acquired a degree of predictability' (Mbembe 2001a: 120). Indeed, this makes power to improvise to take a toll of excess. The postcolony appears as its own making, whereas it is not —but then, being the product of colonialism where power makes the character of the autocrat to be beyond comprehension. *Commandement* is the exhibition by the autocrat to make his wield of power to be obeyed, if not feared by the postcolonial subjects. Mbembe (2001a: 122) opined that '[i]n the world of self-adoration that is the postcolony, the troupes summoned to dance bear witness to the central place accorded the body in the process of *commandement* and submission'.

Olson (1993) calls for a rational autocrat and for Mbembe there is no such. For Olson the autocrat can provide public goods for the country for that the autocrat has interests in the country. As Mbembe will contend to this, this in the postcolony is a different case where the autocrat has no interests on the good will of citizens and their well-being. 'The autocrat is also an acoustic fact, since his speeches are broadcast by the radio and even float in popular song' (Mbembe 2001a: 154). Mbembe adds that:

> Furthermore, the autocrat is virtually offered at hand's reach—his face on the national currency, his face on the uniform of a citizen may wear, his name on the stadium, the airport, or the main avenue of the capital (Mbembe 2001a: 155).

The autocrat is omnipresent and Mbembe has also this to say:

> What defines the postcolonial subject is the ability to engage in barque practices fundamentally ambiguous, fluid and modifiable even where there are clear, written, and precise rules. These simultaneous yet apparently contradictory practices ratify, de facto, the status of fetish—that state power so forcefully claims as its rights (Mbembe 2001a: 129).

The powerlessness of the autocrat is projected as power, whereas it is absence of power. Power in the postcolony is that of hallucination (Mbembe 2001a). The idea of power and its practice in the postcolony is that of fantasy but fantasy in the level of the real. What is considered abnormal or an ideal is that which finds—in most cases, actualisation in the postcolony. Power has been about the disciplinary and coercive mechanisms. The form of regime is that of ensuring that it assumes the visible and audible. This is made to such an extent that the rule should be institutionalised and normalised. The autocrat is therefore exhibiting power—the power that is the fetish since it is not power, but its absence and the mode of power that assumes the embodies presence being coloniality of power.

Politics of eatery and the zone of accumulation

The autocrat and the aristocracy who are often the comprador bourgeoisie in the postcolony eat in excess. It has been the mode of operation in the postcolony as that those who are closer to the helms of power have privilege. They eat while others are hungry. The form of eating in the postcolony is that which is abhorred by the subjects in the postcolony since it borders on excess and waste. The nature and character of this eating can be understood in terms of bribery, theft, looting, extortion, expropriation, rent-seeking, cronyism, patronage, graft and embezzlement to name just a few. Politics of eatery 'breach in the wall of prohibitions' (Mbembe 2001a: 112).

The politics of eatery should be understood in the realm of coloniality of power in that those who are at the position of power have access of accumulation and at the same time they inhalate themselves in the form of eatery. They do that at their own disadvantage since it is their population that suffers, but having not to care at all. The scandal of fortune that in many times originates through theft, plunder and exploitation just like in colonial epoch does not invite any sense of moral shame, not even the sense of guilt nor does it contribute anything to the state that is being plundered. The locus of power therefore, dictates the proximity of eating by the comprador class. 'On top of unrestrained licentious is the unending exercise of brutality' (Mbembe 2001a: 162). Politics of eating go hand in hand with brutality.

As Bayart (2009: 231) adds '[t]he stakes involved in these rivalries and these frauds are without doubt sufficiently high for violence to be common'. They are politics of accumulation—in form; they are marred by violence if the comprador class do get interrupted. These politics are that of 'a veritable war fought without restraint and with total disregard' (Ojukwu and Shopeju 2010: 16). These are politics of whatever means necessary. Olson (1993) points out to the monopolisation of theft and protection of the tax-generating subjects. Such protection is not that of good faith, but such that to ensure that the base of accumulation—that is, the subject taxed is large enough for the largesse of extraction. They eat first and do not even leave remains, they eat all! The politics of eatery means that the interest of the comprador bourgeoisie is paramount and as such they must be served at the expense of the people they are supposed to serve. As Goldsmith (2004: 89) notes, they 'favour excess current consumption and neglect the public's capital stock'. The comprador bourgeoisie are in the postcolony a dominant class. Bayart (2009: 228 -229) posits that '[a]s soon as positions of power within the dominant party command access to social and economic resources, the logic of schisms becomes irrepressible, and political fragmentation spreads'.

The dominant class, and, in the sense of the postcolony, the nationalist bourgeoisie, have acquired much that sharing is seen as necessary. Jackson and Rosberg (1982: 80) point out that 'moral constrains on the existence of power are absent'. The politics of eating are that of eating without getting full, eating is arbitrary. The impulse of excess is the one that are taking order and they are in the sense the fabric of the political. This is informed by excessive vanity and flight of fancy (Decalo 1985). The politics of eatery create deep structural inequalities and most often, wealth is pursued by whatever means necessary. Patronage networks fudge the public and private spheres of the political. The political base is rooted in the politics of eatery where in that the sole aims is to treat the public affairs as private, and being largely dependent on the selective political incentives embedded in patronage that creates a predatory bias (Goldsmith 2004). What exists is eating in both the public and the private political spheres with parasitisim and excess being open enough to open unfair advantage.

For there to be no violence, eating must continue in excess. The politics of eating are indeed accompanied by tragedy in the postcolony. The struggles of the comprador class have a devastating spill over effect to the postcolonial subject that at times has resulted into warfare. In amplification, Ndlovu-Gatsheni writes:

In the process of political contestation the people of Zimbabwe have gone through a lot of traumatic experiences because of elite struggles for power. Across the colonial and postcolonial history of the country, elite struggle for power and elite disunities have resulted in conflict and even wars (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009: 300).

Liberia, Angola and Sierra Leone and Democratic Republic of Congo serves as testimony to this. The large proportion of the crisis in the postcolony has been as a result of comprador struggles for accumulation and access to power. Such struggles have indeed proven to have power to influence the postcolonial subjects. Indeed, such influence can be seen in the waste of the existential condition where warring factions are brought to being siding with the sites of power struggles matching that of the factions of the comprador bourgeoisies. According to Decalo 1985), the comprador bourgeoisies are glued together by socio-economic patronage and plunder. The struggle in the postcolony is often centred on the struggle for state power, and the sole purpose being that of having access to accumulation of wealth.

Furthermore, Mbembe and Roitman (1995: 335) point out that the comprador bourgeoisie are 'often in competition and conflict, they plotted a structure of interests and set in motion a regime of ownership and modalities for the reali[s]ation of private revenues'. Such, on the other hand, might not be that of taking over the power of the state, but to fight for inclusion in the nest of accumulation or the wealth that power offers access of accumulation to. Such struggles are not concerned about taking over the state, but to have the tendency of the comprador bourgeoisie having to project the image that now it is their time to eat too. Such is the projection of claiming victimhood of oppression and exclusion and the politics of eating are seen as a cure. But then, the problematic has been that the form of eating is that of eating without getting full - that is, excess.

> Enjoyment and need for assuagement are thus complementary and take various forms: excess intemperance, extravagance and dereliction, the capacity to set limits (arbitrariness) and to breach them (transgression)—in short, the apparent facility with that, with a simple fiat, one can decide to set up anything or abolish anything (Mbembe 2001a: 167).

The postcolony possesses, through coloniality of power *qua commandement*, the rights to enjoy excess. This excess is that of indefinite nature. The dynamics of power are such that the relationship between power and wealth are so close. This closeness creates blurriness, as such, both become a unitary. This is simply because; access to privilege means proximity to power. 'These lines of interdependence do not of course exclude inherent conflicts of interests' (Bayart 2009: 100). The self-interest of the comprador bourgeoisie is hardened in similar ways the autocrat holds the firm grip to power, and such a grip is even supported by the elite. This is because is the autocrat loses power; the self-interests of the comprador bourgeoisie will be threatened. It is in this state of affairs that the autocrat and the comprador bourgeoisie protect each other. Such is not a protection in the symbiotic sense, but the protection based on parasitism. This parasitism is informed by personal interests. The comprador bourgeoisie are obliged to protect the autocrat for that they will lose their materialistic gains. It is not that they are in favour of the autocrat, but theirs is in pursuit of the materialistic gains that are only possible to make in the reign of the autocrat. Personal favours are the heart of the political—this often yields material security and material rewards (Bratton and van de Walle 1994).

Bayart (2009) makes an intervention and call for the notion of the patrimonial politics that are pervasive in the postcolony. This also highlights the fact that politics of eatery is the nature of the accumulation and appropriation of wealth par excellence. But then, Bayart does not explain who is in charge of that wealth and what power relations around patrimonial politics are. It is not enough to only point out to the patrimonial network to account for this state of affairs, but a diagnosis of the power networks in broader terms is needed.

> When the rule is built on personal loyalty, supreme leaders often lose touch with popular perceptions of regime legitimacy. They lack institutional ties to corporate groups in society that could alert them to the strength of their popular support.

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Instead, they surround themselves with sycophantic lieutenants who protect their own positions by telling the leader what he wants to hear and by shielding him from dissonant facts (Bratton and van de Walle1994: 462).

According to Bayart:

The link between holding positions of power within the State apparatus and acquisition of wealth is also clearly related to the political hierarchy. The exercise of supreme authority in particular generally goes hand in hand with a proportional increase in wealth (Bayart 2009: 87).

According to Davidson (1992), the way of defending clientelism—is a form of patronage style of politics. Politics of eatery exist through various means and one that is pervasive is in a form of illicit economy. This can include smuggling, money laundering, commercial fraud, human trafficking, drug trafficking and other global forms of crime. Lewis (1996) argues that this illicit economy is lively and the form of eating is such that it is done in the public view. The comprador bourgeoisie who are benefiting from these economies through patronage and the protection of the autocrat do so with impunity. They know that they are only accountable to the autocrat so to serve their self-interests. According to Lewis (1996: 97), 'state officials fomented growing corruption, and sanctioned or organised as expanding realm of illegality'. The postcolony is fraught with the practice of cheating the African state for personal gains and accumulation in excess.

Discourses of "eating" and the size of political "bellies" are thus anchored in a moral economy of politics, in that the engorgement of politicians' bodies take place within a social matrix of substantive reciprocities, and this confirms the legitimacy of their authority (Karlström 2003: 68).

In the postcolony, as Mbembe (2001: 148) puts it, there is 'orgiastic enjoyment of power'. The accumulation zones are always in a form of a tyranny. They are zones of moral bankruptcy inherited from the colonial. 'In this respect at least, the contention is clear: the African post-colonial apparatus has replicated, internalise and totalised the power structures introduced through colonisation' (Weate 2003: 6). They are informed by violence and brutality, and they are centred on the moral economy of corruption (Oliver de Sardan 1999). This is

means the justification of arbitrariness and normalisation of corruption by those who practice it. It is the accumulation zone that normalises the manner of extraction, appropriation and indulgence that borders on the zone of immorality. The zone of immorality exists and is despised for the mere fact that it cannot stand the test of principles though different, but that are necessary to bring the form of life in the postcolony that is beneficial for those who are ruled. The zone of accumulation ratifies the politics of eatery since corruption as a form of socio-political mechanism is that of forced legitimation. For the fact that the zone of accumulation should at all times be the exclusionary zone, the zone for a few—the aristocracy. In this accumulation of zone, what exists is what Mbembe (2001: 102) calls 'a tendency to excess and lack of proportion [...] that constitutes a distinctive regime of violence'.

The zone of accumulation in the exclusionary sense aims not to conceal. The extraction, appropriation and consumption are made to be laid to be bare. They must be seen by the subjects in the postcolony who are mostly often in the margins. They can only see how power is enjoyed in terms of eatery. Their role is just to witness. The zone of accumulation excludes them, but it also exists to be seen. They assume banality in the manner of their extension and generalisation (Oliver de Sardan 1999). Such extension and generalisation will mean decentralising and privatising the bureaucratic personnel into cliques who engage in illicit forms of economy and blurring the lines of the public and private sector. Most often lean towards the private arm so that they can extract as much capital as possible since the political office is used as a tool to make illicit gains.

Even though the zone of accumulation is stigmatised, it continues the way it is, to such as extent that is makes itself normal. The manner in which the zone of accumulation is stigmatised is the fact that it is linked with the corruption complex. This in the postcolony does not yield any solid moral ground in the real sense since condemnation does not bring an end to it. The corruption complex might be ethically problematic, but there cannot be any punitive measures. According to Oliver de Sardan (1999: 29), [t]he complex of corruption is almost unanimously experienced as an evil, or even as a calamity'. The socio-political norms are forced to tolerate it, to accept it even in the face of moral condemnation and criticism. The illicit character of the zone of accumulation is

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backed by the machinery of the state, and in the sense of the state, the make of the law and the source of power in the postcolony, the illicit character even if it is so, it is made not to have such an illicit character.

In such state of affairs, this has made the postcolony to assume the corruption complex. The functioning of the public and private spheres of the political, across various social, political and economic strata have assumed the common and the routine—that is, banality (Olive de Sardan 1999). The illegality of corruption does not exist in the postcolony, only the rhetoric of stigmatisation that exists. As such, the corruption complex has pointed out the sense of enjoyment in the punitive sense. As Mbembe (2001:115) notes, 'the status of those condemned is not the same'. Those who are condemned will not be affected because they are the power and the law unto themselves. Their impunity is the exhibition of their greasy material wealth and the lavishness that demands the public eye to witness, more especially the public eye of those in the margins of the zone of accumulation.

Mbembe's analysis is profound in understanding the zone of accumulation. However, such a zone is limited in the postcolony and does not account for other forms of accumulation that the postcolony is part of. This then leave the critique of coloniality of power on the wayside. The zone of accumulation in the global scale is necessary to be engaged in relation to the postcolony. This is because such a scale is able to locate the position, contact points and levers of control as far as accumulation is concerned. The politics of eatery, therefore, assume the industrial complex of accumulation in relation to the postcolony. Such is the scale in that needs of capitalism are fused to ensure systems of relations that are asymmetric and that are configured in a centred hegemony (Quijano 2000). The zone of accumulation in the global scale constitutes of extensive web of international commercial fraud and other regional and local accumulative zones. The regional and local accumulative zones are subject to the whims of the global accumulation zones that clearly visibilises coloniality of power at the global scale manifesting through global matrices of power.

The politics of eatery at this level is nothing compared to the eatery in the global zone of accumulation. The global accumulation zone entangles the postcolony

through the economy of plunder and extraction. In form, this economy is the theft by the autocrat and his clientele—the comprador bourgeoisie. As Lewis (1997: 91) puts it, '[f]or elites, the state provided special access to nascent markets and illegal activities, and manipulated key policies to provide opportune 'rents''. This is nothing compared to the illegality of the empire. The form of theft and plunder by the postcolony is nothing compared to the empire that accumulates on the global scale that the postcolony is answerable to.

The national project and character of the African state

The essential question that Mbembe (2010: 1) poses is: '[i]s there anything at all to commemorate, or should one on the contrary start all over again?' This question is too important to ignore for the fact that, the character of the African state in the postcolony is contrary to the national project that was articulated during the heydays of independence. Again, it is in the postcolony that the political dream of freedom was deferred as subjection remained a defining character of the postcolony. The direction that let the present to prevail—the postcolony, is the betrayal of the national project. This betrayal is masked and buttressed by the call to commemorate independence, and more so to the recent, more than five decades of independence. In the postcolony, as Mbembe (2010:2) notes, 'the vision of power has hardly changed'. The national project as coined by Lumumba-Kasongo (2011), in its imagination, experimentation and execution, provides the social, political and economic platform for creating the project to realise the African state in service of its populace and itself. To examine the direction of the national project is to locate it within the political, social and economic context of the state. The present even to some point suggest that the national project cannot be idealised for it discredited past and impracticality. Mbembe (2002a) argues that, at present, the idealisation of the national project is reduced to self-defeating nostalgia, nativism and the site of the faked philosophy—all of that is a baggage of victimhood (Mbembe 2002a).

Mbembe is infamous for criticising any form of the national project, its discourse of resistance. To them there should not be any form of the national project, but the initiative where Africa shows itself to the world. Mbembe correctly argues against the romanticisation of the national project, but they are fundamentally

wrong to reduce it to victimhood. It is in fact the opposite, 'the return to the source' where people 'return to the upwards paths of their own culture' (Cabral [1979] 2007: 173). Cabral had the national project in mind when he referred to a reconversion that is basically re-Africanisation. Mbembe (2001a: 119) points out that '[t]he postcolony is thus characterises by loss of limits and sense of proportion'. The postcolony has proven to be pathological in the sense of the African state. The character of the African state is juridical-political boundary inherited from colonialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012). The character of the African state is that of the giant theft machine that creates misery to the existential conditions of the subjects in the postcolony. The African state has not been built on striving for better good, hence the existence of the African national projects in the advent of the post-independence period.

The challenges that can be encountered in the national project are numerous since the national project is caught within the conundrum of the postcolony. The national project should also be understood within the broader terrain of the postcolonial African state that must bear witness to its betrayal rather than its realisation. The national project has largely been betrayed, but that does not suggest its irrelevance. This betrayal stems from it not being actualised and centering the people at the mantle of the struggle since power was and is still fictionalised. According to Shivji (2003: 3) the national project, 'lends itself to the reactionary side of bourgeoisie nationalism, or what later came to be called 'nation-building theories'.

The failure of the African national project to materialise made it impossible to imagine the African dream of having fundamental changes after colonial oppression. What pervaded the postcolony was nothing other than the easy option of pillaging the state. This form of political thinking has been the one that has pervaded most of the polity in the postcolony. It is in the postcolony that political imagination is not seen beyond it—that is, there is nothing that leads to another form of life in that the character of the state can be that of the beneficiary and that which can be related to. 'The point is that African states and their political leaders have not taken any project toward achieving developmental objectives seriously' (Lumumba-Kasongo 2011: 68). It is in these schemes of things where the legitimacy of the national project has been tainted and indeed it

was just reduced to a mere fiction or so to speak, the unrealisable utopia even in the imaginary sense. As Bayart warns:

> Contrary to the popular image of the innocent masses, corruption and predatoriness are not found exclusively amongst the powerful. Rather, they are modes of social and political behaviour shared by a plurality of actors on more or less a great scale (Bayart 2009: 238).

The postcolonial state has been haunted by what Bayart (2009: 98) refers to as the problematic of 'the relationship of complementary and hybridisation between private and private capital, rather than a relationship of exclusion and competition'. The national project that is created before and after colonialism is still in the conundrum of repetition without difference. In terms of the betrayal of the national project Fanon ([1961] 1990) cared so much for it to the extent that he did not in his ideal romanticise it, but forewarned about the pitfalls. Still in the present, the idealisation should be that of the unthinkable, the impossibility and in the gaze of the Afro-pessimist the route to total failure. The national project that is linked to progressive national consciousness is the one of the route less travelled, or so to say, the route not travelled. The postcolonial route has been that of autocrat and aristocracy rushing to the colonial office and engaging in repetition without difference, or the difference been that they are mastering the technology of oppression more than their colonial masters. The betrayal means then, not being able to carry out the national project, if not also abandoning it in the continued phase of the colonial struggle. Fanon in expressing disappointment has this to say:

> The leader, because he refuses to break up the national bourgeoisie, asks the people to fall back into the past and to become drunk on the remembrance of the epoch that led up to independence… During the struggle for liberation the leader awakened the people and promised them a forward march, heroic and unmitigated. Today, he uses every means to put them to sleep, and three or four times a year asks them to remember the colonial period and to look back on the long way they have come since then (Fanon [1961] 1990: 136).

According to Ekeh (1975), to fight for independence was about that bourgeoisie class would take over from the colonisers. The bourgeoisie class in the struggle for independence 'raised hopes and expectations of the ordinary citizens' (Ekeh

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1975: 103). Added to this, one of the major factors that signal the failure of the national project is the postcolonial abyss where African leaders are devoid of imagining an alternative Africa and African being. The national project was that of trying to make the African state fit within the mode of colonial governance. Coloniality of power that is the postcolonial abyss means that the African state has not been decolonised. The African postcolonial state appropriated colonialism. The black face is put as an exhibition of colonial power, the very thing that made Fanon ([1961] 1990) to charge "laziness" and "intermediary type" to those who will betray the national project. The pitfalls of the national consciousness suggest the betrayal of the national project and also deviating from its route map. This failure has given the African state a predatory character.

> The ruling classes who have abdicated in favour of the leader, irresponsible, oblivious of everything and essentially preoccupied with the pleasures of their everyday life, their cocktail parties, their journeys paid for by government money, the profits they can make out of various schemes—from time to time these people discover their spiritual waste land at the heart of the nation (Fanon [1961] 1990: 148).

Echoing Fanon, Ndlovu-Gatsheni states that:

> The failure of the state to deliver material benefits and freedoms to ordinary people resulted in a problematic relationship between state and citizens. Those in control of the state became only full citizens, together with their clients and cronies. The majority of the people became subjects once more, just like under colonial rule. Instead of governing, the elites in charge of the state became rulers in the crudest sense of the term. Whereby their words became law and they reduced citizens not only to subjects but also to powerless sycophants and hungry praise singers (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012: 81).

The power of the African state is not that of legitimacy, but that of having its power being projected through *commandement* (Mbembe 2001a). The crisis of the African state is such that it makes the state to assume a predatory character. This character has been that of the state being a thief from the public, the state that does not have the interests of those whom it rules.

Public expenditures can also be interpreted as one of the registers of sovereignty. It provides the sites were the state endeavo[u]rs to combine the mostrative exercise of physical violence and arbitrary symbolic acts. In this way, expenditure is part of an omnivorous political configuration, where public and private forces mingle; where spoils, salaries, exactions, fees and monopolies are inseparable; and where the state apparatus and framework of extraction are one and the same (Mbembe and Roitman 1995: 337).

The above view has been highlighted by Ekeh (1975: 91), who argues that '[t]he publici[s]ation of the private realm—that is, the conversion of private activities and resources into material for the public realm—is characteristic of absolute regimes'. This is the case of Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire) under the kleptocratic leadership of Mobuto Sese Seko. Lewis (1996) argues that the postcolony has seen the shift from prebendalism (decentralised patrimonial rule) to predation (consolidation of dictatorship). Predation as Lewis states, points to the personification and concentration of power to give form and character of the African state. In short, predation and prebendalism are at the heart of the postcolony. The predatory state is *commandement* par excellence. According to Lewis (1996: 99), '[p]redation embodies a reconfiguration of neo-patrimonial rule, towards more despotic and rapacious control'. Mbembe writes:

> Conversely, in states where the predatory rage characteristic of the first phase of coloni[s]ation has been more or less contained, it is the elasticity in the redistribution of utilities that partially underpinned the legitimacy of the postcolonial government and also made the relations of inequality and coercion tolerable (Mbembe 2001a: 51).

Olson (1993) opposes the notion of predatory state and argues that it is misleading. According to this perspective, the autocrat protects and provides the masses with public goods to secure legitimacy. The subjects might have little or nothing while the autocrat has in excess. Mbembe deploys the notion of overloading to argue that '[e]verything leads to excess' (Mbembe 2001a: 119). It is in this condition that the form of political life is that of impunity of the postcolonial state. The postcolonial African state inherited the state of impunity from colonialism. The character of the African state was fashioned by colonialism to be in the real cosmetic sense, to be all powerful and arbitrary (Ake

2000). Such impunity has been that the state has been used as a machinery of plunder, theft, exploitation that are coupled with gratuitous and systematic violence. In machinery form, the state has made violence to be a technological formation—the technology of subjection. It has been known that what existed in the postcolony has been a state that takes the form of economy of violence. 'The government's response was to tighten the screws of political repression and violence' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009: 241). The motive behind this is that the state wants to legitimate itself.

> Africa, a headless figure threatened with madness and quite innocent of any notion of centre, hierarchy, or stability, is portrayed as a vast dark cave where every benchmark and distinction come together in total confusion, and the rifts of a tragic and unhappy human history stand revealed: a mixture of half-created and the incomplete, strange signs, convulsive movements—in short, a bottomless abyss where everything is noise, yawning gap, and primordial chaos (Mbembe 2001a: 3).

In the postcolony, self-deception and perversion are abound (Mbembe 2001a). In the postcolony the embodiment of the machinery of extraction by the state has not only been the autocrat, but also the clientele of the autocrat. The language of violence is in the era of colonialism, and thus in an improvised form is abound when the giant theft machine is in operation. The language of violence that affects and corrupts all the senses is such that its excess is making sure that docility remains for plunder and theft to continue unabated, no matter that degrees of excess they may take. 'Such unconditionality and impunity can be explained by what long constituted the *credo* of power in the colony' (Mbembe 2001a: 26). 'The continent, a great; soft; fantastic body, is seen as powerless, engaged in rampant self-destruction' (Mbembe 2001a: 8). In Africa, the modern state has been imposed from outside and the 'political structuring' of the country by the post-colonial regimes is far from complete' (Geschiere 1988: 38). Violence and domination are forms of relationality. The postcolonial state creates as a result objects and negates subjects. There are many possibilities of responses to domination that go beyond conviviality, complicity and destruction (Weate 2003).

What is fundamental in the African state is to understand the subjectivation of the crisis and the crisis of the subject. The crisis of the African state in the form

of its character as Mbembe and Roitman (1995: 323) put it 'the crisis as a constitutive site of particular forms of subjectivity'. This affects the existential conditions of the subjects in the postcolony both in imaginary and material terms. According to Mbembe and Roitman (1995: 326), the crisis of the character of the African state 'belong at the most to the domain of the obvious or self-evident, and at least to the banal or that which no longer evokes surprise'. The character of the African state cannot be exceptional but banal since its forms of dramatisation of crisis are institutionalised and normalised. The subjects in the postcolony are often trapped in the mode of not understanding their existential crisis simply because the state apparatus institutionalises and normalises their lived experience on the basis of pacification that will then yield the sites of coping mechanisms. This does not suggest though that the subjects in the postcolony are uniform, as with any other typical character of the oppressive state, the role is to have pacification that reduces subjects to objects.

There are, in the postcolony, the politics of evasion or erasure of institutions that are making the state accountable. The character of the African state is abounding with instances of taming or abolishing institution that ensure accountability, legitimacy and egalitarialism. What is a priori is to make sure that theft, plunder and exploitation continue unabated. To amplify this point, Mbembe and Roitman (1995: 339) state that '[t]his attests to a sense of loss both the material sense of the waste and dilapidation as well as in the sense of existential deprivation and disorientation'. The large scale of corruption and politics of extraction has led to the incapacitation of the state. The state becomes debt burdened and dependent in the external hand outs that are the mechanics of coloniality of power. The national project, if it were to be taken seriously, would have not resulted in the route map of betrayal.

The postcolony is indeed indebted to the colonial power. The betrayal of the people is seen as convenience. The mode of life in the postcolony assumes the figure of destruction that produces certain pathological attachment and existential crisis of having to live in the hellish zone of non-being. This comes into being though betrayal that is indeed repetition without difference. To understand this postcolonial abyss of repetition without difference suggests the actualisation of the ideals of the national project is something that is caught within global

imperial designs. For these designs to be effective, they need native assistants whom Fanon ([1961] 1990) refers to them as 'intermediary types'. The national project is betrayed by these intermediary types 'with the mind of a huckster, only too glad to accept the dividends that the former colonial power hands out to it' (Fanon [1961] 1990: 141). Indeed, the postcolony has produced a breed of junior partners instead of leaders. These junior partners are so attached to their patriarchal figure—the colonial metropolis. The national project will not be actualised as long as these colonial affinities are still in existence and in control of Africa. This then suggests that the character of the state has never changed. The coming of independence meant the improvisation of the colonial state *qua* coloniality of power.

The postcolony then is entangled simply because there has never been a decolonisation of the African state. The character of the state is that of coercion rather than consent (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012). This is because in the context of the postcolony there must be *commandement* and it can only come into being through legitimacy, but self-legitimation. The only answer on how to delink from global imperial designs lies in the character of the African state being in need of been thoroughly decolonised. Colonial affinities carry with them technologies of subjection that mutate and adapt—that is, they are amoebic in form and shape. In this form and shape, they are able to hide behind structures and become banal. The national project that was supposed, and is yet still supposed to bring material, existential, social and spiritual renewal is still in the belly of the global imperial designs. These designs operate through coloniality of power.

Mutual zombification unmasked

According to Mbembe (2001a: 125), '[t]he link between the *commandement* and its subjects, in postcolonial as in colonial form, meant not only control but also connivance'. Coloniality of power through state machinery constitutes routines and rituals and this is seen in stamps, maps and flags or other symbols of the state (Nuijten 2004). There are de-centred practices of power in the postcolony that have such potency that they threaten the hegemony or coercion of the state. Through laughter or conviviality the postcolonial subject seeks to unmask the godly figure the autocrat aspires to be (Mbembe 2001a). The postcolonial

relationship between the rulers and the ruled need to be understood in other forms and Mbembe (1992a; 1992b; 2001a) fundamentally opposes the binary function of resistance/domination, counter-discourses, counter-movements. The better way that Mbembe suggests is to understand postcolonial relationships between the ruled and the rulers is that of conviviality.

Conviviality as Mbembe (2001a: 104) states, is a relationship fraught by *commandement* and its 'subjects having to share the same living space'. It is the manner in which the link between the rulers and the rules assume complex forms of relations. These are forms that are in opposition to conventional forms of relations. Mbembe (1992a; 1992b; 2001a) argues that the rulers and the ruled are entangled by intimate tyranny. This creates what Mbembe calls mutual zombification that means the performativity of power by the rulers and response and articulation of that power means impotency. Mutual zombification is the impotence or the state of powerlessness of the ruler and the ruled as 'each has robbed the other of vitality and left both impotent' (Mbembe 2001a: 104). Mutual zombification as Flores (2011: 78) puts it, is an 'idiom of suffering through intimacy'. For Flores, Mbembe's injunction of mutual zombification is said to be the state of engaging in the modality of theorising that veers from the familiar. In contrast to Flores, Karlström (2003: 58) argues that 'Mbembe's portrayal of African politics contains much that is familiar'.

For Mbembe, what makes African subjects to appear complicit is 'a unitary system of ensnarement' (Mbembe 2001a: 128). Mbembe does not mean this in the sense of coloniality of power but the proximate relations between the rulers and the ruled. If Mbembe took coloniality of power into account and seriously, it would then mean that for resistance and convivial play of vulgarity to take place, this will create the impression that there is absence of agency whereas there is. Mbembe still insists that:

> Strictly speaking, this process does not increase either the depth of subordination or the level of resistance; it simply produces a situation of disempowerment for both ruled and rulers (Mbembe 2001a: 111).

What Mbembe calls obscene and grotesque are parodies that undermine the face of *commandement*. Obscenity and grotesque undermine officialdom by making it

potent through ridicule and laughter. According to Geishiere (1988), relations between the ruler and the ruled have become fraught with ambiguities. The projection of state power by the postcolonial machinery often invites ridicule. Mbembe notes that:

> The question of whether humour in the postcolony is an expression of 'resistance' or not, whether it is, a priori, opposition, or simply manifestation of hostility toward authority, is thus of secondary importance (Mbembe 2001a: 108).

For Mbembe, African subjects in the postcolony in ordinary ways guide, deceive, and toy with power instead of confronting it directly. But then, in Mbembe's sense, the politics of laughter and ridicule suggest conviviality and complicity. However, the act of laughter and ridiculing cannot be that of creating laughter in itself. The politics of laughter and ridiculing as points out constitutes the very act of 'subverting power relations, exploitation and repression' (Hammett 2010: 5). The ultimate reach of this is not only to ratify power, but to see its other side—its nakedness. This in a way intensifies resistance. Hammett (2010) rejects Mbembe's notion that resistance in the context of the postcolony is futile. Resistance to a lesser or greater extent, disrupts the power dynamic of the postcolony to expose its nakedness, not just laughter. What then this amplifies is the narrative of resistance since the intention of resistance in this context is to produce out of laughter—unlaughter. In this state of affairs, subjects in the postcolony will question the nature and character of power in its multiplicity.

The aim in this sense is that of producing the moment of existential reflection that will then yield resistance and delegitimation of power if such power is in contradiction with the aspirations and expectations of African subjects in the postcolony. What exists in the postcolony is a situation where 'promise has been replaced by the lack of expectation' (Mbembe 2001a: 199). It is clear that such condition creates banality, but then, this is the banality that creates docility and pacification, but can also open the avenue of resistance. The expectations of the subjects in the postcolony are such that they will trigger resistance if they are not met. The narrative of resistance will then mean that power is questioned and challenged.

For Mbembe, African subjects can pretend to obey *commandement* while they do disobey it—mostly through laughter or mockery. Such is the activity where postcolonial subjects have their own language—that is non-official discourse. This laughter often locates itself in the private realm. The autocrat 'cannot escape symbolic sanctions: slander, gossip, character assassination' (Scott 1985: 25). For Scott, the autocrat who claims to wield absolute power does not have the total control of the theatrical space. According to Ekeh (1975), what is considered right in the private realm is also right in the public realm. In the postcolony, and on the contrary, this differs. It is important to add that it is often in the postcolony where the line between private and public realms is blurred. If laughter is permissible in the private realm, it might not be permitted in the public realm. This is more so if it directed at the autocrat or the state machinery.

The contention of Mbembe (2001a) is that the postcolonial subject makes mockery and derision of *commandement.* However, in nowhere in the postcolony the defamation of the autocrat is permissible. The subjects in the postcolony would nevertheless continue to defame the autocrat, the aristocrat and the state machinery—whether in private or public realm. 'In fact, officialdom and the people have many references in common, not least a certain conception of the aesthetics and stylistics is power and the way it operates and expands' (Mbembe 2001a: 109).

> Within Africa we perceive distinctive tendencies. Typically, transitions from personal dictatorships are driven by spontaneous street protests, focus on fate of the ruler, and, in the absence of effective political institutions to channel political participation and contestation, tend to dissolve into chaotic conflict (Bratton and van de Walle 1994: 485).

Contrary to Mbembe, it is important to note that the projection of power has been met with different degrees of resistance. Resistance is a form of force that modifies power though different scale and degrees. The very fact of engaging power suggests the manner in which power needs to be changed in content and form. The power that one sees in Mbembe is a form of power that Weate (2003) calls 'incontestable power'. That is, the power of the absolute that maintains its unchallengeable status. Therefore, resistance is the name that must be given to the force that tries or that modifies power (Weate 2003). For the mere fact that

freedom is agitated in the postcolony, this shows that there is agency, and not conviviality with oppressive aspects of the postcolony. As Cole (2006) posits, resistance from below is disruptive and vicious if it has been bottled up. Such agency points out to the materiality of resistance, no matter the degree of potency or impact. Hammett (2010) emphasises that there are creative ways of responding to the expressions and experiences of power. For Hammett, power in the sense of agency is not only power over subjects since there is power of resistance and opposition, and this also includes the power of self-presentation.

Moreover, these points to the fact that even if power in the postcolony can have a degree of high potency, but it cannot in all means or indefinitely defeat the agency of the subjects in the postcolony. This has led Weate (2003: 8) to criticise Mbembe thus, 'Mbembe tries to *conceal* what is effectively functioning as the concept of "resistance" in his text by semantic substitution'. The subjects often present themselves in the postcolony to challenge power. Power is not only a form of limitation and imposition; it is also 'power as capacity and agency' (Weate 2003: 7). The subjects in this sense, even if they are disempowered, they nevertheless refuse what power confers to them and in the process, the subject assert their existential conditions and as such this amends the manner in which power is constituted. The colonial legacy is largely intact and this is embedded in structures of the postcolony. Mamdani (1996) calls for the ways in that to understand how power is organised and the forms of contemporary resistance, and the manner also in that it fragments as a result of resistance.

Through the might of *commandement* through its response to dissents by intimidation, detention, banning, torture, kidnapping and killing, this response of the postcolony is still abound. The notion of mutual zombification seems not to have enough ground and the postcolony seems to be that which Mbembe (1992a; 1992b; 2001a) suspends or opposes fundamentally—that of binary function. Though what Mbembe proposes in terms of understanding postcolonial relations is valid, to some extent, that should not invite a total closure of resistance discourse or political action that indeed proves the agency of the political subjects in the postcolony. Perhaps it would have been in Mbembe's thinking to suggest that the mutual zombification and also the foreseen absence of resistance—the notion of conviviality could have been an additional. Indeed,

there are those who are complicit and those who toy with power. As Weate (2003: 8) notes, '[f]or Mbembe, in an African context, there are simply no spaces of resistance available outside domination (unofficial or otherwise)'. For Mbembe, the omission of resistance in the power relations of the ruled and the rulers is problematic. There cannot be subjection without subjectivity in the form of resistance. But also, there are those who confront power in the postcolony head on and are not complicit to it, hence not zombified by it. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012), African subjects in the postcolony still continue freeing themselves from oppression inherited from colonialism by the autocrat and the state machinery. The need for genuine freedom suggests that there is agency, and the mode of political existence in that this agency is demonstrated is that of resistance.

According to Hammett (2010), power in the postcolony is the matter of everyday life and it is contextual, relational and constitutive in relation to the lives of the ruled and the rulers. Therefore, power should be recognised in terms of its multiplicity and also the multiplicity of the subjects in the postcolony. Mbembe (2001a) however states that, subjects have no single identity, but multiple ones that they negotiate and modify whenever necessary. This then stems the fact that they African subjects respond to power in the mode of differentiation. The subject to be labelled as such precisely points to the fact that there is agency. This confirms the argument advanced by Zegeye and Vambe (2009) that facets and intricacies of power in the postcolony are pervasive. The way power is understood and lived in the political suggests that the postcolony should be subject to complexity. Such complexity should not be about relations but how power is constituted, and also the manner in which it is exercised. 'It is within the rubric of power relations that dissent, assent, reification and resistance are conceived and expressed' (Hammett 2010: 4). The bone of contention of Zegeye and Vambe (2009) is that Mbembe presents the rulers and the ruled as if they possess uniform or similar subjectivities all the time. The lack of dynamism of the subject, and the manner of difference in reference to the response to power is weakens the thesis of mutual zombification. The extent or the level of mutualism in the postcolony suggests complexity of the subjects. This even goes to the extent of the difference of power and how it forms systems of relations.

African subjects in the postcolony, even if they can be casted by the spell of *commandement*, cannot be caught in the rubric of mutual zombification. There are in the postcolony 'visible manifestations of resistance to the abuses and excesses of power' (Hammett 2010: 4). The subjects in the postcolony are not passive and the autocrat indeed is the one with absolute power. Even though this power can be abducted, as Mbembe (2001a) notes that control goes in tandem with conviviality and even connivance, the subject in the postcolony should not minimises agency. Weate (2003) argues that the absence of possibility and agency is attributing to the fact that the work of the negative is at play. Such negativity borders on the obscene in the form of destruction, complicity and decay. This means there is no subjectivity. Even in the era of colonialism that Mbembe (2001a) states that it is a 'discourse of madness that threatens all dominations' there was site of resistance. The postcolony has improvised the modes of subjection that it has drawn from colonialism for the sole purpose of erasing any form of subjectivity for objecthood. These effects even from colonialism and to the postcolony never succeeded. There is in the postcolony the high level of agency as it was in the colony. This can be seen by the forms of resistance that exists even if oppression hardens. This is not to suggest that there is no conviviality or connivance in the postcolony.

What is essential is that the subjects in the postcolony have different forms of subjectivities, and different modes of resistance. Those who are ruled are not the same, unless if there is no subjectivity. As Zegeye and Vambe (2009) states, Mbembe ignores agency and falls in the trap of reducing or confining the subjects in the postcolony into the space of the masses without any form of agency. This mechanistic form of theorising does not see the postcolony as the space of contestation. No form of oppression can exist in the postcolony without any site of resistance. Even if such resistance is not visible, this does not suggest that it is not there. The site of resistance is not only in those who are ruled. To go further, resistance exists in the circuits of power, where those who are close to the autocrat or in the apparatus of power do resist in subtle forms in fear of marginalisation. The level of complicity can be there for that they are in they are in the circuit of power. What exists in the resistance in the site of power resides not all those who are close to the autocrat benefit equal amounts of privileges.

There are those who are feeling the sense of exclusion and they can form some relations with the ruled.

Conclusion

This chapter, through decolonial critical analysis, has unravelled the complexity and the nature of power in Africa in the sense of the postcolony in that it is plagued by coloniality of power. The performativity of power in the postcolony is that of mimicry of the colonial regime, and this is improvised by the making such power to have much potency. Such potency and extravagance of performativity of power comes through what Mbembe refers to as *commandement*—a form of subjection that still operates in a form of coloniality of power on the postcolony. It is in this form that *commandement* in the absence of consent, but coercion finds expression. Then, in the postcolony comes the figure in the form of power in the fetish sense—the autocrat. The figure of the autocrat is entangled by power that has the capacity to entrench and exclude. Coloniality of power makes the autocrat's power not to be absolute and the autocrat cannot assert himself his power at the global level.

This then means that the power of the autocrat is a fetish, it is power without power. The arbitrariness of such power is only in the postcolony, not in the global scale where coloniality of power presides and the power of the autocrat is just that —a fetish. In terms of politics of eatery, the scandal of fortune that in many times originates through theft, plunder and exploitation just like in colonial epoch does continue. The difference in the postcolony is that the autocrat, the aristocracy and appendages of power in the postcolony have assumed a place in the zone of accumulation. The politics of eatery in the postcolony co-exist with violence and brutality for that they are pursued in whatever means necessary, as long as such pursuits yield material gains. Mbembe's focus is limited to the local zone of accumulation without also focusing on the global scale of accumulation and this leaves coloniality of power unexplained. Suffice to say, the two co-exists in the asymmetrical and parasitic fashion.

Also, it is important to note that the character of the African state in the postcolony highlights the betrayal of the national project. The national project had the content of aspiration and expectation of the subjects of the postcolony

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being met, and the post-independence period with its euphoria, embarking in the fundamental change. The opposite is what happened, and the postcolony being what the African subject is still caught within coloniality of power since the national project was done within the parameters of coloniality. Power in the postcolony is not absolute, and more so in the politics of relations between the rulers and the ruled—the relations that are fraught with various kinds of complexities. It is partly true as Mbembe is of the view that the relationship between the rulers and the ruled is informed by intimate tyranny. The very fact of conviviality and complexity as Mbembe puts it suggest that there is no agency in the face of oppressive power. It has been clearly stated how agency exists in the face of oppression and the politics of ridicule and laughter are not for that sole purpose. What they aim to yield are the politics of unlaughter that seeks to amplify the contours of resistance. Resistance exists in the postcolony for that there are subjects with subjectivities of different kinds and who have different understanding to power. Power in the form and character of *commandement,* cannot remain incontestable, it will remain challenged and questioned. In the next chapter, the concept of coloniality of being will be challenged by engaging Mbembe's conception of violence in Africa.

MBEMBE ON THE POLITICS OF VIOLENCE

Introduction

In this chapter, decolonial critical analysis is deployed to examine Mbembe's conception of the politics of violence to trace the *problematique* of coloniality of being. Mbembe's conception of the politics of violence is challenged in that it does not take into account coloniality of being that makes violence manifest. The overall aim is to highlight a different understanding of politics of violence in contemporary Africa. Thus, violence in Africa should not only be understood at the symptomatic level, but also on the structural level to account for its nature, form and logic. This chapter seeks to shed light in the understanding of the politics of violence in Africa, and also to account to the ways in which Mbembe contributes to African politics.

The chapter then starts by investigating violence through decolonial critical analysis and argues that it is in the level of the libidinal in that it has assumed sadistic proportions in its form and character. Then, notion of necropower as coined by Mbembe will be problematised by engaging the notion of sovereignty and the state of war by the empire. In addition, the ontology of the racialised body will be examined to highlight its existential crisis of obsoleteness. Furthermore, the form and character of war machines will be examined including their predatory nature in the realm of illicit economy. Then lastly, the notion of martyrdom in relation to suicide bombing is applied and critiqued from the positionality of the racialised body of the African subject.

Libidinal economy: sadistic trope of pain and pleasure

The phenomenon of violence in Africa is libidinal, and it is infused by the practice of sadism. It is as Mbembe (2006a: 299) notes, 'a destruction that results in a relative pleasure'. For Mbembe, the warlike act of eroticism assumes the form and character of sadism—that is, the sadistic elements are constitutive part of the war like act. The manner in which violence is normalised and practice

has been sensual and exerted in the manner that assumes the very act that seeks a spectacle. This is coloniality of being in that those who are at the receving end of this sadistic violence are turned into erotic objects whose bodies are destructed through sexual violence and mutilation. Mbembe (2001a) regards states that in Africa violence has become the normal state of things, and violence has assumed the omnipresence character. For Mbembe, the murderous character is inscribed in the rituals of the colonised. But then, it is not clear from Mbembe that the character of violence by the coloniser indeed was not a murderous ritual that it derived the excess of pleasure through its sadistic proportions. Mbembe makes reference to violence thus:

> There is the violence that the Other inflicts, the violence of being reduced to nothingness, so that the mouth that kisses itself is the very same one that, simultaneously, eradicates life by producing death; on the other, there is violence that one inflicts on oneself: self-exhausion, self-crucification, the void that is the founding moment and paradox from that all this is deployed. But how can we speak about this without delving further into the two notions of colony and coloni[s]ed? (Mbembe 2001a: 182).

Indeed, going further should even be taking into account the endurance and tenacity of the colonial state of affairs in its mutative form. Thus, also accounting to the fact that even after the departure of colonialism and the end of the colony—real or imagined, its articulation and logic of violence is that of transference, reproduction, and improvisation. Mbembe (2001a: 173) puts forth that violence 'has penetrated almost everywhere and virtually nothing escapes it'. Violence in its sadistic nature cannot be escaped for that it is conducted in a territory—that is, a colonial zone that is a hellish condition (Gordon 2007). This colonial zone can also be understood as the state of exception (Agamben 2005). It is a zone where coloniality of being signifies the forms of lives that have been permanently suspended. This means that the notion of colonial zone also precedes colonialism because colonialism in its departure did leave colonial zone intact. This was necessary to create the continuity or the residue of colonialism where in that the nature and character of violence at the level and direction of the body is permissible.

It has to be pointed out that the violence that Mbembe largely describes is that of the colony, where in that violence is the economy of language. It is through the transaction of sadistic acts, in that language was developed—the language that was exercised to make violence alive and potent. This language takes the form of the political—that is, language turns itself into a political function of executing violence against its objects. This is the absolute language of the sovereign power with its mode of expression being the foundational part of intention, action or fantasy (Mbembe 2006a). The logic behind is this is that, the only language that the native understands is that of violence. Mbembe has the following to add:

> Furthermore colonial violence is linked to the exercise of language, to a series of acts, gestures, noises, and sounds, and also participates in the phallic gesture: a phallic and sometimes sadistic gesture, insofar as the coloni[s]er thinks and expresses himself through his phallus. It is through the phallus that the coloni[s]er is able to link up with the surrounding world (Mbembe 2001a: 175).

Such spectacle is horror, but the one that pain and pleasure are intertwined. Lyotard (1993) posits that money or capital is a currency of death; as a source of enjoyment—*jouissance*, it is on the other hand sadistic since libidinal fragments that are a pulsion force reinforce it as a currency of death. For Lyotard, this state of affairs is embedded in mercantilist politics, where money or capital matters than the human life. According to Lyotard (1993: 195), '[m]ercantilist desire requires what we call stagnation or shortage, but that is for it the condition of a surplus—*jouissance*'. This libidinal economy, where in that *jouissance* is attached requires in this sense, the body of the victim, that can be destroyed in order to produce pleasure. Therefore, the practices of violence are a sadistic affair, and what is relevant here is the logic of violence against the civilians both from the state and the insurgencies. Violence then is the monopoly of reason.

Mbembe's (2001a: 174) asks: 'what does it mean to do violence to what is nothing?' The question as it relates to the object—the African subject, is more telling in the existential plane where violence is omnipotent—the value of life being devalued because what losses life is outside the realm of life itself. For violence to have reached sadistic proportion—a form of excess, simply suggest that it is normalised since the body African subject is available to be violated for the sake of its racial objecthood. What is of interest in the postcolonial Africa is

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that civilians have become instruments of violence. Though civilians are at the receiving end of violence and there is a need to account for such directionality of violence. What makes the practice and the logic of violence to be the libidinal in the manner of sadism is the bone of contention here. The intervention is that what needs to be understood is the logic of violence and not its symptoms. The spectre of violence in the postcolonial Africa needs to be understood on the basis of victims becoming killers (Mamdani 2001). In this logic, the victims of colonial violence, the regime preoccupied with the language of violence, this language has been adopted, creolised and even improvised to sadistic proportion par excellence. It is, in the postcolonial Africa that violence is among victims, and they find every possible mode to destroy their own, hence the Rwandian genocide and other regional civil wars in Africa, Angola, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Sudan, Burundi and Democratic of Congo being the case among others. Misra (2008) is of the view that there are complex reasons for turning to pure violence by outlining four factors. Firstly, this can be linked to the culture of obedience where the masses follow their leaders blindly or through fear. Secondly, the institutional complicity where the state apparatus is used to single out, discriminate and exclude minorities in the call for mass violence. Thirdly, a structurally uneven society where there is a deep social deprivation has been a reason why this triggers violence. Lastly, the existence of psychological violence where there is hatred and "Othering" can cause violence.

Violence in the postcolonial African assumes another form in that it is the area where ethics are abandoned. Žižek (2009) articulates the notion of devine violence, and puts forth that those annihilated by it are said to be completely guilty, and they are not sacrificed as they are not worthy of it. As Mbembe (2001a) notes, violence is expressed through language; it is this language that is not used as speech, by the asymmetric relationality of control. This means language is not used to communicate or transact, but its form is the commanding chain of orders, impositions and even intimidation (Mbembe 2001a). It is in such an environment where violence assumes the character of absence of logic. Santos (2007) concept of abyssal thinking is relevant to understand violence as the act of sadism par excellence. According to abyssal thinking, the world assumes the abyssal character where there is 'vigilant policing and harsh punishment of

violations' (Santos 2007: 9). The abyssal character gives life to the nature of violence affirms power, and such is a violence that can be understood at the structural level. The abyssal character is in a form of cartography where there are lines dividing, in the Manichean sense, humans and savages. Violence and appropriation therefore take different forms, hence they are intertwined—and the affirmative discourse in such a condition is the violence and appropriation as extraction of value (Santos 2007). Such an extraction is sadistic for that it is a value extracted from African subjects reduced to objects, therefore, there is no prohibition as in the other line. In the lines of the humans, there is existence and subjecthood, and on the other line there is non-existence and objecthood. In this process of negation, the prize of destruction is made so easy to such an extent that the destruction is trivialised so that it reaches the condition of the normal (Santos 2007). Therefore, in relation to sadism, its economy of imaginary is excess where the possible becomes the possibility of everything.

Mbembe (2001a) deploys the notion of 'spirit of violence' but only in the colonial discourse, and argues that this violence assumes the character of discourse incantation. It is in this discourse that violence is reduced to the magical, hence the libidinal desire of the colony to improvising it. This state of madness turns to the sane. Misra (2008) makes a valuable point that the sadistic trope of inflicting pain while deriving pleasure is done on the basis of projecting and affirming power. This is the power that must be seen by the perceived enemy not to confront the perpetrator. According to Butchart (1998) strategies of sovereign visibility were devised to project their regime of presentation not only as a gaze to the body of the Africa subject, but in reverse, the shock and amusement to the might of colonial violence in its perversity and excess. Such sadism was the ritual of the European since it was in a form of disciplinary power. To amplify this, Butcher states that:

The display of its power to punish was not only way that sovereignty invented itself to the eyes of its subject. Complementing these violent strategies of majestic visibility were less bloody but equally spectacular tactics by that the power of monarchical might was fabricated in the course of those more placid rituals where the African was approached by the European for the purposes of observation and inquiry (Butchart 1998: 62).

Mbembe (2001a) is therefore essential to capture this form of relationality, and turning back to verbal economy that scarcely alters, its political function is intended to break down life, freeze it the better to produce it by trampling it. Then, this is what Mbembe sees in the colonial times, the colonial moment that he claims that it was the time of multiplicities, overlapping sequences, hybridity, entanglement—the event that lacked singularity. Mbembe's argues that colonial spaces are the spaces of terror. This terror is the mode of violence that lacks relationality—that is, the violence that is a form of excess. The way violence occurs even in the postcolony does not in any way suggests that the army or the state apparatus is part of the society it violates. Repetition without change has been the political, the life and times of banality par excellence. The way violence was practiced in the colony has been improvised in the postcolony.

Mbembe (2003a) deploys the example of the plantation system to understand the politics of violence *qua* sadism. According to this logic, instilling terror occurs by means of seeking pleasure and through inflicting pain—sadism. The pain inflicted on the body of the slave—the lifeless object—created pleasure to the act of the master. The being of the slave is detached from the body—the slave is a mere possession. If the slave is a mere possession, the slave life is that of dispossession, and this logic of dispossession means the absence of being. The slave is, in other words, the property of the master—and, as Hartman (1997) puts it, a being for the captor who determines life, survival and even death.

> Who is a slave, if not a person who, everywhere and always, possesses life, property, and body as if they were alien things? Possessing life and body as alien things presupposes that they are like external matter to the person who bears them, who serves as their scaffolding. In such a case, the slave's body, life, and work may be attacked. The violence thus perpetrated is not supposed to affect the slave directly, as something real and present (Mbembe 2001a: 235).

Mbembe also points out that:

> As an instrument of labo[u]r, the slave has a price. As a property, he or she has a value. His or her labo[u]r is needed and used. The slave is therefore kept alive but in a *state of injury,* in a phantom-like world of horrors and intense cruelty and profanity (Mbembe 2003: 21; emphasis original).

The whipping, raping, and lynching—much that is the economy of torture are some of the deeds that created pleasure. For Mbembe, the plantation system the political economy of slavery was institutionalised to the extent in that it became reality. It is in the plantation where sovereignty to reign at free will on the body of the slave normalised. Wilderson (2010: 11) points out that the body of the slave is 'generally dishonoured, perpetually open to gratuitous violence […] having no relation so being recognised'. This can also be drawn as far as to Patterson's (1982) articulation of the ontology of the slave in the existential abyss of natal alienation. The slave is then, that which is devoid of ontology— nothingness. Mbembe has this to say:

> The guillotine that language has become can then embark on the exercise of a violence all the more savage because done behind closed shutters, bleak and empty, marked with cruelty and vertigo. It can, in an access of jubilation, proceed by dissection, mutilation, and decapitation. Only in this way can the coloni[s]er, at the end of language, deny the existence of the colonised and the coloni[s]ed subjectivity (Mbembe 2001a: 181).

Mbembe (2003a) thinking with regards to the plantation system to understand the politics of pain and pleasure is indeed a great contribution to understand the logic of violence, more so when it is practiced to the directionality of the civilians in the postcolonial condition. The manner in which civilians are treated in the condition of violence and civil war in particular is like the practice of the master towards the slaves. It is clear that the logic and the economy of torture is still rampant in the sense that it is something that demands a spectacle as a matter of disciplining and punishing those who are likely to dissent the established or the enforcing order. This means, there is no selfhood, the very notion that suggest that in the colony is a peak of ontological corruption (Mbembe 2001a).

According to Mbembe (2003a), what exist are technologies of destruction that ensure that they are empowered for that sole purpose of destructing. This is the destruction of bodies, and the suspension of ethics applies in that the practice is that of displaying the effects of this technology of destruction. As Mbembe (2003a: 35) states, '[t]he ways of killing do not themselves differ much. In the case of massacres in particular, lifeless bodies are quickly reduced to the status of simple skeletons'. The technologies of destruction are deployed to make the

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practice of inflicting pain to be that of deriving pleasure. In this state of affairs, what is important is how well and advanced is the state of technologies of destruction. Since sadism is often closer to excess, the mode of improvising is always present when the technology of destruction is at play. For example, if this operates in the manner of amputation, the language or the act will be invented. In Sierra Leone and Liberia civil wars, the amputation of civilians was common practice and victims were often asked how they would like their amputation. It is also common that when young boys were taken by force, drugged and trained to kill unpityingly. Also, they would amputate their family member or the community members to show their loyalty to the rebel formation they are part of. Arguably, 'capricious violence often sediments into distressingly predictable, repeated patterns of wounding as those most vulnerable' (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006a: 9).

According to Misra (2008), civil war is not irrational as it is projected, but it is informed by rational intentions. This means that the enterprise of civil war is complex in nature and requires understanding circumstances to its emergence and prevalence. Civilians are at the receiving side of violence and the mode in which such violence is projected is something that cannot be reduce to complexity, but the factual reality that the logic of civil war is the abandoning of ethics where there are non-ethics of war (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). If war is conducted on the non-beings, it is like the mode of experimentation on the objects. The object is devoid of any ontological content and such violence is legalised, and if not legalised, it cannot be punished. Therefore, the conduct of violence is the one that is done at free will.

Coloniality of being permits the practice of sadistic violence and it has been inscribed in the postcolony to such an extent that it is only seen as if it is recent. Sadistic violence should be understood as coloniality of being precisely because it is the violence that puts the humanity of the African subject into question. Drawing from Santos (2007) it is clear those abyssal lines that subject the other line—that of non-humans, assumes a permanent character. Abyssal lines clearly demarcate the inner workings of coloniality of being and their meaning changes at any given historical period, but their position is guarded to ensure the same logic in terms of the subjection that is destructive in character. The historical

trace will indeed validate that these are the acts that were common practice in the colonial encounter and they have found their way into the present. The inflicting of pain while deriving pleasure has been present with Africa since the colonial encounter, and this was used as a weapon to silence. The logic or illogic of cruelty of coloniality of being is embedded in the socio-psychological framework of prejudice, insecurity and power projection and it is so pervasive in the postcolonial context (Misra 2008). According to Turshen (2004), to the most and to the least lethal, violence constitutes of genocide, international wars, internal wars and terrorism. The logic behind this sadistic trope of pain and pleasure as a disciplinary mechanism was to serve as coloniality of being, to induce fear on the side of the opposition, dissents or the perceived enemy. Added to that other than the act of humiliating, it is the act of exerting authority and to introduce the absence of speech.

In this libidinal economy of pain and pleasure, bodies that are predated upon are made a site of exhibition of this technology of destruction. These are bodies that are made to be dead while alive. They are made to be the existence of a lack, and this is what is left by coloniality of being to make these bodies to be wallowing in want. The pain left in the body and the eyes that are seeing that body should assume permanence. The victim does not get healed even if the pain is soothed away for that this is the body that should serve as a reminder that the body was not like that.

> The traces of this demiurgic surgery persist for a long time, in the form of human shapes that are alive, to be sure, but whose bodily integrity has been replaced by pieces, fragments, folds, even immense wounds that are difficult to close (Mbembe 2003a: 35).

The body has the capacity to, as it has to be, to feel plain. So the horror done to the body in this excess form of sadism of unending pain is the expression of power to maintain subjection. Thus, adding to the fact that the body belongs to the possessors of violence, the subject in the capacity *qau* master, like in the case of the plantation, is the self that is external. The injuries of war as Turshen (2004) states are both visible and invisible. Both have different degrees but cannot be quantified, but it is important to point that violence and war in

particular leaves devastating impacts. Such devastation has taken another trend where it is no longer directed at soldiers but the civilians themselves as they are the targets of war. Turshen states that in the 20th Century modality and morbidity affected soldiers, and this has reversed to the civilians towards the end of 20th Century and beyond.

The psychology of violence in divided societies takes root at the level of stereotypes and myths that are represented as truth. In explaining conflict in postcolonial Africa, Nugent (2004) states that three things feature: the first is the contagion effect where patterns of violent conflict and its practices reproduce themselves. This often happens in an improvised and excessive in form. Secondly, overly genocidal practices and civilians becoming specific targets is common place. Lastly, violent conflict is often not ethnic or ideological, but a struggle for resources. According to Misra (2008: 48), this 'habours antipathies and animosities against members of the opposing community' and what matters is the tenacity of these stereotypes.

> Labelling or negative stereotyping may appear banal but nonetheless has some deep epistemic justification from the perpetrators' perspective. Negative stereotypes allow perpetrators a self-constructed moral high ground on against the '[O]ther'. It allows that particular individual or group to engage in a one-sided debate about 'good' and 'bad' and one's responsibility. Very often an alluring unsubstantiated myth that portrays 'the other' in a poor light allows the ethnic homophobe or notes a context in that to operate (Misra 2008: 49).

The case of amputation that has been common place in civil wars situation in Africa the body is amputated in that the victims were asked whether they want short 'sleeve or long sleeve'; 'shot pants or long pants'. This means, whether they wanted to have their arm or hand; foot or leg amputated. The rebels did this with pleasure, and this is the form of pain that in the act was done in the visibility of all the civilians who are attacked.

> The danger behind this crude recreational violence is that it regulates the desire for violence among the perpetrators. Seeking out sadistic violence on 'the other' becomes insatiable for this individualistic or group. Violence seduces the paramilitary, the thug, the butcher (Misra 2008: 51).

In the context of violence—rapes, torture, mutilations, amputations, burning bodies to name a few become normalised. The performance of these acts is like a play in the theatre or watching a horror film—not from the screen but in a proximate and in naked eyes. The smell of death, blood, mucus and tears comes into being. It is clear that the sadistic trope of pain and pleasure assumes the uncontrollable character and that is why coloniality of being is the factor of interpellation. It is, as Mbembe (2006a: 300) notes that, the '[c]apacity to prosecute war in other forms'. This is amplified my Misra (2008: 50) who states that '[t]he wanton lust for inflicting violence on the enemy assumes sadistic proportions in some conflict scenarios'. The libidinal economy of the sadistic trope of pain and pleasure is also the sacrificial discourse for the empire to pursue the political ends. Hardt and Negri (2000: xv) argue that the empire 'wields enormous power of oppression and destruction'. The empire has the arsenal of meta-rules, but such rules are applied when it suits it, and such rules are there for the service of it.

Sacrifices can be embedded in coloniality of being *qua* Manichean logic of othering leading to the dehumanisation of enemy or disliked persons. Žižek (2009: 165) complicates this to say: '[i]t is mythical violence that demands sacrifice, and holds power over bare life; whereas divine violence is non-sacrificial and expiatory'. It is clear, when introducing the body of the African subject, the body that has been afflicted by violence that it is, due to its intimacy and constitutiveness with death, that divine violence applies to it. The act of violence towards this body of the African subject cannot be a criminal act, or that which is outside the realm of law, but the law itself, since it is the violence to the non-ontological entity which cannot be accounted for. The empire in this Manichean logic sees itself as paragon of virtue and good, closely to God, while others—near evil. This binary is used as a state of necessity to warrant state violence in the logic of sacrifice (Frank 2010). This can be traced to Mbembe's formulation of the colonial discourse that he articulates thus:

> Colonial discourse, an aberrant product of the madness that threatens all dominations, is stuck deep in the thick clay of contempt, condescension, and hatred. Meanwhile, the coloni[s]er gorges on food, scrambles up the tree of language, goes on an orgy of pleasure, farts, and collapses into a drunken stupor. The coloni[s]er

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pinches words, sentences, scratches them, dilates them, slams them, and then erupts violently (Mbembe 2001a: 181).

The colonial discourse suggests that the master, who is the head and component of the empire is destined to dominate human life, the human life that it denies humanity. According Butler (2004), the empire enjoys projecting its militaristic might without regard for human life. For Butler, the wayward military solution of the empire is sadism. As Butler (2004: 17) states, the empire in its sadistic posture 'perpetuates and displays its own violence'. The empire's logic is that of deriving pleasure while inflicting pain (sadism). In the sadistic acts the motive is to create the discourse of '[m]ourning, fear, anxiety, rage' (Butler 2004: 28). The empire has bred the world and it is in this world where violence is the language that speaks. The formation and elaboration of it and its frontiers has the marks of violence.

Misra (2008: 50) states that 'the image of the enemy is conflated in order in order to allow the perpetrators to engage in what might be called pleasure-seeking violence'. This is a form of violence that is normalised. However, its projection is that of spreading terror. By its very nature this is the form of violence that aims to dehumanise and to some extent to render lifelessness to its targets. This form of violence appeals to the perpetrators (Misra 2008). The practice of violence becomes improvised and such is the act of making violence to the state of invention. Coloniality of being makes violence to become recreational and its sadistic performance becomes a norm. Such acts of sadism emanate from recreating and institutionalising violence for it to have maximal impact. It essentially means that killing is not is not merely separating the body and the soul, but insulting the body in life and also in death. To be sure, sadistic violence is the one that requires spectators and witnesses, it is in such a way that its mode of recreation leaves a permanent mark of fear. This state of sadistic violence should not be understood outside the discursive terrain of the politics of death that Mbembe (2003a) coins as necropolitics, where the project of dehumanisation and the configuration of power are still entrenched.

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Necropower: unthinking empire and sovereignty

Mbembe's (2003a) deployment of the concept 'necropower' suggests the logic of conferring life and taking it at free will in the form of killing resulting to death. According to this perspective, the empire is the propagator of war and violence. In this state of affairs, the advocacy of peace is hypocrisy since the empire creates and sustains the state of permanent war. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a), the empire advocates war, violence and death—the very basis of its experience and a form of thought predicated on coloniality of being. The sovereign, who is the empire, always decides on the state of exception (Agamben 2005). The logic of exclusion and othering produces a chaotic geopolitical structure, but that keeps the logic of the state apparatus intact with its monopoly of violence. Agamben posits that power that is sovereign, the empire, is outside and beyond itself.

According to Mbembe (2003a), sovereignty and violence claim moral high ground that they create a political realm where in that there is a power to define life and death. Necropower refers to 'the dynamics of territorial fragmentation, the sealing off and expansion of settlement' (Mbembe 2003a: 27-28). Mbembe argues that necropower is the political condition that seeks to render mobility impossible and entrenches separation. Mbembe also does not confront and charge coloniality of being as something linked to the empire directly through is criminality of creating the state of permanent war. The state that defines the African condition through the lineage of the colonial encounter and also the tentacles of the colonial in the postcolonial condition are absent. The empire creates and entrenches the logic of separation, that it is, 'tatamount to seclusion' (Mbembe 2003a: 28).

The racist attitude of the empire creates the state of hell in the postcolonial African condition. Through its politics of labelling and 'Othering', the technology that brings the Manichean axis of good and evil that are constitutive basis of coloniality of being, the very condition that creates a stasis. This stasis came into being through the logic of seizure and the creation through the politics of labelling and appropriation something called the native (Mbembe 2001a). This is the framing of the world that makes the logic of empire to make its logic some

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form of a singular truth. This is no different from the colonial logic, the very genesis and the nature of the empire with its 'Othering' politics. The empire as projected is always a paragon of virtue, the one that can be easily transported with military intervention under the guise of 'regime change'. Butler articulates the empire as a:

> Sovereign and extra-legal subject, a violent and self-centred subject; its actions constitute the building of a subject that seeks to restore and maintain its mastery through systematic destruction of its multilateral relations, its ties to the international community' (Butler 2004: 41).

Mbembe (2003a) does not diagnose and critically respond to the non-ethics of war that have been institutionalised and normalised by the logic of the empire. The diagnosis and response of the non-ethics of war through ethical revolt is essential to open the archive of understanding the so-called 'contemporary war in Africa'. Mbembe (2003a) articulates the notion of necropolitics to suggest a condition of war in contemporary Africa. The political under the guise of war assume the role of the sovereign in defence of the empire or in resistance to the empire, but resistance that still paradoxically sustains the imperial logic. For Mbembe, the state of war has assumed a new form of life where the tradition of conventional war is obsolete, and war being understood across time and space. Coloniality of being creates the state of permanent war. Racism and colonialism are central tropes of violence and war. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a), both promote the complicit character where dehumanisation, violence and war are institutionalised and normalised.

Mbembe's articulation of the state of war through understanding the notion of necropower is innovative, but it has nothing I to do with the existential conditions of the African subject and it does not account for coloniality of being. The archive that Mbembe draws from is that of looking at the state of war in Africa from the European metropole, and not understanding the lived reality of the state of war. This then leaves coloniality of being on the wayside. This means, Mbembe's deployment of necropolitics is descriptive and lacks the explanatory rigour when it comes to the African context. 'Mbembe's interests

stops descriptive level, however, that means that the teleogies are observed but ultimately not necessarily theori[s]ed' (Gordon 2008: 240).

Mbembe omits the role of the empire, and the continuity of effects of colonialism. According to Iadicola (2010), the empire establishes and reinforces rules of the system of the unjust word. Iadicola charges the crimes of the empire as forthright in that they supersede all other forms of crime in the world. Though Mbembe condemns the empire in some level, in nowhere does Mbembe criminalises the empire. The fact that crimes of the empire are committed with impunity; condemnation is not enough. Its crimes assume a normal form of life.

> Those who dominate the governing circles of the empire define empires crimes. These crimes are acts of violence and theft that threaten the empire, while acts of violence and theft of the empire are defined as normative, if not heroic, in imperial history (Iadicola 2010: 33).

Rather than prosecuting the empire directly, the notion of sovereignty has also assumed innocence. There is absence of clearly stating directly that is sovereignty is the product and the constitutive part of the empire. Mbembe (2000) argues that forms of violence contribute to the establishment of sovereignty outside the realm of the state, and are based on confusion between power and fact, between public and private government'. The notion of sovereignty in relation to Africa is relatively void. The empire has dominant through neo-colonial means. The forms and technologies of violence that are prevalent in the postcolony originate from colonialism, and it is in the postcolony where they are elaborated and improvised. This, therefore, suggests that sovereignty is in the heart of violence, for that it is the product of empire—the incubator of violence. Mbembe (2003a) states that the conceptualising of sovereignty takes a form of configuring based on the logics of power—that is, to confer life and death. As Mamdani (2001: 196) states, 'there is a demarcation between life that is considered worth taking (or giving) and life considered worth preserving (or enriching)'. It is argued here that this sovereignty is the empire—the arsenal that confers life and death. The empire constructs sovereignty, so it logically follows that sovereignty is the technology of the empire. Thus, to the empire and its allies, '[v]iolence and war appear to them not as contingent results

of particular historical project, but as constitutive dimensions of dominant conceptions of civilisation and civilising process' (Maldonado-Torres 2008a: 5).

To exercise sovereignty is 'to exercise control over mortality and to define life as the deployment and manifestation of power' (Mbembe 2003a: 12). This means that the empire assumed the role of the patriarchal figure. The empire is then that of the patriarchal figure that objectifies whatever that exists under his authority. The logic and the make-up of the empire is a form of political life that is patriarchal in that it is a community of life that is narcissist. As such, what exists outside the margins of the empire is continuously marginalised and subjugated—the very justification of the empire to render death upon it. Power confers the right to kill and Mbembe examines trajectories of the state of exception and enmity to have a right to kill. For Mbembe (2003a: 16), the logic of power is that of 'exception, emergency and fictionali[s]ed enemy'. It will be argued here that meaning of death takes a different way of death—a death of objects that cannot be accounted for precisely because they are not synonymous with subjects. What matters for the empire is the patronising political reasoning that is based on the perspective that it seeks to civilise, liberate and democratise other parts of the worlds. This is how Mbembe puts it:

> The exercise of reason is tantamount to the exercise of freedom, a key element for individual autonomy. The romance of sovereignty, in this case, rests on the belief that the subject is the master and the controlling author of his or her meaning (Mbembe 2003a: 13).

The conception of freedom applies only to the empire and it is therefore symbolically extended. Such an extension means that freedom is cosmetic since it is contrary to the lived experience of those who are in the margins of the empire. The empire privileges conflict to keep the world 'order'. The empire is the word order that is expressed as a judicial formation (Hardt and Negri 2000). This arrangement refers to what Maldonado-Torres (2008a) refers to as the paradigm of war that is informed by the logic of reducing the world in singular terms. This is the world that the empire regards as its own property, the same like the plantation system that has slaves as the property of the master. In other words, the body and soul of the slave belongs to the master. This then qualifies

the master to exercises sovereignty at free will in his plantation. The conception of freedom is that of the master since the slave does not have any form of relationality to the form of human existence. The slave, as Wilderson (2010: 11) intimates, is 'a being outside of relationality'. The enterprise of the plantation system that is akin to the empire is the negation of black humanity.

The logic of violence is the discretion to kill indiscriminately and this is a form of killing that cannot be accounted for (Mbembe 2003a). Such lack of accounting is based on the fact that the colonised are made by coloniality of being to be in perpetual state of defeat. Sovereignty is, therefore, the potency of the empire and the impotence of the African subject. Mbembe states that sovereignty is two-fold, at first it is about self-institution, and secondly about self-lamination. The concern for Mbembe's perspective on sovereignty is that this two-foldedness is not for the struggle for autonomy that instrumentalises human existence beyond coloniality of being. On the contrary, this sovereignty is about the destruction of human bodies (Mbembe 2003a).

> Mbembe's central problematic is to ascertain the relationship between politics and death in those systems that can function only in a state of emergency or a state of exception. He shows how the trope of death operates in the formulation of one being rendered a subject through an exploitation of the very "work of death" (Ahluwalia 2004: 636).

Hogeveen (2010) has it that sovereignty does not share. This is because it is dictated and is designed by the empire. The empire cannot share; it must conquer, dominate, control and at worse, kill. Such structural arrangements cannot in any way ensure cooperation or sharing since these are off-limits in the condition where coloniality of being is pervasive. The simple reason is that, sovereignty in the lens of the empire is that which obliterates law, since it is the law unto itself (Butler 2004). What is the provision of what laws confers and protects is that the empire has the power to withdraw and suspend. According to Butler, the condition of the existence of rights and their protection is what the empire can withdraw.

The act by that the state annuls its own laws has to be understood as an operation of sovereign power or, rather, the operation by that lawless sovereign power comes into being or, indeed, re-emerges in new forms (Butler 2004: 61).

Iadicola (2010: 38) rightfully asserts that, '[e]mpire's law is fundamentally based on a system of unequal justice that violates a central principle of law'. This is clear and political figures from the empire, like George Bush and the Tony Blair are absolved for not being hauled before the International Criminal Court (ICC) and to be charged for war crimes they have committed through the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. The state of being absolved is not that there was an intention to subject them to the principles of law. They were the law and the label of them being war criminals was absent. They cannot be even prosecuted in the ICC. This means they are the community of masters who are the law unto themselves (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). Only African dictators, rebels and warlords can be hauled before such a court. This affirms the logic that sovereignty is arrogated by the empire's 'right' to contaminate sovereignty of other nations whom it dislikes or disfavours. The empire can enforce regime change in the countries that are not its puppets and if there is resistance war will be declared to liquidate such resistance. Therefore, the empire's military order always stands to violate with impunity against those it excludes and finds in disfavour.

The sense of peace by the empire is an illusion and blind faith, but that are accepted complicity as truth (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). Fatalism exists in the sense that those who are subjected by violence of the empire see their ordinary life as normal. For Maldonado-Torres, the advocacy for peace by the empire, through its community of masters is hypocritical since such a peace is alien to non-violence. For Mbembe (2003a), necropolitics concerns the state of mundane violence. This is a state of exception where the international law and a nation's sovereignty are ignored. The state of exception is the betrayal of 'the mystical foundation of authority because sovereign power operates in suspension of positive law, enforcing the law paradoxicaly insofar as it is inapplicable at the time and place of its enforcement' (Sexton 2010: 32). As Agamben (2005) explains, politics and law create a situation where relations become liquidated such state of necessity is affirmed. This means, as Sexton (2010) posits, a

suspension of the politico-juridical, the exception becoming the rule that connotes the absence of order.

Mamdani (2001) warns that temptation to present necessity as choice and to strip human action of both the dimension of possibility and responsibility should be resisted. This warning of course, will not change the attitude of the empire since the empire sees the logic of necessity as a tool to create the state of exception. The state of exception makes political fact to preside over judicial principle and this is the constitutive basis of coloniality of being. The state of exception obliterates legal terms and 'appears as the legal form of what cannot have legal form' (Agamben 2005: 1). In these terms, the law is suspended. For Agamben, the state of exception is removed from the law and judicial oversight and this creates enough ground for war to be normalised and naturalised. In this condition, the paradigm of governance is that of the empire that creates the permanent state of emergency to bring into effect any political ends as law or suspended law to advance its agenda.

Iadicola (2010) is of the view that there is complicity in the type of state criminal behaviour prevalent in the empire. The disaster that befalls those in the ex-colonised parts of the world is that criminality is seen as self-inflicted. The empire has the power to influence elites, insurgents and influential networks in the ex-colonised world on how to engage in the economy of violence. The only war crime is that of postcolonial African states acting on behalf of or in the interests of the empire during war time (Iadicola 2010). During war time active support and sponsorship is provided to the comprador class of the postcolonial African states. It is usual that when such a class face charges or extradition from the ICC, they are no longer supported by the very same empire that then charges them of war crimes. The empire needs to create and maintain the economy of violence since violence is foundational to it. 'The contradictions of imperial society are elusive, proliferating, and nonlocali[s]able; the contradictions are everywhere' (Hardt and Negri 2000: 201). Hogeveen (2010) intervention is important to understand this state of affairs, since the law that is applied by the empire is that of its own authorship, not those of the ex-colonised or in the margins of the empire. Such laws are subject to violation at will and permit the violence meted against those who are in the margins of the empire. Sovereignty

in its Westphalian meaning and its *trias politica* (separation of powers of the executive, legislature and judiciary) are thrown on the wayside if not fully suspended to fulfil self-interest and predatory nature of the empire. 'The state [produces], through the act of withdrawal, a law that is no law, a court that is no court, a process that is no process' (Butler 2004: 62).

The empire performs power based on its sole decisions that do in a way have dire consequences for the rest of the world. According to Butler, the acts of the empire are embedded not in law but another form of judgement. To label or define the 'Other' for the fact that they are a threat to 'international community', essentially mean that these are people who are not pandering to the whims of the empire and they must be subjected to the whims of coloniality of being. Since the empire is in the possession of power, it has the power to define. As Hardt and Negri (2000: 23) note, drawing from Foucault, they argue that the empire *qua* disciplinary power sets of 'the parameters and limits of thought and practice, sanctioning and prescribing normal and /or deviant behaviours'. Definitions are then designed and shaped in line with the interests of the empire (Iadicola 2010). So the notion of politics is that of the reasoning of the empire, the reasoning that resonates from the power to define.

According to Hardt and Negri (2000: 33), '[p]ower, as it produces, organi[s]es, it speaks and expresses itself as authority'. This links with how power of sovereignty creates subjects and how subjectivity is produced. What is not spelt out clearly in Hardt and Negri is how subjection takes place when sovereign power exerts its own authority and also forming its own subjects. The way power exerts itself—that is not legitimate in other societal and spatial positions of the world—subjection features since the refusal of legitimacy exists. Hardt and Negri do point out that sovereign power demonstrates its effectiveness of power through the effective use of force, and this raises a concern whether this is not subjection. As Mbembe (2003a: 13) has it, 'the truth of the subject and politics is the exercise of reason'. This form of reason is what the empire holds, to engage in the state of exception.

> In truth, the state of exception is neither external nor internal to judicial order, and the problem of defining it concerns precisely a threshold or a zone of indifference,

where inside and outside do not exclude each other but rather blur each other. The suspension of the norms does not mean its abolition, and the zone of anomie that it establishes is not (or at least claims to be) unrelated to the judicial order (Agamben 2005: 23).

Politics of necessity suggest that politics are not rooted in legal systems or norms. The legally is that of the empire, meaning that politics precedes everything as long as they serve the interests of the empire. In this formulation law is negotiated. According to Chouliarus (2010), the process of normalisation of exception allows the empire to name, label, torture, and dehumanise its targets. Secondly, the logic and reason of the empire precedes whatever binds all states. The empire operates without any fear of reappraisal because it is the power that unites itself. Coloniality of being makes the empire to see its righteousness and moral superiority, and this imperial attitude is enforced through its political reasoning. The morality of the empire here is means the military might.

> The exercise of sovereign power is bond up with the extra-legal status of these official acts of speech. These acts become the means by that sovereign power extends itself; the more it can produce equivocation, the more effectively it can augment its power in the apparent service of justice (Butler 2004: 80).

This is the totalising discourse and claims officialdom in its propagation of singular truths that should not be opposed. It is this arrangement that creates the notion of political reasoning, the very act of the empire that sees itself as the regime of truth that rules. The paradigm of violence is so inculcated in the psyche of the empire to the point that the empire is beyond redemption. In addition, it is important to point out that the empire cannot be redeemed since this will mean its end. Redemption will mean the empire committing suicide, something that is impossible since this will mean the end of the majesty. Since the empire was created and sustained through the expansionist logic, it cannot allow what it has invaded, dominated, and controlled to secede. If the paradigm of war cannot exist, then it logically follows that the empire cannot exist.

Such a discourse permits the empire to politically exist with impunity and being immune from violence. As Mbembe (2003a) states, politics is not a dialectical

exercise towards reason, but spiral transgression of political limits. In postcolonial Africa the crimes of the empire are hard to ignore, as Iadicola (2010) argues, the empire is the largest, most powerful, violent and rarely defined criminal organisation. The historical record of the empire is littered with plunder, theft and exploitation of resources and killing those who resist such practice. It is a regime of violence that is always ready to declare war, and the outcome of that war is to destruct the enemy completely. To amplify this view, the empire is infested with illusion that it is ethical enough and this makes it to claim to be ethical enough to be in the status of declaring war and this state of war is coloniality of being. The empire is motivated by selfish political ends that are designed as truth in the eyes of its subjects and they are coined as 'national interests'. Those who try to falsify these 'truth' are said to be in opposition to the order of the notions of peace, self-determination, justice and democracy. They are those who are othered and excluded outside the circle of the empire, are resistant for being part of the international community. It should be kept in mind that the relationality of the empire and its objects is that of asymmetrical relations. Such relations reinforce the idea that the world as it is hierarchichised and the empire as at the commanding heights of this world since it is a subject over objects.

Iadicola (2010) charges the empire as the violator of sovereignty at will and at worse, with impunity. The empire defines and dictates what sovereignty is and contravenes its very meaning. Sovereignty and even there has to be after sovereignty, the spectre of the ex-colonised and racialised world will continue to linger on (Hogeveen 2010). For Hogeveen, the empire's sovereignty equates to the law of violence that legitimises and rationalises itself. Even today the empire still possesses the power to define. The argument in this study concurs with the view that sovereignty remains a mercantilist, feudal, colonial, imperial and neoliberal formation (Hogeveen 2010).

> The predominance of state interest over every personal or joint interest, and its furtherance, represents the ultimate objective of the new technique of government according to the reason of the state (Chouliarus 2010: 238).

Mbembe (2003a) argues that the existence of the other threatens the subject of the empire. So there needs to be elimination of that threat to strengthen the subject of the empire. As Maldonado-Torres (2008a) explains, the imperial violence centers the discourse of the ideals of war that creates the paradigm of war and violence. Mbembe's (2003a) conception of the technologies of destruction is essentially linked to the acts of war. The paradigm of war should be unearthed to understand its technologies by pointing them out to 'racial policies, imperial projects, and wars of invasion' (Maldonado-Torres 2008a: 2-3). This is important to understand the paradigm of war and violence that is the genetic make-up of the empire, but then the specificity of such technologies seem not to be grounded in the lived experience. Also then, to problematise the state of war in Africa and its permanent or recurring character should not be ahistoric, since this undermines the presense of the colonial legacy.

Mbembe (2003a) does not go further to shed light the logic of explaining contemporary war in Africa, except to describe it. But then, that is not essential to understand African politics with regards to the state of permanent war. In other words, necropower is seen as omnipotent, it does not have an ending. Necropower is the potency of the phallus that is occupied by its raping mission, the very logic of technologies of destruction. 'It is through the phallus that the coloni[s]er is able to link up with the surrounding world' (Mbembe 2001a: 175). The phallus is used as a weapon and it must rape through since its nature of the act is invasion. The empire as the embodiment of power has been a phallus in form and character—a weapon. War itself can be seen as an extension of domination —that is, war is rape both figuratively and literally. The projection of war is phallic power. Mbembe's absence of ethical revolt against this raping practice of the empire betrays the very agency that exists in the ex-colonised world. The subjects cannot be reduced to mere objects that cannot revolt and create another world. Though the empire raped and continues to rape through, this does not suggest that there is no way victory can emerge. The slave struggle for recognition to the point of the slave winning is a mirage to Mbembe's thinking. The argument here is that Mbembe's contribution is superseded by that of Maldonado-Torres (2008a) who is concerned with coloniality of being that creates the hellish conditions of existence, and advocates for decoloniality

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analysis that is committed to the destruction of the complicit structures of the empire.

State sovereignty in these ungoverned spaces is linked to states absence of authority and governance (Clunan 2010). Ungoverned spaces are in a way a threat to the empire. If such spaces were not a threat there would not be any call for the empire crying for their concern. Ungoverned spaces are the creation of the empire and they are beneficial, and at the same time they are working against the empire. The empire brought upon itself contenders. Stakes are high that the imperial logic of conquest, dominance and control is intensified and re-inaugurating itself. Being as a clandestine formation and practice, it has become exposed. It is military intervention where those who are othered are violated through the rhetoric and propaganda of 'regime change'. The logic is the same, but the terminology is different. The international community means the empire and it is clear that it does not involve those who are not powerful states and/or allies of the empire.

The empire will keep the weak and failed states intact as long as they are not a threat. This exposes the hypocrisy that civil wars or conflicts in those states are a threat to global good governance. What is global only suggests what is in the domain and the interest of the empire. The ungoverned spaces are virtual realms where 'non-state actors can avoid state surveillance and undermine state sovereignty' (Clunan 2010). Such undermining can be done with relatively ease. Clunan states that ungoverned spaces for example are feral cities, failed states, offshore financial markets, cyberspace to name a few, and these are the spaces where governance de-facto exists.

> Western liberal imperialism created contested territorial spaces. Western embedded liberal, and then neoliberal, ideology brought about contested authorities—contested control of the economy, polity, and society—and retreat of the territorial state (Clunan and Trinhunas 2010: 25).

The neoliberal project inaugurated globalisation that is the larger transnational phenomenon—the very case of ungoverned spaces. The empire pursued and still pursues its national interests and capitalism (Clunan and Trinkunas 2010). This is the reason why the empire advocated and implemented economic liberalisation

and blurring of borders to ensure flow of goods and services. This led to the neoliberal configuration of the world through globalisation, and it is the powerful states that are leading the process. Also, this condition contributed to the privatisation of the state and commoditisation of people as goods. Clunan and Trinkunas (2010) extend the argument to suggest that ungoverned spaces are a socio-politico-economical arena where state sovereignty cannot hold the centre. This is the state weakness or absence or being a contested terrain. The territory in the sense of sovereignty has been ceded voluntary and involuntary. This then suggests that, ungoverned spaces connote a threat to the state security and the state international system. Power resides in the areas that were not powerful and this form of softened sovereignty possesses a threat to the empire. The empire militarises itself to keep the colonial and imperialistic architecture and technologies of subjection in place to subordinate and exclude. The structure and technologies of subjection that globalisation opened space for perpetuates the hellish conditions of war.

On the obsolete ontology

'Power in the colony involves a tactile perception of the native that makes this violence more than simply an aesthetic and an architecture' (Mbembe 2001a: 175). In the state of war, the racialised African subject can be easily labeled as the aberration from the norm and war will be justified in terms of its means and ends. 'The obliteration of the trans-ontological takes the tendency of producing a world in that war becomes the norm, rather than the exception' (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 260). According to Maldonado-Torres (2007), the trans-ontological is the foundation of the ontological. The racialised body of the African subject was in the colonial era, a fatal attraction of the white gaze that made the sensationalist description of its form and structure to create the technology of invention. This technology, create a new power regime fabricating the racialised body to the level of objecthood that gives live to disciplinary power (Butchart 1998). This is because the body of the African subject is circulated and is plagued with stereotypes of disease, deviance and animality, the very things that qualifying murderous violence of coloniality of being. As Vergés (1997: 582) states, the racialised body is 'a humiliated, mocked, beaten, raped, assaulted, tortured, murdered body'.

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Nowhere does Mbembe apply coloniality of being to the level of the racialised body, but he elevates it to the level of the bodies in general. This means the body of the empire, the very centre of the technologies of destructions is equivalent to the racialised body. This in a way, the empire is absolved. Nothing is mentioned by Mbembe in the postcolonial era, about the racialised body being the target of the empire and being affected by coloniality of being. The empire in pursuit of non-ethics of war engages in the ritual of sorting and labeling those it does not want as enemies of global peace. The humanity of the African subject becomes absent in the world, as the body itself carries with it the undesirable, and ceases to be part of view and has to register to the world.

Therefore, the world of the African subject in general and that of the racialised body in particular will be subjected to the murderous and rapist lusts of the empire. The ideology of war is the basis of ontology and the condition of being is in the hands of the community of masters (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). The community of masters are those that dictate the form of existence and also deciding who may die and who may live. This means, the community of masters have absolute power over life of the colonised, the one with a racialised body, the racialised body. Such absolute power through its possession and projection licenses the community of masters as architects of dehumanisation. This makes the racialised body to be a 'thing', the character that the racialised body has assumed, but that Mbembe only looks in the colonial era and not in the postcolony where it suffers from coloniality of being. Since the African subject, with its racialised body targeted; it cannot defend itself for that it is subjected in the hellish existence—the existential conditions which are foundational and constitutive basis of the rapacious violence. As Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 31) captures it, the 'violation of ethics and in the exercise of violence over other human beings—by a conscious of lordship' has been the rationale of empires existence.

Arguably, the paradigm of violence and war has been radicalised and naturalised through coloniality of being that has pervaded the world since the kick-starting of the invasion and dehumanisation of the racialised body by the empire. This radicalised and naturalised, as Maldonado-Torres asserts, is articulated through the idea of race. The idea of race as Gordon (2005) argues is used as an

organising principle. So it follows that the making of the world by the empire has been that of the idea of race with the racialised body as a target. The world ever since has been constructed and defined through the ideology of war (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). Mbembe (2001a: 174) asks, 'what does it mean to do violence to what is nothing?' Mbembe locates this within the framework of human existence, and in particular the ways in which such existence is permitted or terminated in the era of colonialism. The existence of the human being should be centered on the birth of the subject, something that is not permitted by colonialism, and also coloniality through its imperial global designs. The paradox is that coloniality of being still suggest that the spectre of colonialism is still haunting today and the question, what does it mean to do violence to what is nothing is also akin to 'what does it mean to suffer?' (Wilderson 2008: 100).

The formulation of these two questions, are essential to understand the existential phenomenology of the African subject. To answer them demands some reflection on the existential condition of the African subject. It has to be pointed out that to Mbembe (2001a) these questions are only relevant in the colony and to the historical era of colonialism. In what Mbembe regards as the postcolony, these questions are irrelevant since the colonial masters have departed and cannot be blamed for the state of abyss that the racialised body of the African subject finds itself. These questions are irrelevant to Mbembe in the contemporary for the fact that he is ignores structures of violence and subjection.

Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 103) against 'radicali(s)ation and naturali(s)ation of ethics of war'. The absence means living in the possibility of subjective death (Gordon 2007). The lived experience of the African subject is that of the transportation and exportation of the negative image, in that the existence of the African subject is dehumanised systematically. Maldonado-Torres (2007) continues to point out that the African subject needs to be objectified and exploited, hence its continuous denigration to the point of the infra-human. The empire declares wars to the racialised bodies and creates this state of war as the existential reality of the African subject.

War, however, is not only about killing or enslaving. War includes a particular treatment of sexuality and of feminity: rape. Coloniality is an order of things that

put people of colo[u]r under murderous and rapist sight of a vigilant ego (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 247).

The existence of African subject equates to death, the death that cannot be accounted for since it is not illegal for the empire to kill the racialised body. The bodily life of the racialised body possesses a life that can be taken away from that body even if it were to be alive. The racialised body is the body that is exposed to vulnerability. As Butler (2004) states, risk, damage, and expunge define the subject position of the racialised body. Racialised bodies 'are given over to nothing, or to brutality, or to no substance' (Butler 2004: 31). The racialised body has been an object. Maldonado-Torres points out that:

> Misanthropic skepticism posits its targets as racialised and sexuali[s]ed subjects. Once vanquished, they are said to be inherently servants and their bodies come to form part of an economy of sexual abuse, and control (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 248).

Misanthropic skepticism exists within coloniality of being and this suggests that these practices that are often bound and limited only to colonialism and war situation. These conditions are in the everyday existence, and more so in the spaces inhabited by racialised bodies. In relation to the body, the notion of the state of exception is also applicable as Whyte (2010) shows that the individual subject, who happens to be the African subject, his or her subjecthood becomes objectified through the process of dehumanisation. This means for the back there is no subjectivity since subjectivity is under erasure (Wilderson 2010). For Butler (2004), the body that cannot be humanised means it does not fit the schema of being human. Dehumanisation makes the path and nature of violence easier. The legal status of the individual is obliterated as the body is just a mere object of that violence is directed to.

So this means that the state of exception goes beyond Agamben's (2005) terrain—that is, territory and socio-politico and economic structure. The state of exception becomes worse when is at the level of the body. The very damnation—the hellish existence of the African subject is coloniality of being through the naturalisation of slavery, serfdom and inferiority justified through the prism of race (Madonado-Torres 2007). The idea of race is the identity code through that

the state of exception can reproduce itself, and author its own law just like the master does in the plantation. The tools of imposition from the state of exception are embedded and reinforced through a negative dialectic of law (Whyte 2010). The state of exception here is understood at the level through that it attacks the racialised body, the body that lives under the surveillance and the control of the empire. The conditions of life of the African subject is trapped in coloniality of being, the other abyssal line where savagery and dehumanisation are constitutive parts of reality. In the contemporary era, they take the form of life through structural violence. Structural violence makes the axis of evil of the empire to assume the form of the human face. Structural violence is effective in the sense that it attacks the level of the body by means of packaging it to the 'site of a common human vulnerability' (Butler 2004: 44). This means, the racialised bodies are made to suffer because they are that of commonality. So, the collective blame is attributed to such bodies and they even get blamed for their own dehumanisation and its long-lasting effects.

Mbembe (2003a) is of the view that the state of exception is a space where the slave belongs to the master. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a), the empire is informed by the nexus of power that divides the world according to the logic of the plantation. In the plantation, the master and the slave inhabit the same territorial space, but the different space of existence. For the master there is life and for the slave there is death, the death that is caused by the master. As Ahluwalia (2004: 638) notes, '[s]lave life was in many ways a forms of death-in-life'. The life of the slave can be taken at will of the master, for that the owner of the slave, the slave being the property of the master. Indeed, the state of exception is still informed by the colonial relations, where the body of the slave is the property of the master, and only the master can confer life and death on this body. In this form of ownership the master can reign free on the body of the slave that is the object lacking any form of ontology. In short, the slave is not human and does not possess any form of relationality of being human in the world of the master, the plantation. The plantation can be understood as the anti-black world, that is, the world that militates against the existence of the black being. 'That is, to live in such a world is to be socially dead' (Ahluwalia 2004:

638). This is the world constructed by the empire with its dehumanising project. Such a project sustains the hellish condition of created by colonialism.

At the level of the body, violence does mean the dispossession of law, not its preservation. Violence against the racialised body is conducted outside the judicial order. This is because, the judicial order is the instrument that governs the racialised body, and this is the body that is excluded and left outside of that order. Santos (2007) states that there is a law of persons and the law of things; and the law of things state of the economy of violence in the sense that it is the suspension of law itself. The law of the empire is therefore the law of things, and as Santos (2007) amplifies, this is the law that operates through appropriation and violence. As such, for the mere fact that African subjects are things, the law of persons does not apply to them, since a thing is not a person. The rule of law in this sense connotes the idea that it is the law of things and things here refer to those which are outside the domains of subjects.

Therefore, it follows that African subjects are objects as they are ruled by the law of things. So, in this state of things, violence loses its meaning and becomes necessity and in its self it becomes self-justified. The master drops and suspends law to affirm his form of life over the 'Other'. The 'Other' is a source where master derives life. If the slave does not exist, so is the master. Then again, coloniality of being is what important to reflect upon through abyssal lines as Santos (2007) alludes to them because they divide the humans and non-humans. These lines in their cartographical forms are reinforcing each other through their double bind form. On the other side of line there are ethics where humanisation and life are permitted, and the opposite applies to the other side of line.

> The colonies provided a model of radical exclusion that prevails in the modern Western thinking and practice today as it did during the colonial circle. Today as then, both the creation and the negation of the other side of the line is constitutive of hegemonic principles and practices. Today as then, the impossibility of co-presence between the two sides of the line runs supreme (Santos 2007: 10).

Manganyi (1973: 7) argues that 'a tolerable environment maintains a distinction between "the people" (whose rights and existence are recognised) and the "non-people" whose existence and rights are not seriously considered'. In this regard,

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the former is the subject, while the latter is the object—the patterns that fits well with the making and the operation of the Manichean structure that affirms the logic of coloniality of being. Manganyi argues that the individual experiences the body as an object, the body being something outside itself. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a), the empire is constitutive to inhuman pathologies. In the colonial world and its aftermath through the imperialistic logic of the empire, the pathological is normal. Human beings do not exist, and the form of existence that exists is the coloniser and the colonised, the latter who possesses the racialised body. The logic of the empire through the use of state of exception is to create a norm out of the state of exception. As pointed out:

> Far from being a response to a normative lacuna, the state of exception appears as the opening of a fictious lacuna in the order for the purpose of safeguarding the existence of the norm and its applicability to the normal situation (Agamben 2005: 31).

This means that coloniality of being presents the very basis of war situations—a disaster and a scandal. This is partly because, that if there is no war, the African subject will exist, so the permanence of war is the logic of empire. This is the very basis of rendering the ontology of the racialised body of the Africa subject obsolete. It then means that to assume the positionality of the racialised body is to be outside ontology and to be in a deathscape.

Deathscapes: ways of dying and a 'life in death'

According to Mbembe (2003a), it is in this place where violence can mature to the state of being labeled civility. Having a different take to this, Baliber (2001) argues that the conditions of violence and extremity fall outside the ambit of political civility. Death is made possible by the state of exception, where the notion of the other is factionalised to justify the very basis of his or her death. Violence in this deathscape makes death to be elevated to the natural state where it is a lived reality and a condition of life. According to Mbembe (2003b), the mode of life in the political world is that of confrontation and defamiliarity. Deathscapes suggest politics of space where 'raw material of sovereignty and the violence it carries with it' (Mbembe 2003a: 26). Deathscapes, the space inhibited by African subjects who are vulnerable to death by the mere fact of being at the

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receiving end of coloniality of being, not only because they are in proximity to such a space, but the fabric of their being is death itself. As Balibar (2001) notes, 'extreme violence has produced a tendential division of "globali[s]ed" world into *life-zones and death-zones* (emphasis original). It is in this condition where life is constitutive of death—that is, to live is to die. The will to live simply means their will to die. This represents the 'extreme forms of human life, death-worlds' (Mbembe 2003b: 1). It is in this form that the manner in which those who are the targets of the empire in the image of sovereignty should be accounted for, and those who are at its margins should not be accounted for as they are not sovereign subjects.

Deathscapes have assumed a complex character, but it is important to point out that the condition of violence in its absolute and structural. According to Wilderson (2010: 75), deathscapes do exist simply because the nature of violence precedes and exceeds the life of the African subject. The empire kills its targets through police brutality, mass incarceration, segregated and substandard schools, housing and health facilities, astronomical mortality rates to name but a few. These are the lived experiences of most of the African subjects, and they demand a grammar of suffering that is crowded out as there will be a demand for empirical facts, statics and complexity of race and class. These lived experiences have their own grammar that articulates terror and death, but such a grammar cannot turn into speech, since it is crowded out (Wilderson 2010).

Mbembe (2003a: 36) posits that 'terror and death are at the heart of each other.' He also points out further that 'terror is a defining feature of both slave and late-modern colonial regimes' (Mbembe 2003a: 38'). Deathscapes are akin to the existence of blacks and this is not as Mbembe assumes, the new forms of social existence, but the continuity emanating from the colonial encounter to the present era of subjection where death is permissible and cannot be accounted for. It is in this condition of war, that is, war against racialised bodies, the bodies that cannot be accounted for simply because they are at the lower radar of human hierarchy. According to Casper and Moore (2009: 134), war produces missing bodies, both literally and figuratively, while amplifying the visibility of other bodies'. This assumes the presence of deathscapes where the body of the African subject does not matter since it is the body of the object and not that of the subject.

Deathscapes have assumed the form of 'violence that underwrites the modern world's capacity to think, act, and exist spatially and temporally' (Wilderson 2010: 2). What is masking the deathscapes and giving them self-justification is what Wilderson (2010) articulates as a radical fringe of the political discourse that is obsessed with the passionate dream of civic reform and social stability.

Understanding structural violence from coloniality of being in relation to the concentration of the racialised body in the deathscape is akin to the understanding of the hidden dimension of this violence. This understanding exposes what is hidden in the discourses of the passionate dream of civic reform and social stability. Mbembe (2003) in his articulation of necropolitics and necropower that produces *death-worlds* seems to ignore structural violence and he only focuses on visible forms of violence—that is, absolute violence. Violence in Mbembe's thinking, only circulates in the matrix form, describing its devastation, multiplicity, proliferation and omnipresence—and these are symptoms. In other words, the realm of structural violence that sustain the plantation and the dehumanisation of the African subject is that which Mbembe (2002b) refers to its grammar of suffering as mere victimhood and it genealogy dismissed as faked philosophies. Mbembe's dismissal is outright and fails to engage the manner in which subjection operates at the zone of non-being, that shows how the perverse of structural violence takes, can be engaged. Structural violence is about structures that are hidden in form, and that continue to create deathscapes the logic of zoning that Wolfe (2007) calls the blatant racial zoning. These are deathscapes that have assumed the level of the normal and natural through the mask of structural violence since this is the violence that assumes the invisible from, hence the normalisation of pathologies, the very basis of deathscapes.

Mbembe (2003a) is of the view that the state of exception is a space where the slave belongs to the master. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a), the empire is informed by the nexus of power that divides the world according to the logic of the plantation. In the plantation, the master and the slave inhabit the same territorial space, but the different space of existence. For the master there is life and for the slave there is death, the death that is caused by the master. As Ahluwalia (2004: 638) notes, '[s]lave life was in many ways a forms of death-in-

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life'. The life of the slave can be taken at will of the master, for that the owner of the slave, the slave being the property of the master. Indeed, the state of exception is still informed by the colonial relations of superiority-inferiority. This means that the body of the African subject is reigned over. In short, the African subject being denied humanity does not possess any form of relationality of being human in the anti-black world that is comparable to the plantation *qua* deathscape. The plantation can be understood as the anti-black world, that is, the anti-black world that militates against the existence of the African subject. 'That is, to live in such a world is to be socially dead' (Ahluwalia 2004: 638). This is the world constructed by the empire with its dehumanising project. Such a project sustains the hellish condition of created by colonialism.

The plight decrying the perversity of dehumanisation is dismissed as accused as mere victimhood by Mbembe (2001a). Contrary to Mbembe, Hogeveen (2010) argue that this denial accounts for nothing that the empire is predatory in its order of erasing the other, including the form of speech. Such erasure even goes with the distortion and termination of histories and lived experiences. The grammar of suffering is not the language of victimhood as Mbembe claims, but is the language that grammar of demands. These are demands that are impossible to meet (Wilderson 2010). These demands are demands for justice, reparations and restitution of labour, land, being and humanity. The meeting of these demands simply means the obliteration deathscapes, something that the empire cannot concede to. The colonial encounter is informed by violence—a deathscape. Deathscapes are a place of no return as there cannot be any resurrection from death. The return of resurrection will only come into being by killing the very condition that creates such death form—that of the deathscape.

Deathscapes in the sense of coloniality of being open the vistas of understanding a complex form of violence that in its make-up is in a matrix form. This can be understood on the difference and division between the coloniser and the colonised. This is not a binary, by a complexity of power relation that informs the relations between the empire and its objects. The performance and character of the empire has been changing through mercantilist, imperialist, colonialist, segregationist, globalist and neo-liberal periods. But this change has been cosmetic in the sense that the logic of conferring live and death and enslaving the

racialised body of the African subject and keeping its environment a deathscape has not been changed, but radicalised to the state of naturalised abyss. The logic of zoning has been with the empire through its inception. The logic and operation of violence in relation to coloniality of being is the very form of zoning that renders life and death, privilege and dispossession, and inclusion and exclusion is the work of the empire. This is what Wilderson (2010: 80) regards as 'the differential zoning and gratuity (as opposed to contingency) of violence that accrue to the Blackened position'. Deathscapes assume the Manichean form that is akin to what Santos (2007) regards as cartographical abyssal lines where forms of lives differ in each line. Santos points out that there is an invisible distinction between the metropolitan societies and colonial territories. Through these distinctions, Santos demonstrates that the condition of freedoms that are created for the metropolitan societies are impossible to imagine as the necessary conditions that can be given to the colonial territories. The colonial territories following this account mean that they cannot be the same with the metropolitan societies. Therefore, there should be no ethics on that other side of the colonial territories and, death is permissible. Coloniality of being as the condition of unfreedom means that the existential plane is a deathscape.

Mbembe's (2003a) understanding of death is that it is a power of proliferation, meaning that death is that which assumes multiple forms. This is the form of power that precedes the erectile form of power, for that this is the power of the temporal. Death in the power of proliferation should not only be understood on the basis of proliferation, but, the power of mutation in its permanent form. Since the deathscapes are like the plantation, death is permissible and it is in this plantation that death even exists in the liveliness of the object. Therefore, the object should be subjected to multiple deaths. 'Sovereignty consists of the will and the capacity to kill in order to live' (Mbembe 2003a: 18). The life of the master depends on the death of the slave and this form of death assumes the form of social death (Patterson 1982). Social death is just like the plantation, the world inhibited by the colonised is a deathscape—the place of death, the death that cannot be accounted for. This is the form of death that is seen as normal. Maldonado-Torres (2008a) argues that the exercise of war and conquest are connected to concepts of human community that configures the plantation system

that divides the existence of the master and the slave. In this configuration the master must live while the slave must die. The death of the slave cannot be accounted for. To be a slave 'is a right to death in that dying has no value and is no longer sovereign' (Marriot 2007: 227). In amplification, Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 31) states that 'the violation of ethics and in the exercise of violence over other human beings—by a conscious of lordship' is the state of affairs in the plantation system.

Mbembe (2003a) demonstrates that the presence of death defines the world of violence. Such a world then inhabits the character of the deathscape, where death is permissible. Such permissibility comes to being because death is naturalised. This however, does not suggest death as an inevitable form of a life circle, or then the end of live. This naturalisation of death means death in larger proportion that does not raise any form of agency. Not only that this death is a result of war, but the everyday living as a result of coloniality of being. Agamben (1998) introduces the notion of 'bare life' that is the undermined life, the life that does not exist. This form of life is the one lived by those who are situated at the darker side of modernity (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). Bare life is the life that does not have any form of ontological relationality. Sovereign power 'is centred on the politically ambivalent and judicially marginal figure of the person who can be killed with impunity and their reduction to infrahuman condition of "bare life" that sanctions their death' (Gilroy 2005: 48). According to Gilroy, bare life of the infrahuman are often contrasted with those of life of the human—life in the figure of the latter is enjoyed while on the former (the infra-human) is the condition of perpetual misery and even death.

Deathscape means death in life—that is, the body is dead while it still possesses the soul. So, death should not be a result of death itself, but the appropriation of death in life without the liquidation of life. In the deathscape bodies are disposed as quickly as possible for that these are bodies of non-humans (Mbembe 2003a). The disposal of these bodies, are those who are the subjected to the whims of coloniality of being. This form of coloniality is the one of the empire as stated earlier, and it is informed by murderous and genocidal lust in its forms and content. Agamben (1998) argues that life is qualified, and at the same time it can be disqualified by the political. The political here, it is referred the community of

masters who are at the echelons of the empire who, in Mbembe (2003a) terms, have the prerogative to confer life and death.

The humanity of the people who are in the deathscapes is negated all the radical content (Mbembe 2003a). Mbembe sees the deathscapes as existing in the colonial order, and in the contemporary, deathscapes in Africa seem to be impotent in the sense that they are not linked to the colonial order. The colonial order is historical, so is the deathscapes—the very suggestions that if they do exist, they are outside Africa. Africa as a space of death is where there is perpetual subjection of death that even amounts to elimination. Elimination with its logic and practice of leaving no traces is what preoccupies the empire. It is impossible for there to be no traces since the logic of the empire is that of perversity and excess. Wolfe (2006) argues that the logic elimination is the relationship between genocide and settler colonialism. This means, these are intertwined processes and their relationality might assume a complex character to disentangle them. Thus, this creates a condition that the Rwandian genocide is seen in provincialised and localised terms. This means, it is outside what Mignolo (2000) regards as the global imperial designs. However, Wolfe (2006: 387) cautions that 'settler colonialism is inherently eliminatory but not invariably genocidal'. Wolfe points out that both settler colonialism and genocide employ the grammar of race. This technology of destruction is informed by the logic of destroying to replace (Wolfe 2006).

Humiliation, torture and death that come to being through the expansionist project that is now referred to as 'regime change' has given the empire to kill at will. Violence and war are contributing parts of the empire, and when they are reaching the African space, they reach escalating proportions. Mbembe (2003a) reads the deathscape within the loci of the colony. Deathscapes are still perpetuated in the postcolonial or contemporary Africa and this is the condition that is not only self-inflicted, but that which is still accountable to the logic and operation of coloniality of being. In the postcolonial condition, it is then interesting to account for the continuity. According to Morgensen (2011), the persistence and naturalisation of subjection in the form of settler colonialism defines the present as colonial, while occluding settler colonialism. The gaze should then also look at the empire and to extend this, and the notion of bare life

is necessary to engage though the notion of coloniality of being as articulated by Maldonado-Torres (2007; 2008).

Deathscapes are the places of subjection in that they create natal alienation—the very basis of death (Patterson 1982). The principles of means through that the logic of expansion is informing the empire, this can only come into being through the creation, elaboration and sustaining deathscapes. The proximity of the deathscape and the empire is a curious one. The empire that sees itself as a paragon of virtue and the conduit of high moral benchmark distances itself from the deathscapes. The empire even justifies its murderous lusts and sadistic actions of violence as moral since this is necessary for its well-being and interests. So, the empire is the majesty, the authority that cannot be associated with the deathscapes since its racial superiority and value is godly and unbloody like that of what they regard as savages who are in need for redemption. Deathscapes are what are looked in the colonial era, the past that the empire draws from to sustain itself but refuses to see itself is the create of deathscapes.

The simple fact is that they are far away from deathscapes, and it matters a lot if they are affected. The plantation, just like the way the condition of war described, is that Africa is also a deathscape. According to Morgenson (20011: 71), '[n]ational resistence to incorporation in the body of Western law continues to result in being placed in the camp'. This camp is a deathscape, and it is justified that those who are in defiance be subjected to the disciplinary power of the empire. Mbembe (2007c) gives an account of Ruben Um Nyobe the Secretary General of Cameroonian Peoples Union death who was killed as a first rebel against colonialism and refusing to be corrupted through its cooptation. Mbembe state that Nyobe's corpse was not enough of being a corpse; it was owned by the state. The corpse was even killed by being and as Mbembe (2007c: 80) states, 'getting rid of the corpse altogether was impossible'. This impossibility was to subjecting such a corpse to multiple tortures and death. Mbembe (2007c: 81) also states that Nyobe's 'corpse was first covered in cement; only then was it lowered to the ground'. For Mbembe, this manner of burial was to disfigure the corpse beyond recognition and robbing it all other forms of humanity and existence. This means, the total elimination of Nyobe in the face of human existence and also the projection of the disciplinary power of

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the empire was to liquidate any form of dissent or resistance. The form of this burial is to inaugurate the sense of order through censor, and this is also made a form of the spectacle to put such death publicly.

Deathscapes are produced by what Mbembe (2003a) refers to as technologies of destruction where in that the destruction reduces a body into a mere thing—an object. The might of the empire with its tendency of war that has been under the code of regime change, employs these technologies of destruction as a form of disciplinary power. This is seen through the bombing of civilians, countless loss of lives, destruction of communities and infrastructure (Butler 2004). These acts of the empire, producing deathscapes are not regarded as criminal, and as stated earlier, the empire is the law unto itself. At the level of structural violence, the description of technologies lacks the explanatory factor. In their descriptive form there are powerful to describe the deathscapes. The explanatory power comes to being through the understanding of deathscapes by engaging the notion of structural violence.

Explanatory power is not permitted in the deathscapes and it is even depleted—hence the absence of the grammar of suffering. What is needed as Wilderson (2010) states ensemble of ontological questions that are foundation and accountable to accumulation and fungibility as a grammar of suffering as opposed to agency and contingency. This will expose the power relation and the genetic make-up of the structural violence, the very thing that makes the deathscapes alive. Coloniality of being makes itself normal as if it is not violence—that is, the violence with a human face. It therefore follows that structural violence renders deathscapes permissible. If then, the life of the body of the African subject is not in a humanised form since it is in the camp of the deathscapes its life cannot be in a real form. Butler makes this observation:

> If violence is done against those who are unreal, then, from the perspective of violence, it fails to injure or negate those lives since those lives are already negated. But they have a strange way of remaining animated and so must they must be negated again (and again). They cannot be mourned because they are already lost or, rather, never "were", and they must be killed, since they seem to live on stubbornly, in this state of deadness (Butler 2004: 33).

In this state, the empire having to face the stubborn resurfacing and reemergence of the dead who are dead—the empire then mobilises forces to render dead what remains to die. Such motive to render dead is killing the dead body and to silence it in its very death. Butler (2004) argues that the enemy on the eyes of the empire is seen on the lens of spectral infinity' that invites more and more violence, fuelled by infinite paranoia. The state of war *qua* coloniality of being creates deathscapes proliferates and entrenches them. The empire through is majestic might, Butler states that even if the empire were to eliminate 50 000 lives in the deathscapes this will not be seen as violence. According to Butler, the 50 000 are nameless and can therefore be obliterated. The one who is named is humanised and can therefore not be obliterated but must be protected. The empire for its subjects has a lot of 'humanising effect' that do establish the human, the subject not the nameless object. Deathscapes are a public affair and the difference is only that the agents of violence cannot be identified, except to say that their targets who are African subjects are easily identifiable. Coloniality of being is a form of violence that the empire claims not to be involved in, while indeed the empire is the source of this form of violence.

The return of the colonial is does not necessarily require physical presence of the actual metropolitan centre, but the tentacles of the centre. That it, the colonial presence is through the presence is that of coloniality. Hogeveen (2010) deploys the concept of spectres of colonialism to engage the notion of structural violence that create the state of complicity. He argues that the spectres of the racialised, ex-colonised, subalternised, marginalised that are the very sites of deathscapes, continue to haunt the present. 'That is the thing with spectres; they begin by coming back to re-dress unfinished business: they are relevant' (Hogeveen 2010: 116). This means that there is no way in that the deathscapes with their nature of elimination can silence death itself. Since they are deathscapes, they must be ghostly, he very nature of haunting. Spectres of colonialism touch the very raw nerve of the status quo that claims to remain blind to the injustices and failing to link them to imperial global designs—the architecture of the empire. Spectres are always negated or destructed completely for the mere fact that they expose the hypocrisy of the present and its complicit status quo. This means the present and status quo are 'flawed, incomplete and unjust' (Hogeveen 2010: 116).

There is no peace in the deathscapes, and the form of peace that is propagated by the empire is on the other hand, the advocacy for war. This is because the tone of such the propagation of peace is such that it is a command and it should be in the interests of the empire. As Maldonado-Torres (2008a) argues, the peace of the empire is not peace at all. The peace of the empire connotes and denotes the state of permanent war. What matters to the empire is its interest, so these interests cannot be realised if the deathscapes are eliminated. What should be eliminated are those who are trapped within the deathscapes and not the deathscapes themselves. Butler (2004: 31) has it that '[it] would be difficult, if not impossible, to understand how humans suffer from oppression without seeing how this primary condition is exploited and exploitable, thwarted and denied'.

Mbembe (2003a) has stated how life is determined—that is, how to life, where and how, including survival and death. But then, this cannot be seen as the modern convention of the bio-political, but the existence that has continued to define the existential conditions of the African subject, the subject who is outside the realm of life. Maldonado-Torres (2008a) declares that what creates antagonism towards ordinary social life is that the social life in the deathscape is that of licensing of death. This means that there cannot be any social life where death is permissible, to the space that was created for death. It is known that social life should be the locus of peace, but death has superseded it. Drawing from Santos (2007), the articulation of the abyssal lines, is clear that deathscapes are a not a common place in the empire.

The abyssal lines do even exists within the empire itself, where life and death reside side by side, but also divided cartographically. The metropolis at the centre is surrounded by life, while its peripheries are mere deathscapes. Certain lives that are that of the bodies of the empire are highly protected. The neglect of such bodies will mean the weakening of the empire. These are the bodies of imperial subjects and to be the imperial subject is 'to be in power, near power, or simply identified with power' (Mamdani 2001: 75). Butler (2004) amplifies this view to state that if such bodies are interfered with or destructed, this is sufficient for the empire to mobilise forces of violence. Coloniality of being is violence conducted in the deathscape because it is a space where there is absence of life. In other words, this is the violence against those who are already dead—and,

only humans can call for barbarity or massacre if they are faced by the cruel proportionality of violence. This violence is, many at times, carried out by war machines operating in the realm of warfare that is closely knotted to the illicit economy.

War machines: the economy of violence unveiled

Mbembe (2001a) deploys the concept of private indirect government to show how power is exercised and re-organised. Private indirect government has assumed multiplicity of forms, just like war machines. In is in the sphere of private indirect government as Mbembe (2003a) states, where war machines combine both the functions of a political organisations and mercantilist company. The concept, war machine(s) originates from Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 387) in an axiom form which is the 'exterior to the [s]tate apparatus'. War machines are that of exteriority in the sense that their life is that the configuration of the sovereign.

Mbembe (2003a) correctly argues that war machines combine a plurality of functions that makes them to be a metamorphosis of form and character. The existence of war machines is that of dynamism and complexity—for also that, war machines are interwoven in the contested political terrain where power has assumed multiplicity of forms. This is how Mbembe describes them:

> War machines are made up of segments of armed men that split up or merge with one another depending on the task to be carried out and the circumstances. Polymorphous and diffuse organisation, war machines are characteri[s]ed by their capacity for metamorphosis. Their relationship to space is mobile (Mbembe 2003a: 32).

The functionality of war machines is structural, the structure that is in a form of pieces that can be integrated and disintegrated. War machines are in a form of a multitude. Multitude as deployed by Negri (2008: 27) is 'a multiplicity of singularities that cannot in any sense find a representative unity'. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) point out that in terms of functionality, war machines are in a pair and in alteration assume the constitution of sovereign unity. According to Comaroff and Comaroff (2006a), banditry shades into low-level warfare

assuming amoebic form of political allegiance and also creating new cartographies of dis/order *qua* zones of accumulation.

The state is about the distinction and legitimation of the governors and governed. The state apparatus is the unit of power, and the existence, constitution and function of the state is that of power. War machines contest the field of power. As Mbembe (2000: 264) notes, there are 'various centres of power [who] might have authority over a single place'. The power of the state apparatus is only effective to such an extent that it can control. Since war machines are characterised by exteriority, this suggest the limit of the state power. Both the state apparatus and war machines are characterised by possession and projection of power that creates the condition of coloniality of being by reducing the life of the African subject to abstraction. War machines in theory constitutions and logic, suggest the counter-state mechanism. War machines in their exteriority do not even go with the solidarity or patriotism to the state. In short, they do not owe allegiance to the state. The state is that of the privatised nature. 'Military functions and security services are simply the latest additions to the list of state functions that are increasingly being externalised and often privatised' (Lock 1999:19).

The state in its function and projection of power creates dependency to it. 'In every respect, the war machine is of another species, another nature, another origin of the [s]tate apparatus' (Deleuze and Guattarri 1987: 388). War machines cannot be dependent on the state because of the nature of their exteriority. They include rebels, insurgents, privatees, ex-combatants, private security firms to name but a few, and these are units external to the state apparatus. They can also even take a guise form of the state apparatus and its monopoly of violence. But then, for the state to assume this form it must privatise its machinery—that is, war machines can be understood on the basis of the private security and army apparatus that serves and/or guards the interests of the state. What is clear on the nature of war machines is that their complexity can be understood on the basis of engaging their multiple genealogies. As Deleuze and Guattari note, the state has no war machine of its own. What the state has is the apparatus—that is, police and the army. Their power is that of centralising and having the monopoly of violence. Such a monopoly is to strengthen the state and to act in the interests of

the civilians. Even though the state can be in the interests of the civilians, coloniality of being suggests the problematic of the state as far as civilians are concerned. Civilians are at the receiving end of both legitimate and illegitimate violence. The state of being is that of permanent crisis for the mere fact that existence of civilians can easily be compromised and as a consequence, eliminated.

The efficiency of war machines, and the extent through that they can be measured, is the state of war, and war machines always assume the character of the negative since they conduct is that of violence. Musah (2002) argues that the nexus of privatisation of security, the proliferation of arms and the worsening structural paralysis of the African weak state have been debilitation since it is prominent in the discourse of curse of resources. According to Musah, the phenomenon of privatised military has a long history in Africa, and he cites destabilising mission that have been carried out in the 1960s and 1970s. This then means the notion of war machine is not a new phenomenon in the African political scene. War machines only gained prominence towards the last quarter of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21[st] Century—that is, the era of globalisation, the latter that is not a new phenomenon. The motive of war machines, like those mercenaries in the 1960s and 1970s was to benefit from cash rewards and having the privilege of being rented armies.

> They operated as lone wolves or were organi[s]ed into small bands to frustrate (or assassinate) nationalists, to support factions in internal power struggles, and to overthrow regimes that were unfriendly to a foreign power (Musah 2002: 912).

Musah provides the typology of mercenaries in terms of private military companies who provide a multi-purpose security related products and services. The product and service of these mercenaries are rental in nature. Mbembe (2001a) makes reference to the regime of violence and brutality that is at the centre of war machines in a form of concessionary regimes. These regimes are privatised and they take the form of extraction of resources that then creates the circle of the war. It is in this context where war machines are organised into temporary armies who in their nature and function assume that of the state of permanent army. Their function and operation is centred on procurement of war

material and logistics, military advice and strategies, intelligence and act as force multipliers, and these depends on the needs of the clientele. The other type of the mercenary is the floating indigenous mercenaries who serve the local warlords, and they are composed of ex-combatants and ex-soldiers. Their operations and functions range from prosecution of factional wars, debt collection, resource extraction, rape and criminal activities. The observation made by Musah points out that:

> As a rule, these floating indigenous mercenaries are drawn from different nationalities within the conflict clusters. They are often ex-combatants who desert their warlords because of disillusionment or desert national armies because of deplorable service conditions, or demobili[s]ed soldiers who have not been properly reintegrated into society (Musah 2002: 914).

Mbembe (2003a: 32) puts it forth that 'the vast majority of armies are composed of citizen soldiers, child soldiers, mercenaries, and privateers'. The combination of these forces of destruction is indeed that of war machines both in the individualistic and in the collectivist sense. War machines operate in the industrial logic of making possible mass destruction. The political nature is that of civil wars that destroyed political order. Disorder then, by means of violence was seen then as a process that will restore political order. According to Mbembe, violence assumes the economic character in the sense those informal systems of taxation and taking control of the nodal points of the resources and minerals.

> Military manpower is bought and sold on a market in that the identity of suppliers and purchasers means almost nothing. Urban militias, private armies, armies of regional lords, private security firms, and state armies all claim the right to exercise violence or to kill. Neighbouring states or rebel movements lease armies to poor states (Mbembe 2003a: 32).

War machines are predatory and driven by self-interest; nothing makes them different from the state apparatus they are fighting to recruit (Reno 2010). According to Reno (2010), the failed or collapsed state constitutes greedy warlords, angry combats and illicit economies. The postcolonial African condition has seen the presence and proliferation of war machines and their

presence perpetuates coloniality of being. Also, this proliferation is centred on the access and denial of access to the illicit economic networks. In what Pham (2004) calls a 'warlord political economy' where in that the logic of extraction is of excess through control and exploitation, this offers an opportunity for illicit economies to flourish. They take advantage of the flexibile international economic networks. According to Misra (2008), the nature of civil wars is linked with the nature of the state in its weak or collapsible sense since the state fails to hold the centre of monopoly of violence. It is within this realm of weak or collapsed states where insurgencies emerge.

The postcolonial states on their make-up that is the systematic inheritance of the grafted and plundered colonial state that makes them not to have monopoly of exercising sovereign power. As stated, African postcolonial states are unable to control territories under their jurisdiction (De Kock 2010). The legitimacy of the state becomes that of crisis. War machines kill with impunity, and this is because the weapon as an object and phenomenon has been the symbol of power. Therefore, war machines as Pham (2004: 124) notes, 'present a new and troubling reality in geopolitics'. As De Kock (2010: 24) argues, war machines expose and exploit the 'institutional inability of states to maintain internal cohesion'. In such a situation, war machines as opposed to the state, assume the monopoly of violence. Then this gives power to war machines that operate outside the state sovereign machinery. Mbembe (2003a) is correct to state that war machines have made violence to be a form of aesthetic enterprise and it is deployed to cause and effect maximum destruction.

Individuals can be easily co-opted to become active participants in the civil war by being on the rebel side, war machines. This is done through war machines use of or exploitation of fear, anxiety and grievance. Such is the means of making those who support rebellions to have trust in warlords (Misra 2008). Musah (2002) asserts that warlords to become important war machines, they should adopt authoritarian tactics for the rebel groups to be controlled. Violence is both collective and collectivised (Misra 2008). Violence assumes the state of grace for that it is pursued to reach a higher goal. But then, there is often an absence of a higher goal, except to say that there is an orgy of violence. Such is a condition of senseless killing of civilians where humanity is reduced to objecthood. The

violence of the higher goals has the vision of recreation and it does not target civilians. The violence of the contemporary is the opposite simply because it is led by warlords, who in a war machinery sense are antagonistic to the political system that ejected them. So, war machines attack unarmed civilians since their higher goal is an orgy of self-interests.

Coloniality of being makes war machines feature greatly in the economy of violence and also the matrices of violence. The matrices of violence can be understood also in terms of directionality in that they are directed to civilians who often have nothing to do with the causes of the war. War machines assume the level of the political because of power relations that are not asymmetrical. Indeed, war machines and the industrial complex of the illicit economies create a hellish existence to the civilians. Their presence is supported or largely dependent on conflict—that is, conflict is the life support system of war machines and the industrial complex of illicit economies. According to Maldonado-Torres (2007), relations between subjects are based on superiority and inferiority. By extension, these relations are based on existence and non-existence. Since the monopoly of violence is traditionally vested within the state apparatus, war machines undermine such a monopoly by exerting its power to be the monopoly of violence. Within that matrix of violence, civilians are trapped in the shadow of death, with the little changes of not being haunted by it. in this form, death is inevitable.

The matrix of violence can be understood in relation to the notion of territoriality, but then not reducible to it. Mbembe (2000: 261) argues that '[n]ew forms of territoriality and unexpected forms of locality have appeared'. There is no accounting of these transforming discourses and that they are complex through the ways in which networks of power relations are constituted. As Mbembe (2000: 261) posits, '[n]ew internal and external actors, organi[s]ed into networks and nuclei, claim rights of these territories, often by force'. War machines challenge the postcolonial African state for that such a state is the embodiment of violence. According to De Kock (2010), the African postcolonial state is said to be plagued by illegitimate use of violence. This is simply because war machines emerge via the nature of the weak or collapsed African postcolonial state.

According to Mbembe (2003a), the African weak state cannot withhold the monopoly of violence or other measures to enforce coercion. This creates a condition where war machines become the locus of power, and this can also take the shape of a quasi-political power. They emerge at the moment of state fracture that produces many sites of power that are localised in nature. According to McCormick and Fritz (2009: 84), 'former provincial military governors became the independent lords of their respective provinces, some even competing for control in the capital'. War machines are a product of weak states and they create a strong tradition of local government that contests with the central government (McCormick and Fritz 2009). As Musah (2002) argues, war machines gain potency for the mere fact that the military in Africa is a politicised phenomenon. This makes them through their power, to confront the state with a security dilemma. As such, the nature of the power of war machines is the proliferation of both new and used weapons that circulate through illicit economies.

> This process is the basis for the emergence of alternative spaces that structure the informal economy, contraband, and migratory movements. Far from being merely regional, these interstate exchanges are connected with international markets and their dynamics. The commerce for that they provide the moving force is favo[u]red by a fundamental characteristic of African states, namely the relative lack of congruence between the territory of a state and areas of exchange (Mbembe 2000: 262).

According to Mbembe (2000), the violence takes circulation forms, and it takes a form of destructing people and exploiting resources. In this logic, both people and resources are put in circulation, where there is connection and disconnection. The nature of the political is the state of violence, and in such a state, the weak or collapse state creates a vacuum that coloniality of being—a failure of the state to protect its own civilians. As De Kock (2010: 26) argues that 'war machines that challenge state authority, sovereignty and legitimacy are therefore discordant elements (pieces) that confront the post-colonial state with its inconsistencies'. War machines draw battle lines and they are that of attacking the state and civilians, whom the state should protect. Civilians suffer a double jeopardy as they are suffering in the violence meted against them by both the state and war machines. The direction of war machines is war against the state, and the

civilians are attacked as they are the most constitutive unit of the state. Civilians get killed, displaced, decapitated, conscripted, tortured and raped. What matters in the economy of war is the logic of excess that finds itself through amassing with weapons. Human life does not matter but what matters is the weaponry might. This might is not for the war that is between states, but the war of both the state army and insurgents against the civilians. According to Parry:

> State violence thus raises the threat of—indeed, it actuali[s]es—tyranny and repression even as it holds out the possibility of protection and the tyranny of state violence could be more destructive than the anarchy of private violence (Parry 2002: 2).

State violence protects and threatens, and this means the conception of law that is often tied to the state largely depends on enforcement and control that are embedded in state control (Parry 2002). In other words, law relies on state violence and also on the other hand, state violence is derived from law. It follows then that the law is part and parcel of the state machinery it is not extended to it— 'sometimes law is up to the task of mastering state violence' (Parry 2002: 4). In the condition of violence or war, civilians become the primary targets from war machines complicates the nature of violence in its absolute form, and this invited series considering with regards to the nature of violence in matrix form. According to Misra (2008), the cycle of development, decay and eventual demise is the feature that marks the state of violence. African states, for example Congo, Angola, Somalia and Ethiopia during the Cold War era have been a fertile battle ground as pawns.

Mbembe (2003a) posits that the logic of violence assumed the mercantilist form since it is based on coercive resources of labour and minerals. The mercantilist form of extraction and excess is the one that is the epicentre of war machines. War machines are private instruments of violence who operate according to the whims of capital excess (Lock 1999). War machines want also the resources that are in the concentration of the state apparatus (De Kock 2010). This is not for the purpose of redistribution, but that of replacement and perpetuating coloniality of being. The character of war machines is criminal since their services and conduct is that of criminal character. War machines want to be at the commanding

heights of the resource and mineral extraction. The state of war in weak or collapsed states is the privatised war, where war machines assume the predatory character. As Mbembe argues that:

> Military power is brought and sold on a market in that the identity of suppliers and purchasers means almost nothing. Urban militias, private armies of regional lords, private security firms, and state armies all claim the right to exercise violence or to kill. Neighbouring states or rebel movements lease armies to poor states (Mbembe 2003a: 32).

'People who loot and exploit rackets attract fighters faster and in great numbers than the ideologue or community organiser, who has to take time for political education' (Reno 2010: 58). But added to this, war machines can use force to recruit. For Reno, the heart of the effective war machines is extensive and effective patronage network. It is clear that for their efficiency they assumes privatised politics to be able to move and manoeuvre with ease in this patronage network due to accountability to themselves and produce unrest that is influenced by self-interest and predation. War machines are not accountable, say like the state to citizens or citizens to the state.

> The types of resources that are being extracted also make a difference. Gems, minerals and timber, for example, are particularly attractive. They tend to be found in specific and often remote areas of the country, they are effectively anonymous and, therefore, easy to launder and they require little infrastructure or even knowledge to acquire and move into the market (McCormick and Fritz 2009: 87).

According to Mbembe (2001a), illicit economy in its function is the market of the gangster mode. In this economy, what Mbembe (2001a: 72) calls 'a regime based of murder' is the order of existential reality. It in this existential reality where violence is commercialised through illicit economies where circulation remains uncontrollable due to the huge surplus of stock of weapons offered on the black market.

> The most complete figure of the world is presented from the monetary perspective. From here we can see a hori[s]on of values and a machine of distribution, a mechanism of accumulation and means of circulation, a power and a language (Hardt and Negri 2000: 32).

What keep war machines alive is illicit economies that Felbab-Brown (2010) defines as economies that operate outside trade regulation or political and economic regulation. Illicit economies by the nature of use of coercion and intimidation—the operation of this form of economy is through blackmail, racketeering and violence (Lock 1999). Illicit economies are where there is an exchange of arms and resources. For Reno (2010), the circulation and flow of resources produces and fuels violence. Mbembe has this to note:

> As explained above, the concentration of valuable resource extraction activities around these "reserves" has, in turn, transformed them into privileged spaces of conflict and war. War conditions are fed by the increasing commerciali[s]ation of extractable products. As a result of this ensemble of activities, new possible of linkage to the global economy have opened up (Mbembe 2006a: 304).

Resources from illicit economies are the ones that are contested for the purpose of access and control. The state that is supposed to hold the monopoly of violence and to control the sphere of violence in the favour of the protection of civilians fails to make the centre hold and as a result experiences are that of intense fragmentation. The predatory nature of war machines creates an enabling environment of being the dictates of violence and exerting the forms of violence against the civilians in favour of accumulation and control of illicit economies. 'The great industrial and financial powers thus produce not only commodities but also subjectivities' (Hardt and Negri 2000: 32). The predatory nature of war machines is such that the human body is decapitated and brutalise it in such a way the projection of the power of war machines reproduces coloniality of being through the theatre of massacre and crisis.

According to Mbembe (2001a), war machines are about exiting the formal international economy, with the preference to underground channels where illegality is institutionalised and normalised. Felbab-Brown (2010) puts it forth that the state may choose to co-opt or set up illicit economy. This clearly shows that the state is often the participant in the illicit economy. The same will have a connection of the state and non-state actors in civil war. Mbembe (2001:73) states that the dynamics happening within illicit economies should not be simply reduced to antagonism, but 'contradictory dynamics at work, made up of time-

lags, disjunctures, and different speeds'. War machines want access to these economies.

As war machines want to be beneficiaries, and some even go to the extent of wanting to be co-opted or even colluding with these economies. Musah (2002: 914) argues that war machines are infamous for 'waging a predatory war to carve out territory and resources—diamonds, and the strategic mud, coltan—for their leaders'. Misra (2008) states that these are wars between greet-looting seeking rebels—that is, war machines and the predatory state that brings down the curse of resources. The state as the apparatus of force, repression and violence often refuses to concede to the demands of the rebels. In this antagonistic situation the response of war machines is that of confrontation by means of opposing the predatory state. According to Misra (2008), this opposition is used by engaging in violence and the cycle of retaliation is directed to civilians who become the most affected victims.

Felbab-Brown (2010) points out two factors leading to the emergence of illicit economies that are the lack of governance and enforcing prohibition. The demand for commodities of the illicit economy makes them to proliferate to the point beyond governance and enforcement of prohibition. Illicit economies find their existence in the foreign patronage networks that need the existence of the weak state (Reno 1998). Illicit economies change shape, form, character and flow. They can adopt other forms of economy if they can be banned or criminalised. Illicit economies are preserved and it makes it difficult to curb and they do not need the state to facilitate their functions (Felbab-Brown 2010). If the state comes to a complete halt—that is, a failed state in the absolute sense, illicit economies will be affected too. Illicit economies need to function smoothly, hence the need for provision of services and extracting value for such provision.

In most condition of conflict, war machines provide protection for illicit economies. War is a corporate affair and there are multi-linkages between violence and capital (Ruggiero 2010). It is in the condition of conflict where there the state ability to monopolise violence becomes vulnerable and this gives leeway for illicit economies to extract, plunder and collide with impunity. This state of affairs increases the political capital of war machines. However, the

situation may be on the contrary where illicit economies favour the state and the state may not criminalise these economies. As such, illicit economies are bound to be in opposition to war machines, if such machines are antagonistic to the state. This allows the perpetuation of the predatory state where plunder, graft, corruption, racketeering become legalised. 'At this extreme, rulers and their associates resemble a mafia rather than a government if one thinks of the latter as necessary serving some collective interest, however faint and by whatever means, to be distinguished from the mafia' (Reno 1998: 3). For Reno (2010), the suspension of law means using the state office for private accumulation and extraction from illicit economies. However, what political rulers accumulate and extract is nothing as compared to the illicit economy itself. The illicit economy in the private and military sense is tatamount to that of the industrial complex (Ruggiero 2010).

Reno (1998) argues that the nature of the global capital and politics took a different dimension—that which is direct and violent with the sole aim of plundering resources and minerals. The logic of economic operation—that is, accumulating as much as possible, is now part of the political where stakes are high.

> Violence and military[s]ation of commerce were central to adapting the functions and forms of state sovereignty to the pressing task of building political authority in heavily divided postcolonial African societies. These methods were not new in Africa; they looked back to the colonial strategies that had manipulated markets to supply scarce revenues to finance the alien bureaucracies that local people regarded as an imposition (Reno 1998: 21).

Illicit economies are operated by people who can have enough power to create dependent states. In this form, the state will be a market that will be funded and dictated to by the elite economy itself. War machines always position themselves to form part of these networks of patronage. This is because 'accentuation of practices reflecting dual power are within the range of the possible' (Mbembe 2001a: 77). The client-patron politics are is the logic through that illicit economies operate, and patronage politics created a situation where patronage politics were converted into predatory warlord politics (Reno 1998). The state will be reduced to a mere clientele. For Mbembe (2001a) the undermining of the

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state is that the logic of the market economy is such that rights against the state should be asserted, let alone people having duties and obligations towards the state. The material base of the state, as Mbembe states, has already been undermined. It is in this condition where the state is reduced to puppetry and such is the state implicated criminality due to the criminality of illicit economies. 'This, in popular consciousness, there was no need to demonstrate accountability or transparency towards this state and it was legitimate to plunder ad undermine it' (Musah 2002: 915).

According to Reno (2010), the dark networks that exist in pre-war situation are sites that link people and resources. This gives rise to what Reno refers to as political entrepreneurship where social capital and resources are co-opted for self-interest and predatory nature of war machines. The state machinery in the postcolonial Africa is infamous for turning into a predatory formation and engaging in dark networks by soliciting bribes and kickbacks—the very acts of corruption. The elite who are managing the postcolonial African state ensure maximal protection to their clientele who runs the dark networks. This creates a condition where capital flows in their direction. The mode of accumulation is an alternative form of theft where the law will be manipulated or suspended to protect their clients from prosecution (Reno 2010). This creates forms of political networking where the manipulation of law and its suspension is a priori since accumulation matters. The dark networks that are an arena for illicit economies can even go to the extent of replacing the state institutions (Reno 2010). This however, does not denote that the state institutions will disappear, but they will virtually be reduced to empty shells. They will exist, but impotent in their function and execution, hence the potency of war machines.

On martyrdom: body on body war

Mbembe (2006a) articulates the notion of politics as sacrificial act that denote the practices of war where there representation of life is also a relationship and affinity with death. This form of politics can be seen in the act of confronting death by means of suicide bombing. Mbembe (2003a) argues that suicide bombing will not be understood if it is seen in binaries. Terrorist acts, and suicide bombing in particular justified the discourse of self-defence through military

response (Butler 2004). It will be examined here, on how Mbembe treats the notion of suicide bombing in so far as it relates to the notion of martyrdom. Mbembe (2003a) refers to such politics in a form of body on body war, and such politics means death produces another form of life. That is, the life that is outside the body itself. It is giving the self at the level of the body to the higher cause and as a result getting the status of martyrdom, the afterlife.

Ahluwalia (2004: 939) brings this to the attention, '[t]he phenomenon of suicide bombing is by no means new or unique to Islam, as it is often portrayed in the media'. Suicide bombing is not just a mindless act, but also a rather politically informed act with specific political goals (Murray 2006). The condition of suicide bombing is often reduced to singular, simplistic and comforting fictions of the empire. What the empire hides in these fictions is that suicide bombing is the response, not provocation, to the might of the empire. The political act of suicide bombing contributes to the notion of martyrdom and 'suicide-bombing follows the sacrificial logic of the gift of terror' (Birrell 2006: 14). The gift of terror is, for Birrel, intentional in that the subject, in the words of Mbembe (2006a) is engaged in 'the works of death'—that is, 'the prior event and knowledge of a death to come' (Birrell 2006: 13). For Casquete (2009), the politics of martyrdom are practiced by the living and they are built in myths of the dead—that is, death becoming sacred. Casquete (2009: 265) correctly notes that 'a person is not born a martyr, he (sic) is *made* a martyr'. As Casquete hastens, the construction of the martyr is mythic-martyric construction where death is made the object of worship. As such, a martyr is a symbol not to be negativised and it is upon death that the human as a political subject gets purified after death.

As Birrel (2006) notes, the logic at play is more than that of the rational choice, but that of the importance of upholding duty and obligation. For Birrel, suicide bombing is undertaken not as the individual choice but also a ritual obligation where in that the politics of giving, receiving, and repaying the gift of terror. The gift of terror is embedded in the politics of the subject resisting subjection. This is the capacity to agency, where in that actual death represents agency (Ahluwalia 2004). According to Birrel (2006), giving the gift of terror assumes the passing of some form of power since the act of suicide bombing is performed

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as the public act, with the intention to shock those who are watching its effects. In amplification, Groys (2006: 89) points out that '[b]y pushing a button that makes a bomb to explode, a contemporary warrior or terrorist pushes a button that starts the media machine'. This is done with the intention of reinforcing the iconographic seduction and its desire in the form of 'a pictorial strategy of intimidation' (Groys 2006: 95).

Indeed, Mbembe's (2003a) perspective on suicide bombing accounts to how death loses its meaning and how it transcends life. But then, this has no bearing on coloniality of being—except to locate violence not in gratuity but aesthetics. It then follows that death; therefore, suggest the form of what Raja (2005) refers to as imaginary of 'non' death from the Arab body—the body that is racialised like that of the African subject. Imaginary of 'non' death refers to 'death from the eyes of the person who straps bombs to his/her body, and to walk into the so-called valley of death' (Raja 2005: 11). In short, in the eyes of the suicide bomber death has another meaning—it is not death, but a transcendental moment where there is another life after death.

> The employment of the past tense to describe a future event situating the living martyr between to death not, as might be expected, between the real death of the flesh and blood individual and his (sic) symbolic death in martyrdom, but between his (sic) death in the symbolic (martyrdom) and the imaginary (Birrell 2006: 35).

According to Mbembe (2003a), the body of the suicide bomber is that of a martyr. This is based on the logic that it is death in a form of becoming. It is in this logic that the politics of becoming are that of seeing and being destined to the future—the future as in, having another life. The conferring of such a life comes with the act of sacrificing ones life for the purpose of the higher ideal. As Axinn (2009) adds, this being a moral duty, an individual is supposed not to be egoistic—that is, a subject who is not a sovereign subject. The logic of sacrifice in this regard demands a subject to have a non-egoistic position. 'The non-egoistic position insists that there is some entity more important than the individual, and therefore individuals ought to make sacrifices on its behalf' (Axinn 2009: 11). If then this is what exists in the psyche of the suicide bomber, then the just cause is served. That is, the suicide bomber fulfils the mission

necessary for standing in the shoulder of martyrdom. The end assumes the politics of death of the other and satisfaction from that from that form of death. As Raja (2005: 21) states, 'the romantici[s]ed notion of death'. This means death itself is what is given in life for that it is a quest for martyrdom.

'The power and value of the body result from a process of abstraction based on the desire for eternity' (Mbembe 2003a: 37). The body project the politics of sacrifice, and Mbembe (2003a) states that the death of the suicide bomber is at the will of the suicide bomber. Death of the self by the self is the act of sacrifice. It is important to understand how the complexity of death and also Mbembe's (2003a) singularising and multiplicity of it in the form of suicide bombing. Mbembe gives the exposition of death and it is important to understand how this form in a way, explains the causes of death. Thomas (2011) posits that '[s]uicide bombing, in all its diverse and terrible forms, is a phenomenon that vividly dramati[s]es the most destructive possibilities of this interface between global and local forces'. For Thomas, suicide bombing is the dangerous intersection between the personal and the political concerned with deep structures and destructive excesses. Raja (2005: 12) argues that the interpretation relevant to the notion of the suicide bomber 'is the continuance of a martyr's life after death'. Life after death as a form of excess gravitating to a meaningful desire, the one that death is confronted head-on, seems appealing for the status of the martyr. As Raja points out:

> While there may not be any material advantages to this movement, there are considerable advantages after death—a life after death being one of them, hence adding meaning to this kind of death. It is in this context of life beyond death that the actions of a suicide bomber are transformed from an excess to a meaningful action (Raja 2005: 14).

The meaningfulness of death in the eyes of the suicide is that of dying for a cause, whether it is political or existential. The state of being a suicide bomber in the world is the state of death, but the death that presupposes the beginning of another form of life. The discursive method and the imaginary of the ideological also takes the dimension of the literal and that of the metaphorical to enter the place of death to die, and what matters is how honourably death takes place (Raja 2005). The fictionalised discourse of the war in terror is the construction of the

empire. Suicide attacks are not happening in isolation. They are the constitutive part of the response to the empire—that is, talking back to the empire. Suicide bombing at the level of the political is informed by resistance against the domination of the empire. It is in a way, a response. The war on terror on the other hand is not seen as a form of crime and a threat to the world. The empire is a terrorist. When the empire gets attacked it terrorises. Suicide bombing is regarded as declaration of war.

According to Butler (2004), bombing of civilians, countless loss of life, destructive communities and infrastructure cannot be labelled as terror. Destruction of bodies and space they inhabit is not terror. These are the acts of sadism, where the empire just enjoys destructing human bodies. The life of the inhabitants of the empire matter the most for that they are humans. If they were to be captured or harmed in any form by the ex-colonised world, the empire will intervene with destructive force. The simple logic being that the humans cannot be violated and only non-humans can be violated. As Butler (2004) states, the 50 000 people who are destructed by the empire, they are nonetheless and can therefore be obliterated. The one is easy humanised and cannot be obliterated. According to Butler (2004: 38), the empire for its subjects has a lot 'humanising effect' that establish 'the human'—the subject rather than the object. Since the empire is omnipotent it should be no be challenged due to its possession of military might and the will to destruct with ease. The empire mobilises moral justification and moral superiority assuming the subject position of being a victim. The acts of the empire are placed at the noble cause of rooting out terrorism, a worst form of propaganda (Butler 2004). The might of the empire is such that its institution of death is that of eliminating as many as possible. This is informed by the self-arrogated power to confer and to liquidate as it chooses. The war on terror is a war declared against those who pose a threat to the hegemony of the empire, or simply, those the empire desires to conquer and does actually conquer.

> Despite common popular misconceptions, suicide terrorists today are not motivated exclusively or primarily by foreign occupation, they are not directed by a central organi[s]ation, and they are not nihilistic. Most suicide terrorists today are inspired by a global jihadism that, despite atavistic cultural elements, is a thoroughly modern

movement filling the popular political void in Islamic communities left in the wake of discredited Western ideologies co-opted by corrupt local governments (Atran 2006: 139).

For Atran, suicide bombing cannot be understood outside the empire. The hegemony of the empire is seen through its logic of operation centred on conquest, subjugation and control. According to Parry (2006), war on terror located its discourse in politics of necessity. For Parry (2006: 11), '[t]he necessity argument attains meaningful weight only when there are specific reason to fear an imminent attack'. The use of torture and murder by the empire create a spectacle, and through its modes of excessive violence is it serves as deterrent to the modes of resistance to those who are clutched in subjection. War on terror and assassinations equates to crime and violence of the empire (Iadicola 2010). As Butler (2004) states, never will the empire itself admit that its acts are terrorist and at worse escalating. This means, the terrorist acts of the empire cannot be terrorism but a mere self-defence, and more so, war against terror.

When the empire strikes civilians of its perceived enemy are at the receiving end of violence. War on terror is located within the discourse of politics of necessity. According to Parry (2006: 11), '[t]he necessity argument attains meaningful weight only when there is a specific reason for fear of an imminent attack'. Also, they are at the receiving end of suicide attacks, since the civilians are part of what the state should protect. It is, therefore, necessary to understanding the discourse of suicide bombing that involves the body taking the form of a ballistic. In other words, the body is a weapon and as stated earlier, the body assumes the category of difference in so far as coloniality of being is concerned. The body is a ballistic in that it engages in the battlefield by itself as a weaponry device (Baylis 2006). The body of the suicide bomber cannot be counted since it is not a body—but a weapon.

According to Moghadam (2008), al-Qaida tenaciously inspired its most tactical arsenal that is suicide bombing to the point of becoming perfected and institutionalised. In addition to this, Baylis (2006: 111) states that '[s]uicide terrorism has virtually always been carried out by organi[s]ed rather than individuals, complicating the issue of impunity'. Thus this enabled the cult of

martyrdom in that the spirit of self-sacrifice was the one binding the group together. It has been one of the ethos of the members of al-Qaida. However, suicide bombing cannot be linked with being a member of al-Qaida. Atran (2006) posits that it is a fallacy that suicide bombers as contemporary martyrs are being directed and inspired by the al-Qaida, but rather, there are self-forming cells. The cult of martyrdom, as Thomas (2011) claims, is located on the existence of the suicide bomber who would rather live paradise in his/her head rather than to exist in hell.

In this way, suicide bombing assumes the character of being both the symptom of weakness and as a theatre of resistance. In this mode of resistance, it resists as in life form and in death form. Suicide bombing impunity challenges the form of structure of law and also the hegemony of the state power upon the body. This form of death has made more others who aspire for martyrdom not to fear. Baylis (2006) argues that suicide bombing is the contempt to the legal system. In broader terms, law or legality defends and operates in the dictates and logic of the empire. As Parry (2006) argues, the doctrine of law changes in line with interests of the empire when the conception of justice and best legal rule will apply. Parry warns that legal rules should not be dependent upon for that they are mere tools and not solutions. The empire with its juridical apparatus 'assume [its] leading role in the definition of justice' (Hardt and Negri 2000: 38). This is supported by its moral, normative and institutional orders that are biased and favourable to it.

The fate of the suicide bomber is death, so death is confronted head on (Mbembe 2003a). According to Baylis (2006), the destruction is the body and property of the victims, including the body of the terrorist. This is added to the essence of martyrdom of willing to enter the valley of death, and such entrance means death with others. This is public death, since the very act of suicide bombing attracts publicity. Suicide bombing is to exercise the worse form of punishable law— death, at worse, death that also means the destruction of the body to pieces of flesh. To the suicide bomber, the body is a matter that does not matter. The body is a mere flesh; it is therefore that which can be destructed in pursuit for martyrdom. As Mbembe (2003a: 37), '[t]he body has neither power nor value'. That is why the whole logic of destructing the body is relatively easy. 'The body

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duplicates itself and, in death, literally and metaphorically escapes the state of siege occupation' (Mbembe 2003a: 38). It erases itself to mock the very act of justice and punishment. The body executes itself in the very act of commiting crime. That is, the act of crime is not that of survival after the crime has been committed, but the crime that is the complete end.

The contempt is that it denies the legal system the object that it can use its instruments upon—the body. The body of the suicide bomber is reduced to pieces of flesh scattered and pasted everywhere—that is, the body that has even micro-mutilated its status beyond that of a corpse. Even the corpse can be attempted to be buried or incremented, already this is done. The body has been reduced to materialistic waste. Therefore, suicide bombers are regarded by Thomas (2011: 442) as 'living weapons' and 'already therefore dead meat'. According to Baylis (2006), the suicide bomber robes the legal system— apparatus of execution its functions. The suicide bomber cannot be captured and tried everything ends at the scene where suicide bombing took place. Baylis argument is that suicide bombers are of the view that they cannot be tried and prosecuted by the system that is illegal and terrorist. The enunciation of the suicide bomber wholly rejects and shows utter contempt to it by evading capture of the body. According to Hardt and Negri (2004: 54), '[t]he suicide bomber appears here once again as a symbol of inevitable limitation and vulnerability of sovereign power, refusing to accept a life of submission, the suicide bomber turns life itself into a horrible weapon'. The discourse of suicide bombing to some extent can be that of cycle of vengeance. If the body assumes the figure of a ballistic, it appropriates itself to the level of being a technology of destruction. For Mbembe (2003a), the body does not simply conceal a weapon for that it is a weapon. Mbembe highlights that the weaponry of the body assumes the state of being invisible. As such, 'the suicide bomber is not wear[ing] no ordinary soldier's uniform and displays no weapon' (Mbembe 2003a: 36). Unlike the visible weapons and weaponry equipment, they can be seen. The body cannot be suspected as something that will explode and kill others and itself.

As Mbembe notes in the sense of the suicide bomber, the body is transformed into a weapon, not in a metaphorical sense but in a truly ballistic sense. The weapon is the body itself, since the weapon is not external to the body. Mbembe

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(2003a: 30) states that war is in the level of the body that is informed by the nature of being 'hit and run affairs'. This is because of the fact of mobility, the mobility of the body to a predetermined targeted location. As Hard and Negri (2004) point out, suicide bombers are unlocalised, dispersed and unknowable making them to be polycentric, horizontal and distributive. The body on body war is the destruction of other bodies, and the destruction of the body itself that is a ballistic.

> In this logic of "martyrdom", the will to die is fused with the willingness to take the enemy with you, that is, with closing the door on the possibility of life for everyone. This logic seems contrary to another one, that consists in wishing to impose death on others while preserving one's own life (Mbembe 2003a: 37).

The operations of suicide bombing are in a form of martyrdom. To understand this, Thomas (2011: 430) states that particular attention be paid to 'the delicate interplay between explosive fictions and explosive materialities'. Though this might be perceived as irrational or opaque, this from the geography of reason of those who are committed to the cause of politics of martyrdom is different. Suicide bombers are willing to die for their cause and this end is seen as the transcendal moment. For Atran (2006: 127), '[t]hey are increasingly willing and eager to die as they are to kill'. This means, there is another form of life that is more rewarding than that of the body and the soul combined.

Most often, weapons assume the state of continuity, but the body as a weapon assumes the end. The death in the scene of body on body war is simultaneous. The killer does not see the death of its victims, simply the killer dies with them. In this instance the death of the killer goes hand in hand with the death of the victims (Mbembe 2003a). This is the elimination of other bodies in the process of the body eliminating itself. The body on body war is that of close proximity to effect possible destruction. 'To kill, one has to come as close as possible to the body of the enemy. To detonate the bomb necessitates resolving the question of distance, through the work of proximity and concealment' (Mbembe 2003a: 37). Mbembe makes a distinction between classical heroism and martyrdom to understand the work or proximity and concealment. Classical heroism is the fear of death and it is that which kills from the distance. The act of killing is not that

of suicide where the perpetrator and the victim experience simultaneous death. Here, the body is not a weapon, but the weapon is used and can be re-used to kill. The body itself cannot be concealed but the conventional weapon can be concealed. On the other hand, martyrdom is about gaining proximity, camouflaging and dissimulating (Raja 2005). Suicide bombing is to bear witness to fear, horror, pain, rage, despair and panic (Thomas 2011). According to Atran (2006), suicide bombers depend on the degrees of horror and also the amounts of collateral damage to innocent bystanders.

For Atran, the state of becoming is that of introducing justice. The politics of gift and exchange are alien to the racialised body of the African subject due the fact that it is collapsed by subjection from the ontological scale. The politics of martyrdom, therefore, cannot be identified with the racialised body for that it exists as death—that is, subjection makes, as noted earlier, African subjects to be in the existential plane of social death. This is why politics of martyrdom cannot simply exist, because there cannot be existence to what does not exist. The body on body war that is understood as martyrdom is appropriate to the body that is not that of the 'racialised Other'—the African subject. Focusing on the level of the body as a weapon of war, Moghadam (2008) argues that suicide bombing needs to be understood the following motivation: a strong commitment to the group, a desire for revenge, an expectation of benefits after death, and personal crisis.

The politics of martyrdom become institutionalised and 'their respective systems of beliefs, myths and dogmas that define the purpose and meaning of human existence' (Casquete 2006: 266). Wilcox (2001) refers to 'symbolic disruptive violence' to articulate the extent of destruction of violence embedded in the politics of symbolism. According to Wilcox, terrorist turn their bodies to a source of betrayal—that is, the body being not being suspected as a weapon only to find out that it is. Politics of symbolism create the world in their own making through the acts of violence and the world becoming a symbolic form. This symbolism is built upon martyrdom and violence is the act of faith. Indeed, these are present existential crisis around the racialised body of the African subject. At worse, this existential crisis has been and continues to be an extra-ordinary affair. That is, the existential condition of the African subject is the life of permanent crisis.

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Whether read from the perspective of slavery or of colonial occupation, death and freedom are irrevocably interwoven. As we have seen, terror is a defining feature of both slave and late-modern colonial regimes. Both regimes are also specific instances and experience of unfreedom (Mbembe 2003a: 38).

Mbembe is correct but is not aware of coloniality of being in the era of coloniality. The condition of unfreedom exists. It will come only to end if the empire can be dismantled. Any reflection on the racialised body of the African subject is to see the extraordinary affair of unfreedom side by side with the illusion of freedom. Not only unfreedom as Mbembe suggests ended, but continues. There cannot be any form of martyrdom in a form of resistance, even by means of suicide bombing as performed by the racialised body of the African subject. This is the body that cannot transcend death—the end of life to another form of paradise. This is because coloniality of being abstracts the body of the African subject from any ontological stand-point to make it to have no ontological density. What has been the property of the empire cannot in itself and within the territory of the empire—the deathscape that is—be of any value if it were to be liquidated, this has already been and done. This, therefore, means that the African subject at the level of the suicide bomber, and also in the act of suicide bombing killing other bodies identical to its own will be not be labelled terrorism that will then invite counter-terrorist discourses. The body on body war at the level of the black body, upon other black bodies, and even in the periphery of the empire is just any other form of, or mere violence. This violence is that is seen as the existence of the black body, even though it results in death that cannot be accounted for.

The ontological status of the African subject is so penetrated to such an extent that it is 'wrapped in desire to frustrate desire' (Gordon 1995: 104). And still, this reveals the state of understanding martyrdom, and martyrdom cannot originate even the black body were to kill itself. More troubling, what is death to what is already dead and what significance does that have or value perhaps? Coloniality of being is the state of non-ethics of war and it cannot produce the emergence of the martyr from the ontologically void racialised body of the African subject.

Death, then, to the African subject is something else—it is the death of the racialised object. Suicide bombing with its martyrdom seems to have a relational crisis at the level of the racialised body of the African subject—the racialised object cannot emerge because it is not a subject. The object is devoid of ontology and the subject has the ontology. In other words, to be a subject is to live and to be the object is to die. The destruction of the racialised body of the Africa subject has been a given, and it has been the possession of the empire. The ontological difference of the African subject differs from any other body and the existence of the African subject is the extraordinary affair. According to Gordon (1995), there is absence of being or ontology in the African subject. Suicide bombing of, and/or against that which does not exist or lacks human essence reaches another meaning of death. This is not the meaning of something emerging, but the amplification of what is being normalised—that is, the death of the black is normal and does not rouse any form of agency. This is the death of the already dead and this also implies—the martyr cannot be something or being that has not existed. The absence of ontology means—the condemned of the earth who are absent in the world. Suicide bombing in Africa has not been about politics of life as Mbembe (2003a) would implicitly highlight. The ontological resistance should exist, but auxiliary of the terrorist grounds who have planted cells that are proliferating. Also, their terrorist destruction will have no matter if it is directed to what is already dead.

Direction of non-ethics of war has been the destruction of the racialised body of the African subject. This direction is to render the body dead and for that body to kill itself is no matter at all. However, of the black body was to launch a body on body war with the white body—the empire will amplify non-ethics of war—the very scandal of coloniality of being. The body on body war at the level of the racialised body of the African subject is normal, no matter the extent of destruction. The African subject at the level of the body is both denied and suppressed—its very own crisis being the demand for humanity. In doing so, this crisis is ignored and the state of death intensifies to affirm coloniality of being. This is the form of elimination and destruction. The ontological dynamic of obliteration pervades, and in no way can there be any form of martyrdom. To challenge Mbembe, the empire can remove the mask of coloniality of being and

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really put in place absolute violence—non-ethics of war in a form of raw power. For the racialised body to resist in the form of death like a suicide bomber and bombing other racialised bodies of African subjects or even bodies of the subjects of empire, this not in pursuit of martyrdom. What remains clear is that the racialised body of the African subject presents a scandal when put in the realm of the politics of martyrdom, and thus the notion of the politics of martyrdom *qua* the African subject is an oxymoron. This is something that Mbembe does not account for, and it also implies the absence of the African subject from the realm of politics of martyrdom. It is clear that the problematic ontology of the African subject resides in coloniality of being.

Conclusion

This chapter through decolonial critical analysis has emphasised the necessity of understanding violence in Africa, through its genealogy and constitutive complexity rather than its symptoms to account for coloniality of being. This means, the tracing of violence, something that Mbembe does but seem to divorce from the continuities of colonial affinities of the empire—that is, coloniality of being. Violence is that of the libidinal and having reached sadistic proportions in postcolonial Africa, it is normalised. This is simply because it is mutating in form, character and shape, and to ignore such complexity is to absolve the colonial nature of violence that still haunts the present. Therefore, it is important to understand structural violence that hides behind the 'normal way of life'.

The notion of violence suggests that the empire is omnipotent, and sovereignty is not in the Westphalian sense, but the realm where there is a suspension of law. This clearly points to the arrogated position of the empire for being the law and the definer of what is legal and what is not. The violence that is committed by the empire is not regarded as violence, and the violence committed by ex-colonies will invite the wrath of the empire if it is the violence that threatens the interests of the empire. Though Mbembe condemns the actions of the empire with regards to its state of exception and the right confer life and warrant death, Mbembe does not directly implicate the empire of being a criminal for engaging in non-ethics of war.

The empire, for that it targets the racialised body of the African subject even to the point of death, still there is no consequence. Just like in the plantation system, as Mbembe has demonstrated, the racialised body of the African subject is a mere possession, an object, property—and also, an aberration from the norm. The racialised body of the African subject is located at the level where there is absence of ontology and that is the very that justifies the non-ethics of war. This permeates the existence of war machines that assume variety of functions, form and character exists in deathscapes. The predatory nature of war machines and even that of the state apparatus in the condition of war make the shadow of death—a deathscape to be impossible to escape.

Mbembe is right that deathscapes even at the level of the politics of martyrdom by means of suicide bombing makes death impossible to escape. Most tellingly, death is not feared by the suicide bomber because it serves the higher purpose of martyrdom. The paradox is that death matters for the suicide bomber who is the African subject, and such a death will not serve the higher purpose of wanting martyrdom. The racialised body of the African subject is already dead and does not have any sense of agency and no martyrdom even if it can commit suicide bombing. The only problem will be that if such a body engages in body on body war with the bodies of the empire, white bodies, the empire will respond through its might of sovereignty. Violence suggests that in the contemporary Africa, it has multiply genealogies, and it cannot be understood outside from the empire and its tentacles of coloniality of being—something that is absent in Mbembe's intervention. In the next chapter, Mbembe's engagement with the political thought of Fanon will be examined to argue for the relevance of Fanon.

CHAPTER SIX

MBEMBE ON FANON

Introduction

In this chapter, decolonial critical analysis is deployed to examine Mbembe's engagement with the political thought of Fanon will be examined through de-colonial turn. The main reason behind this is that Mbembe's engagement of Fanon relation to existential conditions of black subjects is foregrounded in global imperial designs. Therefore, this kind of reading alienates Fanon from being a decolonial thinker and affirms him in the genealogy of postmodernism and postcolonial thought. As such, the main aim is to challenge Mbembe's project of de-radicalising Fanon and crafting Fanon within the Euro-North American canon and sub-ordination of his thought. Fanon is engaged from the decolonial archive, and in the interregnum of the past, present and future, as mutually constitutive of one another instead of any epochal breaks.

This chapter firstly engages the relevance of Fanon and Mbembe's position on his relevance. It is argued that Fanon is still relevant and is of course, the spectre that still haunts the postcolony as subjection of black subjects continues. Secondly, the chapter argues that Fanon is a philosopher of existence and Mbembe does not see him as such, but a revolutionary, thinker, psychiatrist and so on. Fanon made the original philosophical contribution through existential phenomenology to investigate the existential conditions of black subjects. Thirdly, the chapter argues that for Mbembe, there is no anti-blackness, but just a colonial wound in need of healing. The contention here is that the colonial wound does exist, and so is anti-blackness, and these make up subjection to be structural systematised. Fourthly, the chapter engages the notion of structural violence where subjection is not explicit. The contention is that Mbembe sees subjection as characterised by what he refers to as the violence of death, and this leaves structural violence unexplained as a form of subjection. Fifthly, the concept of humanism that has been ascribed to Fanon's thought is engaged. The chapter argues that humanism fails to account to existential conditions of black

subjects who are excluded from the whole project of humanity. The chapter finally engages the notion of the emergence of the black subject outside the politics of consent and politics of consensus. De-colonial turn affirms that the liberation of the black subject, the emergence that is, should be understood in terms of the end of the world, the anti-black world to be exact.

Fanon and the now: the spectre still haunts

The relevance of Fanon is still the spectre that haunts for the fact that subjection still continues. It is through de-colonial turn that Fanon's project that was to diagnose and to antagonise subjection still forms part of the black subjectivity and this is essential in that subjection still continues to exist. Black subjectivity *qua* de-colonial turn for Fanon is still needed in order to make sense of what Fanon's project was, and is really about. Mbembe writes:

> To read Fanon today means to translate into the language of our times the major questions that forced him to stand up, to break away from the roots and to walk with others, companions on a new road the colonised had to trace on their own, by their own creativity, with indomitable will (Mbembe 2011c: 2).

Fanon was informed by the need to engage in the political act, the political will to take a stand. What Mbembe calls for is the need to revisit and to engage the questions that were formidable in Fanon thought. Though there are many of them of course, Mbembe is concerned with the contemporary challenges that are akin to what preoccupied Fanons thought. In what Mbembe (2011c) refers to as Fanon's nightmare, that is a crisis of the 21st century, Mbembe cites examples like warfare and occupation, counterinsurgents tactics and torture, secrete prisons, militarisation and plundering, that are a necropolitical force of politics. This is indeed true, and of course, at the global level. Therefore, the relevance of Fanon's thought is the crisis, and this crisis ignites in the spirit of Fanon—that is, the oppositional force that still rooted in his political project.

Therefore, it is essential for such political practice to prevail to develop Fanon's project. The development of Fanon's project as Mbembe (2012) asserts, is to take into account its exact measure. De-colonial turn contends that this measure should not be reduced to the 'after-life' of Fanon, which is the posthumous

positionality reducing Fanon to a mere text. The after-life of Fanon is defended by Alessandrini (2011: 55) who argues that it is 'an active, unsparing, and sensitive (in the Fanonian sense) engagement with his work, that is the best way to address Fanon as "our contemporary"'. The reason that Alessandrini puts forth is that though Fanon is seen as the contemporary, particularities are important to take into account due to differing geo-politics—that is, being context sensitive. The thought of Fanon, according to Mbembe (2012), is metamorphic thought. Fanon ([1952] 2008: 1) declares that '[t]he explosion will not happen today. It is too soon … or too late'. This does not suggest the thought that is caught in uncertainty of the revolutionary rupture will ensure the emergence of black subject.

The metamorphic thought of Fanon as Mbembe (2012) states, is the thought that is tenacious, and in perpetual continuity. It is the thought that is 'animated by an indestructible will to live' (Mbembe 2011: 3). By deploying de-colonial turn what emerges is that what is metamorphic cannot automatically be a spectre. The spectre on the other hand haunts, it is something that does not emerge from the state of being dead or declared so. The metamorphic thought will mean the thought that has undergone changes in the form of natural intervening action. Mbembe (2012: 20) rightly points out that 'Fanon's thinking was born of real, lived, unstable and changing experience'. Fanon's thought is engaged with subjection that relegated the existential condition of the black subject to the margins and deathscapes.

Fanon ([1952] 2008) writes, '[i]n the course of this essay we shall observe the development of an effort to understand the black-white relation'. This relation has never, even up until the present being that of mutual recognition or that which humanises the black subjection. It has been the relation of subjection. The thought of Fanon is then, that which haunts subjection, and the subjects that are entangled in it. Following de-colonial turn, it cannot therefore be the metaphoric thought, if subjection still continues. To amplify this, Fanon ([1952] 2008: 63) asserts that '[a] given society is racist or it is not'. Therefore, this demonstrates clearly the thought that has not mutated by being metamorphic, but that still carries the same weight in its interrogation density to unmask subjection is in its radical mutations.

In addition, this should provide a testimony that Fanon's thought is the spectre that still haunts. As such, the thought of Fanon advocated here is rooted in de-colonial turn that takes seriously the existential conditions of the black subjects who are at the receiving end of subjection. It therefore follows that, Mbembe's focus on the thought of Fanon as metaphoric is not to make him to be accountable to those he is speaking and living for, that is, black subjects. Fanon's thought is a sworn evidence that subjection by means of colonial oppression 'dehumani[s]es the native, or to speak plainly it turns him (sic) into an animal' (Fanon [1961] 1990: 32). It is essential to take into account that Fanon's thought encompasses the past, present and future and the three are the nodal points through that de-colonial turn it is based and they are essential to account for the existential condition to unravel subjection. The past, present and future is Fanon's context. This is the thought of co-constitutionality meaning that the one cannot be understood without the other. The relevance of Fanon and in this case, his thought by Mbembe, suggests the search for the answer(s) to this question: which Fanon is being engaged and for what purpose exactly? This question is framed in the light of the more things being said about Fanon's subjectivity and of course, to be specific, his thought in the 21st Century. The matter of that Fanon is contextually specific is due to variety of the existential conditions of the black subjects.

Mbembe's (2012) ideas are also key in understanding which Fanon is he referring to. This will also determine Mbembe's epistemic location *qua* Fanon relevance and positionality. The response of Mbembe (2012) to the question above will be zeroed into with regards to three aspects he puts forth: namely, colonial wounds, psychic damage and administration of pain. These aspects are essential in that Fanon's thought has been and continues to be, in most cases, framed along these. However, de-colonial turn exposes Mbembe's framing of the answer to the question is limited in the sense of explaining the aspects of the answer at the level of the internality of the existential conditions that signify the ontological externality of the black subject *qua* subjection. The limit to these existential questions can be largely attributed to Mbembe's framing that suggests the minimalisation or absence of subjection as black subjects are said to have agency and not regarding subjection as a negative effect in relation to the

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existential conditions of black subjects. The existential conditions of the black subjects seems not to matter in the contemporary sense, and that can be attributed to the notion that the colonial condition that Mbembe is concerned with is the one that is related to the historical moment, whereas there is a spectre. The spectre evokes fundamental questions emanating from the limits of being of the black subject. These are questions that are essential in the 21st Century.

Mbembe's project is the attempt to make the moderate and radical Fanon to exist side by side. Of course, there is nothing wrong with this, but then, it is essential to point to what end or actual purpose. In a sense, it is important to locate Fanon's relevance to a particular existential plane—that is, the existential plane of the damned of the earth (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). The purpose here is to locate Fanon within the existential conditions of the black subject and who engages in the form of critique that is foregrounded in de-colonial turn. To answer to that Fanon, it will be the Fanon in the intestines of the struggle against subjection, and to be exact—Fanon as a decolonial thinker. The political thought of Fanon then, will be the thought that is articulated and rearticulated within the course of the struggle against subjection. As such, Fanon's political thought cannot be delinked from the struggle, but he is the product of it and also its greater advocate that is seen through revolutionary commitment to see the end of subjection. In those existential conditions that Fanon finds himself, Fanon will be speaking from the structural positionality of the black subject at the receiving end of subjection. To be a pacifist, of course, is a self-defeating purpose since pacificism does not confront subjection. Such positionality will mean remaining a shell and not emerge from the existential condition of being damned. Then, it is essential to interrogate Fanon's project as done by Mbembe and not to negate the revolutionary spirit infused in Fanon's thought that confronted subjection.

Being in the existential condition of the damned is to exist in the hellish condition (Gordon 2007). The emphasis of Fanon's project through de-colonial turn is informed by the commitment to bring the hellish condition into an end. Fanon's interrogation and deeper understanding of the existential conditions of the black subject is the interrogation that is still relevant even today. The relevance of Fanon in the 21st Century is still informed by the need to free the black subject from subjection. The revolutionary spirit of Fanon is still relevant

and it is still informed by the conviction that there is subjection and the change of the century does not mean the end of subject by the change of its modus operandi. For Mbembe, to regard the colonial condition as something of the past is to ignore the fact that the colonial condition is still with the black subject. To put Fanon alien to the existential conditions that affect the black subject in the contemporary is to deny Fanon the right to be a decolonial thinker.

Fanon is, and has always been the figure of black subject. It then follows that he is still struggling against subjection that wages war against the humanity of the black subject whose humanity is always put into question. Subjection still continues to haunt the black subject and there has never been a radical break through de-colonial turn from its clutches that change to suite the contemporary conditions. For instance, during the era of colonialism black subjects were open to subjection in its raw and explicit form, but now, it has hidden itself through the everyday life and its structural constitutive is hard to explain in the realm of common sense, created by the very same subjection. Subjection has been well clarified as total oppression, 'a form of domination that afflicts every aspect of a person's life' (Birt 1997: 206). Fanon's relevance through de-colonial turn is to expose the scandal of subjection to explicate the fact that the old is the new, the new is the old. Fanon's relevance as the spectre that still haunts should be understood on the basis of black subjects being the political agent who is striving towards the state of become, what Mbembe (2010) refers to as affirmative politics and the politics of life.

The relevance of Fanon is still the spectre that haunts, and of course, this does not stand outside controversy as there are Fanon detractors. Fanon detractors are engaged in the erasure of Fanon's contribution and such erasure is deliberate (Robinson 1993; Gibson 2003; Maldonado-Torres 2008a). This erasure can be seen from Bhabha ([1986] 2008) who erases colonialism, a naked form of subjection, its absolute and systematic violence and of course, the hellish reality it creates to the existential conditions of black subjects. So, it is essential to state that Fanon is the contested figure, and beyond that, the figure of relevance to explain the existential condition of the black subject in the 21st Century. Therefore, the examination of Fanon's thought cannot only be metamorphic as Mbembe (2012) suggests, but also, Fanon's thought being a spectre that haunts.

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As such, this point to the need to examine Fanon's thought in the manner that positions him as a philosopher of existence.

Fanon as a philosopher of existence

Mbembe does not regard Fanon as a philosopher of existence, let alone, a philosopher for that matter. To position Fanon as a philosopher is to put him squarely in de-colonial turn—something that Mbembe does not acknowledge. For Mbembe, Fanon can be anything from activist, thinker, prophet, theorists, psychiatrist but not a philosopher. This is indeed the common case in most of the studies in relation to Fanon, and the contention here is that Fanon is a philosopher, the philosopher of existence of black subjects to be exact. This is how Fanon ([1952] 2008: 91) defines himself 'if I was asked for a definition of myself, I would say that I am one who waits; I investigate my surroundings, I interpret everything in terms of what I discover, I become sensitive'. This self-definition is indeed of Fanon as a philosopher of existence, and this is the existence of those who have their existence continuously and systematically militated against—the black subjects. In amplification to this, Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 93) argues thus '[i]ndeed, Fanon's extraordinary effort to describe and examine the lived experience of the black and the condemned gain him a title of a philosopher of existence'. So, for the mere fact that Fanon's concern is the existential conditions of the black subject that makes him a philosopher of existence. The black subject to Fanon is a problem of thought in that this subject is critical in the ways that is being thought, and this only appears when such a subject starts taking de-colonial turn seriously. 'Fanon pioneered the psychological, social and political investigation of anti-colonialism and what he took to be the 'Negro'' (Robinson 1993: 80). Fanon then considers, through existential phenomenology, the actual experience of being black in the anti-black world. This, according to I'Anson (2003: 4), can be referred to as 'the life world as experienced'. This means that Fanon's philosophical effort is indebted to his commitment and love for black subjects.

According to Robinson (1993), Fanon used his existential phenomenology to engage in contradictions of colonialism. This contribution is influenced by Fanon's own lived experience as a black subject in the anti-black world. It is

Fanon's intent to address the existential questions, in a diagnostic manner to the black subject, who is in need of liberation as subjection holds such a subject down. Fanon's philosophy of existence is seriously dedicated and devoted to getting to the roots of the phenomena and interrogating it while being located in it for it to emerge (Gordon 2010). Fanon is a philosopher of existence and this should be traced in the manner in which he diagnoses and exposes the colonial deception that has subjected black subject of the long dogmatic sleep of subjection. The long dogmatic sleep of subjection really explains the essence of existence in relation to the black subject. The existence is not the one desirable for the state of being, but it is the one that shows subjection in its sadistic proportions. So, the deployment of de-colonial turn means that Fanon as a philosopher of existence yearns for the awakening of the black subject from the ontological slumber that is created by subjection.

De-colonial turn through Fanon as a philosopher of existence brought to being what Gordon (2010: 200) refers to as 'the paradox of a method against method'. This is the paradox not just in a puzzling sense, but the paradox that takes the existential conditions of the black subjects seriously. According to Gordon (2010), this paradox of method against method is performed in any act of reflection. This means that Fanon in his moments of reflecting the existential conditions of the black subjects engaged the notion of the method through revealing its problems and its incapacity when it comes to the existential phenomenological aspects of the black subject. So, the paradox of a method against method is actually the authorisation of the disruption of method. The disruption of the method in Fanon's philosophy of existence is the means of introducing the black subject who has been an object to become a subject proper. That is, the black subject is the one that is in charge of method, and this is the crux of Fanon's philosophy where in that antagonisms are created within method. According to Gordon (2010: 202), 'Fanon advocated the position of embodied interrogatives, of human being re-entering a relationship of questioning'. Fanon as a philosopher of existence exposed colonial impositions that hide behind method, and that create the justification of subjection and the hellish existential conditions for the black subject.

The originality of Fanon is the systematic examination of the colonial condition and its aftermath makes him a philosopher of existence. Fanon as a philosopher of existence grounds his philosophy to existential phenomenology that qualifies the examination of the existential conditions of the black subject. In addition to this, Fanon applies the sociodiagnostic analysis to understand 'the wider social situation' (Gibson 2003: 46). The primary purpose of this philosophical blending is to understand how subjection filters through the lives of black subjects and making sure that they are ontologically void. It is clear from the above that the understanding of existential conditions needs to be grounded in Fanon's existential phenomenology that is rooted in sociodiagnostic analysis to understand the existential conditions of the black subject. This indeed demands the philosophical effort not only of making sense of the condition, but being actional to facilitate the emergence of subjectivities that were ontologically closed off. This is the philosophical grounding that aims to bring the hidden into bare, and unmask the unreal of the so-called reality. The reality of Fanon is that 'his own suffering as a black other [is] scripted by a raciali[s]ed authoritative discourse' (Nielsen 2011: 364). The philosophy of existence in the Fanonian sense is to expose what subjection is, and on the other hand, to diagnose options that the black subjects can engage in to facilitate emergence and the ontological quest. To expose subjection is to make it what it is, a scandal.

Mbembe (2012) is concerned with therapeutic paradigms that black subjects must mobilise as they face dehumanising violence of colonialism that Fanon tried to heal. The therapeutic paradigm does not change anything since the black subject does not need any form of healing, but being anew in the new world free from subjection. Mbembe of course, does not account for Fanon's philosophy of existence where in that therapeutic paradigms will be insufficient to explain or remedy the hellish existential conditions of black subjects. The existence of the black subject under the crushing weight of subjection demanded and still demands philosophical commitment to diagnose and unmask subjection, not prescribing therapeutic paradigms. Judy (1996) asserts that Fanon's philosophical intervention is of necessity since there has been no philosophical thought of the black subject.

De-colonial turn as the philosophical intervention of Fanon is the exposé of subjection in its institutionalisation, naturalisation and normalisation of subjection that militates against the existence of the black subject. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a), Fanon's philosophy of existence was informed by the need to clarify the existence of pathologies that plagued the ordinary life of the black subject. These pathologies create hellish existential conditions that are seen as justifiable in relation to the black subject. The black subject being trapped in this hellish circle, to break it, 'there is no genuine way out' (Gibson 2003: 42). Caught in the state of constant comparison, whiteness projects itself as the ego ideal. The life of the black subject signifies pathologies that serve as the standard marker in relation to white subjects. Fanon engaged the black subjects as problem of thought, and the philosophical manner that is assertive. The black subject was not only the problem, but subjection that makes the black subject to be a problem. 'That is, to be black is to be already interfered with, violated by, a whiteness that comes from inside out. A whiteness that not only distrusts but hates' (Marriot 2000: 79).

Fanon, through the deployment of existential phenomenology engaged in what he titles 'the fact of blackness' (Fanon [1952] 2008). The existential conditions, the pathological and the hellish were closer to Fanon, as he himself, was the other, but the virtue of being raced. 'Look a Negro' the gaze that squeezes out the ontological essence of the subject, being 'an object in the midst of other objects' (Fanon ([1952] 2008: 82). According to Fuss (1999: 296) 'Fanon implies that the black man (sic) under colonial rule finds himself relegated to a position of other than the other'. Fuss continues to assert that the implications for black exclusion are immediate and devastating. Not only the gaze excludes Fanon, it dehumanised him. 'The racism phenomena has its root in the visual field of perception when the white other directs his/her gaze upon Fanon' (Mahendran 2007). This means the black subject is 'degraded, polluted, diseased' (Gibson 1999: 345). The assertion of the black subject though it seems impossible is 'to enjoin or reaffirm the opposition of actuality and possibility' (Marriot 2007: 231). This means, making the black experience to be visible and to account for 'the idea of race as "ontological"' (Mills 1998: xvi).

This is the existence that militates for the emergence through de-colonial turn and as such, such a philosophical effort through existential phenomenology allows Fanon to philosophically meditate the form of life that is accorded to the black subject, and to demand the form of life that subjection is not willing to concede. For the mere fact that subjection still a pathological lie that still refuses to concede, it is clear that such conceding is the end of subjection itself, the end that mean that life will change in the form that is already is. This end of life will not mean the free and just world as the liberal propaganda has it, but the form of life that will be a nightmare for the oppressor. This not meaning subjection of the oppressor, but the situation where the oppressor is not imagining being alive with what is considered substitutedly dead. The philosophy of existence in Fanon's thought really means taking ontology seriously since '[t]he black man (sic) has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man' (sic) (Fanon [1952] 2008: 83). The philosophy of existence of Fanon means that there is a need to understand the structural positionality of the black subject, the relational capacity or the lack thereof, and the workings of subjection in denying the ontological significance that is due to the black subject.

The ontology of the black subject is what already exists in Mbembe's thinking, and as such, it needs to be asserted. So, it means that it is the responsibility of the black subject to emerge that is definitely true. In addition to that, Mbembe's thinking suggests that an assertion means that black subjects can counter subjection with relatively ease, since black subjects have the ontological capacity that is inherent from within. But then, what de-colonial turn is concerned with is not ontology is *per ser* but the emergence of such an ontology since it does not exist in relation to the existentiality of the black subject. Fanon ([1952] 2008:82) affirms this to say '[o]ntology—once it is finally admitted as leaving existence by the wayside—does not permit us to understand the being of the black *subject since it is a subject that is devoid of ontological essence'* (emphasis added). The ontology of the black subject is that of the state of constant comparison, and the comparison that is asymmetrical in intent since the white subject is the possessor of ontology that is then denied to the black subject. The denial of ontology exists in the manner of inferiorising the black subject and as such, creating the existential crisis—the hellish existence of the black subject. Ontology, for Fanon,

as the philosophy of existence, is not the starting point, but subject formation is where black subjects will be in pursuit of ontology in order to emerge. So, for Mbembe, this is not of importance since he does not see subjection as the very thing that denies and strips the being of its ontological essence.

According to Fuss (1999: 322), 'Fanon's work also draws our attention to the historical and social conditions of identification'. This being illuminated through existential phenomenological exponent of his thought, it means the proper grounding of the black subject for the purpose of emergence. Fanon's role as a philosopher of existence is grounded on philosophy as, and being preoccupied with the notion of the existence of being—that is, being-in-the-world (Manganyi 1973; Gordon 1995; More 2008). Amplifying this position, Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 130) states '[f]or Fanon, the examination of the colonial racial context in that he lived demanded an existential phenomenological approach'. The use of existential phenomenology approach was seen as necessity to examine subjection. This necessity is grounded on the pathologies that afflict black subjects. The philosophy of existence in Fanon's thought is the will to fight for the emergence of the ethical for the emergence of the black subject as a political subject. As Gordon (1996: 77) states, '[a]t the heart of the existential phenomenological approach is the question of human studies in general'.

The denial of ontology is the very essence of colonial deception that is the antithesis of liberation. Fanon ([1961]1990) argues that the dominant forms of criticisms do not expose the ethical limits that are inherent in subjection, and they are also not radical enough. According to Mbembe (2012: 20), '[f]or Fanon, the irrepressible and relentless pursuit of freedom enquired us to mobilise all life reserves. It drew the colonised into a fight into the death—a fight that they were called upon to assume as their duty and that could not be delegated to others'. De-colonial turn makes Fanon's philosophy of existence, to have consciousness and it to be centred at the level of existence. This also tied to the nature of being that black subjects were structurally positioned at the receiving end of subjection. As the call for concern, consciousness is necessary and it is something that warrants a philosophical examination. As Judy (1996) states, 'consciousness emerges with experience and it is not a consciousness *of* experience'. This means, Fanon's philosophy of experience is the philosophy that is mediated

within experience. Fanon struggled as he wrote—he was at the receiving end of subjection when he unmasked it. Therefore, Fanon's philosophy of existence means that Fanon wrote from the existential condition of a black subject, it is the philosophy from *within*.

What does the black subject want? Put another way, why the black? This is the philosophical mode of questioning akin to Fanon to problematise the existential condition of the black subject in the world that intensifies subjection towards the existence of the black subject. The ultimate answer being that of wanting to be white, the black subject in assuming such positionality is the flight from responsibility; it is bad faith (Gordon 1995). In providing this answer in the affirmative form, it does not mean it is the end. The form of bad faith of wanting to be white was the inferiority complex of the black subject and that has made such a subject to be engaged in what Fanon ([1952] 2008) refers to as the state of 'constant comparison'. What does the black subject wants is the question that Mbembe (2012) does not pose. The challenge, therefore, comes to understand this question in light of what Mbembe assumes that black subjects have something in their possession, and there is agency. This is in the light of Mbembe's thought that black subjects are the same with white subjects and colonisation was just an event. The black subject is said to have ontological essence and in the same light as with the white subjects. Therefore, the black subject in the Fanonian sense as Mbembe suggests should engage in the process of self-care, self-creation. In sum, black subjects have the opportunity, in the 21st Century, to heal itself. This is true, but then, when de-colonial turn is put at the centre Mbembe does not mention the necessity of the existential conditions that needs to change fundamentally.

Mbembe's engagement of Fanon is not that grounds Fanon in philosophical consciousness. That is why the existence of the black subject through the pursuit of liberation is not holding a radical break. For Mbembe, the black subject must engage in the creation of the self, self-care and this not being done through the proper accounting of subjection. Mbembe's position on Fanon has some implication since it seems to leave subjection on the wayside essentially means that Fanon is not the philosopher of existence. But then, for the mere fact that Fanon was the philosopher of existence concerned with hellish existential

conditions that mechanistically and systematically constituted to tear the black flesh apart. This has led Fanon ([1952] 2008: 87) to say 'I am laid bare'. The existence of the black subject has been that of being torn apart, and the task of Fanon as the philosopher of existence was not only about suturing but as Fanon ([1952] 2008: 90) states '[w]ith enthusiasm I set cataloguing and probing my surroundings'.

What does the black subject wants amidst the hellish existential conditions that eliminates and do not offer choices? It is clear that as the philosopher of liberation, Fanon probes for the understanding of this choiceless condition in order to make choices that are in the middle of subjection, hard to make. Fanon philosophy is existential phenomenology and it is concerned with the existential conditions of the black subject. In the choicessless condition, subjection has created the dispossession of choice. The choices that are of concern are choices of liberation. The choiceless condition means that the available 'choices' are those in favour of subjection. Black subjects are under the pressure of subjection that determines choices. Mbembe's thought in relation to Fanon, suggests that choices have already been available, and Fanon did not as a black subject, exist in the choiceless situation. The choiceless situation that is the predicament of black subjects is always that of being rendered vulnerable. Their social lives are not the ones that are confronted by choices. In amplification to this, Fanon according to Sexton (2011:15) is concerned with 'the social life of death'. This means that the hellish existential conditions of the black subjects are inescapable. To understand this choicelessness, Fanon's philosophy of existence should be understood as 'meta-political no less than it is metaphysical' (Sexton 2011: 15).

Drawing from Fanon, Gordon (2007) calls for the articulation of grammar of meaning; such that enables the articulation of the imaginary of the human subordination in the modern world. In the lived-reality, Gordon goes further to state that Fanon, in his thinking and articulation engaged the existential condition and the Manichean structure 'speaking from that grammar of articulation' (Gordon 2007: 10). This is precisely because, Fanon wrote of the disaster in all his works—a hellish zone. The black condition is that of being, or finding itself amongst other objects and the condition itself is a 'sealed into that crushing objecthood' (Fanon [1952] 2008: 82). Fanon rejects ontology in that it

does not help to understand the black condition in that: 'the black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man' (Fanon [1952] 2008: 82).

Therefore, it is clear that to live for the black subject is simply also to die. The black subject even if it engages in the process of recreating the self as Mbembe (2012) suggests that will be useless as long as the existential conditions that are designed by subjection do not come to an end. It is, therefore, problematic to regard the black subject as having absolute choices for its existential conditions created and imposed in absence of choice. Mbembe is faulty in this instance precisely because being in the hellish existential conditions; subjection exists as the force that eliminates choices. According to JanMohamed (1983) the limited choice of black subjects is what has been imposed by subjection and lack of political power that makes the subjects more vulnerable. What is left in the existential condition is confusion and pathology that make it difficult for philosophical consciousness to emerge. Being human is the liberation of the black subject, and that is the emphasis of Fanon as the philosopher of existence. But then, as it was in Fanon's context, and to the contemporary where his thought is a spectre, the problem of choice as the political is a serious philosophical challenge.

The fact of (anti-)blackness

In the engagement of Fanon Mbembe (2012) makes no mention to anti-blackness, but just a colonial wound in need of healing. Not seeing anti-blackness as structural systematisation of continuity of subjection is to ignore the positionality of the black subject in the anti-black world. De-colonial turn shows that the colonial wound does exist, and so is anti-blackness, and these make up subjection. According to Fanon ([1952] 2008), the black and white encounter suggests the black is in constant comparison to the white, and the thing is to massage the ego ideal. In confronting the inferior complex the black subject has been in the existential crisis in the world that is anti-black. As Gordon (1997) notes, anti-black racism espouses a world that is ultimately better off without blacks. Black subjects from such a world '"must" provide justification for their continued presence' (Gordon 1997: 6). Mills (1998: 126) is correct to state that the fact of anti-blackness should be understood from 'the idea of race as a global

system'. What informs this position is that 'the planet as a whole is divided by a racial metaphysic that partitions persons from sub-persons, who are linked by a reciprocatory ontological engine' (Mills 1998: 127).

As Fanon ([1952] 2008: 165) points out, '[s]ince in all periods the Negro has been an inferior, he (sic) attempts to react with a superior complex'. Such a reaction is an oxymoron since that inferior complex is directed to those who are the weakest, and who happen to be in the same existential plane of subjection. So, the reaction of superior complex is the subjection of those who are at the receiving end of subjection, but those who are the victims of subjection itself. This means then that the subjection in this sense is by black anti-blacks towards black subjects, the black subjects oppressing their own. According to Mahendran (2007), black subjectivity is not concerned with race as a concept, but race as lived reality that creates the anti-black world where the existential conditions of black subjects cannot be reduced to concepts. The dehumanisation project of subjection has condemned the notion of race as lived experience by criminalising the black subject for articulating and asserting their own ontological density. For Mahendran, the existential condition of black subjects is not only the bodily experience but a concept/reality and cognition/psychology.

This brings alienation, as Fanon ([1952] 2008) argues, something that means the condition is 'pathological state'—and that is, illness. On the contrary, the body that sees itself as the subject, 'it does not experience the body as something outside itself' (Manganyi 1973: 30). Gordon (2007) engages with the condition of appearance, the black skin and it is through this condition of experience where the non-existence of black is unraveled. 'There is a zone of nonbeing, an extraordinary sterile and arid region, an utterly naked declivity where an authentic upheaval can be born' (Fanon [1952] 2008: 2). Since the Manichean structure is oppressive and uses race as the organising principle, Gordon (2007:5) argues that such a structure is the one embedded in anti-black racism and the problematic presence of the black's subject. Gordon brings to the fore that the conditions of appearance, that the form of emergence; and that is, the black skin that reflects the ontology of non-being, and he points out to Fanon's existential political thought in that the black subject appears as something.

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Since the world is anti-black, the black subject cannot have the 'ethical position in the world' (Fanon [1952] 2008: 166). The structure of the world should be understood in terms of conceptual order. The anti-black world is characterised by 'the intensification of anti-blackness' (Martinot and Sexton 2003: 176). The anti-black world masks its sadistic elements through liberty, equality and justice, that the anti-black world, from the structural positionality of blackness, means their very antithesis. The anti-black world is the world of subjection that poses as reason and de-colonial turn exposes the anti-black world for what it is—the world of unreason (Gordon 2010). The manner in which blackness is conceptualised, or being-black-in-the-world is the figure that is the aberration of being. Being the other, simply explains that the world that the black subject inhabits is the anti-black world. Drawing from Fanon, Wilderson (2003a: 18) argues that '[b]lackness is a positionality of "absolute dereliction"'. So, the positionality of the world, that is anti-black, makes the black subject to be positioned in existential crisis—the state of permanent subjection. Fanon's understanding of the world as anti-black is to get into the heart of ontology. I'Anson (2003), affirming Fanon's view, argues that a feeling of inferiority is made to be a feeling of non-existence. The anti-black world is, according to Sexton (2011: 27), 'a world structured by a negative categorical imperative'. This is the core of the category of the inferiority and superiority to keep subjection well intact.

The anti-black world is also a structure of imposition of pathologised existence, and that it renders the black life to be non-existent. This then, explains the existential predicament of the black subject in the anti-black world. This world is tyrannical in form and character, and as such, it justifies itself by rendering the structural positionality of the black body is that which should be invaded. The black body then reduced to a tabula rasa, a razzmatazz in need of the disciplinary invasion. As such, the lawlessness that is in need of discipline makes the black body to be magnetic to bullets, the justification of subjection through its gratitious violence (Wilderson 2003a). The anti-black world is informed by the obsessive gaze and its fantasy, which transform themselves into sadistic elements of subjection. This then explains the extent through that the ontology of blackness is nonexistent, and being black being just a thing.

Fanon ([1952] 2008) argues that to be a black subject is to be a phobogenic object. To be such an object is to trigger all sorts of phobias that systematically attack the black body to make subjection justifiable. This makes the pathologisation of black subjects to be justifiable. Such pathologising originates from what Fanon refers to as neurotic reactions. They create hate and derogation of black subjects, thus justifying the unjustifiable. The unjustifiable is subjection and its victims are converted into stereotypical and mythical vices. Marriot (2000: 67) points out that these vices assume the "idea of exhibition" through 'the production and mediation of racist hatred'.

According to Gibson (2003), Fanon considers the possibility of another structure of feelings in that inferiority and inadequacy must be purged. The purge will not yield the desired results if there is no diagnosis of the social situation that will then unpack how subjection outplays itself to ensure that the structural positionality of the black subjects is that of hellish existential conditions. The existential conditions of the black subjects are hellish in that subjection creates the anti-black world that 'expresses […] racism in an extreme [a]nti-black phobic' (Gibson 2003: 51). In addition to this, the anti-black world possesses 'the lens of racist re-presentation' (Gordon 1996: 77). Subjection finds its expression from the base of racist assumptions that are supported by infrastructure of power as the base. As such, this means that Fanon having occupied the colonial anti-black world, it was and still therefore necessary to bring such a world to an end through de-colonial turn so that the black subject can emerge.

Mbembe (2011) has a different take by suggesting that Fanon was concerned with bringing the end to colonialism through absolute praxis and the goal being of course to produce life and free the world from the burden of race. Contrary to Mbembe, the world is not burdened by race, it is sustained by it, hence its anti-black positionality. Race is not a burden to the world, but the organising tool (Gordon 2000). The struggle by the black subject is the one that should be formed along its own lines of defense and antagonism, and as such, the idea of the absolute praxis will not be sustainable if the demands of the black subjects are calling for the end of the world. The end of the world being the end of anti-black world, and it is organised around anti-blackness as its source of life cannot survive without it.

Being in the anti-black world, the black subject is faced with being ontologically void. Being ontologically void, the black subject has no ontological density to determine, define and appropriate. The ontological status of blackness is void because the black subject is bared to define, frame and create the world as they see it and the world that the black subject inhabits is the inhospitable world—the anti-black world. The black subject cannot have a future since the anti-black world is made in the exclusion and elimination of blackness. This has led Gordon (1996: 79) to argue that '[b]lackness in an anti-black world is always superfluous'. This is what is attributed to the white subject who has ontological density and ability to do what the black subject cannot do, since the world is not anti-white, but anti-blacks. The world therefore, assumes not only the positionality of exclusion of the black, but subjection. Fanon's ontological concern is the critical revision of the world.

> Blackness, however, cannot be defined as primarily empirical nor understood as the non/property of particular subject, but should be understood as an integral structuring assemblage of the politics that, rather than the succumbing to the brutal facticity of blackness, introduces invention into existence, as Fanon argues (Weheliye 2008: 324).

Blackness is the problem of appearing in the world that renders it invisible at the ontological level. By way of militating against blackness, the world with its anti-black position excludes blackness from the real of humanity. In this configuration, 'blackness signifies something like the antithesis of being' (Maldonado-Torres 2008a: 104). This makes the black subject to have a problem in terms of ontology. As Fanon ([1952] 2008) remarks, the ontology of the black subject exists by the way side. The nothingness of blackness officialises the hellish existential conditions as mechanistically orchestrated by the Manichean structure. Ontology without the lived existence in Fanon's thought is problematic as blacks are ontologically void. The anti-black world is the rigified world that constitutes a panoptic surveillance that policies black bodies (Nielsen 2011). This is the world that is structured by asymmetric power relations that ensure that power militates against black subjects. As Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 106) asserts, '[t]he coloni[s]ed loses all the ontological weight in the eyes of the coloni[s]er'. The absence of ontology warrants subjection to operate in free

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reign. Subjection maintains bondage; it also ensures that the black subject is a dehumanised entity. In no way can there be the emergence of the black subject while anti-blackness pervades the whole scene of the political. To Mbembe (2012), the idea of the anti-black world does not exist, and the sadistic proportions of subjection are relegated to the colonial period. For the mere fact that the anti-black world is still a lived reality, this means that subjection is ritualised to render the sadistic acts legitimate, hence the reign of impunity. As Wilderson (2003c) argues, the modalities of violence and empathy are that of subjection.

Blackness is born and lives on the night, and this night is the long one and with a dogmatic sleep. The waking of the black subject from this night by means of de-colonial turn is unwanted, since this will mean the end of subjection. The black body is criminalised and this means that it must be policed and militated against. The existential condition of the black subject is pervaded by violence and appropriation where death is permissible through the logic and justification of racism. Mbembe (2012) does not dwell on this uncomfortable positionality that in effect will ignite the revolt inherent in the being that is yet to explode. Though Mbembe highlights subjection but in nowhere in his thought where he engages the notion of anti-black racism. To Mbembe, subjection is and was a mere colonial practice. What is essential for Mbembe is the creation of another self, the black who is free from the burden of race, as if blacks impose the idea of race upon themselves, whereas they are racialised. The process of racialisation is the one that justifies subjection. Being racially conscious means that black subjects are taking stock of what contributes to their subjection.

Mbembe (2012) calls for the creation of the self or self-creation, the self of the black subject that does not take subjection into account and blind to the world that practices anti-blackness is impossible. The subjectivity that can only prevail is that Fanon is in opposition to anti-blackness, this will even expose the scandal of having black subjects blaming themselves for the subjection that they did not cause. The creation of the self-discourse in relation to Fanon, if it does not include the ways in that to counter subjection and bring it to the complete end, it is a mere futuristic project devoid of any form and content in terms of how to counter subjection. The futuristic discourses negate or completely deny the past,

as if the past is not having any bearing in the present and also the future. Mbembe's evoking of Fanon's statement of not being the slave of the past is not expanded upon and not also linked to subjection. Such omissions leave the structures of anti-black world that must come to an end largely intact.

To engage on Fanon in relation to anti-blackness points out the markers inherent structures of subjection concealing oppression, injustice, genocide, incarceration and so on. To be the black subject in the anti-black world is to be criminal and punishment even by the way of death is justified. Death is justified as blacks are dead while being alive. If these structures of the world are anti-black, to be black is to be structurally positioned in criminality. It is clear that Mbembe does not engage anti-blackness as his conception of blackness is the cause for celebration and the phenomena that is confronted with myriad possibilities to be outside the idea of race. Mbembe's understanding of blackness is framed along the lines of politics of possibility, complexity, multiplicity and hybridity—their end of course being the pursuit of transcendence. The notion of transcendence exists while subjection is still largely intact, and how can there be transcendence is there is subjection. The making and design of the anti-black world points to the fact that racism that is hidden in structures that produce anti-blackness in multiple forms that are institutionalised, naturalised and normalised. The special design of the world is akin to the idea of race. This is amplified by JanMohamed who writes:

> I am emphasi[s]ing race as a pivotal to the relations in colonial society in order to provide a phenomenologically accurate description of the colonial experience and to avoid two types of distortions. One view misrepresents reality by pretending that racial differences are unimportant in colonial society and this need to embarrass or concern us; while the other view distorts the world by perceiving everything in terms of class conflict and this becomes callous to the complexity of lived human experience (JanMohamed 1983: 7-8).

Geographical trends are tied to the racial trends. Space is racialised to facilitate the classification of populations. As such, race is the organising principle (Gordon 2000). The configuration of the world, in its anti-black positionality is to centre the idea of race. Anti-blackness then makes blackness to be relegated to the stage that is even worse than that of animality. The world is then informed by

sadistic elements that create the suspension of civility and life in the world with regards to black subjects. This is the world that is informed by suspension of ethics and non-ethics of war also do feature. The ethics that apply to white subjects who are considered humans change by means of being suspended when they are applied to the black subjects. The ethics in the logic of subjection that expresses itself through anti-blackness positionality creates a condition of black subject not only being criminalised, but their existence as crime itself. So, the anti-black world with its sadistic desires is there to do justice with putting the black subject under the continuous and systematic subjection.

> Overdetermination saturates consciousness in the flesh with the quality of being a thing, a form of being-in-itself. With such weight, the black body is confronted by the lived-experience of its absence. A binary world is imposed upon it that functions as a constant source of evasion (Gordon 1996: 78).

This creates the invisibility of blacks in the ontological sense, and '[t]he body is surrounded by an atmosphere of certain uncertainty' (Fanon [1952] 2008: 83). Being overdetermined means that to exist as the black subject is to be a problem. So, the black subject is made by the anti-black world to be a problem of existence. This is a form of self-justification of the anti-black world to absolve itself from responsibility, and also of being criminality implicated. So, this means that subjection with its devastation to the black existential condition cannot be a crime, since blacks are a crime by virtue of their existence. For Fanon, the anti-black world needs to be understood in relation to being black in the anti-black world. Fanon, through de-colonial turn aims to find out how is it to be dead while being alive, and how life seems to differ to different people on the basis of their race. It is essential then to point out that the anti-black world is the created on non-existence of the black subject.

The anti-black world guarantees nothing to the black subject who is unwanted in the configuration of this world. Anti-blackness clearly shows that the world is different when it comes to blacks and the violence that is meted to the black subject becomes self-justified. There is no anti-black world for Mbembe, but the universal that 'all humans' must gravitate towards. Blacknesss has to recognise itself and this should not be done as if it is asking or gravitating towards the

world as if the world must affirm its existence. Blackness has to do it, that is, to affirm existence in its own terms and to chart the configuration of the world, the change of the world as it is. To live in the anti-black world as the black subject is the structure of impossibility (Wilderson 2010). As Weheliye (2008: 322) notes, 'conditions of possibility lose their ontological thrust because, their limitations are rendered abundantly clear'.

For the mere fact that blackness is overdetermined without, this means that to see the black is to see the black (Gordon 2000). That is, to see the black subject is not to see the human, but the representational figure of something, something in the limits of humanity and of course, there will be no means to take the existential conditions of a thing seriously. According to Wilderson (2010), blackness is an accumulated and fungible object that is outside any form of subjection that can be meted against human. This is to say that the suffering of blackness cannot be comprehended in that subjection is directed towards non-humans and who of course, are experiencing violence in sadistic proportions and their hellish existence is turned normal. In addition to this, Hartman (1997) posits that 'suffering must be materiali[s]ed and evidenced'. This is because blackness is entangled in subjection that meters out, as Wilderson (2010) says, the gratuitous violence. This affirms Fanon's positionality of the absence of ontology of the black subject. It is in this absence that violence takes the routini[s]ed form 'the fashioning of identity, and the process of individuation and normali[s]ation' (Hartman 1997: 4). As Wilderson (2010) states, blacks are openly vulnerable to the whims of the anti-black world with its sadistic and gratuitous violence.

Fanon (1967: 36) has this to say, '[r]ather unexpectedly, the racist group points accusingly to a manifestation of racism among the oppressed'. For Tibbs and Woods (2008), the anti-black world is formulated in the form of a dual terror of violence and denialism that are constitutive elements of subjection. Race denialism creates a condition where 'race is read off the base' (Wilderson 2003b: 225). The construction of anti-blackness is to render black subjects blameworthy, while absolving anti-blackness of responsibility. Anti-blackness is said not to exist since there is no subjection. Subjection in this case being understood in the explicit form and the failure to locate it in structures that perpetuate a condition where blacks are still a problem and have themselves to blame by engaging in

continued victimhood. This creates race denialism that keeps the invisibility of subjection, rendering subjection being a myth since there is liberty, equality and justice as the ideals that the world is striving towards.

According to Wilderson, race denialism is the act of crowding out the ensemble of questions relevant for the ontological base of black subjects. Its main purpose is to silence the calls that point to sadism and despotic terror of accumulation and fungibility (Wilderson 2003a). Race denialism that finds its origin and rise in the intestines of the anti-black world create a claim as Appiah (1992) has said that there are no races, and that also implying that there is no racism. According to Martinot and Sexton (2003: 178), '[t]he liberal ethos looks at racism as social ignorance, something characteristic of the individual that can be solved at a social level through education and democratic procedure'. Race denialism sees race and racism in terms of the individual acts and not it being a structural issue that sustains subjection. This being the logic of the anti-black world, race denialism is the pedagogy of racial violence with a human face, the one that is structurally constituted at best. For the mere fact that the anti-black world is a concern for the existential condition so of the black subject it means that this world should not be reformed. The anti-black world 'is saturated by anti-[b]lack solidarity' (Wilderson 2010: 58). Mbembe does not hold such a view in terms of the existential conditions of the black subject, since the existential crisis, though colonial in making cannot be attributed to colonialism or any form of subjection.

The long night of structural violence

Mbembe (2001a) traces the conception of the long night of subjection, its causes and actuality in the colonial era. The concept of the long night of subjection in the postcolony suggests its end, and Mbembe in this regard affirms the position that the concept of the long night as 'that night devoid of consciousness' and that 'has penetrated almost everywhere and virtually nothings escapes it, since to a large extent, it has become the normal state of things' (Mbembe 2001a: 173). Mbembe sees this night being characterised by what he refers to as the violence of death, but then, this is not the reference to structural violence as a form of subjection, but absolute violence. It is Fanon ([1961] 1990) who foresaw that the long night is still yet to be in continuity in the postcolony. Mbembe (2001a) is

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correct to point the origin of the long night of subjection to colonialism and by extension in the existential condititions that are said not to be subjection, and hence ignoring structural violence. Mbembe does however point the continuities of the long night of subjection in the postcolony, but that are not structural violence. The long night of subjection with regards to the structural positionality of the black subject is subjection by means of structural violence. If subjection is the long night, it follows then that there is a dogmatic sleep where the awakening of the black subject is denied.

Subjection of the black subjects should not be understood as something that merely occurs at the levels of the psyche as Mbembe does. The long night is the existential predicament to the black subject and it means that there has never been any light of the day or any other form of light during the night. Mbembe correctly poses existential questions thus:

> How is it possible to live while going to death, while being somehow already dead? And how can one live *in death,* be already dead, while being-there—while having not necessarily left the world or being part of the spectre—and when the shadow that overhangs existence has not disappeared, but on the contrary weighs ever more heavily? (Mbembe 2001a: 201).

This night constitutes the shadow of death, and this is tatamount to what Farmer (2002) call a 'deadly monotony'. This means, the existential condition of black subjects is the state of predictability. As such, death is expected, since existence is survival and not life. Structural violence is also Patterson (1982) notion of 'social death', where the subject is dead while being alive. For Patterson, the desocialisation and depersonalisation of black subjects render them dead. This death is in the form of the death of the subject and the death of subjectivity, all that are reinforced by subjection that determines the forms of life. Wilderson (2003b), drawing from Patterson, defines social death as a metaphor *that* comes into being through violence that kills the thing *that is the black subject* such that the concept might live. For Wilderson, social death is a scandal that is hard to articulate in the absence of structures that should support the positionality of the black subject. The positionality of the black subject is the spectre that still haunts due to its disarticulated historical groundings. Mbembe regards this form of death as violent death where everything ends up badly. The capacity of subjection to

determine the form of life stems from the fact that life can be liquidated without any form of consequence if it relates to black subjects.

> Colonialism renders invisible the lines of power and control both within the colony and especially—through the spatial and administrative technologies of distancing between absent coloni[s]ing power and people and their coloni[s]ed counterparts. This sadistic invisibility makes possible the partial hiding from the view of the source of characteristic control, domination, degration, and oppression that is the mark of the colonial condition (Goldberg 1996: 187).

From the standpoint of de-colonial turn, the long night is still the part and parcel of subjection, and it takes the form of structural violence. According to Farmer (2002), structural violence is a force that is mechanistically inherent in social forces raging from poverty to racism and death. Structural violence is the violence that is not visible and it is hidden in structures. For Farmer, structural violence negates the capacity to see, name, describe and explain. It creates the absence of grammar of suffering and the state of noncommunicability (Wilderson 2010). What makes the night of subjection to be long is structural violence that hides the sources and coordinates of subjection. The notion of the long night of subjection means that there has never been any form of historical break from subjection, but its continuity. The long night of subjection creates a dogmatic sleep and this incapacitates the ability to see the horisons that are essential to break from structural violence. In order to understand this, it is essential to provide this existential predicament posed by Martinot and Sexton (2003: 170): '[w]hy do things get worse after each hard fought revelation? Where do we locate the genius of the system? Something is left out of the account; it runs through our fingers, escaping our grasp'.

De-colonial turn makes subjection to be understood at the level of existential conditions and from the vantage point of black subjects who life it day-by-day. This will provide diagnosis of structural violence and how it is directed to those who are at the receiving end of subjection. The colonial experience, that is the long night of subjection, carries with it both the trauma and confusion and it is essential 'to begin with a description of the generic colonial situation' (JanMohamed 1983: 2). For Fanon ([1961]1990), the colonial situation is over determined by violence. The existential dimension of the black subject equates to

perpetual violence. This remains so as subjection continues to exist. It is not clear from Mbembe's (2012) position whether he takes cognisance of how subjection still continues to haunt the existential condition of the black subject, that is by all means, is defined by structural violence.

Mbembe (2012) identifies three dimensions of colonial violence. The first dimension of violence was institutional that was the entrenchment of subjugation by force, dependent on force and maintained by force. This is the form of violence that was visible and it was permissible and morally justified by those executing it. The second dimension of colonial violence is empirical and as Mbembe (2012: 22) notes '[i]t inmeshed the daily life of the native in nodes, network and detail'. This is the form of violence that was existential since it determined, in arbitrary fashion, the subjected life of the black subject. The third and the last dimension of colonial violence is a phenomena that touches on 'both the senses, the psychic and affective domains' (Mbembe 2012: 22). This is the form of violence that led to what Fanon ([1961] 1990) refers to as war psychiatric phenomena that creates and pepertuates disorders affecting behaviour and thought. The main aim of this violence was to render the subjectivity of the black subject sterile, and also to pacify the black subject to liquidate all sites of imagination and the possibility to resists or to become conscious. As Fanon testifies:

> Because it is a systematic negation of the other person and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity, colonialism forces people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: 'In reality, who am I?' (Fanon [1961] 1990: 200).

According to Mbembe (2012) the choice of the colonised subject, who happens to choose violence rather than being subjected to it, this enables the restoration of the self. The subject is said to know the self and in answering the 'who am I' question through what Mbembe's notion of 'self-creation' discussed earlier. For Mbembe, violence of the black subject is always a response, and it is not violence for its own sake but self-creation. The negation of being, in part, of those who are at the receiving end of subjection breeds aggressiveness. What is of concern though is the direction through which such aggressiveness takes, and

by and large, through structural violence, the aggressiveness of the back subjects is directed to other black subjects. It means then, the black subject engages in self-inhalation as, while seeing it as if it is the means to exorcise violence. So those who at the receiving end of subjection engage in the process of self-inhalation. They are aggressive towards each other and they cannot point the source of their own oppression. Structural violence is the source of the existential conditions of the black subject pits black subjects against each other. In the process the black subject who exists in the long night of colonial oppression, prevent other from pursuing and obtaining liberation.

De-colonial turn reveals that structural violence is war and war is structural violence. Structural violence makes the logic of disorder and death not only at the level of the symbolic, but that of the real (Wilderson 2010). According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a: 75), '[t]he opposition between ethics and politics is mirrored in the opposition between peace and war, and between ordinary social life of an elitist exceptionalism'. The elimination of the opposite between the ethics and politics can come into being if structural violence does not exist. In such a condition, then there will be justice (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). Structural violence being not symbolic but real suggests that structural violence is absolute violence against the structural positionality of blackness. Being at the level of the real, Wilderson (2010: 75) argues that 'the grammar of suffering of the [b]lack itself is on the level of the real'. Structural violence produces the pathologised form of life that is not far from death, the death that cannot be accounted for. In support of Wilderson, Maldonado-Torres (2008a) argues that what takes place at the level of the ordinary pathologies at the level of the real is the absolute expression of violence and misrecognition of the black subject. The black subject who is damned at the level of signification is ontologically depleted. The ontological weight of the black subject disappears and as a result, the ontological void takes a centre stage.

What does it mean to suffer? This is the existential question posed by Wilderson (2010) and this question is the one that concerned Fanon and his ongoing critique of subjection was to search for answers for this question. This is the question that Mbembe does not pose and even not answering when it comes to the black subject in the anti-black world. Farmer (2002: 424) asks this existential question

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thus: '[c]an we identify those most at risk of great suffering?' This is the existential question concerning black subjects, who to Fanon, they are of concern since these are the subjects structural violence is made to be in the shadow of death. In amplifying Fanon and to explicate the answer Weheliye has this to say:

> Suffering has long functioned alternatingly as the hallmark of human satience and of human brutality. Suffering becomes the defining feature of those subjects excluded from the law, national community, the human etc. due to the political violence inflicted upon them, while paradoxically also granting them access to the sphere of inclusion and equality in various manifestations of human rights discourse (Weheliye 2008: 324-325)

The suffering of the black subject cannot be accounted for since structural violence hides itself through emancipatory discourses of human rights, justice and equality—the very tenants of subjection as they are just cosmetic in the relation to the black subject under the existential crisis of subjection. What is often the case is that the suffering of the black subject is solely blamed on the African subject. To suffer, for Mbembe (2001a) is something that needs agency in that they should face up to themselves. Farmer (2002) argues that the existential condition of black subjects under structural violence amount to the life of familiarity with death. Suffering under structural violence is 'certainty [that is] a recurrent and expected condition' (Farmer 2002: 245). The suffering brought by structural violence is not accounted for since it affects those who are outside the realm of the human. As such, there are no affective dimensions that call for making sense of the suffering of the black subject since it does not matter. But then, for Fanon, the black subject mattered and still matter hence he dedicated his revolutionary commitment to understand the existential conditions of the black subjects.

For Fanon, the intervention is informed by the fact that structural violence that attacks black subjects is not explained, and its explanation will expose the historical and contemporary scandal, that is subjection. The existential conditions of the black subjects are explained in patchy manner by those who subject black subjects to subjection and closing spaces for black subjects in order not to make legitimate claims. As Fanon intervention explicates, structural violence, to be properly understood, there should be a constant interrogation and mechanisms

that are inherent in the suffering of black subjects. The hellish existential conditions of black subject cannot be understood outside structural violence. If that is indeed the practice, the intention is therefore, making black subjects to suffer in perpetual continuity.

Departing from Mbembe (2010) who regards the night as the matter of articulating the language, Fanon ([1952] 2008) from the standpoint of de-colonial turn position goes further to articulate the night in the realm of existential conditions of the black subjects. These are existential conditions that are governed by what Maldonado-Torres (2008a) refers to as non-ethics of war or the paradigm of war and violence. According to Maldonado-Torres, the non-ethics of war or the paradigm of war and violence have pervasive influence and violence is concrete in ordinary social life of the black subject. This is informed by the logic of suspension of ethics, since the life of the black subject does not matter. This should not only be looked in the colonial context, but also in the contemporary when taking the thought of Fanon into account *qua* structural violence. Structural violence is informed by subjection, and in this form, it assumes the role of being hidden for the fact that it becomes difficult to identify. Structural violence assumes the role of the banal that becomes institutionalised, naturalised and normalised. The banality of structural violence makes it to function through what JanMohamed (1983) refers to as structural amnesia, where in that people forget the structures that are putting them under perpetual subjection. Structural amnesia makes people not to be aware of what puts them under subjection.

The understanding of structural violence can be understood in relation to Fanon's conception of the Manichean structure that Mbembe does not focus on, and condemns it for its binarism rather advocates for hybridity, the latter that cannot account for structural violence. According to Fanon ([1961] 1990: 31), '[t]he colonial world is a Manichaean world'. Fanon in understanding the colonial situation has structural violence in mind when he writes: '[t]he colonial world is a world cut in two' (Fanon [1961] 1990: 29). This Manichean division is simply there to demarcate and catographically map the space of life and death. It is in the Manichean world that the black subject is displaced and also excluded. The foremost contenders of the Manichean world are Bhabha (1994) and Nuttall

(2009) who argue for hybridity and entanglement respectively. According to Bhabha (1994:43), hybridity 'informs the political space of its enunciation'. This, as Bhabha states, is not self-contradictory since there is a contribution to the 'in-between'. JanMohamed (1985) argues that Bhabha ignores conditions within that the coloniser and the colonised operate in the nexus of the Manicheanism. JanMohamed takes Bhabha to task arguing that he reduces the colonial discourse to something that occurred in a vacuum. Fanon ([1962]1990: 30) argues that in the Manichean order of things the 'belly of the coloni[s]er is always full'. Also in opposition to binarism that is said to be inherent in Manicheanism and not being able to account for relations in domination is Nuttall (2009) in articulating the notion of entanglement in that social relations are complicated in the sense that humanity is in its foldedness.

In relation to race, that is the organising principle that informs the Manichean zoning, Nuttall deploys the notion of 'racial entanglement' and also links it to ways of being, modes of identity-making and material life. Similar to Bhabha, Nuttall states that entanglement unravels binaries like coloniser and colonised, black and white, declaring these binaries simplistic. Nuttall (2009:30) goes on to argue that theorists, who engage these binaries, in the socio-political reality, mainly focus on 'conflict, violence, social hierarchy and inequality'. She proposes that the more racial boundaries are erected; the more should be a continued search for transcendence. Both Bhabha and Nuttall regard race as a burden if it dominates the discourse—so, they call for its erasure under the guise of diluting it, while reality expresses its concreteness as far as the black condition is concerned. Both theorists call for living together through difference to produce or in search of sameness.

Nuttall (2009) goes further to argue that the social is mutually entangled and it is in its constant search of definition in that sameness and difference are entangled. Even though entanglement is 'becoming something you were not in the beginning' (Nuttall 2009:58). It will be argued here that copulation with blackness does not necessarily mean all racial formations are equal and the same since such copulation occurs outside the subjection. The in-between, that Bhabha (1994) regards as the 'liminal space' and 'symbolic interaction', presents a situation where the existential conditions of subjects are still a contested terrain.

The in-between provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood—singular or communal 'that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself' (Bhabha 1994:2). The argument concurs with the view of JanMohamed (1985), that indeed Bhabha plays in the in-between that is the ambivalence and the confusion of the discourse not taking the hellish existential conditions of blacks into account.

According to Bulhan (1985:142), '[t]he Manichean psychology is hard to counteract once it takes root in people, the environment, and the culture'. Those who live in it depend on its continuity and they benefit from it. This is found on wreckage and dehumanisation of others. Gibson (2001:107) posits that the '[c]olonial society appears as the Manichean one, whose superstructure is its structure'. Manicheanism is pervasive as it is found in all forms and spheres of life. As such, this shows that structural violence will be rejected, since there is no subjection. JanMohamed (1985) deploys the notion of Manichean allegory that is not a fixed binary, but rather a diverse and yet, interchangeable opposition between black and white, good and evil, civilised and savage—black subjects, being not human and worthy to be at the receiving end of subjection. According to JanMohamed (1985:64), Manichean allegory 'functions as the currency, the medium of exchange, for the entire colonialist discursive system'. Maldonado-Torres (2008a:142) argues that '[t]he Manichean logic of the colonial system operates in favo[u]r of the truncation of the possibility of generous interhuman contact'.

Fanon states:

> When we examine at close quarters the colonial context, it is evident that what parcels out the world is to begin with the fact of belonging to or not belonging to a given race, a given species. In the colonies the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich (Fanon [1961] 1990: 30-31).

Bringing to bear the logic of structural violence in its formulation of the Manichean structure, Fanon provides the description of the town of the settler and that of the native. Fanon, to quote in *extensio* writes:

The town of the settler's town is a strongly-built town, all made in stone and steel. It is a brightly-lit town; the streets are covered with asphalt, and the garbage-cans swallow all the leavings, unseen, unknown and hardly thought about […] The settler's town is a well-fed town, an easy going town; its belly is always full of good things. The settler's town is a town of white people, or foreigners.

> The town belonging to the coloni[s]ed people, or at least the native town, the Negro village, the medina, the reservation, is a place of ill fame, people by men of evil repute. They are born there, it matters little where and how; they die there, it matters not where, nor how. It is a world without spaciousness; men live on top of each other, and their hurts are built one on top of the other. The native town is a hungry town, starved of bread, of meat, of shoes, of coal, of light. The native town is a croaching village, a town on its knees, a town wallowing in the mire (Fanon [1961] 1990: 30).

It still remains a concern that Mbembe does not mention the notion of the Manichean structure that is foundational and constitute in structural violence. Fanon's expose of the Manichean structure is to render such a structure scandalous and to really affirm the necessity of de-colonial turn. According to Tibbs and Woods (2008), Fanon is concerned with the sadistic aggression of subjection that is structural. It is the creation of the Manichean world that allows subjection to operate, from absolute violence in colonial times and through structural violence in the postcolony. The Manichean scandal is what Fanon exposes, and something that is not explicated by Mbembe. To serve as testimony to Fanon's claim, Tibbs and Woods (2008) posit that the Manichean structure does not create the hierarchy of humanity—but a divide between the human and non-human. This being the state continuity, Mbembe suggests a radical break, hence the absence of structural violence.

Structural violence 'depend[s] on ontological violence *at the level of imaginary and the real and also,* antagonism, prior and foundational to their emergence' (Agathangelou 2009: 3 emphasis added). Structural violence structures the positionality of the black subject and negates any form of total realisation of what creates the hellish existential condition in that such subjects find themselves. As I'Anson (2003) points out, for the relations in the colony, there

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is an oppressor and the oppressed, and what govern them are the relations of subjects. Since these relations are asymmetrical by the virtue of being articulated in differences, and the ones of superiority and inferiority, and those who are inferior position being the possessor of evil, and hence deserving the hellish existential conditions, it is enough to point that the notion of Manichean structure is hard not to be mentioned by Mbembe in engaging Fanon.

It is not enough for Mbembe to call for both the elimination of the oppressor and the oppressed, where in that the cause is 'struggling for racial justice or for new psychiatric practices' (Mbembe 2012: 20). Fanon detects and unmasks Manicheanism at the psychological and social level where human oppression and oppression resides. Structural violence creates and sustains the hellish existential conditions of the black subjects who often tormented and troubled psyches. Bulhan (1985) argues that the hellish existential condition of the black subjects should be rid of because it is constituted by inferiority complex, loss of identity and identity is something that should be retained. Also, it is not enough for Mbembe (2012) to claim that black subjects through emancipatory violence that is loaded with value, reason and truth should break away from bondage and take control of their destiny while they are trapped in the hellish existential conditions where agency is crushed from the moment of its creation. For Mbembe to also argue for Fanon in the language of work, violent praxis that is a response to subjection, is something that cannot be actualised without engaging structural violence and the hellish existential conditions it creates and sustains for the black subjects.

The structural positionality of the black subject that puts it vulnerably in the whims of impunity is simply because of the idea of race that 'has enormous social currency' (Farmer 200: 433). It is not enough to call for such elimination of subjection relation without really diagnosing and therefore, prescribing what is subjection and how to engage in its destruction. Of course, what exists is antagonistic defense of subjection, the defense that is informed by structures that keep it intact. Mbembe correctly notes:

> The fact is that power in the postcolony, is carnivorous. It grips its subjects by the
> throat and squeezes them to the point of breaking their bones, making their eyes pop

out of their sockets, making them weep blood. It cuts them in pieces and, sometimes, eats them raw (Mbembe 2001a: 201).

Mbembe being correct on the form of power in the postcolony, by the manner of its violent proportionality, he is not making reference to structural violence, but absolute violence. Sexton and Copeland (2003) introduce the notion of raw power *qua* structural violence in opposition to it being largely understood as absolute violence. Raw power is structural violence, and as such, raw power is inherent in subjection. Structural violence *qua* raw power 'require[s] and depend[s] on a gratuitous violence on [black] bodies' (Agathangelou 2009: 6). Raw power is the mechanism in that black bodies are explicated as sites of accumulation and fungibility as Wilderson (2003b; 2010). Structural violence with its capacity to mask makes this a normal way of existence of the black subject. No matter the masking, raw power is still exposed and the hellish existential conditions of the black subjects serve as testimony to this. Raw power cannot be mistaken to explicit forms of subjection, Mbembe's (2001) conception of the carnivorous power that is absolute violence; but those violence hidden in structures. Raw power when directed to black subjects cannot be criminalised, since the black subjects are crimininalised. Raw power instead, is institutionalised, naturalised and normalised. So, structural violence as a typical raw power—a form of subjection—renders the positionality of the black subjects at the exteriority of humanity, something that Fanon's work is indebted to.

To understand the exteriority of the black subject *qua* humanity, it is essential to introduce the form of life that raw power produces—raw life. Raw life in relation to the hellish existential conditions of the black subject is what Fanon ([1952] 2008: 82) refers to being 'an object in the midst of other objects'. According to Wilderson (2003c), raw life is informed by the logic of having the death of the black subject as the precondition to sustain structural violence. This means then, raw life takes place when raw power, a form of despotism against black subjects becomes a regime that determines the life and death of the black subjects. Structural violence is raw power that consumes black subjects and this defines the raw life of these subjects. For Fanon ([1952] 2008), raw life can be related to the burden of corporeal meladiction that points out the positionality of the black subject being woven in stories, anecdotes and claims of blackness being outside

the realm of humanity. Fanon ([1952] 2008: 84-85) writes, 'I was battered down by tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetishism, racial defects, slave-ships'. Sexton (2011) asserts Fanon's view that the notion of blackness is been associated with decay. The idiom of power in its raw form, assumes the real, and this is testified by the raw life black subjects live.

Under raw life 'the human body becomes a defenseless target for rape and veneration, and the body, in its material and abstract phase, a resource for metaphor' (Spillers 1987: 66). Raw life simply put means that there is no value attached to the black subjects and as such absolute destruction is justifiable (Wilderson 2003c). In amplification of this, Tibbs and Woods (2008) posit that raw life symbolises the capacity of structural violence to render the life of black subject as that which can be made to disappear with relatively ease. For Tibbs and Woods, raw life registers terror and black subjects can be made to live and die at will. It is under raw life that structural violence expresses its violent aspects as the life that has been designated for black subject is lived in hellish existential conditions that permit lawlessness. For the fact that there is lawlessness, structural violence sees itself through the working of institutions and its conception of reality of the state of affairs, black subjects are turned into 'stigmati[s]ed, policed, and degraded Others' (Tibbs and Woods 2008: 237). These existential conditions for the black subjects create what Martinot and Sexton (2003: 171) call 'inarticulable evil of banality' that is a 'duty bound by impunity itself'. Those who put black subjects under subjection are banal functionaries informed by the ethical pronouncement that is a scandal at best, against lawless subjects. What masquerades as ethical pronouncement is actually gratuitous violence.

The dichotomy between a white ethical dimension and its irrelevance to violence of police profiling is the very structure of racialisation today. It is a twin structure, a regime of violence that operates in two registers, terror and the seduction into the fraudulent ethics of social order, a double economy of terror, structured by a ritual of incessant performance. And into the gap between them, common sense, that cannot account for the double register or twin structure of the ritual, disappears into incomprehensibility (Martinot and Sexton 2003: 172).

De-colonial turn clearly shows that structural violence imposes raw life and then lawlessness is imposed and then as a result there is no law or laws that protect black subjects and that is by virtue of their lawlessness. So, what is lawless should be subjected to law, and as such, it cannot be the law in itself. As Wilderson (2010) notes, there are no institutions that are made to protect the black subject, and as such, structural violence reigns the existential conditions of the black subjects with impunity. The conceptions of justice, equality and liberty collapse when it comes to the black subject as its existence is raw life. These are the ideals created in absence of the black subject as living subjects; subjection comes from the existential site where these ideals are upheld. So, there is no justice, equality and liberty when structural violence by means of raw power creates raw life for the black subject. Justice, equality and liberty are ideals of raw power informed by the racial project and their liberal bent seems to evade the question of race and racism as the constitutive part of the political project. They are, as Tibbs and Woods (2008) argue the rules of race and power that feed into the mechanistical constitution of structural violence to be institutionalised, naturalised and normalised.

The proposition of Tibbs and Woods (2008: 243) is that '[f]rom the analytical vantage point of raw life, the racial violence of legal doctrine is alive and well'. In amplification, Martinot and Sexton (2003) argue that structural violence creates the double economy in the Manichean sense, and of course, being in the exteriority, black subjects at the receiving end of not only the economy of injustice—but hyper-injustice. Martinot and Sexton (2003: 117) refer to hyper-injustice as 'the rule and the banal as excess'. They argue that hyper-injustice the state of the banal and the excess is the real of life for black subjects. Indeed, this is how raw life is lived under subjection that produces raw power in the realm of structural violence. This, of course, occurs through the suspension of law and ethics that permeate infuse pervade the structural positionality of the black subject. The reason behind raw life, as de-colonial turn shows is that Mbembe does not engage, its symbolic economy that produces racialised bodies (Tibbs and Woods 2008). The dehumanisation of the black subject is linked with direct relatives of raw life—slavery, colonisation and apartheid—the very things that Mbembe (2002) demonises when it comes to the subjectivity of the black

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subject. It needs to be stated that subjection in its forms of mutations remains banal, a 'standard operating procedure' (Martinot and Sexton 2003: 174).

Fanon as Mbembe (2012) articulates is the figure who is concerned with restoring the ontological density of the black subject—that is, the awakening from the long night. Mbembe is correct on this one, and it can be further argued that the long night of subjection is the one that Fanon provocatively diagnosed in order to ensure the infinite awakening of the black subject. What Fanon calls for is de-colonial turn and it is contrary to Mbembe, in that to understand structural violence and to ensure that the proper diagnosis will lead to deal with it and bringing it to a complete end. Fanon's forceful intervention is informed by what Maldonado-Torres (2008a) refers to as 'phenomenology of the cry'. This is the cry of revolt and it takes form and shape through Fanon's psychopolitics opposing structural violence that makes the bodies of the black subject the sites of extraction of value and even life itsef creates the possibility of awakening from subjection. This form of awaking from the long night changes the conception and imaginary of the night; it brings it to an end. The coming of the night to an end means the end of subjection, its creation that is raw power that then also produces raw life, the life that institutionalises, naturalises, and normalises the existential conditions of the black subject.

The mask of humanism

Mbembe and Posel (2004) argue for the notion of critical humanism that makes a radical break to essentialised notions of difference and advocating for critical cosmopolitanism. Both state that critical humanism is informed by politics of hope. These are politics that embrace the idea of humanity for all, since their premise is that of sameness of humanity. The ideal of sameness is regarded as the possibility, and that being said, the idea of sameness still affirms that there is no subjection. That is why Mbembe and Posel invoke the notion of 'all' that is the one grounded on the notion that humans are equal, whereas the racial logic that is made pervasive by subjection still prevails. Mbembe and Posel (2004: 2) write: '[a] new humanism is inseparable from a cosmopolitan spirit, premised on the politics of hospitality—that recognises the humanity of the alien'. The hope therein lies with the notion of sameness, as if there is no subjection that marks

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differences of the existential conditions. The notion of humanism seems to have no black subjects in mind, the very ones Fanon was concerned with. And, the manner in which Mbembe and Posel (2004) seem not to take into account that Fanon is located in the area where humanity is denied, and does not make an appeal to be accommodationist project of humanism that excludes the black subject.

The problem of this 'new humanism' inevitably opens the question of a non-humanistic opening to humanism, where, almost by definition, the real interest lies: Fanon's persistent location of blackness as a necessary contamination of traditional political thinking and ontology is proof enough of that. If we are right to suggest that racism interrupts the movement towards the human, and paradoxically makes ontology irrelevant for understanding black existence, then clearly ethics and politics (insofar as they are grounded on this humanism) cannot simply be invoked, even negatively, as a model for thinking black existence. But this puzzle is not insurmountable if philosophical thought can come up with an anthropological description of black experience that is both idiomatic and singular, even if the radical singularity of that description remains bound to colonialism as context (Marriot 2011: 36).

De-colonial turn reveals that the project of humanism is not pronounced in clear terms on how can that which is not human can become human when subjection has not been dismantled from the base. Wilderson (2003b: 235) argues that blackness 'throws the notion of humanity itself into crisis'. This is because there is no record valuing the black life, therefore, the project of humanism cannot hold when it comes to the life of the black subject. Gordon (2010: 198) provides three reasons on the problematic nature of humanism in relation to what he refers to the theory of the black: firstly, the black is a site of questionable humanity. Secondly, the black emerged as a site whose freedom is challenged. Thirdly and lastly, the black is a site without reason or worse—a threat to reason. This three problematic reasons by Gordon mean that project of humanism *qua* Fanon in relation to the existential conditions of the black subject is an oxymoron. Fanon when he looks at humanism, he sees the constant denial of humanity (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). Put in a mode of a question: how can there be critical humanism in the hellish existential conditions that deny black subjects humanity?

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Put in another way: how then is it possible that which dispossesses humanity confere humanity in good faith or even act as the moral advocacy of humanity?

The question of humanism in Fanon's thought is essential, and it is fundamental to unmask the discourses that impose the notion of humanity by not problematising it in relation to it being a mere deception if the existential conditions of the black subject are not taken into account. The notion of hospitality that is said to be central to this critical humanism informed by the cosmopolitan spirit, no matter how projectionist it is towards the future, it cannot take the responsibility of engaging subjection that falsifies its intentions. For the fact that subjection exists, it negated humanism. Fanon called for humanism, but this is not humanism or critical humanism as Mbembe and Posel (2004) call it, but humanism that meant the construction of the human from subjection.

According to Nielsen (2011), 'Fanon found himself in the midst of a community perceived with racial strife'. This was the very community that propagated the ideals of humanism, with subjection in practice. Nothing featured in humanism that takes the question of subjection seriously, since the discourse of humanist is utopian and visionary. The positionality of the black subject is 'the oppressed within the already existing strictures of liberal humanism' (Weheliye 2008). So, the utopia and vision will of course not be meant for those who are in the clutches of subjection. Nielson argues for the alternative meaning that Fanon's project of the new humanism was that of carving for the new identity that is informed by the experiences encountered through subjection.

From de-colonial turn, Fanon's project exposes the inhuman conditions that were, and are still pervading the existential conditions of the black subject. This is alien to Mbembe and Posel's (2004) critical humanism, the latter which emphasises that humanism is underpinned by the ideas and debates on democracy. It is not clear which form of democracy that emphasises questions of obligations. What is being argued by Mbembe and Posel is the form of obligations that move beyond the idea of rights, that they also acknowledge their importance. In this scheme of things, obligations should outweigh rights. Appealing as it is, this is not nearer to Fanon since his conception of humanism calls for the end of the world. This call is rejected by those who claim to have the

high moral ground on humanism, and there can be no humanism where subjection exists, that in effect denies others their humanity because of their difference. For Mbembe (2011c) though, Fanon's commitment can be seen from the cause of the oppressed or fight for racial justice. This racial justice is linked to the idea of critical humanism, but then, it is not clear what kind of racial justice did Fanon pursue. Gilroy (2011) notes that Fanon's humanism has proven to be a tricky subject in light of the fact that it is something rarely discussed. Gilroy (2011: 7) calls for reparative humanism that is 'configured by overcoming of colonial statecraft and its racial orders'. Reparative humanism, for Gilroy, is suitable in solving the contemporary problems. But Mbembe also states something to maybe provide a clue:

> Indeed, to Fanon we owe the idea that in every human being there is something indomitable that no domination—no matter in what form—can eliminate, contain or suppress, or at least do it completely (Mbembe 2011c: 2).

It seems to Mbembe that the positionality of the black subject is not that is standing face-to-face with the antagonism of subjection with its gratuitous violence. To simply suggest that something indomitable is potent in every humanity—is to downplay the existential conditions of the black subject, where in that subjection reigns at will due to its institutionalisation, naturalisation and normalisation. De-colonial turn shows that non-ontological positionality of blackness is not accounted for by the discourse of critical humanism as espoused by Mbembe and Posel (2004). The humanism that Fanon calls for is the humanism that is articulated by those who have been excluded as human—it is the humanity that emergences in the intestines of subjection, and that can be humanism only if that subjection has been depleted. The humanism of Fanon seeks to humanise what has been dehumanised. It seems then, to Mbembe (2011c) that Fanon did not engage the constitutiveness of subjection that was informed by the sole purpose of leading the black subject into depletion.

Humanism is articulated and imposed by those who are not in the intestines of subjections, but those who are executing subjection and making humanism in bad faith as if applies to all humanity, while in reality it does not. Maldonado-Torres (2008a) notes that by virtue of justice being asymmetric, no humanism can apply

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for all. The notion of the 'all' cannot be the same in the conditions that are asymmetric. The notion of 'all' therefore, can be replaced by 'some'. That is to say humanism applies to some, those who are human and not to those who are considered not human. Fanon's engagement with humanism on one hand is to expose the limits of the humanism that is indeed subjection, and on the other, calling for the humanism that will fill the ontological density of the black subject. The humanism that Fanon revolts against is the one that dehumanises and that denies the emergence of the African subject. Humanism if it is transplanted into the existential conditions of the black subject, will turn out to be hypocritical and unethical par excellence due to the spectre of subjection. Fanon's intervention through his politics of antagonism exposes the hypocrisy of humanism. Such antagonism being clearly directed towards humanism means that humanism is subjection. De-colonial turn exposes humanism as the source of Western civilisation with 'its persistence of a paradigm of war, or way of thinking that privileges conflict and violence and that finds its climax in racism and genocide' (Maldonado-Torres 2008a: 83).

Fanon exposed the hypocrisy of humanism with its conception of human rights. Blackness was and is still excluded in the enterprise of humanity, or becoming human. Dehumanisation, through the paradigm of violence makes the existential conditions of the black subjects to be the antithesis of humanity. Therefore, the gesture of critical humanism is not in good faith, but in bad faith. Fanon is not concerned with humanism with its emancipator gesture; but the consistent effort to unmask its dehumanising aspects. What takes precedence in Fanon's thought then is the love for the black subjects 'aiming to help them overcome the effects of extended systematic colonial violence' (Maldonado-Torres 2008a: 97). From the affirmation of de-colonial turn, the existential conditions of the black subjects do not have humanism that produces the *damne*—that is, the damned of the earth. The *damne* are products of the hellish existential conditions that are produced by subjection. In no way, does Mbembe interrogate subjection and its over lasting impact or its technological mutation hiding itself to become institutionalised, normalised and naturalised. Humanism in this scheme of things, and being an oxymoron, means in Fanon's thought that it is bad faith if imposed via Fanon's thought. In exposing the limits of humanism Wilderson (2010: 54)

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argues that '[h]umanist discourse can only think a subject's relations to violence as a contingency and not a matrix that positions the subject'. According to this perspective, humanism has no relational capacity towards the black subject. It is in this line that Wilderson (2010: 55) still contends that humanism cannot answer the 'ensemble of ontological questions that has it as its foundation accumulation and fungibility as a grammar of suffering'. For the black subject's structural positionality, there is the impossibility of formulating ontological questions. This is, akin to Fanon (2010) thought on ontology that blacks are substitutedly dead.

Gibson (2003) argues that Fanon argued for a new humanism where the black subject becomes the self-determining subject, and not determined by the other. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008a), the discourse of humanism, if it was what Fanon engaged it would be about the politics of love grounded on the notion of bringing subjection to liquidation. The option of humanism of course, is the one that directs its force which is informed by the political intent of realising the emergence of the black subject. Such emergence, as the result of political intent, is informed by the ethical practice of bring subjection to the end. Humanism then, should be the political and ethical practice that is informed by antagonistic forces of bringing subjection to an end. This end should not mean the one of the state as the politico-juridicial formation that claims the end of subjection when it is still hidden in institutions and socio-political practices. For the mere fact that subjection is structural as stated before, it means, from de-colonial turn, that there should be the total destruction of structures that are producing it. For this to materialise, Maldonado-Torres (2008a) argues for the ethical suspension where the idea of the universal is suspended and this will allow the emergence of the consistent expression that prefers the humanisation of black subjects. The suspension of the universal is to argue for the fact that humanism is not applicable to all, and there is a need to re-contextualise it to the existential conditions of the black subjections. This is not what humanism is in its universal applicability—the scant or no attention to the existential conditions of the black subjects. This means they are not important, hence their exclusion.

For Gibson (2003: 123), this new humanism 'requires the nurturing of creative, inventive and thoughtful activity'. According to this perspective, humanism is not abstraction that is a mere miraculous gesture, but a political practice

informed by politics of criticism. The politics of constant criticism, Gibson argues, are what inform Fanon's idea of new humanism that should be understood in relation to anti-colonial action. According to Bernasconi (1996: 114), 'Fanon recogni[s]ed that the disappearance of colonialism necessitated the disappearance not only of the coloni[s]er, but also of the coloni[s]ed'. Though this might be a true assertion, it is however, militated by reality that points to the continuity of subjection. Since there is subjection, the coloniser and the colonised cannot simply disappear. Their presence and disappearance will be determined by the presence or disappearance of subjection itself. So, subjection is the determining factor. What Bernasconi, asserts though is that new humanism will liberate both the coloniser and the colonised. If this is put in another picture, subjection is the denial of liberation of the colonised, and if there is liberation how will the coloniser be liberated as a subjection who has had liberation. Though Bernasconi insists that for there to be liberation in this scheme of things, new humanism does not emerge from the site of the coloniser. The contention is still that subjection still continues, in that the emergence of new humanism seems to be under constrains of not having diagnosed subjection in its tenacious nature. The declaration of liberation is not useful then, since liberation cannot exist where there is subjection.

According to Mbembe and Posel (2004: 2), critical humanism 'calls into question the minimum entitlements of a human existence'. What this essentially means is that the idea of human existence is key, and therefore, critical humanism holds it seriously. It seems then to suggest that the entitlement of the human existence is something that also takes ontology seriously. What is then, needed is to account for Fanon's engagement with the ontological questions relating to the black subjects and the criticism of humanism as a project that conceals dehumanisation of subjection. Mbembe and Posel's project is refuted by Wilderson (2010: 55) who argues that 'the explanatory power of Humanist discourse is bankrupt in the face of the black'. It is clear from this de-colonial turn that humanism does not let the recognition and humanisation of the black subject to emerge, even to exist.

The end of the world

The emergence of the black subject poses a threat to subjection, since this will mean the existence to that world that has been ontologically void and the life that is dead while being alive. De-colonial turn is essential in that it points out that to be liberated is to emerge, and that is the creation of another world. Mbembe (2012) does not engage the idea of having another world or it having to emerge as the work of liberation by the black subject as Fanon affirms. Contrary to Mbembe's stance, the emergence of the black subject is necessary to afford humanity to what has been dehumanised. This cannot of course be actualised in the world that militates against the existence of the black subject. It needs to be stated that the emergence of the black subject is cannot be reduced to subjectivity or psychic forms of exorcising subjection. This emergence is not accountable to forms that are transplanted outside the existential conditions of the black subjects. The emergence of the black subject should be self-initiated through de-colonial turn and Fanon counsels thus:

> The settler makes history and is conscious of making it. And because he constantly refers to the history of his mother country, he clearly indicates that he himself is the extension of that mother country. Thus the history that he writes is not the history of the country that he plunders but the history of his own nation in regard to all that she skims off, all that she violates and starves (Fanon [1961] 1990: 40).

Mbembe (2012) argues the black subject should realise self-determination and work towards restoring themselves. This restoration is therapy to psychic damage created by colonialism. This of course, is not seen by Mbembe as structural continuity, where in that the notion of liberation falls short. Mbembe sees the liberation of the subject originating from revolutionary violence. Mbembe writes:

> But Fanon shows that, although it is a key phase in the becoming subject of the colonised, violence is in turn, at the very moment of its occurrence, the cause of deep psychic damage. If truly subjective violence at the time of a liberation struggle can be articulated as speech, it is also capable of weighing on language and producing, in those who survive war, mutism, hallucinations and trauma (Mbembe 2012: 21).

The becoming of being a subject also goes beyond psychic damage being cured and having the capacity to articulate speech, is not enough if the black subject

does not emerge in relation to insatiable demands. Fanon brings to the attention the fact that the will to liberation is the creation of new forms of life, and by black subjects themselves. For Fanon, it is simply because everything that has to do with the liberation of black subjects wholly depends on them.

> Fanon's political writings are well known. What is less known, or better yet, less articulated, is the existential phenomenological basis of Fanon's approach to what supports his revolutionary humanistic conclusions, particularly those premised upon constructing new values and a new humanity (Gordon 1996: 75).

The end of the world—that is, the anti-black world that militates against the existence of the black subject due to its sadistic impulses of elimination is not and will never be a just world. Indeed, the end of the anti-black world means that there needs to be the all-over starting again. The structures and psychic economy that runs them needs to be unthought. Black subjects are the ones that should become human since the confirguration of the world as it is has been something that did not allow the black subject any sense of being. The contention here is that another world is possible where the black subject can rise as a being, and be in the state of being in permissible existential conditions. Fanon's conception of the end of the world should be seen in light of the quest for search for another world. The end of the world, as something that Mbembe did not consider as the act of liberation is because of the fact that the anti-black world cannot be transformed, it must be destroyed. This is what the alarmist from progressive, reformist and reactionaries alike. They are benefiting from subjection hence they are not affected by it.

According to Mbembe (2011c), Fanon believed that the liberation struggle had not healed the colonial injuries and trauma that were the legacy of colonialism. This is what Mbembe has to say:

> In *Black Skin [,] White Masks,* Fanon suggests that because both the black body and psyche have been profoundly been damaged by racism, freedom should be fundamentally understood as cure, the aim of that is to endow oneself and the immanent world with a new meaning, a new moral law, created or laid down by oneself (Mbembe 2005: 297).

As de-colonial-turn contends this world cannot be created in the world as it is—the anti-black world. This is how Fanon articulates the anti-black world: 'I had rationali[s]ed the world and the world had rejected me on the basis of colo[u[r prejudice' (Fanon [1952] 2008: 93). The challenge that Fanon poses is to understand the black subject, since this is the undertaking that constitutes political demands that cannot be met or remedied. The emergence of the black subject is akin to existence and requires the 'relationship with *human* being[s], freedom, and reason' (Gordon 2010: 198). These are things outside the existential conditions of the black subject, and they are not something that must be repossessed or returned, but things that are created, but the creation that changes the configuration of the world. For the fact that there have been some sites of liberation, that took a form of what constitutional emancipation, the real liberation has not yet been born. There has never been the moment of rupture in terms of liberation, and how can that be actualised when the configuration of the world is the plague of anti-black solidarity. For the mere fact that what Fanon prescribed did not transpire, this can be explained to kind of liberation that pervades the postcolony, that is, liberation in the intestines of subjection. For there to be liberation, Fanon pointed out the difficult task of re-appropriating the dispossession of choice and making choices out of it. The liberation that Fanon is concerned about is the black subject becoming human. This is denied and it is not a matter of choosing to be human or not. Subjection denies the black subject to become human but infra-human.

According to Wilderson (2003c), blackness as a structural positionality of emergence disarticulates the politics of consent that is pervasive in coalition politics propagating the positionality of the unraced subject. The liberation of the black subject in the state of emergence disarticulates the scandal hidden in the politics of consent and politics of coalitions. The positionality of the emergence of the black subject disarticulates because, blackness is 'possessed, accumulated and, fungible object' (Wilderson 2003c: 186). For the mere fact that there is this disarticulation, the positionality of the unraced subjects behind the flag of politics of consensus and coalition collapses and therein lies a scandal that is the spectre of the racialised subject, the black. Wilderson has this to say about politics of consent and coalition:

> In short, whereas such coalitions and social movements cannot be called the outright handmaidens of white supremacy, their rhetorical structures and political desire are underwritten by a supplemented anti-[b]lackness (Wilderson 2003a:18).

Using Fanon explanation that not everyone is an ally, Wilderson amplifies it thus through two reasons. The first is that the movements, that are based in politics of consensus and coalitions are ontologically manifesting from Europe and the zone of the settler in the colony. The second is that black positionality is the state of emergency and no rhetorical structure and political desire can rescue the black subject from anti-black solidarity of the world. So the positionality of the unthought in Fanon is this one 'the settler never ceases to be the enemy, the opponent, the foe that must be overthrown' (Fanon [1961] 2008: 39). This is the end of politics of consent and politics of coalition since the emergence of the black subject is creating the world anew. So, there is no synthesis available, but the insatiable demands by the black subject that the world must come to an end (Wilderson 2003a). The positionality of the unthought destabilises the unraced positionality of the anti-black world since the ontological articulation of the black subject exposes the scandal of subjection. According to Sexton and Copeland (2003: 53), the positionality of the unthought position can only be imagined through its affective dimension by those who are at the receiving end of subjection. It is against the notion of politics of consensus and politics of coalitions, since the existential questions pertaining to the black subject are not in the register of these politics. In adopting this form of subjectivity, the black subject is charting a new terrain of struggle for liberation.

Things are not the way they were and as Fanon (1965) warning stands, there must be refusal on the part of the black subject to engage in politics of consensus and politics of coalition where their insatiable demands will be denied or structurally adjusted. The positionality of the unthought presents a scandal because the ontological weight of the black subjects come with insatiable demands, that are resisted openly by the unraced subjects who have claimed to be allies of black subjects through politics of consent and politics of coalitions. The reaction to these insatiable demands rests on the excuse of politics of impossibility and unraced subjects as allies having everything to lose, and the most potent being their racial privilege that absolves them from subjection. So,

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the politics of impossibility is legitimated with the unraced subjects as stern advocates, and the demands of black subjects, being insatiable are, ultimately denied. The denial comes through rendering these demands illogical, senseless, racist, and destructive. So, these reactions by the unraced subjects clearly confirm that the demands of black subjects are insatiable.

The politics of impossibility mask this scandalous affair by claiming that these demands are not insatiable but they are not of any public good hence legitimising denial. If they are not denied, they are structurally adjusted in line with the conditions that will keep subjection intact (Wilderson 2003b). These structural adjustments come through constitutions, conventions, treaties and so forth, and the rhetoric of transformation, reform and restructuring and so on sets it, and yet liquidating the demands of the black subject. But then again, this is denial as aspirations of black subjects are not what they are supposed to be. To understand the notion of liberation is to understand it in that realm the scandal of liberation in the anti-black world, that came of course through the assistance of the positionality of the unraced subjects who dictated the terms of the struggle for liberation. For de-colonial turn, the liberation that exists is the liberation in the anti-black world—an oxymoron! Fanon has this to say:

> But the Negro knows nothing of the cost of freedom, for he has not fought for it. From time to time he has fought for Liberty and Justice, but these where always white liberty and white justice; that is, values secreted by his masters (Fanon [1952] 2008: 172).

Fanon's concern that the black subject did not fight for his or her liberation stems from the fact that the reconciliatory gesture pacified the black subject, hence the failure to emerge. Also, the judicial freedom confound by the master are outside the subjectivity of the black subjects. Fanon attests that there cannot be any freedom as a form of gift, black subjects must fight for it and emerge in their own terms. There cannot be elimination of subjection that of course, is structural and foundational at the free will of the master. Subjection must be ended by black subjects themselves. Fanon ([1952] 2008: 172) states, 'we can be sure that nothing is going to be given free'. Honenberger (2007: 157) echoing Fanon states that the black subject '(1) has been *set* free, (2) *without* a struggle, (3) into

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a *racist social world'* (emphasis original). For this state of affairs, black subjects are made to be thankful and indebted to the white master who has given them freedom and even the unraced subjects who 'assisted' in the struggle. As such, initiatives of black subjects seeking freedom in their own terms are quickly dissolved (Honenberger (2007). Fanon (1967) fundamentally opposes freedom as gift because it is a flag freedom. He also argues freedom of gift does leads to flag independence (Fanon [1961]1990) and also 'one way of life to another, but not from one life to another' (Fanon [1952] 2008: 171).

De-colonial turn exposes the scandal of liberation that comes through the politics of negotiation and constitutional conventions. In this realm, the existential conditions of black subjects are not accounted for and subjection wears a human face. So Fanon ([1952] 2008: 171) notes that this liberation is an oxymoron as it 'produced psychoses and sudden deaths'. In it is in this state of affairs where there will be a condemnation of subjection, but not calling for the destruction of the structures that create and sustain it. This leads Wilderson (2003a: 229) to declare that 'blacks are fair game'. For the black subject not to be a fair game, it means that it must emerge, the emergence that Wilderson refers not only as articulation but disarticulation. Disarticulation resides in the realm of threatening reason, methods and common sense to say the least. This is the positionality of the black subject that is the spectre that haunts the hidden forms of subjection. The positionality of black subjects *qua* disarticulation means the articulation of grammar of suffering with its insatiable demands. According to Wilderson, the remedies that are offered by politics of consensus and politics coalitions are not suitable as they cannot, and are not willing to end the anti-black world. The politics of consensus and coalitions are informed by hegemonic tendencies that are there to pacify black subjects. As such, their main aim is to turn the blind eye to the anti-black world, and as their mode of pacification or resistance is there to frustrate black subjects.

This scandal rests in the banal tendency where unraced subjects always speak on behalf of the black subject and also censuring the elementary critique inherent in the positionality of the black subject as it raises the politics of antagonism predicated on liberation. According to Fanon (1967), 'liberation must be the work of the oppressed people'. It means then, black subjects must liberate

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themselves as they are the ones who are trapped in the clutches of subjection. The act of liberation is not escaping subjection, but destroying it from its roots. Liberation is the 'existence of oppression, alienation and immiseration… [and] the joy of existence in the liberated life that is open field of possibilities' (Birt 1997: 206). The unraced subject as an ally in the cause of the struggle for the liberation of the black subjects acts on behalf of the black subject. Fanon ([1952] 2008: 171) critique still stands: '[t]he black man was acted upon'. This shows the betrayal of the politics of allies, who are not in the same existential condition with black subjects. There cannot be any politics of consent and politics of coalition the black subject is always outside the realm of solidarity. So, Wilderson (2003c) makes the proposition that the emergence of the black subject should be thought from the positionality of the unthought. Introducing the black subject through de-colonial turn as the point of emergence is the positionality that disrupts the anti-black world. Fanon thinks from the positionality of the unthought, black subjects emerging and shifting the geography of reason to create the possibility of another world. The positionality of the unthought, therefore, means that black subjects affirm their positionality by making unsuitable demands that include the demand to have subjectivity, ontology and existential conditions outside and in absence of hell.

It is in this political condition where even the notion of an ally, emerging outside the existential condition and the structural positionality of the black subject will even collapse. Fanon asks ontological questions in his quest for liberation, he questions that hit at the centre of subjection and not allowing subjection to redeem, transform or reform, but to be ultimately destroyed. Since the world is subjection, by its configuration of anti-black solidarity directed to black subjects, answers to Fanon's existential questions will mean the end of the world. It is this end of the world where there will be a totality of being, and the black subject of course, having the necessary fulfillment of attaining humanity.

> The logical end of this will to struggle is the total liberation of the national territory. In order to achieve this liberation, the inferiori[s]ed man (sic) brings all his resources into play, all his (sic) acquisitions, the old and the new, his own and those of the occupant (Fanon 1967: 43).

Adding to Fanon, Parris states that:

> This totality of being, according to Fanon, creates a new race of humans capable of creating a world that is free of oppression, exploitation, and hegemonic domination. Idealistically, yes, but Fanon locates the idealism in the complete eradication of the empire, a seemingly impossible fear that, if achieved, would necessitate that freedom be reali[s]ed by all. (Parris 2011: 19)

The black subject, as the subject who wants to emerge outside the pathologies of subjection, must follow the route of liberation. Liberation is a continued political practice, and it is opposed to Mbembe's (2005) proposition that it is a practice of cure and not about restoration. The route to liberation is pursued after all avenues of consciousness have been exhausted, and this pursuit is seen as that of necessity. This necessity follows from the fact that the black subject is hard pressed with subjection that denies the very essence of being that ontology is. So then, the concern is to fight for the emergence of the being as the liberated subject. This fight is pursued in relation to the construction of the ethical and political subject. Fanon has this to say:

> The struggle of the inferiorised is situated on a markedly more human level. The perspectives are radically new. The opposition is the henceforth classical one of the struggles of conquest and liberation (Fanon 1967: 43).

For Sexton (2011: 37), '[t]he most radical negation of the anti[-]black world is the most radical affirmation of blackened world'. The blackened world is the creation of the narratives of certain impossibility to engage the narratives that are in the space of incommunicability (Wilderson 2003c). Such a world can only come into being if subjection in destroyed in all its forms and content. It is here where the unraced narratives, that mask subjection, are rejected. Blackness should be understood 'as a structural position of noncommunicability because, again and again, as a position, [b]lackness is predicated on modalities of accumulation and fungibility, not exploitation and alienation' (Wilderson 2010: 59). The positionality of the unraced subject, the one that is an oxymoron as it avoids subjection and simplifies the hellish existential condition of black subjects as that which should be escaped, falls out when the black subject emerges. The existential condition of the black subject cannot be articulated and explained

outside subjection. The foundational nature of the anti-black world due to its systematic and continuous subjection needs to come to an end. This is a political demand higher that Mbembe who calls for abolition, accommodation and transcendence. These do nothing as they mask the aspects of subjection that are aimed at keeping the existential conditions of the black subjects in the manner that they are—that is, hellish existence.

The liberation of the black subject, the emergence that is, should be understood in terms of the end of the world, the anti-black world to be exact through de-colonial turn. Fanon ([1952] 2008) charts the route to liberation in the form of the emergence of the subject who questions. The emergence of the black subject is the mode of a question: 'who speaks?' (Sexton and Copeland 2003: 59). The capacity to ask a question is subjectivity. Indeed, those who question in the quest for liberation are at the centre are black subjects as subjection that they question affects them directly by means of affective and psychic economies. The capacity to ask is to emerge and to bring an end to subjection. The mode of questioning authorises the silenced, marginalised and dehumanised. As Memmi (1965: 91) notes '[t]o be deceived to some extent already, to endorse the myth and then adapt to it, is to be acted upon by it'. Those who are in opposition of being acted upon are marching towards the route to liberation. The capacity of black subjects to question is 'the fleshy figuration of blackness both within and beyond' (Sexton and Copeland 2003: 59). As Fanon (1965: 80) counsels '[t]he revolutionary instruction on the struggle for liberation must normally be replaced by revolutionary instruction on the building of the nation'. This can also be actualised when black subjects are at the centre of the struggle to liberation, their own liberation.

> It is through the effort to recapture the self and to scrutiny[s]e the self, it is through the lasting tension of their freedom that *black subjects* will be able to create the ideal condition of existence for a human world (Fanon [1952] 2008: 181).

Fanon also elsewhere writes:

> This community in action, renovated and free of any psychological, emotional or legal subjection, is prepared today to assume modern and democratic responsibilities of exceptional moment (Fanon 1965: 159).

Fanon continues:

> The thesis of the launching of a new society is possible only within the framework of national independence here finds its corollary. The same time that the coloni[s]ed man braces himself to reject oppression, a radical transformation takes place within him that makes any attempt to maintain the colonial system impossible and shocking (Fanon 1965: 159).

De-colonial turn tenaciously insists that the emergence of the black subject is in pursuit of liberation through de-colonial turn. It is the act, that makes the black subject to declare Fanon's ([1952] 2008: 180) words 'I am my own foundation. And it is by going beyond the historical, instrumental hypothesis that I will initiate the cycle of my freedom'. Mbembe (2005) on the other hand, argues that '[f]or liberation to come, there comes a time when freedom has to be disentangled from histories of spilled blood and sacrificial cruelty'. This then implies whatever pursuit of liberation by black subjects is about violence and bloodbath—barbarity at its best. Contrary to Mbembe, de-colonial turn shows that Fanon is concerned about the positionality of black subjects becoming political agents in their own right. Their emergence in this formulation present a nightmare as 'the dream of black accumulation and death' (Wilderson 2003b: 233) becomes nodal in the quest for liberation. The spilling of blood and sacrifices derive from subjection itself with its sadistic elements of accumulating the black body and making it a site of extraction. This is the ontological base through that the grammar of suffering should emerge. With these words, Fanon was engaging in the process of liberation, to emerge as a black subject. His prayer, 'O my body, make me always the man who questions!' (Fanon [1952] 2008: 181) is grounded in existential phenomenological meditations. The capacity to always question is to have the spirit of critique in the world where subjection mutates into various forms and also putting a mask of dehumanisation. This is not just a prayer to ask question, but to ask existential questions that are of concern to the black subject in a form of de-colonial turn. The prayer is never to stop questions, and it is essential to ask: what *fundamentally* is liberation in the anti-black world? There are no easy answers, since the questioning embedded in Fanon's prayer indicts.

Conclusion

This chapter, through decolonial critical analysis, serves as the call for the Fanon of the past, present and the future from the standpoint of de-colonial turn. This suggests, departing from Mbembe's reading that suggests that the colonial situation by means of subjection still befalls black subjects who happen to receive subjection by the virtue of their race, and also being raced. Fanon has become the figure of contestation, and in the 21st century, it is essential to really interrogate the relevance of Fanon and to claim him from the de-radicalisation project conducted by Mbembe. The relevance of Fanon indeed should take into account the context in that he lived, but that does not suggest freezing Fanon to the historical moment, but interrogating the relevance of his ideas in the 21st Century.

The interrogation of Fanon's project that Mbembe calls for is the therapeutic reading that reduces the potency of Fanon's thorny existential questions to unmask subjection. The therapeutic reading of Fanon is informed by healing of psychic damage and the very thing black subjects are accused of creating themselves, whereas this stems from subjection. The contention in this chapter is that there is relevance of Fanon rather than his resurrection. Fanon has been a spectre in the postcolony and as such, Fanon's project has never died, therefore, the notion of resurrection is not relevant. The spectre of Fanon started in the 20th Century and still penetrates the 21st Century.

Fanon's project has been the politics of love of the *damné*—those who are misrecognised and dehumanised by subjection. So, Fanon's project in this chapter is read from the positionality of the limits of being—that is, the existential conditions of those who are at the receiving end of subjection. This is to ensure the reading that signals the possibility that ensures the emergence of the figure of the black subject. This reading suggests the politics that are infused with the potential of liberation, the liberation that will only come through the ontologising of the deontologised subjection crushed in objecthood. Such interrogation is primarily essential for understanding Fanon in relation to the humanity that was, and is still of concern to him, that which is excluded, marginalised and oppressed, in short, humanity under the surveillance of

subjection. So, the liberation of black subjects, their emergence, is what can bring them to humanity, but the anti-black world must come to an end for this to be actualised. In the next chapter, Mbembe's thinking on the idea of South Africa will be examined from de-colonial turn as a rallying point of critique.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MBEMBE AND THE IDEA OF SOUTH AFRICA

Introduction

This chapter, decolonial critical analysis is deployed in order to examine Mbembe's engagement with South African political reality in the post-1994 through de-colonial turn. As an idea, South Africa should belong somewhere, there needs to be a nodal point through which it revolves. The contention this chapter makes is that Mbembe is not critical of the neo-liberal reality that the post-1994 South Africa on —that is, false freedom where emancipation is mistaken for liberation, the continued racism and structures of white supremacy, inequalities, injustice and oppression. Mbembe sees South Africa as a postcolony rather than a neo-apartheid state. Contrary to Mbembe, this chapter sees South Africa as a state that is still in need for decolonisation as it constitutes colonialism and coloniality. Mbembe's idea of South Africa will be engaged from de-colonial turn.

Firstly, the chapter challenges the notion of Nongqawuse syndrome as articulated by Mbembe, and also how the story has been part of the frontier historiography where black subjects are objects and white subjects being the agents of history. Secondly, the chapter problematises Mbembes thinking on what is dubbed the '1994 Miracle' and the post 1994 political reality with regards to the existential conditions of the black subjects. Thirdly, the chapter engage the notion of frontier accumulation as articulated by Mbembe and argues that the role of black capitalist cannot be understood outside them being in service of white oligarchy. Fourthly, the chapter reconsiders the Native Club debate and argues that the critics of this initiative, and Mbembe being part of them as well, were engaged in the silent scandal as they do not criticise Afri-Forum and Solidarity which are white suprematist and radically right-wing. Finally, the chapter argues that race is an issue and black subjects should not be dictated to in terms of how they must engage it, and it also challenges Mbembe's project of non-racialism, the notion of mutual *ressentiment,* freedom from race, and politics of sameness.

Nongqawuse as an alibi

Mbembe (2006d) made a remark that South Africa politically is said to be leading to a hopeless and dangerous dungeon of history repeating itself, by alarming what he refers to Nongqawuse syndrome. Mbembe (2006c: 20) defines Nongqawuse syndrome as 'the name of a political disorder and cultural dislocation South Africa seem to be experiencing'. Mbembe compared this with the regression effect that has pervaded the postcolony where everything is stereotyped as being in the brink of collapse, or already having collapsed. This of course, is made through comparing the political situation with Nongqawuse who is said to be a prophet who led the millenarian movement of cattle killing that eventually led to national suicide where most Xhosa's died of self-imposed starvation while waiting for the miraculous of the resurrection of cattle they destructed themselves. Mbembe's deployment of Nongqawuse has not been without controversy.

For instance, Masondo (2006) charged Mbembe of pushing the imperialist cosmopolitan agenda and his analogy of Nongqawuse's as a false prophet similar to Jacob Zuma as a faulty analogy. On the other, Mangcu (2006a) charged Mbembe of deploying historical fiction and the portrayal of Zuma in the negative light and Mbeki in the positive light. The argument here goes a step further to these controversies that seem not to interrogate the Nongqawuse story itself. These criticisms lie on Mbembe alone, who is the purveyor of the story, and not the story in its entirety. This is essential in a country where black subjects are said to have no history themselves, but that of white subjects as agents of history.

De-colonial turn problematises the historiography in South Africa as the story of the colonised other. Davis (1992) articulates the notion of history in the light of other histories to suggest non-linearity of history and one meta-narrative. Chakrabarty (2000: 98) punctuates that '[h]istory is a subject primarily concerned with the crafting of narratives'. The black subject from the standpoint of de-colonial turn is engaged in the manner in which it is denied its own histories in a plural sense of the term. It seems then, that Mbembe's account of history, in specific reference to what the story of Nongqawuse is, remains what it is—that is, history fashioned from the colonial imaginary and sensibility. The

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history is that of those who record and the record of history is that of absolute truth, for that it serves as evidence. The story goes that a young prophet, Nongqawuse came with the prophesy of seeing two strange figures calling her from the bush and ordered her to convey a message to her uncle Mhlakaza and the message is said to read thus:

> Tell that the whole community will rise from the dead, and that all cattle now living must be slaughtered, for they have been reared by contaminated hands because there are people about who deal in witchcraft. There should be no cultivation, but great new grain pits must be dug, new homes built, and great strong cattle enclosures must be erected. Cut out new milk sacks and weave many doors from boka roots. So says the chief Nepakade, the descendant of Sifuba-sibanzi. The people must leave their witchcraft, for soon they will be examined by diviners (Peires 1989: 99).

According to this story, Nongqawuse narrated this account to the elders and could not be believed, but to be ridiculed and dismissed. It is imperative then to argue that this story should be understood on the basis that the problem of historiography is the confusion between narration and signification. Charkrabarty (2000: 98) asks a compelling question: 'Can the story be told /crafted?' De-colonial turn makes the intervention to understand the signification of the story of Nongqawuse. The story of Nongqawuse cannot be read as a mere chronology of events. The question that is not answered and the one worth asking is—what does the story of Nongqawuse signify? The empirical historiography, the one that Peires is embedded in as he narrates the story, emphasises the piercing together the story as the catalogue of events. This generally misses the signification, and stories on their own cannot tell anything if there is no signification. The presence of signification will mean new interpretations of events, and will reveal more why the story is told in the way that it is being told by Peires.

As the narrative goes, Nongqawuse is said to be playing in the bush and chasing birds and she head two strange voices who gave her prophetic orders. As the story goes, told and detailed by Peires (1989) a sixteen year old prophet is said to have ordered Xhosas to kill their cattle, destroy their corn and all other important amenities, and as a result, white colonialists will be driven to the sea. Then, the new life will begin and what has been destroyed will come anew and purified. It is said that strangers continued to persist and gave Nongqawuse orders to,

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eventually the instruction was that Mhlakaza to kill a beast, wash the body clean appear in of strangers in four days time. Strangers are said to have stated that Xhosa people will be assisted by the great ancestral spirits. So, the Xhosa should act in line with the anscentral commands. As Peires (1989) notes, the old cattle were tainted and polluted; they had to be killed so that the new cattle would not be contaminated by them. So, the living cattle should be slaughtered as they are contaminated, and of course, they are said to have been suffering from a lung-disease that was widespread. Peires notes the following with regards to the prophetic injunction:

> For this reason, all cattle had to be killed, all corn destroyed, and all magical charm given up. All their copper rings, all their clothes, all their cooking pots, all their hoes and other implements, everything they had, was contaminated and should be destroyed or sold. They themselves were impure and they should purify themselves for three days and offering up certain sacrifices (Peires 1989: 100).

This was said to be a sacrifice necessary for the upcoming paradise, the life of unlimited plenty and excess. This life, as Peires notes, is comparable to that of white colonial settlers. However, as Peires notes, this did not amuse all the Xhosas. For the mere fact that Nongqawuse was dismissed as ridiculous, as it would have been expected, does this not debunk the colonial stereotype of black subject as mere objects who cannot think? Also then, the mass slaughter is said to have continued even when other people were convinced by this prophesy. According to Peires, the sceptical Xhosas are said to have initiated mass slaughter but tentatively, up until the hysteria prevailed when mass slaughter accelerated. The killing was not the performance of rituals but getting rid of cattle that are cursed beasts. Not all Xhosa's were convinced even those who came to be the first witness accounts during their witnessing in Gxarha that is a village where Nongqawuse and Mhlakazi resided. According to Peires (1989), Nongqawuse's prophesy is said to be prominent, but there were still doubts and even dismissals. It is stated that the voices of the two strangers could only be heard by Nongqawuse even Mhlakazi did not hear them, since she was the only one who can understand them. So then, she relayed the message to Mhlakazi, who then relayed it to various Xhosa chiefs. The popularity of the prophecy to those who believed it resulted in this description:

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Hundreds of cattle were killed every day. The believers were ordered not to eat the meat of any cattle killed the previous day, so everyday fresh cattle were slaughtered and yesterday's remaining meat thrown away. Rotten flesh lay putrefying around the homesteads (Peires 1989: 117).

The resurrection of new cattle and people did not happen, only disappointment prevailed. Peires inists that mass slaughter continued despite doubt and ever disappointment. So, doubt has to be suppressed so that the practice can go on. According to Peires, Nongqawuse's prophesy—the ideology of cattle-killing movement—combined old and new ideas, both of that were equally necessary to its credibility. Nongqawuse's prophesy is said to be the combination of ancestral belief and Christianity. Peires rightfully argues that the ancestral beliefs of the Xhosa Cattle-Killing were neither irrational nor atavistic. Ironically, it was probably because they were so rational and so appropriate that they ultimately proved to be so fatal (Peires 1989: 164). So it means that the Nongqawuse story is that of the figure with divine possession and connectivity that can be translated to reality—that is, to engage in the miraculous. This engagement means that the message of the prophet must be actualised in reality—but self-destruction by mean of self-imposed starvation, deception, disillusionment and disaster.

The story of Nongqawuse, and to be exact, its signification, not empirical history, is of interest and this lies in the fact of wanting to understand Nongqawuse being positioned as an alibi to exonerate subjection. De-colonial turn shows how the story of Nongqawuse is told, through the act of empirical historiography where in that Peires (1989), narrates about the young prophet and her uncle Mhlakazi who initiated the cattle-killing in pursuit of the paradise where the new form of life will emerge, replacing the old ones as they are cursed. The argument here is not about the (in)validity of the narration of Nongqawuse, but to argue for another interpretation that constitutes of signification. That is, that which has some potential to unmask the hidden power relations amongst subjects, where black subjects are at the receiving end of subjection. To be specific, among subjects who narrate (white subjects) and those who are narrated (black subjects), mute subjects who cannot have their own narrative because of the absence of the record. Kesteloot (1992) argues that the extensiveness of the narrative, its depth and breadth of detail gives it much weight. This is even intensified with the

existence of the written record. For Kesteloot, it is not clear if its credibility will be challenged. Therefore, history begins with white subjects and black subjects are on the negative.

> The problematic is the African normali[s]ed as object of European history and culture, that lost desire for creating African cultural objectives, often producing "anti-agency" or dysfunctional behavio[u]r, that negates recognition of the African as actor and of positive projections of the African self in the future (Modupe 2003: 65).

The interest is what Davis (1992) refers as the 'thought about the past'. The thought about the past should not be confused with, the thought of the past, the latter that is more about signification. Davis provides four kinds of thought about the past. The first is autobiography or biography the life and times of a person, and if necessary death of the person. The second is the precedent where the abstract serves as a particular context where someone can be remembered or others silenced. The third is myth that is something that is often distanced from the truth. Myth is regarded as not truth and they are evoked in present terms as something archaic in order to delegitimise them. The fourth and the final one is history that is linear and plotted and that is regarded as the true accounts about the past.

> The type of history is a linear account of unfolding of a story, suffused with notions of linear development from origins, of following the traces, even uncovering process. But the practises of historians are more complex than the type (Davis 1992: 20).

The thought about the past as Davis argues, is not the monopoly of historians, since history is a type of thought about the past. Therefore, the past is not also, that which is known by historians, or what is solely in the domain of historians. Indeed, history is regarded as the most authoritative of them all simply because of the claim of being empirical—the narration of true accounts or events. But then, this poses a challenge when one thinks of the history that is done on the people whose histories are said not to exist, but they only exist when those who the executioners of subjection claim it as such. As Jewsiewicki (1992: 97) puts forth, '[t]he falsification of history is a crime against its people'. The practice of

history is alien to black subjects and as such, it renders them alien to their own form of consciousness.

> African history, throughout its epic vehicle, does not escape the rule: each national entity has its own point of the events, each pressure group in this nation also has its own champions, its choices, its interests that modify its judgements of history, that condition its interpretation of the facts, that bend the manner in which these are told, deformed, disguised (Kesteloot 1992: 143).

In the South African context, the opposite is true, as historians and the historiography rests from the lens of racial power relations, white subjects being the ones who have history. De-colonial turn shows how subjection has more to account to the fact that the story that is hegemonic is that the conqueror and not of the subjugated. The subjectivity of the latter is made not to exist since subjection pervades. The Nongqawuse story emerged from the climax of subjection and this has an impact of who tells the story and why there is an agency to tell that story. It is also important to state that the history of black subjects was kick-started by white subjects and as such, black subjects have no history. De-colonial turn seeks to open way for different perspectives to account for different ways in that events are interpreted and represented; and the manner in which they will be narrated or explained. The purpose here is not to argue about the merits or demerits of the story, or whether it existed or not—but to problematise knowledge practices that emerge in the height of subjection and to understand what is their locus of enunciation *qua* black subjects. As Kesteloot (1992) states, there is the existence and the possibility of historians having to face the version and contradictory opinions.

> But if the beneficiaries of a colonial system suffer from selective amnesia, then for the victims of such a brutal system memory is a weapon. The injustices of the colonial experience and our present condition make it imperative that we remember that our situation was not an act of nature. Our present condition was brought about the actions *not* of *ignorant* but of *learned* men, some of whom had high reputations in imperial countries (Magubane 1996: 369 - 370; emphasis original).

Mbembe (2006d) coins the story of Nongqawuse as a syndrome that is said to be atavistic, destructive, superstitious and anachronistic—the form of self-destruction and national suicide. Mbembe linked the story of Nongqawuse as

something akin to the South African political discourse, more especially the role of Jacob Zuma (the current president of South Africa and ANC) as the tamed native. Black subjects are often reduced to masses waiting for the messiah to save them. Black subjects are seen as objects in waiting and without any sense of agency and dependable to the miraculous. It means the historical representation and the contemporary is still the same—that is, black subjects are objects. Does this mean that Mbembe treats black subject like the colonial subjection has done and is still continuing through coloniality? So, in waiting, national suicide—the form of fatalism at best, this also shows the representation of black subjects, the representation that borders on stupidity and absence of reason that Mbembe parades. As such, black subjects are those who are barred from the realm of humanity as they have no form of reason, truth and reality. Black subjects are said to be caught in profound stupidity, and they are said not to have subjectivity, hence the historical representation of black subjects has not been the act of black subjects themselves.

The telling of the past is said to be embedded in historical facts and evidence. This does not tell anything with regards to the fundamental question that is: who tells the story and why? The nature of power relations, asymmetric relations of course, as de-colonial turn exposes, it is informed by subjection. It is during the colonial contact that the dispossession and resistance ensured. The Nongqawuse story can be said, to amplify Magubane (1996: 371) that 'the story itself remains incomplete and partial'. This is so simply because the South African historical landscape has been that of the frontier. That is, the South African society has been the frontier from the pre-colonial and the colonial. The frontier is the interregnum of the colonial encounter where black subjects are caught in the state of change and resistance. The frontier of history signifies the white subject as the agent of history and blacks as the objects of history. White subjects are agents of history in the barbaric situation as they record those events, and claiming to narrate them as they are. It is in this barbaric situation where black subjects are to blame and them being the main cause of their existential crisis. Hence, the representation of the black subject borders on negativity. The frontier historical tradition is in short, the re-inscription of white history and displacement of the history of black subjects.

The frontier historiography is the colonial project that has created the sense in which black subjects are atomised and as such, they need are in need of civility. Such atomisation of representation can be seen from Conrad (1999: 21) who writes, '[a] lot of people, mostly black and naked, moved about like ants'. For Conrad, black subject were not enemies or even criminals, but they were nothing earthly—but unhappy savages who were dying slowly. Black subjects under the colonial project are what they are, savages and people outside the realm of humanity. Here is the famous ontological and epistemological violence against Africa and its black subjects and of course, the usual perpetrator being Hegel whom Mbembe seems to have close affinity with. In detailing the world history he writes:

> At this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again. For it is no historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit. Historical movements in it—that is in its northern part—belong to Asiatic or European World (Hegel 1956: 99).

Hegel in his racist ontological and epistemological violence continues:

> What we properly understand by Africa, is UnHistorical, Undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature, and that had to be presented here only as on the threshold of the World's History (Hegel 1956: 99).

De-colonial turn seeks to resurrect the black subject that has been outside the realm of thought. Subjection that denied the black subject the capacity of speech, thought and of course, the sense of the self is challenged when the black subject resurrects. The denial for the resurrection of the black subject has given the colonial functionaries the prerogative of defining the black subject stereotypically belonging to people without record—written history to be exact. The subject of history, with its portrayal of the past as empirically factual, has been the alien subject when it comes to black subjects. So, the study of 'societies without written record' (Hastrup 1992: 4) and societies that are only enough to be understood in terms of history 'a mere narrative rather than a comprehensive description' (Coetzee 2007: 16) is the common practice found in the representation of the black subject. Having no record and any form of subjectivity, this means there is a free reign over the black subject as subjection

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through colonisation meant dispossession of labour, humanity and land (Mngxitama 2010). Those who are dispossessed are also dispossessed of any means to tell their story. So the act of history is indeed the historian and not the subjects. Having free reign over black subjects, the narration of events, accounts, stories, testimonies to name but a few, are in the monopoly of those who reign over black subjects since the interpretation is theirs and also, their own means of validation to render the historic even as truth.

According to Mbembe (2006c), the Nongqawuse syndrome can be seen through the emergence of the false prophet from humble beginnings. The prophet, as Mbembe says, is backed with hysteria in that the claim of resurrection is made, and for it to materialise there must be sacrifice. Mbembe goes on to continue that this prophecy also justifies violence. From de-colonial turn, it is clear to Mbembe that the figure of the prophet whether imaginary or really, possess to him the problem of uncivility, where political disorder is prevalent as the existential conditions are lax. The Nongqawuse syndrome is said to be advocated by nativism that Mbembe rails against. As Mbembe charges:

> [I]t is stirring the dark brew of South African culture, its addiction to prophecy, consumption and small miracles, its deeply held phallocratic ethos shared by blacks and whites, the corrosive violence that is tearing apart its social fabric, its xenophobia among blacks especially, its rooted belief in witchcraft and evil forces (Mbembe 2006c: 20).

It then seems to Mbembe (2006c: 20) that the panacea for South Africa and its idea is the 'attempt to build a truly non-racial, modern and cosmopolitan society'. So it means that Nongqawuse syndrome is driven by blacks who are still in the dark brew and in need for some melanin of modernity. The idea of South Africa that Mbembe wants is the building of the Afropolitan dream. Masondo (2006) captures Mbembe's notion of Nongqawuse syndrome as a faulty analogy. And he adds that Mbembe suggests that black subjects are the way they are because of the failure of not following the cosmopolitan project. Masondo regards this project as imperialists, and it cannot be seen as panacea. Masondo (2006) charges Mbembe of regarding black subjects as masses that are craving for a messiah and they are portrayed as people who cannot think for themselves. Cosmopolitanism is regarded by Mbembe as the panacea against barbarism that is brought by

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Nongqawuse syndrome. Mbembe seems to agree with Peires, hence his civility/barbarity dichotomy that political mobilisation by black subjects is a recipe for disaster. This is even the comparison that suggests that black subjects on their own, cannot effect any form of political sensibility, and for there to be such, white paternalism is needed.

Furthermore, the comparison of civility/barbarity outplayed itself in the colonial history among the native who were socialised and institutionalised to refer to each other in terms of the colonialist constructions. The *amakholwa* (believers who are Christianised and considered themselves modern) and *amaqaba* (traditionalists who were said to be backward) distinctions serves as testimony to this. It is clear that for the former, heaven was awaiting for them, while hell was waiting for the latter, unless they convert. To the distinction that Mbembe (2006c) makes with reference to Nongqawuse syndrome, though Mbembe does not mention names, it is clear that Zuma is a typical native who is barbaric because of his traditionalist posture, lack of formal education and a polygamist of note, while Thabo Mbeki (Zuma's predecessor) constituted civility, his urbane, cosmopolitan and English man posture, the modernist at best. As Mangcu (2006a: 10) puts it, Mbembe 'paints a picture of Zuma the anti-modern, anti-Christ, threatening the cosmopolitan embodiment of modernity, Thabo Mbeki'. Jacobs and Zuern (2006) argue that Mbembe is wrong to suggest that South Africa lacks capacity to generate moral vision of the world. It means the world is the bench mark that sets up standards for morality, and it is questionable whether is there something, as far as the positionality of the black subjects is concerned, that can be looked up to the world and to show the world. This is the world that has projected Africa with many of its stereotypes that are rooted in the colonial project (Jacobs and Zuern 2006).

In the terrain of de-colonial turn the Nongqawuse story creates a condition that allows 'moral equivalence between the position of the oppressor and the oppressed' (Magubane 1996: 376). This means, subjection is read from the base. So, Peires (1989), by means of narration, implies that the white subjects who are settler colonialists did not dispossess the Xhosas and they were decimated by the false prophesy of Nongqawuse. What then prevail are narratives of the oppressor, and the oppressed disappears in terms of subjectivity. Xhosas killed their cattle

and they died out of self-imposed starvation. As such, white settler colonialists had nothing to do with their colonisation and the false prophecy being attempted to be spread by Mhlakazi to convince whites to do the same sacrifice. This means that the oppressor is exonerated and there is nothing to account for, since subjection existed and black subjects participated in it or at worse, exacerbated it to the point of their total destruction *qua* national suicide. Black subjects are actors who are said to be wrongful, and can be implicated to the existential crisis they find themselves. The thought about the past is that which counters the source of subjection that uses Nongqawuse as an alibi and claiming that black subjects have the propensity of self-destruction.

This says a lot about Africa and its black subjects. Not to exist is to be outside the bounds of humanity—the exteriority worse than that of animality—an object. Nongqawuse is the object of history, not a subject, hence this history not being located within black subjectivity. From foregrounding de-colonial turn what emerges is that the story of Nongqawuse is indeed an alibi that justifies the idiocy of the black subject. Nongqawuse's false prophesy, though it persistently failed to actualised itself into reality, black subjects believed in it, even if they doubted since no actualisation took place. Mbembe's taking of the story at face value and without probing the nature of historiography—the frontier history of the white subject—borders on the justification that the black subjects, due to the so-called false prophesy, dispossessed themselves and no white subjects were involved. To amplify this, Mbembe (2006d) argues that the addiction to prophesy and the expectancy of small miracles, have led to a national suicide of black subjects. It means to Mbembe that black subjects are always in the brink of self-destruction and they are to blame for their existential conditions. Furthermore, Mbembe reinscribes the frontier tradition by adopting a simplistic approach of accepting the narrative of Peires (1989) as gospel truth. Mbembe used this Peires myth to warn South Africans of the Nongqawuse syndrome, and this makes Mbembe to fall neatly in the colonial narrative of history and not the thought about the past, that is something in need of re-interpretation and interrogating the source of history. This still shows that race matters and it has been a historical and continues to be a scandal.

The falsity of the radical break

The falsity of the radical break from apartheid is engaged from de-colonial turn. In so doing, it is important to locate Mbembe in the post-1994 South African trajectory in order to really account for the idea of South Africa. The idea of South Africa to Mbembe cannot be singular, but it changes constantly. Being as it may, there are ways in that it can be accounted for to really point out Mbembe's subjectivity seems to border of the myth of exceptionalism. South Africa is an African country whose national identity should be African. Mbembe's idea of South Africa puts emphasis on the politics of hope, and also, possibility it is informed by neo-liberal thinking that leaves existential question by the wayside. This can be seen when Mbembe argues that South Africa after the formal abolition of apartheid is not what it used to be (Mbembe 2008). This is how he captures South Africa in the post-1994 moment:

> It is coming out of the dark age of white supremacy. Whether by design or not, the country is undergoing multiple and systematic transitions, at different paces and rhythms. In an age that has witnessed an exacerbation of historically entrenched racial hierarchies, it is involved in one of the few contemporary global experiments with a view of creating the first credible non-racial society on the planet (Mbembe 2008: 5).

The legislative end of apartheid in 1994, with blacks assuming the helms of power under the African National Congress (ANC), Nelson Mandela paraded as its symbol as the first black subject to be a president after a colonialist, imperialist and apartheid state, is said to be a 'victory for all'. This is propagated as the 'rainbow nation' that is said to be blessed with non-racialism, a 'progressive Constitution', free and fair elections, unity, diversity, non-sexism, freedom and equality. So, in the light of these, the end of apartheid is said to be a radical break and the state that exists is a 'new South Africa'. This should be traced from the release of Mandela from his long-life imprisonments, after that of the late Jafta Masemola of Pan Africanist Congress who is the longest serving political prisoner than Mandela. It is at this time that liberation movements were unbanned and anti-apartheid activists returning from exile. This is before 1994, but in 1990 and this was a condition to ensure a smooth transition to democracy and not liberation. From the standpoint of de-colonial turn, South Africa gave

birth to democracy and the claim that this is liberation is a mere propaganda of the ANC and its racist processor—the National Party (NP). According to More (2011), the last apartheid president, Frederick Willem de Klerk and his NP acted on behalf of black subjects by telling Nelson Mandela and black people that 'you are now free'. Terreblanche captures this moment and period thus:

> On 2 February 1990, FW de Klerk—who had succeeded a faltering Botha as state president in August 1989—stunned the world with his announcement that the liberation organisations would be unbanned, that Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners would be set free, and that the NP government is prepared to enter into negotiations with all political parties to seek a peaceful transition to a democratic political system (Terreblanche 2002: 311).

In addition to the above, More has this to say:

> Given the disparity in land ownership, property, citizenship, voting rights, and so on that came with the oppressive apartheid regime, we need to ask the question: Was there any significant transformation after Mandela became the president on April 27, 1994? I think the initial appropriate question to be asked in order to put things into perspective is: What kind of means led to Mandela's presidency? It is well known that the transition from apartheid to Mandela came about not through a revolutionary break or complete discontinuity with the past, but through a negotiated settlement commonly dubbed the "South African Miracle" (More 2011: 181).

Mbembe (2007) sees the post-1994 era political project as the democratic experiment, one that is about the politics of affirmation and politics of life. It is in this politics that Mbembe (2011b) centralises the notion of witnessing as a form of critique, where in that the role of the democratic experiment is to build the community of life. This is seen as essential to the post-1994 South Africa, where in that, unresolved questions do remain, and also, the time where in that some of these questions are ridiculed and dismissed. De-colonial turn is essential here to critique Mbembe's notion of the idea of South Africa as a democratic experiment since South Africa is still in need of decolonisation. Mbembe faults South Africa as a postcolony whereas South Africa is still the settler colonial state under the management of the black ANC government.

De-colonial turn affirms the position that South Africa still keeps the black subject at the receiving end of subjection even when political power is still in the hands of the ANC. This is important to stand in opposition to Mbembe who seems to suggest that democracy or its experiment is the panacea to the existential predicament that faces the black subject. The argument by Mngxitama (2010) that the accommodation of betrayal is normalised and, it is in fact the backbone of the post-1994 domain, instead of penetrating deeper into the existential question and the conditions facing the black subjects is something that is dismissed in the post-1994 political discourse. The post-1994 is gloomy with blatant denial of historical injustices and accommodation betrayal with the impression that all possible gains have been made. Mngxitama posits that the propagators of the integrationist programmes of the post-1994 era are not concerned with the existential conditions of black subjects. So the black subjects are always compromised on, and those how are propagators of the ahistorical and denialist projects deny black subjects justice. Mbembe (2008) emphasised that the democratic experiment of the post-1994 should be taken seriously. 'This experiment's chances of success cannot be ruled out' (Mbembe 2008: 5).

It is after the negotiated settlement and a political compromise that the 1994 moment came with euphoria, and black subjects under the banner of the ANC were in the commanding heights of political office, but with no economic power. As Terreblanche (2002: 371) points out, '[p]olitical compromises [were] formed between the ANC leaders and corporate sector in the early 1990's'. From de-colonial turn, this is the brief exposing of the end of apartheid, and the moment that the ANC claims as liberation and that it is the party that brought liberation. This in short, is said to be the radical break and of course, the building of a new South Africa. It is not clear from Mbembe (2008) how does he articulate the end of apartheid, or the circumstances that led to its demise, except to say that Mbembe articulates its formal abolition. It is therefore critical to note that the abolition of apartheid was the legislative and moral act, and as such, its continuity through various means is something that continues to haunt the existential reality of black subjects, especially those who yearn for genuine liberation. According to Mbembe (2011b: 2), 'South Africa became a model of how to dismantle a racial mode of rule, strike down race-based frameworks of

citizenship and the law while striving to create racial equality through positive [s]tate action'.

The falsity of the radical break, or to say in Mbembe's terms the abolition of apartheid is problematic on the following grounds. First, apartheid was on its brink of collapse anyway and it was very expensive to maintain. Secondly, the end of Cold War had a knock-on-effect in changing the geo-political situation globally, hence the spread of liberal democracy as the model of regime. Thirdly, what is referred to as the end of apartheid is a result of negotiated settlement where a compromise was made in order to have a peaceful transition to democracy for all, the ANC as the manager of this political project. The fourth and final is that the structures of apartheid embedded in the economy, judiciary and state apparatus were not radically transformed when the ANC took power. In amplification to the aforementioned grounds, Terreblanche (2002) argues that apartheid was already in crisis and these are the factors to take into account. Firstly, it was the failure of apartheid to mobilise power needed to maintain the status quo. Secondly, it was its inability to restore stability and also the absence of legitimacy. Thirdly, apartheid failed to maintain conditions conductive for accumulation. And fourthly, sanctions were a very heavy burden. As More (2011) precisely points out, '[e]conomic, sports, or cultural sanctions, together with the initial negotiations between the Afrikaner intellectuals and the ANC in exile on the other hand, pressured the apartheid regime into agreeing to negotiate with the ANC structures'.

For institutional power relations and ideological apparatus to be understood, there needs to be an understanding of the totality of power. In other words, various manifestations, locations, expressions and effects of power should be understood in terms of how they operate in isolation and in tandem to create subjection in its complex form. De-colonial turn explicates that it is the institutional power that the apartheid regime did not concede, but only political power, that is symbolic if it is not tied with totality of power. The spirit of negotiated settlement predicated on the apartheid power structure did not give away its economic power and hegemony. This is not something that Mbembe diagnoses and explains, for perhaps to say the least, he sees challenges that fail to

bring the 1994 possibility as resting on the shoulder of the subjects, black and white.

There is, for Mbembe (2008), a need to foreclose the gaps that exist between black and white subjects, and of course, desisting from any form of vengeance but transformation. With regards to transformation Mbembe (2008: 18) writes, '[i]t will be a justified claim so long as South Africa can establish that it is not pursuing the good by violating the basic requirement of justice itself'. It is in this complexity that the totality of power where subjection is constituted and lived; and that hegemonises itself for it not to be recognisable between the relations that form part of the subjected and objectified, for that the notion of transformation and justice find themselves in the post-1994 that is of course, antithetical to both. At this level of this complexity, the existential crisis of the black subject having only one directed effect, subjection that is now hidden in structures that invisibilises themselves, and there is no accounting as there has not been any conceptual shift of what transformation and justice is for black subjects. The problem arises when Mbembe indicates the status quo of justice, that, its principle should not be violated. The concern is raised because of the lack of clarity in terms of justice according to whose terms since justice as it is institutionalised is not the formulation of black subjects. From the perspective of de-colonial turn, there has not been any justice in the post-1994, but politics precipitated on reconciliation.

Mbembe (2006c: 1) commends South Africa 'from coming out of the dark age of white supremacy and entering, willfully or not, into a new age of diversity, pluralism and inclusion'. On the contrary, the symbolic order, the dominant narratives in the post-1994 political discourse suggest that the 1994 moment in South Africa was a time of realisation of liberation. The point here is that it is not and the clear terms should be that South Africa is a negotiated settlement. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013b) exposes the myths and illusion of 'juridical freedom' that is the freedom that is bottlenecked and does not translate to itself people's liberation. That is to say, juridical freedom leaves the black condition the way it is, as the injustice are unaccounted for. It is important in relation to the aforementioned that there was emancipation and not liberation.

The society that should prevail is where liberation is lived instead of it being reduced to black faces in government, slogans, flags, national anthems, symbols, national holidays, monuments just to name but a few. De-colonial turn unmasks the pretention that creates the national project has been resolved, or at worse there are new forms of life as there is no burden of the past. This is far from the truth as the post-1994 ANC leadership is not informed by the national project that is informed by true liberation. The post-1994 is emancipation because its logic of operation is reformist—that is, reforming apartheid with the aim of creating a rainbow nation, but without dismantling the apartheid infrastructure. The existential crisis of the black subject for it to change, there should be economic rights, justice and reparations where the black majority are at the commanding heights of the economy and ownership of wealth. If there is a call for economic rights under the era that propagates civil rights, the economic rights will be considered radical. This means the black condition should be reformed with piecemeal changes while the status quo remains.

Further still, de-colonial turn posits that the problematic presence of post-1994 liberation, is still a plague since the illusion of emancipation has diluted the core ethos of liberation as the post-1994 is just a reformist initiative (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013b). As such, it is clear that deracialisation of the economy was central rather than a total recreation of the new being as part of resolution of subjection of black subjects. Mbembe (2008: 5) agrees to say that '[t]o a large extent, this involves deraciali[s]ing the ownership of assets and cultural capital while reconciling the principles of equal protection, affirmative action, and nondiscrimination'. This is the act of emancipation as the change of the political situation has conditions attached to it, and as such, conditions that will not be a threat to the status quo. Emancipation is a child of Euro-North American modernity and it is about attaining civil political rights only, and devoid of reparations. This includes the right to vote, human rights, equality, freedom and justice. Though these rights are fundamental, they have the challenge of being translated to reality more especially in the existential condition that were, or are still pervaded by subjection. These are rights that are born out from the elite project that its end is only reformism and they do not resolve the black existential crisis. This is related to class not the conditions of radicalised black oppression

and that is why the black condition is given a scant attention or it is ignored in total. Emancipation can be said to be a symbolic order that is antithetical to fundamental change and it tolerates change at the cosmetic and symbolic level. It does not clarify how the subjection will be done away with; it only presents the sets of rights. What often occurs is the ritual of condemnation where the acts of subjection are declared unlawful. But then, this does not mean they will not occur, or form the fibre of political subjectivity by taking the hidden dimensions that stand beyond the legal test.

The first priority of liberation movements should be a commitment to return the dignity to those who have being excluded, exploited, humiliated and dehumanised. This is a necessary condition to create new possibilities of a new society to emerge (Nursey-Bray 1980). For this society to emerge, new forms of life that must be lived by black subjects are the ones that do not need an elite project, but the liberation that is fermented and managed by the people themselves to realise justice and reparations. For such a liberation, '[t]he social revolution must distribute the fruits of national liberation struggle to the nation' (Wright 1992:432). The post-1994 launched an elitist project of emancipation and that is why it haunted by the existential crisis of the black subject and the plague of subjection that is structural and rendering itself invisible. The post-1994 was produced by the anti-apartheid struggle—a discourse that was emancipating not liberating since the end was to reform apartheid. Slaves, serfs and other oppressed sectors in the parts of the world were emancipated since the structures that were keeping them in bondage remained intact and change was only cosmetic.

It is not clear from Mbembe whether the liberation movement in charge now of political power (the ANC) did take the right path in order to bring an absolute end to subjection of black subjects. This is because, since the post-1994 is, or was a political experiment, it can be speculated then, that the results of the experiments are overdue and the experiment was supposed to yield chances of success. If then, the experiment regards itself as a liberation project coming from the 'defeat' of apartheid it is important to briefly highlight the following in relation to liberation. Liberation centres on fundamental question like addressing the economic injustices inflicted in the black condition. It is multifaceted and

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engages issues like land and psychological liberation. The bourgeois imagined liberation does not have the capacity to imagine the total overhauling of anti-black structures that perpetuate the black condition. It is such a lack of imagination that makes liberation to be an illusion since it intends to only reform the colonial infrastructure instead of dismantling it. It is this repetition that signal and brings to bear the betrayal of liberation that is managed by the black comprador bourgeois who capture the state power, manage it and fail to fundamentally change it in line with the aspirations that informed liberation.

De-colonial turn exposes a scandal that it is the oppressor who must always emancipate, for that liberation is considered too radical if it brings the colonial infrastructure to a total collapse. It is for this reason that liberation is the invention of the new self and as far as the black condition is concerned it means the end of it. Mbembe (2011b) advocates emancipation where in which the subjects are said to possess agency and as such, being morally obligated in the political transaction of responsibility to avoid the repetition of violent acts and events. For Mbembe, what matters in the emancipator possibility is the generative force of life propelled by the possibility of 'the pursuit of truth as a form of struggle in and of itself' (Mbembe 2011b: 1).

The post-1994 has not yet produced a new being and the existence of the black subject in the mould of liberation is not the one that must be given life by whiteness, for that liberation cannot be given. The post-1994 is a reform since there is no start towards genuine liberation; and the notion that there is no alternative pervades the neoliberal emancipatory pretensions of the 1994 'victory'. It is this victory that does not speak to the aspiration and the content of liberation in that it aims to reform the racial and exploitative apartheid infrastructure. This is where there is a tendency of a regression effect that means to move from better to worse and enriching the few, while leaving many in perpetual state of suffering—the existential crisis of the black subject. The post-1994 with its absence of the liberation project failed to open the vistas of creating a new being out of the ashes of the existential crisis of the black subjects.

Although the black subject in South Africa have been given political rights, these rights do not translate into a means for dismantling the legacy of apartheid,

which remains evident in the black existential conditions, which are a scandal if they are to be put squarely with liberation that the post-1994 propagates. As an elite project, the national liberation struggle underwent an embourgeoisement that culminated in a negotiated settlement that is now equated with liberation. In the post-1994 era democratisation, black depoliticisation and pacification has led to liberation becoming a mere illusion. Although South Africa celebrates the post-1994 era as a triumph of democracy, its history is still too closely bound up with colonialism, racial segregation and apartheid (Pillay 2004). Liberation cannot occur when those who are in the black condition are brutally crushed by the state apparatus when they demand conditions of a better life and basic needs notwithstanding. It has become normalised in the post-1994 era for the police to shoot and even kill unarmed protesters who demand basic services such as water, electricity, RDP houses (free houses provided by government), wage increases, and even toilets.

The idea of South Africa in the context of post-1994 settlement brought hope and expectations of fundamental change, suffered the regression of euphoria like any other form of cosmetic change. This repetition of past patterns signals and brings to the fore the betrayal of liberation that is managed by a black comprador elite, whose sole aspiration is to capture state power and manage it, and in doing so fail to fundamentally change it in line with the aspirations that informed liberation. For de-colonial turn to be effected the black condition must not only symbolically disappear, but must also disappear in realistic terms. Economic freedom, reparations and justice must ensure that collective goods benefit all people, not only small black elites. Thus far in South Africa, there has been a consistent failure to bring about a total end to subjection suffered by the black majority trapped in subjection that creates the existential crisis.

By contrast, the post-1994 is the elite project where liberation is that of the few at the exclusion of black subjects and society has been the way it is. The post-1994 era is fraught with the existential crisis of the black subject which is the predicament and something that is inherited from apartheid. The latter of course, by being inherited is given a human face through neo-apartheid with the ANC as the managers of the project. The post-1994 has a romantic view that is premised on the notion that diverse people unite to create a rainbow nation. This will not

continue indefinitely and for the rainbow to transform there should be incentives to think in unitary terms. The black existential condition must not symbolically vanish, but vanish in realistic terms. Economic freedom, reparations and justice must ensure that collective goods by people to benefit not a few black elite. There has been a consistent failure to bring a total end to the black condition.

If this can be applied to the ANC, it can be argued that it typifies the masses as people who cannot exist without them, but while in power the ANC leaders neglect the masses. This can be related to a situation where the ANC knows that it negotiated for emancipation and it will be hard for it to be toppled by other political parties since it has the majority of support from the masses. In relation to the existential crisis of black subjects in the post-1994, who are dispossessed and excluded, they are caught in the political reality where they often ask peripheral questions. These questions relate to service delivery, human rights, wages among others and most of the black subjects rarely articulate questions in relation to their condition and demand answers to them (Maldonado-Torres 2008a). Maldonado-Torres points out different attitudes of blacks in relation to their condition. These include the silent subjugation of the black subjects. Firstly, the black subject will see their black condition as normal and having nothing to do with the structures that seek to dehumanise them. Secondly, there will be those black who will formulate the project of assimilation and they will be quick to condemn those who point out at racism or other forms of discrimination. In this sense, liberation means absence of racism and nothing should be mentioned about it. Lastly, there are seemingly revolutionary black subjects who affirm the value of blackness in categorical terms. Such black subjects will use the seductive language of race to gain inclusion in the white economy at the exclusion of the black majority. The accommodationists always assume the contradictory position and it always haunts them, but they suppress it—a form of stoicism—bad faith par excellence (Kamara and Van der Meer 2007).

Liberation as a tenant point of de-colonial turn means that the violence structured and justified to attack the black body becomes obsolete. If this is not the case, freedom and liberty can be non-existent and the slave cannot be non-existent. Freire (1972) argues that the precondition for liberation is that the oppressed must confront their reality by objecting it and acting upon that reality. This is

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only possible if the oppressed only agitate for genuine liberation become the antithesis of the black condition. This means that the oppressed should be part of the process of liberation and it should not be something that is mediated on their behalf. Exclusions mean their objection because they are acted upon. In this state of affairs they will be led into 'the populist pitfall and transform them into masses that can be manipulated' (Freire 1972:41). Kamara and Van der Meer (2007:384) argue that '[o]nce the slave resist or refuses to accept his (or her) condition the relationship is forever transformed'.

In the post-1994 era, blacks are a political majority, but in economic terms, they are marginalised, with only a few members of a black elite included in the mainstream of the economy. If the post-1994 era is plagued by the black existential crisis, it means that apartheid was reformed on the basis of continuing its legacy by means of this pseudo-liberation. For Mbembe there is no pseudo-liberation, but rather, the democratic experiment gone wrong, but with the hope of it producing the politics of possibility (Mbembe 2011b). The post-1994 South Africa is yet to give birth to liberation beyond the fake flag freedoms that do not address the lived experience of the black majority who are still trapped in the hellish black condition. To them liberation is just a rumour. Mbembe (2011b: 4) correctly notes that 'the self-understanding of South African society should also be read against a long history of black dispossession'. This, therefore, serves as testimony to the fact that there needs to be liberation not emancipation that is symbolic as it only gives reconciliatory gestures that cannot change the concealed structures of subjection that are the antithesis of black humanity. But then, de-colonial turn still shows that it still remains a challenge for Mbembe to spell out how the black subject can be liberated, *by itself* and *for itself*.

The racial phase of 'frontier accumulation'

The idea of South African should be understood in terms of dispossession and accumulation. Mbembe (2011a) argues that 'frontier accumulation', in its new phase, is made possible by the 1994 negotiated settlement. Both of them are engaged in the excessive mode of mobility, where in that the rich are getting richer and the poor getting destitute. Mbembe remarks thus:

Although a lot remains to be done, blacks are visible in positions of leadership, affluence, and influence in almost every sector of South African life (government, business, industry, banking and commerce, higher education, health, media and so on) (Mbembe 2008: 5).

Mbembe also concedes to say that:

Black South Africans still command less than 5 percent of the national economy of South Africa. Racial and gender imbalances in the distribution of wealth, income, and opportunity are still the rule. Too many poor blacks are still not in a position to create something meaningful for their lives (Mbembe 2008: 6).

The latter statement point to the reality of South Africa, and how black subjects, though the ruling party is possessing political power that it can use to effect change, are still at the negative receiving end. Its existential crisis still exists, and that is, the dispossession of land, labour and humanity. The ANC with is political power can change the situation, but then, it chooses not to do so. Though there are said to be exceptions, with some few blacks in the commanding heights of the economy, with little or no capital power at all to a lesser extent, this possess the limit of them being the representatives of the black subjects as a whole, but only themselves. This is because, the sphere of life that black subjects have part and access in, are far from being from justice since the logic of subjection is till the moral fibre that informs these sectors of the South Africa life. It is in these sectors where black aspirations are denied, contested and where the logic of power resides, though implicit, but also expressive.

Mbembe does not explicitly point out to subjection, and de-colonial turn exposes it as something that comes through hegemony and domination, since these sectors are the spaces where white power is felt. It is clear that black subjects who are in the commanding heights of these sectors do not have power as Mbembe would like us to believe. The change that is said to be is there, falls short if it is the change that has to be looked in relation to the existential conditions of the black subjects. In other words, the nature of that change does not make a greater proportion in relation to black subjects who are trapped in dispossession. Even at the political level, the ANC does not wield that much power in term of it doing justice to the majority of black subjects. Its political

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power is limited in so far as it must ensure to keep the status quo intact. In other words, the change that can be charted as far as black subjects are concerned is yet to come and it is not the one that informs the logic of the post-1994 political reality.

De-colonial turn is essential in that the black condition persists indefinitely even when liberation is claimed to be in place, with some occasional cosmetic changes. The black subject is placed in the existential condition where difficult questions that centre on historical injustice, reparations and the demand for land are necessary to ask. Post-1994 South Africa under ANC rule does not have the political will or imagination to bring about fundamental changes, for fear that this will disturb the status quo. In the post-1994 political discourse, the curses of racism, land dispossession and the monopoly of capital are not engaged directly. There is silence, or in absence of it, self-censorship on these fundamental questions, that are considered sensitive. As a result, this pretence is a mere sleight of hand, claiming to defend one of the most progressive Constitution and deepening democracies in the world, whilst in fact, there is existential crisis of the black subjects.

The contention here is to understand the idea of South Africa as the racial industrial complex of frontier accumulation. This industrial complex explains how South Africa is racially embedded in terms what it means to have and to have less or at worse, to have nothing at all. To have nothing at all is of course, the life of being clutched by subjection, where the poor are black subjects who, as Mbembe (2011b) notes, are turned into waste. This can be described as like the human system where black are consumed through the economy of extraction, exploitation, accumulation, labour to name a few, and then be digested and then excreted as waste. These pathologies affect blacks who are trapped in squalid conditions and they are condemned to the life of non-existence in the hell-holes like townships, shacks and free houses referred to as RDP houses. When the black majority rise and protest to make legitimate and basic demands such as demanding basic services such as water, electricity, sanitation and housing, they are met with police brutality. This clearly shows that the legacy of the past is still haunting those at the bottom of society.

The revolution or liberation is betrayed, since there is absence of those ideas that were the driving force. Therefore, another language, the language of capital is engaged upon. Nevertheless, this is an antithesis to overcoming the black condition since these very same black elites do not understand in clear terms the language of capital since they are not the creators of capital or its forces of production. The racial complex of frontier accumulation is parasitic to black subjects, who are deprived of life and who, in their search of life, render their life as a commodity in order to survive.

> But that wealth, poverty and property have become essential to the self-understanding of South African society after liberation should also be read against a long history of black dispossession. In the new phase of "frontier" accumulation made possible by the 1994 negotiated settlement, the have become the new idioms for political and normative arguments about what should be the proper relation of people to things; what should be the proper relation of people to each other with respects to things; how much property is enough for one person and how much is too much; how much is justifiable especially for the opulent in an environment where hunger and debasement are all too real for many (Mbembe 2011b: 4).

The racial industrial complex of frontier accumulation is informed by unstoppable excess. The regulation and absence of excess is regarded as that which renders it unworkable. So, this industrial complex has no sense of accountability and distribution as Mbembe correctly notes. The dramatic sites of contestation, as Mbembe (2011b) argues are fractures around those who have property and those who do not. The latter are of course, the black majority whom subjection has rendered them dispossessed and as such in lack of being. This fracture is racially embedded, and that is something that explains the presence of the past in the present that is likely to remain unaltered in the future. In this form, subjection is still with the black subjects who are mostly dispossessed and their forms of life being the one clouded with anger, for that the hope of the euphoria is something that did not materialise as the existential conditions remained the same.

> If anything, these whites are doing better today, economically speaking, than ever before. To be sure, they lost political power. But they did not die as a class. In most instances, they can still use their economic muscle and social capital to co-opt an

increasingly predatory elite, therefore gaining the upper hand, to the point of turning the "transformation project" to their own advantage (Mbembe 2008: 15).

De-colonial turn brings to the fore that the racial industrial complex of frontier accumulation should be explained in terms of who are the functionaries of it, who benefits and through what form of relations between those who are privileged and those who are dispossessed. Apartheid was racist and so as capital, and this is facilitated the reality of privilege and dispossession. The post-1994 era that is said to be the radical break from apartheid has not delinked itself from capital. According to Mbembe (2008: 15), '[t]he end of apartheid, however, has not affected the structural positions the white propertied class enjoyed during the period of white supremacy'. It then produced its form of small group of black elites who are in service of white elite, since the logic of accumulation is beneficial to the latter. Both the black elite and the white elites are grounded on the logic of using the body of black subjects as sites for extraction. This is how the racial industrial complex of frontier accumulation is constituted. The same results of accumulation by and/or dispossession exist.

The black elite class arose in a situation where the white oligarchy was willing to make some concession to open their capital caste a bit for black capitalist to eat, but the condition that they leave the white economic power intact. Since the black elites are parasitic to the state and white capital, the two that are their material bases for accumulation, it is essential therefore, to render these black subjects a cog in the machine. They are the appendages of the racial industrial complex of frontier accumulation. It is in this configuration that black subjects are understood as having been active participants through complicity and collaboration through subjection; and this therefore, absolves whites from responsibility of accumulation and dispossession. The path to accumulation is the one that should extract from the very same black subjects, by white subjects and their black collaborators alike. The path of black accumulation has been somehow similar to some extent to that of the English and Afrikaner elite, who were assisted by the state that played a very interventionist role to exclude the black majority in the playing field. They would always take the easy option of leaving the structures of the white capital untransformed. 'In other words, the

fundamental logic of the apartheid and colonial economy would remain intact as few blacks were allowed to accumulate and consume at the rate of old white capital' (Mngxitama 2010: 1). The ANC, of course, serves as the protector of these interests by making a few to blunder and excluding the majority of black subjects. This serves the interests of the white oligarchy and 'it is a method perfected by the [white] oligarchy to placate the political elites and to by protection' (Mbembe 2008: 11). Mbembe is correct to note that this creates inequality among blacks and reproduces similar structures to that of apartheid.

From the standpoint of de-colonial turn, the positionality of the black subject in the post-1994 is subjection. Being in the coal-face of struggling against subjection and struggling to have a right to exist, the material conditions of the black subject are indeed, the state of depletion. Mbembe makes this observation:

> I was struck by the extent to that, here, capitalist forms of accumulation have reached deep in society, and prominent place given to structures of private property and to the legal regimes set up to ensure permanence (Mbembe 2007: 165).

The form of life is divided between those who have good life and those who are in the state of permanent existential crisis. It is essential to state that black subjects are not better from subjection by the virtue of their material status. For Mbembe, this could have not come as a surprise knowing the extent through that subjection masks itself in order to ensure continuity and the state of permanence. Therefore, Mbembe could have just stated how, if necessary, this logic of accumulation and dispossession can come to an end, not only in symbolic terms as it were, but in real terms. De-colonial turn shows that existential conditions should fundamentally change and the material status does not guarantee that there will be no subjection. Subjection is racialised, and if it is looked in relation to the racial industrial complex of frontier accumulation, whether driven by black or whites, those who suffer are only the black majority. So it is clear that even though there is proliferation of vulgar capitalism, and the speedy accumulative excess from blacks who are in the private sector and the public sector, this does not mean the improvement of the dispossessed and deprived black majority. This mobility widens the forms of life, and that is why South Africa is regarded as the

most unequal society in the world. The politics of plenty and the politics of scarcity or nothingness exist side by side. Mbembe writes:

> It is this tension between what looks like an unstoppable logic of unproductive excess on the one hand and on the other hand, a logic of scarcity and depletion that is turning wealth and property into dramatic sites of contestation (Mbembe 2011b: 4).

Mbembe (2007: 164) remarks that 'the gradual consumption of the life of the poorest served as the kindling to the plenitude of the wealthy'. For Mbembe this is caused by the material inequalities that exists, and that by the manner of the constitution and expression, pander on the logic of apartheid accumulation and dispossession. As such, this mean that black subjects who are part of this crusade that consumes the black poor, through exploitation and plunder, do in fact conduct a form of violence that perpetuates the state of material inequality. Mbembe (2006a) refers to this logic as 'radical predation' where extraction, consumption and excretion are part of the political.

However, the post-1994 state with a black political administration has not dethroned white capital, because here white capitalists have not been overtaken by black elites who even fear to antagonise it. This clearly shows that the post-1994 is complex in that the black elite are inclusionary, while the English and Afrikaner capitalists were exclusionary. The paradox is, the black elite have no capital since they were given birth by white capital that they cannot destroy. This makes them weak and they will be in the same post-colonial conundrum that pervades the African continent where they are unproductive, parasitic and exhibitionist. Alexander (2004) argues that the black elite do not reflect blackness and they cannot change white capital, but the latter is the force that masticates and swallows them. She argues that this creates a situation where blacks have no space and they must function in the manner that warrants white guidance and supervision. De-colonial turn reveals how the lives of the black elites are a fiction since they are embedded in a fashion parade and prestigious luncheon. The lifestyle of the black elite is an embodiment of consumption characterised by a lifestyle of opulence and greasy political wealth that has no foundation since it is dependent on political power and parasitic to white capital by systematically excluding the black majority. This accumulation was facilitated

through structural violence, systematic exclusion, dispossession and exploitation. It is on this basis that race was used as the organising principle, with the state playing a maximal and interventionist role to create and sustain the white elite.

In the post-1994 era, white capital is immune, since the discourse of this era focuses on forgiveness of the past, as opposed to a claim to justice and reparations due to blacks. The discourse of corruption is racialised and selective, in that it institutionalises, naturalises and normalises the corruption of white capital. It is considered almost blasphemous to question the past and present accumulation of white capital. The present accumulation is criminalised, whereas the previous accumulation is immune from scrutiny. It is not only whites who monitor the moves of the black elite. The black majority who are trapped in the black condition also monitor the emergence of the black elite. The predicament of the black elite is the question of nearness to white capital. Any black person emerging from the black condition or means of accumulation is placed under severe scrutiny by the media. When they try to move out of the hellish black condition, they are constantly questioned. The discourse of corruption is similar to a speed trap that aims to regulate black mobility.

It is important to note that corruption is not condoned. The discourse of corruption should not be racialised towards black subjects, and since apartheid was a grand project of white corruption there is nothing said about it, and also the beneficiaries of that project. Modes of accumulation, both before and after 1994, should be criminalised if evidence of corruption is found. The notion of primitive accumulation should, therefore, however be criminalised as a whole, since it is, by its very nature, corrupt. Furthermore, it is also embedded in capitalism that is ontologically corrupt. If South Africa is a capitalist system, the logic of primitive accumulation will always operate. It is also essential to note that capitalism is racist, and therefore, ontologically corrupt. Is there any other path to accumulation rather than primitive accumulation in the capitalist system? The issue is structures such as white capital were not dislodged during the transition, but were rather entrenched. These structures perpetuate primitive accumulation, a process that in itself produces similar results of corruption and inequality. The

debate that is not present and that is needed in South Africa is one on ethical modes of accumulation.

However, the neglect of the poor black majority and them being made invisible in the projection of wealth is the reality that exists. According to Mbeki (2009), the detachment of the black elite from the black majority is indeed the detachment from the economy itself since their role and presence preserves white capital. According to Mbembe (2011b), there are moral questions around the notion of lifestyle and accountability. These are informed by the relations of defining life itself, and including the value of life, something that should account to the existential conditions of the black subjects. It is clear that in the post-1994 era, the relationship between the black subject, property and privilege is something that border of complexity and moral blackmail. The frontier of accumulation is not something that began in the post-1994, or made possible by it, even during the apartheid era. The majority of blacks were excluded from economy, politics and social life. The domain exclusiveness of whiteness, that created privilege that is not accounted for, but defended through race denialism, and the Constitutional moral arguments, is something that needs to be explained. The Constitution is not for all, and in particular for black subjects as they are under subjection that is said to have a vibrant democracy while they are under subjection.

Wealth is something that is criminalised when it comes to black subjects and normalised when it comes to white subjects. White capitalists are not seen as a site of decay, greed, corruption and those of the darker hue are. The logic behind this is that white capitalists by the virtue of being white can be trusted with power, wealth and property. As Steyn and Foster (2008: 42) argue, '[t]he insistence that wealth and power are unsafe in the hands of black people carries the subtext that these were one in more trustworthy hands, and should be left there'. The apartheid infrastructure remains intact and nothing was done to overhaul it, except to bring few blacks to eat the crumbs of the wealth generated from exploitation and denigration of black subjects. The accumulation of wealth in the post-1994 follows the very same path of dispossessing, exploiting black subjects. The legacy of the apartheid, through structural and institutional arrangements remains intact since the spatial settlement patterns remain the same

with few blacks gaining the point of access. This is made possible by the presence and the establishment of the oligarchs who have been, and who are still in control of the economy. Terreblanche has this to say:

> The democratic part of the system (controlled by the leadership are of the ANC) is too weak, too constrained, too underdeveloped, too hesitant, and too uncertain of itself when compared with the capitalist part (controlled by the managerial elite of the corporate sector), that is too strong, too developed, too modern and sophisticated, too globalised, and too dominant (Terreblanche 2002: 456).

Terreblanche presses on to add that:

> This system cannot rectify the repression, social destruction, exploitation, and maladministration of the past 350 years. It cannot bring about the sorely needed socio-economic transformation, and cannot guarantee the long term stability and legitimacy of South Africa's new democracy (Terreblanche 2002: 456).

The political power of the ANC, as Mbembe (2008) posits, is not the one that penetrates the nucleus of the economy. As such, such political power even lacks the capacity to have an impact on the economic power in the sense that it is the power corrupted by it. As such, the logic of subjection, with black subjects as victims is perpetuated and the economic power is still not in the hands of black subjects who are in majority. The ANC does not have the political imagination to have a situation where black subjects who are its main supporters are indeed in charge of the economy. The ANC lacks the audacity to transform and to expand political imagination beyond their negotiated liberation that settles only in political freedom. Mbeki (2009) points to the establishment of New Africa Investment Limited that was formed before the ANC won political power in 1994. This formation was not seen as the broader project where the black majority will have access to the economy, but a few black wanting inclusions in the racial industrial complex of accumulation. The initiatives like Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) were also made part of the post-1994 political reality, but it only saw itself as beneficial for few blacks. According to Mbeki:

> The object[ive] of BEE was to co-opt leaders of the black resistance movement by literally buying them off with what looked like a transfer to them of massive asserts

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at no cost. To the oligarchs, of course, these assets were small change (Mbeki 2009: 67).

The black elite in the post-1994 era run what Mitrovic (2010: 4) refers to as 'bandit economy', that is politically, structurally and developmentally untransformed. Mitrovic states that this stems from the fact that these neo-elites accept their former oppressors to be their mentors. As a result, instead of bringing about radical reform, this transitional state results in 'mass unemployment, enormous exploitation, social inequalities, [and] the rise in social contradiction' (Mitrovic 2010: 4). The apartheid state was a form of racial capitalism since the economic arrangements benefit the white life and few blacks at the exclusion of the black majority. The 'trickledown effect' of capitalism is something that is justified, while in fact there is opulent consumption. The desire to accumulate more wealth at the expense of the poor is the moral code of primitive accumulation that is embedded in capitalism. So the capitalist mode of production must always be present to create an enabling environment for primitive accumulation. As Ndlovu-Gatsheni argues:

> A few black people were able to take advantage of favourable state policies such as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and Affirmative Action (AA) to climb up the social and economic ladder into the middle stratum/middle class status. Examples include Cyril Ramaphosa, Patrice Motsepe, Irvin Khoza and others termed the 'black diamonds'. These people were used by dominant white groups as showcases to counter accusations of racial discrimination and to hide continuations of racial discrimination (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013b: 142).

De-colonial turn clearly illustrates how and why a few trusted natives who are not a threat to the white capital will be co-opted to run the untransformed economy and eating the leftovers of the capital since they do not drive the economy and producing the capital. The spatial economy that breeds and perpetuates inequalities between black and whites and among blacks is something that leaves majority of blacks at a disadvantage. The logic behind the co-optation of a few black into white capital is to create parasitic black elite. The ANC are gatekeepers and body guards of white privilege and they serve white interests. Fanon amplifies this view thus:

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Seen through its eyes, its mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists, prosaically, of being the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism, rampant through camouflaged, that today puts on the masque of neo-colonialism. The national bourgeoisie will be quite content with the role of the Western bourgeoisie's business agent, and it will play its part without any complexes in a most dignified manner (Fanon 1990 [1961]: 122).

Mbeki (2009) agrees with this outlook and states that the wrongdoer will not pay reparations while still maintaining a privileged position. Mbeki raises a red flag for a brief moment when it comes to reparations issuing a sterling warning in the problematic relationship that the black elite have with the state. The black elite will see themselves as sole beneficiaries at the expense of the black majority. The questions of property, wealth and accumulation run in the logic of accumulating by dispossession. According to Mbembe (2011b: 4) '[w]ealth and property also operate as means of regulating access to resources that are scares for some and plentiful for others'. Being reduced to mere managers, they have no control or ownership of the economy. The black elites are indebted to, and parasitic to white capital, as such; they are not liberated from its logic of accumulation as dispossession (Bonefeld 2001). What is present in the post-1994 then is the black elite, who benefit from capitalism by perpetuating the exclusions of the black majority the same way with colonialism, segregation and apartheid. The rise and consolidation of the black elite is not a threat to white capital. It is the black elite who often display their wealth from only a fraction in the larger context of the excluded black majority. To gain access to white capital, the manipulation of tenders and cutting deals is means through which the majority of black elites become part of the economy. Mbeki (2009: 61) argues that the 'BEE creates a small class of unproductive but wealthy black crony capitalists made up of ANC politicians'.

The interests of the white capital in the post-1994 era were and are guaranteed in apartheid and that even in the post-1994 era white privilege remains untouched. However, this is far from articulating how structures of white capital should be dismantled, for the economy to benefit and work in favour of addressing the black majority. The black elite will continue to be an oxymoron as long as they do not produce, redistribute and own capital. The black elite serve white

economic interests, and it is in these terms that they are a buffer zone that effectively blocks black aspirations. Nevertheless, when it comes to its enjoyment, this should be done in a just and equitable manner. The black elite are not concerned with the well-being of the black majority; the latter who are excluded and marginalised. The black elite are ashamed of the black majority and thus, they seek inclusion into whiteness. It is in this inclusion where the black elite will project their success on behalf of the whole black majority whom they are ashamed to relate with. The black elite, therefore, become exhibitionist, and as a result, this situation allows for the downplaying of the serious condition of neglect and for exclusions that are part of the black misery to lose effect.

They cannot create a condition where there are new ways of life that are necessary to bring fundamental change to the oppressed. As a result, they will end up as oppressors and will witch-hunt those who question their self-interested and contradictory lives. That is, the colonial world will be reinforced and what is regarded as liberation will be a mere illusion as things will remain the same for those who are oppressed. Mbembe (2011b) argues that the notion of wealth and property is intrinsically linked to bodily life. It is not clear from Mbembe's view whether this is the positionality of the body of the black subjects. The emergence of the black elite in the post-1994 happened in tandem with the exacerbation of the injustices inflicted upon the black subjects. The continued structures of oppression, exploitation and exclusion are part of the legacy of apartheid, and the post-1994 is the neo-apartheid that is managed by black elites at the political level. These structures have their form of life in property and in wealth.

The white oligarchy, the possessor of white capital, has been commanding the South African economy during and after apartheid and who are not mentioned when there is an outcry about the rise or the existence of the black elite who plunder and steal. There is silence about the white rich who live in a safe heaven, where in that their accumulation and possession of plenty is not questioned. This is not seen as corruption, but meritocracy. To remedy corruption in the post-1994 one of the popularised intervention introduced by Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU) was that of the 'lifestyle audits'. The motive behind this call was to ensure accountability, transparency and clean governance among

political leaders and black elites alike. This was in the wake of continuous awarding of tenders to a politically connected few and the culture of graft and corruption that has taken root in the ANC. Thus lifestyle audit is seen as an antidote to graft and corruption, and this call was welcomed by various section of society. The focus is how much do the black elite consume, loot, and spend—and far perhaps, how they impoverish those who are excluded and dispossessed. The concern of COSATU is that then black elite who are parasitic engage in corruption to maintain their lifestyles.

The discourse of the lifestyle audit is limited in the sense that it does not audit cross-sectionally. The white elites seem to be left out and their modes of accumulation and lifestyles are not interrogated or will not be subjected to lifestyle audits. The historical mapping of South Africa clearly shows the role of the state played in helping English and Afrikaner races respectively to accumulate capital whilst simultaneously excluding, exploiting and dispossessing black blacks. The creation and the consolidation of white elites happened on the basis of maximal state intervention with capitalism as the economic logic. The state played a maximal role, both in Anglican and Afrikaner elite formation and consolidation and the state was a means of accumulation. The South African state of the past was used to advance, protect and entrench white privilege (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013b).

It is clear as de-colonial turn unmasks the fact that under the former white regimes, capital accumulation and consolidation of white elites was not regarded as corruption. Nor does Mbembe come out to condemn white corruption that is being normalised and having the connotation that white elites are immune from corruption. However, in the post-1994 era, the discourse of corruption has become racialised since numerous senior figures of the ruling party have been implicated in corrupt practices that resemble that of the white elite, the difference being that the black elites are, at worse, parasitic. The discourse of corruption is located only in the post-1994 era and creates an impression that corruption is a recent phenomenon. The English and the Afrikaner South African states and the emergence and conduct of the white elites are not regarded as corrupt. Even those who were advocating apartheid have changed the terms of

the debate in the post-1994 era claiming that the past should be forgotten and there should not be any discussion about race and white privilege. This can be seen as a deliberate to create a midst or even to erect walls to trace the roots of white capital and how it is being allowed to operate in the contemporary.

The Native Club and the silent scandal

According to Mbembe (2006d: 4), '[a] real danger for South Africa today is that the country may be sliding back into a situation where, once again, the language of racial destiny becomes so all-encompassing as to render impossible other ways of connecting the various fragments of the nation'. The formation of the Native Club in 2006 elicited controversy regarding its role and relevance post-1994 constitutional democracy. The formation occurred in a country that is claimed to be democratic—but the reaction to this formation being that of calling it to come to an end. Mbembe (2006d) in outright dismissal of the Native Club argues that it is never attached to any concrete social and political programme of reform; it can never be a progressive force. Nowhere in the discourse of the post-1994 era has the idea of black intellectuals in wanting to define themselves emerged as strongly as in the politics of the Native Club that was housed in the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA). This is how Maloka (2006: 1) frames it, 'the Native Club is simply a movement, or rather a network, of a section of our country's intelligentsia that is "gatvol" with the dominance that whites continue to enjoy in our knowledge production sector'. The contribution was that posits a key role not only in the realm of ideas, 'but also in the many struggles against inequality, exploitation and oppression' (Maloka 2006: 1).

As already mentioned, the formation of the Native Club arose out of a belief that there were no organised black intellectuals, based on the fact that although there are black intellectuals in some intellectual circles, their agenda was not in line with the aspirations of black subjects. So, the formation of the Native Club was indeed de-colonial turn in that black subjects created their own platform to deliberate on their own issues and in their own terms. Seepe (2007a) also adds that the formation of the Native Club was a sharp relief in the environment where political engagement, more especially that of black subjects has suffered a withdrawal. According to Seepe, the formation created a meaningful dialogue

between and among black intellectuals. Mamdani (1999) amplifies this view by noting that black intellectuals should engage in a re-awakening of thought, and be drivers of social change. The Native Club as Adebajo (2006: 13) amplifies this, to say, the Native Club is the generative force of that mobilises and consolidates the intelligentsia as a social forces to promote the ideas of transformation, networking and researching. Adebajo states that these are all unobjectionable goals that one would assume most reasonable people readily embrace.

Mbembe (2006d) contends that the Native Club is dangerous project as it 'shifts away from the project of non-racialism to a re-segregation of the public sphere'. For Mbembe to argue that the Native Club will never be a progressive force, while it has not been given a chance to exist, and also to ignore its objectives, that concretise social and political programmes, this means Mbembe engages in sheer criminalisation of the Native Club. Though Mbembe states that the South African landscape is caught between white denialism and black victimhood, the Native Club should also be understood as the necessary agent for change in its own terms, and the existence of subjection. So, for the Native Club not to exist while there is subjection, and also, various forms of grievances, this amounts to injustice. For Mbembe (2006d) to even suggest that the Native Club will always repeat the sorry state history it pretends to redress is suggest that there will be no change and repetition, whereas there has never been such a formative or initiative in post-1994 South Africa is to put the cart before the horse.

The Native Club that was accused of reverse racism, arose out of the belief that there was no black intellectualism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). This chorus of reverse racism is not concerned about the objectives of the Native Club, but rather, the concern of black subjects meeting on their own and in their own terms. The engagement of the discourse of the Native Club that arose among other think-tanks that were formed both before and after 1994 and is necessary to establish why there was such an uproar concerning the founding of the Native Club. According to Masango (2009:2), the source of the furore surrounding the formation of the Native Club was 'its perceived link to the ruling party and the office of then President Thabo Mbeki'. This link is because of the chairman of the Native Club and the advisor to Thabo Mbeki, Titus Mafolo. Masango states

that much of the commentary concerned the motives and the relevance of the Native Club. This might also imply that, the Native Club was supposed to explain itself and justify its existence. This is typical, and as de-colonial turn explicates, in the oppressive milieu the black subject must always justify itself. No wonder the response to it has been unnecessarily vitriolic, and the popularised liberal sentiment that black subjects are already in power and therefore, they do not need the racially exclusive organisation (Adebajo 2006).

One of the things that is said to be a controversy surrounding the Native Club is that Thabo Mbeki was seen as the brain behind its formation that allowed it to operate as the alleged presidential initiative and as an ANC project. Seepe (2006:9) explains that the 'Native Club is a presidential project that aims to realise a vibrant critical consciousness among Africans'. Seepe (2000) states that when Mbeki raised the question about the whereabouts of black intellectuals, he was searching for those who shared his views and not for critics. It will be argued here that Mbeki challenged black intellectuals to define themselves, and called on them to engage in critical issues facing society. The popularised warning has been that the Native Club could be reduced to a mere apologetic platform, loyal to the president, instead of being a robust intellectual platform. Although Mbeki made it publicly known that everyone was welcome to join the Native Club, there was still resistance from whites that can be attributed to the word 'native'. Roberts (2007) argues that Mbeki corrected the inaccurate perception that the Native Club was subordinate to him, as exemplified by Gumede (2007), who regarded the Native Club as an invitation-only club of black intellectuals and argues that everything was 'presidentialised', as the office of the president was given more powers.

It is evident that what was of concern and what Mbeki raised in particular, was the absence of black intellectuals in determining and shaping the agenda of the political discourse and the direction of the country (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). In amplifying this view, Masango writes:

> In many speeches he had presented at various forums, former President Thabo Mbeki, consistently asked the black intelligentsia to be more visible and vocal in the socio-political arena. Mbeki had not only made the call in South Africa, but

throughout the continent as well. In one of his earliest attempts to call for the vigorous participation of intellectuals, Mbeki used the forum of [the] Z.K. Matthews Memorial Lecture held at the University of Fort Hare on the 12th October 2001 (Masango 2009:3).

Masango (2009) argues that this call appeared to influence some of the intellectuals, since the intellectual discourse had previously been white-dominated. However, although this was a genuine call, it was received with scepticism in some circles, because Mbeki was infamous for dismissing and labelling those who criticised his government as if they were enemies of the state (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008; Ndebele 2007; Daniels 2006; Kadalie 2001). Seepe (2000) argues that Mbeki was calling for praise singers, since those who criticised the government were demonised. For Kadalie (2001), independent and critical views were marginalised and the use of the race card was deployed whenever suitable in the Mbeki era. Kadalie (2001) highlighted the fact that political power might be consolidated and abused in subtle ways in what she called 'Democracy of a Special Type', that she argued was prevalent in post-independent eras where those in power are sensitive to criticism, and such criticism will also be silenced in subtle ways. 'People do not speak as easily for fear of being called racist, right-wing, sell-out, disloyal and unpatriotic' (Kadalie 2001:224). Mangcu (2007) states that black subjects were supposed to rally behind the Native Club and those who differed with the views of Mbeki are often labelled. The contention for Mangcu is that the Native Club exists in the intellectual sphere that was on retreat and decline, something that gave Mbeki the power to claim absolute truth immune from intellectual challenge and criticism. This is regarded as something that stems from political intolerance. Mbembe compares white nativism and black nativism thus:

If, historically, white nativism has always been about racial supremacy and the defence of immoral privilege, black nativism has always been a by-product of dispossession. As a form of cultural and political protest, the task of nativism is generally to create a common language of grievance (Mbembe 2006d: 4).

Mbembe seems to suggest that white nativism is a historical phenomenon, and it is in the contemporary, due to the presence of constitutional democracy, that white nativism does not exist, or to say the least, that is not a potent force. It then

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implies that black nativism, and the formation of the Native Club in this regard, is irrelevant and detrimental to constitutional democracy. Does it mean then, that black subjects according to Mbembe, should not galvanise their grievances? And why then, such grievances are criminalised and labelled as victimhood but then such a state is not created and perpetuated by the black subjects themselves? The problem centres on the fact that those critical of the Native Club are not equally critical of longstanding white racism, and how it has hidden itself. According to Mangcu (2006b), new forms of political life should not be based on racial nativism that is said to be the fibre of the Native Club. For Mangcu, racial nativism comes with a culture of political intolerance.

As a political project informed by de-colonial turn, the Native Club was meant to provide impetus to his ideas concerning the African Renaissance and those reflecting the black existential conditions, and also, Africa's pressing issues writ large. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2008) argues that the Native Club was in fact a call to focus on the issues that are of concern to the African society. This even included a call to 'produce ideas that drive African society' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008:70). According to Roberts (2007:266), 'the Native Club was an attempt at bringing blacks and whites together for deconstruction of some racial legacy'. Contrary to Roberts, it will be argued here that his stance is just a defensive position that to some extent, borders on the apologia and political correctness. This is clear when Roberts states that the members of the Native Club made an error in suggesting that there are only black indigenous Africans. Roberts's claim is refuted by the reaction and resistance that came from most whites, and some blacks, who had a problem with the word 'native', while others went further in suggesting that this was a 'blacks only' initiative. So, it means that the concern of the word 'native' suggests that this is exclusive, as if there are no white natives. The argument here is that there would be no need for the Native Club if there was no concern about the legacy of the apartheid. The formation of the Native Club was informed by an ethos of being resistant in the mode of operation against the institutionalised and normalised legacy of apartheid. Ndlovu-Gatsheni points out the following:

The supporters and the critics of the Native Club focused their attention on the murky present with a view to prescribing the mysterious future. No one

historicised and contextualised the Native Club in the complex history of the South African liberation struggle (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008:54).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni draws attention to the fact that the Native Club should be understood in relation to black political thought rooted in the tradition of resistance that has informed and still informs the ideologies and the politics of most black liberation movements. These traditions stand in opposition to the idea of the rainbow nation, since they advocate for the ideas of radicalism that can be labelled racial nativism, although not always in essentialist terms. Thus, the injection of black populist thought into political discourse, though it often fits more into the marginal discourse, is part of a black intellectual political tradition. The liberal consensus is founded on the logic of having black subject who are keen to defend the hegemonic post-1994 social script and the status quo. In other words, black subject who will not raise views that are contrary to the dominant ideas, or the institution(s) they serve. As Steyn and Foster (2008) argue, liberal consensus constitutes and perpetuates amnesia, silencing and distortion. Mbembe (2006d) can be seen as advocating the liberal consensus that is clear in its motive to criminalise any form of black racial initiatives. The racial nature of this initiative, the Native Club, is not, as stated before about being a racist organisation, but a space where black subjects can engage in the matters that concern them and that of course, they treat as a matter of importance. But Mbembe sees this is detrimental to the non-racial project, and the Native Club, as a racially exclusive project.

De-colonial turn explicates the fact that the Native Club suffered the wrath of liberal consensus that calls for equality, liberty and justice—stemming from the Constitution that is lauded as one of the best in the world. The Native Club was seen as the threat to the democratic project—the victory for all with its non-racialism where subjects who are clutched in the configuration of race and its manifestation, racism, are said to be unraced subjects who do not see race. Contrary to this alarmist position, Adebajo (2006: 13) posits that '[t]he real danger to South Africa's democracy is not as some critics have hysterically claimed, the Native Club, but the stubborn lack of transformation of the country's intellectual, cultural and socioeconomic life'. The liberal consensus is done by 'resistant whiteness that does not hesitate to present itself' as the

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conscience of the nation' (Steyn and Foster 2008: 33). The banning of racial subject is only applicable to blacks, as they cannot be trusted on their own, hence the need of white subjects to make sure that black subjects are policed properly.

It follows then that it is only blacks who have the potential of ruining the democratic project—the defence of the status quo—that is, through the superiority of the Constitution as the highest law of the land, white privilege affirms itself. Such affirmation is done as if things are normal, and indeed, what post-1994 brought is the hegemony of white supremacy through the liberal consensus. This consensus exists under the pretext of vibrant debate, freedom of expression, freedom of movement, association and the like. But then, the right for black subjects to associate, or to practice freedom of association is something that must adhere to this consensus where in which black associations based on means to fight subjection are declared unconstitutional and detrimental to nation building. It is in this democratic project that white racism still persists and it is denied. Behind the liberal consensus that calls for the forgetting of the past and moving on, there is hypocrisy of wanting the status quo to remain. White aspirations exist in so far as the post-1994 era works for them, and not for the black subjects.

It is important to point out that whether the Native Club was the presidential project or not, it had the right to exist. Some of the black subjects who saw its relevance could have not supported it willy-nilly, there were reasons why. The blacks who supported in did not see themselves as part of the chorus of liberal consensus. Thus, the project of the rainbow nation and non-racialism that faded at the time was used as an alibi to bring the Native Club to a halt. The idea of the rainbow nation that is theological, and alien to the existential conditions of the black subjects is a mere carnivalistic politics and cannot be the corner stone of the nation where political power of blacks is ran by blacks who are in full service of white supremacy and who are against black subjects.

The liberal consensus imposes the myth of non-racialism that is used as a mechanism to tame and police black subjects. The liberal consensus makes sure that the issues that are outside the hegemonic psyche of non-racialism are not raised and the discourse of race should pander to white sensibilities. As Mbembe

(2006d) affirms the importance of non-racialism, he sees the shifting away from it as a dangerous project. Then, it means that non-racialism should be a project that all subjects adhere to, or contribute towards it, and the opposite to that is a danger to democracy and the Constitution. The ANC is in service of white supremacy and is managing subjection on behalf of white supremacy. The ANC is used as a buffer zone to block the aspirations of black subjects, and if it forgets this role, as it is closely watched, the liberal consensus with the apparatus of the Constitution disciplines the ANC to do what is supposed to do—to keep the status quo intact. No matter the content of the Native Club, that is not the point here, but rather the Native Club that was the elite intellectual initiative to engage in matter that affect them, that of course, are not of concern to white subjects and some blacks. Blacks are not allowed, in a democracy that advocates tolerance, to operate on their own —that is, and black subjects cannot be on their own and cannot be trusted. The liberal consensus regards black solidarity as unconstitutional, as if the Constitution holds a biblical stature and is suffused with blasphemous clauses.

Mbembe's railing against the Native Club is purely for the repetition and reproducing of injustices, and thus dampening the spirit of the Constitution and also the hard worn freedoms. So, this means that black subjects must be happy to exist in the post-1994 where they are enjoying constitutional protections. So, the resistance of black subjects, as Mbembe refers to it as nativism, that borders on victimhood, should not, in any way, form part of the political reality. Since South Africa belongs to all as Mbembe would agree, why there should be no solidarity among black subjects. Mbembe's reason of course is that solidarity that does not challenge the liberal consensus, but to deliberate it from within. Those who solidify with the aim of understanding themselves as black subjects in the country where they feel the thorns of subjection, they are said to be a threat. They are a threat as they will expose the scandal hidden in the liberal consensus, where those who are dominant dictate the terms of engagement.

De-colonial turn shows that the liberal consensus represents a silent scandal. Mbembe (2006b) in railing against the Native Club did not do that to the racist and right-wing formations like Afri-Forum and Solidarity. These organisations are nativists and they are not seen as a threat to the project of non-racialism,

democracy and also the Constitution. Afri-Forum and Solidarity are seen as normal, as they have in recent times claimed to be the custodians of the Constitution. They are using the very Constitution to litigate against all forms of black aspirations under the shield of minority rights, or if not, in the defence of the Constitution. It is clearly known that these are movements that in their proverbial minority rights, want to the *volkstad*, and wanting the apartheid machinery not to be threatened. The interests of these movements are only for Afrikaners and no mention is made about them being racist. So, it means the racialised group formations of Afrikaners are not a threat and that of black subjects are a threat.

Therefore, it is of importance to clearly note that white supremacy is alive and well. Contrary to Mbembe (2006b), white nativism is not only a historical phenomenon, but a contemporary reality that presents a danger as it advocates the preserving of the status quo and perpetuating injustice. This is seen through the expression of white arrogance displayed by Afri-Forum and Solidarity as they criminalise black aspiration and even the project of transformation. For the mere fact that Mbembe is aware of white group formations like Democratic Alliance (the prominent opposition party with a liberal bent safeguarding white interests while masking behind non-racialism), Afri-Forum and Solidarity in terms of their agenda of being in fierce opposition to the project of transformation. Why they are not condemned for nativism, but simply being those who are loud to cry unfairness and reverse racism, or put simply, being the victims of the post-1994 project, that of course, is serving them in many ways. When these arguments are made, nothing is mentioned when it comes to subjection and the existential condition of black subjects, but only white subjects as if they are endangered species. For Mbembe (2006b: 3), they are '[t]hose who cannot leave have but a fleeting attachment to the new democratic order'.

The liberal consensus has not called for the end of these organisations, and it seems then, they are constitutional and those that are black only are unconstitutional. It is this scheme of things that those who are in support of the Native Club or its advocates were literally seen and represented as bad blacks versus good blacks who railed against the Native Club. The good blacks are those who are said to be caring about the rainbow nation and who are the

defenders of the Constitution. As Steyn and Foster (2008: 34) argue that '[u]pon closer scrutiny, however, this often turns out to be a specific example of the strategy that pits "good blacks" against "bad blacks"'. This is done to absolve white subject from responsibility and as such, this is used as a tool to discipline black subjects who dare to confront subjection and the scandal of white supremacy. So, good blacks are those who perpetuate liberal consensus and do not want anything that confronts white supremacy. The criticism stemming from black subjects who are fierce opponents of the Native Club was seen as important to be used as a scapegoat and to couch for the demise of the Native Club.

The railing against of the Native Club is interesting to understand in the context of the post-1994 where most often, because of the liberal consensus, black subjects will be structurally positioned to be its spokespersons. For Mbembe (2006d), to criminalise grievances of black subjects and calling the project of non-racialism as important than to unmask whiteness that pervades is really to ignore the extent through that black subject are denied their right for self-determination. They must be determined for, and they must not be on the offensive of white privilege, and their dispossession should not be articulated since this is tantamount to what Mbembe criminalises, victimhood. For the mere fact that they are black subject, this racial positioning was seen as something that elevates Mbembe and some of critics of the Native Club who are black subjects as spokespersons of all blacks. This does not mean all black critics of the Native Club are on the wrong, but the concern is those black critics who criminalised grievances of black subjects, who deny the extent of racism, who overlook white nativism, who forces the myth of non-racialism, who are against any form of black racial formation and the like. These black subjects are instrumentally used as standard model that black subjects must follow. In their positionality, they are denying, of course, that subjection is still the order of the day. They are quick to attack and condemn all those who call it what it is as those who are suffering from victimhood. The notion of victimhood is seen as desperate and detrimental to democracy as it is filled with the sense of entitlement.

Nothing is being said to that effect in relation to Afri-Forum and Solidarity who are projecting themselves as the victims of the post-1994 era. These formations

use what Mangcu (2008: 103) calls 'a racialised mobilisation of sympathy' that is said to exists both on white subjects and black subjects. The silent scandal that is perpetuated by the liberal consensus is not legitimate in calling an end of to the Native Club, whereas it does not do the same to Afri-Forum and Solidarity. The Native Club has the right to exist and black subjects should not be dictated to how they should form themselves. So, the Native Club was of, and is still necessary and relevant to the post-1994 era where black subjects who are concerned about subjection still need their own space and own terms of engagement. But then, the spectre of the silent scandal remains *qua* banning of the Native Club and Mbembe's silence on the white suprematist formations like Afri-Forum and Solidarity, both that are antithetical to non-racial project, seeing beyond nativism, defending the Constitution, progressive social and political projects, transformation and self-determination of black subjects.

Race still matters: on two defensive logics of race

The issue of race is the one that is still relevant, and a contentious issue that is often evaded by those who do not want to confront and evoked by those who are affected by it. The race issue is a bane in the post-1994 South Africa, that claims to be non-racial, and race is here to stay as the racist reality continues to be perpetuated, though in the implicit form. The contention here is that the race issue does not sit well with the South African liberal constitutional state that propagates non-racialism and even transcending race by embracing humanity in its diversity. Mbembe (2008) acknowledges that race is still a problem in South Africa and it is here to stay for a long time. Mbembe (2008: 5) also affirms that the post-1994 is 'undergoing multiple and systematic transitions, at different paces and rhythms'. Mbembe justifies this reality by pointing to black sense of upward mobility, the declining segregation, owning a car and a house, access to education and the like. While mentioning these, Mbembe concedes that a lot has to be done. But then, these are the changes, if one has to take the proportionality of black subjects in the post-1994 reality, something that can be regarded as cosmetic as structural relations have not changed. Indeed, Mbembe also point out structural inequality of blacks and whites co-exist with legal equality and, that in fact, is of a lesser weight since the legality does not translate to the existential conditions of the black subjects. The post-1994 with its progressive Constitution

cannot guarantee the constitutional life for black subjects. The Constitution does not outlaw the hellish life of black subjects that is the post-1994 reality and this necessitates the need for de-colonial turn.

> Although depending on each other for daily existence, Blacks and Whites were cut off from all human closeness, so much that the biggest obstacle to the project of non-racialism was the difficult—experience both by Blacks and Whites—of seeing in the other face of a fellow human, or of merely imagining what it would mean to be in the other's place; to have, somewhere, any commonality (Mbembe 2007a: 162).

According to Mbembe's perspective, the fibre has been torn and experiences of both races are not the same. This even calls for the interests and aspirations of both races being a matter of confusion. Their stance, it is argued here, is that of diametrical opposition. But to Mbembe, what is essential is finding commonality as the possible politics—that is, non-racialism where race no longer matters. But then, the post-1994 reality that is fundamentally racist disrupts this possibility since race still matters and it is part of the post-1994 reality. It is in this context that blacks who are concerned about race and the racist nature of the post-1994 are denied the language to articulate it. Mbembe (2007b) raises a concern on two defensive logics of race that he sees as white race denialism that is predicated on white persistent denial of privilege on one hand, and on the other, black assertion of identity that is predicated on the idea of victimhood. Mangcu (2008: 102) amplifies Mbembe stating that '[t]he culture of denial and racial solidarity among whites provides the backdrop for understanding why black nativist leaders are able to entrench themselves further in power'. According to Mangcu, this can be understood also to be the racial mobilisation of sympathy where each race is concerned and sympathetic with the issues of their own race. Mbembe (2007b) argues that both these two defensive logics of race create 'a culture of mutual *ressentiment* that, in turn, isolates freedom from responsibility and seriously undermine the prospect of a truly non-racial future' (Mbembe 2007b:2).

It means, therefore, the blame of the unworkable post-1994 miracle is the responsibility of both white subjects and black subjects. It seems to the latter, who maybe making legitimate claims in relation to how white privilege that is founded on the dispossession and the exclusion of the latter is criminalised. This criminalisation comes through the discursive practice of black subjects been

portrayed as stubborn, paranoid and even melancholic, as if they are holding on to whiteness (Ahmed 2007). So then, black subjects are not supposed to articulate their demands and even how racism affects them. Black communal victimhood for Mbembe (2008) stems from the promise that blacks claim that nothing has changed and all is still the same, and this is internalised by blacks who convince themselves as such. As Manganyi (1977) puts succinctly puts it '[t]he situation of the racist and his (sic) victim(s) are characteristics by different types of inauthenticity'.

The contention here is that mutual *ressentiment* is not a symbiosis and this rules out Mbembe's thesis that there is collision and collusion in tandem. Mbembe seeks to equalise both subjectivities whereas they are not equal. In fact, there is collision in so far as the interests of both races, and the fault of the post-1994 being to project them as if they are from the same existential plane whereas they are not. As Hudson (2012: 4) argues, 'there is asymmetry— "whiteness" is the master signifier and it has both white and black subjects in its grip'. For Hudson, whiteness possesses wholeness, self-control and sufficiency and it has something to hold on to, the black subject. The black subject as a result of having nothing to hold on to still remains without any forms of existence. The lived experience of white subjects is informed by privilege and that of black subjects by dispossession. This is the reality of the post-1994 where there is absence of political imagination on how to bring new forms of life where there will be a true freedom. But then, what is couched is moving forward and forgetting the past and evoking non-racialism as if it is a solution to the racist reality of the post-1994. So, the notion of mutual *ressentiment* as articulated by Mbembe is problematic largely for being in denial of the post-1994 existential realities, and to call for the end of this notion will not automatically bring the non-racial future or make the non-racial project to work if the structures informing the racist reality of the post-1994 are not destroyed.

De-colonial turn affirms that there is nowhere Mbembe mentions the need to destroy the structures that reproduce the racist reality of the post-1994. White privilege benefits from black dispossession, and it is in the condition of dispossession where black subjects will depend on whiteness for survival. Therefore, even if there is some sort of dependability between white subjects and

black subjects what must be made clear is that this dependability is asymmetrical. The racist logic of white privilege and black dispossession remains profound. This should also include the need for Mbembe to probe why both positionalities of white denial of privilege and the so-called black communal victimhood keeps resurfacing and also still persisting in the post-1994 South Africa. Hudson (2012) notes that the post-1994 is the liberal democratic constitutional state, that is informed by the colonial unconscious, where white subjects are the master signifier and the consciousness on whiteness is colonial unconscious.

Race is not only an issue in the post-1994, it matters and those who are affected are black subjects as the logic and the ethos of race was just to dehumanise, exclude and subjugate them. So, race is not only a psychological affair where black subjects must just embrace non-racialism and then as a result this making race to disappear. Race is also existential in that it affects the everyday life of black subjects who are concerned about it as it even affects their material conditions. The project of non-racialism is on the shaky foundation since the post-1994 is a racialised reality, and the visible markers of race are evident. The project of non-racialism is often silent on what Mngxitama (2009) calls the interrelated moves that are connected to black dispossession—that is, the dispossession of land, dispossession of labour and dispossession of the African being. The logic of dispossession is what informs the existential conditions of black subjects who are at the receiving end of dispossession. Whiteness is an issue in the post-1994 era of non-racialism. According to Mbembe:

They [whites] continued to embrace the privileges of white skin and devoted an extraordinary amount of energy to restoring the normalcy of these privileges. Not only did racism become subtle and often unconsciously practiced, many whites went as far as declaring that racism was a thing of the past; that in fact, white men were now suffering from reverse discrimination (Mbembe 2007b).

The dominant narrative that is informed by the liberal consensus is that race is not relevant and the race issue is a mere obsession that does not take the country forward. This race denialist positionality is so profound that it has found black subjects who are supporting it investing a whole energy condemning and even

censuring the insurgent black voices that expose the post-1994 scandal of trying to hide race whereas it exists. From the stance of de-colonial turn, white privilege is something tied to whiteness as an identity, and white privilege should be understood, from the positionality of black subjects, side by side with their own dispossession. The issue of whiteness has been taken by whites themselves and in no way it is suggested here that it will remedy the existential conditions of the black subjects. As such, whiteness should be on its own, where in that whiteness speaks for itself. If it does not speak for itself, whiteness will be caught in what Alcoff (1991) coins as the problem of speaking for others. As Alcoff (1991: 6) warns, 'speaking for others is arrogant, vain, unethical, and politically illegitimate'. So, the positionality of whiteness is not in any other way, fit to speak on behalf of black subjects and dictating to them how they should and should not engage the issue of race. This even includes how black subjects should engage the post-1994 reality, since the reality of white subjects and that of black subjects is not the same. The premise made by Alcoff is essential in this regard:

> Rituals of speaking are politically constituted by power relations of domination, exploitation, and subordination. Who is speaking, who is spoken of, and who listens is a result, as well as an act, of political struggle. To the extent that this context bears on meaning, and meaning in some sense the object of truth, we cannot make an epistemic evaluation of the claim without simultaneously assessing the politics of the situation (Alcoff 1991: 15).

Therefore, it is important to emphasise that whiteness must speak of itself and for itself. If whiteness speaks for black subjects, then it entrenches itself and negates the lived experiences of black subjects by manner of imposing its own distortions on what is fair and just to black subjects. Whiteness by its very nature is the antithesis to blackness. The phenomenology of blackness is collapsed by whiteness. Mbembe does not account for the fact that whiteness is the state of invisibility, and that it does not have to justify its existence. Whiteness exists in the state of invisibility because it is has the capacity of choice, and to choose whether to be visible or not. Whiteness visibilises itself when its interests are threatened or when the demands of black subjects are articulated in such a way that they pose a threat to white privilege. In amplifying this perspective Ahmed

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(2007) argues that whiteness is 'a category of experience that disappears as a category though experience'. For Ahmed, this disappearance makes whiteness institutionalised, naturalised and normalised, where in that whiteness reifies itself and of course, coming into coalition with the idea that race does not exist or it is not an issue. So then, black subjects cannot determine for themselves what is fair and just to, and for them. This is because whiteness is accountable and responsible for itself and in no way it can be expected to rid itself off the privileges it has accumulated for the benefit of black subjects. According to Mbembe:

> There was a very ancient guilt they wanted to forget because it was giving rise to strange emotional events. Others had no desire to know anything. Not even the name of the place they currently inhabited—and even less who their new rulers were (Mbembe 2007a: 163).

It is essential to briefly engage the whiteness debate as Vice (2010) asked a question on how white live in South Africa, that she refers as a strange place where whites are products of apartheid and still benefiting from it. Vice (2010: 331) claims that '[t]he problem in white South Africa is not just being with being *white*, but being white *South African*'. But then, the opposite is true in that being white is being structurally positioned in the relation to accumulation and preserving of privilege. This cannot be seen as something problematic since this is the betterment and protection of white privilege. White subject do not feel bad that privilege is bend in their favour and blacks are left wanting, and their existential conditions is a crisis. Vice is faulty to assume that privilege is something that contaminates whites and they must have the sense of shame and guilt. White privilege is not a moral burden, hence the reaction of white subjects when it is threatened. According to Vice, white privilege is nonvoluntary in its origins, and it creates a situation where white subjects choose to embrace or reject it. This is what Vice proposes as the way in that whiteness can rehabilitate itself from its contamination of white privilege:

> One of the task of white people is to engage with their selves, and if the theses of habitual white privilege and moral damage are correct there is certainly enough work to do. Our thoughts are heavy with whitely assumptions, and so they would be morally risky, at best, to utter publicly in as racially charged a space as South Africa.

Given the necessary self-vigilance and double thinking imposed by knowledge of whiteness, being careful in this context does not seem cowardly or disengaged. Rather, the care stems from a recognition of the moral complexities and potential for mistakes, that would entrench the very habits from that one is trying to become disentangled. We would, instead, express our attachment to justice though a commitment to a private project o self-improvement, recogni[s]ing the moral damage done to the self by being in the position of oppressor (Vice 334-335).

What Vice proposes does not engage how privilege is dismantled, but it is the moral exercise of making whiteness to be more humane. It does not matter whether whiteness engages or disengages, but then, it is important to stress that this does not say anything about how the privilege should be destroyed. For Vice to call for whites to refrain from airing their views and withdrawing from the political discourse is something that absolves whites from responsibility. The form of life that Vice is proposing for white subjects is to live quietly and decently as possible. The white privilege that informs part of the existence of whiteness is left largely intact, so that it reproduces itself. McKaiser (2011) contends that white subjects should feel shame and regret, but not guilt for their whiteliness. McKaiser also argues that whites should not withdraw from the political discourse as they are moral agents, citizens, and persons with prudential interests. McKaiser also makes the argument that Vice should have put emphasis on whiteliness, rather than being white.

According to McKaiser (2011: 457) 'whites should engage politically in a way that does not perpetuate unearned privileges, *qua* whiteliness, and in a way that allows other interlocutors to engage them—whites— fully, as moral equals'. So, it means that whites must continue to engage politically and the issue of them being morally implicated should not be used against them. Futter (2011) states that the propositions of Vice can invite anger and that the conclusions of her arguments will be rejected out rightly. Futter raises the concern of Vice making a political recommendation that white subjects should remain in silence and not engage in the political discourse. Even Wanderer (2011) supports Futter, and argues that the proposition that white should have humility and modesty as part of their political silence is something that faces objection. Wanderer goes further to suggest that there should be self-examination, self-concern, self-perfection and

self-care as the core of ethico-political. Ethical politics blocks the possibility of black subjects to destruct their own existential reality.

Bailey (2011) is also in opposition to Vice as she argues that the whithdrawal of whites from the political discourse and calls for the white anti-racists project. According to this perspective, '[c]conscientious whites might work toward reparations, redistribute resources (including their own) along more equitable lines, or become politically active in organi[s]ations supporting Black South African's political efforts' (Bailey 2011: 475). This is problematic in the sense that whiteness for what it is, cannot give away its privileges, and this seems to suggest that the act of white subjects assisting black subjects as something of doing well. As Hook (2011: 497) states, 'many moral and political projects are driven by the ego-needs of a given subject'. White subjects often want to appear that they have been involved in the cause of the black struggle, and most of the whites claim not to have supported apartheid. Even those who are still holding racist and right-wing views do not want to be associated with apartheid. Again, this does not explain how to destroy white privilege, and whatever efforts white subjects make means that they will dictate the terms of engagement for black subjects.

The rehabilitation of whiteness should not be for the sake of black subjects, but for whites themselves. This is also linked to the idea of Vice asking white subjects to be civil, since this will automatically stem from their humility and silence. Hurst (2011) is advocating for politics of forgiveness that are typical in the post-1994 as forgiveness is the political mantra in the face of injustices. Hurst argues that white subjects exist in complicit and being at the receiving end of unfair advantages that come with white privilege. So the complicity of white subjects can be explained by the structures of privilege and oppression remaining intact. Coupled with forgiveness, Hurst (2011: 486) call for politics of justice where in that '[justice requires everyone to accept responsibility for wrongs, even when chances places one unwittingly and unwillingly in the wrong'. It is important to note that in the post-1994 the gesture of forgiveness did not deliver any form of justice, and forgiveness can exist or prevail while masking injustices that are of course given a human phase to adapt with the contemporary political reality. Whites in the post-1994 did not ask for forgiveness only blacks are

pushing that crusade that is of no help to them since white privilege as it is does not need to apologise for its existence. As Janz clearly puts it:

> There are, of course, plenty of whites who might not feel shame for a variety of reasons—they do not feel personally responsible for social injustices, they do not feel as if the inequalities are really unjust, they feel as if whites have worked harder or smarter and so deserve their privilege, or perhaps they feel as if social conflict is the way of the world, and some people win and others lose (Janz 2011: 465).

This is the post-1994 reality where the arguments of meritocracy are raised and whites claiming that they cannot be punished for the past that they were not part of. Indeed this is generally accepted in the sense that it goes with the moral equivalence where the concern should not be about the past, but building a non-racial future that Mbembe (2007b; 2008) emphasises. Mills (2011) raises fundamental issues in the Vice debate to put forth that white responsibility and moral self-reform is informed and shaped by the legacy of white domination. White privilege cannot dismantle itself; it should be the responsibility of black subjects in doing so. Whiteness cannot be expected to commit class suicide. Vice, according to Mills, creates unrealistic virtues of whiteness constructing itself. Mills has this to say:

> Apartheid South Africa was, of course, an extreme example of an oppressive society in various ways: the overt and routine reliance on force, the formally institutionali[s]ed differentiation of status, the huge difference in living standards between the privileged and the subordinated, the sharpness and blatancy of social division in everyday life, the very high ration of the numbers of the oppressed to the oppressors, and the literally black-and-white hypervisibility of the key social marker, race (Mills 2011: 429).

The concerted effort for race to be forgotten and moving on to the non-racial future is not adequate to really address the injustice in that white privileged is founded on. As Leonardo (2004: 141) correctly notes, '[t]hey frequently serve to perpetuate white racial supremacy through colo[u]r blindness, ahistorical justifications, and sleights-of-mind'. The post-1994 reality is that whiteness exists in the favoured location that exempts it from what is a burden to black subjects. Whiteness in its location is does benefit a lot from privilege that goes in tandem with dispossession. It then essential also to add another important

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element to whiteness that Mbembe does not call it what it is, white supremacy and this opposes Mbembe' argument that 'the operation of white privilege and supremacy cannot proceed as before' (Mbembe 2008: 8). White supremacy and privilege have changed their character and structure to continue, and this is not the reality in the United States only as Mbembe suggests, but even in the post-1994 South Africa. What seems to emerge in the narrative of Vice is delinking privilege from subjection, as white privilege is inherently subjection. Doing away with subjection simply means destroying white privilege. Of course, this is often rejected even by those who claim to advocate the white anti-racist discourse. Whiteness in the post-1994 South Africa will always fail to moralise itself credibly for that the scandal of black subjectivity, where black speak for themselves is its collapsibility. This is because, the situation where in that black subjects speak for themselves and calling for the destroying of white privilege is seen as problematic. As Mills (2011: 438) argues, '[t]he ideals to that [Vice] is appealing are not realistic ones, given the facts about our doxastic and conative makeup'. So then, these ideals cannot be actualised to the existential conditions of the post-1994 in concrete terms they will be symbolic and rhetoric gestures. Also, it is important to note that Vice does not engage the notion of white supremacy by calling it what it is.

What is fundamentally important from the standpoint of de-colonial turn is that white subjects should not; in the anti-racist effort join black subjects in the struggle. This may sound separatist, and in fact it is due to the opposition to integrationist tendencies where the demands of the black subjects should not be negotiated and mediated on their behalf. What is essential is that the anti-racist efforts of white subjects should be fought by whites subjects themselves in recognising their own privilege and injustices. But then, this should not be the moral crusade in that doing so will mean that they are doing it on behalf of black subjects. If they continue to do so, they will realise that they are fighting on the wrong side as they have been doing (Alcoff 1998). White subjects are made not to recognise their privilege and as such seeing them as the normal part of being white-in-the-world. Mngxitama notes:

> But even recognising privileges of whiteness serves to self perpetuate the inherent goodness of whiteness. It enacts self-critical evaluations that lull blacks into a

meaningless celebration of the self-revealed evils of whiteness. This says, "Look, we know we are benefiting from your oppression but at least we are kind enough to admit to it". It assuages the consciences of (liberal) whites as they continue to enjoy the privileges that come with white skin (Mngxitama 2009: 15).

This means that whiteness has the power to silence, and it means in doing the anti-racist work it absolves itself and also to silence the demands of black subjects. As Leonardo (2004: 137) posits, 'the conditions of white supremacy make white privilege possible'. So, without engaging the total make up of what constitutes whiteness of what Vice calls whiteliness, this will be of no help, even if it means making whites subjects to be aware of their privileges. This is what Ahmed (2006) refers to as the nonperformativity of antiracism. According to Ahmed (2006: 105), '[p]erfomatives succeed when they are uttered by the right person, to the right people, and in a way that takes the right form'. Therefore, it is clear from this perspective that white anti-racist efforts should be for whites and in no way they should be advocated as if they are serving the interests of black subjects. 'White support for antiracism is often similarly flawed: riven with supremacist pretensions and an extension at times of the coloni[s]er's privilege to decide the true, the just, and the culturally valuable' (Alcoff 1998: 7). Matthews (2012) encourages white antiracist work in the recognition of the past injustices and persisting inequalities and also encouraging whites to joining the struggle to achieve social justice. Matthews (2012: 172) also warns thus, 'anti-racist work may actually result in the perpetuation rather than the erosion of white privilege'.

De-colonial turn affirms the position that race is in the post-1994 a burden that is carried by blacks, whom race is structuring them in the state of permanent negativity. Race in the post-1994 as the reality that is denied, is something that does not serve blacks but that is against them. Blacks being the victims of racism are criminalised for pointing it for what it is, and they are out on the defensive hence they are the only ones who are raced and race is used as a tool of criminalisation. Mbembe's call for facing up to race and engaging in affirmative politics do little to alter the racist post-1994 reality where race and racism have taken the melanin of blackness for the purpose of their reproduction.

If South Africa effectively belongs to all who live here, then one can no longer be defined by race, and the latter should no longer carry any privilege. But this would

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mean that privileges previously accumulated precisely on the basis of race must be shared and extended to everyone (Mbembe 2007a: 169).

Mbembe actually knows that this is something that was not in the negotiated settled post-1994, and it is something that is wholly resisted. As such, it does not feature in the political imagination of the post-1994, where demands by black subjects who are at the receiving end of subjection are insatiable. Even the ANC does not have such a bold political imagination hence it is something that does not feature in their rhetoric. The land question is a crude example of this, and the concern of course is to make sure that white privilege exists untouched. Even though Mbembe evokes de-racialisation and distributive politics, it is not clear where should this begin. In no way is Mbembe calling for the dismantling of white privilege, but its distributive logic that is something impossible. Mbembe knows very well the defence of whiteness to its privilege and its silence on how these privileges were and are earned. So then, it seems problematic to deracialise privilege and not dismantling it.

Mbembe (2007a) sentiment of transcending race can only be possible if the post-1994 reality is shaped in line with the aspiration and interests of the black subjects outside the schema of the ANC that reproduce the racist reality of the post-1994. Mbembe's idea of freedom is not the one where black subject exist in the condition where there is no any form of subjection, and the one of racism in particular. But then, Mbembe advocates for what he call freedom from race that he sees as the real freedom. Freedom from race is embedded on the politics of sameness that are silent on white supremacy, white privilege, and the injustices that come with subjection. The politics of sameness are even silent on the existential crisis of black subjects. They use few blacks for the purpose of racial showcasing and such blacks, often in minority as they have been given access to the benefits of white privilege will criminalise other blacks who are making demands for white supremacy and privilege to come to an end. The politics of sameness are based on a few black subject and white subjects in totality and the claim will be that those few blacks are representatives of all black subjects. Mbembe writes:

Real freedom means "freedom from race"—the kind of freedom that South Africa is likely to enjoy because this nation will have built, for the very first time in history of human kind, a society, culture, and civili[s]ation in that, for once, the colo[u]r of one's skin will be superfluous in the overall calculus of status, dignity, opportunities, rights and obligations. This freedom will originate purely and simply from our being human. And this relation between race, freedom, and democracy might come to constitute South Africa's unique gift to humanity (Mbembe 2008: 18).

The post-1994 as it is far from this reality that is projected by Mbembe, even if this is predicated on the politics of hope and possibility. The idea of freedom from race cannot hold if the structures of racism that are managed by the ruling ANC are not destroyed. To call for the idea of freedom of race as something in that black subjects and white subjects must advocate, or volunteer themselves in doing will not resolve the post-1994 reality that is informed by the racist ethos that have moved from public to private. Mbembe (2008) even concedes that the non-racial reality is far from being realised since prejudice keeps breaking wide open, though this is kept secret and hidden as no one would like to be seen as racist, what is usual is often the guise of debates about things that have nothing to do with race.

Whiteness is so pervasive it has become invisible, that is to say normalised—the "normative state of existence". This normative state of existence is also a powerful tool of silencing. "Why can't we all just get along?" someone asks innocently, while another claim that "colour is just skin deep, we are all human beings ultimately". Blacks are under pressure to accept this, in fact we are heroic when we accept our common humanity, and thereby fail to bracket off whiteness and make obvious what it actually is. Mandela is loved precisely because he is so effective in shielding whiteness from view. (Mngxitama 2009: 16)

But then, Mbembe still insists the pursuing of freedom from race where the project of non-racialism should form part of the political imagination. So, it means then that the racist ethos that informs the existential reality of the black subjects must be ignored, and the dirty little secret of prejudice originates from white subjects who occupy the South Africa that works well. So this mean that Mbembe does not challenge the normative state of existence, since the non-racial project that is predicated on freedom from race reifies it. Freedom from race

seems to be problematic in the sense that black subjects who are raced cannot just claim to be free from race whereas their lived experience and existential conditions are informed by the racist ethos. So, race is still part of the post-1994 reality, black subjects who are concerned with race should not be demonised when they are engaging it.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the idea of South Africa has been demonstrated, and this does not mean it is a complete one and it was engaged from the standpoint of de-colonial turn. It is essential to restate that the historical narrative and the historiography has been that of the frontier history that is told by whites about blacks and *for whites*. Mbembe in articulating the post-1994 political phenomena adopted the role of the purveyor of the Nongqawuse story that he refers as the Nongqawuse syndrome. The concern is that Mbembe seems to have taken the historical narrative as it is, and deploying it without any effort of problematisation and the contention is that the story of Nongqawuse cannot be read as a chronological story. The story should rather, be read in the mode of diagnosing its signification.

It is clear that the idea of South Africa as articulated by Mbembe is situated in the neo-liberal stratum where the issue of race is often obscured, since non-racialism is advocated through the politics of sameness. Mbembe regards this as a positive state action where in that racial equality is created. It is therefore critical to note that the abolition of apartheid was the legislative and moral act, and as such, its continuity through various means finding some sites of continuity. On a further note in what Mbembe refers to the phase of 'frontier accumulation', he correctly notes how the logic of extraction and accumulation still continues in South Africa, with few black subjects playing a major role as well. What is not often stated by Mbembe is how and why the black elite are in service of the white oligarchy and them also being buffer zone closing of the majority of blacks. This is the arrangement that is even legitimated by the ANC who are the ruling class, but claiming to be in opposition of the white oligarchy who are in the commanding heights of the economy. Since the black capitalist are parasitic to the state and white capital, the two that are their material bases for

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accumulation, it is essential there to render these black subjects a cog in the machine.

The chapter has even demonstrated how politics of black solidarity are opposed and also criminalised. Mbembe is infamous for railing against the Native Club, and arguing that it is not tied to any progressive political programme and devoid of any content of reform. What is of concern is that Mbembe and the whole liberal consensus chorus alike, are silent on white supremacist and right-wing politics of Afri-Forum and Solidarity. The latter that are right wing and racist are not seen as a threat even to nation building and non-racialism, and it has been demonstrated in this chapter that this is a silent scandal of the liberal consensus.

The issue of race is indeed a bane in the post-1994 South Africa and it cannot be wished away by the politics of sameness, non-racialism and race-transcendence, and this shows that it does not sit well with the liberal constitutional democracy. Though Mbembe agrees that race is here to stay, but his proposition of two defensive logics of race, freedom from race, and politics of sameness are problematic in the era where there is race denialism to mask white supremacy, privilege and all forms of subjections that come with it. What was problematised in this chapter is the notion of white anti-racism efforts, and the suggestion being made that whiteness must fight its own struggles for itself-by-itself. The white anti-racist efforts should not be seen as the ones serving the interests of black subjects since this will mean that the interests and demands of the black subjects will be sanctioned and censured. To conclude then, the idea of South Africa as advanced by Mbembe is of importance but in needs further interrogation, and the attempt made here is to engage some of the aspects Mbembe put forward. The idea of South Africa is engaged here from the positionality of black subjectivity that takes subjection into account rather than relegating it to the abstract margins, but concretising it for its importance of the existential conditions of black subjects.

CHAPTER EIGHT

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

On reflective restatements

In this thesis, the understanding of who is Mbembe is not a biographical sketch, but the location of the subject *qua* persona—understanding Mbembe as an intellectual and his contribution to African politics from the standpoint of decolonial epistemic perspective in general and methodologically, through decolonial critical analysis in particular. The political thought of Mbembe has been studied outside his own canon of the Euro-North American tradition but from decolonial epistemic perspective. This has proven to be essential in order to understand the political thought of Mbembe, and thus forming a political critique of how Mbembe engages the African subject, its subjection, and subjectivity. This was done by asking who Mbembe is, and this was framed along the lines of the emergence of the subject, the African subject in particular. The question of who is Mbembe was to try to explore his subject formation and the conception of the Western subject and that of the African subject were examined in order to locate Mbembe's positionality, even though he did not claim to be the African subject and of course, he cannot even regard himself as the Western subject— that is, the Cartesian subject. Mbembe here is the political subject engaged in the political act of the subject in the making, but the one indifferent to African subjectivity that he reduces to mere footnotes.

So, it has been established that Mbembe regards himself as a subject of free choice asserting itself to the world. What was demonstrated, and contrary to Mbembe's notion of the subject, there has been the notion of identity that is tied to the figure of the subject. Identity for the basis of this thesis can be understood in at least three aspects: the first being identity in the form of the self that has the free choice, the self that makes itself a subject. Second, identity can be understood in the form of imposition, the very thing of creating the dehumanised figure of being who the *exteriori* of life. And third, identity can be understood in the form of social engagement rules. These aspects of identity are essential when

it comes to the African subject and also when it comes to the understanding of Mbembe as the self-defining subject. The self-defining subject is that of self-creation and subject in the making. The educational voyage of Mbembe and the conical texts that influenced him, and also, how influential are they to the political thought of Mbembe. Also, the movement of Mbembe from Cameroon, to France, to the United States and back to Africa—the tri-continental move was important to examine to understand how his intellectual thought developed. It has been stated that Mbembe's political thought tradition is rooted in French political thought with other political thought traditions—and that of the Euro-North America also taking a profound shape. This then gives Mbembe much arsenal to project, represent and articulate Africa in the manner that is external to its locale and even going to the extent of ridiculing Africa, thus denying it any form of subjectivity and to blame it when it resists subjection.

Furthermore, what this thesis has sought to do, in the manner of contributing to the body of knowledge is to engage the works and the political thought of Mbembe from decolonial epistemic perspective. Decolonial epistemic perspective enables the foundation of understanding, interrogating and challenging subjection, and as a result point to the possibilities of re-articulating the positionality of the African subject. Decolonial epistemic perspective enables the foundation of understanding, interrogating and challenging subjection, and as a result, pointing to the possibilities of re-articulating the positionality of the African subject. As a theoretical intervention in this thesis, it explored the understanding coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being. By engaging these three conceptual pillars of decolonial epistemic perspective, the aim was to give an exposition to coloniality which puts the African subject in the structural positionality vulnerable to the industrial complex of subjection. This means coloniality continues to hide colonial relations by naturalising, institutionalising and normalising the industrial complex of subjection.

This thesis, sought to demonstrate that coloniality emerges from the contact points or the colonial encounter that articulates the modes of operation and appropriation of restructuring the world to give the same effect as colonialism did, and make way for modernity to be strengthened. Decolonial epistemic

perspective is in the same line of the political, social and theoretical interventions that sought to challenge injustices and inhumanity of the African subject, just like other anti-colonial struggles, placing the African subject at the centre, to understand its subjectivity and subjection. Therefore, the African subject becomes the agent of research instead of being an object. As such, this is what informs the subjectivity of the African subject. It means that the African subject as the agent of history and contemporality of his or her own subjectivity where in that the African subject thinks of itself, rather than being thought for. This is done through the highlighting of subjection that is a technology reproducing itself in many ways. The subjectivity of the African subject considers the importance of the definitive subject calling for the possibility of another world. Thus, the geography of reason determines the positionality of the African subject. It is in this condition that the terms of engagement are not dictated outside the realm of thought and the existential conditions of the African subject. Also, the African subject's subjectivity is the one that combats subjection.

From this theoretical intervention of decolonial epistemic perspective, the political thought of Mbembe was examined on the works he has written. This has been done through examination of Mbembe's political thought on the modes of self-writing, power in the postcolony, the politics of violence in Africa, the political thought of Frantz Fanon, and the idea of South Africa. The subject position of Mbembe has been informed by the knowledge claims he makes, and that in effect has a bearing on the positionality of the African subject, its subjection, and subjectivity. The existential conditions of the African subject should be understood on these lines—that is, how the subject exists in the clutches of subjection that denies it the potential of becoming the subject in the full sense as opposed to the subject of lack that is ontologically void, and of course, how the African subject in the act of subjectivity creates its own state of emergence. It has been demonstrated in the thesis that Mbembe's relation to the African subject has been the one fraught with complexities, and this can also be extended to the subjection that affects the African subject and of course, its subjectivities. The understanding of the African subject in relation to Mbembe should also be understood in relation to how he engages the existential conditions of the African subject. Mbembe's engagement in this regard acknowledges the

existence of subjection, but the great contention has been however, how he does not untangle subjection.

The mode of self-writing has been a contentious issue more in relation to how the African subject must write the self. Mbembe has railed against what he refers to faked philosophies and modes of writing emphasising the metaphysics of difference predicated on populism. This is the mode of writing that Mbembe sees as problematic as it creates caged epistemologies. In this thesis, the opposition to Mbembe is based on the grounds that populism that has many genealogies, trajectories and horisons is the epistemological intervention that is defended because it is the act of the political—that is, it is the subjectivity of the African subject to counter subjection. And by extension, populism is the construction of the political. It is the affirmation of the political that informs the basis of African subjectivity. What was highlighted as problematic in Mbembe's thought is the politics of naming and vulgarity that are seen as a tool of censure to those who dare to raise subjection and subverting the status quo. As such, it has been demonstrated that they are of no importance if their role is to criminalise populism without explaining it, and this is seen as if Mbembe absolves subjection and criminalises resistance to it. The mode of writing that Mbembe advocates namely, Afropolitanism is seen as the mode of writing that seeks accommodation within the world system that continuously marginalises and excludes the African subject. Mbembe (2006b) insists that there is a possibility of rearranging the new ways of writing Africa and African as a name, idea and subject should not be fraught. Africa is always in-the-making as it has 'unstable consistency including in the midst of shifts, volatility and velocity' (Mbembe 2006b: 148). It is on this reasons that Afropolitanism is advanced by Mbembe as the mode of writing. The examination of the content of Afropolitanism clearly indicated that it is a transplant of cosmopolitanism, but now provincialised in Africa.

In this thesis, the mode of writing that has been advocated as relevant is Africanity. This is the mode of writing embedded in and drawn from the anti-colonial critique, and that is concerned about the existential conditions of the African subject, where in that subjectivity of the African subject is thought and writing from within. This was to show the importance of existential conditions

being articulated are part of the lived experience of the African subject and the necessity of them articulating those conditions in their own terms for the purpose of their own liberation. Therefore, Africanity responds to the things that do exist, and there is no reason why there should be silence, when the existential condition breeds the mode of writing that is fuelled with anger. Mbembe's attack on Africanity as the mode of writing is akin to denying Africans to be angry of abuse and censuring them not to engage in any form of critique to the subjection that defines, names, categorises, and objectifies them. It is on this basis that Africanity is of necessity as the mode of writing by African subjects, and of course, those who are concerned about subjection and the existential conditions that alienate them from humanity.

One of the important contributions Mbembe made is the development of the concept of the postcolony. Mbembe does not see it as the era after colonialism but the entanglement of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods into one. This thesis has sought to map out how power is exercised in the postcolony, and it argued for it to be understood in terms of its perfomativity. The performativity of power in the postcolony is that of mimesis of the colonial regime, and this is improvised by the making such power to have much potency. Such potency and extravagance of performativity comes through what was referred to as *commadement,* as one of the technologies of subjectivation that was mimed also from colonialism. The potency of power in the postcolony is a shallow form of power—a projection of power without power.

The figure of the autocrat was examined in the whole act of perfomativity of power and it is entangled by the very same power that can entrench and even reject the autocrat. This then suggest the postcolony in the sense of the autocrat is not absolute in terms of power in that the postcolony cannot assert its power to the global. The power of the autocrat is then a fetish, since it is like power in the postcolony, power without power. The power of the autocrat is limited to the postcolony, and such absoluteness is that which means the narrow way of sovereignty which is understanding power within. The postcolony being an entangled space and time suggests the limitation of the power of the autocrat. The arbitrariness of such power is only in the postcolony, not in the global scale where coloniality of power presides and the power of the autocrat is just that—a

fetish. In terms of politics of eatery, the scandal of fortune that in many times originates through theft, plunder and exploitation just like in colonial epoch does continue. The difference in the postcolony is that the autocrat, the aristocracy and appendages of power in the postcolony have assumed a place in the zone of accumulation. The politics of eatery in the postcolony co-exist with violence and brutality for that they are pursued in whatever means necessary, as long as such pursuits yield material gains.

Moreover, the character of the African state in the postcolony highlights the betrayal of the national project. The national project had the content of aspiration and expectation of the subjects of the postcolony being met, and the post-independence period with its euphoria, embarking in the fundamental change. The opposite is what happened, and the postcolony being what the subjects are caught with. The national project did not succeed since the character of the African state was entangled by affinities of colonial power that reduced the content and form of the national project to a mere pipe dream. This indeed proved to be right as the national project was left in charge of the hands of the comprador bourgeoisie class that saw the national project as a mere rhetoric to be preached while the state is used as a machinery of oppression to facilitate accumulation. The national project suffered from the conundrum of being something that is reduced to repetition without difference. What the character of the African state showed in the sense of the postcolony is the indebtedness to the colonial metropolis. Though the reading of Mbembe might suggest that *commandement* is the potent form of subjection—well it is in the sense of the postcolony. What is then missing in Mbembe is to mention any other form of power that creates *commandement*. Perfomativity of power *qua* colonial affinities of power is such form of power—subjection par excellence.

The thesis also argued that the politics of violence should not be understood in terms of symptoms, but rather through the genealogy and constitutive complexity. This means that the genealogy of violence is not complex to the extent that it can be reduced to the level of abstraction, and violence as Mbembe noted, is the economy of language is at the level of the real. The colonial encounter inaugurated the language of violence, and this is what has been improvised in the postcolonial moment. Violence should not in the postcolonial

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era as Mbembe suggests be de-linked from colonialism. This is simply because it is mutating in form, character and shape, and to ignore such complexity is to absolve the colonial nature of violence that still haunts the present. It has been examined that Mbembe's concept of technology of destruction, the technology of the empire, is important but seems to be problematic at the level of the black body. At the level of the black body there is absence of ontology and that is the very thing that justifies the non-ethics of war. The black body cannot be accounted for because its ontology is at the level obsolete. The existence of the black body means the black life is not a human life. The existence is at the wayside that then creates the necessary condition for deathscapes to come into effect by assuming the character of the plantation system, where the black body lives in what Mbembe refers to as a shadow of death. In this shadow of death war machines assumes a variety of functions, form and character exists in deathscapes where the economy of war is volatile. The predatory nature of war machines and even that of the state apparatus in the conditions of war create the shadow of death—a deathscape impossible to escape. Though death is not feared by the suicide bomber, this does not suppose that the African subject *qua* slave, possessing the racialised body that is defying through death. The paradox is that death matters for the suicide bomber who is not a slave, and death then serves the higher purpose of wanting martyrdom. The black body cannot claim the politics of the sacred since there is no higher purpose to be served. The black body is already dead and does not have any sense of ontological virtue and no martyrdom even if it can commit suicide bombing. The only problem will be that if such a body engages in body on body war with the bodies of the empire, white bodies, the empire will respond through its might of sovereignty informed by the genocidal and non-ethics of war in the guise of the war against terror. Violence suggests that in the contemporary Africa, it has multiply genealogies, and it cannot be understood outside from the empire and its tentacles of coloniality.

Moving further, this thesis examined Mbembe's ideas on Fanon who is still a contested figure in the 21st Century, and more importantly, the relevant figure of course. The interrogation of Fanon's project that Mbembe calls for is the therapeutic reading that tames Fanon's thorny existential questions to unmask subjection. The therapeutic reading of Fanon is informed by healing of psychic

damage and black subjects creating themselves. The contention in this thesis is that there is relevance of Fanon rather than his resurrection. Fanon's has been a spectre in the postcolony and as such, Fanon's project has never died, therefore, the notion of resurrection is not relevant. The spectre of Fanon started in the 20th Century and still penetrates the 21st Century in various forms and degrees, and this resonates of course with Mbembe that Fanon's thought is indeed metamorphic. This is to ensure the reading that signals the possibility that ensures the emergence of the figure of the black subject from the belly of subjection. This reading suggests the politics that are infused with the potential of liberation, the liberation that will only come through the ontologising of the deontologised subjection crushed in objecthood. It was argued that such interrogation is primarily essential for understanding Fanon in relation to the humanity that was, and is still of concern to him, that which is excluded, marginalised and oppressed, in short, humanity under the surveillance of subjection. So, the liberation of black subjects, their emergence, is what can bring them to humanity, but the anti-black world must come to an end for this to be actualised, and this is something that Mbembe did not engage.

The thesis has also tried demonstrating Mbembe's notion of Nongqawuse syndrome through re-considering the historical narrative itself of Nongqawuse by showing that whites were the agents of history and black subjects were objects of history. By using de-colonial turn as a rallying point of critique, the contention is emphasising the signification of Nongqawuse's narrative, and to call for other histories. This proved essential since the historical narrative and the historiography has been that of the frontier history that is told by whites about blacks. The concern raised with Mbembe's notion—that is, Nongqawuse syndrome made him a purveyor instead of the subject rethinking history. The subject of history, with its portrayal of the past as empirically factual, has been the alien subject when it comes to black subjects and the concern is that Mbembe does not see this as problematic, hence the application of the Nongqawuse, that it is argued here that it is an alibi. Also, radical break that is propagated in the post-1994 South Africa is falsity if it is predicated on the idea that this has led to fundamental change. What is essential to restate is that the 1994 moment was a negotiated settlements that had terms and conditions that led to a compromise.

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Mbembe regards this as a positive state action where in that racial equality is created, but also having to acknowledge structural inequalities and a lot that has to be done to address the injustices of the apartheid past.

On another note, since the black capitalist are parasitic to the state and white capital, the two that are their material bases for accumulation, it is essential there to render these black subjects a cog in the machine. They are the appendages of the racial industrial complex of frontier accumulation. Mbembe does not explicitly point out to subjection that comes through hegemony and domination, since these sectors are the spaces where white power is felt. It is clear that black subjects who are in the commanding heights of these sectors do not have power as Mbembe would like us to believe. This thesis even raises a concern on why Mbembe railed against the Native Club, but is quite on the white suprematist formations like Afri-Forum and Solidarity. The silent scandal that is perpetuated by the liberal consensus is not legitimate in calling an end of to the Native Club, whereas it does not do the same to Afri-Forum and Solidarity. The argument raised here is that the Native Club has the right to exist and black subjects should not be dictated to how they should form themselves. So, the Native Club was and is still necessary and relevant to the post-1994 era where black subjects who are concerned about subjection still need their own space and own terms of engagement. But then, the spectre of the silent scandal remains *qua* banning of the Native Club and Mbembe's silence on Afri-Forum and Solidarity, both that are antithetical to non-racial project, seeing beyond nativism, defending the Constitution, progressive social and political projects, transformation and self-determination of black subjects.

Mbembe acknowledges that race still matters in the post-1994 South Africa and it will be here for a long time. What was contended in this thesis is Mbembe's stance of two defensive logics of race to argue that race denialism is an issue, and it should not be correlated with black experiences that Mbembe refers to as communal victimhood. It means therefore, the blame of the unworkable post-1994 miracle is the responsibility of both white subjects and black subjects. It seems to the latter, who maybe making legitimate claims in relation to how white privilege that is founded on the dispossession and the exclusion of the latter is criminalised. What was also of emphasis was the role of white anti-racist work.

The white anti-racist efforts should not be seen as the ones serving the interests of black subjects since this will mean that the interests and demands of the black subjects will be sanctioned and censured. To conclude then, the idea of South Africa as advanced by Mbembe is of importance but in needs further interrogation, and the attempt made here is to engage some of the aspects Mbembe put forward. The idea of South Africa is engaged here from the positionality of black subjectivity that takes subjection into account rather than relegating it to the abstract margins, but concretising it for its importance of the existential conditions of black subjects.

Restatement of contribution and future research inroads

To conclude, this thesis necessitates the shifting of the geography of reason of the African subject and also the biography of knowledge of the African scholars. It is necessary to move away from the decadent Euro-North American canon if African subjectivity is to be taken seriously. The shifting of the geography of reason is the reading of the African archive and resurrecting African subjectivities from subjection that comes in the image of epistemic violence, epistemic ignorance, epistemic erasure, epistemicide and epistemic deafness. The shifting of the geography of reason has been carried out through decolonial critical analysis as a method of studying Mbembe and from the theory of decolonial epistemic perspective to unmask coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge, and coloniality of being as forms of subjection inherent in Mbembe's work.

Also, these forms of subjection makes Mbembe's analysis to be inadequate to African subjectivity and contributing to the misreading of Africa—therefore, having the implications of leaving Africa to the whims of being read from the Euro-North American ways of doing and thinking. This thesis has affirmed the ways of doing and thinking rooted in Africa as the geography of reason. The suppressed, criminalised and erased epistemologies of the African subject are resurrected if the geography of reason is shifted and they do become African subjectivity proper. The shifting of the geography of reason is reading Africa from —to name just a few—from Aimé Césaire than George Hegel; from WED Du Bois than Jacques Derrida; from Frantz Fanon than Michel Foucault. This is

essential in order to cast light into de-colonial horisons that provide the possibility of the liberation of the African subject.

The shifting of the geography of reason is a practical shift. Once there is a shift, new subjectivities come into being. The shifting of the geography of reason has demonstrated the originality of thought to engage Mbembe from the existential and epistemological base of African subjectivity. What this thesis has explained through decolonial critical analysis and de-colonial turn to the modes of self-writing, power in the postcolony, the politics of violence, Frantz Fanon and the idea of South Africa is that Mbembe is still on the side of coloniality. This has led Mbembe's insights to be alienated to the existential condition of the African subject; hence he dismisses African subjectivity and seems to absolve the presence of subjection. The geography of reason of Mbembe has not shifted from the Euro-North American archive and the colonial library. This thesis shows why Mbembe does not treat African scholars seriously by reducing them to a footnote and not treating them as the body of the text. This makes Mbembe to have the attitude of the imperial subject who maintains coloniality by treating Africa as a mere abstraction.

The possible future research projects are essential since the thematic areas featured in this study are not Mbembe's *oeuvre in toto*, but a *capita selecta* corpus. It has to be noted that Mbembe is an eclectic and illustrious scholar as he engages in philosophy, photography, African modernity, postcolonial theory, history, aesthetics, art, political theory, political thought, urban/area studies, anthropology and literature to name but a few. The possible themes, that are pertinent and worthy of future research on Mbembe particularly on African politics as a subject area should be his theoretical inventions, African philosophy, African political thought and trends in the postcolonial Africa—and this being done outside the realm of Euro-North American episteme. Since there is a crisis of modernity and the Euro-North American episteme, there is a need of modes of theorisation and epistemological intervention in studying Mbembe. Essentially, what is encouraged for future research is the shifting of the geography of reason. This serves well as part proof of understanding the African condition from its existential location. In summation, this thesis has looked at some thematic apparatus pertinent to Mbembe's complexity of thought and his overarching

positionality. This thesis ends with a note that it has attempted to make the epistemological intervention from the geography of reason of decolonial epistemic perspective with the contribution of opening and inaugurating the possibility of another forms of lives, knowledges, worlds and utopias. *Aluta continua!*

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