

EMPIRE UNBOUND:
IMPERIAL LIBERALISM, RACE AND DIASPORA
IN THE MAKING OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Dedication

For my Parents and Grand-Parents
who made my world possible
and held it together
longer than
I
can remember

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At last, some words of gratitude and acknowledgement at the end of a rite of passage. Becoming an “arrivant” at some threshold is a thing that memory threatens to behold in an unruly fashion. A certain narrative of “completion” is imposing itself on me with deceptive orderliness. In invoking your names and thanking you all, I am reminding myself that if the dots ever came together at all, it is because you lent me your shoulders to stand on. I will carry this deeply within me, lest new myths in the coming passages give struggle the appearance of providence.

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ABSTRACT

EMPIRE UNBOUND:
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IN THE MAKING OF SOUTH AFRICAKhwezi Mkhize
Deborah A. Thomas

Empire Unbound is an exploration of the history and politics of empire and imperial citizenship that went into the making of South Africa before the Second World War. The making of racial difference in South Africa is often located in the temporal and political terrain that is Apartheid (1948-1994). In this dissertation I look to the history of South Africa in the long nineteenth century and recuperate the frameworks of empire and imperial citizenship in making sense of struggles for belonging. Empire, both as a form of government and imaginary, invokes a degree of scale that exceeds the nation-state. It also historically precedes the nation-state, which has come to exemplify the model form for organizing sovereign polities. In *Empire Unbound* I argue that as South Africa became a self governing territory in the early twentieth century it folded the remnants of empire into its instrumentalities of racial governance. I therefore explore South Africa's imperial politics and imaginary as it extends to other parts of Southern Africa such as Namibia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana. Empires also have histories that date back to maritime commerce and the making of the modern world. In this dissertation I turn to Cape Town to examine the ways in which this long history of empire gradually formed the grammars of belonging in South Africa and the Atlantic world. Black intellectuals in South Africa during the early twentieth century had their investments in empire but theirs was a struggle to wrestle its grammars into a form that included blackness in its regime of belonging. It was especially after the First World War that these intellectuals sought to write themselves and the colonized masses of the world into an alternative grammar of sovereignty. I demonstrate in this dissertation that these intellectuals were far from mimic men and women; they were involved in a dialogue of reshaping what it meant to belong in the world after empire.

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Introduction: The Violence of Belonging

A Saturday evening, dark like any other, settles to a chilling stillness as you unleash the chain to the gate to park the car. This is an old ritual by now. Simulating calmness, you lax your shoulders, lean a little further in, breathing evenly and turning your head to surveil the surrounds, slip the key into the lock - almost always locked from the inside - and feel the unraveling of metal from metal. Beyond the gate there lies another held shut by a pair of bricks. These you kick aside and let the inner gate gently swing itself open. The bricks, trusted props, make their return to hold the gate open. You turn around and walk assuredly toward the car. The only noise that cuts the air is the song of the trees whispering the night. Halfway there.

This, this is a different night. The trees that so often resemble miniature people, a soft choir of a silhouette in the distance, sing the taste for blood. There are shadows approaching. Shadows of people holding hands and hoisting weapons of famished rage. You are the only one on this lonely street. You are the only one who will taste this rage. The calm gives to fear. The night is hungry and the people who had turned their burning tires and machetes against those deemed *outsider flesh* are fast approaching; a silent mob. You were born here, but will they know that? You are the only one on the street. What will it matter?

You are seized by panic. As your senses spiral into uncontrollable fear you head back to the outer gate, abandoning the last ritual of return midway. Barely locking the gate and the silent silhouettes imminent, you dash into the car and drive toward a safe distance. You end up in your friend's apartment in Melville halfway across town. She receives you in the dead of night, fearing for your life. You settle yourself down and finally story opens up what has been. There was nothing different in the streets barely an hour before. It narrowed to the same church-end that you know. The trees inched ever closer to each other and at times merged into the form of crowds scattered in the distance. In any other night they would have been trees leaning into each other in a narrowing street. The violent gestalt that wrenched you so abruptly out of normalcy was a hallucination.

Earlier that day you marched the streets of Johannesburg with a few thousand others, denouncing the theatre of violence that turned some into outsiders marked for expulsion. The new diasporas of Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Nigeria, Kenya and other nations had existed in an uncomfortable tangle of postcoloniality with the diminishing romance of Apartheid's end. *They* were deterritorialized Africans without citizenship. *They* were guests. And guests live on borrowed time and a hospitality that is tenuous and contingent. Then the patience of those who belonged ran out on them. The guests were making new homes. They were making new lives amidst the waning euphoria of the *new South Africa*. Some had even married "our" women. The boundary between those who belonged and those who endured their hospitality was becoming a blur. In an uncanny way fixed and emergent postcolonialities were colliding. The specter of "failed African states" was breeding their contagion into the "rainbow nation." South Africa was being swamped by *Africans!* To preserve the purity of the precarity of those who belonged "the Africans" had to be dealt with. Then there came the explosion. People were pursued,

rounded up and asked to provide proof of being South African. Those who failed the test of belonging were thrown out of their homes and beaten. Some homes were burnt. Some people were hacked. Some were burnt and left, like the said sell-outs of Apartheid's nadir, languishing in flames long enough to perish. It happened so suddenly for you. The Zim-babwean neighbors who came and asked to leave their furniture and belongings at your home for a few days wore faces of the terrified and shameful. They were not victims of crime or anything of the sort. Their shame was not to belong or possess the skill to make convincing appearances. Their belongings were safe but, now driven to a fugitive existence, where would they go if the night came for them? In the days you and your family held these belongings the violence of belonging became apparent. You were inviolable because the colonial borders that made South Africa almost a century before gave you the privilege of citizenship after Apartheid's demise.

You carry that uncanny passage of time in you. It is now a way of seeing the limits of citizenship. Some years after the autumn of 2008 you will learn that of the people who were assaulted many were in fact South African. They were either too dark in complexion, belonged to suspect 'ethnicities' or spoke one of the less favored languages to pass for 'real' citizens. Their likeness to '*Africans*' was often the telling difference. Belonging is skin deep. That quiet evening of the march carried with it some bitter lessons. Before you turned that last corner in your drive home, flames licked the sky in a near distant settlement of shacks. You wondered then, were people burning too? Your strange hallucination came after this. Perhaps the scenes that had changed the color of the television screen and newspapers headlines leapt uncontrollably out of your mind now that you were under the cover of darkness. Perhaps, after a day of moving in a crowd, you could only see in crowds. It matters little. The uncanny gift of that hallucination - now that you sit and reflect from the luxury of gentrified Harlem in America's "Empire State" - is knowing how deadly the grammar of belonging can become.

Discordant Postcolonialities

Empire Unbound: Imperial Liberalism, Race and Diaspora in the Making of South Africa represents my attempts at working through the political unconscious of the events and entanglements that I have briefly sketched above. In May of 2008 there erupted a series of expulsions of 'foreigners' in various parts of South Africa. The attacks of 2008 which included "the murder, rape, and looting directed at bodies and belongings of non-South Africans" had, by the beginning of June, left more than 60 people dead.¹ It was later confirmed that about a third of these people were South African. In the midst of discussions about the violence something of a clear consensus emerged that what had transpired owed itself to the *xenophobia* of some South Africans. For some, such as Thabo Mbeki, then the country's president, xenophobia talk masked the actions of "people who acted

¹ Eric Worby, Shireen Hassim and Tawana Kupe, "Introduction: Facing the Other at the Gates of Democracy" in *Go Home or Die Here*, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2008), pg. 1.

with criminal intent.”² Mbeki’s refutation of xenophobia as appropriate nomenclature for the violence drew on “a long genealogy of pan-Africanist black South African intellectuals” to generate a normative template from which to differentiate between deviant and authentic African ethics.³ The violence of 2008 did indeed inspire a great deal of indignance, frustration and helplessness among many South Africans, including myself, who either took to the streets to build a voice of conscience against it, or find some way to help those who were injured and displaced. This was not the first time that such events had transpired in post-Apartheid South Africa. But coming of age in this particular juncture made witnessing not only painful; it urged in me a rethinking of the taken for granted ideal of citizenship as the crucible of belonging in South Africa. In the years that followed these events, it has been more and more difficult for me to cradle frustration through indignance. The axiom that nations mythologize their existence through an ongoing concoction of remembrance and forgetfulness became poignantly apparent. In the years since 2008 I have become convinced that there is something in the ontology of the nation-state form itself that cultivates a hermeneutics of suspicion toward the so-called foreigner.

If Nelson Mandela’s election to the presidency in 1994 brought with it a neo-liberal, multiracial democracy that would be anathema to Apartheid, then one must also reckon with the categories of exclusion that developed along side South Africa’s emergent regime of citizenship. In the edited volume inspired by the events of 2008, *Go Home or Die Here: Violence, Xenophobia and the Reinvention of Difference in South Africa* (2008), Eric Worby, Shireen Hassim and Tawana Kupe rightly observe that “The violence that seeks to disposes those identified as ‘Other’ to the nation is revelatory of the unfinished and contradictory nature of the transition from the authoritarian apartheid project” and the “aspiration to democratic inclusion also remains haunted by the older, naturalized differences engendered by apartheid ideology.”⁴ Indeed, the forms of policing, surveillance and punishment that accompanied the acquisition of knowledge of who did not belong, though largely dramatized among black people in this instance, called into memory colonial techniques of marking and disciplining black bodies that were written into the body politic from the regimes of slavery, the post-1834 emancipation, nation-state formation in 1910 and Apartheid in 1948 to name some critical conjunctures in South African history. It is striking how closely discourses of difference and citizenship have been linked to the history of Apartheid. It is as if South Africa’s history after the first democratic elections of 1994 has been a linear journey out of the prison-house of ‘the authoritarian apartheid project.’ Equally striking is how Apartheid has come to embody the history of racial oppression in South Africa. Yet some things are left out by this mode of recollection. That a large number of those attacked and murdered in 2008 were in fact South African points

² Thabo Mbeki quoted in Shireen Hassim, Tawana Kupe and Eric Worby (Editors) *Go Home or Die Here: Violence, Xenophobia and the Reinvention of Difference in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2008), pg. 4.

³ See Eric Worby, Shireen Hassim and Tawana Kupe, “Introduction: Facing the Other at the Gates of Democracy,” pg. 4.

⁴ Eric Worby, Shireen Hassim and Tawana Kupe, “Facing the Other at the Gates of Democracy,” pp. 4-10.

to a racialized politics of knowledge. After all it is quite normal to hear South Africans who are dark skinned, who do not speak the major languages such as isiZulu and isiXhosa, or those who live close to the northern borders of the country, being likened to outsiders or, even more tellingly, simply being labelled “Africans” or “black.” The exceptionalizing discourse of South Africa’s emergence from Apartheid teeters on the verge of a racializing self-apprehension (How fair in complexion would one have to be to be considered safe from the suspicion of being a foreigner? Does the existence of these kinds of questions not mean that the obsession with phenotype which typified colonial regimes is a *deep* code of difference that has been redeployed to tie people to discreet hierarchies of belonging?). In this schema of exceptionality the narrative of ‘failed’ African states ubiquitously marks a form of postcoloniality best avoided. It also marks the bodies of some South Africans as ‘misread’ into the schema of non-belonging. In other words there is an embodied quality to belonging that constantly produces an outside to the nation-state. Neil Lazarus quite insightfully observes that the “disjuncture between the politics of time in South Africa and the continent at large” has reproduced a condition in which one form of nationalism has been “usurped by another nationalism, much less glorious.”⁵ Immigrations from various African countries that are now a daily fixture in discussions of governmentality do not only raise a number of issues about the complexities of post-colonial migrations and the formation of new African diasporas, they also raise familiar anxieties about the mobility of black and African bodies as a form of contagion.

These anxieties have only intensified in the years of the writing of this dissertation. In the middle of March 2015, the Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini Zulu advised at “a moral regeneration event in Pongola, northern KwaZulu-Natal . . . that the government should send foreigners back home.”⁶ The Zulu King’s words were followed by reprisals in southern Durban in which “foreigners - many of them Congolese small business owners - were stoned, stabbed and beaten.”⁷ In the wake of the Human Rights Commission’s investigation of the events, Zwelithini Zulu has since denied making the comments, accusing the media of “twisting” his words. The chairman of the Royal Household Trust, Judge Jerome Ngwenya, has since plugged in for the Zulu potentate, pointing out that arguing for the safety of the country’s borders against “illegal” immigrants is not xenophobic: ““He then urged the police to apply the law firmer [sic] and catch those who violate the country’s laws coming from outside and return them to whence they come. We find nothing offensive [about] this, nor anything xenophobic in it or about it,” said Ngwenya.”⁸ In April, the attacks spread to other parts of the country, this time with

⁵ Neil Lazarus, “The South African Ideology: The Myth of Exceptionalism, the Idea of Renaissance,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* Vol. 103, No. 4 (2004): pg. 610.

⁶ Matthew Savides and Taschica Pillay, “Zulu king: Attacks on foreigners not my fault,” TimesLive. Times Media Group, 1st April 2015. <http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2015/04/01/zulu-king-attacks-on-foreigners-not-my-fault>. Accessed 5th April 2015.

⁷ Matthew Savides and Taschica Pillay, “Zulu King: Attacks on foreigners not my fault.”

⁸ Matthew Savides and Taschica Pillay, “Zulu King: Attacks on foreigners not my fault.”

threats of self-defense and retaliation among some immigrants who are tired of being held under siege. It is yet to be reported that either Zwelithini Zulu nor Ngwenya have spoken against the recent attacks in Durban. In any case, their comments, besides making the recent events permissible, create a framework for rendering immigration tantamount to criminality. The moral economy of citizenship that they espouse works precisely in opposition to immigration in imagining an ideal form of belonging. Worby, Hassim and Kupe observe that “the category of ‘criminals’ and that of ‘immigrants; - taken *together* - makes[s] it possible to imagine the category of the virtuous national citizen in the first place.”⁹ The talk of policing boundaries and the movement of people - mostly people of color - suggests that the techniques of colonial knowledge and surveillance - such as classifying people according to skin complexion and language - are alive and well in the mundane and explosive machinations of new struggles for inclusion in South Africa. There is more that still needs to be said about the coloniality of these negative sociabilities. On the other hand the pan-Africanist genealogy that was mooted as a normative ethic seems to have no real historical weight in the face of intransigent colonial scripts masquerading by other names. The irony is that the labelling of the new diasporas against belonging re-inscribes the same colonial modes of labor temporality wherein African mobilities were over-represented as transient and those who carried themselves across spaces as belonging to an elsewhere to which they ought to return. The fantasy-wish of transient transnational migrancy misses the point. I am not naive to that the object of these epistemological entrapments is precisely to foreclose the unfolding of a flexible mode for belonging that considers people, histories and territories that lie outside of South Africa as gesturing to the future possibilities of its becoming. Diaspora is not a passing condition and so-called “Africans” are no mere guests. The condition of diaspora and deterritorialization are incrementally transforming the social, cultural and economic landscape of South Africa. The failure to think through belonging after Apartheid in the unstable space of emergent diasporas is a kind of epistemological myopia that threatens to extinguish the need to imagine what a pan-Africanist ethics might actually look like after Apartheid.

The absence of Apartheid and post-Apartheid South Africa as a referent in this dissertation might appear a striking omission. Why would a dissertation whose generative source of unease is clearly located in the precarious lives that were made along side the demise of Apartheid evacuate its cause from scrutiny? One could argue that the end of Apartheid has created an intensification of knowledge about the past half century of the country’s history its most beloved statesman, Nelson Mandela, that it has indeed become all too tempting to revert to linear, singular narratives about its racial histories and their contestation. In the two decades that have ensued the end of Apartheid it has become commonplace to mark the country’s becoming as a narrative of the romantic overcoming of Apartheid and its categories of exclusion. In his study of the “transculturation” of modernity by South Africa’s black intelligentsia between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, David Attwell gives an evocative, if triumphalist reading of the African Nation-

⁹ Eric Worby, Shireen Hassim and Tawana Kupe, “Facing the Other at the Gates of Democracy,” pg. 4.

al Congress's conversion of the codes of modernity into a grammar of multiracial citizenship:

The second general historical condition governing South Africa's postcoloniality is its experience of an aggressive modernisation, a situation that began with the industrialization of the mining industry in the 1880s. Industrialization, together with administrative centralization (based on models of colonial control over frontier conditions earlier in the century) created conditions for the emergence of a pan-ethnic, non-racial movement for decolonization (in the discourse of the African National Congress [ANC], the 'national democratic revolution') in predominantly urban and poly-lingual environments. Far from being the natural expression of residual, primordial ethnic loyalties, apartheid was itself a quixotic attempt by the National Party to put this social process of confluence into reverse, essentially an attempt to police intimacy (nowhere was this more apparent than in its absurd laws attempting to regulate sexual contact between races). In the long run the ANC was able to capitalize on this aggressive modernity, by harnessing its centripetal forces and using them against the white minority rule that tried to unsuccessfully balkanize the country. Even in its most gentlemanly phase, the ANC was always in possession of a code of modernity that would eventually be triumphant. It always held the right cards.¹⁰

Attwell's critique of the appropriation of the codes of modernity by the black intelligentsia, most ideally exemplified by the century long odyssey of the ANC, conjures up a dialectic of modernity that was always in movement toward resolving itself in the form of "a pan-ethnic, non-racial movement for decolonization," a dialectic that seems to have been disrupted and temporarily displaced by Afrikaner republicanism and the Apartheid state. I have reproduced this passage in detail because it encapsulates a standard narrative of thinking about the genealogies of modernity and Apartheid in South Africa. On the one hand, the "code of modernity" is assumed to be the master narrative for unfurling and resolving the contradictions of colonialism. Secondly, the Apartheid state and its hand-maiden, the National Party, assume center stage in a schema for explaining the deferral of decolonization in South Africa. The redemptive qualities of the ANC's assumption of power at the end of Apartheid - "It always held the right cards." - offers a powerful appraisal to the narrative of modernity itself for Attwell. The linear temporality of Attwell's grand narrative of modernity assumes the multiracial nation-state to be the inevitable institution through which the "modernity . . . would eventually be triumphant." The question of what forms existed before the nation-state, how and why the nation-state has become such a dominant mode for organizing populations and politics and what alternatives exist to it are not only unposed, they are somewhat unimagined by the preponderance of unquestioned dialectics. In contrast, I argue in this dissertation that the grammars of modernity in South Africa can not be made sense of without thinking about empire and liberalism as providing the structures of feeling that infuse the languages of citizenship that proliferated through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In other

¹⁰ David Attwell, *Rewriting Modernity: Studies in Black South African Literary History* (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2005), pp. 2-3.

words, whether silent or resounding, the relation between metropole and colony has been one of the most salient ways of thinking about the genealogy and politics of citizenship in South Africa before Apartheid. I also argue that the routes of segregation are to be found in what Ann Laura Stoler and Fredrick Cooper have called the “tensions of empire” in South Africa’s history.¹¹ In other words the conditions of possibility of Apartheid must be traced back to the contradictions of imperial liberalism, a history which forces us to stretch our temporal frameworks to the long nineteenth century and before.

My reluctance to enter into the territory of Apartheid’s history in this dissertation, besides the immense and rich terrain outside of it that deserves attention, can be explained by the more political reason that I am cautious about explaining the demise of multi-racial belonging in South Africa by positing the retrogressive influence of Afrikaner nationalism. The Apartheid state might have heightened the regime of racial segregation and placed the question of black citizenship beyond the pale, but it did not invent the techniques of governmentality that prevailed in South Africa’s history. They emerged, initially, in the contact zones of early colonial settlement and slavery and later on in the tensions between imperial liberalism, industrial capitalism and the rethinking of empire as a project commensurate with settler colonialism. Historian Maynard Swanson convincingly argued in the late 1970s that the crisis of managing health and illness in the major cities of the British Cape Colony at the turn of the twentieth century prompted public officials toward racial segregation: “medical officials and other public authorities in South Africa at the turn of the twentieth century were imbued with the imagery of infectious disease as a societal metaphor, and that this metaphor powerful interacted with British and South African racial attitudes to influence the policies and the institutions of segregation.”¹² *Empire Unbound* takes this argument further by placing the rise of segregationism in South Africa in the context of liberal imperialism. One of the under-discussed issues about the country’s history is that the authority of nineteenth century British imperialism came with the franchise through the granting of representative government in 1853 and responsible government in 1873. The franchise that came with responsible government may have primed a masculine political subjectivity for citizenship but in its discursive form it did not presuppose racial exclusion. Citizenship in South Africa was made, then, through the institutions of British imperialism. In turn, some of the significant early innovations of racial segregation were elaborated through the project of British imperialism. Nowhere was this more evident than in Cecil John Rhodes’s careers in electoral politics in the Cape Colony and his ventures in mining capitalism. One of the first legislations institutionalizing racial segregation and prescribing institutions of “native administration” can be traced to the Glen Grey Act of 1894 which Rhodes was instrumental in passing. In 1910, the two Afrikaner Republics and two British Colonies of the Orange Free State, the Transvaal, Natal and the Cape Colony were merged into the Union of South Africa after

¹¹ See Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Editors), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

¹² Maynard W. Swanson, “The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic plague and urban native policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-09,” William Binary and Saul Dubow (Editors) *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth Century South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1995), pg. 26.

the protracted South African War fought at the turn of the twentieth century. Unlike in 1994, the 1910 moment consolidated a form of nation-statehood in South Africa that presupposed the prevalence of white supremacy. I argue in this dissertation that the rise to global eminence of influential Afrikaner figures such as Jan Smuts was built on the state of empire that Rhodes had lain the foundation for. Indeed, as I shall demonstrate in chapter four, the term Apartheid was coined by Smuts in 1917 in London at a time where he played a significant role in the shaping of the the League of Nations and the expansion of the Union of South Africa's sphere of dominance and sovereignty. Smuts' ideas and permission to speak, however, drew its authority from Rhodes himself and, such as in his famed Rhodes Memorial Lectures of 1929 at Cambridge University, he was wont to think through his ideas of white dominance in Africa with a captive metropolitan audience. I do not mean to dismiss or propose to re-write how we should periodize Apartheid. I am more interested in thinking through its prior traces in ideologies and practices that are embedded in structures of empire. Empire is an important framework for me precisely because it enjoins us to think about the circulation of ideas about governance in ways that exceed the boundaries of the state form. As Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper observe, "Empire was a durable form of state."¹³ I also take from Burbank and Cooper that since the nation-state is "a state form that emerged from under imperial skies," part of the project of challenging "the notion that the nation-state is natural, necessary, and inevitable," will involve exploring some of the ways in which empire has been written into the nation-state form.¹⁴ This dissertation takes up this project by exploring how the black intelligentsia and the black diaspora in South Africa appropriated and reconfigured the grammars of imperial citizenship to wrestle alternative forms of belonging into being during the period prior to the Second World War.

Recent scholarly writing about postcoloniality in Africa, the Caribbean and South Asia has been deeply instructive in helping me to think about inflecting what I call South Africa's state of empire with a sense of the layered temporalities - or the afterlives of empire and coloniality - that figure into the complexities of citizenship. In *On the Postcolony* (2001) Achille Mbembe has argued that a reversion to linear temporalities does not help us to account for the predicaments of postcoloniality in Africa. "As an age," he argues, "the postcolony encloses multiple *durées* made up of discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another, and envelope one another."¹⁵ Drawing on the work of M. Jacqui Alexander and Ella Shohat, Deborah Thomas has suggested that transnational and postcolonial time are "neither vertically accumulated nor horizontally teleological."¹⁶ We could rather think of time as palimpsestic, like a parch-

¹³ Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), pg. 2.

¹⁴ Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History*, pg. 3.

¹⁵ Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), pg. 14.

¹⁶ M. Jacqui Alexander quoted in Deborah A. Thomas, *Exceptional Violence: Embodied Citizenship in Transnational Jamaica* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), pg. 11.

ment that retains the markings of prior inscriptions which will remain “imperfectly erased.”¹⁷ In her recent work on violence, transnationalism and citizenship, Thomas suggests that “repertoires of spectacular violence” in postcolonial Jamaica should not be thought about as deviant or through the framework of the “culture of poverty.” They are, she suggests, “techniques of performance that have developed over time and that are made available through a variety of public forums for improvisatory citation or reprisal.”¹⁸ Thomas’ work offers some helpful ways of thinking about the specter of postcolonial violence that, on the one hand do not work through the criminalization of doers yet, on the other hand, implicates the regimes of slavery, imperialism and colonialism that are co-extensive with modernity since they created some foundational repertoires for these spectacular forms of violence. As she explains, the “notion of repertoire provides a way for us to imagine continuity in more complex terms, a complexity that in this case must be contextualized in relation to the thorny dynamics of empire and more specifically, of the transfer from British to American imperialism.”¹⁹ If anything, *Empire Unbound* adds to this kind of thinking by suggesting that South Africa another node of “transfer” that in some striking ways was operates alongside the regimes of power that she outlines, especially in the inter-war period. Thomas’ argument that forms of violence publicly performed must be understood as repertoires “made available” through prior historical iterations also offers some possibilities for how the current state of xenophobia in South Africa can be apprehended by working through multiple, disjointed historical time rather than imposing liner narratives that anomalize the postcolonial uncanny. In their work Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds have recuperated “the spread of ‘whiteness’ as a transnational form of racial identification” during this period as a way of figuring racial difference as a part of the making of “geo-political alliances and a subjective sense of self.”²⁰ I am unsure that a presentist reading of the violence of 2008 or that of March and April 2015 alone - which are showing signs of being more continuous than ruptures in an of themselves - can do the work of outlining the traces of colonial time that are implicit in the repertoires that continue to complicate claims of post-Apartheid citizenship. In this regard *Empire Unbound* works through prior conjunctures to map out how the conceits of citizenship have simultaneously made and unmade belonging.

I am not only interested in empire as a geography of rule creating pathways for the circulation of capital, power and difference. Ideas, texts and people also circulate through the life-worlds of empire. *Empire Unbound* recuperates a pan-Africanist archive to assemble fragments of history where various figures of the African diaspora found themselves in South Africa and elsewhere to re-tool the language of imperial citizenship to forms more amenable to the amelioration of blackness. Indeed, empire and diaspora are

¹⁷ M. Jacqui Alexander quoted in Deborah Thomas, *Exceptional Violence*, pg. 11.

¹⁸ Deborah Thomas, *Exceptional Violence*, pg. 89.

¹⁹ Deborah Thomas, *Exceptional Violence*, pg. 90.

²⁰ Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Colour Line: White Man’s Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008,) pg. 3.

in themselves pathways of circulation that yield their own unique insights about this process and it is precisely because of their contradictory location within and beyond the nation-state that these insights matter. If, as Walter Benjamin put it, the storyteller signals the “ability to exchange experience” what do we make of storytellers in the worlds of empire and diaspora?²¹ In lieu of the sketches of “anti-Africanism” in South Africa that I have already outlined, I would like to begin with a more contemporary example. One of the more interesting examples of this kind of storyteller as the sources of an alternative history can be found in Kenyan writer Binyavanga Wainaina’s recent memoir *One Day I Will Write about this Place: A Memoir* (2011). *One Day I Will Write about This Place* has been described as Wainaina’s tale of a “middle-class Kenyan childhood,” but what intrigues me about it is how deeply it is made through the intimacies and anguishes of an identity that owes itself to multiple narratives of decolonization. Though born into a Gikuyu family, Wainaina’s mother is from Uganda. The Wainaina family is haunted by Idi Amin’s dictatorship in Uganda, which the writer’s mother had fled to Kenya. Wainaina’s childhood life, then, coincides Kenya’s early postcolonial history with that of Uganda. In the collision of these early postcolonialities it is precisely difference through which the young Wainaina learns national history. As he remembers:

Kenyatta is the father of our nation. I wonder whether Kenya named after Kenyatta, or Kenyatta was named after Kenya.

Television people say Keenya. We say Ke-nya. Kenya is fifteen years old. It is even older than Jimmy.

Kenya is not Uganda.²²

The location of Wainaina’s mother both within and without the Kenyan nation gives her “middle-class” existence an edge of precariousness which occasionally erupts in fits of antagonistic (xenophobic?) urges as some Kenyans confront the right of her existence in their homeland. Wainaina’s dreams of an elite Kenyan education after high school are shattered when, under pressure from the IMF and World Bank in the late 1980s, the Kenyan government begins to stop subsidizing university education. In a matter of a few years the structural re-adjustment program strips even the Kenyan middle-class of its ability to give its children a secure professional education. Wainaina’s parents scramble to secure an education for him elsewhere and he ends up in South Africa as a college student. Wainaina, though, continues to be haunted by his inability to catapult himself through education into the African bourgeoisie. The narrative of a somewhat alienated existence among a postcolonial Kenyan and the African diaspora in embryo at Apartheid’s end predominates this rise to comfort and Wainaina poignantly sings its vicissitudes: “We are children of the cold war. We came of age when it ended; we watched our countries crumple like paper. It is as if the Great lakes are standing and rising above the map and tilting downward, and streams of Rwandese, Kenyans, and others are pouring into Congo, Tan-

²¹ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections* (New York: Schocken Books, 2007).

²² Binyavanga Wainaina, *One Day I Will Write About this Place: A Memoir* (Minneapolis: Graywolf Press, 2011), pg. 14.

zania, Kenya. The Kenya shook and those stood and poured into South Africa.”²³ Wainaina’s student years in South Africa weave together new postcolonial migrations along with the dismantling of the Cold War and Apartheid. His existence at the center of the entropy of Kenya’s dreams at the end of colonialism and South Africa’s early post-Apartheid euphoria make Wainaina a storyteller caught between multiple textures of postcolonial time. In South Africa he encounters the other new African migrants and their abrupt funneling into the category of “*amakwerekwere*,” a derogatory appellative slating the new African diaspora as *in* South African but perpetually outside. *One Day I Will Write about this Place* narrates, thus, captures the simultaneous emergence of South Africa’s antagonisms toward the new African diaspora as co-extensive with the inscription of multi-racial citizenship in a neo-liberal democracy. Reading the end of Apartheid through texts about migration and diaspora such as *One Day I Will Write About this Place* enjoins us to not only see the post-Apartheid project as “others” saw and experienced it, but also to exist with an uncomfortable sense of the loss of a pan-African sensibility along side the making of a multi-racial democracy. This kind of reading strains against the corpus of South African literature read through the institution of the nation-state and compels us to begin to think more critically about the inclusion of terms such as diaspora, migration and transnationalism in South African culture without always presupposing the predominance of South African biographies in its production. *Empire Unbound* begins to do this work by recuperating figures who, from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were circulating in ways that were similar to the multiple routes of Wainaina. Bringing these figures into focus means not only thinking about South African history through diaspora but rethinking the archives of empire and blackness in South Africa.

An example of how we might rethink the production of South African literary and cultural history in relation to diaspora can be found in the first novel written in English by a black South African: Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje’s *Mhudi: An Epic of South African Native Life A Hundred Years Ago* (1930). *Mhudi* has, among other things, been acknowledged to be a significant early example of the appropriation of the novel by an African writer in its use of oral history and literary forms.²⁴ It has also been read by Laura Chrisman as a novel by an African nationalist which sensitively dialogizes “the totalizing subjectivity of British imperialism” by working “diverse temporalities for the African nation.”²⁵ One of the most intriguing passage in *Mhudi* involve Plaatje’s use of “diverse temporalities” but ones that work through diverse geographies. Plaatje’s brief early description of Tswana life and custom is intriguing because of the regular ‘interruptions’ of modernity and its temporality in his narrative. In marking Tswana time outside of the modern, Plaatje ges-

²³ Biyavanga Wainaina, *One Day I Will Writ about This Place*, pp. 105-106.

²⁴ The work of Tim Couzens on Sol Plaatje literary works and especially *Mhudi* is especially important in this regard. For examples of Couzens’ work on Plaatje see Tim Couzens, “Sol Plaatje and the First South African Epic,” *English in Africa*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (1987): pp. 41-65 and Tim Couzens & Stephen Grey, “Printers’ and Other Devils: The Texts of Sol T. Plaatje’s “Mhudi,”” *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1978): pp. 198-215.

²⁵ Laura Chrisman, *Rereading the Imperial Romance: British Imperialism and South African Resistance in Haggard, Schreiner and Plaatje* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 207-208.

tures toward some striking juxtapositionings of geographies that lie simultaneously inside and outside the modern: “These peasants were content to live their monotonous lives, and thought nought of their oversea kinsmen who were making history on the plantations and harbors of Virginia and Mississippi at the time; nor did they know or care about the relations of the Hottentots and the Boers at Cape Town near home.”²⁶ This historical ethnography of Tswana life places them outside of the experience of modernity but the early passages of *Mhudi* invokes multiple and disjunctive flows of time through Plaatje’s use of a ‘worlding’ geography. In the process racial kinship and racial capitalism through the yoke slavery are ferreted into what at first seems to be a ‘traditional’ African existence par excellence. Why was Plaatje so intent on ‘forcing’ signatures of racial kinship and colonial contact zones such as Cape Town in a portion of *Mhudi* that is decidedly not about these confluences? The simple answer to this question is that the temporality of these depictions contained all of these formations unevenly spread throughout the world. *Mhudi* begins, then, with fragments of simultaneous history unfolding in different parts of the world rather than a self enclosed ethnographic moment.

The other way of explaining the weaving together of multiple geographies in these early passages is that they map out Plaatje’s location between a colonial modernity marked by the British Cape Colony’s mastery of southern Africa and his wanderings in the black diaspora to find a community of racial solidarity against the color line drawn against the darker peoples of South Africa. *Mhudi* was published by Lovedale Press in South Africa in 1930 but it was written and completed in London a decade before where he had travelled for the second time as part of the South African Native National Congress to protest the South African’s government’s segregationist policies.²⁷ Plaatje tried valiantly to have his novel published in the United States in the early 1920s but his efforts were not successful. Brian Willan, Plaatje’s biographer has suggested that the belatedness of the publication of *Mhudi*, coupled with its publication by a missionary press in South Africa, placed it outside of the vibrant literary culture of the Harlem Renaissance that it would have been a part of if it was published in the United States in the 1920s.²⁸ This gives a great of promise to thinking about the possibility that Plaatje was keen to inscribe the geographies of American slavery in *Mhudi*. The virtual readers of a *Mhudi* published in the time and space of the Harlem Renaissance would have arguably been ushered into a sense of time in which they would have apprehended their own location in history. In order words, the remnants of a diasporic consciousness in *Mhudi* are a reminder of the novel’s complex relationship to bounded categories. The references to the Tswanas’ “over-sea kinsmen” in *Mhudi* does more than give a worldly context to their idyllic lives; they contextualize Plaatje’s own search for racial kinship in the diaspora. It is fascinating that though *Mhudi* was not published in the United States in spite of W.E.B. DuBois’s optimism that a publisher would be found for the manuscript, the Universal Negro Improve-

²⁶ Sol Plaatje, *Mhudi: An Epic of Native Life in South Africa a Hundred Years Ago* (Lovedale Press, 1930), pg. 3.

²⁷ Brian Willan, *Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist 1876-1932* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pg. 349.

²⁸ Brian Willan, *Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist 1876-1932*, pp. 276-277.

ment Association's weekly, *The Negro World*, took up the re-circulation of another book that Plaatje had published in England almost a decade before. In April of 1923 *The Negro World* advertised that those who bought a year's subscription of the world traveling weekly would get "a Copy of Either of the Two Great Negro Books Listed Below."²⁹ One of the books on offer was Thomas Jesse Jones' *Education in Africa* (1922). The other was Plaatje's *Native Life in South Africa* (1916). The public sphere of the black diaspora had transformed *Native Life in South Africa's* semantic value from a text of appeal to imperial power to a "Great Negro Book." Perhaps Plaatje had surreptitiously found his way into the Renaissance after all. In any case, that both major works by Plaatje were produced in the sinews of colony, empire and diaspora enjoins us to think with our senses open to unbinding nation and state whenever we enter the realm of things South African.

A CORKING COMBINATION OFFER!

A Year's Subscription to the Negro World, Which Is Ordinarily \$2.50, and a Copy of Either of the Two Great Negro Books Listed Below for \$4.00

"NATIVE LIFE IN SOUTH AFRICA"
By SOLOMON T. PLAATJE
PRICE \$2.50

"EDUCATION IN AFRICA"
By Thomas Jesse Jones (Review Later)
PRICE: CLOTH BOUND, \$2.00

This offer, made especially for the convenience of Negro World readers, is made in conjunction with

Young's Book Exchange,

THE NEGRO WORLD, 54 West 125th Street, New York City.

Gentlemen: Enclosed please find \$4.00 for which please send me [NATIVE LIFE IN SOUTH AFRICA] or [EDUCATION IN AFRICA] and one year's subscription to the NEGRO WORLD.

Name

Address

Image 1.³⁰

²⁹ "A Corking Combination Offer," *The Negro World*, 14th April, 1923, pg. 10.

³⁰ "A Corking Combination Offer," *The Negro World*, 14th April, 1923, pg. 10.

Of Empire and Diaspora

One of the more intriguing aspects of the black experience in South Africa around the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is how its race politics were inflected by local and international reverberations. As in other instances, black intellectuals from within as well as those drawn from other parts of Africa, the United States, the Caribbean and those resident in Europe, were compelled, by will and forces beyond their making, to converge in South Africa in an effort to think through the meanings of modern blackness. This amounts to a thinking of black intellectual formations in this period as forged in the concatenations of the local, the national and the energies and ideologies of diaspora. Framing questions of race and diaspora around intellectual formations, I look primarily to black newspapers and other forms of print culture in a effort to unravel a history of the forms, cultures and styles of black intellectual life in the period.

The multiple incarnations of black political life in South Africa may have been beleaguered by the specter of colonial modernity, but a creature simply made in the sinews of Otherness it was not. It is my intention to uncover how blackness, for the varying actors who converged around South Africa, or returned to it after periods of itinerancy, served as a grammar through which a politics that was sensitive to both local and global resonances could be elaborated. The most sizable and far-reaching black movement of this period in South Africa - the Industrial and Commercial Worker's Union of Africa - was in part lead by Clements Kadalie (1896-1951), a young unionist from Malawi.³¹ From the rise of the Ethiopian movement of African Initiated Churches in the late nineteenth century to the trepidation with which black people regarded the Italian invasion of Ethiopia of 1935-1936, this is a history in which, as C.L.R. James put it in a different context, "The Negro responds not only to national but international questions."³²

In our contemporary moment, this history seems to have all but been eclipsed by a regime of belonging and memory in which "a totalitarian root" has been predominant.³³ The sequestering of international considerations from the making of what we see as distinctly South African problems has resulted in a reluctance think more explicitly about how the "politics of racial epistemologies share and intertwined history and overlapping territories."³⁴ The result has been at times a violent exhibition of what anthropologist

³¹ See Helen Bradford, *A Taste of Freedom: the ICU in Rural South Africa, 1924-1930*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

³² C.L.R. James, *C.L.R. James on the 'Negro Question.'* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1996), pg. 3. Of course, the mid-1930s did not mark the first act of Italian imperial aggression in Ethiopia. As Joseph E. Harris observes, "Ethiopia's defeat of Italy in 1896 enhanced the fascination the African nation historically held for people of African descent." Joseph E. Harris, *African American Reactions to War in Ethiopia 1936-1941*. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994), pg. 2.

³³ Edouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), pg. 11.

³⁴ Michelle A. Stephens, "Re-Imagining the Shape and Borders of Political Black Space," in *Racial History Review*, pg. 178.

John L. Jackson, Jr. refers to as the politics of *georaciality*: “the transnational ebb and flow of people through local spaces that demand certain affective investments for them, including qualified and quantifiable racial frameworks for determining community and reckoning belonging.”³⁵ As I have suggested, though it would seem from our contemporary purview that belonging was always orchestrated by the “seductive archaeology” of the nation-state, nothing could be more to the contrary.³⁶ Colonial spaces such as South Africa may have been located on the margins of empire, but they were constitutive of the field in which some of the foundational categories modernity were defined. They were, furthermore, spaces in which the grammars of blackness were worked out as various black figures encountered one another, and the depravities that were recognizably racial in their import. If the subjective and political imaginaries through which a politics of the black diaspora was constituted was one of the ferment of mutuality in difference, then I am similarly interested in exploring how these grammars of blackness, decidedly part of the history of black internationalism, were no less the necessary conditions in which the exigencies coloniality would be confronted.

In this dissertation South Africa stands as both a sign and a material structure. It is the central geography in which I would like to locate this story of the black public sphere. It was an imaginary space which was made by the imperial enterprise and contested by generations of itinerant black intellectuals who were developing a racial consciousness in colonial modernity. The study is located in a period roughly spanning the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 and the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935-1936 as a way of examining the local, national and international designs and repercussions of South Africa’s colonial formation for the politics of race among black intellectuals. How and why was the basis of black textuality established and circulated in South Africa? Who were the figures who edited, produced and sustained these texts? What were the primary modes of textuality, both in its writing and reading practices, through which black modalities of publicness were propagated? What was the relationship between these newspapers and the black social and political movements that arose in South Africa as a result of colonial modernity? These are the broad questions that this dissertation engages with.

Empire Unbound, then, is an attempt to think through the making of modern blackness and its forms of publicness by focalizing South Africa as a geo-political region of its imaginaries. If racial exclusion and colonial marginality deterritorialized black subjects then any consideration of their histories must work to recuperate the multiple resonances of black discourses and alternative visions of what a reterritorialized blackness might look like. This work draws on the insights and builds on the long history of black intellectual work as well as some recent scholarship on this history, especially in the period girded by

³⁵ John L. Jackson, Jr. “Gentrification, Globalization, and Georaciality” in Kamari Maxime Clarke and Deborah A. Thomas (editors) *Globalization and Race: Transformations in the Cultural Production of Blackness*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). pg. 193.

³⁶ I borrow this phrase from Cedric Robinson’s illuminating critique of how regimes of race tend to leave their history susceptible to be represented as if processes were stable and inevitable forms. See Cedric Robinson, *Forgeries of Memory & Meaning: Blacks & the Regimes of Race in American Theatre & Film before World War II*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), pp. xi-xvii.

the Great Wars of the twentieth century. Brent Hayes Edwards's *The Practice of Diaspora: Translation, Literature and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (2003) and Michelle A. Stephens's *Black Empire: The Masculine Global Imaginary of Caribbean Intellectuals in the United States, 1914-1962* (2005) are two recent works of scholarship that provide some of the insights that have inspired how I frame the questions that I begin with. As Deborah A. Thomas has recently pointed out, Edwards, Stephens and other scholarship on black internationalism has drawn our attention to "the burgeoning forms of black internationalism and pan-African anticolonialism during the interwar years" has directed our attention to the "middle-class intellectuals, as well as migrant manual laborers [who] were encountering each other in metropolitan centers and backwoods barrooms, thinking through what it might mean to be a worldwide community of politically agential black folk."³⁷ Indeed, recent scholarship on the politics of the black diaspora has been keen on reminding us that black identities and politics have been forged in *movement* and *relation*.³⁸ This scholarship has done much to encourage us to consider the intellectual and political cultures of "black globality" as not located in "center[s] of black modernity" but rather to "critique and then dislodge the very idea of any simple center and periphery in the African diaspora, to question the usefulness of such figurations of a fundamentally rooted black modern identity and its ensuing *filiation*."³⁹ However, in this crafting of the politics of the black diaspora colonial and other so-called *non-metropolitan* spaces seem to have remained largely marginal - as *generative* sites of discourse and agitation - to the framing of the imaginary and political vicissitudes of its subjects and to the making of the political cultures of the black diaspora as a whole.⁴⁰ The metropolitan spaces of Europe and the United States after the First World War indeed "provided a special sort of vibrant cosmopolitan space for interaction."⁴¹ However, if black intellectual cultures were also "robust and extremely

³⁷ Deborah Thomas, *Exceptional Violence*, pg. 84.

³⁸ Edouard Glissant's *Poetics of Relation* (1997), Penny M. Von Eschen's *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937 - 1957* (1997) and Brent Hayes Edwards's *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (2003), Michelle A. Stephens's *Black Empire: The Masculine Imaginary of Caribbean Intellectuals in the United States, 1914-1962* (2005) and Kevin K. Gaines's *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era* (2006) are some of the major works that explicitly think of modern black intellectual formations as having not only been transnational but also as having developed theoretical grammars for thinking about blackness in relation to nation and diaspora. A study that explores these questions in relation to South Africa is Francis Njubi Nesbitt's *Race for Sanctions: African American against Apartheid, 1946-1994* (2004). Some of the earlier scholarship that considers these issues on relation to the development of racial ideologies and black religiosity are noted in the literature review below.

³⁹ Edwards, Brent Hayes. 1998. *Black Globality: the International Shape of Black Intellectual Culture*. PhD Dissertation. Columbia University. Pg. 14.

⁴⁰ This comment seems to me apposite only as far as the historical conjuncture - that between the World Wars - that Thomas outlines. The post-Second World War period has spawned many a restless sojourn to metropolitan cities among former colonized Black subjects. But, as J. Lorand Matory has incisively pointed out, the fault-lines of post-colonial decline and neo-liberalism have produced an unevenness in the historiographies of diaspora where "it has been easy for theorists impressed by the post-World War II flood of Africans, Asians, Caribbeans, and Latin Americans into Europe and the United States to forget that flows among Africa, Asia, and Latin America are centuries old and, in many cases momentous. We must not ignore South-South transnationalism." Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion*, pg. 35.

⁴¹ Brent Hayes Edwards. *The Practice of Diaspora*, pg. 4.

diverse on all sides of the Atlantic” more work needs to be done to understand how they facilitated not only the ‘metropolitanization’ of colonial intellectuals but also the embrace, on the part of ‘local’ and metropolitan figures, of colonial struggles on the margins of empire.⁴² Michelle Stephens has observed that while contemporary debates and experiences of neo-liberalism and the reconstitution of empire seem new they are, in fact, “not at all new to the inhabitants of colonial spaces:” “the colony itself needs to emerge as a privileged site for the analysis of empire and a space of critical resistance, generating alternative forms and formulations of a global imaginary.”⁴³ This is the caesura in which I would like to locate *Empire Unbound*.

I have already indicated that South Africa’s place in the global imaginary has been augured by the entrance of “‘apartheid’ into the global lexicon.”⁴⁴ This history coincides with the ascendance of a “white national[ist] regime” to the state in 1948. The focus on South Africa - Apartheid and post-Apartheid - has however, resulted in explorations of race and coloniality that tend to, firstly, take the nation-state for granted as the primary site of thinking about the boundaries of political space in South Africa and, secondly, privilege Apartheid and its aftermath as the temporality of its encounters. There are a number of reasons why this ‘imaginary,’ if I may, needs to be rethought. Firstly, Apartheid is not only a way of thinking about racial segregation *in extremis*; it is also a way of organizing the temporality of its regimes and knowledge about South Africa. It has provided historical references unevenly lumped around the period between 1948 and 1994 and beyond. These reference points are, therefore, ever in need of being stretched out. Secondly, while South Africa’s existence as a racist state is unquestioned, its racial formation has not always been put in conversation with the larger designs of empire. This may seem surprising since South Africa’s history as a nation-state is coeval, even exists in a dialectical relationship, with global formations of empire. In the interwar period, the Union of South Africa sought to extend its borders by incorporating Namibia, Zimbabwe and other colonies and protectorates in southern Africa into its sphere of sovereign white rule. In examining the making of the Union of South Africa, I read the geo-political expansionism characteristic of empire as built-into South Africa’s state project. As I show in this dissertation, thinking about the history of South Africa in the early twentieth century requires that one see ‘imperiality;’ that is, to see boundaries of nation and empire as malleable and extendable. South Africa’s imperial formation has been eradicated by how the making of the Apartheid state has been remembered, in spite of how closely interlinked the logics of state racism and imperialism are in its history. I am suggesting, then, that thinking about race and nation in South Africa should involve as much of a focus on geography as on chronology, on space as much as time, particularly ‘transnational space,’ for these have constitutively structured the play of race and nation in the course of its

⁴² Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*, pg. 8.

⁴³ Stephens, *Black Empire*, pg. 11.

⁴⁴ Andrew Van Der Vlies, “South Africa in the global imaginary” in David Attwell and Derrick Atttridge (editors) 2012. *The Cambridge History of South African Literature*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pg. 697.

history.⁴⁵ The example that I have given above, situated as it was on the cusp of Apartheid, illustrates just how important moments occurring historically before its historical time and ‘outside’ of its spatial boundaries are to racial struggles within the country. These elements are often neglected in considerations of South Africa’s racial and colonial pasts. At a time where postcolonial nation-states are becoming increasingly deterritorialized and identities are compelled to function in multiple cultural, national and political registers, recovering an archive of a prior history, albeit one shaped by the itineraries of empire, might provide different models for reckoning with South African pasts that do not presuppose an organization of social and political desires along with lines prescribed by nation-states.⁴⁶

If black South African and diasporic intellectuals were inspired by the need to unmake racial and colonial marginality then what we must also pay attention to is how their lives and travels left traces of a black ‘archive.’ This, as Brent Hayes Edwards has pointed out, is the space in which what was documented was “the ‘fact’ of blackness itself, to frame race as an object of knowledge production in the service of a range of adversarial internationalisms.”⁴⁷ The making of black intellectual discourse and its articulation of racial subjectivity was held together, in part, by the innovations of black public spheres. As Penny M. Von Eschen observes, “The crafting of a new [national and] international political language and new political strategies, as well as how these came to animate a broader political discourse, can be understood only by looking at the initiatives of the men and women who created this politics both through organizing and through print capitalism and the black press.”⁴⁸ Michael Hanchard and others have echoed this understanding of the apparatus through which “Afro-Modernity” was shaped in suggesting that “the most significant leadership among African American elite of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were journalists, writers, or those otherwise involved in mass communication and mass transport.”⁴⁹ In late nineteenth century South Africa the emergent missionary educated black elite, confronted with the snares of colonial modernity, similarly “led the way in seeking new means of protecting African interests. Besides the ballot box, the press provided Africans with another channel of political expression.”⁵⁰ What an intellectual history of the black press offers is a critical meditation on some of the well worn theses on the print culture of colonial elites; namely, as Bene-

⁴⁵ Andrew Van Der Vlies, “South Africa in the Global Imaginary,” pg. 176.

⁴⁶ See Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller and Cristina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, Deterritorialized Nation-States*, (London: Routledge, 1994).

⁴⁷ Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*, pg. 8.

⁴⁸ Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*, pg. 8. See also Edwards’s *The Practice of Diaspora* and Michael Hanchard’s “Afro-Modernity.”

⁴⁹ Hanchard, “Afro-Modernity,” pp. 288.

⁵⁰ Andre Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu! The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics in South Africa*. (Cape Town: David Philip, 1984). pg. 5.

dict Anderson so famously put it, that vernacular print culture was a primary technology for the elaboration of the grammars of nationalism.⁵¹ A cursory look at the black newspapers of South Africa and the black diaspora suggests not only their concern with national problems but also with black marginality as an *international* problem. A theoretical consequence of this problem, then, is the valence of blackness as an epistemological horizon for thinking across difference and forging common projects. Clearly, a great deal of the work by black intellectuals in South Africa in the period covered by this dissertation was done through periodicals and pamphlets. These forms in their materiality have been under-explored in South Africa. I follow some recent work on the periodical in suggesting that paying attention to these forms opens up a vista of circulation that operated at the scales of empire and diaspora. Marina Bilbija has recently observed that because of “speedier inter-imperial mail networks,” the regular cycle “and geographically broad circuit,” the periodical was “amenable for communication with readers in distant parts of the empire to whose homes editors could bring news of other communities, compressing distance between them affectively to each other.”⁵² However, since black transnationalism functioned against the hostilities of the empire and the colonial state, the pathways of the black periodical were not always official. These fugitive circulations raise questions about intensify rather than diminish the urgencies of diasporic communication. The bewildering array of migrations, colonial conflicts and instantiations of difference that marked the political and cultural landscape of South Africa makes it an apposite place in which concerns that appear to have an import in processes of globalization can be put in conversation with local and national considerations.

It was not until 1910 that South Africa was to exist as a nation-state. The preceding decade that saw it come to be had seen a brutal and protracted imperial war (the South African War) fought over control of the mineral wealth that had been catapulted by what Hannah Arendt has referred to as the “superfluous wealth and superfluous men” of a mining industrial complex.⁵³ However, as recent historical work has shown, the South African War, though supposedly fought as a conflict between the interests of British capitalism and Afrikaner sovereignty, further entrenched the *racial* character of citizenship and labor in the newly formed nation-state.⁵⁴ The decades before *and* after, then, are of crucial importance to any understanding the kind of racist ‘*postcolonial*’ project that in-

⁵¹ Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), pp.37-46.

⁵² Marina Bilbija, *Worlds of Color: Black Internationalism and the Periodical in the Age of Empire*, pg. 7. Also see Victoria J. Collis, *Anxious Records*.

⁵³ Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, pp. 150-151. Also see Bernard Magubane’s *The Making of a Racist State: British Imperialism and the Union of South Africa, 1875-1910* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1996).

⁵⁴ See Magubane’s *The Making of a Racist State* and Zine Magubane’s *Bringing the Empire Home: Race, Class and Gender in Britain and Colonial South Africa* (2004). For examples of historical scholarship on the South African War that brings to light the experiences of black people see Peter Warwick, 1983. *Black People and the South African War 1899-1902*, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983) and Bill Nassoon, *Abraham Esau’s War: A Black South African War in the Cape, 1899-1902*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

formed the making of the nation-state - the first of two - in 1910. Black constituencies exhibited a robust and complex set of responses to these machinations.⁵⁵ By the time that South Africa had become a nation-state there were at least eight formally registered African newspapers.⁵⁶ The children of Ethiopia had indeed begun to stretch forth their hands against the smite of imperial might.

There already exists a significant body of literature that places the work of black South African intellectuals in a diasporic context. Interestingly, some of the most notable contributions to this scholarship has come not necessarily from South Africanists but from Americanists and comparatists interested in race, diaspora and developing a more international sense of the mutual resonance of “societies structured in [racial] dominance.”⁵⁷ An early example is George Shepperson’s “Ethiopianism and African Nationalism” (1953). It was published at a time in which the diaspora idea was emerging as key for organizing black global cultures.⁵⁸ In the context of self-consciously diasporic Africana researches, Shepperson provided not only some important historical insights on the African diaspora idea, his work also exemplifies the kind of movement between different contexts that is a crucial methodological aspect of the field. “Ethiopianism and African Nationalism,” for instance, sought to establish the historical antecedents of African nationalism by emphasizing one of its “earlier phases, often called Ethiopianism, in which Americans, particularly Negroes, played important parts.”⁵⁹ South Africa figured prominently in this narrative. Its iteration was one in which Ethiopianism formed an important ideological and organizational impetus for “the independent African church movement in South Africa, whose origins may be traced back to the 70’s of the nineteenth century and earlier.”⁶⁰ My argument about the emergence of the diaspora idea is

⁵⁵ For some exemplary studies on the dialectics of colonial modernity in South Africa see Jean Comaroff’s *Body of Power Spirit of Resistance: The Culture and History of a South African People* (1985) and Jean and John L. Comaroff’s *Of Revelation and Revolution*, Volumes One (1991) and Two (1997). The Comaroffs’s work has been important in situating the colonial encounter as part of a history of the “colonization of consciousness.” Other important work that was published around the same time addressed the silences in the historiography regarding black experiences in the South African War of 1899-1901. Previously read as the Anglo-Boer War, historians such as Peter Warwick and Bill Nasson have made substantial contributions to broadening perspectives on the war, particularly on the experiences of black people. See Peter Warwick’s *Black People and the South African War* and Bill Nasson’s *Abraham Esau’s War: a Black South African War in the Cape, 1899-1902* (1991).

⁵⁶ For statistical figures on and a detailed bibliography on registered black newspapers of the period, see Les and Donna Switzer’s *The Black Press in South Africa and Lesotho: a descriptive bibliographic guide to African, Coloured and Indian newspapers, newsletters and magazines, 1836-1976* (1980).

⁵⁷ I have borrowed this phrase from Stuart Hall’s article “Race, articulation and societies structured in dominance.”

⁵⁸ “Ethiopianism and African Nationalism” was published in the journal *Phylon* in 1953. As Brent Hayes Edwards observes in his important historiographical and theoretical essay “The Uses of Diaspora,” “the term diaspora, so attractive to many of our analyses, does not appear in the literature under consideration until surprisingly late after the Second World War.” Edwards, “The Uses of Diaspora,” pg. 45. Shepperson’s work around this time was important in orienting a theoretical sense of this emergence.

⁵⁹ George Shepperson, “Ethiopianism and African Nationalism,” pg. 9.

⁶⁰ George Shepperson, “Ethiopianism and African Nationalism,” pg. 9.

not meant to detract from the valuable South Africanist scholarship that traced the intellectual history black South Africans in their encounter with colonial modernity. This scholarship has, though, largely made use of South Africa as a national framework for thinking about these histories without explicitly indexing its diasporic resonances. Notable early exceptions are Clement Thsehloane Keto's "Black Americans and South Africa, 1890-1910" (1972) and "Black American Involvement in South Africa's Race Issue" (1973) and Tim Couzens's "'Moralizing leisure time': The Transatlantic connection and black Johannesburg 1918-1936" (1982).⁶¹

It is not surprising that subsequent work developed comparative frameworks for making sense of black nationalist movements on both sides of the Black Atlantic. For the structures of racism and white supremacy were not only national but demonstrate a propensity for shaping global politics. As a comparative scholar of white supremacy has noted, "In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries this international dialogue on comparative race relations dramatically accelerated toward a shrill climax. Historians have analyzed the debate under familiar headings: Social Darwinism, manifest destiny, the new imperialism segregation. Both white Americans and white (especially English-speaking) South Africans participated in this discussion."⁶² Important major work also includes John Cell's comparative study of racial segregation in South Africa and the American south, George M. Fredrickson's histories of white supremacy and black liberation in South Africa and the US, and James T. Campbell's history of the AME church in

⁶¹ Unfortunately, very little is known of Keto's life and work, except that he seems to have been a South(ern) African expatriate who taught at Temple University for some years. Among some of the notable work in this South Africanist scholarship are A.C. Jordan's *Towards an African Literature: the Emergence of Literary form in Xhosa* (1973), Tim Couzens's *The New African: A Study of the Life and Work of H.I.E. Dhlomo* (1985), Veit Erlmann's *African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance* (1991), Jean and John L. Comaroff's *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa - Volume One* (1991), *Of Revelation and Revolution: the Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier - Volume 2* (1997), Leon De Kock's *Civilising Barbarians: Missionary Narrative and African Textual Response in Nineteenth-Century South Africa* (1996), Alan Gregor Cobley's *Class and Consciousness: the Black Petty Bourgeoisie in South Africa, 1924-1950* and, more recently, Paul La Hausse de Lalouviere's *Restless Identities: Signatures of Nationalism, Zulu Ethnicity and History in the Lives of Petros Lamula (c.1881-1948) and Lymon Maling (1889-c.1936)* (2000), Bhekizizwe Peterson's *Monarchs, Missionaries and African Intellectuals: African Theatre and the Unmaking of Colonial Marginality* (2000), Isabel Hofmeyr's *The Portable Bunyan: A Transnational History of The Pilgrim's Progress* (2004), David Attwell's *Rewriting Modernity: Studies in black South African literary history* (2005) Hlohipha Mokoena's *Magema Fuze: the Making of a Kholwa Intellectual* (2011). With the exception of Erlmann's chapter on Orpheus McAdoo and his Jubilee Singers's tour of South Africa, Homfeyr's *The Portable Bunyan*, which considers the making of the (black) public spheres of the Protestant Atlantic, Attwell's chapter on Es'kia Mphahlele in the diaspora, and Zine Magubane's reflection on the use of African American images and ideologies in the self-fashioning of African petty-bourgeoisie masculinities, a great deal of South Africanist scholarship has tended to make of the category of race as afixed to national boundaries. This isn't to say that this kind of articulation of race is itself not interesting. There are some interesting questions that can be raised about the extend to which H.I.E. Dhlomo, for instance, may have developed his idea of the "New African" - in a series of articles published in 1945 in *The Democrat* - through a recalibration of the impulses of black American culture that Alain Locke so famously editorialized as the voices of the "New Negro." Indeed, Michael Hanchard's juxtaposition of the "New Negro" movement in America with the Afro-Cuban *El Nuevo Criollo* (New Creole) movement and Edwards's re-contextualization of the Harlem Renaissance as co-eval with and mutually constituted with the Francophone black modernism stirring in Paris around the same time, offers a great deal to think through as far as the affinities of these movements. See Couzens, *The New African*, pp. 32-37, Alain Locke's "The New Negro" in *The New Negro: Voices of Harlem Renaissance* (1997 [1925]), pp. 3-16, Hanchard, "Afro-Modernism," pp. 286-289, and Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*, pp. 2-10.

⁶² Cell, John W, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: the Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). pp.21-22.

the US and South Africa.⁶³ Some new scholarship has taken on these themes and put them overtly in relation with the politics of the black diaspora. Robert Trent Vinson's *The Americans are Coming! Dreams of African Liberation in Segregationist South Africa* (2012), ostensibly a history of Garveyism in South Africa between the wars, is the most recent iteration of this scholarship.⁶⁴ Pamela E. Brooks's *Boycotts, Buses, and Passes: Black Women's Resistance in the U.S. South and South Africa* (2008) is a study which comparatively examines the history of black female politics in these two contexts. Partially located in postcolonial theory, Zine Magubane's *Bringing the Empire Home: Race, Class and Gender in Britain and Colonial South Africa* (2004) takes up some of these questions by contrapuntally reading constitutive presence of race and gender in discourses of citizenship in the colonial imaginary in the long nineteenth century. In the figurative use of gendered black bodies in their interpretation of the relationship between the political and economic, Magubane argues, these discourses created a grammar of citizenship in which black people - though hyper-focalized, or "thought through", as she puts it - were not only excluded from the fledgling South African polity but served as the racial Otherness through which white citizenship was negotiated.⁶⁵ This, for Magubane, was the context in which the politics of diaspora provided a crucial alternative grammar of black inclusion.

In a great deal of scholarship on modern black intellectual practices in South Africa print culture prevails as a predominant methodological and 'archival' space in which to recuperate the agential black voices of these conversations. It is seldom that monographs self-consciously excavate this history by predicating its conceptual and historical questions on the very technology and material forms that, apart from actual migra-

⁶³ See John, Cell, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy*, George M. Fredrickson's *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American & South African History* (1981) and *Black Liberation: A Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United States and South Africa* (1995), J. Mutero Chirejine's *From Tuskegee to Fort Hare: the Quest for Higher Education in Southern Africa, 1884-1916* (1980) and *Ethiopianism and Afro-Americans in Southern Africa, 1883 - 1916* (1987) and James T. Campbell's *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (1998). Campbell has recently published a history of African American migrations to Africa: *Middle Passages: African American Journeys to Africa, 1787-2005* (2006). *Middle Passages* is a significant reminder that the black diasporic imaginary has a long intellectual history of internationalist thinking. As Campbell suggests, there is a reciprocal dialectic that informs how questions of identity are posed in relation to diaspora: "when an African American asks 'What is Africa to me?'" he or she is also asking "What is America to me?" Campbell, *Middle Passages*, pg. xxiv.

⁶⁴ I must add that in some ways, Vinson's scholarship takes off from Robert A. Hill and Gregory A. Pirio's "'Africa for the Africans': the Garvey movement in South Africa, 1920-1940" (1987). As an example of Hill's continued preoccupation with this question, see his *Dread History: Leonard P. Howell and Millenarian Visions in the Early Rastafarian Religion* (2001). Of particular interest to me is Hill's discussion of Anguillan-born author Robert Athlyi Rogers' founding of the Afro-Athlican Constructive Gaathly in Kimberely, South Africa. Hill informs us that Rogers' work was an important part of "The doctrine that would provide the actual interpretative basis of Rastafari ideology. . . . The first of the two books was *The Holy Piby*, otherwise known as 'the Blackman's Bible,' which was written and published by Robert Athlyi Rogers in 1924 in Newark, New Jersey. It formed the basis of the doctrinal basis of Rogers' 'Afro-Athlican Constructive Gaathly,' with headquarters in Kimberley, South Africa." Hill, *Dread History*, pp. 18.

⁶⁵ Zine Magubane, *Bringing the Empire Home*, pp. 95-97.

tions facilitated and mediated these interactions from as South African purview.⁶⁶ In other words, though black newspapers are taken for granted as the immanent modes of “Afro-modernity,” the forms of *black textuality* that they furnished are seldom mined for how they put these conversations to work. ‘Ethiopia Unbound’ seeks to bring together the larger concerns of historically situating black intellectuals formations while trying to be sensitive to the textual strategies through which they fashioned public lives.

Recent scholarship on black radicalism and internationalism has taken up these questions in useful ways. Brent Hayes Edwards’s *The Practice of Diaspora* and Michelle Ann Stephens’s *Black Empire* are exemplary. Edwards makes methodological and theoretical use of translation in *The Practice of Diaspora*. For Edwards, making sense of diaspora involves recognizing that “the cultures of black internationalism can be seen only in *translation*.”⁶⁷ Here, translation - both textual and epistemological - was a primary discursive strategy of focalizing the priorities and differences of diasporic agents from different nationalities and linguistic backgrounds while making possible the migration of texts across national borders. Diaspora, then, was in effect not only an invocation of political agency but also a confrontation, within the structure of modern blackness, conversations about the political, literary and social that could and could not be had. Stephens’s *Black Empire*, in looking at the work of Anglophone Caribbean radicals in the US considers how empire “provided the material solidarities of black to emerge across nation, language, gender, and even class.”⁶⁸ As with Magubane, Stephens “brings to contemporary discussions of black nationalism and black diaspora a necessary regrouping of questions black subject formation and gender formation in imperial discourses and colonial frameworks of consciousness.”⁶⁹

A study that seeks, in the mapping of grammars of modern blackness, to knit together the local, national and global regimes of race confronts specific conceptual problems. How are nation and diaspora to be regarded relationally, that is, as coeval and co-constitutive, if race - and also gender - structures both the depravities and itinerant undertakings of black intellectuals?⁷⁰ It should be clear that blackness cannot be considered to be an innately unified ontological structure. It is, rather, a structure of difference within itself as well as a space for working through the taxonomic, cultural, historical and exis-

⁶⁶ Hlonipha Mokoena observes in her recent study, *Magama Fuze: the Making of a Kholwa Intellectual* (2010) that while her work is focused on “the appropriation of the newspaper for the purpose of creating a reading public” a book “about the history of printing or the printing press in South Africa” is yet to be written. Mokoena, *Magama Fuze*, pg. 1. I am interested in bringing these two facets of print culture together in an effort to think about it helped in the formation of black intellectuals in South Africa.

⁶⁷ Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*, pg. 7.

⁶⁸ Michelle Stephens, *Black Empire*, pg. 5.

⁶⁹ Michelle Stephens, *Black Empire*, pg. 6.

⁷⁰ Tina Campt, Deborah Thomas and Carla Freeman have urged us to consider the importance of gender in how these formations have taken shape and to theorize these processes so that theory itself isn’t left with unquestioned masculinist assumptions of the global. See Tina Campt and Deborah Thomas, “Gendering Diaspora,” *Feminist Review*, No. 90 (2008): pp. 1-8, and Carla Freeman’s “Is Local: Global as Feminine: Masculine?” *Signs*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (2001): pp. 1007-1037.

tential experiences of blackness into a language bound by common hermeneutic strategies and desires.⁷¹ Faith Smith has observed that “specifying location and context are essential to disrupting seamless, blanket pronouncements of blackness, as in noting how subjects borrow from many traditions.”⁷² Similarly, where the local and global are to be regarded relationally it is of further importance not to capitulate to the temptation to subsume the former under the latter but to hold their uneven and at times silent dialogue in place. As Smith further suggests, while “A diasporic context might usefully question national narratives . . . it can also consolidate them.”⁷³ A key problem for writing blackness in the fields of nation and diaspora, then, would seem to lie in apprehending the unruly patterns in which they each become available and ‘useful’ in the struggle for citizenship.

An impulse that runs through *Empire Unbound* is the desire to weave these concerns with a rich corpus of literature on black life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It draws from an array of literature in the fields of African and diaspora literature, black cultural studies, especially its cultural theory and histories of the black diaspora, as well as work on South African social and cultural history primarily associated with the Marxist revisionist history that emerged in the 1970s. Weaving such fields together for a case study that seems bound by national borders might seem to be a misguided endeavor. Yet the import of my framework, that of historicizing black intellectual culture, is itself immersed in a kind of conceptual language - that of race - that is notorious for overflowing national boundaries. Indeed, the epistemological and hermeneutic importance of race lies in its traversal of the local, the national and the global while keeping them unevenly ‘at play.’⁷⁴

The Chapters

This dissertation contains four chapters. They work through the itineraries of empire and belonging in South Africa from different geographic and temporal vistas. Chapter one, ““to see us as we see ourselves:” John Tengo Jabavu, Empire, Colonial Be-

⁷¹ Among some theoretical discussions of this problem, Edwards borrows the idea of *decalage* from Leopold Sedar Senghor to posit that diaspora is in itself a structure of difference - “disjointed, by a host of factors” - held up, or articulated, through various strategies, among of which translation is a predominant form. For Wright, the appropriate form of imaging the intellectual history of the making of blackness in the West is in its eventuation of a *methodology* of “dual dialectics” - of the ideal and the real - in which black male subjectivity articulates itself against a racially exclusive Hegelian dialectics and, subsequently, black female subjectivity’s articulation of itself against the overrepresentation of both. Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*, pp. 12-15; Wright, *Becoming Black*, pp. 3-4.

⁷² Faith Smith, *Creole Recitations: John Jacob Thomas and Colonial Formation in the Late Nineteenth-Century Caribbean*. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002). pg. xviii.

⁷³ Faith Smith, *Creole Recitations*, xviii-xix.

⁷⁴ Thomas C. Holt’s *The Problem of Race in the Twenty First Century* (2000) offers some useful insight for thinking about how articulated the local and the global in modern societies. As Holt suggests, it is “hardly coincidental that modern nation-states evolved in the same era as racialized labor systems.” However, the categories of race and the material structures that they were concocted to sustain were sustained beyond national boundaries: ““racialized labor forces became crucial to the mobilization of productive forces on a world scale.” Holt, *The Problem of Race*, pp. 28 - 48.

longing and the Public Sphere” takes up the journalistic career of John Tengo Jabavu and his periodical *Imvo Zabantsundu*. Interestingly *Imvo Zabantsundu* went into print for the first time during the same year in which the Berlin Conference was held (1884). Jabavu has long been recognized as an important figure in black letters for having begun the first black-run periodical in South Africa. One of the lesser discussed aspects of Jabavu and *Imvo Zabantsundu*’s early years (1880s-1890s) is how they demonstrate the close relationship between the making of a black public sphere and the fashioning of colonial citizenship through imperial belonging. I attempt to uncover the political registers of black Victorianism rather than read this identity as mimicry of an already white regime of belonging. The argument that this chapter sets up and that I try to develop throughout this dissertation is that blackness and citizenship were not always mutually exclusive of each other. They were made so. What citizenship already was, through the franchise, was *male* and *liberal*. The process of contesting the alienation of blackness from citizenship, then, intensified gendered forms of belonging. I also discuss the circulation of African Americans, in print and physically, across the Black Atlantic. I argue that the thinkability of a politics of diaspora in the era of high imperialism brought tensions over the geographic scales of black struggles over citizenship. These could be colonial, national or global through the linkages or disavowal of diaspora. The exigencies of the present, then, did not always make diaspora the already desired vista for inscribing a politics of belonging vis-a-vis the British empire. The conversation was shaped by the present and its tensions.

The second chapter, “Cape Town and the Black Modern,” moves to the oldest city of colonial settlement in South Africa, Cape Town. In so doing, I attempt to push the temporal boundaries of how we imagine the politics of empire, race, and belonging to have been made in South Africa. In going as far as the early modern period, I suggest that categories of racial difference were in operation centuries before the intensification of industrial capitalism generated some of the more broadly discussed techniques of reckoning and policing difference in South Africa and the world at large. Gender and sexual politics were deeply important to the production and policing of racial difference. Although I focus on the lives and predicaments of black women who were either enslaved or punished through incarceration, racial difference and sexual difference have always been intimately tied to each other and the forms of colonial violence that have attempted to make their *effects* seem like the product of a natural order of being. It is important, I suggest, that before we think about the machineries of industrialism as their importance to racial capitalism we consider the more intimate forms of power that have always shadowed the politics of belonging in the modern period. The networks of empire that brought these forms of power into play should enjoin us to think more spatially and invoke, in their historical specificity, the sites in which these politics unfurled as maritime culture from the late fifteenth century began to transform the shape power in the world. Cape Town and other African port cities are important to this history and in this chapter I begin to think through how Africa existed in the modern world without writing it out of the tragedies of modernity, such as slavery, that are so important to the development of modern economies.

In “Black Cosmopolitans in Cape Town,” the third chapter, I continue to work through Cape Town as the coeval to forms of modernity. In this chapter, however, I turn

to the history of Pan-Africanism by first of all exploring how the first Pan-African Conference (1900) affected the politics of diaspora in South Africa. Cape Town is important because it was that node in the British empire in which black missionaries, seafarers, laborers and other itinerants could either pass through or settle in. The project of Pan-Africanism was thus extended through print and the actual travel of figures who labored to connect the city to the diaspora. Cape Town is also important to the history of Pan-Africanism because through it we can see how the politics of diaspora were transformed from its initial inscription through imperial citizenship to other forms, such as labor unionism, black nationalism and communism, that began to reconfigure the relationship between colony and metropole that sustained black Victorians' dreams of colonial belonging.

The last chapter of the dissertation, "A Home-Made Empire: The Afterlife of Empire in the Making of the Union of South Africa," takes up the question of the Union of South Africa as a state of empire. While the making of the Union of South Africa (1910) after the South African War (1899-1902) held the promise of a unified nation-state in the British Commonwealth, it took place at the expense of the franchise for black people. Racial belonging became important to the Union precisely because it could convert its policy of segregation and white supremacy into an imperial project. In other words, I explore how the Union absorbed the imperial imaginary and re-imagined it as a project emanating from a white state within the African continent. It is no coincidence that while the United States was defining its own racial and imperial relationship to occupied and colonized territories in the Caribbean, the Union of South Africa was similarly defining its own form of state power in relation to southern Africa. Thus the shift from British to American empire in the early twentieth century is something that this chapter begins to think through its parallel effect in another white settled former British colony. While I argue that the conversion of colony into nation-state was continuous with forms of imperial power, I also think through how this form of power also transformed the grammar of imperial citizenship among the black intelligentsia in South Africa which was, to an extent, thinking about Pan-Africanism as an alternative structure of feeling to institutions of global administration such as the League of Nations which, in spite of the need to live the world anew after the catastrophe of the First World War, did not seem to be ameliorating the anguishes of a global black community that remained outside the pale of citizenship.

Chapter I:

“to see us as we see ourselves.” John Tengo Jabavu, Empire, Colonial Belonging and the Public Sphere

Yesterday the first number of the *Imvo Zabantsundu* was issued, and we hope the paper will be, in every way, a success. Natives who have been educated are now on their trial. The trial is if they can put their leaning to good account, and this paper should help them with advice and example. *Cape Mercury* We look upon the Constitution Ordinance as the Cape *Magna Charta* - the document the document which sets forth the terms of agreement between the Imperial Government and the Colony, and which fixed the conditions under which Her Majesty's government relinquished the direct government of the Cape, and left the colony of manage its affairs. But the imperial government assumed its proper functions as the guardian of the *weakest* of its children - the Natives. With wonderful foresight it insisted that the natives should have a share in the self-government of the Colony; and with this in view the franchise was lowered as to embrace the native. . . All we are trying now to ascertain is - does the other party to the contract, the Imperial Government, which is also our guardian, acquiesce in what has been done. If it does, and as a consequence the native are shut out of the pale of British citizenship - then the confidence of our people in British justice will be rudely shaken, and the vaunted government of the people by the people will be shunted by the natives as a delusion and a snare. *John Tengo Jabavu*¹

In the middle tier of these societies rested the native petite bourgeoisie, wedged between the laboring classes beneath them and the foreign and native operatives of capital and the officials of the state above. Their social origins were complex and intertwined. *Cedric J. Robinson*²

On the 3rd of November, 1884, there appeared a new periodical in the eastern reaches of the Cape Colony. Its distinguishing aspect was its claim to being an “organ of native opinion.”³ It was hailed with a fair amount of fanfare among its newly gained peers as the occasion of “the first appearance of a native paper in this country.”⁴ Its edi-

¹ John Jabavu, “The Native Appeal,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 12th October, 1887, pg. 3.

² Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: the Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000) pg. 179.

³ John Jabavu, “The Launch” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 3rd November, 1884, pg. 2.

⁴ *East London Advertiser* cited in *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 17th November, 1884, pg. 3. In the second issue of *Imvo Zabantsundu*, Jabavu published a collage of mentions of the launch of the periodical from around the Cape Colony. All were warmly receptive to *Imvo*, which must have given Jabavu greater impetus for publicizing it.

tor and proprietor, John Tengo Jabavu (1859-1921), then a young man of twenty-four years not lacking in ambition or audacity, cast some prefatory remarks on the meaning of his venture into journalism. He was aware that the Cape Colony was not wanting for newspapers and periodicals. And yet none of these could be said to truly reflect a “native opinion.” “Although the columns of the Colonial Press have been open to any Native to unbosom himself,” he offered, “still, speaking as natives we have had opportunities of observing the newspapers in the Colony, we have arrived at a conclusion . . . that, in addressing Europeans, our countrymen felt, rightly or wrongly, that they spoke or wrote out of “courtesy.””⁵ In giving the lie to the notion that the colonial public sphere was by any means impervious to color prejudice, Jabavu invited his readers to see in his new organ a necessary public voice. “Students of the Native Question,” he offered, “may well rejoice at living to see a regular organ of native opinion set up. In that organ they will, no doubt, not only expect to see ourselves as “others see us,” but also to see us as we see ourselves.”⁶ The appearance of *Imvo Zabantsundu* (Native Opinion) held up to the men of the Cape Colony that the “natives,” benefactors of a ‘civilizing’ colonial education, were now prepared to test their “expectations of modernity” by writing themselves into colonial culture.⁷

Jabavu’s delineation of the *raison d’être* of *Imvo Zabantsundu* (henceforth *Imvo*) encapsulated the aspirations of a fledgling intellectual class. Its contemporaries in the “Colonial Press” offered amiable rejoinders that a “bi-lingual (Kafir and English) literary venture” had appeared in the annals of the “Colonial Press.”⁸ *Imvo* would appear weekly for much of its existence.⁹ Soon after the publication of the periodical’s first issue observers would soon echo Jabavu’s chord of optimism in appreciating “a medium for the expression of native opinion, and for the enlightenment of native minds.”¹⁰ Indeed, Jabavu’s first editorial gesture framing the periodical’s existence outlined this prerogative of racial uplift. He also traversed, by some measure, beyond the courtesies of his peers. His framing - as it was often indicated in acknowledgements of *Imvo*’s linguistic polyphony - drew closer to an ethos of suturing the racial cleavages of the Cape Colony. It offered a unique window

⁵ John Jabavu, “The Launch” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 3rd November, 1884, pg. 2.

⁶ John Jabavu, “The Launch” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 3rd November, 1884, pg. 2.

⁷ I have borrowed the term “expectations of modernity” from the title of James Ferguson’s book *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

⁸ *Kaffrarian Watchmen* quoted in *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 17th November, 1884, pg. 3.

⁹ *Imvo* was in print from 1884 through to the 1970s. In its near-century long history it has about a year long hiatus - between August 1901 and October 1902 - where it was suspended by the British military during the South African War (1899-1902). See Les and Donna Switzer (Editors), *The Black Press in South Africa and Lesotho: a Descriptive Bibliographic Guide to African, Colored and Indian Newspapers, Newsletters and Magazines 183-1976* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1979) , pp. 40-41.

¹⁰ *Journal* quoted in *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 17th November, 1884, pg. 3.

through which the “dialectics of modernity” could be apprehended and coaxed toward desired manifestations.¹¹ (As would be the case with subsequent generations of the black intelligentsia, these dialectics were often in want of cautionary appraisals.)

We begin, then, with the figure of the editor laboring to weave bodies of texts, mapping through words grammars of the social. But why did Jabavu so keenly tether his life - and the fate of his people - to the social life of the periodical? We could, following Jurgen Habermas, explain this gesture by calling into mind the axiom that entry into the institution of public letters was synonymous with the self-conscious coming into being of “the bourgeois strata.” The bourgeois claim to the “world of letters” dramatized, as he saw it, the “representation of the interests of the privatized domain of a market economy” and its establishment of “a sphere of criticism of public authority.”¹² But, as well shall see, the coming into being of the black intelligentsia was more than a process of self-realization by an emergent social class within the context of colonial modernity. For those who were initiated into the modern through slavery, indentured labor, the “decentralized despotism” of indirect rule, and conversion from ‘barbarity’ and ‘savagery,’ the relationship to the form of the commodity, wage labor, and the cultural institutions of the ‘civilized’ world would always be drawn into the shadows of what Richard Wright once perceptively referred to as a “negative loyalty.”¹³ The social vocabularies of the colonized in Africa were as wont as their contemporaries in America to inspire the “unreconciled strivings” that placed belonging at a disadvantage for those possessing a “dark body.”¹⁴ What did a turn to the world of letters entail for mission educated Africans in the eastern Cape Colony? What did this mean for, to return to another of Wright’s rhetorical ges-

¹¹ I have culled the term “dialectics of modernity” from the second volume of Jean and John L. Comaroff, ’s two volume work *Of Revelation and Revolution*. Though their studies focus on the religious aspects of the “long conversation between Southern Tswana and Nonconformist missionaries,” the process is illuminating for the general history of the cultural politics of colonization. They argue that “The encounter . . . provides an especially revealing vantage on the dialectics of colonialism, on the making of European modernity, and on the exchanges through which colony and metropole constructed one another.” In this dissertation I take up an aspect of this history wherein the black intelligentsia in the eastern Cape Colony had taken up this project by entering into the colonial public sphere. Jean and John L. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), pg. 408.

¹² Jurgen Habermas, *Strategic Transformations of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), pp. 51-52.

¹³ In his lectures published as *White Man Listen!* Richard Wright was referring here to the condition of “yearning under almost impossible conditions to identify with the value of the white world.” Although Wright was thinking about the psychological condition of African descended people in the New World, the idea that the racial overdeterminations of these societies “limit and condition their impulses and action” is one that I find to resonate for the various figures whose writings this dissertation will be engaging with. See Richard Wright, *White Man Listen! Lectures in Europe, 1950-1956*, (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), pp. 16-17.

¹⁴ W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pg. 8.

tures, those writing from the “Frog Perspective”?¹⁵ What modes of textuality dictated their engagement with the colonial polity? What were the stakes of taking on the form of the periodical in the framing of a “Native Opinion”?

These questions are not new. Indeed, they have generated a considerable body of South Africanist scholarship. This scholarship has firmly established the centrality of writing in the project of making blackness commensurable with modernity.¹⁶ It is notable, though, that while writing has acquired pride of place in the naming of what is black and modern, our understanding of the material production of black textuality and the black text as constituting both rhetorical events and a veiled archive has generally been neglected. South Africanist scholarship has, however, begun to operate in a field in which writing and the making of textual meanings are placed more carefully in the networks of the imagined and eventual pathways of circulation and the material forms upon which words take form. As Roger Chartier has suggested, “any work inscribes within its forms and its themes a relationship with the manner in which, in a given moment and place, modes of exercising power, social configurations, or the structure of personality are organized.”¹⁷ In the case of colonial South Africa in the nineteenth century, one can observe, as some scholars of Victorian print culture have, that the periodical during this period was one of the pre-eminent forms for the purveying of authoring and the making of publics.¹⁸

¹⁵ Richard Wright borrowed the term from Friedrich Nietzsche’s writings. Wright is interested in the how aptly the term describes the psychological condition of the oppressed: “This is a phrase I have borrowed from Nietzsche to describe someone looking from below upward, a sense of someone who feels himself lower than others. The concept of distance involved here is not physical; it is psychological. It involves a situation in which, for moral or socio reasons, a person or a group feels that there is another person or group above it. Yet, physically, they all live on the same general material plane. A certain degree of hate combined with love (ambivalence) is always involved in this looking from below upward and the object against which the subject is measuring himself undergoes constant change. He loves the object he would like to resemble; he hates the object because his chances of resembling it are remote, slight.” I do not extend all of these insights as pertinent to the period covered by this dissertation but I do think that the problematics that generated this kind of ambivalence was already at work. It is not surprising that a later generation of South African writers such as Peter Abrahams in *Mine Boy* (1946) would come to develop themes around the psychology of oppression best associated with Frantz Fanon but quite deeply present in that of Richard Wright more fully around the middle of the twentieth century. Richard Wright, *White Man Listen!* pg 6.

¹⁶ During the past twenty to thirty years there has developed a steady body of work that have grappled with the relationship between blackness and modernity. I would like to point out some of the best know works by South Africanist literary and historical scholars: David Attwell, *Rewriting Modernity: Studies in black South African literary history*, (Pietmaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2005), Leon De Kock, *Civilizing Barbarians: Missionary Narrative and African Textual Response in Nineteenth Century South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1996), Natasha Distiller, *Shakespeare and the Coconuts: on Post-Apartheid South African Culture*, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2012), Isabel Hofmeyr, *The Portable Bunyan: a Transnational History of The Pilgrim’s Progress*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), Andre Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu! Black Protest and Politics in South Africa to 1912*, (Cape Town: David Philip, 1984), Les Switzer, *Power and Resistance in an African Society: The Ciskei Xhosa and the Making of South Africa*, (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), Mcebisi Ndlemanyana, *African Intellectuals in 19th and early 20th Century South Africa*, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2008), Bhekizizwe Peterson, *Monarchs, Missionaries and African Intellectuals: African Theatre and the Making of Colonial Marginality*, (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2000).

¹⁷ Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), pg. x.

¹⁸ See Laurel Brake, *Subjugated Knowledges: Journalism, Gender and Literature in the 19th Century* (New York: NYU Press, 1994), pg. xii.

The submergence of texts and relationships associated with print culture over-represents the axiom that “texts were circulated then in the forms we read them today, as books.”¹⁹ The importance of returning to and making interpretive space for what is black in print culture and the “Colonial Press” in particular lies in the expansion of our understanding of how, as Chartier observes, “circulation of printed matter transform[s] sociability, permit[s] new modes of thought, and change[s] people’s relationship with power.”²⁰ One must not, however, assume the positivity of textuality in the making of these socialities. As scholars such as Houston Baker, Jr., Elizabeth McHenry, Walter Mignolo, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. LeRoy Vail and Landeg White have shown, writing, literariness and the text were insignia that marked the limits of which racial subjects possessed the mental character deemed properly human and which did not.²¹ Isabel Hofmeyr has already argued that if our efforts at gathering the folds of writing and print(ing) culture at given moments, and in particular that of high imperialism, were to proceed from a provincialization of the book - a form which continues to determine, to a large extent, what constitutes writing - we would begin to glean the crafting of sociabilities that worked, spatially, within and without the nation state and, temporally and epistemologically, before its forms of territoriality framed the question of belonging.²²

In this dissertation I try to seriously take up Christopher Saunders’ observation that while “British rule and liberalism have taken hard knocks in recent South African historiography” it remains useful - perhaps even apt, given the contemporary upsurge of neo-liberal governmentality in post-Apartheid South Africa - to think through the productive force of “ideas of liberty” in the shaping of colonial subjectivity.²³ The point that I begin with, following Edward Said and others, is that empire was both material formation and a structure of feeling. In the rhetoric of empire, colonial intellectuals excavated an archaeological framework for reckoning the question of colonial belonging. This chapter works through the efforts of John Jabavu and *Imvo Zabantsundu* to inscribe the desire for

¹⁹ Brake defines Victorian print culture here as “the relations of certain forms of nineteenth-century printed texts - articles, periodicals, and part-issues in the main - to their modes of production and to each other, in their own period and in ours.” Laurel Brake, *Subjugated Knowledges*, pg. xi.

²⁰ Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books*, pg. 3.

²¹ Gates writes with acuity that “Writing, especially after the printing press became so widespread, was taken to be the visible sign of reason. Blacks were “reasonable,” and hence “men,” if - and only if - they demonstrated mastery of “the arts and sciences,” the eighteenth century’s formula for writing.” Henry Louis Gates, Jr., “Writing “Race” and the Difference it Makes,” *“Race,” Writing and Difference* (Chicago: Chicago University Press 1986), pg. 8.

²² Isabel Hofmeyr, *Gandhi’s Printing Press: Experiments in Slow Reading* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), pp. 1-22.

²³ Christopher Saunders, “The Expansion of British Liberties: The South African Case,” Jack P. Greene (Ed.) *Exclusionary Empire: English Liberty Overseas, 1600-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 269-270. For scholarship that takes up South Africa’s foray into neo-liberal state-craft after the end of Apartheid see Zine Magubane’s “Globalization and the South African Transformation: the Impact on Social Policy” *Africa Today*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (2002), pp. 89-110 and “The Revolution Betrayed? Globalization, Neoliberalism, and the Post-Apartheid State” *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 103, No. 4 (2004), pp. 657-671.

black belonging in the Cape Colony. I will be looking to establish the field of the British empire and liberal imperialism as the overarching frameworks for thinking through the staking of black belonging in the colonial polity. Although the larger arguments to be made in this dissertation are animated by my anxiety that a focus on contestations over colonial belonging have tended to inscribe colonial space as the progenitor of what would become in turn the Apartheid and post-Apartheid politics, in effect binding imperial formations and affiliations to a genealogy of nation-hood, this chapter posits imperial formation as the *habitus* of the colonial.²⁴ Indeed, empire proved to be one of the enduring forms of racial government in twentieth century Southern Africa but its forms have been obscured by keywords - such as colonialism and Apartheid - which could not have found life apart from it. Framing the colonial through empire seems commonplace enough but it is surprising that one of the relationships that are often left out of analytical focus in South Africanist scholarship is how the colonized, working on the margins of empire, devised their own techniques of contrapuntal reading and writing.²⁵ In *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Edward Said drew our attention to how “the era of classical or high imperialism . . . has in one way or another continued to exert considerable cultural influence in the present.”²⁶ In the colonial situations to which Jabavu affixed his ventures into print(ing) culture the influence was more than considerable: it defined the conditions of possibility and the horizons of expectation through which to anchor “the “languages” of citizenship” for the black colonial.²⁷

An Apprenticeship

John Tengo Jabavu was born in January of 1859 in Healdtown near Fort Beaufort. His parents, Ntwanambi Jabavu and Mary Mpinda, were both Christian converts who brought up their children strictly and through menial work. Their lives in the Christian mission, as well as the peregrinations of their labor, seems to have been tethered to religious devotion and the minutiae of a marginal economic existence in the eastern Cape.

²⁴ I am thinking about Pierre Bourdieu's use of the term as he develops it in *Distinction*. Habitus is, for Bourdieu, is “the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgements and the system of classification (*princípio divisionis*) of these practices” within a given social formation. What I am suggesting in this dissertation is that empire is the larger field of existence through processes of becoming were presumed in colonial South Africa during this time period. Hence, while invocations of the colonial might presume that the referent is solely annexed territories, dominions and protectorates, it is the larger ensemble of relations and affiliations which bind the colony and the metropole together that needs to be kept in mind when thinking about the formation of black intellectuals in South Africa. Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), pg. 170.

²⁵ Contrapuntal reading is, of course one the key methods for reading imperial culture invoked by Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism*. Through the notion of contrapuntal reading Said was looking for a way of making sense of the “intertwined and overlapping histories” of “metropolitan and formerly colonized societies.” Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994). pp. 15-18.

²⁶ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, pg. 7.

²⁷ Sukanya Banerjee, *Becoming Imperial Subjects: Indians in the Late-Victorian Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), pg. 5.

The Jabavus would be inexorably bound to social and political transformations of the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony. They were Mfengu - "a migratory people of Zulu extraction" - who had been displaced with the expansion of the Zulu kingdom in the early nineteenth century.²⁸ After a period of clientage among various Xhosa groups they were settled in fairly substantial numbers near Grahamstown and Fort Peddie by the colonial government in return for loyalty to God and his missionaries and faithful subservience to the British king and government. These loyalties often saw the Mfengu warring on the side of the British in the Frontier Wars (1779 - 1879) that took place in much of the nineteenth century. As imperial subjects, their claim to a distinct identity rested on being "educated Natives" apart from the "raw Natives" who, until the Cattle Killings of 1856 - 1857 fought intermittent wars with the British to preserve their autochthony. John Jabavu, "a quintessential "Cape liberal" of his generation," was thus something of a child of the frontier.²⁹

The Cape Colony - a British possession throughout the nineteenth century - was an ever expanding frontier. Its boundaries were enlarged following the British acquisition of the Dutch Cape colony after the Napoleonic wars. The British presence in the Cape was co-extensive with free-trade ideology, the exportation of evangelical humanitarianism and immigration to the colonies.³⁰ The expansion of the frontiers of the Cape Colony was ushered in as mercantilism gave way to ideas of free-trade where "new rationalities for retaining and developing colonies of settlement were formulated."³¹ Settler colonialism and the desire to establish an agricultural colony in the manner of the "pastoral English country towns" found its elaboration on the eastern frontier of the colony with the establishment of Albany and Grahamstown in the early 1830s. In typical Habermasian fashion, the landed settler elite quickly developed a cohesive self-consciousness and projected its interests in a "traffic in news."³² In 1831 L.H. Meurant launched *Graham's Town Journal*. Historian Timonthy Keegan has suggested that "*Graham's Town Journal* represented typical entrepreneurial interests vigorously over a number of decades. . . . It was the

²⁸ See Catherine Higgs, *The Ghost of Equality: the Public Lives of D.D.T. Java of South Africa, 1885-1959* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1997), pg. 8.

²⁹ This is Catherine Higgs' description of D.D.T. Jabavu, John Jabavu's son but I think it holds just as well for the father. See Catherine Higgs, *The Ghost of Equality*, pg. 1.

³⁰ Timothy Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia 1996), pg. 45.

³¹ Tim Keegan explains the confidence of colonial expansion and ideas of free-trade took a hold "when finding ever-wider markets became a central preoccupation of imperial policy, colonies of settlement had the great advantage of being safer and more predictable markets than foreign states." Tim Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, pp. 46.

³² Jurgen Habermas is referring here to the development of "early capitalist commercial relations" Europe in which "the traffic in commodities and news, manifested their revolutionary power only in the mercantilist phase which, simultaneously with the modern state, the national and territorial economies assumed their shapes." Jurgen Habermas, *Structural Transformations*, pp. 16-17.

Journal more than anything else which defined this settler elite as a historical reality, subjectively and collectively, and differentiated it from those who were excluded from remembering by reason of social class, culture or racial characteristics.”³³ In the making of this bourgeois sensibility, as Ann Laura Stoler and others have shown us, the boundaries that were to be managed on the fringes of the contact zones of coloniality were those in which racial and cultural difference were of paramount importance to the cultivation of the European bourgeoisie self.³⁴

The frontiers of the British Cape were the subject of an economy of textual production that designated colonial difference. In order to make sense of this one must at least read textuality itself as the sign of ontological difference. This, of course, is the configuration that Walter Mignolo ascribes to the “imaginary of the modern / colonial world:” “Spanish missionaries judged and ranked human intelligence and civilization by whether the people were in possession of alphabetic writing.”³⁵ “This,” he writes, “was an initial moment in the configuration of the colonial difference and the building of the Atlantic imaginary.” As we shall see in more detail below, the kinds of colonial institutions that were foundational for the black intelligentsia in the Cape Colony and South Africa also emerged out of this imaginary. In 1823, the Glasgow Missionary Society sent John Ross to join John Brownlee, William Ritchie Thompson and John Bennie and evangelize among the Xhosa people in the Tyume Valley. He brought along with him a printing press. In August of 1862 *Indaba*, a missionary periodical he had set the foundation for, historicized this moment and placed these efforts in a hierarchy of values where while reading could form the “intellectual improvement and the worldly advancement of our readers, we shall ever look on these as *subordinate* to their spiritual interests.”³⁶ Isabel Hofmeyr and other scholars have written extensively about the kinds of circulations, publics and readerships that formed within this formation of textuality.³⁷ I would like to focus here on John Jabavu’s relationship to the two genealogies of textuality that I have briefly sketched

³³ Timothy Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, pg. 73.

³⁴ See Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper’s “Between Colony and Metropole: Rethinking a Research Agenda” in their co-edited volume *Tensions of Empire*. For an insightful discussion of how the racial order in colonial society involved the development of techniques and racial doxa around which the white female subject was to manage the burden of keeping the race “pure,” see Ann Laura Stoler’s “Making Empire Respectable.” Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, “Between Empire and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda” in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Colonial World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), and Ann Laura Stoler “Making Empire Respectable: the Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in 20th Century Colonial Cultures,” *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (1989), pp. 634-660.

³⁵ Walter Mignolo, *Local Histories / Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges and Border Thinking*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pg. 3.

³⁶ “English Department,” *Indaba*, August 1862, pg. 14. Italics added. For an insightful study of missionary publishing and its publics in the eastern Cape Colony in this era see Russell Clarke, *Book Frontiers: Reconstructing Readers and Reading in a Nineteenth Century Eastern Cape Missionary Journal*. MA Thesis. University of the Witwatersrand. 2005.

³⁷ See Isabel Hofmeyr, *The Portable Bunyan*.

above. The colonial public sphere was defined by the emergence of two kinds of regimes of textuality: that of the secular bourgeoisie and the publics of the “Protestant Atlantic.”³⁸ Jabavu’s interest in it ultimately lay in its liberal variant, though he did work for the missionary press for a number of years. His foray into the world of colonial letters has been described as a positively “anxious” one.³⁹ In 1876, at the age of seventeen, he was averring between a career as a teacher at Somerset East and an apprenticeship in the world of the newspaper. “Anxious to learn the Printing Trade,” we are told, “he apprenticed himself to the local newspaper office, beginning work, as a “Printer’s Devil,” at four o’clock in the morning and continuing until breakfast times, when he returned home to wash himself and get ready for school.”⁴⁰ The reasons behind this oscillation between the Printing Trade and school go unexplained in Jabavu’s biography. But the energy he put into insinuating himself in the world of colonial letters writ large was clearly immense. One can read this passage in Jabavu’s life as one that culminates in his editorship of the missionary periodical *Isigidimi Sama-Xosa* between 1881 and 1883. However, this doesn’t account for the emergence of *Imvo* in 1884 nor the fall-out with the missionaries once he had struck out on his own.

A sign of the desires and affiliations that Jabavu was forming during this period can be gleaned in the kinds of texts he associated himself with. Tellingly, here the authority of the missionary appears minimal, if not adversarial. Jabavu’s apprenticeship in the printing trade fit into a desire for a political audience. If Habermas sees the “political task of the bourgeois public sphere as the regulation of civil society,” what I am calling the years of Jabavu’s apprenticeship dramatized this practice in its incipient form:⁴¹

Newspapers, as seen in the Exchange Copies at his printing office, proved an irresistible attraction, especially the “Cape Argus” to which he became a regular local correspondent, writing under a Nom-deplume. At this time he developed a personal friendship with the “Argus” editor, Mr Saul Solomon, the most magnanimous Prime Minister the Cape Colony has ever had, in which home at Cape Town he was in later days frequently entertained.⁴²

The kinds of newspapers that Jabavu affiliated with marked not only the kinds of publics that had become accessible to him but predicated his entry into a political life. The kind of intellectual identity being invented through the appropriation of bourgeoisie tech-

³⁸ Isabel Hofmeyr, *The Portable Bunyan*, pp. 229-230.

³⁹ Don Davidson Jabavu, *The Life of John Jabavu, Editor of Imvo Zabantsundu, 1884-1921* (Lovedale Institution Press, 1922).

⁴⁰ Don Davidson Jabavu, *The Life of John Jabavu*, pp. 12-13.

⁴¹ Jurgen Habermas, *Structural Transformations of the Public Sphere*, pg. 32.

⁴² Don Davidson Jabavu, *The Life of John Tengo Jabavu*, pg. 13.

niques of public (self-)representation relied on a colonial cosmopolitanism that, for those on the margins of empire, rested on an “invention of British identity.”⁴³ Jabavu’s penchant for editorial labor was crucially drawn from the influences of Victorian print culture. “He took for his models the *Spectator*, the *Nation* and the *Manchester Guardian*, all of which he extolled for their sweet reasonableness.”⁴⁴ Jabavu’s apprenticeship and literary ambitions rested, then, on what Belinda Edmondson has called in another context an “ongoing fascination” with “Victorian sensibilities.”⁴⁵ A reading of the colonial text is simultaneously a reading of a discursive node of an imperial formation. But what did imperial subjectivity mean for those writing from the colony? One can place the relation to Victorian Englishness in the metropole as authorizing the sets of discourses and discursive styles through which to address colonial publics. As Edmondson has shown, Englishness was seen to be “representative of manhood itself.”⁴⁶ Black intellectuals in the colony, therefore, were to not only frame their self-making in relation to white and metropolitan texts, but the regime of meaning and signification which outlined these undertakings as possible can be described, whether the textual codes are silent on this or not, as project of “making men.”⁴⁷

“a blameless moral character”

The precocious careers of *Imvo Zabantsundu* and John Tengo Jabavu were, upon the latter’s death in 1921, enthusiastically summarized as exemplary of the “heroic in history.”⁴⁸ John Jabavu’s son, Don Davidson Jabavu (1885-1955), working against a fragmentary archive, seemed eager to cast his father’s life in the light of hagiographic reminiscence. “In all probability,” he wrote, “the future African historian will class John Tengo Jabavu as the great celebrity of his generation who through sheer industry, rising from most obscure origin to the pinnacles of fame, raised the Bantu race a stage upward by virtue of his political and educational achievement.”⁴⁹ Indeed, in the years after the pub-

⁴³ Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pg. 29.

⁴⁴ Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness*, pg. 129.

⁴⁵ Belinda Edmondson, *Making Men: Gender, Literature Authority and Women’s Writing in Caribbean Narrative* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), pg. 1.

⁴⁶ Belida Edmondson, *Making Men*, pg 32.

⁴⁷ I have borrowed the title of Belinda Edmondson’s book to emphasize how masculinized discourses of citizenship, imperial belonging and literary authority were in the Cape Colony during these years.

⁴⁸ I have borrowed here from Thomas Carlyle’s *On Heroes and Hero-Worship, and The Heroic in History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1969).

⁴⁹ Don Davidson, Jabavu, *The Life of John Tengo Jabavu*, “Foreword.”

lication of *Imvo* it would be almost impossible to speak about the world of black letters without offering John Jabavu's name. Sol Plaatje, in a chapter of his *Native Life in South Africa* (1916) which was otherwise scathing of the elder Jabavu, took care to mix his gripes with a bit of historical genuflection.⁵⁰ What marked Jabavu for this sort of trajectory? His "conspicuous political deeds" may have lent to his memorialization in the figure of the exceptional but in the milieu of their making they confirmed nothing more important than his character. In fact Don Davidson Jabavu outlines a sketch of a man who, if any man was suitable for the task, possessed the character to carry the burden of his race. As the younger Jabavu put it, "Although he was only seventeen he already exhibited all the qualities that constituted the basis of his later reputation; a blameless moral character, a zeal for education, religious fervor, together with an inclination towards the printing trade, a penchant for writing to the press, and enthusiasm for politics."⁵¹ These words frame not only the early years of John Jabavu's youth and the makings of a 'newspaper' man but the predilections of a young man who will assume a life of historical importance.

The tracing of an affable character as prefiguring John Jabavu's rise to public prominence was more than mere foreshadowing. As Sukanya Banerjee's work has shown, the dramatization of character was a major preoccupation of enunciations of Englishness in the nineteenth century. For British subjects pining for imperial citizenship on the margins of the metropole demonstrations of industriousness, respectability, reading, credit-worthiness, and the mastery of the cleanliness of the body were some of the tropes "marshaled to profile political membership and entitlement" on the part of the imperial subject.⁵² That the young John Jabavu's "blameless moral character" was early on neatly aligned with the most valorized institutions of colonial culture - "a zeal for education, religious fervor, *together* with an inclination towards the printing trade" - frame, as we shall see, not only his progressive entry into the latter from the former but the claim of a legitimate presence in the "Colonial Press." Appropriate biography and character bestow him with the means and rationale to enter into the "space of position-taking."⁵³ Indeed, as Don Davidson Jabavu would later add about his father, whether to enter into the colonial public sphere as a producer of opinion precipitated a deep crisis in the young John: in 1884 "He had to choose between continuing at Lovedale and suppressing his political

⁵⁰ Plaatje's altercation with Jabavu was over his response to the Native Lands Act of 1913 and his divisive influence on the black vote. I shall discuss this in a later chapter of the dissertation. For now, I will point out that in his chapter on Jabavu, Plaatje was careful to observe that *Imvo* "formerly had a kind of monopoly in the field of native journalism, and it deserved a wide reputation." This sort of recognition of *Imvo* is commonplace among scholars and contemporary observers. Sol Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa: Before and Since the European War and the Boer Rebellion* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1991), pg. 192.

⁵¹ Don Davidson Jabavu, *The Life of John Tengo Jabavu*, pg. 17.

⁵² Sukanya Banerjee, *Becoming Imperial Subjects*, pg. 88-106. These aspects of character as discussed by Banerjee also need to be considered alongside the practice of reading. Isabel Hofmeyr has suggested that "In Victorian thinking, reading was closely tied to ideas of character . . . changes to how people read could impact on what kind of subjects they would become." Hofmeyr, *Ghandi's Printing Press*, pg. 18.

⁵³ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pg. 30.

views and ambitions; or retuning to the teaching profession, which could hardly grant him wide enough scope for his versatile powers.”⁵⁴

Apparently, those in Jabavu’s circle of “personal friends” urged him to strike out on his own, abandoning a secure social path in two institutions that were fêted for the respectable achievers of the educated “Native population:” teaching at the mission school and an editorship of the mission publication *Isigidimi Sama-Xosa*.⁵⁵ The prehistory of *Imvo* was thus riddled with the crisis of authority over the African subject. If, as V.Y. Mudimbe has suggested, the colonial project was “to organize and transform non-European areas into fundamentally European constructs,” then it also had to confront those who took its postulations as the basis of their self-fashioning. Thus, when Meshach Pelem wrote to John Jabavu urging for something like *Imvo* one cannot miss the grammar of citizenship underwriting his disconsolate tone: “Meshack Pelem wrote him insisting that for a person of his stamp to remain in the restricted sphere of the editor of the “Isigidimi,” limited in free action and free speech, was to bury himself alive; that the time was ripe for the establishment of a journal in English and Xosa, to give untrammelled expression to the feelings of the Native population, before the Government and the European public.”⁵⁶ Pelem’s address to Jabavu evidently locates the African subject outside of the sphere of belonging in the colony. But the discourse of “the feelings of the Native population” does not (yet) suggest a disavowal of the colonial project or invoke the inscription of African tradition as a critique and alternative lexicon for imagining African self governance. Pelem’s imagined strategy for contesting colonial exclusion invokes a discursive structure that speaks precisely “through the European text.”⁵⁷ To imagine the emergence of *Imvo*, then, we would have to “locate the African subject at the intersection between colonial governmentality (the semantic and material conditions of colonial politics) and the realm of subjective desires (the colonial subject’s cultivation of their self-hood through the mastery of the trappings of colonial modernity).”⁵⁸

If we follow the trail of Pelem’s imaginary we can’t miss a radical shift in the writing of the desires of the colonial subject. Anthropologists Jean and John Comaroff have pointed out that any attempt to make sense of the long, complicated and drawn out struggle for the “colonization of consciousness” and the most salient signs of its cultural

⁵⁴ Don Davidson Jabavu, *The Life of John Tengo Jabavu*, pg. 17.

⁵⁵ This is R.H.W. Shepherd’s commentary on the role of Lovedale college and its affiliated periodical *Isigidimi Sama-Xosa*. Shepherd notes that *Isigidimi Sama-Xosa* would accumulate four African editors around this time: Elijah Makiwane, John Knox Bokwe, John Tengo Jabavu and William Wellington Gqoba. This, for him demonstrated “an early instance of Lovedale faith in Native capacity.” R.H.W. Shepherd, *Lovedale and Literature for the Bantu: A Brief History and a Forecast* (New York: Negro University Press, 1970), pg. 12.

⁵⁶ Don Davidson Jabavu, *The Life of John Tengo Jabavu*, pg. 17.

⁵⁷ Simon Gikandi, “Cultural Translation and the African Self: A (Post)Colonial Case Study,” *Inter-versions: Journal of Postcolonial Studies* Vol. 3, No. 3 (2011), pg. 356.

⁵⁸ Simon Gikandi, “Cultural Translation and the African Self,” *Inter-versions*, pg. 357.

and semantic regimes in colonial South Africa would have to begin “with the entry of mission Christianity onto the historical landscape.” How do we account, then - in Pelem’s rejoinder to Jabavu - for the absence of the authority of the missionary in this framing of - to borrow from the Comaroffs - the “consciousness of colonization” in the African subject? It is useful to draw out the Comaroffs’ argument in more detail here. One of the larger arguments of the volumes *Of Revelation and Revolution* is that “evangelists [were at] the vanguard of the British presence” as the unwitting “cultural agents of empire.” They were caught between sacred desire and secular powers whose designs for colonial order mounted rather than diminished racial difference and the script of ethnic identity.⁵⁹ The problem arising from the impossibility of drawing a clear distinction between the work of the church and that of the state in the colonial encounter found its elaboration in the messy entanglement of Christian evangelists in the “affairs of government.” In effect they “became embroiled in decidedly worldly relations of power and dominance. Some even emerged as active public figures and administrators. Nevertheless, because of the nature of mission ideology and the colonial division of labor, their role in this arena was intrinsically indeterminate and ambiguous.”⁶⁰ What of the intelligentsia of “mission school graduates” who were spawned out of the entanglements of the sacred and secular that marked colonial modernity?⁶¹ In order to account for their location and consciousness, we need to think a little more about the nature of the “secular power” that they were thrust into.

The Comaroffs argue that the evangelical endeavor became indelibly intertwined with the governmental and bureaucratic aspect of the colonial encounter. However, they point out, they also left their European origins firmly ensconced with a grammar of modern subjectivity that would frame their scripts and techniques of conversion. They were inheritors of liberal notions of person-hood that would form the basis of their reformulation of the African self. Evangelical humanitarianism was thus

complicated by the fact that salvation, and subjection to divine law, had become fused with the imperatives of "civilization." And "civilization" had been suffused by, and inscribed in, an impersonal legal system in which people were defined as citizens of a secular, liberal nation-state. Its ethical touchstone, far from being theocentric, drew on the temporal model of the unfettered economy, a model that presumed the protection of the right to enter into contract and to engage in enterprise by free individuals. . . It is not surprising, then, that, in the effort to recast Southern Tswana personhood - and to introduce their preferred

⁵⁹ Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonization and Consciousness in South Africa* (Volume One), pp 6. For a detailed discussion of the intertwining of the worlds of the secular and sacred see the chapter “Secular Power, Sacred Authority: The Politics of the Mission” in *Of Revelation and Revolution*. Jean & John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonization and Consciousness in South Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

⁶⁰ Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution* (Volume One), pg. 254.

⁶¹ For the discussion which contain this passage see Jean and John Comaroff’s *Of Revelation and Revolution* (Volume Two), pg. 401.

forms of subjectivity and identity, citizenship and moral community - the Nonconformists would tune their teaching to the language of legalism and rights.⁶²

The logic of colonial rule, however, offered a competing order of sovereignties. One relied on the re-building of the character of the converted through the mastery of interiority as manifested in the individual care of the self and “altering modes of exchange and consumption at the same time.”⁶³ This making of “universal citizens” was inevitably sullied by the fabrication of “ethnic subjects” who were supposedly to be presided over by a “primal sovereignty,” a policy that was to “disenfranchise and disable blacks in South Africa, thwarting their efforts to become free, right-bearing, propertied citizens.”⁶⁴ At the heart of the colonial project the Comaroffs see the workings of a “double consciousness” wherein the colonized had to negotiate the “two-faced character of the discourse of rights itself.”⁶⁵ It is not insignificant that in their theorization of the structure of the colonial polity the Comaroffs echo DuBois’s meditation on the problem of being black in America. Since the allusion to double-consciousness is not expanded as an inter-textual relationship the possible comparisons and connections of the making of (un)belonging across the Atlantic Ocean are not pursued by them (In the parts of the dissertation to follow we will see how another idea closely linked to DuBois: the problem of the color line, resurfaces in South Africa.) When we encounter the debate prefiguring *Imvo’s* existence we encounter the black intellectual striving to inscribe himself in the language of “universal citizens.” John Jabavu and his circle made it the incipient politic of their making of a black public sphere. This is not to argue that the spatial, social and moral configurations augured by Christian evangelicals were absent in Jabavu’s life. Indeed, one could argue that they had been converted into a silent code of identity. Jabavu and his siblings were second generation Christians. The social and moral world of the domestic space of their upbringing suggest a most intimate reckoning with the new order: his mother, Mary Mpinda, was “an indefatigable Christian worker, a vigilant disciplinarian over her children, and enthusiast for education in those “dark ages”” who raised her children “under [the] strictest moral conditions.”⁶⁶ If Jabavu’s circle were involved in a struggle, it was not a struggle for *identity*. It was a struggle for *colonial citizenship*. The appropriation of a liberal discourse of critique may map a genealogy of a stubborn yet often un-

⁶² Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution* (Volume Two), pg. 369.

⁶³ Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution* (Volume Two), pg. 218.

⁶⁴ The Comaroffs are, of course, framing the discourse of indirect rule. One of the most discussed studies of colonial rule in Africa is Mahmood Mamdani’s *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). A less cited yet equally fascinating work on this theme of colonial administration is the pamphlet *Transkei in the Making* (1939) by Govan Mbeki. I will return to Mbeki’s pamphlet later on.

⁶⁵ See the chapter “New Persons, Old Subjects: Rights, Identities, Moral Communities” in John L. and Jean Comaroff’s *Of Revelation and Revolution: the Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier* (Volume Two), pp. 365-404.

⁶⁶ Don Davidson Jabavu, *The Life of John Tengo Jabavu*, Pg. 8.

efficacious politic for the black intelligentsia but it also frames a schema of ideas and desires that constitute a “problem space,” a horizon without which other struggles may not make sense.⁶⁷ Neither the missionaries nor the colonial administrators were faced with a subaltern class. Not only could they speak but they had mastered the language of the master. It would be useful to recall here Pierre Bourdieu’s “field of cultural production.” Since “position-taking” within the field involves “the structured set of the manifestations of the social agents involved in the field - literary or artistic works, of course, but also political acts or pronouncements, manifestos or polemics, etc.” The problem is not one of taking a project of belonging as “universal citizens” as such but thinking through the veiled logics of how it would invariably involve “a determinate quantity of specific capital (recognition).”⁶⁸ Faith Smith has observed with regard to late nineteenth century Trinidad, “journalism was an important institution, providing a base from which to enter other spheres of public life, as well as giving the men connected with it the power to control public opinion.”⁶⁹ The description serves the milieu John Jabavu just as well. Colonial culture enforced rules of political exclusion which made newspapers and periodicals “a critical means of criticizing the ruling authorities.”⁷⁰ They were the most of effective means of a racially excluded intelligentsia to perform a social and political function in the colony. But how was the language of “universal citizens” made to speak to the problem of colonial belonging?

As postcolonial theorists and scholars of imperial culture have suggested, affiliations generated under the rubric of either Christian or liberal universalisms were compelled to confront their limits in the contact zones of the colonial encounter. In *Empire and Liberalism: A Study in Nineteenth Century Liberal Thought* (1999), Uday Mehta convincingly argues that the liberal tradition’s “encounter with strangeness” in the colonial contact zones ultimately strained its universalism and revealed “the ambiguity of a dualism that is there in liberalism in any case.”⁷¹ In order to understand Jabavu, we need to work beyond “the judgments of liberalism on the unfamiliar” and consider the evolution of ‘strangeness’ toward a normative ethics of colonial cosmopolitanism.⁷² This, of course, is the scene in

⁶⁷ David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: the Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), pp. 1-22.

⁶⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, pg. 30. A very helpful discussion on this issue in the context of black intellectuals in the British empire is Faith Smith’s “‘Writing Was Easy to Him’: Education, Labor, Distinction” in *Creole Recitations: John Jacob Thomas and Colonial Formation in the Late Nineteenth-Century Caribbean* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002), pp. 23-66.

⁶⁹ Faith Smith, *Creole Recitations*, pg. 27.

⁷⁰ Faith Smith, *Creole Recitations*, pg. 27.

⁷¹ Uday Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth Century Liberal Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pg 24-29.

⁷² Uday Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire*, pg. 29.

which, as Homi Bhabha argues, the “disclosing [of] the ambivalence of colonial discourse” takes place.⁷³ But, as Anna Tsing has also suggested, we need to grapple more deeply with what takes place on the margins. Her case is that of “remotely global” places that anthropologists find themselves, despite their efforts to the contrary, still tempted to place in the older framework of “peoples and cultures of out-of-the-way places.”⁷⁴ Of course, ours is the space of more affiliations with metropolitan culture, the space of the mimicry that Bhabha has argued produces the “almost the same, *but not quite*.” Tsing is helpful for me here because she demonstrates that the margins are also “zones of unpredictability at the edges of discursive stability, where contradictory discourses overlap” or even complementary discourses wielded by the ‘wrong’ persons effect civic estrangement. These are the spaces that shadow the drawing of “worlds of color,” sites of enunciation where “marginal” “cultural and political movements are launched from reinterpretations of these same exclusions.”⁷⁵ If we are to think through the politics of mimicry only through the difference, the “not quite” that it produces, part of what we lose and need to recuperate is not the inevitability of this loss but the grounds on which it became possible. It is, I argue in this dissertation, toward the black colonial subject striving to overcome difference *through* the appropriation of imperial liberalism and the writing of Englishness that we should turn to in order to understand the entry of black voices in the “Colonial Press” as the producers of a “Native Opinion.”

Writing Imperial Subjectivity from the Margins

Imvo Zabantsundu took a leap into public existence entangled in a network of racial meanings. In its early years it was an almost single-handedly crafted assemblage moving between existing publics and those most incipient. Its surrounding conditions would not have allowed much else. The passage to self-authored black reading and writing would have to emerge in contradistinction to a symbolic economy that cherished reading as “the only true way to moral and spiritual fortitude.”⁷⁶ I have already suggested, following Roger Chartier, that in order to understand this shift one would have to take seriously the work of texts in fixing and reframing sociabilities. Michel Foucault has encouraged us to think of the author function in terms of the “modes of circulation, valorization, attribution, and appropriation of discourses [which will] vary with each culture and are modi-

⁷³ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), pg. 88.

⁷⁴ Anna Tsing, “From the Margins” *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 9 No. 3 (1994), pg. 280.

⁷⁵ Anna Tsing, “From the Margins,” pp. 279-280.

⁷⁶ Russell Clarke, *Book Frontiers*, pg. 32. In her *Ghandi's Printing Press*, Isabel Hofmeyr has pointed out that attention to “Christian mission publishing in sub-Saharan Africa,” in spite of the existence of other printing cultures and formations, has tended to create the “impression that all printing in this region is of European Christian evangelical provenance.” But one cannot gainsay the enormous efforts of mission printing in the evangelical effort. Hofmeyr, *Ghandi's Printing Press*, pg. 33.

fied within each.”⁷⁷ In a world in which colonial rule was institutionalizing “grammars of difference” as a measure of social control and the maintenance of European dominance, the production of black textuality needed to go beyond articulating itself with the “mechanisms for controlling the circulation of texts or for lending them authority.” It needed to thread itself into the colonial public sphere while thwarting the appearance of circumvention through the vocabularies of civility and respectability. As the epigraph above suggests, this mode of textuality gathered its frames of referentiality through an enunciation and management of “audience desires and expectations.” It also gestures toward the gathering of black audiences and publics. *Imvo* would carve its publics, then, in the interstices of these racial cleavages that distinguished “the great mass of reclaimed Natives ... those who are on the shores of civilization” and “their white friends.”⁷⁸

In order to account for this multivocality in *Imvo*, one must keep in mind that the gaze between colonist and colonized was not mutual. If, as I am suggesting, *Imvo* was performing the dual labour of addressing colonial publics *and* articulating a self-spoken blackness onto it, then on what basis was this to be textualized? Jabavu fell, on the one hand, on a gesture of framing *Imvo* as a supplement to the narrative of colonial modernity. On the other hand, it was a critical rejoinder to the racial structures which were making colonial marginality. The crucial link that connected the two was performative. As Michael Warner has suggested, this is a scene in which to “enter the temporality of politics” actors had to “adapt themselves to the performances of rational-critical discourse.”⁷⁹ Of course, Warner’s comments were directed to the making of publics as a “relation among strangers,” but they serve well to underscore how the performance of speech and audience, specifically white publics, was in this moment. These negotiations can be clearly grasped in the first pages of *Imvo*. In “The Launch,” his first editorial article for *Imvo*, he figured a blackness as situated in the contingencies and vicissitudes of colonial modernity. “For over half a century,” he offered, “Missionaries have been laboring assiduously among the Natives of this country, and the Government has invested, and is still investing enormous amounts of money with the professed object of civilizing them. The result, which will ever be mentioned with gratitude - is that a large class has been formed among the Natives which has learned to loathe the institutions of barbarism, and to press for the better institutions of a civilized life.”⁸⁰ Yet the merits of civilizing blackness were in question; for the admittance of a small yet growing black intelligentsia to the ‘civilized’ institutions of colonial culture had spawned some measure of “misunderstanding.” “This uncertain drifting hither and thither of “School Kafirs,” as they are called, has given rise to some hateful comparisons as to whether “School Kafirs,” or, as they are sometimes called,

⁷⁷ Michel Foucault, “What is an Author?” Paul Rabinow (Ed.) *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), pg. 117.

⁷⁸ John Jabavu, “The Launch” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 3rd November, 1884, pg. 2.

⁷⁹ Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), pg. 124.

⁸⁰ Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, pg. 124.

“Educated Natives,” have stirred up within them a desire for better things, and in their perhaps in their clumsy efforts to attain them, they have been misunderstood by white friends.”⁸¹

Imvo Zabantsundu’s “occasion for speaking” rested, therefore, on a diagnostic, if sly, claim on the part of Jabavu that an un-curtailed black presence in the colonial public sphere would soothe unwanted misunderstandings between black and white. In an issue of the periodical printed some weeks later he revealed, with almost ventriloquial deftness, what seemed to be the true import of such vaunted misunderstandings. In it Jabavu published an editorial which cited at length an article by “an ex-Lovedale student” on a speech subsequently published in the missionary periodical *The Christian Express* by Dr James Stewart, then the principal of the Lovedale Institute. Dr Stewart’s views on the “Experiment of Native Education” must have been the subject of some controversy as “Umjala” - the former student of Lovedale College “who writes in the *Port Elizabeth Telegraph*” - took the headmaster to task for being unfair to the “Natives.”⁸² Stewart was reportedly unpersuaded on the merits of “native education.” “He found,” we are told,

that his efforts had been wasted, his efforts disappointed, and his expectations unfulfilled; that education had been simply travestied and money spent in vain; that those who thought that by educating the native they were casting their bread upon the waters, in order to find it after many days were laboring under a false impression, so to say, because the only fruits he has ever been able to gather among those who have got good enough education are the *want of trustworthiness*, want of common honesty and ordinary industry.⁸³

Umjala’s ire was apparently piqued by the publicness of Stewart’s claims and promptly responded with his own pithy public treatise. The “address,” he complained, “has been converted *argumentum ad populum* by its publication in the *Christian Express*.” On the score of the content of his argument, Stewart had managed to see what he wanted to see to the neglect of “those native clerks and others who are occupying respectable positions in Government and other offices, however few they may be.” “Let him,” ended Umjali, “take his lamp, like Diogenes of Sinope, and go out to look - not for the untrustworthy, who are too common - but for honest and trustworthy Kafirs, and then let him make an impartial appeal to the common sense of both friend and foe.”⁸⁴

Jabavu, for his part, deftly editorialized the debate, carefully placing his voice on the margins, framing the debate as if ‘merely’ taking notes. This bare framing drew out the debate’s circulations between audiences and publics in a manner that magnified the

⁸¹ Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, pg. 124.

⁸² “Editorial Notes,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*. 10th November, 1884, pg. 4.

⁸³ “Editorial Notes,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 10th November, 1884, pg. 4. The italics are contained in the original article in *Imvo*.

⁸⁴ “Editorial Notes,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*. 10th November, 1884, pg. 4.

issue: “All fair-minded men will welcome with pleasure this contribution to this perplexing question. If it has done nothing else, it has, in its own way, represented the feelings of the class that Dr. Stewart alleges has caused his faith to grow cold in native education, and almost to lose it in the cause.”⁸⁵ These feelings of “the class” Jabavu had summarized by recourse to the lines in the last stanza of Robert Burns’s poem “To a Louse”: “O wad some Power the giftie give us, To see ourselves as others see us!” In colonial culture where the “other” marked racial, social and political boundaries, such a ‘gift’ was, at best, a mixed blessing. “Sealed into that object hood” where “the other fixed me,” the colonial public sphere would ever contain the “native” voice in a posture of speaking “out of ‘courtesy.’”⁸⁶ In this instance, Jabavu’s intertextualism proved a method for framing the reception blackness in the colonial public sphere. The inversion of Burn’s “To see ourselves as others see us!” Jabavu’s reposte - “*but to also see us as we see ourselves*” - articulated public blackness as “counterpublicness,” one in which its “member’s identities [would be] formed and transformed” through the production of black textuality.⁸⁷

It is no wonder that John Jabavu named his periodical *Imvo Zabantsundu* (Native Opinion). In addition to being “the medium of communication between the vast masses of the aboriginal population of this country and the ruling power which hails from Britain,” the early issues of *Imvo Zabantsundu* mapped out the scene of discourse that defined the conditions of the black presence in Cape Colony and beyond. Its existence, successes and failures, would rest on how far the modern black subjects who seized and wielded these discourses would be recognized in its regime of ‘citizenship.’⁸⁸ In his projection of *Imvo* into the colonial public sphere, Jabavu had taken empire as the necessary condition of possibility for the colonial. In other words, in the quest for the expansion of the franchise and political rights among mission educated Africans, harnessing the authority of the metropole over the colony became a major recourse for addressing colonial affairs. It was, as we shall see, this structure of rule that he sought to steer toward amicable ends for the black subjects who had embraced the project of modernity. In their espousal of empire as a condition of colonial belonging, colonial intellectuals took quite se-

⁸⁵ “Editorial Notes,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*. 10th November, 1884, pg. 4.

⁸⁶ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks* (London: Pluto Press, 1986), pg. 109.

⁸⁷ Michael Warner discusses counter publics as a “scene for developing oppositional interpretations of its members’ identities, interests, and needs. They are structures by different dispositions or protocols from those that obtain elsewhere in the culture, making different assumptions about what can be said or what goes without saying.” Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, pg. 119.

⁸⁸ As Sukanya Banerjee has observed, the term ‘citizen’ had not yet codified in British legal parlance in the nineteenth century but its grammar was always already at work: “citizenship in its guises as a universal rights-bearing category was not formally codified till the drafting of the constitution of an independent India, but the fact of codification alone should not detract from the longer processes - partial, incomplete, flawed, and often futile - through which the languages of citizenship were refracted from at least the late nineteenth century.” Sukanya Banerjee, *Becoming Imperial Subjects*, pg. 4.

riously what they thought to be the metropolitan conditions of colonial culture.⁸⁹ Indeed their reckoning of a racially inclusive imperial cosmopolitanism was to predominate in the structuring of the colonial civility of their imaginaries. In “The Launch” Jabavu made the political institutions of the colony a primary preoccupation of *Imvo*: “We wish to say a few words on the support or otherwise of the various political parties in the country. Our own view is that whosoever treats these parties as mere figures which are not a factor in the attainment of certain ends in a county ruled by Responsible Government, is like attempting to make omelets without eggs. Our attitude toward the th[...?] parties existing at present [...] be to do our best to educate our countrymen to support m[...?] men. This is a c[...] which every lover of the Colony must follow under the present circumstances.”⁹⁰ This claim to colonial citizenship inscribed the foundational discourses of liberal governance in the British empire. How Jabavu and his peers crafted a space for themselves within this formation, then, took as enabling “the transmission of British ideas about liberty, consensual governance, and the rule of law.”⁹¹ Imperial subjectivity thus provided Jabavu and his peers with a grammar for the “meticulous translation of colonial culture into the idiom of self-making.”⁹² But in a landscape in which culture was made to ventriloquize racial designs, colonial liberalism was generated through exclusionary hierarchies which undergirded the liberal discourse of universal equality.⁹³

A perceptive reader and participant in the entrenchment of liberal ideals in South Africa, John Jabavu’s quest for colonial belonging stressed the already existing tensions of a non-racial discourse of citizenship. This tension, in fact, provided one of the most salient reasons for his entry into journalism. As numerous historians have shown, the Cape of Good Hope Ordinance Constitution of April 1852 was founded on “non-racial constitutional[ism].”⁹⁴ The ordinance, permitted, under representative government, “every male person” over the age of twenty one years “and either a natural born subject of Her Majesty the Queen, or a subject of Her Majesty the Queen who, though no nat-

⁸⁹ For discussions on empire and belonging in South Africa and Africa see Christopher Saunders, “The Expansion of British Liberties,” Vivian Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Price and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town: Group Identity and Social Practice, 1875-1902* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), Victoria Collis *Anxious Records: Race, Imperial Belonging, and the Black Literary Imagination, 1900 – 1946*. PhD Dissertation. Columbia University. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI, 2013. Publication No. UMI Number: 3561772, Simon Gikandi, *Map of Englishness*.

⁹⁰ “The Launch,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 3rd November, 1884, pg. 3.

⁹¹ Christopher Saunders, “The Expansion of British Liberties: the South African Case,” pg. 269.

⁹² Simon Gikandi, “Cultural Translation and the African Self,” pg. 357.

⁹³ See David Kazanjian, *The Colonizing Trick: National Culture and Imperial Citizenship in Early America* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2003), pp. 1-34. Also see Uday Mehta, *Empire and Liberalism* and Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 1-14.

⁹⁴ See Andre Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!*, pp 4-6. Christopher Saunders, “The Expansion of British Liberties,” Stanley Trapido, “From Paternalism to Liberalism: the Cape Colony, 1800-1834,” *The International History Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1990), pp. 76-104.

ural born, was, before an on the eighteenth of January, one thousand eight hundred and six, a subject of the Batavian Government, resident in this colony, and who, from thence hitherto, has resided or remained domicile in the sail colony,” to have the power to vote, provided that he be the owner of “immovable property” within the colony costing more than £ 2 000 and “really and *bona fide* in the receipt of salary or wages at or after the rate of not less than fifty pounds by the year.”⁹⁵ Since this ordinance and others before it was not racially exclusive, black men who claimed imperial subjectivity and met these qualifications could legally participate in electoral politics in the Cape Colony. This isn’t to suggest that colonial governmentality inscribed its bodies unequivocally with the “formal and abstract equality of citizen-subjects.”⁹⁶ Zine Magubane and others have shown that in the Cape Colony embodied female blackness gained a negative symbolic quality in a material and imaginative economy that was “strongly conditioned by prevailing notions of what constituted productive and unproductive labor.”⁹⁷ The Ordinance of 1852, on the other hand, was instrumental in establishing a masculine framework for colonial citizenship. The coming of responsible government in 1872 brought the problem of racial governmentality ever sharply into relief. Under responsible government, the Cape Colony was reluctantly compelled to assume the fiscal, political and administrative burden of managing its affairs.⁹⁸ Arthur Keith saw the problem of governmentality solely through the “complications” brought by the administration of “the enormous mass of natives and the large British Indian population,” a history with a record of “unrelieved incompetence and error” in the colony.⁹⁹ He evidently overlooked the lines of distinction that separated the “mass of natives” from those who were slated for colonial enlightenment. Writing out of the experience of the First World War and the experiment to make empire commensurable with self-governance, Keith’s historical analysis often conflates, compares and distinguishes Dominion self-rule, the politics of the nation-state and imperial governmentality.¹⁰⁰ His critique was glaringly silent on how gendered and racial differences were articulated with these instrumentalities and discursive structures. But the si-

⁹⁵ “The Cape of Good Hope Ordinance Constitution” in G.W. Eybers (editor) *Select Constitutional Documents Illustrating South African History, 1795 - 1910* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1918), pp. 45 - 55.

⁹⁶ See David Kazanjian, *The Colonizing Trick*, pp. 1-7.

⁹⁷ Zine Magubane, *Bringing the Empire Home: Race, Class, and Gender in Britain and Colonial South Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 14 - 39. Also see Belinda Edmondsdon’s *Making Men* and Sukanya Banerjee’s *Becoming Imperial Citizens*.

⁹⁸ See Arthur Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions* (Volume 1), pp. 27 - 37 and “Responsible Government” in E.G. Eybers’s (Editor) *Select Constitutional Documents Illustrating South African History, 1795 - 1910*, pp. 63 - 64.

⁹⁹ Arthur Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions* (Volume 1), pp. 33 - 34.

¹⁰⁰ In *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, Keith put forth that “Dominions should be enabled to amend their constitutions freely without reference to the Imperial Parliament.” Arthur Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, pp. viii - ix.

lence spoke to some of the most over-determined articulations of imperial and colonial rule. While he could observe that for some “native interests would be more wisely treated by a government under Imperial control, especially as the franchise had been denied to the natives in accordance with the settled policy of the Boer republics and the promises given to them in the terms of peace,” he only took it for granted that “responsible government was also shortly fully justified by the decision of the four territories already enjoying it to form the Union of South Africa” in 1910.¹⁰¹ “Native interests” have all but disappeared in the latter construction of responsible government as self-rule in waiting. But what has gone unmentioned has neither ceased to exist or reign the imaginary of “self-rule.” Keith maintained the ideological trick of white rule as the ultimate right to the right of sovereignty. I shall return to this theme more explicitly in the third chapter of this dissertation. For now I would like to observe the conceptually and politically instructive feature of this veiled silence. David Kazanjian has pointed out that where “universal egalitarianism . . . took the form not simply of citizenship but rather of national citizenship” these logics surreptitiously articulated “race, nation and equality” in the “*interdependence* of universalism and particularism.”¹⁰² Kazanjian draws out the analytically salient feature of this interdependence in suggesting that “the systematic reduction and maintenance of hierarchically codified, racial and national forms actually enabled equality to be understood as formally and abstractly universal.”¹⁰³ Keith, in a sense, offers a narrative of self-governance in South Africa that is aphasiac about its negativity. This leaves us with the problem of how the black imagination revised and found points of articulation within these tensions.

The transition from representative to responsible government meant that the assertion of the rights of the citizen in the Cape Colony were not, at least in an abstract sense, already absent for the black male subject. The erasure of certain racial bodies of citizens would itself become a part of the process of the making of the nation-state in the early twentieth century. Under responsible government the number of black voters rose substantially. Black voters among the constituencies of the eastern reaches of the Cape Colony rose by close to fifty percent, running figures that inched close to those of white voters in the mid-1880s.¹⁰⁴ Andre Odendaal’s work has shown that in responsible government the eastern Cape saw an unprecedented rise in black colonial politics. “The upshot,” he tells us, “was a dramatic growth in the number of African voters and in their political awareness. In the six ‘frontier’ constituencies in the eastern Cape - Aliwal North, Fort Beaufort, King William’s Town, Queenstown, Victoria East and Wodehouse -

¹⁰¹ Arthur Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, pp. 34 - 35. These are issues that I shall return to in more detail later on in the dissertation.

¹⁰² David Kazanjian, *The Colonizing Trick*, pp. 3 - 4.

¹⁰³ David Kazanjian, *The Colonizing Trick*, pg. 5.

¹⁰⁴ Andre Odendaal, *The Founders: The Origins of the ANC and the Struggle for Democracy in South Africa* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2013), pg. 96.

African voters increased sixfold from 1150, or 14 per cent of the total vote in 1882, to 6045, or 43 per cent in 1886.”¹⁰⁵ The coming of responsible government meant that there was now a black political presence that could, on its own, begin to shape colonial politics. “The number of white voters in these constituencies rose by only 914 to 8077 in the same period”¹⁰⁶ These are numbers which surely gestured to the ‘blackening’ of colonial politics in the eastern reaches of the Cape Colony. James Stewart, the principal of Lovedale, might have hastened to reduce black desire to be admitted to “the civil and other public services of the country” around ‘premature’ claims to worthiness but his entreaties to patience and stoicism surreptitiously obscured the actual gradations that were making this attainment a fading possibility.¹⁰⁷ This sort of argument was taken to its logical ends, ironically enough, in *Isigidimi Sama-Xosa* where the writer of the letter expressed thanks to “Mr Saul Solomon and Mr Irvine for their advocacy of their cause in Parliament.” The letter boldly framed black parliamentary representation *sui generis*: “When shall we choose men from amongst ourselves to represent us in parliament? There are many educated men of our own race who are able to represent us. We must not sit still, waiting to be lifted up.”¹⁰⁸ It is quite likely, given his affiliations with the *Cape Argus* and *Isigidimi*, that these letters were written by Jabavu. In any case, Stewart was not having it. He argued that the “the native young men who may aspire to such a position are not yet on the right line that will lead to it.” He continued,

In no country in the world that I know of, is mere education a qualification to enter Parliament. An aspirant must in every case show some other and better claim. He must show some work done or attempted; some cause of public good or avowed public good espoused, and to which he has given himself, he must also allow some willingness, real or pretended, to sacrifice something for that cause. And I warn all natives who my words now reach, or may ever reach, not to deceive themselves on this point. It was never heard of amongst white men, and it will never be realized as a fact legislative amongst black men, that education *per se*, will qualify a man for a position in the highest legislative assembly in the country.¹⁰⁹

As for why this was so, Stewart would fall on the well established strategy of infantilizing the “native.” The mission school would remain the necessary incubus for “gradually

¹⁰⁵ Andre Odendaal, *The Founding Fathers*, pg. 96.

¹⁰⁶ Andre Odendaal, *The Founding Fathers*, pg. 96.

¹⁰⁷ Uday Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire*, pp. 30-34.

¹⁰⁸ This article is cited by James Stewart in his “*The Educated Kaffir - An Apology*,” and *Industrial Education, A Sequel. Two valedictory Addresses given by Dr Stewart, to the Lovedale Literary Society* (Lovedale Press, 1880), pp. 7-8.

¹⁰⁹ James Stewart, “*The Educated Kaffir - An Apology*,” pg. 9-10.

training the people to walk alone.”¹¹⁰ “as regards the material progress and property of this country, the education of the natives, is of more consequence than some half dozen questions which are receiving a good deal of attention: and is worth a many good Act in Parliament - to place on a right basis - for the good of all shades of color in the country.”¹¹¹ The suspension of the fulfillment of the black right to the political institutions under responsible government consigned them to what Amit Chaudhuri, following Dipesh Chakrabarty, calls the “waiting-room of history.”¹¹² The “liberal strategy of exclusion” maintained its non-racial character. Stewart’s arguments ever reduced African readiness for political office to a formulation of wanton character and not race, though his prescriptions were clearly concocted to manage the desires of the black colonial intelligentsia. Jabavu was not lost on these designs of colonial containment and their attendant stratagems. He seized upon this discourse of childhood and turned it into a narrative of progress and a charge of governmental responsibility: “It is being constantly remarked that the natives are children, and must be treated as such. We do not object to this observation, provided it does not mean that they are the only children in the world; and the only instruction children have a right to receive is correction with a rod, a sjambok, or a gun. . . . And when the State declares, through its representatives that the natives are children it also, and as clearly, affirms its duty, which is - to use all responsible diligence in developing them up to man’s estate.”¹¹³ In reframing the narrative of colonial inclusion, Jabavu had turned to the colonial state as the institution through which to pose the question of belonging. Habermas would, of course, understand this as a process by which the “complex of audience-oriented privacy made its way into the political realm’s public sphere,” but it is also clear that Jabavu was more than reformulating a relation between the private and the public but reconfiguring the colonial public sphere as a relation between black subjects, the colonial state and racialized publics.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ John Stuart Mill quoted in Uday Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire*, pp. 30 - 34.

¹¹¹ James Stewart, “The Educated Kaffir - An Apology,” pg. 15.

¹¹² Amit Chaudhuri’s discussion of the idea is quite revealing of the aporia of the fulfillment of modernity in the colonial space: “The phrase has purgatorial resonances: you feel that those who are in the waiting-room are going to be there for some time. For modernity has already had its authentic incarnation in Europe: how then can it happen again, elsewhere? The non-West – the waiting-room – is therefore doomed either never to be quite modern, to be, in Naipaul’s phrase, ‘half-made’; or to possess only a semblance of modernity. This is a view of history and modernity that has, according to Chakrabarty, at once liberated, defined and shackled us in its discriminatory universalism; it is a view powerfully theological in its determinism, except that the angels, the blessed and the excluded are real people, real communities.” Chaudhuri, “In the Waiting Room of History,” <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v26/n12/amit-chaudhuri/in-the-waiting-room-of-history>.

¹¹³ “The Government’s Children,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 30th March, 1885, pg. 3.

¹¹⁴ Jurgen Habermas, *Structural Transformations in the Public Sphere*, pg. 51.

It is not surprising, then, that some among the black intelligentsia were seeking alternatives to the authority of the missionary politics of tutelage and domestication.¹¹⁵ Jabavu, an undercapitalized school teacher, sought allies among liberal politicians who had stakes in garnering black votes in the eastern Cape. In return, James Rose Innes, along with James Wilson Weir, supplied the seed capital and a joint guarantee with a bank to start the publication of *Imvo*. Jabavu meticulously “toured the Native Territories and the Border districts” gathering support for the periodical.¹¹⁶ His efforts quickly paid dividends. A small group of agents for the dissemination of *Imvo* was assembled. Jabavu urged his budding readership to support his representatives and subscribe to *Imvo*:

[Ukuze umsebenzi opatelele eku hanjiseni kwelipepa uhambe ngokukapukapu kumiswe amanene kwindawo ngendawo ukufeza imicimbi engalo endaweni nase gameni lomnini-lo. Indawo ezizintloko ezilindolweyo koli-Gosa zezi: -

- (a)Kukumela ilungelo yepapa ngokuzama bonke abanokulesa ukuba balamkele.
 - (b) Kukumela abamkeli ngazo zonke inyanga ezintatu ngentlaulo yepapa, eliyakuti i Gosa liyitumele kumpati-pepa e Qonce.
 - (c) I Gosa kwekona lomela ukuvakalisa izikalo zabantu bomandla walo ngento zonke ezipatelele ekuhanjiseni
- N.B. Akunakumiswa bani ebuneni li-Gosa kwindawo engenabo abamkeli abalishumi bagoselweyo.]

In order that this paper be a success we have placed representatives in various places who will fulfill its work in the name of its proprietor. Of utmost importance to the representatives are the following: -

- (a)To work in the interest of the paper by soliciting all those who may be interested in subscribing to it.
- (b)To collect subscription payments on all the three months in which the payment will be due, whereupon the representative will send the payments to the proprietor in King Williamstown.
- (c)The representative will be responsible for the complaints of the people on all things related to the paper.

N.B. No one will be permitted to serve as a representative who does not stand for at least ten subscribers.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ I am thinking of the idea of domesticity as it arises in Uday Mehta’s discussion of the infantilization of the racial other in liberal discourse. Though Uday emphasizes the domain of the family as the site in which imperial liberalism grasps the other as an object of reform, his insights can be stretched to encompass an understanding of why the mission school was so important a space for doing this work for someone like James Stewart: “The child/deviant, whose difference threatens the legitimacy of the father by placing a limit on the reach of his authority by straining his understanding, must there fore be assimilated in a power that “knows” or offers a progressive future in which the ambivalence of “not-being-one-of-us” and being “one-of-us” will assuredly get resolved. And because this resolution occurs in the domain of the family, adjacent to the political sphere, but still free from any of the constraints that internally limit the use of power in that sphere, the instruments that can be used for there form of the deviant are often harsher and more unrestricted.” Uday Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire*, pg. 33.

¹¹⁶ See Don Davidson Jabavu, *The Life of John Tengo Jabavu*, pp. 17-22.

¹¹⁷ “Amagosa,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 17th November, 1884, pg. 2.

The representatives who were actually listed at this early stage numbered close to twenty and they circulated *Imvo* in as many districts. These included Kimberely, which lay outside of the reaches of the Cape Colony in the Afrikaner Republics. The points of circulation between the proprietor, his representatives and readers being so small, seemed to work at a minuscule scale in comparison to Anderson's "imagined communities" forged in the act of reading in "empty homogenous time." Jabavu's project can be more accurately read as part of a formation of textual production that Karin Barber has described as "printing culture." Barber distinguishes printing culture from print culture by calling into focus its making in the realm of "artisanal small-scale publishing."¹¹⁸ What interests me about Barber's discussion of printing culture is that its uses are located somewhere between "enormous anonymous publics" and "deeply sedimented personal uses of print."¹¹⁹ I argue that part of what animated Jabavu's turn to printing culture was the interpolation of white publics and black readers into the local manifestations of the practice of Englishness as an avenue to public and political acceptance for black colonials. Both Jabavu and his representatives were agents, interpreters and conveyors of imperial Englishness and *Imvo* the space in which the white gaze could be fixed on the sedimentation of this culture among the black intelligentsia.

Imvo was drawn into the role of performing and archiving the project of colonial belonging for the black subject. This was posed as an ethical problem as much as it was political one. Here, Jabavu was as much attentive to the politics of sincerity and commitment as he was to the racial underpinnings of colonial alienation. "The "native problem,"" he observed, "so often talked of, is reduced to its primary elements, amounts after all very much to a mere question of loyalty or disaffection."¹²⁰ Apparently, the opening of the Edendale Native Training Institution in the colony of Natal in November of 1884 had raised, once more, the question of how suitable - how desirable, really - "native education" was. Jabavu was at pains to demonstrate that reading the "native problem" along these lines was essentially a reductive gesture. It gave a racialized hierarchy to what was a most besought prize in the field of imperial subjectivity writ as a global economy of desire: *deserved* imperial belonging. The desire for colonial belonging and the claim of imperial citizenship often elided each other. Indeed, imperial subjectivity was the ground upon which arguments for colonial inclusion would be mounted. Jabavu was to map out this rubric by privileging the public display of Englishness as the predominant sign through which the ethics of loyalty to the Crown could be appropriately staged. In so doing, he drew some careful comparisons among metropolitan and colonial spaces as

¹¹⁸ Karin Barber, "Audiences and the Book in Africa," *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2001), pg. 16.

¹¹⁹ Karin Barber, "Audiences and the Book in Africa," pg. 16.

¹²⁰ "The Advanced Post," *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 15th December, 1884, pg. 4.

connected, among other things, through the terrain in which the culture of Englishness was to be continually re-inscribed, appropriated and extraverted if it was to remain stable:

Could we feel absolutely certain that our natives would be as obedient to the powers set over them as are the masses of Great Britain, or of any other European States, the task of legislating and administering for that people would be lightened of more than half its difficulty. It is the fear that our natives may not always obey the law, or submit to authority, that embarrasses action at every turn. Yet so far as Edendale is concerned is as loyal a subject of the Crown as any that this Empire can produce. The banner which is suspended in the church there, bearing upon it the legend, "For Queen and Country," is a symbol fraught with enormous significance and hope to every student of the future. The flag is no empty or meaningless emblem, for it represents yeoman's service done and blood freely shed to defend both Crown and land. The tale that it tells is interpreted in language that none can misunderstand in the memorial column erected just outside the church by the natives themselves to the memory of their comrades who fell during the Zulu war. Loyalty to the Queen at Edendale is probably far more of a principle and a passion than it is in any one of Britain's booming and seething cities.¹²¹

By shifting the identity of Englishness from a racial and metropolitan essence to an affective one equally at play in the colony, Jabavu sought to convince the detractors of African education of the worthiness, even deservedness, of this project on the part of its recipients. In so doing he urged them to parse out and ultimately discard any sense of a complete and authentic English identity. Instead, the crucial exercise would be the education of the senses to see the proliferation of the signs of Englishness as the artifacts of actual (black) English subjects. "The flag" which signifies loyalty to the British Crown also stands in for the ma(r)king of an imperial geography. The correlation that Jabavu is making connects black doers as producers of English culture. One could, borrowing from John L. Jackson, Jr., argue that Jabavu's project was predicated on demonstrating a performative *imperial sincerity* as the mark of Englishness. Jackson points out that sincerity - apart and distinct from authenticity - "privileges intent, an interiorized intent that decentralizes the racial seer (and the racial script), allowing for the possibility of performative ad-libbing and inevitable acceptance of trust amid uncertainty as the only solution to interpersonal ambiguity."¹²² Jabavu posted imperial subjectivity - for the colonial subject speaking from the margins of empire - as "an identity of passions."¹²³ The adoption of an identity of "principle and passion" *from* the margins of empire opened up a discursive scaffold for the colonial intelligentsia to ruminate upon and contest, as Anna Tsing has so insightfully argued, the "oppressive quality of cultural exclusion and" invoke "the creative potential of rearticulating, enlivening, and rearranging the very social categories that peripheralize a

¹²¹ "The Advanced Post," *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 15th December, 1884, pg. 4.

¹²² John L. Jackson, Jr. *Real Black: Adventures in Racial Sincerity* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005), pg. 18.

¹²³ Ralph Ellison, *Shadow and Act* (New York: Vintage International, 1964), pg. 263.

group's existence."¹²⁴ The discursive strategy of collapsing the colony and the metropole to a unitary structure of comparison was directed, both rhetorically and politically, to the racial tensions bedeviling the extension of modern institutions to a marginal site of the British empire. This strategy went beyond an extemporization of colonial marginality. As Sukanya Banerjee has argued, rhetorical struggles over colonial and imperial inclusion as enunciated by those who were rendered subjects of the Crown in effect provided "what is an often overlapping genealogy of citizenship for Britain and its colonies."¹²⁵ If it appears that the most pressing concerns in *Imvo* were spawned by the problem of local, colonial inclusion, the terms upon which these claims were made exceeded the boundaries of colonial space. They invoked, instead, the necessary mapping of an uneven yet singular imperial cartography which was at once a geo-political entity and one in which it was impossible to write the dialectics of colonial identity without recourse to a moral genealogy. In this schema, metropolitan and colonial subjects could be subjected to a politics of comparison that suspended any *a priori* privileging of metropolitan location as paramount in the making and sustaining of Englishness. Indeed, for Jabavu, in the margins of the British empire where colonial institutions were most needed in the making of modern subjects, this "principle" was taken up with more "passion" than in the metropole. In the colony, claims about the responsibilities of empire in affirming the "universal identity" instilled by "colonial culture" seem not only to have been at their strongest; they were premised on the intertwined histories of the colony and metropole.¹²⁶

In his projection of *Imvo* into the colonial public sphere Jabavu had taken empire as the necessary condition of possibility for the colonial and its structure of belonging. It was its effects that he sought to steer to an amicable end for the black subjects who had embraced modernity. In his espousal of empire as a condition of colonial belonging he took quite seriously what he thought to be the metropolitan conditions of colonial culture. In his reckoning, a racially inclusive imperial cosmopolitanism was to predominate in the structuring of colonial civility. Writing identity in the field of the colonial entailed, then, translational gestures that folded, as Isabel Hofmeyr has recently suggested, "the vast skin of empire on the nation" and, more particularly in this instance, the colony.¹²⁷

In South Africa, the problem of writing and what Start Hall once called "the question of cultural identity" has not always been framed through the genealogy of its imperial origins. The problem has rather been overshadowed by the specter of the nation. But, as many scholars have argued, national belonging was deferred to the brink of the twenty first century. It will be remembered that it was the sharp exclusions predicated on the colonial territorialization of whiteness that signaled the making of the (racial) state in

¹²⁴ Anna Tsing, "From the Margins," pg. 279.

¹²⁵ Sukanya Banerjee, *Becoming Imperial Citizens*, pg. 5.

¹²⁶ Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness*, pg. 9.

¹²⁷ Isabel Hofmeyr, *Ghandi's Printing Press*, pg. 1.

South Africa. Its overt institutional forms emerged out of the drawn out and bloody imperial South African War (1899-1902). I shall return to these questions later on. Thinking about colonial culture and its politics, given this dialectic, should involve taking seriously colonial identities as formed in the “tensions of empire.” Christopher Saunders is correct to note that the “bad press” that British liberalism has received in South African scholarship has tended to “downplay the vast contributions that the British made to the development of South Africa, in economic, cultural, and other spheres of life.”¹²⁸ Indeed, some of the more recent scholarly attempts to re-frame the “African presence” in the institutions and cultural edifices of colonial culture seem to have tended to privilege the imperatives of mimicry as the modality through which the self-making of the black subject becomes legible in the colony.¹²⁹ As I have been suggesting, we could think these problems through the prisms of citizenship, a category which should compel us to more seriously consider the kinds of affiliations and affects that are produced in the translation of the desire for belonging. The question begs some kind of framing of the genealogy of imperial citizenship. As Judith Butler reminds us, following Michel Foucault, a genealogical critique would have us think through social categories as “in fact the *effects* of institutions, practices, discourses with multiple and diffuse points of origin.”¹³⁰ In other words, part of thinking through colonial belonging cast in the rhetoric of empire and imperial subjectivity is a question of tracing the *production* of the effects of belonging.

To be sure, Jabavu was aware that the charge of mimicry could be used as a strategy of containment. And nowhere was this more evident than in the politics of cricket in the colonial imaginary. Jabavu was keen on reminding his readers that black participation in cricket was a sign of the colonial subject’s desire to master the cultural codes of Englishness:

To our Colonial English contemporaries, the playing of the game of cricket by natives would seem to be regarded as a strange phenomenon; and already all sorts of guesses are indulged in as to the probable motives of the sons of Ham in taking to this English time-honored pastime. “Mimicry,” “travesty of civilization” and expletives of a like character have been hinted at as the possible causes, but our countrymen have gone on the even tenor of their way without noticing their critics.¹³¹

Jabavu ascribed the rhetoric of mimicry to colonial discourse and its strategy of disavowing black claims to imperial citizenship. But cricket in the field of empire was to serve the performative role of publicly positing the civility of black male colonials. In a revealing

¹²⁸ Christopher Saunders, “The Expansion of British Liberties,” pg. 269.

¹²⁹ Homi Bhabha’s “Of Mimicry and man: the Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse” in *The Location of Culture* is a crucial and influential essay but a more recent example of this is Natasha Distiller’s *Shakespeare and the Coconuts*.

¹³⁰ Judith Butler, “Preface (1990),” *Gender Trouble*, (London: Routledge, 1999), pg. xxxi.

¹³¹ “Editorial Notes,” *Imvo Zantsundu*, November 3rd, 1884, pg. 4.

and perhaps speculative gesture, the game of cricket is imagined to be transported back to the metropolis with black players exhibiting the pageantry of the “english time-honored pastime” in full view of the metropolitan gaze:

We venture to say a native team sent to England to enter into friendly rivalry with Clubs there would not only find itself amply repaid pecuniarily, but would also afford our friends there an opportunity of realizing the tone that European civilization gives to the society of Africans, and, in these days when the faith of some in Native is growing cold, would revive their hopes, and doubled efforts be made in the course that has led to such wonderful results within the comparatively short time of sixty years, since efforts to reclaim the native were begun.¹³²

The imagined detour to the metropolis was, in the end, a redoublement of the colonial. Cricket was to boon the deflated belief of the detractors of the black project in the colonial polity. In order to seize and appropriate Englishness, the black male subject had to think himself through the performative act where what Bhabha would call the ambivalence - and downright racism - of the white gaze was to be disarmed. If, as Michelle Stephens suggests, we are to think about racial politics in terms of performance and audience, then what becomes clear is that Englishness performed through blackness is to be read as a sign of colonial inclusion. It was perhaps the only way in which the social and political desires of black colonial subjects could be made legible in the colonial public sphere.

The framing of blackness in the presence of a white gaze, being a confrontation with what the Comaroffs call the “double consciousness” of colonial modernity, brought into sharp relief these strategies not solely as a creature of black political desire but also of the grammars of exclusion that the colonial state was beginning to master. If books, reading and writing were the crucibles of the entry of black subjects to the narrative of modernity, then the black intelligentsia had to confront their racially determined contours. One of the ways that the figure of black textuality was to be ushered into the colonial politics of containment was through a figuration of criminality which interpellated the colonial and the diasporic. The editorial notes of the 1st of December, 1884 noted that the *Eastern Star*, one of its peer journals, had written scathingly about “thieving niggers” because “there had been social scandals of a revolting nature perpetrated by a certain section of a certain color, on some unfortunate spot on earth.”¹³³ The articulation of criminal blackness in the Cape with diasporic blackness evidently speaks to a trans-colonial construction of a regulatory regime but this is something that I would like to return to later. *Imvo* itself would be unceremoniously brought into this scandal. The *Fauresmith Mail*, a journal from the Orange Free State, published an article in which *Imvo* was slyly accused of encouraging thieving among one claimed to be its subscriber. “A coloured man, well educated, but rather bashful, left his employer, Mr Holmes, without leave, but

¹³² “Editorial Notes,” *Imvo Zantsundu*, 3rd November, 1884, pg. 4.

¹³³ “Editorial Notes,” *Imvo Zantsundu*, 1st, December, 1884, pg. 4.

with fifty-seven sovereigns borrowed from Mr Holmes's cash-box. As the *help-yourself* gentleman was a subscriber to *Native Opinion*, it is supposed the money was wanted to pay for the paper."¹³⁴ *Imvo* looked into the matter and the article was promptly proved to be sheer fabrication. However, the *Fauresmith Mail* had managed to ungracefully yoke together "well educated," "coloured" and criminality with *Imvo* so as to make the public presence of the latter seem ominous if not a catalyst for the moral corruption of black colonials. Entangled in a web of dangerous texts, the class of respectable mission educated Africans was forced to contest their social desires on the terrain of "metaphorical books."¹³⁵

In his rebuttal of the *Fauresmith Mail*'s falsified claims, Jabavu began to parse out the precise details of what constituted appropriate modes of black textual practice. The first step was to differentiate the bad apple from the good ones. *Imvo*'s Jagersfontein's correspondent, Charles Z. Ntozini, was summarily dispatched to do some investigative work. He reported that "The notorious Philip is taken for an educated native, but it is a mistake. The merest rudiments of knowledge he cannot boast of."¹³⁶ The said Philip was reported to be have no wherewithal of the world his doings were threatening to smother with his apparently ill-reputable designs. He was, we are informed, "anxious to do away with the English and Kafir dictionary in his possession on account of his defective knowledge. . . . When conversing in English he does murder it, and shows no mercy. So far in the matter of his being an educated native."¹³⁷ Philip's criminal capacity is here framed as commensurate with his intellectual ineptitude. He languishes defeated by a corpus of texts that clearly lie beneath the level of erudition that *Imvo* sought to cultivate among its black male readers. The fault line of respectability seemed to lie, for Ntozini and Jabavu, in the erudition of the "educated native" and his competence in more than "the merest rudiments of knowledge" and "conversing in English." The emphasis on erudition shored up the image of *Imvo* while the 'dregs' of criminal black subjectivity were left to the punitive designs of the law: "From subsequent information Philip is now in the clutches of the law, having been arrested at Beaconsfield."¹³⁸ This final passage makes coldly clear some of the imagined differences between representative and undesirable forms of blackness.

¹³⁴ "Editorial Notes," *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 1st, December, 1884, pg. 4.

¹³⁵ This is a phrase that I take from an article by Isabel Hofmeyr of the same name. Hofmeyr argues in that article that the "zone of metaphorical induction is a crucial field for understanding the book in Africa. One key issue in this arena is how books are positioned in existing intellectual force-fields and in turn what zone of influence a book exerts." The argument that I am developing here is that books belonged to a metaphorical zone wherein the black subject in possession of "the book" could be drawn into a zone of suspicion. Books then, in the racially charged contestations in the colonial polity, had to be vindicated as much as the black figures who produced and consumed them. Isabel Hofmeyr, "Metaphorical Books," *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2001), pg. 101.

¹³⁶ "Editorial Notes," *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 1st, December, 1884, pg. 4.

¹³⁷ "Editorial Notes," *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 1st, December, 1884, pg. 4.

¹³⁸ "Editorial Notes," *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 1st, December, 1884, pg. 4.

That Philip was not in any way offered into a kind of redemptive narrative or plea brings sharply into relief these cleavages and their capacity to parse out whose efforts could be read as appropriate synecdoches to the effort for black colonial belonging.

If Jabavu was wont to cast a framework of black reading that moved the black subject beyond the acquisition of rudimentary knowledge, then we can read his designs as a sign of an investment in the formation of character. Reading, as one may expect, was essential to character formation. The practice of reading, in his theorization, should best resemble an upward climb in an order of books in which the most prized were those that most explicitly cultivate character. “Native young men” were to begin with a book that “compel[s] us to read it” and not one that would be an “intolerable burden.”¹³⁹ He then proceeded to elaborate a hierarchical template for reading which would set the stages of reading for which readers were “mentally ripe.” Readers were encouraged to begin with “easy and entertaining book such as “Voyages and Travels, especially those written by persons who visited unknown lands for the first time.” Interestingly, these books were travel narratives that in some way or another were foundational to the “contact zones” of modernity: Columbus’ *The Discovery of the New World*, Lord Anson’s *Voyage Around the World*, Captain Cook’s *Voyages* and John Williams’ *Missionary Enterprise*. From these, readers were to progress to biographies - books “fitted to exercise powerful influence on the minds of young men” - and then histories, being most ideal when preceding poetry. Though English poetry was “the splendor of the English literature,” pride of place he preserved for books that “*form opinion*.” “Foster’s *Essay on Decision of Character*, Coleridge’s *Table-talk*, and *Ecce Homo*, are samples of these. Dick’s *Christian Philosopher* is a good book of that sort, and it was this that gave Livingstone - so he says - the first great impulse in his life.” Books, for the black intelligentsia in the late nineteenth century Cape, were, as Belinda Edmondson has shown in a slightly different context, “founded on the interpellated meanings of manhood and cultural authority” in colonial life.¹⁴⁰ While Jabavu complained that there was “some difficulty in getting books” for “Native young men,” these strictures were not to be overdetermining if met with an ethos of “*self help*.” He drew out a detailed plan for book clubs and book subscriptions which would be the “most feasible plan to obtain books.” In these robust entreaties for book acquisition, he juxtaposed autonomous book collection and reading with a restructuring of the relationship between masculine self-making and public life, a relationship that, as we have seen, involved a stretching, if not a severance of ties with the missionary regime of books: “On the question of getting books one of the greatest oversights of the missionaries is that they have not supplied their stations with libraries of readable English books for the use of their educated young men. They have overlooked the power of books to give young men an impulse, *and to fit them for taking some part in public life*.”¹⁴¹ On the latter score *Imvo* had taken

¹³⁹ “Education through Books (No.1),” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 29th August 1889, pg. 3.

¹⁴⁰ Belinda Edmondson, *Making Men*, pg. 5.

¹⁴¹ “Education through Books (No. II),” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 5th September, 1889, pg. 3.

charge to re-cast black male readers and turn them into political subjects and sensitive readers of the cartography of race relations: "There are . . . reasons of a special kind why Kafir young men should learn from books the social problems of the native races in other parts of the world. Here there is a hostile Bond who seeks to deprive the Natives of education, and to cut them from all hold of the soil."¹⁴² Jabavu was referring to the objections to African voters that the Afrikaner Bond, amongst others, had begun to lobby with attempts to pass the Registration Act. The controversy around the act took on the forms which the liberal framework of citizenship had constructed and, as we have seen, structured it against the stifling order of what the Comaroffs have called the "primal sovereignty" of "ethnic citizenship."¹⁴³ As historian Andre Odendaal observes, the act was to disenfranchise black voters by making communal land tenure, property value deemed to be of insufficient value and the claim of being alien to the Cape Colony the primary basis for disqualification. The act, thought not altogether successful, would substantially decrease the number of black voters in the Cape Colony.¹⁴⁴

The curtailment of the black vote in the Cape was framed by Jabavu around its racial demarcations. His critique and counter-argument drew on his characteristic citational strategy which underlined the possibilities of thinking about the politics of representation - here, quite literally meaning candidacy for political office - beyond the grammar of racial difference. Both the *Cape Argus* and *Ons Land* had come out against any effort on the part of the black intelligentsia to secure the franchise. The latter had gone on to discourage the effort, suggesting that "were the Natives from their side to thrust this question to the front and to claim the full rights allowed to them under our present laws, they would themselves be the means of forcing on class-legislation, and would certainly not be acting in their own interests."¹⁴⁵ In the election of the Indian intellectual and politician Dadabhai Naoroji to the English House of Commons under the Irish Home Rule ticket in 1892, Jabavu found a most apposite rebuttal to the quietude that the *Cape Argus* and *Ons Land* were urging among the black elite.¹⁴⁶ Naoroji best exemplified an ethic of the transcendence of difference where empire was to foster a "union of hearts" and not "prejudice against the black because of his color merely:" "the election of a Parsee, Mr Naoroji, by the Liberals of Finsburg, which we noted as the visible symbol of the "union of hearts," and of an approach to a common understanding among nations of different

¹⁴² "Education through Books (No. II)", *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 5th September, 1889, pg. 3.

¹⁴³ Govan Mbeki's *Transkei in the Making* provides some invaluable context to this process.

¹⁴⁴ Jabavu wrote and mobilized around this issue. For an discussion of the Registration Act in *Imvo Zabantsundu* see "Premature Rejoicings," "A Native Appeal" 12th, October, 1887, pg. 3 and "The Native Conference," 12th October, 1887, pg. 3.

¹⁴⁵ Cited in "Colour Question," *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 11th August, 1892, pg. 3.

¹⁴⁶ For a more thorough discussion of Naoroji's writings and his election see "Of the Indian Economy and the English Polls" in Sukanya Banerjee's *Becoming Imperial Subjects*, pp. 36-74.

colours.”¹⁴⁷ But, as we have often seen before, Jabavu’s evidences refracted, through the referent of the metropolitan, the colonial in search of an agreement between the blackness and the condition of colonial citizenship.

Racial Figurings: Blackness and the Atlantic

Toward the end of the 1880s, Jabavu found himself having to read for the signs of representing the capacity of black citizenship in multiple contrapuntal registers. In the imagined cricket tour and flaunting of Naorojis seminal electoral success, the metropolis was ever darkened in full view of the colony. And yet, as we have seen, the “condemnation of blackness” in the Cape was wont to draw its semantics from the “Negro-phobia” of its kin racial regimes on the other side of the Atlantic ocean. The rhetoric of “thieving niggers” might have sought to cast the black subject out of the body politic of the Cape but it presumed and thereby bolstered the global reach of this negation. This instance of racial translatability may not be surprising, however its portability raises further questions about the perverse, even coercive, readings of diaspora that constituted colonial registers of anti-black racism. Is the colonial underwritten by the imperial? Or is the colonial underwritten by post-Reconstruction Jim Crowism? And the imperial by the racial?

These entanglements seem to speak to the simultaneous effusion of the techniques of de-linking blackness from citizenship. Zine Magubane’s work has shown that the traffic of ideas about blackness in the white colonial imaginary were in transit between the United States and South Africa in the mid-nineteenth century already.¹⁴⁸ She has also pointed out the utility of the pejorative “nigger” in structuring race relations in the colony. “The word nigger,” she writes, “had such tremendous transnational valence because it referenced simultaneously a particular group of people and a broader relationship between the inferior and the superior.”¹⁴⁹ But what did blackness writ large in the structures of the Atlantic world mean for Jabavu and his audiences? I have been arguing in this chapter that one of the techniques which Jabavu used to impute blackness into colonial citizenship was through a contrapuntalism that yoked the colonial and the metropolitan together. Of course, Edward Said made use of contrapuntalism in the field of imperial culture in order to urge us to read it as constituted of “intertwined and overlapping histories.”¹⁵⁰ I would extend Said’s reading of culture in the field of empire by reading it as one out of numerous sites of affiliation in which this mode of relation obtained. The other would be the Black Atlantic.

¹⁴⁷ “Colour Question,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 11th, August, 1892, pg. 3.

¹⁴⁸ See Zine Magubane, *Bringing the Empire Home*, pg. 154.

¹⁴⁹ Zine Magubane, *Bringing the Empire Home*, pg. 171.

¹⁵⁰ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, pg. 19.

I do not wish to explicate here the rather complicated genealogy of the term and how much it has and has not been made to extend some of Melville Herskovits's insights on Afro-diasporic cultural formations. What rather interests me, much like scholars who have written on South Africa such as Christopher Ballantine, Ntongela Masilela, Zine Magubane, Robert Trent Vinson and Tsitsi Jaji, is how diasporic circulations do more than just map routes of "return" to Africa but script vocabularies of self-fashioning that that are constitutive of the African modern.¹⁵¹ Toward the end of *The Black Atlantic*, Paul Gilroy hinted at these circulations. But, in keeping with the incredulity toward registers of purity and insiderism that informs his work, he signaled these circulations and exchanges as the "untidy elements in a story of hybridization and intermixture that inevitably disappoints the desire for cultural and therefore racial purity, whatever its source."¹⁵² I have been suggesting throughout this chapter that part of the work of the colonial state in the late nineteenth century was to reserve the key claims of imperial liberalism - that is, of the transcendence of the 'disabilities' of racial inferiority through perfectibility of character - by placing race and culture interchangeably in the service of white male citizenship. Nowhere did the desire to whiten the polity manifest itself more clearly than in Cecil John Rhodes' veiled sentiments of 1890. In the 1880s Rhodes reportedly dreamt to build, as he surely would, "an empire to the northward, eye, one land."¹⁵³ In the election of July 1890, he wrested the Premiership of the Cape Colony from Gordon Sprigg. Rhodes' miming of liberal speak revealed the designs of racial capitalism that underlay what Edward Roux aptly called "his Imperialist expansion to the north." Roux captures the tensions that bedeviled "mouth[ing] liberal sentiments" while setting the stage for the disenfranchisement of Africans: "He [Rhodes] is credited with coining the phrase: "Equal rights for all civilized men south of the Zambezi." According to William Plomer, the actual words used by Rhodes were: "Equal rights for every white man south of the Zambezi."¹⁵⁴ It wasn't until a copy of a newspaper that published the original statement was sent to him "by an association of Coloured voters at the Cape" that he deigned to excise the racial conceits that augured his political career. The black intelligentsia can thus not be said to have entered into a schema of "hybridization and intermixture" in order to sully the racial purities upon which colonial belonging rested. They had entered into a semantic regime whose signs of belonging were to be translated and performed legibly. But the racial claims of this grammar could not be easily re-written; for the colonial state took racial purity to be its condition for reckoning belonging. As Simon Gikandi has suggested, per-

¹⁵¹ A study that makes explicit use of the term self-fashioning is Gaurav Desai's *Subject to Colonialism: African Self-fashioning and the Colonial Library* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

¹⁵² Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), pg. 199.

¹⁵³ See Edward Roux, *Time Longer Than Rope: A History of the Black Man's Struggle for Freedom in South Africa* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), pg. 57.

¹⁵⁴ Roux, *Time Longer Than Rope*, pg. 62.

haps one could, in the stead of working from a will to transcend racial taxonomies, proceed from an awareness of the “epistemic power” of the conditions which framed a Jabavu’s positionality.¹⁵⁵ As we have seen, Jabavu reverted to the metaphor of the colonized as a child in order to reinvigorate imperial commitment to “developing them up to man’s estate.” He was thereby converting the deferral of colonial responsibility to a modality of imperial and thereby colonial patronage. The temporal axis upon which the disavowal of the ‘development’ of the black colonial was framed was thus given a new reading. But how did the temporality and narrative of black upliftment in the Cape look when brought to close encounter with the Black Atlantic?

One of the oft cited and significant Black Atlantic encounters in South Africa during the late nineteenth century was the tour of Orpheus M. McAdoo and the Virginia Jubilee Singers. McAdoo and the Jubilee Singers arrived in South Africa in Cape Town July of 1890 and would only depart for the United States in June of 1898, after a tour initially meant for a few months lasted for almost five years. Scholars interested in black print culture and music have remarked the importance of the arrival of the Jubilee Singers in South Africa. In her recent study on what she calls *stereomodernism* in the Black Atlantic, Tsitsi Jaji locates the arrival of the Jubilee Singers in South Africa as influential in the development of black choral performance and entrepreneurship. As she observes, “The American group was sensationally popular, inspiring a number of black elite choirs whose preferences ran toward “modern” forms of leisure to adopt African American spirituals into their repertoire. One such group, the African Jubilee Singers (also known as the South African Choir) soon planned a tour to Britain organized by a set of enterprising impresarios, J. Balmer, Walter Letty and Paul Xiniwe.”¹⁵⁶ Interestingly, the projection of modern black choral music into the British metropolis coincided with a black social upliftment ethos. “Their stated aim,” continues Jaji, “was to raise 10,000 pounds for building technical schools in South Africa, a mission clearly inspired by the Fisk Jubilee Singer’s fundraising efforts.”¹⁵⁷ Robert Trent Vinson has gone on to suggest that the arrival of the Virginia Jubilee Singers in South Africa was seminal in encouraging “the growing idea among Africans and African Americans that they were of the same race, bound together in a program of transnational racial uplift.”¹⁵⁸ Veit Erlman, who did earlier work on the Jubilee Singer’s tour of South Africa, has drawn our attention to how McAdoo and other

¹⁵⁵ See Simon Gikandi, “Culture and Reasonableness,” *Contemporary Literature*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (1993), pg. 779.

¹⁵⁶ Tsitsi E. Jaji, *Africa in Stereo: Modernism, Music and Pan-African Solidarity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), pg. 43.

¹⁵⁷ Jaji, *Africa in Stereo*, pp. 43-44. For more writing on the influence of the Jubilee Singers on the modeling of a modern African musical, social and economic modality of uplift, particularly in the overlooked city of Kimberly, see David Coplan’s *In Township Tonight! South Africa’s Black City Music and Theatre* (London: Longman Group, 1985), Veit Erlman’s *African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), Zine Magubane’s *Bringing the Empire Home*.

¹⁵⁸ Robert Trent Vinson, *The Americans are Coming*, pg. 13.

members of the group fostered transnational links between South Africa and the United States through print culture: “McAdoo and other members of the company frequently corresponded with friends in the U.S.A. and with U.S. black newspapers like *Southern Workman*, *Cleveland Gazette*, *New York Age*, and *The Freeman*. Their reports became the first black American eyewitness accounts of a country whose exacerbating race relations were increasingly to attract the attention of black Americans.”¹⁵⁹ In the Cape and other places where mission educated Africans were making their presence felt, this dialogue with the diaspora spoke ever so sharply to the exigencies of the present and the precocity of colonial belonging.

McAdoo and the Jubilee Singers made an appearance in the pages of *Imvo Zabantsundu* not long after the group had landed on the shores of South Africa’s metropolitan city. On the 18th of September, 1890, the social updates column of *Imvo* reported that “There is an excitement among the whites of Kingwilliamstown that the “Jubilee Singers” are standing for African Americans, it being known that they are expected to arrive in Kingwilliamstown at the beginning of October. At this moment they are in Grahamstown. Preparations shall be made for them in “Rini.” The council there is hiring out the Town Hall for £22 10s per week.”¹⁶⁰ Apparently the news of the Jubilee Singers’ travels to the eastern reaches of the Cape Colony, most likely from a stint in Kimberly, did more than raise a few eyebrows. Jabavu hailed the approaching visitors from America with an editorial entitled “African Americans.” The editorial is a bit misleading. It is the first article-length treatment of the arrival of the Jubilee Singers in the issue, but it addresses another article that is printed a page after Jabavu’s editorial. Both articles were written in Xhosa and, unlike many editorials, they remained untranslated for the benefit of English readers. What do we make of this double gesture? If Jabavu was keen to have the ‘first’ word on a matter already enunciated upon, he seemed eager to put the issue exclusively to the black readers of *Imvo*. The references to race and kinship that weave narratives of modernity in the Cape and the United States give, in the articles and what would emerge as an important debate on the location of the black colonial’s upliftment, a rather insiderist form with the Xhosa language marking the boundaries of a (black) public within a (colonial) public. As we have seen before, public conversation is a manly business.

[Umhlobo wethu obhala komnye umhlathi kwakwi Mvo namhla, nezifundo ezizofunyanwa kuma Afrika avela e Amerika, utsho ngenteto abayivuma bonke abalesi ukuba yeyendoba, yeyengcondo. Izifundo aza nazo zizezikulu, ekuya kuba luncedo ukuba ate amawetu azikhangela ngengcondo ezendeleyo.]

One of our friends who has written in another part of *Imvo* today about what is to be learned from Africans from America speaks on a matter that all our readers will agree

¹⁵⁹ Veit Erlmann, “A Feeling of Prejudice: Orpheus M. McAdoo and the Virginia Jubilee Singers in South Africa, 1890-1898,” *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (1988), pg. 332.

¹⁶⁰ “*Ama Africa ase Amerika*,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 18th September, 1890, pg. 3.

has been addressed manly and sensibly. The lessons that he brings are big, and it will be a help that our readers regard them attentively.

The editorial “Africans from America” / “African Americans” was Jabavu’s response to one “Dorotil’ongwevu-ngezihlathi.”¹⁶¹ In his “Lessons from Africans from America” / “Lessons from African Americans” “Dorotili” took the Jubilee Singers as the standard of comparison for marking the progress of black people toward modernity. In the stead of the metaphor of the child which liberal colonists had planted to defer the time of black imperial citizens “Dorotili” turned to New World slavery and the American Reconstruction as the master narrative of black modernity.

[Nkosi Yam Mr Editor - Kaundivumele nditete ngezi Jubilee Singers osuke waziva. Ndite ndavuka ibali lomfo wase Kimberly ndanga ndingalila ezimatonsi izinyembezi, ndakubona ukuba esona isimbuku sento akasiqondi umfo wase Kimberely, usuke wafuza ama Afrika amanye. Kuphela izolo nemihla tina Afrika ungafika siwungula uboya sibusa ekaya ize intaka siyishiye endle isala ityiwa zizizwe. Ezona zinto zigqite nokucula kulamadoda ase Amerika abezifanele namhla ukuba zifundo ezikulu kumakowetu zezi.

1. Ababantu ngabantwana bama Koboka - kanti kwiminyaka ema 20 mhlawumbi ngaphezulwana bekululekile sebefunde njengama Ngesi. Thina kwiminyaka esesondele ekulwini singazange sibe sebukobokeni sisezi “Barbarians” ngaphandle kwabambalwa.
2. Ababantu bepumile nje behamba kwezindawo abafuni imali yenxhowa zabo, bafuna imali zokwaka izindlu zenfundo zokufundisela abantu abantsundu bakowabo base Amerika kwanabeli lizwe abanokufikelela kwelo.
3. Ulangazelelo abanalo ukunyusana; xa tina neliswana elinye esibona ngalo IMVO ZABANTSUNDU sizama ukulityapaza ngenxa yomona namakwele, ngokungayiroli imirumo, nokungazami ukubalande, kuba siyokela ukuti hleze umnini lo atyebe angawoti.]

My Lord Mr Editor: Permit me to speak on the “Jubilee Singers,” of whom you have heard. Hearing from our correspondent in Kimberly, I never cried as I did then, seeing that he misapprehends the matter, like many other Africans. It was not so long ago that we Africans left our homes for other nations to devour. These things are of great significance and the singing of these men from America should stand as a lesson to us.

1) These people are the children of slaves but in the little more than twenty-years in which they have been free they have become educated like the English. We, in almost a century and without having been enslaved, have remained “Barbarians” apart from a few.

2) The people are in these lands gathering money not for their aggrandizement; they are gathering money to build schools to educate black people in America and this land they have travelled to.

¹⁶¹ This is obviously a pseudonym. I am still yet to look into the author’s actual name and identity. This pseudonym, literally translated, means “The Grey Bearded Doctor.”

3) What they aspire to is upliftment / uplifting; when we of Imvo Zabantsundu disparage them out of envy, and by not patronizing them with contributions and by not trying to follow them, it is that we fear to act in self regard.

That African Americans had moved “up from slavery” into modernity after only two decades ensuing the Emancipation opens up a new geography and temporality for projecting the Cape intelligentsia’s desire for upliftment. Evidently, the presence of the Jubilee Singers meant more than an opportune moment for the enunciation of racial kinship.¹⁶² Dorotili was positing through diaspora a politics that Michael Hanchard has described as working in the interstices of “racial time.”¹⁶³ For Hanchard racial time is defined by “the inequalities of temporality that result from power relations between racially dominant and subordinate groups. Unequal relationships between dominant and subordinate groups produce unequal temporal access to institutions, goods, services, resources, power, and knowledge, which members of both groups recognize. When coupled with the distinct temporal modalities that relations of dominance and subordination produce, racial time has operated as a structural effect upon the politics of racial difference.”¹⁶⁴ Both Dorotili and Hanchard understand slavery to be either the foundational or irreducible moment of negation from which black temporality can be initiated into the modern. The narrative of New World black modernity for continental Africans thus provided an exemplary narrative of upliftment and possibility. Taking up the project of becoming modern in America under the black tutelage would be like yoking up the continental slumber with qualities that had remained largely elusive in the colony; acquiring what the English had held up but re-framed through the solidarities of racial kinship. Dorotili’s urgings might have seemed passionate, surely if not abrasive to some, but underneath the impatient urgings were rumblings of exhaustion with the idea of ‘civilization’ being Europe’s gift to Africa.

Dorotili’s admiration for the Jubilee Singers brought one of the most debated themes of the time sharply into relief. As he saw it, because of the remarkable upliftment experienced by African Americans since the end of slavery, it was their institutions which held the key to unlock the thwarted progress of Africans. In the process, colonial enlightenment and its ruses of slow education and modernity came in for some sharp rebuke.

[bazipatele imfundo: oko ukuthi bayazifundisa - ngenteto elula bayafundisana - abanyiswa mntu kofileyo umbele njengokuba thina suvuma ukwanyiswa kofileyo ngabelungu balelizwe. Andikwekwi, nditsho. Tina imfundo esiyinikwayo yile kuthiwa iyingozi Akuko mntu untundu akade atsho kumlungu ukuthi sifuna imfundo epakamileyo, yinqaba. Ungafika esithi umlungu alikafiki ixesha lokuba nifundiswe into zama Ngesi - inteto eseyingenwe nangabantsundu abafuna ukuba kuzothiwa bafundile.]

¹⁶² Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery: An Autobiography*, (New York: Doubleday, 1907).

¹⁶³ Michael Hanchard, “Afro-Modernity: Temporality, Politics, and the African Diaspora,” *Public Culture*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1999), pg. 253.

¹⁶⁴ Michael Hanchard, “Afro-Modernity,” pg. 253.

they have brought education; which means they are educating themselves - put simply they are educating each other - this is not being done for them as we have permitted the white people of this land to do for us. I do not mince my words; I speak what I mean. The very education we are given is touted as dangerous There is no black person who has ever said to a white person that we want higher education. It is taboo. The white person would reply by adding that the time has not come for you to be educated like the English. This attitude has been adopted by some of our people who desire to appear educated.¹⁶⁵

The object of Dorotili's invectives and measurements of the prospects of modernity conjured in diasporic time was to link-up Jabavu and McAdoo. He proposed that a delegation including Jabavu, Isaac Wauchope, and Elijah Makiwane should meet with McAdoo to discuss sending a number of their own to receive a black education in America. This education was to be significant in a number of ways. Firstly, it was touted to be all that a higher education could be ("Ati lamadoda imfundo yoke ephakamileyo singayizuza yoke e Amerika" / "These men say that we will receive all of the higher education that we need in America."). Secondly, a black education in America offered the entrepreneurial skills that was to supplement a good formal education ("Ati into enyusa umntu asisiyo emfundo yencwadi kupela; uhlanga olufuna ukunyuka malufunde namashishini" / "They say what uplifts a person is not only an academic education; a people that desire uplift should be learned in business."). If, then, what Hanchard calls racial time is to be re-articulated through the frame of diaspora, the narrative of upliftment that we see being imagined here is a geo-temporal one. However, I would not suggest that this desire locates Africa out of the structure of co-evality that Johannes Fabian has written about. It is the prism of diaspora that reconfigures the cartography of upliftment; a spatial expansion that integrates the racial narrative of becoming modern. Indeed, what is so potent about Dorotili's reproduction of the discourse of 'civilisation' - here an absent signified - and 'barbarism' is its subtle critique of the colonial structure as arresting the "racial time" of the African.

Of all these impassioned urgings of diaspora over the ambivalent commitments of colonial culture, what did Jabavu have to say? Having the editorial edge of framing the periodical, the readers of *Imvo* must surely have sampled Dorotili's words through Jabavu's powers of curation before perusing them on their own. Jabavu invited his readers to consider Dorotili's keen observations about the disjunctures of becoming black and modern between Africans and African Americans: ["Nyani-nyani sishiyiwe elugqatshweni lenfundo nokuhlambuluka ngamawetu ase Amerika po ebengamakoboka, tina sikululekile kakade. . . . Sivuyile ukuba umcimbi onjengalo ute wasondezwa yiciko lomfo elingu "Dorotil'ongwevu-Ngezihlathi.""] / "Truthfully we have been surpassed on education by our kin from America, in spite of their enslavement and our enjoying freedom. . . . It pleases us that an occasion such as this has been brought to our attention by then pen of the writer who calls himself "Dorotili.""). Jabavu's genuflection to the axiom of disjunc-

¹⁶⁵ "Dorotili," "Lessons from African Americans," *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 18th September, pg. 3.

tive acceleration, however, harbored his deep skepticism about the prospects of diasporic uplift.

[Singaba siyaposisa mhlawumbi kodwa ngati kuti ama Afrika eli akasakuncedwa luto kukupa imindwakela engaminye ukuya e Amerika, ize ibuye izinjoleli eziyakuti ngemfundo yazo kubonakale zirwaqele kumbindi womzi wakowazo zikohlwe ke kuwumzamele ngoncedo kuba zingeko nase mpungeni wawo. Enye into sengathi selalile uMlauli-zinto-zonke ukuti ama Afrika esi siqingata sise zantsi Afrika aye kutabata imfundo mgama aze abuye azokuba noncedo kuti, kuba sekufuthi sibona futi abanjenjalo bangahlali maxesha ukuba babe luncedo. Konakala impilo kulomazwe amgama bebesinge kuwo, bebuya, sanele ukuba buka ngokubancoma, bagqite; abangagqitileyo bafika babuye bengamakatshakowe, amakapela azimilo, zibethe kwanqaba nokuba abe nomsebenzi onganikelwa ingqondo ngumzi. . . . Ukuya e Melika kukuya kudla ukubila kwamanye amadoda, ekubeni sibe siqena tina ukuzenzela isonka. Kulungile ukutaba amava namavo kumawetu awaya engazinyulele e Merika, kodwa masiwasebenzise pakati kwetu ukuze asincede. UBacon yingqondi yamayange yase ma Ngesini yaseka yati “Whatever man has done, man may do.” Okwenziwa ama Afrika ase Amerika, nati singakwenza kweli.]

I might be in error but perhaps I may suggest to us Africans that here we shall find no help in sending our people to America if they will return as experts that will have forgotten to uplift their own people. Another thing is that we will have forsaken the will of the All Mighty if Africans of these parts of south Africa should seek education from afar to return to be of assistance to us. It is that again we see those who have not fulfilled this design. Lives go to ruins in those distant lands they travel to and when they return, we are merely satisfied to praise them. Those who return not having fulfilled their mission end up being and end up failing to find work to apply their minds to To go to America it so eat off the sweat of other men while we lack the courage to do for ourselves. It is all good to take from what our brethren from America but let us use it to help ourselves where we are. Bacon the intellectual of the English once said “Whatever man has done, man may do.” What African Americans have done we too can do here.¹⁶⁶

If Dorotili saw uplift as a diasporic project, Jabavu proposed its local roots and negotiations as an alternative. He was decidedly weary, at least at this point, of the itinerancies of diaspora; which evidenced to him the dangers of alienation and failure. His rebuttals of Dorotili’s invitation to diasporic uplift divided racial commitments to belonging to a politic of the imminent spatiality. So, while he seemed committed enough to diaspora as an inspirational discourse, the social, educational and political possibilities that were in the offering remained largely to be sussed out of the historical peculiarities of the Cape. If Jabavu’s reluctance to enter into the frame of “racial time” is susceptible to being read as a conservative gesture, an issue which crippled his standing on the national stage in the years leading to the First World War, we could at least read this stage of his political career through its critique of the Cape’s foundational discourses.

¹⁶⁶ Jabavu, “African Americans,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 18th September, 1890, pg. 2.

In his tussle with invocations of diaspora he developed historical rubrics which aggregated the global black struggle for citizenship along discreet spatial focal points with their own genealogy. In “The Race Problem in America,” published in English a little over a month after his exchange with Dorotili, he took off with a customary genuflection to the admirable advancement of “the Africans in America.” But he soon urged his readers to turn their eyes to the problems yet unfolding in American history itself. Jabavu drew on an address made by “one of the leading colored statesmen in the United States.” He reproduced an article representing Douglass’s speeches in Baltimore the previous month. The sources of the article is not given. It may have been culled from one of the exchange copies that he regularly received. Douglass’s speeches were interesting to Jabavu because in them the “United States Minister to Hayti [Haiti] . . . contemplate[d] the relation existing between us [African Americans] and our citizens generally.” Douglass drew on two examples to illustrate the prevailing ethos of this relation. The first example was that of Haiti. Haiti carried the unfortunate burden of shouldering rhetoric of blame against the ‘progress’ of black people in the West. “Our American friends are apt when they want to say anything against us to remark. ‘Look at Hayti. These negroes cannot govern themselves there, why here?’ There is something about Hayti which we have to deplore and so there is about the United States.” Douglass overturned this history by framing the Haitian Revolution against the efforts of the French and British to suppress it and stunt the progress of an independent Haitian state. The narrative of Haitian progress was recast by Douglass to encapsulate the denial of freedom that conditioned its movement: “These degraded, stupid negroes were able notably to assert their liberty but to organize a government which they have carried on for eighty seven years. Haiti is only a part of the island of San. Domingo, having 10,000 square miles out of the 33,000 of the island, yet she has a revenue yearly of 7,000,000 dollars and ships 70,000,000 pounds of coffee every year.” To end with, Jabavu quoted Douglass speaking on the future of the “race problem” in the United States. Douglass banished the ‘problem’ by returning to the question of the responsibilities of making citizenship real in America: “If slavery could not kill us, liberty won’t. The problem is whether this nation shall be ruled by the principles that were vindicated in the last severe struggle, or shall it be ruled under the old dispensation?” In calling up the fulfilment of the promise of Emancipation as the measure of the progress of African Americans - a promise which they had risen to themselves in establishing schools and developing “culture, grace, beauty and elegance” - Douglass placed the burden of responsibility upon the American government. “We are raising doctors, lawyers and divines, and all we say is let us along and give us fair play,” he ended. Jabavu rejoinder to this oratory was pithy and rhetorical, but in a literal sense it brought the issue home: “May we not say the same to the Government here?”¹⁶⁷ It was ingenious of Jabavu to dispel the hand of diaspora by calling into play the equally unfulfilled struggle for citizenship in the United States. “The Race Problem in America” made a citational ‘play’ by ‘cross-referencing’ black discourses of citizenship in the Cape and the United States and gesturing, without saying so, that though “the visit of the Africans in America to their fa-

¹⁶⁷ John Jabavu, “The Race Problem in America,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 30th October, 1890, pg 3.

therland should awaken an interest in their history among the aborigines of this land,” in neither geography could black people claim mastery of citizenship. But the terrain of distance from belonging did not spell grounds for conjoining the intelligentsia of the Cape and the United States. It precisely called upon an intensification of speaking back “to the Government here?” What Douglass had given to Jabavu was a means of addressing the local, colonial predicament of black belonging and not the creation of a geography of collaboration. In *Black Cosmopolitanism: Racial Consciousness and Transnational Identity in the Nineteenth-Century Americas* (2005) Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo has suggested that the Haitian Revolution was crucial in the shaping of black consciousness in the Americas because its symbolic value lay in the “global and local affinities and exigencies” that it encouraged an avowal or disavowal of among people of African descent.¹⁶⁸ Kiddoe’s insights are of interest to me not only because of how Haiti trickles into the (revised) computation of black progress (by Douglass) and a reassessment of “racial time” after slavery but how these histories structure public discourses among black men across the Atlantic. Kiddoe has argued that under with specter of the Haitian Revolution “People of African descent had to decide where to position themselves, particularly in print, and decide whether and how to embrace bon national/local ad transnational/global affinities.”¹⁶⁹ Though Kiddoe explores the unstable interplay of these references as a dialogue of blackness in the Americas, it’s clear that the movement of people of African descent and their print cultures between the Atlantic dispersed these shifting affinities across a much broader terrain. Jabavu may have been reluctantly diasporic but the print culture that he participated in nonetheless pushed his desires for imperial citizenship to reckon with the Black Atlantic and at least index the Cape as the “local phase” of a global problem.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Jabavu was listed among the “leading black of the day” who had been invited to attend the first Pan-African Conference convened by the Trinidadian barrister Henry Sylvester Williams in July of 1900.¹⁷⁰ There is no evidence to suggest that Jabavu was among the delegates in London. South Africa was at the time embroiled in the South African War (1899-1902). This might explain his absence from the Conference. In any case Jabavu was clearly among the “race men” and entrepreneurs of print in the black diaspora who had gained a sizable reputation at this time. In July of 1912, Duse Mohammed Ali (1866-1945) - the journalist and actor born in Alexandria, Egypt, to a Sudanese mother and Egyptian father - launched his periodical the *African Times and Orient Review*. In a “Symposium” on the *African Times and Orient Review*, he asked some prominent men of letters their opinion on whether “a paper operated by coloured people - Orient and African - reflecting their opinions and stating their aims, is likely to be appreciated by the British public” and whether it will promote goodwill “be-

¹⁶⁸ Ifeoma Nwankwo Kiddoe, *Black Cosmopolitanism: Racial Consciousness and Transnational Identity in the Nineteenth-Century Americas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), pp. 6-7.

¹⁶⁹ Ifeoma Nwankwo Kiddoe, *Black Cosmopolitanism*, pg. 7.

¹⁷⁰ Marika Sherwood, *Origins of Pan-Africanism: Henry Sylvester Williams, Africa and the African Diaspora* (New York: Routledge, 2011), pg. 71.

tween Orient and Occident, between the governors and the governed of the opposite races.”¹⁷¹ Many replied. Among them was H.G. Wells, W.E.B. Du Bois, the chairman of the Pan-African Conference who was at that point the editor of *The Crisis* magazine, and “Mr Tengo Jabavu.” Jabavu was gracious and encouraging of the Duse Muhammad Ali’s new venture. “I hope and trust the periodical you are contemplating issuing will have a successful course.”¹⁷² Jabavu wrote like an advisor, having been at the helm of *Imvo Zabantsundu* for a quarter of a century. The reasoning behind his encouragement of the *African Times and Orient Review* seemed like a rejoinder to the terrain that *Imvo* had for a while made a part of its imaginary: “It has always seemed to me that such a venture, if well handled, would meet with a hearty response in Great Britain, where the colored people have many friends and sympathizers.”¹⁷³ In this citation and the Pan-African Conference’s interest in his input we glean some inklings of how Jabavu and *Imvo* had entered into a global domain of black letters. It will be for another moment to etch out the details of *Imvo* as a diasporically circulating periodical. It is significant enough to consider that in its struggles and significations, *Imvo* may have been picked up in other points on the globe as an example of race work in print.

¹⁷¹ “Symposium,” *The African Times and Orient*, July 1912, pg. 14.

¹⁷² “Symposium,” *The African Times and Orient*, July 1912, pg. 15.

¹⁷³ “Symposium,” *The African Times and Orient*, July 1912, pg. 15.

Chapter II:

Cape Town and the Black Modern

We are the offspring of that Cape of Good Hope, and the Cape of Good Hope is the place that fathers one branch of what the minister's wife calls a family tree, while another is mothered. And, let me tell you, that place makes us who we are but it will deny us. Yvette Christianse - *Unconfessed*

In his "Appendix" to *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (1989) C.L.R. James wrote of the slaves of the West Indies as a characteristically modern people. "The Negroes . . . from the very start lived a life that was in its essence a modern life."¹ As James saw it. "When three centuries ago slaves come to the West Indies, they entered directly into the large-scale agriculture of the sugar plantation, which was a modern system. It further required that the slaves live together in a social relation far closer than any proletariat of the time."² James's reflections on the plantation economy in the West Indies made modern slavery a generative institution for modernity and the Africans whose snatched labor powered it equally modern people. If one were to sail across the Atlantic Ocean to the tumultuous shores of the Cape of Good Hope in the middle of the seventeenth century, one would find a story not unlike the one that James describes unfolding. Soon after his settlement in the Cape in 1652, Jan Van Riebeeck (1619-1677) the administrator for the Dutch East India Company, wrote back to Batavia convinced that "slaves would be useful for the dirtiest and heaviest work."³ When slavery was abolished in the British empire in 1834 the slave population had risen from a couple of hundred - in the days of Van Riebeeck - to well over thirty five thousand.⁴ The Dutch and British empires would, over the course of the modern period, contribute to the swelling of a slave population in the city which was drawn from the far East, India, Indonesia, Ceylon, Angola, West Africa, and Mozambique, making a colonial matrix which existed at the juncture of the Atlantic and Indian Ocean world and economies. The numbers of slaves in the Cape were by far smaller than those which James described in *The Black Jacobins* and they did not rise to challenge the slave economy as the Haitians did but their presence raises similar questions about the location of modernity in the early institutions of colo-

¹ C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), pg. 392.

² C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins*, pg. 392.

³ James C. Armstrong and Nigel A. Worden, "The Slaves, 1652-1834," Richard Elphick and Herman Giliomee (Eds.) *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), pg. 110.

⁴ James Armstrong and Nigel Worden, "The Slaves," pg. 109.

nality and the forms of life and sociabilities constructed around the management of the black body.

In this chapter I turn to Cape Town and its formation in the *longue duree* of the modern period. My interest in stretching the temporal framework for working with Cape Town derives from the need to write the city into the structure of modernity from its early colonial beginnings; a period which was quite significant in the shaping of the meanings of race, gender and sexuality. I think it is important to work with varying temporal scales so that, as the work of C.L.R. James and others has encouraged us, we continue to think through how blackness and the making of modernity have been formed through a long history. Cape Town was formed in the seventeenth century. It became a port city linking the Atlantic and Indian Ocean routes of the Dutch East India Company. In the coming years and centuries, ships stopping in Cape Town would also carry slaves, indentured laborers and political exiles. One of the most famous among the subjected of Cape Town is Sara Baartman (1789-1815) who was shown in Europe as a grotesque example of the radical difference of the black female body. Her body was seized upon to consolidate, in the name of scientific knowledge, the hierarchies of race to which notions of deviant black female bodies and sexualities were slated to do the work of making difference. As Sander Gilman has shown, Baartman's unhappy journey from Cape Town to Europe is internal to the long modern history of the "association of the black with concupiscence."⁵ It is, he writes, a history that "reaches back into the Middle Ages."⁶ At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Baartman and her body became central to European apprehensions of "primitive" sexual appetite and activity."⁷ In his chapter I read the archive and literary works generated from an engagement with the colonial archive of Cape Town to think through how these themes were central to the management of race in the colony.

Feminist scholars doing work around race, nation, diaspora, empire and transnationalism have cautioned us against reading the affective and political structures of transnational mobility and diaspora as a lending to a rupture from colonial epistemologies. Michelle Stephens has argued that the shape of radical black internationalism was "gendered and masculinized in particular ways as they both inherit and transform tropes of black masculinity from mid-to late nineteenth-century racial and sexual discourses."⁸ Tina Campt and Deborah Thomas have suggested that adopting a diasporic framework should not mean that the inequities of Euro-American modern culture are to be supplanted by the equitable counterculture of the black diaspora. We also have to attend to the imbalances or what they call the "uneven circulation of specific cultural logics that are privileged by particular routings of global capital the produce important contests over the

⁵ Sander L. Gilman, *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), pg. 79.

⁶ Sander L. Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, pg. 79.

⁷ Sander L. Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, pg. 90.

⁸ Michelle Stephens, *Black Empire: The Masculine Global Imaginary of Caribbean Intellectuals in the United States, 1914-1962* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), pg. 21.

meanings of blackness, race, Africa and diasporic belonging itself.”⁹ This includes some thinking around the meaning of transnationalism and migratory identities as masculine. They urge us to begin to wrestle with what it means to come to terms with “hegemonic diasporas,” a question I shall turn to later on.¹⁰ In part I begin to open up questions of race and empire, through Cape Town, to the importance of black women - real and imagined - in the construction of the racial and sexual logics of imperial dominance. If, in the previous chapter, we saw the discourse of citizenship in the Cape was underwritten by the privileging of masculine ontologies and the rhetoric of manliness, this chapter uncovers a prior existing history in which black womanhood was written out of the colony’s regime of belonging. I do not mean to think this history only through its negativity. Rather, I am interested in demonstrating firstly that this history is part of a global narrative which suggests a way of writing African spaces into the logics of global power and difference without presupposing the rise of industrial capitalism, and secondly, that the policing of sex and sexuality are *racially productive* and that they have been so in African spaces should compel us to think more about colonial formation through the generality of its global forms and the geographic specificities of its contact zones. Cape Town was not, as we shall see in the following chapter, only opened up to the struggles of blackness-for-itself; it was opened up at the cusp of modernity, to the very grammars of exclusion that led to the peculiar longings for a state form which marshaled whiteness as the ideal of state-rule.

Reassembling the Problem Space

So, why Cape Town? Geographies are, of course, not merely empty spatial entities but “mental territories” in which social and political desires are mapped out.¹¹ But, as anthropologists Karen E. Fields and Jemima Pierre have suggested, the division of intellectual labor on either side of the Atlantic Ocean has tended to obscure Africa’s articulation with the problem of race.¹² Here race has the curious fashion of, like a magical talisman, being whisked away from ‘native’ bodies, almost leaving them inimitably tethered to ethnicity or the thick stability of indigenous ontologies. If we are to trace the genealogy of race in the black imagination, our minds would invariably have to begin in the New

⁹ Tina Campt and Deborah Thomas, “Gendering Diaspora: Transnational Feminism, Diaspora and its Hegemonies,” *Feminist Review*, No. 90 (2008), pg. 3.

¹⁰ Tina Campt and Deborah Thomas, “Gendering Diaspora,” pg. 3.

¹¹ John L. Jackson takes the concept of “mental territories” from historian Katherine Morrissey to unpack how “cognitive factors all have a part to play in the construction of spatial identity, in the creation of socially meaningful cartographies.” The mental territories that I am interested in weave the particular worlds of colonial urbanity and the larger workings of empire. John L. Jackson, Jr. *Harlemworld: Doing Race and Class in Contemporary America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), pg. 9.

¹² See Karen E. Fields, “Witchcraft and Racecraft: Invisible Ontology in its Sensible Manifestations” in *Racecraft: the Soul of Inequality in American Life* (New York: Verso, 2012), pp. 193-224 and Jemima Pierre, *The Predicament of Blackness: Postcolonial Ghana and the Politics of Race* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2013).

World and then make the giant leap across the Atlantic Ocean. In a rather curious passage discussing the genealogy of race and nationalism in the continental Pan-African imaginary in his *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (1992), Kwame Anthony Appiah locates the beginnings of African nationalism in an Afro-Atlantic dialogue that was a traffic of ideas and influences *from* the West. The African nationalism of Kwame Nkrumah's generation, he argues, had inherited its "nationalist discourse" from "prewar Pan-Africanism, and that discourse was the product, largely, of black citizens of the New World." Appiah does not make any explicit overtures toward naming the condition of possibility of this doxa yet it should be clear enough that what marks the exceptionality and difference of the New World black experience is the strangely silent legacy of racial slavery:

What race meant to the new Africans affectively, however, was not, on the whole, what it meant to educated blacks in the New World. For many African-Americans, raised in a segregated American society and exposed to the crudest forms of discrimination, social intercourse with white people was painful and uneasy. Many of the Africans, on the other hand (my father among them) took back to their homes European wives and warm memories of European friends; few of them, even from the "settler" cultures of East and southern Africa, seem to have been committed to ideas of racial separation or to doctrines of racial hatred. Since they came from cultures where black people were in the majority and where lives continued to be largely controlled by indigenous moral and cognitive conceptions, they had no reason to believe that they were inferior to white people and they had, correspondingly, less reason to resent them.¹³

Distance from slavery and the terrors of the Atlantic passage supposedly confers upon the African mind a bastion in what Frantz Fanon would have called some "ontological resistance" in the presence of whiteness. We are left with a history in which race and racial thinking were generated out of the peculiar histories of the New World.

The problem with this location of the discursive structures of modernity's counter-cultures is precisely that the theatre of its genesis is read as a "European-New World encounter."¹⁴ This reading is bound up with the spatialization of formations of the modern in which its 'progress' (and its regressions) migrates from the east to the west, from the Old World to the New World. Contrary to this logic others such as J. Lorand Matory have argued - as seen in the second epigraph - that the social and cultural processes of modernity, especially variants of modern blackness, involve ongoing translocal dialogues and movements between Africa and the black Americas, processes which can-

¹³ Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 6-7.

¹⁴ See Robin D.G. Kelley, "How the West was One: On the Uses and Limitations of Diaspora," *The Black Scholar*, Vol. 30, No. 3/4 (2000), pg. 31.

not be narrated from a vantage of a single originary baseline.¹⁵ This insight offers some censure against the tendency of equating modernity with the history of “the West” which offers a view of the black diaspora as a history of people “in the West but not of it.” What we often refer to as modernity is neither a region solely locatable in “the West” nor an ensemble of sensibilities of European or New World origin. “A major achievement of imperialism was to bring the world closer together.”¹⁶ Jemima Pierre’s observation deserves some regard for, as she points out, the legacies of European empire making projects lie in “realities [that] are connected to an interlinked set of practices, experiences, and belief systems” haunted by the specter of Euro-American dominance that is; within “worlds of color.”¹⁷ These realities stretch across the vast and variegated dominions claimed and governed by mostly Occidental empires. In situating Cape Town within ongoing discussions about the geo-politics of metropolitan space, and in particular their *coloniality*, one can gain invaluable insights about the history of translocal black movements and their undergirding logics. “The Mother City” can be read as one of numerous nodes within the interlinked worlds of the British empire *and* circumatlantic world, one which often shades into the Indian Ocean.¹⁸ On the horizon, and at stake, are larger questions about how global processes can be read through specific geographies and problematics, the need to continue with interrogating the place of Africa in the Black Atlantic and to think through what space and location may mean for how grammars of blackness have been constructed in the modern period. Scholars of black intellectual and political history will be aware of the “haunting shadow of of Africa in the making of modern culture, a feeling that the continent is both within the grand narrative of modernity but outside it.”¹⁹ The trouble with Africa is how it continues to carry the burden of an *oikos* stubbornly refusing full entry into modernity. The question might seem beleaguered by the problem of the coevality of Africa with modernity *writ large*, a legacy which seems not to have left unaffected attempts to link how we account for processes of globalization with racial-

¹⁵ J. Lorand Matory’s *Black Atlantic Religion*. Matory revises Melville Herskovits’s argument in *The Myth of the Negro Past* that residues of African cultural practices among New World black people exemplify “survivals” from the middle passage. Matory convincingly demonstrates that what he calls Afro-Atlantic expressions are part of an ongoing dialogue that was crucially buttressed by Afro-Americans as some of them traversed the Atlantic Ocean in the opposite direction. See “The English Professors of Brazil” in *Black Atlantic Religion*, pp. 38-72.

¹⁶ Jemima Pierre, *The Predicament of Blackness: Postcolonial Ghana and the Politics of Race* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), xii.

¹⁷ Jemima Pierre, *The Predicament of Blackness*, pg.xii.

¹⁸ See Gabea Baderoon’s *Regarding Muslims: from Slavery to post-Apartheid* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2014).

¹⁹ Simon Gikandi, “In Praise of Afro-Optimism,” Anne-Maria Makhulu, Beth A. Bugenhagen & Stephen Jackson (Eds.) *Hard Work, Hard Times: Global Volatility and African Subjectivities* (Berkeley: California University Press, 2010), pp. xi-xvi.

ization but also with the horizons of interpretation which locate the *geographies* in which to examine these phenomena.²⁰

The troublesome place of Africa in narratives of the Black Atlantic, modernity, and (under)development reveals how deeply colonial structures generate cleavages and apportion differences in phenomena essentiality attributable to what Walter Mignolo calls “the coloniality of power” and its epistemologies. V.Y. Mudimbe observed some decades ago that “the colonizing structure” has not only been “responsible for producing marginal societies, cultures and human beings” but, in Africa, it has produced a “dichotomizing system” in which “a great number of paradigmatic oppositions [between ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’, for instance] have developed,” a system in which “a great deal of attention is generally given to the evolution implied and promised by the passage from the former paradigms to the latter.”²¹ The colonizing structure organizes geographies of modernity by framing the temporal horizons of their being as if in an uneven state of development nonetheless arched on a singular teleology. A theoretical legacy of this problem has found its most recent elaboration in discussions of the failure of post-colonial state-craft in Africa. As Simon Gikandi puts it, the problem with theorizing African failure - as if, he adds, “there is a model of a successful state and Africa has failed to live up to this model” - is that it organizes our understanding of African experience along the lines of the “Western narrative of progress.”²²

This problem, though, is not solely the creature of the colonizing structure. It is also generated in some appraisals of the Black Atlantic formation as counter-culture. Of course, explorations of the histories of what we have now come to refer to as the Black Atlantic have developed fairly robust frameworks for reckoning with transnational interactions among black intellectuals and figures of the hemispheric West of the Atlantic. The guiding axiom for examining these histories derive from the foundational significance of Africa as “the source of all kinds of diasporas” and modern blackness as the history of a “people in but not necessarily of the modern, western world.”²³ But if, as Edouard Glis-

²⁰ See Deborah A. Thomas and Kamari M. Clarke, “Globalization and the Transformations of Race,” Bayo Holsey’s *The Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), and Jemima Pierre’s *The Predicament of Blackness*.

²¹ V.Y. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), pg. 4.

²² Simon Gikandi, “In Praise of Afro-Optimism: Toward a Poetics of Survival,” xiii-xv. Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall place this problem as one of the lasting theoretical legacies of the colonial *episteme*: “. . . *Africa* as a name, as an idea, and as an object of academic and public discourse has been, and remains, fraught. It is fraught in ways that go beyond even the paradigm of orientalism first introduced by Edward Said to speak to the staging of the difference of the non-West from the West. Indeed, Africa is not only perpetually caught and imagined within a web of difference and absolute otherness. More radically, the sign is fraught because Africa so often ends up epitomizing the intractable, the mute, the abject, or the other-worldly.” Mbembe and Nuttall, “Writing the World from an African Metropolis,” pg. 348.

²³ Edouard Glissant, ThirdWorldNewsReel. “Edouard Glissant: One World in Relation - Trailer - TWN.” You Tube. You Tube, 29th August 2011. Accessed 5th March, 2015. Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, pg. 29.

sant once put it, “in the African condition there is a kind of vocation to go elsewhere,”²⁴ then what seems to become less visible as the focus on diaspora increasingly located formations of black modernity in the West is that Africa, both conceptually and empirically, remained an originary source, a point of departure, and ruptured memory. It did not gather or corroborate its own ‘diaspora-like’ movements or confirm how racial structures and institutions of ‘tradition’ were articulated by the racial regimes of colonial governance. It remained a space which was not easily reconciled to the vocabularies and temporal frameworks of modernity, except perhaps Liberia and Sierra Leone, which were framed as extensions of the slavery, emancipation and colonization projects of the hemispheric west of the Atlantic.²⁵

And yet, for Francis J. Peregrino and his African and Afro-diasporic interlocutors in Cape Town there were specific geographies in continental Africa that were as contemporaneous with the “Atlantic pasts” that were foundational to modernity as any other ones in the West.²⁶ Rev. L.J. Coppin of the A.M.E. church, also writing from Cape Town at the turn of the twentieth century, well understood how the discourse of primitivism obfuscated this underlying history of the global connectedness and modernity of a city such as Cape Town. “Travelers and writers,” he writes in his *Observations of Persons and Things South African*, “have said so much about Cape Town, that it is about as well known to the average readers as most other important sea port cities. Still, many people, in thinking about Africa, “Darkest Africa!” do not always stop to consider that civilisation has been on this portion of the Continent for a long time. The history of the place dates back as far as 1486, the actual occupation of the Portuguese as far back as 1503. From that time until now it has been variously held by Portuguese, Dutch and English.”²⁷ The interpretive distance between Coppin and Francis J. Peregrino’s utterances and those of appraisals of Africa as either a site of radical difference or the originary source of diaspora inscribes Cape Town within a larger field of what Michelle Stephens describes as a “transatlantic history” which is “a layered, multiracial, and multinational founding mo-

²⁴ Edouard Glissant, ThirdWorldNewsReel. “Edouard Glissant: One World in Relation - Trailer - TWN.” You Tube. You Tube, 29th August 2011. Accessed 5th March, 2015.

²⁵ In *The Predicament of Blackness* (2012), Jemima Pierre has taken some of these questions to examine how race works in contexts such as Ghana, that are not recognizably multiracial.

²⁶ I take the idea of “Atlantic pasts” from Bayo Holsey’s historical and ethnographic reconstruction of “cosmopolitan pasts” in the West African / Ghanaian towns of Cape Coast and Elmina in *Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana* (2008). These spaces and how they are remembered entail, for Holsey, “the embrace of a separate set of European narratives about the Atlantic area. In particular, many residents embrace narratives that describe their towns as enclaves of European modernity and, along with them, images of their towns’ cosmopolitan pasts.” Bayo Holsey, *Routes of Remembrance*, pg. 9.

²⁷ Coppin, *Observations*, Pg. 21. Fanny Jackson Coppin, Rev. L.J. Coppin’s wife, who had travelled to Cape Town with him, confirmed these impressions of the city. See Fanny Jackson Coppin’s “My Visit to South Africa” in *Reminiscences of School Life, and Hints on Teaching*.

ment for our contemporary globalized world.”²⁸ The faintness of the memory of these configurations of the colonial in the present may seem a moot point but within it lie the genealogies of globalized formations undergirded by the afterlives of imperialism. As Stephens has urged us to “turn away from the conceptual framework of time and provide instead a focus on place.”²⁹ The attraction of this approach to black political discourse is that, apart from somewhat suspending “the legacies of Enlightenment thought,” we can place a “geographic lens” on the questions, discourses, and compulsions which set many black intellectuals thinking racially about the problems beset by the structured inequalities of modern social formations.³⁰ It permits a return to the space which L.J. Coppin sought to write into the narrative of modernity already aware that the framing of Africa in the colonial imagination always entailed a struggle for history *sui generis*.

Colony and Metropolis

One of the gestures that scholars working at the intersection of disciplines and spaces which appear to blur privileged distinctions between centers and margins are making is to re-examine the vocabularies of modernity by mapping them onto colonial spaces. One of the more compelling arguments for this kind of spatial thinking has eventuated in an interrogation of the notion of the metropolis itself. It is likely that attempts to align the making of metropolitan *and* colonial space in South Africa will lead to Johannesburg as a privileged site of analysis. In the making of Johannesburg and its surrounds we witness, after all, the synergy of racial capitalism, industrialization and, as Hannah Arendt put it, the preponderance of the “superfluous capital” and “superfluous men” of a mining industrial complex.³¹ Achille Mbembe and Sarrah Nuttall, in their introduction to *Johannesburg: Elusive Metropolis* (2008) - first published as a special issue of the journal *Public Culture* in 2004 - drew on these processes and the imagery they invoked in order to conjoin Johannesburg with the archive of “the metropolis itself.”³² For Mbembe and Nuttall, the exercise of recuperating an archive of a metropolitan African city is part of a larger critique - or what they call “a gesture of defamiliarization” - of the location, both conceptually and geographically, of the vocabularies of modernity in the West and what we now refer to as the Global North, a practice which, for them, “continue[s] to describe the Africa as an object *apart from the world*.”³³

²⁸ Michelle Stephens, “Re-Imagining the Shape and Boundaries of Black Political Space,” *Radical History Review*, Vol 87 (2003), pg. 171.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1979), pp. 135-136.

³² Mbembe and Nuttall, “Writing the World from an African Metropolis,” pg. 352.

³³ *Ibid.*, pg. 348.

Mbembe and Nuttall situate African spatiality in a schema of integrated processes of globalization which betoken “commonality and the potential of *sameness-as-worldliness*.”³⁴ They make two gestures which tie Johannesburg to the global structures of metropolitan spatiality. They invite us, firstly, to consider the capitalization of a colonial frontier in the late nineteenth century and its conversion to a modern city clad with the trappings of urbanity:

As far as we are concerned, Johannesburg is first and foremost a metropolis in every conceivable sense of the term. In fact, the entire history of its built structures testifies to its inscription into the canons of modern Western urban aesthetics. After all, until very recently, Johannesburg described itself as the largest and most modern European city in Africa. As amply demonstrated by Clive Chipkin, this meant that Johannesburg was the progeny of nineteenth-century European industrial society. This inland city developed as an industrial metropolis supported by gold mining. A breeding ground for modernism, it grew as a frontier city closely tied to the global market economy and the world of consumption while at the same time mired in bigotry and prejudice, constantly caught between what it could be and what it ended up being.³⁵

Secondly, the city is simultaneously read through its modernity’s “underside” as the progenitor of an “other modernity.”³⁶ This is, of course, the world of racecraft in which the boundaries of whiteness and the labour question were delineated. “In fact,” they argue, “a commercial society - just as a cosmopolitan one - could be founded on settler racism and oppression.”³⁷ The version of metropolitan space that they offer, then, is inimitably shaded by the intimacy and nervousness, the hierarchical and spatialized boundaries, and essentialized differences of race. If the African metropole shares in the *same* making of a globalized world as its European and American counterparts, its contemporaneity with them seems more brazenly orchestrated by the poetics and politics of “the thing and its doubles,”³⁸ a multiplicity of signs that portend becoming the thing itself in its proliferation into something else.³⁹ It is the site of a worldliness, to borrow from Mbembe and Nuttall once more, in which reading for sameness invokes the shadow of alterity which

³⁴ Ibid, pg. 351.

³⁵ Ibid, pp. 361-362.

³⁶ Ibid, pg. 364.

³⁷ Ibid, pg. 363.

³⁸ Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, pp. 142-143.

³⁹ An example of this would be the inscription of citizenship and subjecthood in the formulation of colonial worldliness. The co-existence of the citizen and subject, I am suggesting, is in fact part of the logic of colonial worldliness and does not exist apart from it. The question for me, then, is not that of whether worldliness is an alternative to alterity but rather that the embodiment of the ethics of colonial and imperial belonging throws up multiple forms of worldliness - inscribed in the grammars of whiteness and blackness, for instance - that we need to unpack and make sense of.

returns us to the structured silences of colonial epistemologies that Francis J. Peregrino warned his readers against. Racialized cosmopolitanisms *also* render “unavailable, unusable, safely removed from the domain of current conceivable human relations,” incipient desires for worldliness.⁴⁰ They too raise the specter of aphasiac histories and their affective economies. Johannesburg’s deep interiority, relatively late and uneven capitalization, and the physical structure of the mining industry, anchor this dual modernity through the spatial metaphors of the *surface* and the *underneath*, according to Mbembe and Nuttall. On the one hand there is the *surface* of a legible cosmopolitanism of “ephemeral and the visible (shop fronts, shop windows, café terraces, street cars, automobiles), in the display of the commodity with or without its aesthetic veil.”⁴¹ On the other hand there is the *underneath*, “the underground city of gold mining, with its own syntax, its arteries, its depth, its darkness, and the crucial figure of the *migrant worker*.”⁴² This is a metropolitan location in which the “separate but lived together” lives of those marked ‘different’ by racial lines were codified into a quotidian norm.⁴³

If Johannesburg is to be represented through the grammar of metropolitan spatiality, one must also bear in mind that it is articulated to the global through a grammar that also *produces* difference. Johannesburg’s is an anxious metropolitan-ness. It is not unusual for one to encounter in its media-scapes claims to the city being “a world-class African city.” Such claims teeter on exceptionalizing Johannesburg and South Africa in ways that reproduce familiar narratives about Africa’s general existence outside of modernity. Why does Johannesburg seem, in its singularity, to enunciate Africa’s place in the economy of the global city? In this fraught interpretive space, one may ask the question; through which relations of hierarchy, of distance and aspiration, does Johannesburg emerge as a city that *can* claim such an exceptional representativeness for an imagined African worldliness? One could indeed posit that the anxiety for such metropolitan aspiration reinforces as much, perhaps even more, that it erases the claims of alterity through which African spaces have been written out of narratives of modernity. If, then, one takes from this paradox that affiliations also produce difference, one is left with a sense that claims of globalization in general cannot, in fact, make sense outside of their power to either produce otherness or to integrate it through some sort of hierarchical structure. One need only read Johannesburg from the purview of other African spaces to get a sense of this. In his chapter in *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis* Stefan Helgesson indeed frames Johannesburg as Mozambique’s metropolis. But, as he points out, this is a relationship that is not without its own paradoxes. He observes that “What some call integration” in

⁴⁰ Ann Laura Stoler, “Colonial Aphasia,” pg. 122.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, pg. 122.

⁴² Ann Laura Stoler, “Colonial Aphasia.” To add to the materialist implications of the formation, Mbembe and Nuttall observe that this was an underneath “born out of a ruthless, extractive, mining economy. As such, it is one incarnation of “the actual world of human labor, of grubby production, of toil, exploitation, and minimum wage work” that Marx so eloquently spoke about.” Mbembe and Nuttall, “Writing the World from an African Metropolis,” pg. 363.

⁴³ 30 See Karen E. and Barbara J. Fields, “Individual Stories and America’s Collective Past,” *Racecraft*.

South Africa's post-Apartheid infrastructural projects bridging the two countries "others call domination. Not only would the corridor have been impossible without South African capital, but it continues to generate capital on South Africa's behalf."⁴⁴ The theoretical move to appropriate and deploy the vocabulary of metropolitan spatiality to interpret urban formations in Africa are furthermore confronted with the problem of the colonial histories that such a vocabulary is wedded to. As we shall see later on in the dissertation, such language needn't be discarded for its inferences of coloniality. Its productivity resides in its ability to help us uncover the colonial logics masquerading, often surreptitiously, under the mask of neoliberal postcolonial sovereignty.

Writing the contiguity of modernity and Africa faces not only the problem of the discursive regimes that lend the language of worldliness its legibility but also that of periodizing the 'global' contacts that made the modern possible. To return to Mbembe and Nuttall, one can't miss how the racialized structures foundational to the making of Johannesburg are tied to the conjuncture of industrial capitalism. The spatial metaphors of "georaciality" that they deploy, as with those subordinately raced as 'Native' migrant labourers, theorizes its discreet constellation of global vectors.⁴⁵ In their keywords for marking the kind of metropolitan locality that is Johannesburg, the crucial links drawn are those between "industrialization and urbanization," forces through which the city is to be "fully located within specialized global circuits of finance, labor, technology, and capital."⁴⁶ And yet the Cape Town which Rev L.J. Coppin visited at the turn of the twentieth century invited its own appraisal in the likeness of "most other important sea port cities."⁴⁷ Coppin was careful to place the history of Cape Town within the larger narrative of modern imperial formation and colonial settlement: "From that time until now it has been variously held by Portuguese, Dutch and English."⁴⁸ Before the globalized metropolis of an industrializing interior lies a history of *circumatlantic* and Indian Ocean movement, settlement, merchant capitalism, slavery and colonial liberalism, all of which, as numerous scholars, and certainly the Pan-African imagination, have shown us, have been tied to racial structures of feeling from the early modern period. The form of globalization described here - the interconnectedness of the Atlantic world in particular through maritime travel and commerce - as Frederick Cooper has warned, is *not* one of

⁴⁴ Stefan Helgesson, "Johannesburg, Metropolis of Mozambique," Mbembe and Nuttall (Eds.) *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis*, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2008), pp. 259-260.

⁴⁵ In his essay "Gentrification, Globalization and Georaciality," John L. Jackson uses the term georaciality to open up a discussion about how urban spatialities such as Harlem are imbued with racially overdetermined notions of belonging. I am extending the idea to Johannesburg because, though quite a different context, its urbanization makes no sense without racial markers that explicitly map out movement and location. John L. Jackson, Jr., "Gentrification, Globalization and Georaciality," Clarke and Thomas (Eds.) *Globalization and Race*, pp. 188-205.

⁴⁶ Mbembe and Nuttall, "Writing the World from an African Metropolis," pp. 357-360.

⁴⁷ L.J. Coppin, *Observations*, pg. 21.

⁴⁸ Ibid, pg. 21.

“boundless connectivity.”⁴⁹ Global formations, he suggests, are “space[s] where economic and political relations are very uneven; it is filled with lumps, places where power coalesces surrounded by those where it does not, where social relations become dense others that are diffuse.”⁵⁰ The port city of early modern commerce is not a spatial creature of the West. It is one of the “lumps” in which long distance translocal “relations become dense.” These relations do not necessarily signify sameness either. As Simon Gikandi argues, “the contingency of metropolitan-colonial connections . . . requires interpretative strategies that insist, on the one hand, that Europe’s colonies provided the theater in which modern European identities were shaped and revamped but that call attention, on the other hand, to how this shaping of identity was predicated on the invention and exclusion of the colonial subject as a figure of alterity.”⁵¹ What one must continue to interrogate, especially in the domain of colonial space, is how taxonomies that may appear now to speak of translocal connectivity and even similarity were formed with the assumption of maintaining distinctions and marking boundaries of rule and subjection. These, put differently, are the provinces of the color line drawn by the pathways of empire. Cape Town and the Cape Colony yield the specter of the always already present in this schema of the modern.

I have already suggested that these circulations and structures were formed in the *longue duree* of the modern period. Anthropologists and other scholars working on the African diaspora have been invoking different time-scales in their reckoning with the formations of modernity in Africa. Temporality is particularly pertinent for, as Deborah Thomas has suggested, postcolonial strivings and predicaments often enjoin the repertoires of colonial time redeployed in postcolonial space in uncanny ways.⁵² But keeping this long view of history in mind matters because it re-focuses our attention on a motion of history that goes back to the fifteenth century, “to that first period of exploration and imperial conquest that resulted in the elaboration of a notion of the modern West.”⁵³ In this chapter I push Cape Town to stand as an example - a far from exceptional one - of how integral Africa is to this history. Anthropologists Jemima Pierre and Bayo Holsey have done some important work on the politics of race in colonial and post-colonial Ghana. Jemima Pierre has demonstrated how, in late nineteenth-century colonial Ghana, the “construction of nativeness was a key structuring principle of the local racial terrain forged under colonial rule.”⁵⁴ “Nativeness and Europeaness were also simultane-

⁴⁹ See Frederick Cooper, “What is the Concept of Globalization Good For? An African Historian’s Perspective,” *African Affairs*, Vol. 100, No. 339 (2001), pg. 213.

⁵⁰ Cooper, “What is the Concept of Globalization Good For?” pg. 190.

⁵¹ Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness*, pg. 7.

⁵² See Deborah Thomas’s *Exceptional Violence*.

⁵³ Deborah A. Thomas, *Exceptional Violence*, pg. 11.

⁵⁴ Jemima Pierre, *The Predicament of Blackness*, pg. 12.

ously constructed,” she argues, and consolidated through somatic and spatial ideologies that maintained these racial distinctions. Ethnicization as racialization were a kind of sequestering scaffolding which presumed local histories to be outside of the arena of global imperial designs.

A part of what was rendered illegible by the structures of indirect rule, particularly in the British colonies, is how colonial dominance “refer[s] us to a particular consolidation of identity that results from the interrelated histories of the transatlantic slave trade of Africans and the formal European colonization of the African continent.”⁵⁵ One way of unpacking these sequestered connections is by following Campt and Thomas’s suggestion that we trace the faultlines of diaspora against the grain of “diasporic hegemonies” which might offer a baseline model for diasporic identity formation, or even presume continental spaces to be originary geographies.⁵⁶ Here, the work of Holsey becomes significant for how it refocuses our attention to the effects that slavery have had on the fashioning of African identities and social relations in Ghana. It should not, by this point, be surprising that the sites where these relations are thrown into sharp relief are port towns and cities where the slave trade brought a variety of social players from vastly different origins together.

Stretching out the temporal edges through which the colonial encounter, the politics of memory and identity formation can be framed illuminates a number of things which, as we shall see in the following section, undergird the structure of colonial settlement and empire-craft. In an era where “the mobility of masculine subjects” predominated the population of colonial spaces made the coast a frontier in which race and sex were inseparable from claims of being modern.⁵⁷ In her work on slavery and the politics of memory in colonial and post-colonial Ghana, Bayo Holsey has argued that “the creole nature of the coast is also exemplified by the sexual and romantic relationships between European men and African women.”⁵⁸ They owe to the structure of mobility in the Dutch, Portuguese and later British empires which often saw predominantly men being slated for migration to colonies. The relationships and, at times, marriages that were formed in this matrices of these empires were not socially neutral as they offered for some of the African women involved in them “a major avenue to elite status.”⁵⁹ It is important to keep in mind that this history was closely tied to transformations in the region that had begun with the establishment of mining towns (such as Elmina and Cape Coast) and later slave ports, a history which stretches back to the late fifteenth century.⁶⁰ The Atlantic slave

⁵⁵ Ibid, pg. 11.

⁵⁶ Campt and Thomas, “Gendering Diaspora,” pp. 1-3.

⁵⁷ Ibid, pg. 2.

⁵⁸ Bayo Holsey, *Routes of Remembrance*, pg. 34.

⁵⁹ Ibid, pg. 34.

⁶⁰ Ibid, pp. 28-33.

trade seems to have intensified kin and social relations especially among elite slave holding African families in the region. Holsey suggests that slaves were kept predominantly for domestic purposes and it was not unusual that “slave women were bought for the express purpose of marriage.”⁶¹ I do not wish to dwell for too long on the history of African slavery on the west coast of Africa. I am rather more concerned with elucidating some key points that Holsey makes about the significance of this history in the negotiation of identity in Ghana. Her work clearly demonstrates that, if anything, Atlantic slavery contributed to a complex array of social relations within Ghana. She also points out that the Atlantic slave trade in part created a bi-furcated identitarian structure in Ghana. In insisting on making distinctions coalescing around the tradition / modernity continuum, this structure is a *dedoublement*, interestingly enough, of the colonizing structure which Mudimbe writes of. Modernity, according to this variation of Atlantic logic, was a coastal phenomenon which receded the farther into the mainland one went. “Coastal elites,” she observes, “who were immediately incorporated into the Atlantic order, succeeded to a large extent in maintaining protection from enslavement through their further incorporation, a feat which, from the point of view of the Europeans, a point of view that would heavily influence coastal residents, northerners failed.”⁶² Modernity here reads more like a wager of self-preservation more than it does an ontology of enlightenment. Evidently, this logic reinforced the idea of who was enslavable by troping modernity as proximity to the coast. An article in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of London went as far as far as to wager that “Africans were stupid in proportion to their distance from the converse of coastal Negroes”!⁶³ But the troping of modernity as a coastal phenomenon was not an exclusively European discourse. African elites along the coast also appropriated the discourse and style of modernity to distinguish themselves against those whom they thought themselves to be the social betters of.

If one wants to write a history of an African worldliness, one cannot do so apart from unfurling the palimpsestic layerings in which colonial modalities retained an uncanny animatedness. Writing against the sequestering impulses of colonial history in Africa brings together the necessary navigation of the elements that define what Holsey called “the Atlantic order:” slavery, race and sexuality in the making of difference, kinship and belonging. South African literary and cultural scholars have more recently begun to unpack these relationships. This work is clearly not taking place in geographic isolation. Pumla Dineo Gqola in her *What is Slavery to Me? Postcolonial Slave Memory in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2010) has traced in detail the resurfacing of the memory of slavery at the end of Apartheid. In her *Regarding Muslims: from Slavery to Post-Apartheid* (2014) Gabeba Baderoon has more explicitly focused on the “ambiguous visibility” of muslims in South Africa’s colonial and post-colonial histories, further pushing our analytical boundaries to consider Cape Town as formed in the collision of Atlantic and Indian Ocean formations.

⁶¹ Ibid., , pg. 41.

⁶² Ibid, pg. 46.

⁶³ Quoted in Bayo Holsey’s *Routes of Remembrance*, pg. 46.

The sites of modernity contained by the Atlantic order may not always bear resemblance to the world (dis)ordering of contemporary forms of capitalism but the human relations and social forms which belong to earlier iterations of globalization matter for their surreptitious structuring of contemporary struggles and predicaments. As historian Timothy Keegan argues, from “the beginning of settlement colonial societies were built on a racial basis.”⁶⁴ If a case is to be made for the importance of Cape Town in this matrix, it is precisely for how deep into modernity it allows us to reach in search of “the predicament of blackness.” It is a space in which allegories about becoming black can not be told without centering gender into coloniality.

Black Women and Empire

It began, as with so many Atlantic voyages of ‘discovery,’ with the docking of ships on ‘new’ land. After an audience with King Joao II of Portugal, Bartolomeu Dias had set sail around the western fringes of Africa *en route* to India. It was in February of 1488 that the three ships he commandeered dropped anchor at the Cape. Before the disquieted murmurings of his crew forced the voyage back to Portugal, with rumblings of a mutiny floating in the air, Dias ordered that a “padrao” be raised on the ground that now bridged the passage of sea between Europe and India.⁶⁵ The *padrao* stood above a man tall in height with a cross marking the expanded dominion of the Portugal’s Christian empire. But the arrival of the Portuguese at the Cape did not augur a colonial settlement of immediate significance. If anything, Dias had initiated the first gesture coloniality in the region. Upon his return to Portugal, he reported of his voyage to King Joao II. Noting the amiable conjunction of this thoroughfare of transcontinental trade and empire building, King Joao II overturned Dias’s moniker “the Cape of Storms.” He named it instead the Cape of Good Hope. Dias’s famous journey to the Cape forestalled one Christopher Columbus’s ambitions for an eastern voyage that would lead to his inadvertent ‘discovery’ of the Americas by a few years. In the two figures and the global cartographies their voyages made possible, Africa and the Americas emerge almost simultaneously in the European imperial imaginary of ‘discovery’ and domestication. They were both spaces which shared the Atlantic Ocean as a site upon which imperial sovereignties were to map out their new histories.

The next significant voyage to the Cape occurred over a century and-a-half later. Jan Van Riebeeck arrived at the Cape in 1652 as an officer of the Dutch East India Company. As is well known, the Company’s interest in the Cape was initially for the establishment of a refreshment post for ships sailing on trade networks between the Atlantic and Indian oceans. But, as historian Kerry Ward has pointed out, unlike other nodes in the Company’s imperial networks, the Cape was unique for from the eighteenth century it became a permanent settlement that carved a path for successive generations of colonists

⁶⁴ Timothy Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996), pg 13.

⁶⁵ A padrao is a large stone cross that contains the Portuguese coat of arms. Its casting marks the Portuguese claim on it.

to become localized. The Company's pattern of migration also comprised "a network of forced migration" that "included the slave trade, penal transportation and political banishment of people legally categorized respectively as slaves, convicts and exiles." This network, she adds, stretched between the "imperial nodes of Batavia and the Cape of Good Hope."⁶⁶ What kinds of identities and socialities were formed in this colonial space in which the colonists seemed to be inching toward a form of colonizing indigeneity and others whose lives were defined by degrees of unfreedom?

A body of scholarship and literature, as evinced by J.M. Coetzee's work on whiteness and the literary imagination, has taken the dialectics of coloniality in South Africa to be an ambivalent encounter between "people no longer European, not yet African" and the Africans whom they colonized and imaginatively sought to domesticate through the conventions of the pastoral genre.⁶⁷ To be sure, Coetzee is careful to render legible the almost interchangeable relationship between the black body and the colonial landscape. This is a relationship whose apparent smoothness works by the din of the colonialist will to invent truth out of 'blindness.' "Blindness to the color black is built into the South African pastoral," he writes.⁶⁸ Notwithstanding Coetzee's concise focus on the pastoral genre, it would seem odd if this were to be the only social modality smothered into silence by the white colonial imagination. Indeed, as he points out, the Cape was foundational for the construction of a colonial episteme in South Africa. Its intellectual genesis was "the Discourse of the Cape." This discourse took its primary referential coordinates to be the catalogue of radical alterity that defined the "idle" existence of the "fabled Hottentot."⁶⁹ I do not wish to capitulate in detail Coetzee's critique of the Discourse of the Cape. It seems apposite to point out, as shall become clear in later chapters, that the Discourse was not the mere creature of a naive "ethnographic discourse of travel literature."⁷⁰ This archive of alterity was the conceptual scaffolding of the material hierarchies that the colonial order sought to build into its social and economic institutions. Hence, what appears to be the suspended ontological state of settler indigeneity - "people no longer European, not yet African" - must be more appositely read through its *productive* rather than ambivalent qualities. It in fact belongs to the instrumentalities of what Elizabeth Povinelli has called the "governance of the prior."⁷¹ As Povinelli explains, the governance of the prior involves two related discourses of indigeneity undergirded by a "division of tense" be-

⁶⁶ Kerry Ward, *Imperial Networks: Forced Migration in the Dutch East Indian Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pg. 13.

⁶⁷ J.M. Coetzee, *White Writing: On the Culture of Letters in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Pent Publishers, 2007), pp. 1-12.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pg. 5.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pg. 19.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pg. 22.

⁷¹ Elizabeth Povinelli, *Economies of Abandonment: Social Belonging and Endurance in Late Liberalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), pp. 34-42.

tween settler colonial and “native” claims to belonging. The one tense [settler] “oriented to the future” and the other [Native / Indigenous] “to the past,” this mode of governance “bifurcated the sources and grounds of social belonging,” always oriented toward the “territorial claims” of the former.⁷² In this sense, one can understand how *becoming Afrikaner* was itself a mode of colonial displacement and a technique of the governance of the prior. As Ann McClintock has shown, the colonized, as body and landscape, became available to the regimen of imperial desire as a gendered subject.⁷³ The cartography of European empire making, she offers, is co-extensive with “a hidden order underlying industrial modernity: the conquest of the sexual and labor power of colonized women.”⁷⁴ I would like to push the boundaries marked by McClintock’s designation of imperial temporality as defined by the conjuncture of “industrial modernity” a little further by linking its “scenes of subjection” to older mobilities of sea travel.

If we cast the journey to whiteness to sea, what readings of its colonial sociabilities are we to emerge with then? Ships, as Gilroy pointed out in *The Black Atlantic*, are a chronotope for reckoning with the cultures of modernity. But what did the ships sailed by Diaz and van Riebeeck contain? According to James Reston, Jr. “The commander [Diaz] had taken with him six black slaves, four of whom were female. In the female slaves the Portuguese rested special hope, for it was surmised that a woman could pass harmlessly through hostile tribal lands of darkest Africa, while a strange man would more readily be attacked.”⁷⁵ A “strange man” meaning a strange white man? This rather bizarre ethic of ‘tribal’ (in)hospitality goes unexplained - is it somatic or sheer incredulity toward the foreigner? - but what seems striking in the sea passage to the opening of new frontiers of trade and commerce is the imagined affective labor that enslaved black womanhood is slated to perform. She is figured as a slave-cum-Native holding untold intimacy with locals as well as the somatic thoroughfare to the landscape to be colonized. Already, *at sea*, the project of ‘discovery’ seems saturated with the categories of colonial formation: slaves, “hostile *tribal* lands,” and the colonial frontier as an unstable zone to be managed through covert translational gestures. It appears that we miss, if we read the colonial as an event of the margins, that what we speak of now as racial difference was already emergent in Europe’s early modern history. Ania Loomba has convincingly shown that early modern drama, most popularly Shakespeare’s *Othello*, in the wake of the expulsion of the Moors from Spain (1492), played out “structures of racial fantasy” in the European imaginary.⁷⁶

⁷² Povinelli, *Economies of Abandonment*, pp. 36-37.

⁷³ Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, (New York: Routledge, 1995).

⁷⁴ McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, pg. 3.

⁷⁵ James Reston, Jr., *Dogs of God: Columbus, the Inquisition and the Defeat of the Moors* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), pg. 193.

⁷⁶ Ania Loomba, “Periodization, Race and Global Contact,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (2007), pg. 598.

Though Loomba identifies religion - between Christians and Muslims - to be the key referent for the ferreting of bodies as different, she underscores the articulation of these ideas with a sense of how the body was seized upon to secure the 'guarantee' of difference:

the conflation of color and religion in early modern drama is no simple confusion arising from the double meaning of "Moor," but is strategically deployed from time to time and serves the very precise function of indicating an unchanging inner essence. It is no accident that many of these plays are set in the context of Moorish-Christian sexual alliances in Spain, where Inquisition laws posited increasing distinctions between Moorish, Jewish, and Christian blood, precisely because it was not possible to distinguish visually between Christians and converts to Christianity. To cast Muslims and Jews as literally black, or with other easily identifiable physical characteristics, was also to offer a reassurance that their difference could be easily identified.⁷⁷

The passage of 'discovery,' then, cannot be said to have been devoid of the significance of color for it carried "vocabularies of difference" across the Atlantic.⁷⁸ If we return to Diaz's ships with its six slaves, four of whom were women, what seems striking is the almost inextricable commingling of grammars of gender, enslavement and affective labor in the Atlantic imperial formation. Indeed, one could even go a step further and ask, beneath the suspicious silence of Diaz's allegory of imperial voyage, what coercions fulfilled the sexual fantasies of the erstwhile homosocial vessels of Euro-imperial masculinity? Did these hidden fantasies forego and sublimate what McClintock calls the "porno-tropic" conquest of the 'terra nullius'?⁷⁹

Ann Stoler and other scholars have observed - notwithstanding, in our case, the nominal female slaves on Diaz's sojourn - that until its colonial settlements were firmly established, the Dutch East India Company systematically embraced a policy of colonial migration in which "bachelors [were] their European recruits."⁸⁰ Since the peculiarities of this masculine structure of mobility predominated the margins of the imperial contact zones, the management of inter-racial sex *as* the governance of race supplied empire-making with its one of its most salient and renewable moral economies. The body, desire and the intimate in colonial rule were not far from the gaze of the civil and political institutions of the colony. South Africa under Dutch and British imperial rule was no exception. The work of the legal scholar Frederick Noel Zaal on white attitudes to race mixing and the placement of *mestizaje* children in the Cape attests to the nervous antimony toward black femininity that undergirded the gendering of the colonial structure throughout the modern history of South Africa. Zaal offers that Dutch fantasies about the "witch-

⁷⁷ Ania Loomba, "Periodization, Race and Global Contact," pg. 613.

⁷⁸ Ania Loomba, "Periodization, Race and Global Contact," pg. 599.

⁷⁹ Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, pp. 21-24.

⁸⁰ Ann Stoler, "Making Empire Respectable," pg. 637.

like powers [of] women of color who consorted with Europeans” were transmuted from the travel writing of the early parts of the seventeenth century and slated into an ethos of incredulity toward black womanhood. One could, following McClintock’s use of Mary Douglas’s work on danger and contagion, read the projection of white male desire onto the colonized woman as a inversion or displacement of the masculine structuring of colonial sexuality. Imagining himself to be “in danger,” the white male colonial in fact allegorizes and rehearses the *raison d’être* of some of the most familiar tropes of the colonial structure: “dangerous marginality, segregation, reintegration.”⁸¹ In the unstable management of kinship and the family structure in both the Dutch and British Cape what was simultaneously produced was “the undesirability of racially mixed familial groups.” This would inform a modality of racial governance that “lived on into the twentieth century.” I would like to meditate, for now, not so much on the durability of the founding mediation(s) of race and kinship through sex, but more specifically on how this structure was ensured through ambivalence toward *and* the subjection of the black woman. It appears to me that even in the sustenance of the law of the white father through the appropriation of mestizaje children (under Dutch rule) the fetishized bodies of black, “Native” and enslaved women remain an absent sign of the latent and overt violence of colonial sexuality. Here I do think that internal to what Coetzee calls, as we have already seen, the Discourse of the Cape, is the (re)production of sexual frontiers through the simultaneous appropriation and abandonment of the black mother figure. One must make, then, in the mapping of the genealogies of empire in the Cape, a return to the historicity of race and understand it, as Jared Sexton has suggested, “as a production of bodily (not biological) difference at the nexus of violence and sexuality.”⁸²

In what follows I sketch out the lives of two black women whose lives in the Cape and beyond were - between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries - strewn between the crucibles of enslavement, the colonial prison, sexual violence, and the construction of Western scientific knowledge against the body of an Othered femininity. As many scholars have pointed out, reading and writing against the grain of the colonial archive “requires excavations at the margins of monumental history.”⁸³ However, thinking through the lives of colonized women in the Cape demands not only imaginatively circumventing the silences internal to the (colonial) archive but also unfurling the often hidden histories of enforced (trans)colonial mobility to which colonized women were significant, if not central to. The knowledges produced in these circuits of enforced migration and labor also produce gendered racial effects. Thus, if scholars of modernity have often reminded us that “migration and modernity . . . are undetachable,” then how migrations become

⁸¹ Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, pg. 25.

⁸² Jared Sexton, *Amalgamation Schemes: Antiblackness and the Critique of Multiculturalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), pg. 9.

⁸³ Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pg. 11.

gendered and spatially differentiated should also become analytically legible.⁸⁴ Our first story will take us to the cusp of the early history of the Dutch colonial enterprise in the Cape.

Krotoa-Eva

On January 28th, 1654, Jan van Riebeeck wrote rather casually in his diary that “a girl . . . whom we called Eva” had come to live with him and his family.⁸⁵ The Dutch had been caught in skirmishes with the Khoisan, whom they had been raiding regularly. Eva was then a young girl about twelve years old. The reasons for her arrival in the Van Riebeeck house-hold are not uniformly agreed upon.⁸⁶ Richard Elphick and Robert Shell have suggested, however, that Van Riebeeck had a penchant for “raising Khoikhoi children in his own house.” This was, they suggest, in order that they may “both adopt Christianity and the Dutch language and culture.”⁸⁷ If one follows this reading it would seem that the conversion of Krotoa into Eva was in itself one of the earliest gestures translating indigeneity through the trappings of colonial modernity in South Africa. Krotoa-Eva’s (a)ffiliation with the Van Riebeecks and Dutch colonists would be the catalyst for later South African narratives about the mothering of a new national consciousness in the apogee of the nadir of Apartheid.⁸⁸ She is reputed to be “the first Khoisan woman to appear in the European records of the early settlement at the Cape.”⁸⁹ But what do we make of her given name, embroiled as its possessor was at the crossroads of history? One could perhaps put forth that the preoccupation with Krotoa-Eva as a generative liminal subject in the colonial encounter is already present in the biblical symbolism of her given Christian name. If we are to read *Eva* as the conduit of life then as a desiring subject she

⁸⁴ Reset-DoCwww.resetdoc.org. “The Ambience of Uncertainty.” You Tube.<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPRV8fTn3WQ>. 29th January 2012. Accessed 5th March 2015.

⁸⁵ Jan Van Riebeeck, *Jan van Riebeeck’s Journal* (London: A Richards and Sons, 1897), pg. 175. Explain the use of Khoisan.

⁸⁶ See Richard Elphick and Robert Shell, “Intergroup relations: Khoikhoi, settlers, slaves and free blacks, 1652-1795,” Richard Elphick & Hermann Giliomee (Eds.) *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), and Julia C. Wells, “Eva’s Men: Gender and Power at the Cape of Good Hope,” Tony Ballantyne & Antoinette Burton (Eds.) *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

⁸⁷ Richard Elphick and Robert Ross, “Intergroup Relations: Khoikhoi, settlers, slaves and free blacks, 1652-1795,” pg. 186. In “Eva’s Men,” Julia C. Wells offers a different take on Krotoa-Eva’s relationship with Jan Van Riebeeck: “Although the evidence is entirely circumstantial, a case can be made that Van Riebeeck had an intimate relationship with Eva at some point.” Julia C. Wells, “Eva’s Men,” pg. 88.

⁸⁸ “Diary, Jan Van Riebeeck.” <https://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson7/pdfs/primarysourcepacket.pdf>. 6th March 2015. White South African writing that recuperates Krotoa-Eva as a mother figure is critically engaged with by Meg Samuelson in her book *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women? Stories of the South African Transition* (Pietemarienburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2007).

⁸⁹ “Diary, Jan Van Riebeeck.” <https://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson7/pdfs/primarysourcepacket.pdf>. 6th March 2015.

initiates a deviant mode of historicity. As the agent of “the fall” she comes to embody the human capacity for plunging the ontology of immortality into the crisis of a wanton mortality. She is a sign of crisis, radical instability, an undisciplined ontology that shades into negative impulses. This uncanny overshadowing of the colonized female subject is conferred by what coloniality deigns to name. But the unnamed crisis of this lexicon, as we shall see, will seize upon and haunt the colonial subject.⁹⁰

Encountering Krotoa-Eva is encountering the recalcitrance of the colonial archive. Though she is figured as a translator her relation to history scarcely approaches the authority of authorship. Her voice is mostly absent from the annals of the colonial archive and only appears as traces summoned by the vicissitudes of the colonial encounter. One of the signal ironies of her entry into the colonial archive occurs through at least two gestures of domestication.⁹¹ Firstly, she enters the Van Riebeeck house hold under the authority of Mrs Maria Van Riebeeck. Secondly, she is appears in *Van Riebeeck's Journal* as “Eva.” Her given Khoisan name is abnegated and placed under erasure by through her separation from her original kin. Krotoa-Eva - as she appears in some scholarly work - would thereafter become a translator. But the the initial gesture of translation is not hers. She is conferred to us through a symbology of conversion formulated in an epistemological frame that is European. Beyond Van Riebeeck's entries of early 1654, Krotoa-Eva makes scant appearances in the colonial text and these appearances occur mostly under the crisis of the colonial narrative and its authority over the colonized subject.

Krotoa-Eva's entry into colonial modernity conferred upon her the task of translating in the “contact zones.” She learned and became fluent in both Dutch and Portuguese from an early age. From then she would mediate communications between the Dutch and the Khoisan. We find, in *Jan Van Riebeeck's Journal*, that as early as October 31st 1657 “the Commander [Van Riebeeck]” was “communicating with the Saldanhars, by means of a girl named Eva, about 15 or 16 years old, since the arrival of the Dutch in the service of Mrs Van Riebeeck, and now already speaking Dutch very well.”⁹² Indeed, translation in the charged semantic space between the colonizer and colonized would fill her brief life. But her emergence onto the colonial text does not confer upon her a fully fledged subjectivity. It in fact initializes her erasure as a subject only to erect her in parchments of flashes and traces. She exists where the colonial archive scantily summons

⁹⁰ Meg Samuel has done some work interpreting the significance of the biblical allusion in naming Krotoa as Eva. The gesture, she argues, rests upon a distinction between authorship and interpretation that augurs a hierarchical relationship between the two. In the “Christian narrative to which Krotoa-Eva's Dutch name refers” is one in which “(male) productive labor is distinguished from (female) reproductive labor. This conventional division marks authorship as ‘original and ‘masculine’” and translation ‘derivative and ‘feminine.’” Samuelson, *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women?* pp. 32-33.

⁹¹ I am working closely here with Anne McClintock's recuperation of the term “domestication” for its broader usefulness in allowing us to frame the process of colonization that seized that black female subject. In *Imperial Leather* McClintock suggests that we could read “imperialism as coming into being through *domesticity*” that that one of the things that need to be recuperated is how “What could not be admitted into male rationalist desecrations (the economic value of women's domestic labor) is disavowed and projected onto the realm of the “primitive” and the zone of empire.” Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, pg. 32.

⁹² Jan van Riebeeck, *Van Riebeeck's Journal*, pg. 80.

her presence. Otherwise she is banished to a nondescript vestibule. Trapped in the textual residues of the colonial archive, she is largely unavailable to us, neither as voice nor as translator. She neither speaks nor does she write to us, let alone herself. It is the colonial text which writes her. Even outside of the colonial text, her work as translator is in fact overdetermined by the unequal audiences she is slated between.

In the few entries regarding Krotoa-Eva found in *Van Riebeeck's Journal* we glean the vague minutiae of translation as a stabilization of meaning in the fraught social and semantic realm of the colonial encounter. I am reluctant to read Krotoa-Eva as ambiguously located 'between two cultures' because the scene of colonization rested on the denial of the historicity of indigenous people and their purported rehabilitation through the historical time of colonial modernity.⁹³ The modality of domesticity into which "Eva" was imputed was analogous to an unfolding narrative of the struggle over the land, its wealth and its (prior) peoples. McClintock has suggested that the form of the commodity fetish "figures imperialism as coming into being through *domesticity*."⁹⁴ We can similarly read the indigenous figure reigned into the structure of the settler family as mediating the frontiers of colonial expansion. The politics of translation in this initial encounter is thus not quite a form of intertextuality but a "reading" of "the back of the Native mind."⁹⁵ What the conscription of indigenous translators stands for is more than the 'text's' translatability. At the center of the conscription of translation is the will for what Glissant has called the totalizing, "arrowlike nomadism" that is the "devastating desire for [colonial] settlement."⁹⁶ Krotoa-Eva's apprenticeship to the Van Riebeeck family is thus a necessary supplement to this political narrative; for the 'ominous natives' and the 'divided loyalties' of the 'native informant' put more than translatability at risk but throw the shape of the colonizing narrative into crisis and undecidability. In the next encounter we have with Krotoa-Eva - around June 21st 1658 - colonial sanguinity is thrown amok by the willful intransigence of the Khoisan and into further disarray by suspicious 'native informants:'

June 21st. Fine N.W. breeze. The freeman Jan Rayniersz complained that all night his slaves had run away, taking with them 3 or 4 blankets, clothes, rice, tobacco &c.

Upon this the new interpreter, Doman, now called Anthony, who had returned from Batavia with the Hon. Cuneus, being asked why the Hottentots would not search for the runaways, coolly replied that he did not know. Riebeeck (not trusting him) called the interpreters Eva into his office, who asked whether the blacks were not harbored by the

⁹³ I am thinking here of Johannes Fabian's now well known and oft cited *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes it Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983). Fabian argues, for instance, that "What makes the savage significant to the evolutionist's Time is that he lives in another Time. Little needs to be said, I assume, about separation and distancing in colonialist praxis which drew ideological justification from Enlightenment thought and later evolutionism." Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other*, pg. 27.

⁹⁴ Ann McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, pg. 32.

⁹⁵ This phrase comes from the preface of Sol Plaatje's *Mhudi: An Epic of Native Life A Hundred Years Ago* (Lovedale, 1930).

⁹⁶ See Edouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), pg. 12.

Hottentoots. Being told that the Commander thought so, she replied, "I shall tell you straight out; Doman is no good. What we spoke yesterday in the master's room he communicated to the Hottentoots. I told him that he was doing wrong, but he replied, "I am a Hottentoot and not a Dutchman but you, Eva, are a lickspittle of the Commander," &c. . . . She further begged that it might be kept a secret that she said so; if we did that, she would always speak openly.⁹⁷

Translation in the field of the colonial encounter seems always to bring up its own politics of incredulity. It is not clear why Riebeeck does not trust Doman-Anthony. Is it that, not being a settler, his motives can always be read as subject to 'regressing' to the 'other side'? Is the 'native' simply prone to dishonesty (This is a major theme in the regime of colonial punishment.)? Or are there other designs to which we are not privy? In other words, is there an inherent instability to the politics of interpretation in the contact zones of the colonial encounter? The moment of crisis calls up its own modes of suspicion. And since these crises do not generate any auto-critical reflection - the colonial project does not interrogate the violent suppositions of its being and becoming - the play of colonial fantasy eventuates in producing the culpable black subject. I mean to suggest here that the colonizing project circumnavigates the ontology of its historicism - that is, its true historicity as an encounter founded on physical and epistemological violence, as we can see in the matter of fact narration of slave desertion - and instead realizes its apprehensions through the black subject. I am following Ann McClintock's observation that "The inaugural scene of discovery is redolent not only of male megalomania and imperial aggression but also of lame anxiety and paranoia."⁹⁸ This anxiety is most apparent in the framing of the 'deviant' colonial subject. How else do we account for Van Riebeeck's decided suspicion of Doman-Anthony and his simultaneous need for Krotoa-Eva's supplementary commentary on their exchanges? The unfolding narrative of colonization seems to index a mish-mash of speech acts caught between verification and translation, between procedures of truth and that necessary modicum of suspicion. This suspicion seems to produce its own creature in the regimen of colonial knowledge: the untrustworthy, disobedient 'native.'

Are Krotoa-Eva and Doman-Anthony translators or informants? Clearly the usefulness of the former holds only in service of the latter. The schism which leads to 'bad translation' divides the translator's loyalties between the Dutch and Khoisan. Here the trans-colonialy trained translator's (Doman-Anthony) work stands unfinished, or at least stands to be verified by that of the (literally) 'home-grown' translator (Krotoa-Eva). I do not mean to set up the same dyad - between resistance and complicity - that frames Krotoa-Eva's encounter with Doman-Anthony. I am trying to point out the centrality of domestically formed (a)filialities in securing the emergent "regime of surveillance" in the Cape.⁹⁹ This work, as I have hinted above, is not merely interpretive: it is *productive*. Since

⁹⁷ Jan Van Riebeeck, *Van Riebeeck's Journal*, pg. 129.

⁹⁸ Ann McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, pg. 26.

⁹⁹ McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, pg. 56.

the domestic sphere is the site upon which Krotoa-Eva's apprenticeship to interpretive labor is forged this space seems all the more intimately tied to the politics of colonization in the world outside of it. In order that the colonizing process may proceed, in this case this involves the recovery of Rayniersz's marooned slaves, techniques of verification must be sharpened and loyalties secured. It is her intimacy with the Van Riebeecks that, if anything, ties together the various strands of this complex matrix. If Krotoa-Eva will "always speak openly" to the master, as she is reported to have said, then the sanctity of colonial domesticity will continue to "secret[ly]" allegorize the desire for colonization. "Fidelity and domestication thus work hand in hand."¹⁰⁰ Since the colonial text will say little, or nothing, about Krotoa-Eva's original family, is its erasure a symptom of the securing of the promise - "always" - from the domesticated colonial subject? What becomes of the black female translator caught in the interstices of the unfolding colonial encounter?

Krotoa-Eva's adult life was brief and tragic. Elphick and Shell summarily frame it as a narrative of descent into abjection and deviance: "After Van Riebeeck's departure in 1662 she married the talented Danish surgeon Pieter Van Meerhoff in a Christian wedding financed by the Company. On her husband's death a few years later Eva became a prostitute and drunkard. Wandering between two cultures in which she felt equally alien, she abandoned her children to the mercies of the Council of Policy. The Council imprisoned her at various times on Robben Island where, in 1674, she died."¹⁰¹ Krotoa-Eva's life has been the subject of a number of interpretations and appropriations. Meg Samuelson has observed that recuperations of Krotoa-Eva have largely taken place in the twilight of Apartheid's political career. Her life story has become particularly salient for white writing in this conjuncture where 'rainbowism' was the dominant narrative condition in forging the desire for belonging in an emergent multiracial nation.¹⁰² As Samuelson argues, "During the transition, Krotoa-Eva has been the subject of an astonishing amount of historical revisionist writing, genealogical claims, and fictional reconstructions. . . . narratives by white writers draw on the legacy of the Khoisan woman, Krotoa-Eva, as they negotiate whiteness in the rainbow nation."¹⁰³ Samuelson helpfully points out that these narratives work through a sense of Krotoa-Eva's "central contribution to nation building" as understood "in terms of genetic transmission."¹⁰⁴ While I will not focus on these narratives or representations of her at the end of Apartheid, I would like to recall Samuelson's observation that it is not unusual for such stagings of multiculturalism to fetishize racial admixture as the precondition of a progres-

¹⁰⁰ See Meg Samuelson, *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women?* pg. 42.

¹⁰¹ Richard Elphick and Robert Shell, "Intergroup relations," pg. 186-187.

¹⁰² See Meg Samuelson, *Remembering the Nation Dismembering Women?* and Pumla Dineo Gqola's *What is Slavery to Me? Postcolonial/Slave Memory in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2010).

¹⁰³ Samuelson, *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women?* pp. 15-16.

¹⁰⁴ Samuelson, *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women?* pg. 16.

sive national identity.¹⁰⁵ And yet, as Stoler, Zaal and others have shown, racial admixture was ubiquitous in the colonies of the Dutch (and British) empire and generative of the color line as a sexual, moral and aesthetic boundary. In other words, as Jared Sexton so insightfully put it, it is “Precisely *because* of this impurity, this profound and inextricable historical intertwining, *because* of this togetherness, racism exists, not *despite* that fact. How else could it operate, and why else would it be, as it were, necessary?”¹⁰⁶ That racial impurity signifies the progressive future of post-imperial and post-colonial social identities is a seductive notion but one must recall how this structure also serves to reproduce difference.

Sexton compellingly works out a conceptual and historical terrain through which, I think, we can begin to unpack, even if speculatively, the quandaries of Krotoa-Eva’s demise. Before discussing Sexton I would like to return to the scene of Krotoa-Eva’s demise. The narrative of her spiral into an ‘unrespectable’ life - through maternal abandonment, addiction to alcohol and prostitution - are the putative subjective conditions which bring her afore the punitive institutions of the colony: the law and the prison. Her demise is most poignantly realized through the loss of her children. Historian Julia C. Wells prefers to read the tragic narrative of Krotoa-Eva through her husband’s death. The death of Pieter’s Van Meerhoff marks, therefore, the beginning of the tragedy of an inter-racial colonial romance. Wells stretches this tragedy to gesture at its allegorical significance: “Other Evas and Pieters appear quietly and marginally scattered throughout the history of not only South Africa, but probably wherever two cultures have met.”¹⁰⁷ The tragedy of love’s loss in the theatre of the grand narrative of colonialism indeed invites a seductive reading. But how do we understand Krotoa-Eva’s ultimate fate? She is, in the end, an outcast, a “bad mother,” a prostitute and a prisoner. She seems clearly to be a subject of punitive power, and one with no redemptive qualities. Apparently, as Wells points out, having been incarcerated on Robben Island a number of times and let out “on promises of improved behavior,” it was claimed that “she never reformed” and met her life’s end as a prisoner.¹⁰⁸ Her life as a fallen wife and mother resuscitates, though, another allegory of colonial, racial and sexual power which remains obfuscated where the narrative of the ill-fated inter-racial romance prevails. In “Venus in Two Acts,” Saidiya Hartman reconstructs another allegory of the denigrated black woman: “Various named Harriot, Phibba, Sara, Joanna, Rachel, Linda, and sally, *she is found everywhere in the Atlantic world*. The barracoon, the hollow of the slave ship, the pest house, the brothel, the cage, the surgeon’s laboratory, the prison, the cane-field, the kitchen, the master’s bedroom - turn out to be exactly the same place and in all of them she is called Venus.”¹⁰⁹ Hartman is, of course, calling to our attention how sexuality, power and violence are unabatedly at

¹⁰⁵ For an insightful critique of the multiculturalist project, see Jared Sexton’s *Amalgamation Schemes*.

¹⁰⁶ Jared Sexton, *Amalgamation Schemes*, pg. 35.

¹⁰⁷ Julia C. Wells, “Eva’s Men: Gender and Power at the Cape of Good Hope,” pg. 103.

¹⁰⁸ Julia Wells, “Eva’s Men,” pg. 103.

¹⁰⁹ Saidiya Hartman, “Venus in Two Acts,” *Small Axe*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (2008), pg. 1.

work where black womanhood and coloniality converge. At her life's end, how different is Krotoa-Eva from the myth of the monstrous black woman with unsettling sexual powers that the early colonial settlers were warned of? Or, to put it differently how much did the promise of "improved behavior" amount to a narrative of failed respectability? And does the inference of respectability not enforce upon the tarnished black woman the elusive possibility of an autonomous subject entering into a narrative of redemption? In her moment of loss and crisis, was Krotoa-Eva swiftly overtaken by her "native" predilections?

The structure of multi-racial kinship under colonial rule is not one that is to be read as of a relation among equivalences. It rather calls up, as I have been suggesting, the black mother as the subject who lives under the promise of negation. Krotoa-Eva ultimately becomes a sexually 'deviant' subject who can no longer belong to the institution of the family, since she is purportedly undeserving of motherhood. But, I would argue, it is not she but the multiracial structure of kinship upon which she would eventually be claimed to be the mother of a white progeny that is her achilles heel. According to Wells, "Despite her disgraceful demise, the Dutch community gave her a Christian burial and a few years later laid down strict terms for the adoption of her two surviving children, fathered by Pieter."¹¹⁰ Zaal's research has shown that the adoption of children with a black mother - free or enslaved - and a white father in the Cape was, as in other parts of the Dutch empire, often a technique for reproducing whiteness where the numbers of white settlers were often thin.¹¹¹ What I am trying to suggest, somewhat following Sexton and Hartman, is that the underpinnings of the sexual narrative that Krotoa-Eva is conscripted into is a figure of the Atlantic structure that is not outside of the authority of the law of the white father to dictate forms of kinship at the expense of black motherhood. When, as Samuelson's work has shown, white writers and statesmen spuriously lay a claim to Krotoa-Eva as their founding mother, what is evacuated from history is how the sexual encounters of the early modern period in the Cape were, as Sexton has suggested, *racially productive*. What, in the deepest sense, colonial belonging turns out to be predicated upon, is the precarity and exclusion of not only blackness but *black femininity*. In this matrix of sexuality, interpretative labor, presence in the archive and belonging, one institution lingers hauntingly as the crypt of the abjected black woman. That is; the colonial prison.

Sila

¹¹⁰ Julia Wells, "Eva's Men," pg. 103.

¹¹¹ "The DEIC authorities at the Cape were certainly subjected to intermittent pressure to free light-skinned slaves in accordance with the 'status of the father' criterion with which DEIC law had, in pursuit of the 'whitening' policy in the Indies, supplanted the fundamental *partus sequitur ventrem* and *een moeder maakt geen bastaard* principles of Roman and Roman-Dutch law, respectively. . . . Although, over time, increasingly strict requirements at the Cape may have limited the number of manumissions there of slaves generally, there were nevertheless cases in which the 'right of the father' rule continued to help *mestice* slaves to gain their freedom. Zaal, "The Ambivalence of Authority and Secret Lives of Tears," *Journal of Southern African Studies* Vol. 18, No. 2 (1992), pg. 381-382.

It is quite remarkable how early the prison enters into the frame of colonial modernity at the Cape and equally so that black femininity occupies a crucial place in it. We have already seen with Krotoa-Eva that female imprisonment co-exists with a narrative of reform and respectability. The body of the black mother is situated in the repopulation of whiteness as the liminal yet abjected subjectivity in the inscription of a colonial order of kinship. Krotoa-Eva cannot be said to possess a full subjectivity, for her existence is confirmed by the colonial archive, “appearing there only as and when she plays a role in the strategic objectives of the VOC.”¹¹² Ironically, Krotoa-Eva’s predicaments allegorize what it meant to be present in history. As Yvette Christianse would learn while conducting research on her novel, the recovery of the subjugated black female subject necessitated an entry into the silences created by the colonial archive. Where traces did exist, colonial institutions colluded to textualize a specific kind of black subject: the slave as criminal. As Christianse observes, “the colonial record has a particular way of speaking about [slaves...for...] one of the ironies about the records that do exist of slaves is that they appear in court records. So slaves were just always already criminalized. And whatever was said by them was redacted by the transcribers of the court.”¹¹³ Christianse’s confrontation with the symphony of silence resonating in the colonial archive brought her and her novel, *Unconfessed* (2006), into the crypt of the colonial prison-house.

In what follows I turn to *Unconfessed*, Christianse’s inscription of a slave narrative in the Cape in the early years of its incorporation into the British empire. There is already a growing body of scholarship on the novel. Indeed, the novel and the writing that is flourishing around it attests to South Africa’s legacy of slavery which is undoubtedly one of the sites of remembrance unbound with the collapse of Apartheid.¹¹⁴ A great deal of the writing on *Unconfessed* grapples, understandably, with Christianse’s negotiations with the silences of the colonial archive. Maria Geusteyn has argued, for instance, that Christianse “draws on the gaps of knowledge, coming from an incomplete and stifled archive on slave history” thereby actively engaging “with questions of subjectivity and agency.” In this regard, she argues, *Unconfessed* “‘looks sideways’, offering spaces, paradoxically filled with silence, in which its subject finally finds a voice to narrate her life and articulate her resistance against the condition of slavery and/or subalternity.”¹¹⁵ Indeed, one could argue, borrowing from Saidiya Hartman, that Christianse’s turn to the novel yielded a scaffolding toward “a way of deranging the archive so that,” stripped of the absoluteness of its power to consign what it partially names to oblivion, its mute scraps are

¹¹² Yvette Abrahams, “Was Sila Raped? An Exercise in Speculative History,” *Kronos*, No. 23 (1999), pg. 4.

¹¹³ This passage is a transcription of an interview between Yvette Christianse and Tavis Smiley on the Christianse’s novel *Unconfessed* (2006). I have culled Christianse’s comments as they appear in Maria Geusteyn’s “The Art of Looking Sideways,” *postamble*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2011), pp. 3-4.

¹¹⁴ One of the most cited articles advancing this argument is Nigel Worden’s “The Chancing Politics of Slave Heritage in Western Cape,” *Journal of African History*, Vol. 50 (2009), pp. 23-40. The past few years have also seen the emergence of book length studies on slavery and memory, mostly focused on the Cape. Pumla Dineo Gqola’s *What is Slavery to Me?* was published in 2010 and Gabeba Baderoon’s *Regarding Muslims* in 2014.

¹¹⁵ Maria Geusteyn, “The Art of Looking Sideways,” pp. 2-3.

wrestled to “recall the content of a girl’s life or reveal a truer picture.”¹¹⁶ Perhaps paradoxically, Christianse recovers, or brings herself to haunt, as she puts it, the specter of Sila’s voice coursing where the heights of love and derangement form an uncanny couple; the condemned mother speaking to a son she loved too much to let live in bondage.

At the center of Christianse’s poetics of derangement is one word: *hertseer*. Heart-sore. It is the one utterance that truly belongs to Sila Van Den Kaap. Sila the woman condemned to death by the Cape government for infanticide. And Sila of *Unconfessed*. Christianse came across references to Sila “while reading a memorandum between the Colonial Office in London and the colony’s Acting Governor in 1826.” Languishing on Robben Island, the question that surrounds the persistence of Sila’s life is astonishing in its summoning of the powers of negation: “In the midst of bureaucratic demands and explanations, references to new thatch for the prison roof, and bushels of nibs, there she was, a woman who was supposed to have been hung three years earlier, but who was still alive. *Why was she still alive*, the Colonial Office demanded?”¹¹⁷ Christianse’s own questions - “Who was she? What did it take for someone, a slave, a woman, to survive a death sentence, and for three years?” - might sound like a retort against the Colonial Officer’s supposition of a “death bound subject.” I would add that they also forge an ethical relation with the submerged subject, bringing out of the shadows a wholly different economy of remembrance to the reductive memory of the colonial archive. Christianse works to summon something altogether monumental and mundane: Sila as a biographical subject, possessing a life outside of the throes of prison-bound death. Not unlike Hartman’s desire, then, *Unconfessed* looks to “recuperate lives entangled with and impossible to differentiate from the terrible utterances that condemned them to death.”¹¹⁸ I would like to suggest that Sila’s “one real word,” precariously positioned as it is between colonial power and an unsayable testimony - for how could the institution of slavery reckon with property killing property by any means outside of its repertoires of punishment? - stands at the hinge not only between surviving fact (the archive’s trace) and fable (Christianse’s narrative) but between the ensemble of relations that cohere slave society in the Cape.

Christianse writes of haunting Sila. Indeed, Sila emerges out of the minutiae of prison life on Robben Island through the return of what began her imprisonment; that which could neither be fully possessed nor recovered. Baro, the son she had killed to put beyond the reach of slave holders, returns to her while sitting on the water’s edge on the island. Sila, from the moment of Baro’s re-appearance, begins to wield the sort of remembrance that has been unmade by the prison and the world outside of it. This form of narrative - communion with the dead - occurs in the liminal space that marks the limits of (in)sanity and the (un)sayable. It would perhaps be too easy to read Baro’s recursions through a diagnostic of Sila’s descent into madness. We have already seen with Krotoa-Eva how closely the putative collapse of personhood aligns with the punitive designs of

¹¹⁶ Saidiya Hartman, “Venus in Two Acts,” pg. 13.

¹¹⁷ Italics Yvette Christianse, “Author’s Note,” *Unconfessed* (New York: Other Press, 2006).

¹¹⁸ Saidiya Hartman, “Venus in Two Acts,” pg. 3.

colonial culture. I am more deeply compelled to read the fugitive designations of colonial culture as an instance of how it constructs its ordering through the gendered and racial modes of violence that apportion difference. If I am reluctant to read what appear to be the gothic inflections of *Unconfessed* solely as a confirmation of Sila's derangement or her recuperation of that which has been lost, it is precisely because I sense Christianse to be pushing the moral claims of the colonial prison upon the black mother toward a different economy of the (un)sayable.

To be sure, *Unconfessed* sketches an economy of violence that unfolds around the quotidian and intimate events of slave culture in the Cape. Violence surrounds Sila's life-world as it claims how her desirability by white men can be performed. Indeed, the mark of Sila's relation to white men remains in some of her children. They have absent (white) fathers, men who will not claim to have progeny with a black woman but whose visitations upon her body mark hers as a singular parental identity. The captive mother confers upon her children, of course, more than a 'de-paternalized' structure of kinship. They inherit the status of property that she lives under. The gendered and racial forms of power that structure kinship in the Cape thus works to render invisible their violent mechanisms. But, as Sharon Holland has argued with regard to the American context, while this structure might seem to amputate the 'family tree' of its actual sexual encounters the aporia that it leads to only intensifies anxieties around the already present.¹¹⁹ As we shall see, the violence that is constitutive of Sila's daily existence does more than disciplinary work. It suffuses the regimes of truth under which the speaking subject is to make her utterance. The 'games of property' that Sila finds herself entangled by are particularly salient here. Though *Oumeisies*, the slave-holding matron and owner of Sila, manumits her and her children, she and her children are thrown back into slavery by the guiles of Van der Wat. She is confronted by a mode of legal authority that draws the line between property and freedom, motherhood and the ever-present threat of familial separation. In the hands of Van der Wat her claims to freedom and motherhood are particularly vulnerable:

We got there in eighteen and seventeen. But Van der Wat waited until eighteen and eighteen to register us. He waited for the trouble between Theron and the slave register to quiet. So, when he could, he put us on the slave list,, what they call *registration*. He said that if I tried to get a message to anyone, he would sell me in one direction and my children in another.¹²⁰

Before the officialise of the law confers a regime of truth in relations between slaves and masters we witness the preponderance of a reign of terror and accusation disciplining Sila into a 'truthful' subject. Here, the Sila's kinship is subject to the arbitrariness of invention and her sexuality is enforced upon her as a sign of disavowal.

¹¹⁹ Sharon Holland, *The Erotic Life of Racism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), pg. 7.

¹²⁰ Yvette Christianse, *Unconfessed*.

Van der Wat said, your name is Drusilia. If anyone asked me I had to say that I came from the farm of Maria Martha Cruywagen, widow in the District of George. He said Drusilia was also the mother of Talmag. Talmag? I could not keep my mouth shut. I did not care how he beat me. So, I asked him, I asked, Master, how can I be the mother of a man older than I am?

Klap.

Van der Wat told me he knew what kind of woman I was he said he knew I had been with many, many men. I said no *Massssssssster*.

These men have been with me, but I have never been with them.

He said . . . Ag, but what does it matter what he said? Let what he had to say sink like a stone be neath the waves.¹²¹

This passage is revealing for it allows us to see how closely woven violence, truth-making and white male claims upon the enslaved black woman's sexuality are. But what is perhaps most striking are the unequal relations between voices. While Van der Wat's accusations and fictions of kinship rise to claim truth, Sila's counter-narrative sinks just as she wishes for Van der Wat's to. And the crafting of the discourses of sex she makes recourse to - "*These men have been with me, but I have never been with them.*" - belies the violence under which her sexual identity exists. What is crucial for me is that the violence, while white power remains an audience and authority, remains unnamed. This - the white refusal to develop an ethical relationship to the forms of violence that function under the insignia of race and property - is a wager upon which the black subject is sacrificed for the realization of a white society and its fantasies. Sila speaks her own truth to Van der Wat. But, as we see, truth is craftily masked and rendered secondary to the motion of fact-ordering of the colony's master narratives of desire. There is more than silencing going on here. What happens to the black person and how that is called up in "the durative present," as Elizabeth Povinelli would put it, poses questions that far exceed the individualization of suffering and violence. It is a problem that lies at the heart of *how* questions of kinship, belonging and freedom are posed inside of the colonial regimen. As we shall see, Sila's incarceration is an iteration of this modality which intensifies and gives a different spatial logic to this order.

Violence as a mode of being pose deep existential problems for Sila. When extended to her children, her pain as a mother becomes the unbearable cause of a meditation on freedom under the duress of slavery:

Baro was a beautiful boy, like his brother and sister. He cried for them. He tok the same beating. Yes, he received the blows of a grown man. I have never been able to heard as I did before arriving at Van der Wat's farm, but Baro lost something else.

They would not let me say any of this in that court of justice.

. . . .

¹²¹ Yvette Christianse, *Unconfessed*, pg. 301. "Klap" is the Afrikaans word for slap.

When Baro came back all the washing was finished, even though the stains hung there for all to see. His eyes were heavy. I saw right away that his arm was worse. It was swollen, so thick, thicker than his leg. When I spoke to him he did not hear me. His eyes were flat. I took him to our hut. I carried him because he could not walk. We had bread with fat for supper but he would not eat and he did nothing when Pieter called his name.

Pieter! I do not know where he is. I cannot ask myself if he asks after me, or how he is growing, of if his face is my face.

What?

I put Pieter to sleep and then I took some fat from our bread and rubbed it on Baro's legs where the hide had left its marks. And then I saw the big bruises on his stomach. I rubbed fat on them too. He moved like an old man, Johannes. I rubbed the fat in and he did not even cry. He went to sleep. I put him in my lap and he went into a sleep that has saved him.¹²²

I read Sila's choice to put Baro beyond the throes of pain not as a negation of life but rather as a "negation of the negation" which defines slavery as a way of being made to live. I do not wish to dwell here on the ontology of slavery and its ethical universe. I would like to turn my attention to Sila's one statement that seems to tie together some of the other utterances: "They would not let me say any of this in that court of justice." This one sentence is Sila's reminder that her story indeed lies outside of history. Her fugitive actions are condemned where justice remains a colonial imperative. Yet beyond the law's function to render unequal, there lies the remarkable capacity for the slave's pain to go unnoticed or ignored. The ability to place the suffering of the enslaved person outside of the binds of sympathy should not, however, come as a surprise to us. Slave society in the Cape claimed its right to exist on the paradox of the human as property.¹²³ Its regimes of punishment often thrived on the cruel and spectacular.¹²⁴ If to speak calls the other into being and implicates them in knowing the interiority of the speaker, then Sila's chosen audience - the older slave Johannes and Baro, both of whom are marginal and absent - is a gesture that perhaps should be read through her search for recognition in a community of love. This may be a testimony that is ephemeral to history but - to recall the archival matrix that brought about the beginning of *Unconfessed* - since Sila's survival was already a defiance of what this history sought to make of her, her companions may in fact give an inkling of how a soul still groping toward life invents its own reasons for living. Her testimony, her living, "is the defiance of a mother who survives her children."¹²⁵ Her existence

¹²² Yvette Christianse, *Unconfessed*, pp. 304-305.

¹²³ For a detailed study of how deeply invested in its human property the slave holders of the Cape were see R.L. Watson's *The Slave Question* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1990).

¹²⁴ For a discussion of punishment in the Cape see Kerry Ward's "Defining and Defiling the Criminal Body at the Cape of Good Hope" in Steve Pierce and Anupama Rao (Editors) *Discipline and the Other Body: Correction, Corporeality, Colonialism* (Duke University Press, 2006).

¹²⁵ Yvette Christianse, *Unconfessed*, pg. 275.

is thus not merely outside of history; it is beyond what colonial history could properly conceive as *living*.

Sila's imprisonment is sealed by the law. Christianse seems quite careful in her writing to reveal the ambiguities of witnessing and the status of the slave's testimony before the law. We know that Sila's testimony is virtually engulfed by her silence and surfaces around a veiled utterance. The fiction of justice that grants her a voice takes with what it gives. In tracing Sila's journey to Robben Island, I begin with her trial and the strategies of estrangement that are consummated through her condemnation. What is salient for me is the way in which black motherhood remains what is most acutely susceptible to abjection, the narrative and claim to a right to be that the law will not permit to be enunciated.

I looked at them. They looked at me and looked away. *Speak*, they said.

To say what? What is it you have in your minds when you ask me to make the picture?

Speak, Sila van den Kaap. You have committed a heinous crime.

Before God, you must speak.

I looked at them. I prepared my body. I looked at them and I was out of the room where I had put my mind.

Do you refuse?

...

They wanted me to go behind there. They were sending me as if I was slave to them all. They were sending me to bring for them what they had not seen. Even their shadows leaned forward.

They press me. I keep my mouth tight. I have pressed where a mother should not have pressed. I have pressed as a mother should not. And what flows cannot be stopped.

And still my and pressing on. Thinking. Not being able to think.

Cutting my own mind and heart in two, quickly. Quickly!

They wanted to know about that last moment my boy was of this earth. But not if he suffered.

They said, let it be noted that, in her insolence, the accused refused to answer a further question.¹²⁶

There is a peculiar way in which the court-room ceases to encapsulate testimonies *for* justice for Sila seems to already be condemned. The law has provided a theatre for those who have power over life to witness the horror of killing. What is the purpose of this desire to vicariously enliven the scene of death? If Sila cannot speak, it is clearly not out of insolence. The demand to speak - ironically, this is the only instance in the novel in which she is hailed as a person possessing a voice - is one that pushes her to relive the horrors of suffering that she had sought to extinguish from Baro's life. In a different context, Saidiya Hartman has argued that "The innocent amusements and spectacles of mastery orchestrated by members of the slaveholding class . . . were significant components of slave per-

¹²⁶ Yvette Christianse, *Unconfessed*, pp. 232-233.

formance.”¹²⁷ Though somewhat differently, Sila has been given a stage upon which to perform (and relive) the last moments of Baro’s life. The play between aversion (“They looked at me and looked away.”) and enrapt curiosity (“Even their shadows leaned forward.”) among those awaiting Sila’s testimony is, of course, an ambiguous witnessing that fixes the white gaze upon nothing but the spectacle of violence in-itself. What will they know, if Sila would have obliged and sated their curiosities, that they did not know before? The details and manner of her doing? Or is the horror itself the only thing of that they have not yet mastered about her? Sila’s refusal to speak is more than a resistant act of silence. Her silence is the gap in which questions unmade and unposed by the white gaze’s fixations with the spectacle linger: “They wanted to know about that last moment my boy was of this earth. But not if he suffered.” The ambiguous witnessing that is the scene of the law undoes what it would mean for Sila to possess a history, for then her actions would have *reason* and a *narratable form* that would call into being the everyday forms of violence that divide the moral worlds of slaves and masters, a form of difference that seems to in fact become obscured by the universalizing imperatives of the law. And if Sila could curse with the same authority that the law possesses would she not? But it would take the remaking of the Cape for this to become plausible. Instead, she is condemned to death and stripped to a poignant footnote in the annals of the colonial archives.

If the prison stands in *Unconfessed* as the final institution to punish Sila for her efforts to wrest the agency of motherhood then it becomes impossible to distinguish what becomes the durative life of her punishment from her racial, gendered and maternal identities. Angela Y. Davis has encouraged us, particularly with regard to the the American prison-industrial complex, to think through the different ideologies that attend to the gendered inflections of incarceration. “According to dominant views,” she suggests, “women convicts were irrevocably fallen women, with no possibility for salvation. If male criminals were public individuals who had simply violated the social contract, female criminals were seen as having transgressed fundamental moral principles of womanhood.”¹²⁸ Though the idea that the “fallen woman” was beyond redemption was challenged by reformers the notion itself, Davis points out, remained intact. We have already seen vestiges of this ideology informing the traces that appear of Krotoa-Eva’s last years in prison. What I find striking is Davis’ observation that the regime of domestication that prevailed under patriarchy was extended to women’s prisons as an instrument of reform from as early as the nineteenth century.

Architectural changes, domestic regimes, and an all-female custodian staff were implemented in the reformatory program proposed by reformers and eventually women’s prisons became as strongly anchored to the social landscape as men’s prisons, but even more invisible. Their greater invisibility was a much a reflection of the way women’s domestic duties under patriarchy were assumed to be normal, natural and consequently in-

¹²⁷ Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, pg. 8.

¹²⁸ Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), pg. 70.

visible as it was of the relatively small numbers of women incarcerated in these institutions.¹²⁹

I am more interested in reading Davis' insights for how they may help us to recalibrate our readings of the prison space in the South African political imagination than I am in mining them as a source of comparative inquiry. It is quite interesting, and certainly not fortuitous, that Robben Island exists in the historical imagination as a prison-space that is both *political* and *masculine*. Indeed, it almost exists as the deepest allegory of political alienation and triumph in the narrative of resistance against Apartheid. Perhaps the absence of women from its memory should be taken to be a piece with the masculinist imaginary that informs its remembrance. If we return to Davis we may see how the patriarchal institutions of the prison render invisible the mechanisms of disciplining of the incarcerated female body. But how do the capillaries of patriarchal power enter a prison space where those bound to it are enslaved black women?

On Robben Island, Sila's life is further embroiled in the wiles and desires of white men. Our very first encounter with her in the novel takes place on the island. Surprised to learn that a slave woman who is supposed to have been hung still lives, the superintendent who 'discovers' Sila finds himself thrown into an unfamiliar world:

"Has she been here all this time?"

"Excellency? Yes. Warden will explain, Excellency. We ave nowhere else . . . this is why we put her and her child here with the other . . ."

"Child? What child?"

She understood her surprise. How on earth could she have been here all this time, under their noses, and not be noticed, she and her child, the one she called Meisie despite the name they wanted her to use? How could they have forgotten about her, *forgotten*? But he could not bring himself to ask these questions, they would have expose his ignorance, and a great superintended of order could never admit to such a thing.

. . .

"What have you to say for yourself?" he demanded, but she could see it was to stave off his alarm. "*Ek se, what het jy vir yourself te se?*"

His accent was so stupid. She lay back and laughed, drawing her skirt up. This is how they liked it, filthy and stinking. He should know that, superintendent of cleanliness and order. The *naai mainje* was here. Yes, he should know who and what this place had made of her in all these years she had been forgotten.¹³⁰

What the superintendent fails to recognize is the surreptitious reproduction of white masculine dominance over the black woman's body, her sexual life and reproductive process, as seen in Meisie and there other two children that Sila gives birth to on Robben Island.

¹²⁹ Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* pg. 71.

¹³⁰ Yvette Christianse, *Unconfessed*, pp. 1-2.

Sila normalizes the overdetermination of this desire-violation through her performative gesture of 'seduction' ("She lay back and laughed, drawing her skirt up."). If the mystified superintendent is to fathom the details of social life on Robben Island, then he would have to read Sila's gesture back to his own gaze and its complicity with the regimen of racialized sexual violence on the island. One cannot miss what Sila is actually doing here. She reproduces the stereotype of the over-sexualized black woman, a spectacle which, given her imprisoned body's abject social powers, returns its myth to its original function of displacing the male settler's phallic desire to master and thereby colonize the black body. In rendering herself an allegorical figuration of colonial desire Sila calls into question the official function of the prison in its encounter with the black woman. She suffuses it with the codes of sociability that structure the 'intimate amusements' of the world outside.

I have been insisting throughout this section of this chapter that what occurs in the liminal space of colonial sexuality is racially productive. My instance on this point is guided by a desire to make more legible the intimate (yet silenced) relation between the abjection of the black woman / mother and constructions of whiteness. In the prison space, this entanglement falls into sharp relief for the inescapable proximity between black and white and the ever present authority of white male sexual desire. If one were to measure the undisciplined desire of the white men of Robben Island as the source of a certain politics friendship between women across the color line, then one is bound to be disappointed by the burden of guilt that the incarcerated black woman is made to carry in this relationship. The point for hailing Sila to speak begins precisely where her sexuality is brought into question. The Minister's wife is fishing for a confession when she finally brings herself to ask "Sila, do you fornicate with the men on this island?" This act of bad faith is a carefully constructed apportionment of blame. Of course, the white men of the island will not be asked to account for their sexual improprieties. Sila's speech, properly rude and unmasking, can only be contained through the colonial library's ordering of things and people, between the respectable time of modernity and the sexual anarchy of barbarism which seems to always threaten the coherence of the colonial order of things: "I ask, why do you ask me such questions? I say, you must go and ask the men here. She says, you are a heathen." It is not surprising that the distance between the Minister's wife and Sila is marked by the specter of the book and the performance of feminine domesticity: "While her husband prays with the men, she brigs me here into the warden's house to read to me from her book. But she stands at the window and looks out. She says she loves her husband, it is a union joined by her god." If Sila will remain on the margins of the book beckoning her to enter into an order of respectability - "You take your book of prayers and you get to your husband. Go and find out what it means to kneel before a man and then tell me what this praying of *yours* can mean to me." - her incredulity toward the trappings of colonial modernity place her at the same predicament that marked the end of Krotoa-Eva's life. Both women lose their children. Indeed, their claim to motherhood is placed under question and their children, either taken or willed to a deathly freedom, are the most intimate loss they will suffer. In *Unconfessed* these signatures of loss are most poignantly dramatized when the Minister and his wife draw a kinship chart, a text that perhaps is the most alienating for the enslaved person. "Missus Minister points

to and reads the names of his family, the children of children. She points and says, that is her. Ink on paper. She says she has entered her husband's family and when he comes around to drawing her husband's family and when he comes around to drawing her family tree, it will show how he has entered her family." The lines of descent and inheritance are both linear and cyclical, for the Minister and Missus Minister's families trickle into each other "like a tree with branches growing out," as she says. Sila, on the other hand, reads the tree of kinship through the landscape of the prison and the absences that become remarkable in its grasp. "If you look around this island you will see. There are no trees worth mentioning." In this forlorn landscape the absence of her daughter Meisie becomes apparent. "*And where is my girl, Meisie?*" Meisie's absence is a synecdoche to the end of Sila's "children of children." Eventually, Meisie is taken inland by a priest. "She will be baptized and have that water on her," thinks Sila. This is, of course, the narrative of conversion that Sila herself had refused. If, the distance from Robben Island is a further degree of Sila's alienation from motherhood, it is also, as we saw with Krotoa-Eva, a process that crystalizes through the techniques of colonial modernity: "Spaasie said that Meisie wore a nice new dress and will learn how to read. How about that now? What will she read? My daughter will fall into that black bookend when she looks back at me she will have the look of black leather and thin, white paper words in her eyes. And when she speaks to me it will be the sound of fingers turning thin white paper." Sila is surrounded by a prison house of texts, a world of words that speak against her. In Meisie's journey back to Cape Town, another loss looms on the horizon. Is her journey to the white world which draws her to Cape Town bound to be much different from that of Krotoa-Eva?

Chapter III:

Black Cosmopolitans in Cape Town

There seems to prevail a general idea that the black man is absolutely free in Africa, and that here he is untrammelled from that demon - race prejudice. This is a great mistake. The sight of a black face is as much hated and despised on the Dark Continent - the ancestral home of the negro - as in any other country.

There is, indeed, a great work to be done in Africa for the amelioration of the condition of our people. The field is large, and the labourers are few. My earnest advice to every man who has the interest of our race at heart, and who possesses the advantage of education, is - take your talents in Africa, and there endeavor to diffuse knowledge in a country and among a people who need it, and where it will be most appreciated. - *Francis J. Peregrino*¹

The “dialogue” metaphor would instead highlight the ways in which the mutual gaze between African and African-Americans, multidirectional travel and migration between the two hemispheres, the movement of publications, commerce, and so forth have shaped African and African American culture in tandem over time and at the same time. It highlights the ways in which cultural artifacts, images and practices do not simply “survive” or endure through “memory”; they are, rather reinterpreted and reproduced for diverse contemporary purposes by actors with culturally diverse repertoires, diverse interests, and diverse degrees of power to assert them. - *J. Lorand Matory*²

“The sight of a black face is as much hated and despised on the Dark Continent - the ancestral home of the negro - *as in any other country.*”³ This sentence, like its more famous corollary, was written at the dawn of the century of the colour line.⁴ Its author, Francis J. Peregrino, was at pains to dispel one prevailing myth: that “the black man” in Africa was somehow free from the “demon” of “race prejudice.” If it appeared that

¹ Francis J. Peregrino, *A Short History of the Native Tribes of South Africa* (London: W.H. & L. Collingridge, 1900), pp. 8-9.

² J. Lorand Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion: Tradition, Transnationalism, and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), pg. 290.

³ Francis J. Peregrino, *A Short History of the Native Tribes of South Africa*, pg. 8. Italics added.

⁴ I am thinking here, of course, about the famous sentence in W.E.B. Du Bois’s *The Souls of Black Folk*: “The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line - the relation of the darker to the lighter races of the men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea.” W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, pg. xxxi.

Africa could be contained in a capsule of stagnant or lost time, Francis J. Peregrino assured his readers otherwise. The “Natives” of the so-called ‘Dark Continent’ were not spared one of the signal deprivations of modernity: exclusions wrought by the prejudicial imperative of racism. In the caveat “as in any other country” we find the colour line drawn in its local and global concatenations.

These ruminations are contained in Francis J. Peregrino’s *A Short History of the Native Tribes of South Africa* (1900). Francis J. Peregrino had returned to England (where he was born) from Cape Town around the time of the Pan-African Conference of 1900. The discourses contained in *A Short History of the Native Tribes of South Africa* were given as lectures in London where he had intended them to steer his metropolitan audiences against any “universal ignorance” held against the Africans of South Africa. *A Short History of the Native Tribes of South Africa* gave an “insight into the manners and customs of the native African.” The book’s preface, though only four pages long, went beyond the conventions of ethnographic description and instead ventured to “preface blackness” for its readers.⁵ Brent Hayes Edwards has suggested that writing that is located in para-textual thresholds such as prefaces demands that one keep an eye on “signifying content” which through its “*framing* gestures” link one context to another. These thresholds, as Edwards suggests, are the textual vectors that do the work of “framing race” and links its epistemologies to “internationalist perspectives.”⁶ Francis J. Peregrino reached beyond the descriptive valences of ethnographic representation and placed his discourses on ‘the Native Tribes of South Africa’ in a discursive field which encapsulated the prerogatives of the Pan-African Conference. His gesturing at racial alienation in South Africa hinted at the (global) generality of the suffering of people of African descent, connecting South Africa and the elsewhere of diaspora at the height of the age of empire. In his travels, writing and orations in Cape Town and London, Francis J. Peregrino worked blackness into the circuit of meaning that bound colony and metropole.

In order to account for *A History of the Native Tribes of South Africa* we have to traverse the itineraries of empire and the protocols of race. The oration and printing of Francis J. Peregrino’s foreshadowing of “the problem of the colour line” may have taken place in London but it was penned in Cape Town, on the margins of the British empire. As we have seen, writing from the margins of empire *and* Africa required, for Francis J. Peregrino, unthinking alterity as a mere fact of colonial sociality. It required illuminating the inner workings of the repertoires of what Barbara and Karen Fields have referred to

⁵ See Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), pp. 38-43.

⁶ Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*, pg. 38.

as *racecraft*.⁷ This was the scene of a race prejudice was sustained by a certain kind of “colonial aphasia.”⁸ “In the case of the South African colonist,” he writes, racial prejudice seems to co-exist with a “familiarity [that] seems to have bred apathy with reference to the natives, for they accept the fact of their presence among them as a matter of course, and do not trouble themselves to learn anything about the inner lives of these people.”⁹ Racial prejudice and the ineptitude of the “South African colonist” to apprehend the “inner lives” of ‘natives’ usurped from them any singularly legitimate role in their ‘improvement.’ The question of racial uplift was thus open to the efforts of trans-colonial and international actants. It was also imbricated with an anti-racist politic. In this formulation of an early twentieth century Pan-Africanist undertaking, Africa was an insignia and a domain of realpolitik which black political space could not be imagined without. Neither could those interested in the problem of race formulate or eventuate their programs apart from it. Francis J. Peregrino ultimately nominated Africa as a site of race work out of historical necessity: “My earnest advice to every man who has the interest of our race at heart, and who possesses the advantage of education,” he writes, is “take your talents to Africa, and there endeavor to diffuse knowledge in a country and among a people who need it, and where it will be most appreciated.”¹⁰ He could have substituted this exhortation for an autobiographical fact for two generations of the Peregrino family had migrated to Cape Town at the turn of the twentieth century.¹¹ Francis J. Peregrino himself was known to be the principal of the Progressive Institute in Cape Town and a race-man of repute. In the 1890s he was already “looked upon as a guide, counsellor and leader of the West Indians He was no only a recruiting officer for

⁷ Karen and Barbara Fields suggested that *racecraft* is an intimate practice of taken-for-granted rituals that confirm and maintain the inequalities of racial dominance. “Unlike physical terrain,” they explain, “racecraft originates not in nature but in human action and imagination; it can exist in no other way. The action and imagination are collective yet individual, day-to-day yet historical, and consequential even though nested in mundane routine.” Race-craft is a helpful concept for unpacking what Francis J. Peregrino is attempting to disabuse his readers of about race. Francis J. Peregrino is writing with the end of making his readers aware that the “human action” which produces the color line obtains in Africa but somehow the problem is not appraised as it is elsewhere. Karen E. and Barbara J. Fields, *Racecraft: the Soul of Inequality in American Life* (London: Verso, 2012), pg. 18-19.

⁸ Ann Laura Stoler deploys the term “colonial aphasia” to describe a condition in which colonial histories can “can be disabled and deadened to reflective life, shorn of the capacity to make connections.” In the case of Francis J. Peregrino’s observation we can begin to infer how the colonial moment in itself is at work at banishing an intimate knowledge of the racial protocols of colonial rule. Ann Laura Stoler, “Colonial Aphasia: Race and Disabled Histories in France,” *Public Culture*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2011), pg. 121-156.

⁹ Francis J. Peregrino, *A Short History of the Native Tribes of South Arica*, pg. 8.

¹⁰ Ibid, pp. 8-9.

¹¹ It not clear when Francis J. Peregrino settled in South Africa, or how long he stayed there. But by the end of the nineteenth century he was working as the principal of the Progressive Institute in Cape Town. His father, F.Z.S. Peregrino and his family settled in Cape Town soon after the Pan-African Conference held in London in July, 1900. For some biographical information on the Peregrinos see Marika Sherwood’s *Origins of Pan-Africanism: Henry Sylvester Williams, Africa, and the African Diaspora*.

bringing more Jamaicans to the Cape, but he also looked after their interests there.”¹² The Pan-Africanist politics of diaspora may have been formalized in London at the turn of the twentieth century but its origins were far from singular and certainly emanated from geographies beyond the metropolitan centers of the colonial world.

In this chapter I turn to Cape Town as a site of global black political formation and race work in the early twentieth century. The past few years have seen a surge of scholarly and literary work that has, rightfully, restored the importance of Cape Town in the making of the histories of South Africa, the black diaspora and colonialism. I too have vested interests in adding to this literature, though I think making the politics of empire and diaspora contiguous offers significant insights about how race, or more specifically blackness, provided a grammar for inching toward alternative forms belonging as the longing for imperial citizenship proved to be a desire crucible to the “wages of whiteness.”¹³ In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Cape Town was one of the cities in which black intellectuals and workers converged. Though of different origins, many were nonetheless shaped by common experiences as colonials, imperial subjects and people subordinately structured by racial dominance. The city encapsulates the strivings and often unhappy realities of being black in the modern world as well as any other. It was the theatre of some of the most fascinating stagings of the biblical Ethiopianist creed: “Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.” As we have seen with John Jabavu, some of the most prominent race men and women of this period were quintessentially agents of print capitalism.¹⁴ Michael Hanchard has observed “the most significant leadership among African-American elite of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were journalists, writers, or otherwise involved in mass communications and mass transport.”¹⁵ The same obtained for numerous Afro-diasporic figures who for fleeting or ex-

¹² Van der Roos quoted in Marika Sherwood, *Origins of Pan-Africanism*, pg. 258.

¹³ The phrase comes from W.E.B. DuBois’s *Black Reconstruction* and was taken up by David Roediger’s in his book *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*. In his discussion on the ameliorative effects of racism to white workers in the American south Du Bois argues that “[T]he white group of laborers, while they receive a low wage, were compensated in part by a sort of public and psychological wage. They were given public deference and titles of courtesy because they were white. They were admitted freely with all classes of white people to public functions, public parks, and the best schools.” W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860–1880* (New York: The Free Press, 1965), pg. 700. While I do not address these issues in this dissertation I would like to point out that the same obtained for white workers in South Africa, especially after 1910 when the country was unified.

¹⁴ For discussions of the terms “race men” and “race woman” see Hazel V. Carby, *Race Men* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 1-9. Michael Hanchard’s “Afro-Modernity” is an important and often cited theoretical explication of the politics of the African diaspora. It contains some invaluable insights on the connection of these movements with print capitalism. I will later turn to a discussion on the importance of Hanchard’s work on how we can re-imagine the global shape of the “New Negro” movement. Penny M. Von Eschen’s *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997) is another important work that engaged with the politics of black print culture in the inter-war period.

¹⁵ Michael Hanchard, “Afro-Modernity,” pg. 259.

pended periods of time, made Cape Town a cite of race-work.¹⁶ F.Z.S. Peregrino had published *The Fortnightly Spectator* in New York state before settling in Cape Town and establishing *The South African Spectator* in 1900.¹⁷ The convener of the 1900 Pan-African Conference, Trinidadian barrister Henry Sylvester Williams, began his career in law at the Cape Town Bar in 1903. In that year, Williams also became a member of the African People's Organization (A.P.O.), an early national political organization for "Colored people" co-founded by F.Z.S. Peregrino and which ran its own newspaper - the *A.P.O.* - out of Cape Town from 1909. In the period ensuing the end of the First World War, Clements Kadalie, then a young teacher who had travelled from Malawi (then the British colony of Nyasaland) through Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia) arrived in Cape Town in 1916 in search of employment. In a couple of years, Kadalie was involved with the creation of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa (the I.C.U.). When Kadalie and S.M. Bennett Ncwana first published *The Black Man* - the first I.C.U. affiliated newspaper - in 1920, another West Indian, Marcus Garvey, had set the world alight with the largest transnational black organization of the twentieth century, Universal Negro and Improvement Association (U.N.I.A.).¹⁸ It is no wonder that *The Black Man* reported on its affiliation with the UNIA as a shining example of a "community of interest" on whose "community of sacrifice . . . the Negro movement can permanently rest."¹⁹ The 'community' was also a small but not insignificant assemblage of migratory figures variously described as "American Negroes," "West Indian Negroes" and African colonials for whom Cape Town was a seat of reckoning with imperial culture and its racialized politics.

Cape Town was, as John Jabavu called it, "that English Metropolis." F.Z.S. Peregrino observed in *The South African Spectator* that as "the Metropolis of the Premier Colony of South Africa," the city had risen to a city "of the highest importance in the World's history by virtue of being the theatre for important historical events."²⁰ The elder Peregrino's estimation of the historical importance of Cape Town lay in his projection of the after-lives of the South African War (1899-1902) as the arbiter of the promise of a racially inclusive imperial citizenship under British rule. As we have seen before, the subordina-

¹⁶ An exemplary study of these movements, print cultures and connections between Africa and the Americas see J. Lorand Matory's *Black Atlantic Religion*.

¹⁷ See Christopher Saunders, "F.Z.S. Peregrino and the South African Spectator," *Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (1978), pp. 81-90.

¹⁸ *The Black Man* was the first periodical of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union. In 1923 the organization began publishing another periodical called *The Worker's Herald* after it had relocated its headquarters from Cape Town and Johannesburg. For a bibliographic outline of these periodicals as well as a plethora of other ones published by the black intelligentsia in South Africa and Lesotho see Les and Donna Switzer, *The Black Press in South Africa and Lesotho: a descriptive bibliographic guide to African, Coloured and Indian newspapers, newsletters and magazines 1836-1976* (Boston: G.K. Hall & CO., 1979), pg. 31 & pp. 64-65.

¹⁹ "Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Community's League," *The Black Man*, August, 1920, Pg. 3.

²⁰ F.Z.S. Peregrino, "Bricks without Straw," *The South African Spectator*, 6th Sept, 1901, pp. 6-7. Also see Jabavu, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 19th August, 1901.

tion of the colonial under the insignia of empire raised the specter of imperial responsibility. Hence, F.Z.S. Peregrino submitted that “the question of the treatment and rights of the native races of South Africa” be “a question which ceases to be one of local option, and enters into the higher realms of Imperial politics.”²¹ These words can be read as something of an addendum to the Pan-African Conference’s “Address to the Nations of the World.” The “Address,” written “in the metropolis of the modern world,” imagined an empire of justice devoid of racial prejudice. Since there can be no empire without an imperial cartography, “Address” drew its own map of black suffering suspended in a longed for future of “being counted among the great brotherhood of mankind:” “Let the Congo Free State become a great central Negro State of the world,” “Let the nations of the World respect the independence and integrity of the first Negro States of Abyssinia, Liberia, Haiti and the rest . . . the independent tribes of Africa, the Negroes of the West Indies and America, and the black subjects of all nations.” In this cry beseeching for a just form of imperialism South Africa was generalized and indexed through the mining industrial complex and then folded back into the refrain against black suffering: “Let not the natives of Africa be sacrificed to the greed of gold.” The cartography of Pan-Africanism at *fin de siècle* was one of suffering and longing wherever “black subjects of all nations” may reside. That F.S.Z. Peregrino’s rejoinder to the “Address” was written on the fringes of the nation of the “greed of gold” is significant for how it fills in some geographically specific detail of the narrative of Pan-African struggle and thinking. The Peregrinos’ turn to Cape Town requires, then, that one think beyond the imperatives of racial essentialism or diasporic ‘returns’ as the site of nostalgic memorializations of Africa. Francis J. Peregrino’s ruminations on race prejudice call to our attention to how Pan-Africanism was a response to the darker shadings of racial structures that “constituted and [had] been constituted by global transformations.”²² As their political desires were inscribed with the logics and perturbations of empire, so were their Pan-Africanist sensibilities.²³ The posing of African spaces as co-extensive with the problem of the color line seems logical, given that Pan-Africanists writing at *fin de siècle* variously saw it as the crucial “feature of distinction between white and black men” or as “but a local phase of a global problem.”

Cape Town is, then, defined by multiple histories of migration and displacement. In this chapter I am in part concerned with making sense of how the grammar of imperial belonging was altered by the labors of diaspora. At the turn of the twentieth Cape Town retained a certain pride of place in South(ern) Africa as a migratory diasporic space and one in which black print culture and politics sought to meet the countenances of empire on their own ground. In the end I want to show that coming to terms with migration

²¹ F.Z.S. Peregrino, “Natives in South Africa,” *The South African Spectator*, 14th January, 1901, pg. 2.

²² Thomas and Clarke, “Globalization and the Transformations of Race,” in *Globalization and Race: Transformations in the Cultural Production of Blackness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), pg. 2.

²³ This is one of the central arguments in Victoria J. Collis’s dissertation *Anxious Records: Race, Imperial Belonging and the Black Literary Imagination, 1900 - 1946*. As Victoria J. Collis has suggested, the Peregrinos and many of their contemporaries were *black Victorians* and as such they sought to carve through their investments in British liberal imperialism, black political spaces. Victoria Collis, *Anxious Records*, pg. 20.

in the age of empire reframes diaspora among multiple axes rather than a singular one. Accounting for inter-colonial migration also will serve to open up the articulations of diaspora and blackness, a question which pushes us to work through some of the hidden histories of deterritorialized anti-colonial struggles.

The Returnee and the Diaspora: F.Z.S. Peregrino and the Politics of Vigilance

Journeys of bondage and indenture, to Europe, Africa and the Americas, were not the only ones that shaped the meanings of blackness in the nineteenth century. There were others, less numerous but nonetheless willful, which ignited a form of racial consciousness which, as the twentieth century drew to a dramatic opening, shifted the nineteenth century grammar of imperial citizenship toward new forms of desire and longing. A nineteenth century traveloguer of the Black Atlantic might have easily remarked on the migrations of New World returnees filling into the west coast of Africa. Indeed, like African American freedmen in Liberia and Sierra Leone, numerous Afro-Brazilians docked on the coasts of Nigeria and Ghana, some forming a culturally vibrant dialogue which, as J. Lorand Matory has shown, was part of a coeval trans-Atlantic making of African ethnicity and religiosity.²⁴ Among these Black Atlantic itinerants, the Afro-Brazilian Tabons played a prominent part in the urbanization of nineteenth century Accra. It's a small wonder that manumitted Brazilian slaves who left the shores of Bahia would settle on coastal cities such as Lagos and Accra. These were, after all, major portals to the Atlantic world. Ato Quayson notes in his recent book on Oxford Street in Accra that the Tabon departed from the Americas in possession of the requisite "urban skills" to set themselves apart and perform socio-economic functions that were crucial to the city's urban formation.²⁵ Their modernity owed neither to the "residual slave economy of the European forts and castles" - that we came across in Bayo Holsey's work - "nor to the normative religious implications of the Christian missions."²⁶ The Tabon metaphorise the more rhizomatic impulses of the African diaspora; invoking routes of migration and settlement that unfurl along the multiple axes of empire. The first group of Tabons to settle in Ghana, arriving in 1836, "was led by Nii Azumah Nelson I and included the Vialla (Viera), Manuel, Gomez, Peregrino, Mahama Nassu (or Nassau), and Zuzer families."²⁷ Of the Peregrino family, Francis Zacheus Santiago Peregrino (1851-1919) was born in Accra and would end his days in Cape Town having lived there for almost two decades. The life of the elder Peregrino - for F.Z.S. Peregrino was the father of Francis J. Peregrino - is a remarkable tale of itinerancy and the struggle to realize the desires of Pan-Africanism at the turn of the twentieth century.

²⁴ J. Lorand Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion*.

²⁵ Ato Quayson, *Oxford Street, Accra: City life and the Itineraries of Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 50-51.

²⁶ Ibid, pg. 51.

²⁷ Ibid, pg. 47.

F.Z.S. Peregrino died in Cape Town in 1919, where he had spent his life most notably as a Pan-Africanist journalist, editing the fortnightly periodical *The South African Spectator*. If there ever was a mis-apprehension of the peripatetic impulses that defined his genealogy and biography it was contained in his death notice. In it, he was listed as an “Ashanti (Negro)” from “Accra (Gold Coast).”²⁸ The official penchant for neat population classifications surely produced a misnomer that disciplined the itineraries of diaspora through the discursive “instrumentalization of ethnicity.”²⁹ Hence, the odyssey of the Peregrinos is reduced to insular continental origins, a narrative that excises his family’s long history of travel across the Atlantic. F.Z.S. Peregrino remains a figure in South African history about whom surprisingly little has been written.³⁰ In the late 1970s Christopher Saunders wrote about the despairingly scant record left of *The South African Spectator*. This may owe in part to the fragmentation of the archival traces left by people whose struggles were not defined by discreet geographic boundaries but certainly by their location outside of the institutions of memory purveyed by the forms of imperial and colonial power that they sought to contest.³¹ But the question of invisibility seems to me not to be appositely posed if thought of only in relation to colonial power. Apart from a surge of scholarship on Pan-Africanism, Ethiopianism and South African social and cultural history in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, and a hiatus that has only been bridged by contemporary scholarship on empire and diaspora, F.Z.S. Peregrino and his family have remained relatively marginal figures where one would expect their globally expansive routes to propose openings for how we might think about black intellectual formation in South Africa.

F.Z.S. Peregrino’s move to South Africa was inspired by the 1900 Pan-African Conference. He had been educated in Sierra Leone and lived in England where he married Sophia Williams. Prior to the Pan-African Conference he had been living in New York State, in the US, where he published a monthly called *The Fortnightly Spectator* out of

²⁸ Death notice of F.Z.S. Peregrino, 15th December 1927, KAB, File MOOC 6/9/2710, NASA, CT.

²⁹ Ato Quayson identifies this process as having obscured the diasporic origins of the Tabon in colonial Ghana. See *Oxford Street, Accra*, pp. 52-60.

³⁰ The same holds for his son, Francis J. Peregrino. In this section of this chapter focuses on F.Z.S. Peregrino and his writings in South Africa.

³¹ A perceptive reading of the politics of the archive in South Africa is Bhekizizwe Peterson’s “The Archives and the Political Imaginary” in Carolyn Hamilton et al’s (Editors) *Refiguring the Archive*. In responding to the question “how do we refigure the archives?” he points out that since “mainstream archival traditions in South Africa have been exclusionary . . . should we not, initially, occupy ourselves with locating, understanding and foregrounding the various forms of oppositional experiences and knowledge systems that are currently omitted from the archives in their present figuration?” Peterson, “The Archives and the Political Imaginary,” pp.29-30. F.Z.S. Peregrino’s work is curiously present and absent in the archives. Though *The South African Spectator* spanned much more of his life in South Africa, only about two years of the periodical survives. That very little work has been done in South Africa on him in comparison to maybe Sol Plaatje and other important newspaper men may also speak to the relatively marginal place of diaspora in how black intellectual and political formations are thought through in South African scholarship. Victoria Collis’s work on diasporic black intellectuals in Cape Town is groundbreaking in how it explicitly focuses on these movements and their “anxious records.” Bhekizizwe Peterson, “The Archives and the Political Imaginary,” Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris et al (Eds.) *Refiguring the Archive* (Dordrecht: Springer-Science+Business Media, 2002).

Albany and Buffalo. He would later describe his path to Cape Town as a Pan-African re-routing. He told the South African Native Affairs Commission in October of 1901 that “I did not leave America with a view to coming to South Africa at all. I went to South Africa to attend the South Africa Pan Congress [sic] and spent four months in South Africa all together, then I made up my mind to come here.”³² The Pan-African Conference might have sent a number of its participants en route to Cape Town but the advent of racial capitalism had created a mood of incredulity toward the Afrikaner Republics of South Africa some years before. The intensification of racial capitalism in the region sharpened the rhetorical shape of the Conference in part around the urgencies of its abrasive modernity. Indeed, South Africa was a key referent anchoring how to speak to the abuses of power and mobilize the politics of imperial responsibility as redress. This unhappy dialectic between the metropole and colonial was more than rhetorical. It was formed in the axis of mobilities that were grounded in colonial experience and modes of print circulation that purveyed these disabilities diasporically. In her work on the *Origins of Pan-Africanism*, Marika Sherwood has noted the prominent role that Ann Kinloch, a black South African who had married a Scottish engineer working in Natal, in linking-up the various strands of opinion for publicizing the lot of the African subjects of the British empire. Her journalistic amplifications of the “oppression of natives” through “‘the compound system’ and the ‘pass law’ introduced to limit the freedom of African mine workers” has been noted as a key influence in partly framing this juncture of Pan-Africanism around South Africa.³³ Kinloch was between South Africa and England in the period leading up to the conference and served as treasurer to the African Association in 1897.³⁴ She had alerted Henry Sylvester Williams to the struggles of Africans in South Africa. Since South Africa was in the midst of a military conflict whose *dramatis spersonae* were Afrikaner and British, it ignited the British loyalties of the African elite and their desires for full imperial citizenship after the war.³⁵ Victoria Collis has more pointedly observed that along with the South African War (1899-1902), the Pan-African Conference focused the attentions of the strivers for freedom *within* the grounds of the British empire. “If,” she argues, “the Scramble for Africa was a harbinger of this shift in colonial policy, it was in the aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War (1899 to 1902), that their marginalization became clear to black people who hoped to access modernity through empire. As the British and the Boers fought most of the Queen’s black subjects believed that British victory would mean the extension of the qualified Cape Franchise not only throughout the region, but across the

³² Peregrino quoted in Christopher Saunders, “F.Z.S. Peregrino and the South African Spectator,” pg. 88. This is a curious description of the Pan-African Conference. It is not clear whether this is an erroneous description of the conference on the part of Peregrino or whether there was some kind of transcription error made when he was giving evidence to the commission.

³³ Marika Sherwood, *Origins of Pan-Africanism*, pg. 41.

³⁴ *Ibid*, pg. 42.

³⁵ Peter Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*.

Empire.”³⁶ Kinloch seems to have had an influence on the efforts of the African Association, the the conference and Henry Sylvester Williams’ decision to move to South Africa at the turn of the twentieth century.³⁷ What is unclear is whether she had had any correspondence with F.Z.S. Peregrino. It is likely that Francis J. Peregrino who, as we have seen, was lecturing in London at the time, might have influenced his father to move his family to Cape Town. Francis J. Peregrino certainly attended the conference as he was listed on a circular publicizing it.³⁸ F.Z.S. Peregrino migrated to South Africa having agreed to be the agent of the Pan-African Society and there his American *Spectator* was reincarnated as the fortnightly *The South African Spectator*.

Kinloch is one link in this moment of Pan-Africanism between the colony and metropole whom we know very little of. As with Charlotte Manye Maxeke, her efforts at bridging the intimacies of collaboration and solidarity in the black diaspora have often gone unremarked. This is perhaps a piece with the history of the Pan-African movement wherein migration and the impulse for diasporic propaganda are presumed to be masculine endeavors.³⁹ One cannot underestimate their importance in the building of diasporic and Pan-Africanist institutions. They also lived significant parts of her lives in Kimberly which, along with the Witwatersrand, was a city in the Afrikaner Republics in which the mineral revolution and the mining industrial complex were to take hold between the 1860s and 1880s. It is significant to recall, as the next chapter will make more clear, that until 1910, the Union of South Africa did not as such exist. The abolition of slavery in the British empire in 1834 set into motion migrations and colonialisms that saw the two colonies of the Cape and Natal increasingly in conflict with the Afrikaner Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Hence, when the “Address to the Nations of the World” of the 1900 Pan-African Conference signals the “greed of gold” to which “the natives of Africa” were being sacrificed, their discourse implicitly invoked the expansion of “the rights of responsible government to the black colonies of Africa and the West Indies.”⁴⁰ In South Africa, this struggle was not just racial. It was at times an indistinguishable entanglement of race, geography and the promise of imperial citizenship. The “horizon of expectation” conceived among these Pan-Africanists, as seen from South Africa, was to be the northward expansion of the Cape and its British sensibilities. The critical juxtaposition of British imperial dominion with spaces of Afrikaner dominance was a paradigm in the black imagination that would animate the critique of empire through the First World War.

It is little wonder, then, that Cape Town was a destination of choice for F.Z.S. Peregrino. As South Africa’s “English Metropolis” Cape Town a most apt place from

³⁶ Victoria Collis, *Anxious Records*, pg 6.

³⁷ See Marika Sherwood, *Origins of Pan-Africanism*, Victoria Collis *Anxious Records*, and Tsitsi Jaji, *Africa in Stereo*.

³⁸ Sherwood, *Origins of Pan Africanism*, pg. 70.

³⁹ See Tsitsi Jaji, *Africa in Stereo*.

⁴⁰ “Address to the Nations of the World,” pp. 738-739.

which to disseminate and anchor the Pan-African Conference's manifesto. Evidently, F.Z.S. Peregrino wasted no time in articulating the Conference's prerogatives. Christopher Saunders notes that "*The South African Spectator* was on sale within six weeks of Peregrino's arrival in Cape Town" toward the end of 1900.⁴¹ "Natives in South Africa," one of the first editorials of *The South African Spectator*, F.Z.S. Peregrino amplified the furtive references to South Africa made in the "Address to the Nations of the World:"

The Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society have recently forwarded to Mr Chamberlain a letter, in which they express their sense of the importance of the question of the treatment and right of the native races of South Africa, and of the unique opportunity which is now offered for a decisive declaration against all native slavery, under whatever form of compulsory labor it maybe disguised. The treatment of the blacks by the Boers in the Transvaal is, proceed the committee, well known to have been utterly lacking in humanity; the Uitlanders have, speaking generally, accepted the Boer way of dealing with them, and their treatment by British colonists, it is to be feared, has not been in practice much better. It is submitted that it is in the highest degree necessary to provide safeguards, especially mining districts, against the appearance of slavery under the form of apprenticeship, "labor taxation," and the oppressive exercise of pass and compound systems. . . . They [the Committee] ask for a declaration that the natives shall enjoy the following privileges - which are enjoyed by the natives of India under Her Majesty's Proclamation of 1858, namely: Freedom of religion; property in lands, chattels, and cattle; rights of marriage; freedom of locomotion, of assembly, and of the Press; and equality with Europeans in Courts of Justice. Finally, the committee submit that this is an Imperial and not a Colonial question.⁴²

F.Z.S. Peregrino's sublimation of colonial rule within the fold of imperial justice fixed the longings of *fin de siècle* Pan-Africanism to the grammar of imperial citizenship. The Queen's Proclamation of 1858 - "all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the Law" - provided a key touchstone and reminder of the responsibility to offer equal treatment to those that Britain called its subjects. Though the article took "the treatment of the blacks by the Boers in the Transvaal" as the primary source of discontent and protest, the prevalence of their 'unBritish' "treatment by British colonists" loomed close in what he gestured to as threatening the ethos of imperial rule in South Africa. "Natives in South Africa" and the petition of the Committee forged a politic of vigilance toward the injustices of mining capitalism in the hinterland. This spatialization of the excesses of racial capitalism the Cape was invisibly situated as the space from which to speak about colonial marginality. In this spatial matrix the Cape and Afrikaner Republics were shaded as the desirable possible future and its illiberal antimony in the battle for South Africa.

The assumption of this strategy in South Africa was not new. Indeed F.Z.S. Peregrino's reframing of the Conference's manifesto was a re-inscription of John Jabavu's project begun a decade and-a-half before through *Imvo Zabantsundu*. It is perhaps an indi-

⁴¹ Christopher Saunders, "F.Z.S. Peregrino and the South African Spectator."

⁴² F.Z.S. Peregrino, "Natives of South Africa," *The South African Spectator*, 14th January 14th, 1901, pg. 2.

cation of the evolution of Jabavu's politics at a distance from his prior faith in Victorian imperial ideals that F.Z.S. Peregrino would find himself lampooned for deigning to speak for 'Natives in South Africa.' In December of 1907, Jabavu published "Uninformed Zeal" in *Imvo Zabantsundu* in which he put Peregrino and *The South African Spectator* to the sword for dabbling in a pot which was made not in his home. F.Z.S. Peregrino must have sustained his incredulity toward Afrikaner politics for Jabavu called him out for throwing his weight in with the British political parties in the elections of 1908. Jabavu inferred in F.Z.S. Peregrino's trans-colonial and trans-Atlantic itinerancies a condition of situational incompetence, one where diaspora was critically disabling: "He is himself not a native of South Africa at all," wrote Jabavu. "If we are not misinformed," he continued, "he is a comparatively recent arrival from the United States, after having been many years in England, to which he proceeded earlier from the West Coast of Africa. Natives of South Africa are asked to believe that in all these peregrinations "F.Z.S. Peregrino, Editor S.A. Spectator," has specially kept himself so informed of the "records" of Cape politicians that at this critical time Natives must throw up to the four winds of heaven the confidence in certain politicians . . ." ⁴³ Unfortunately, no copies of *The South African Spectator* from these years have survived to illuminate whether F.Z.S. Peregrino's defended himself against Jabavu. As we saw in the previous chapter, Jabavu was wont to ground a colonial politics that stood apart from the solidarities of diaspora. What we must imagine to have been a heated exchange raises some significant questions about the grounding of Pan-African print culture in specific colonial contexts. According to the Conference Report circulated before the Pan African Conference John Jabavu was among "many of our leading men" who offered "encouraging responses" to the organization of the Conference. ⁴⁴ The disjuncture between Jabavu's interest in the Pan-African Conference and his hostility toward its transposition from metropole to colony in F.Z.S. Peregrino and *The South African Spectator* is indeed vexing. Was it that the common struggles of race that fostered these links had limits at which 'local expertise' were to be presumed politically salient? Who, after all, could speak for the 'Natives of South Africa'? I do not wish to speculatively settle scores that may have existed between these two figures. But I do not read F.Z.S. Peregrino's 'comparatively recent arrival' in South Africa negatively. It was, indeed, a sign of his need to weave the struggle for imperial citizenship in Southern Africa into the geography of Pan-Africanism. A way of approaching this problem may be to think geographically. *The South African Spectator* was recruiting for the Pan-African Society - which F.Z.S. Peregrin seems to have joined at the Conference - soon after going into print in Cape Town. An advert on the Pan-African Society published early in 1901 demonstrates just how expansive the terrain of Southern Africa F.Z.S. Peregrino was working with. The advert states that the Pan-African Society was in "need of good reliable, and intelligent [male] residents of the following places to represent this society in

⁴³ John Jabavu quoted in D.D.T. Jabavu, *The Life of John Tengo Jabavu*, pp. 136-137.

⁴⁴ Quoted in Marika Sherwood, *Origins of Pan-Africanism*, pg. 71.

their respective localities: Kimberly, Rhodesia, Orange River Colony and Transvaal.”⁴⁵ In another advert for the Pan-African Society, F.Z.S. Peregrino gave a more detailed catalogue of the objectives of the Pan-African Society:

For the information of several correspondents who have written enquiring what are the aims and objects of this Society we append the following:

1. To secure to Africans and their descendants throughout the world their civil and political rights.
2. To ameliorate the condition of our oppressed brethren in the Continents of Africa, America and other parts of the world, by promoting efforts to secure effective legislation.
3. To encourage our people in educational, industrial, and commercial enterprises.
4. To foster friendly relations between the Caucasian and African races.
5. To organise a Bureau as a depository for collections of authorized productions, writings, and statistics relating to our people everywhere.
6. To raise a fund to be used solely for the forwarding of the above objects.⁴⁶

John Jabavu may have had reservations about *The South African Spectator's* reading of the South African political terrain but clearly he and F.Z.S. Peregrino were working with degrees of scale that were considerably different. In the vast terrain of Pan-Africanism *The South African Spectator* insinuated itself where the local and the global were affected by the problems of the color line. If, as Benedict Anderson has taught us, print cultures laid the foundation for national consciousness by addressing “people in their particular language-field, and at the same time that *only those* hundreds of thousands, or millions, so belonged,” the kind of community being ushered into self-consciousness in the pages of *The South African Spectator* was being encouraged to inhabit a modality of “horizontal-secular, transverse-time” that bound the multiple yet intertwined social strands of colony, nation, and empire together through the framing of blackness. A black periodical such *The South African Spectator* incessantly rendered black histories, contemporary experiences and struggles from various parts of the world into concise textual forms colliding and occurring interchangeably every fortnight.

It would be helpful to pause and reflect on what it is that the form of the periodical could do in purveying this form of black consciousness that other material forms of the text may not have been able to do. The periodical is a portable text par excellence. It embodied various forms of portability. Interested readers could purchase *The South African Spectator* at two pence. At eight pages per copy, it was also relatively short read packed full with different kinds of information covering news from all over South Africa and the black world as well as some social issues that readers might find to be of interest. One of the most interesting recurring sites of dissemination and summary in newspapers and periodicals is the editorial. Before turning to the work of the editorial I would like to make a few observations about the summary. In her work on Ghandi's printing press, Isabel

⁴⁵ F.Z.S. Peregrino, “The Pan-African Society,” *The South African Spectator*, 9th February, 1901, pg 7.

⁴⁶ Ibid, pg. 4.

Hofmeyr has shown that in his effort to fashion a community of “British Indians (imperial citizens)” out of the various strands of difference among “colonial born” Indians in South Africa, Ghandi’s periodical the *Indian Opinion* worked “the theme of the miniature and the summary” through which a “summary India” could be textually produced.⁴⁷ For Hofmeyr, Ghandi’s forging of an Indian nation in the *India Opinion* meant that “potential readers had to be addressed in linguistic compartments if one wished to draw them together in unity.”⁴⁸ *The South African Spectator* was engaged in a slightly different mode of miniaturization and summary. It cobbled snippets of history reportage into interchangeable forms of knowledge and reference out of the disparate geographies inhabited by the black diaspora. Turning to the editorial we can imagine that because these occurred with every issue of the periodical the repetition thrust the reader into a conveyor belt where they could sample various happenings in South Africa, the British empire and throughout the black diaspora. *The South African Spectator* thus habituated its readers to a kind of racial reading by shifting geographic referents sutured by the presence and experiences of the black diaspora. In effect *The South African Spectator* converted blackness into a way of viewing the world. Consider for instance that on the 9th of March readers were to come across the editorial “American Savages” which inverts a colonizing discourse to publicize the use of the American penal system to lynch African Americans, and those reading it on the 20th of April would come across, in “Terms of Peace,” a close reading of the discussions around the ending of the South African War and the “clauses which more directly affect the native and the colored man.” A reader interested in the latter question might have been struck by the affinities between South Africa during the war and the rumblings for independence in Cuba contained in Bruce Gret’s correspondences in “America”: “The Cubans want absolute independence; the American Government wishes to exercise a sort of guardianship over these peoples, which is distasteful to the leaders in those Islands. Already there is talk of plots and counterplots in Cuba showing an inclination on the part of the Cubans to breakaway from the restraint of the American government. The president’s utterance in his inaugural address in regard to Cuban independence reads smoothly enough and it is doubtless well meant, but the appointment of American civic and military (...) in those unhappy islands (will) goes on. Cuban independence is an iridescent dream. No Negro Americans have been appointed thus far to civic office in any of “our new colonial possessions,” thought there are any number of Negroes qualified by education and experience to fill these places.”⁴⁹ Reading Cuba’s struggle for independence alongside the South African War produces a view of two imperialisms - that of British imperialism at its high point and the nascence of American imperialism - and the unfulfilled promise of citizenship arising as the marker of the precarious state of blackness in both contexts. If the conflicts against dominance in the two geographies were simultaneously producing discourses and desires for freedom when read together in the an-

⁴⁷ Isabel Hofmeyr, *Ghandi’s Printing Press*, pg. 101.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, pg. 102.

⁴⁹ Bruce Gret, “America,” *The South African Spectator*, 20th April 1901, pg 2.

nals of a live black archive - or what F.Z.S. Peregrino thought of as a “depository for collections of authorized productions, writings, and statistics relating to our people everywhere” - the notion of freedom was shown to be at work in a context of radical instability where geographies could be collapsed to reveal the *embodied* alienation that bound them together. *The South African Spectator* folded these precarities into the structure of the periodical’s recurrent circulation so that these “worlds of color” could acquire their own analytical force in colonial space. This kind of horizontal reading enabled an overlapping reading in which, now coeval, the travails of citizenship across diaspora rendered the black subject the measure of progress.

F.Z.S. Peregrino was inevitably embroiled in the difficulty of translating blackness in the interstices of the Atlantic world and the racial ordering of South Africa and beyond. Resting between worlds of difference and similarity, *The South African Spectator* was beset by the “necessary haunting” of diaspora.⁵⁰ It is here that I think black print culture illuminates the problem of shaping a global black consciousness from within colonial space. Victoria J. Collis’ work on F.Z.S. Peregrino has illustrated how important the work of translation would become in the mobilizing of black consciousness in *The South African Spectator*. Collis, following Brent Hayes Edwards, suggests that race work on the margins of empire entailed disciplining the semantic instability of blackness by transposing and juxtaposing its various taxonomies into a framework of “relation.”⁵¹ The “race paper” took on a multilingual form - mainly English, Afrikaans and Xhosa - that fostered a “sense of racial community among those he identifies as colored.”⁵² Indeed, for Collis, multilingualism and the race paper became synonymous with each other in colonial spaces such as Cape Town where the pursuit of relation was as essential to the local as it was to the global dimensions of black community. Reading the race paper, then, symptomised the convocation of multiplicities reading and stretching the boundaries of knowing beyond the protocols of singular references of self. The multilingualism of *The South African Spectator* can be read as forming a black public by retaining - unlike Anderson’s publics which coalesced around a normalized vernacular - translation as the axis, or one of the meeting point of variegated black publics.

Collis has shown that in spite of its linguistic polyphony, *The South African Spectator* remained rather Anglocentric. This may not be surprising given that Victorianism undergirded the structure of citizenship at the Cape. Thus, while F.Z.S. Peregrino sought to eradicate certain forms of difference, others remained. In a short article presenting W.A. Roberts - then “President of the of the Colored Y.M.C.A., and also President of the Colored Men’s Political Protective Association” - as an ideal Victorian gentleman of color, he was careful to distinguish from what he was not: “Much misconception prevails abroad, not only in far off America, but in nearer Britain, as to the status of the colored man in [the] Cape Colony. . . . No discrimination would appear to be made between the uncivi-

⁵⁰ See Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*, pg. 14.

⁵¹ Ibid, pg. 20.

⁵² Victoria Collis, *Anxious Records*, pg. 96.

lized and benighted raw material, and the intelligent, industrious, and sober citizen, the efficient tradesman and business man, of who Cape Town furring so pleasing a quota. . . . With the view, therefore, to present the true picture and to correct the misrepresentations referred to through the medium of our American and European exchanges, we propose to publish in the Spectator, from time to time, brief sketches of the more prominent among the colored people of the Colony.”⁵³ I would like to stretch F.Z.S. Peregrino’s framing of respectable Victorian gentleman-hood beyond the claims of respectability here. The short series of biographies offered to present the ideal gentlemen of the race exist apart from “the uncivilized and benighted raw material” of those existing outside the code of Victorianism. But this discourse of identity also recoils from the ontological and cultural referents that would constitute indigenous sources of self (“Native”?). The Cape, as foundational to the institutions of modernity and British culture, becomes the spatial master co-ordinate for mapping out different forms of modernity in South Africa.

If F.Z.S. Peregrino’s presence in South Africa was anchored by the need to establish Cape Town in relation to the British metropole as an ideal geography of belonging in South Africa, how did he represent the geographies that, for the Pan-African Conference, were the most alienating to “the natives of Africa”? We have seen that the Afrikaner Republics, in particular the gold mines of the Witwatersrand, signaled one of the most urgent sites of appeal at the Pan-African Conference. Interestingly, F.Z.S. Peregrino’s longest critique of black labor at the mines came not through *The South African Spectator* but through his pamphlet of *Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal* (1910). It is unclear whether he was an occasional pamphleteer or took up writing in a longer form more frequently. A few years after this he published a pamphlet on *Political Parties and the Colored Vote* (1915) which advised its colored readers to vote for the Unionist Party in the national elections of 1915 because “they are followers of CECIL RHODES, who championed the cause of COLORED PEOPLE of South Africa and who insisted on EQUAL Rights for all Civilized men.”⁵⁴ *Political Parties and the Colored Vote* leaves some questions regarding the evolution of F.Z.S. Peregrino’s racial politics. Sure, Rhodes connected him to the history of imperial liberalism in South Africa but, as we saw in the last chapter, he was far from a guarantor of the franchise for black people. It is likely that F.Z.S. Peregrino had meant by “colored” “person[s] of mixed racial ancestry” who occupied “an intermediate position in the racial hierarchy,” as most of the population of the western Cape and Cape Town was. Does this mean that his outlook on South Africa’s racial gradations had changed since he arrived in Cape Town? Was this a strategic move to leverage the voting power of some black people? Who exactly was his audience? These things are not entirely clear. The pamphlet was translated into “Dutch” and isiXhosa, which was characteristic of his journalistic work. Since there are no surviving records of *The South African Spectator* after 1902, we can surmise from this pamphlet that F.Z.S. Peregrino retained his Victorian faith in the institutions of the British empire at the end of his career.

⁵³ F.Z.S. Peregrino, “W.A. Roberts,” *The South African Spectator*, 14th January, 1901, pg. 3.

⁵⁴ F.Z.S. Peregrino, *Political Parties and the Colored Vote*, pg. 8.

Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal is an interesting, if not perplexing, piece of late work by F.Z.S. Peregrino. It was provoked, wrote F.Z.S. Peregrino, by “conflicting rumours. . . as to the treatment of Natives and colored people in the Transvaal Mines.”⁵⁵ When the opportunity arose, toward the end of 1909, he took to making a trip to Johannesburg to see for himself the condition under which the laborers worked and what amelioration he might petition for them to receive. As the title suggests, *Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal* brandished the Cape Townian’s travelled experienced knowledge to make a judgement on the realities of miners in the Witwatersrand. Besides linking him to the concerns of the Conference of 1900 the labor question held great importance to F.Z.S. Peregrino because it focalized one of the contested ideas about the black subject in the modern political economy: his value for work. The black man, he wrote, was “reviled by his foes who maintain that he will not work, and he has friends equally in earnest in his defense and for his protection, who assert, that, given fair treatment, he can, and will work...” It was the latter view that was winning the day, in his mind. To his credit, he surmised, “the black man . . . is taking advantage of the improved conditions and of the better treatment, and is giving good account of himself as a labourer.”⁵⁶ *Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal* is a distinctly post-South African War text. The war had diminished the productivity of the mines and in the years leading to the founding of the Union of South Africa in 1910, Chinese indentured laborers had been introduced to the mining compounds. After 1910 greater efforts were made to bring migrant African laborers back on the mines.⁵⁷ F.Z.S. Peregrino evidently had great investments in proving the labor ethos of black South Africans. He was surprisingly quick to throw his weight in support of the Native Affairs Department and its just regimentation of black labor.

From my investigation and careful personal scrutiny on the spot, and from careful observation of labour conditions in other countries, I have not the slightest hesitation in affirming that nowhere in similar cases, is there a better system provided, and better arrangements effected looking to the comfort and protection of those who are really the wards of the Government, than is the provision made by the Native Affairs Department of the Transvaal, for the care and protection of those Natives and coloured people who would accept employment in and about the mines of that Colony.⁵⁸

The rest of *Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal* is made of short separately themed chapters describing aspects of the mines such as “Living Conditions at the Mines,” “Alleged Robbery of Returning Natives- Protection Against,” “Rules governing the Native Deposit and Remittance Agency,” “Native Eating Houses” and the like. Con-

⁵⁵ F.Z.S. Peregrino, *Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal*, pg. 2.

⁵⁶ F.Z.S. Peregrino, *Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal*, pg. 3.

⁵⁷ For a general discussion of this see Nigel Worden’s *The Making of Modern South Africa*, pg. 52.

⁵⁸ F.Z.S. Peregrino, *Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal*, pg. 6.

spicuously absent in these descriptions of life on the mining compounds are the voices of the black laborers themselves. That F.Z.S. Peregrino did not seem to have engaged them is surprising enough but the pamphlet is generally amiable toward the Native Affairs Department, with a dedication to Sir Godfrey Lagden for his “long and successful administration of the intricate affairs” of the department.⁵⁹ F.Z.S. Peregrino maintained his disposition not to “lavish praise on the undeserving,” which gives strength to his views on “native life” on the mines of the Transvaal. That the political economy of the mining industry and its compound system did not come in for any rebuke at all is most surprising. As we saw in “Natives in South Africa” F.Z.S. Peregrino’s early work in South Africa had labored to expose and renounce “the appearance of slavery under the form of apprenticeship, “labor taxation,” and the oppressive exercise of pass and compound systems” as encapsulating racial capitalism’s system of oppression in the Witwatersrand. Perhaps, being a distant reader, it is almost impossible to imagine “happy natives” on those compounds. The point of the matter is that the whole scenario was at some point wholly undesirable! The regard in which *Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal* is most revealing is that of how differently located black laborers were in the debate about colonial citizenship and imperial belonging in the early twentieth century. Indeed, the miners in the pamphlet seemed to be sealed off in a world in which their actions as politically productive was unimagined and their grievances unrepresentable by themselves. In *Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal*, F.Z.S. Peregrino had finally closed the distance between the geography in which the “Address” read sufferings of laboring South Africans. But the closure vindicated the conditions of these mines and placed them almost beyond reproach. In this considerable distance to which the common black laborer was held by the black Victorian we see the extent to which the language of (black) citizenship remained far from being universally emancipatory.

Maritime Cartographies: Captain Harry Dean in Search of an Ethiopian Empire

If, for F.Z.S. Peregrino, Cape Town was a privileged node from which to extend the peremptory Pan-African call to the “Great Powers of the civilized world” to awaken the “deep sense of justice of our age,” the race for imperial citizenship remained, as far as we can tell, the prevailing structure of feeling from which his politics were purveyed. There were other routes, however, through which Africa and its geographies of struggle signified a different narrative of belonging. In his work on the Black Atlantic, Paul Gilroy turned to the life and writings of the nationalist African American polymath Martin R. Delany (1815-1885) to elaborate upon a strand of black nationalism emerging out of the nineteenth century that sought the creation of “a powerful fatherland that could guarantee and champion the rights of slaves.”⁶⁰ Delany is important for Gilroy because his transnational peregrinations in Africa and the Americas in the mid-nineteenth century contributed to a marshalling into black thought in the west a desire for “forms of citizen-

⁵⁹ F.Z.S. Peregrino, *Life Among the Native and Colored Miners in the Transvaal*, pg. 1.

⁶⁰ Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, pg. 23.

ship and belonging that arose from the (re)generation of modern nationality in the form of an autonomous, black nation state.”⁶¹ To be sure, Delany’s ideas were shared by other figures such as the missionary Alexander Crummell (1819-1898) and journalist and abolitionist John Brown Russwurm (1799-1851) for whom emigration to Africa, particularly Liberia, was an alternative to the anguishes of American bondage and alienation. In the 1880s and 1890s Henry McNeal Turner, a senior bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal church (henceforth AME church) struggled to convince his detractors of his solemn wish to “see my people in the heart of Africa.”⁶² For African American evangelists and emigrationists Africa stood as a bridge where return was the fulfillment of a “providential destiny.”⁶³ As J. Mutero Chirenje suggests, providential destiny tied black American appraisals of Africa to a redemptive reconfiguration of a narrative where “the appalling contradictions in the transatlantic slave trade, chief among which was just how a loving God could have let slavery go on for so long without any apparent intervention.”⁶⁴ These melancholy musings may have located becoming at the elusive moment of loss and enslavement but what remained animated in them was the deterritorialized search for home. Bishop Henry McNeal Turner arrived in Cape Town in 1898 set on a path to expand the reach of the AME church. At some point in the midst of the South African War, an African American sailor named Captain Harry Dean docked on the shores of Cape Town with his ship the *Pedro Gorino*. He too was had taken it upon himself to confront the incomplete history of the middle passage. Only for him, the destination was the founding of an “Ethiopian Empire” that reincarnated Delany’s search for a “black nation state.”

There is one book written by Dean on his life as a seafarer: *The Pedro Gorino: The Adventures of a Negro Sea Captain in African and on the Seven Seas in His Attempts to Found an Ethiopian Empire: An Autobiographical Narrative* (2011 [1929]). *The Pedro Gorino* was published for the first time in 1929 in Chicago where Dean spent his last days having returned to the United States and lost his ship. It was only published again in 1989 under the title *Umbala: the Adventures of a Negro Sea-Captain* with an introduction by George Shepperson. A remarkable narrative of a seafaring life on board what Cyril V. Briggs of the African Blood Brotherhood would later call “the Negro Ship of State,” *The Pedro Gorino* turns our attention more closely to the chronotope of the ship and how, from its mappings of black space, one could fashion black belonging outside of the trappings of imperial citizenship.

The figure of the ship is synonymous with the birth and making of Atlantic history. As Gilroy observes, ships were the primary technology for “moving to and fro between nations, crossing borders” being themselves, “micro-systems of linguistic and political hy-

⁶¹ Ibid, pg. 23.

⁶² Turner quoted in J. Mutero Chirenje, *Ethiopianism and Afro-Americans in Southern Africa, 1883-1916* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), pg. 47.

⁶³ James T. Campbell, *Songs of Zion: the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pg. 251.

⁶⁴ J. Mutero Chirenje, *Ethiopianism and Afro-Americans in Southern Africa*, pg. 48.

bridity.”⁶⁵ The kinds of (voluntary) movements that have been a focus of this section would, however, be incomplete with some gesturing toward the importance of seafaring in this world. The work of historian Peter Linebaugh and others has suggested that we perhaps think about circuits of diasporic circulation, particularly of texts, through the itinerancies of black seafarers for throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries “the ship remains perhaps the most important conduit of pan-African communication before the appearance of the long-playing record.”⁶⁶ W. Jeffery Bolster offers a more detailed account of the history of black seafarers in *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (1997). In the long history of seafaring in the Black Atlantic, Dean is located in the twilight of its African American extension. During mid-eighteenth century, though most seafarers in the Anglo Atlantic world were white, “virtually all seafaring blacks were slaves.”⁶⁷ While seafaring was a “contemptible occupation for white men, characterized by a lack of personal independence and reliance on party wages,” for black slaves and freedmen seafaring nevertheless held, through the “tortuous channel through the North Atlantic,” the opportunity for them to take charge of their lives and to communicate with distant blacks.”⁶⁸ This changed with Emancipation. As Bolster explains, the racist exclusion of African Americans from maritime labor, mostly by white southerners who sought to bind them to agrarian labor, saw a dwindling of these numbers.⁶⁹ Bolster names Matthew Henson, Marcus Garvey and Langston Hughes among late nineteenth and early twentieth century race men who extended the tradition of the politics of black maritime culture. It’s rather curious that Dean does not feature in Bolster’s study. Dean’s life as a “Negro Sea Captain” fills the political and semantic space between territory and sea in ways that may offer some insight into how the grammar of imperial citizenship could be transformed into longing for a black empire. As Michele Stephens has argued, the “figure of the black mariner” postured a different black masculinity, one that “moved increasingly away from those Victorian definitions of manliness and gentlemanliness shaping black domestic constructions of the masculinity of the New Negro and the New World Negro.”⁷⁰ In this space, it seems apposite to pose the question what are the scales of history and desire generated by thinking that borders on the oceanic?

It would be impossible to come to terms with the magnitude of Harry Dean’s ambitions without reckoning with his equally remarkable genealogy. Dean was born in Philadelphia in 1864. He belonged to a line of black seafarers. The first among them was

⁶⁵ Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, pg. 12.

⁶⁶ Peter Linebaugh, “All the Atlantic Mountains Shook,” *Labour / Le Travail*, Vol. 10 (1982), pg. 119.

⁶⁷ W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), pg. 6.

⁶⁸ W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks*, pp. 3-4.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pg. 6.

⁷⁰ Michelle Stephens, *Black Empire*, pg. 107.

Sam Cuffee. According to Dean, was Sam Cuffee was born Kafu, probably from the present-day area of the Western Sahara. As a young man he rescued captain McKinnon Paige, the sole survivor of “a pirate ship wrecked off the northwest coast of Africa near the Rio de Oro.” He became Paige’s companion through his journeys. The two men changed their names - Paige to Captain Slocum and Kafu to Sam Cuffee - in London for fear of being discovered as pirates and eventually left England for the United States. They arrived in Salem, Massachusetts in 1740 where Cuffee settled on a life as a shipbuilder. Dean is careful to stress that Cuffee’s children - independent, misunderstood and disrespected by their white New England compatriots - maintained their bloodline by marrying into “free ‘negro’ families along the coast.”⁷¹ Dean might have indexed the noun “negro” in this passage in an effort to signify a free African bloodline. At any rate, Cuffee’s lineage was endowed with a particular sense of character tied to the seafaring life: “Maritime people are aristocrats wherever they go. The discipline and training of the sea endows men with unquenchable courage, and these free New England ‘negroes’ were as fearless seamen and as aristocratic in learning as an Nordic you may offer.”⁷² Seafaring, then, subverted the hierarchies of race built into the Atlantic structure and slave economy of the Americas. The sovereign qualities of maritime character bequeathed to the Cuffees an identity that existed implicitly at odds with the bounded formations that tethered the black subject to the tyranny of racism. Sam Cuffee’s fourth son, Paul Cuffee (1759-1817), according to Dean’s narration, was an autodidact who developed an indignance to the to “the unjust prejudice against his race.”⁷³ Paul Cuffee’s struggles against racial injustice culminated in him petitioning the American government on the ground of slavery. A shipbuilder like his father, Paul Cuffee was among the first in his family to put the ship at the helm of race work, his eyes set on an African American exodus, his emigrationist efforts would be closely tied to the politics of the American Colonization Society:

Before the War of 1812 he had outfitted his brig the *Traveler*, and sailed it to Norway, Russia, Denmark, England, and France. He had circumnavigated Africa, investigating its shores to discover the best place to found a national home for freed slaves. Having finally decided on the cape of Good Hope, he returned to England where he obtained the cooperation and enthusiastic assistance of Bishop Wilberforce, Clarkson the great abolitionist, the Duke of Portland, and several other noblemen.

These humanitarians arranged to secure the means to pay the southern planters the price of their slaves. The cooperation of the British Government was obtained whereby they were to purchase the British Territory of the Cape of Good Hope. Paul was to transport those who would be free to their new national home. But the slavers and the pro-slave el-

⁷¹ Harry Dean, *The Pedro Gorino: The Adventures of a Negro Sea-Captain in Africa and on the Seven Seas in His Attempts to Found an Ethiopian Empire: An Autobiographical Narrative* (Yardley: Westholme, 2011), pg. 7.

⁷² Ibid, pg. 7.

⁷³ Ibid, pg. 8

ement in England, America, France, Spain, Portugal, and the Islands were sufficiently strong to defeat the great 'negro' both at home and abroad."⁷⁴

Dean himself was the great-grandson of Paul Cuffee. His mother, Susan Cuffee was a widower who had married John Dean, whose "family had come from Quata, Morocco."⁷⁵ Dean was the last among the seafearers of the Cuffee bloodline. His Uncle Silas came visiting the Deans one day and convinced John and Susan to let their young Harry to go to sea with him. The young Dean soon found himself "crazy to go to sea."⁷⁶ He was just twelve years old!

The first book (of three) in *The Pedro Gorino* chronicles Dean's life before docking in Cape Town. The detailed genealogical framing of the history precursing his seafaring days offers more than a mere family history. Dean's craze 'to go to sea' reads like an obligation to family and history given the close links he draws between seafaring and the search for black sovereignty. But there are a number of enigmatic shifts in his narrative that warrant a reading beyond the protocols of biography. Is it any coincidence that, with Paul Cuffee having sought a 'national home' of black people in the Cape, Dean too found himself there at the turn of the twentieth century? Aside from the fulfillment of family history, what is it about the Cape that drew Dean to it? Dean himself has been to possess "a tendency to exaggerate and romanticize."⁷⁷ Though much of his narrative has been proven to have been true there are some factual errors that strike me as crucial to the narrative. To begin with, Sam Cuffee was an enslaved African who was taken to Massachusetts and bought by a Slocum who in turn bequeathed upon him his name.⁷⁸ Some sources indicate that his name was indeed Cuffee, most likely an alteration of Kofi, which places him among the Ashanti people of Ghana.⁷⁹ At any rate, the closest that Sam Cuffee and Slocum's relationship comes to the intimacy of a masculine fraternity acrossing the color line was that, as Paul Cuffee remembers it, "he procured the means of purchasing his own liberty."⁸⁰ Paul Cuffee himself rejected Slocum's name and took the one that had passed with his father across the middle passage. There is no mention of a seafaring

⁷⁴ Ibid, pg. 9.

⁷⁵ Ibid, pg. 13.

⁷⁶ Ibid, pg. 16.

⁷⁷ George Shepperson, "Introduction" to Harry Dean's *Umbala: The Adventures of a Negro Sea-Captain* (London: Pluto Press, 1989), pg. vii.

⁷⁸ See Paul Cuffee, *Memoir of Captain Paul Cuffee, a Man of Colour: To Which Subjoined the Epistle of the Society of Sierra Leone, in Africa, &c*" (London: C. Peacock, 1811), pg. 3.

⁷⁹ See Henry Louis Gates, Jr, "Who Led the First Back-to-Africa Effort?" in <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/history/who-led-the-1st-back-to-africa-effort/>. Accessed Wednesday 28th January, 2014 at 21:00.

⁸⁰ Paul Cuffee, *Memoir of Captain Paul Cuffee, a Man of Colour*, pg. 6.

trip and plans to establish a black homeland in the Cape of Good Hope in Paul Cuffee's short memoir.⁸¹ He had in fact taken to sea because "commerce furnished to industry more ample rewards than agriculture"⁸² and as James Sidbury has pointed out, from the late eighteenth century and his struggles against slavery and taxation without representation in the United States. He had a successful career as a sea captain and during these years he developed an interest in black emigration to Sierra Leone.⁸³ Dean's infringements upon history appear to have taken two forms. On the one hand he stretches the maritime history of his family across sea and time as if it were generated outside of the already present effects of Atlantic slavery. Furthermore, he carefully delineates a pattern of kinship among his ancestors that was either free or directly connected to Africa. Either way the condition of slavery is banished from his genealogy. On the other hand, he appears to be working with a cartography of seafaring, particularly where the question of emigration is concerned, that gives pride of place to the Cape as the ideal geography of black sovereignty.

I would like to return to the second aspect of historization in *The Pedro Gorino*. Cape Town actually fills a much larger space in Dean's political imagination than one would expect. One could think of it as a *generative* space for thinking about slavery, empire and black liberation. During one of his world-charting trips with his Uncle Silas, Dean landed in Cape Town. There under a moon fallen sky his uncle told him the story that would shape his life as a seafaring captain:

In the year 1619 a Dutch ship from the Cape named the Full Moon had come into Saldana Bay to get water. At that time the King of the Herreros was an old man and an invalid. The Dutch captain had seen the situation and having his own unscrupulous ends in mind had devised a treacherous plan. To succeed, it had been necessary to incapacitate the King and his best men. The captain had offered his medical services to the King. He had told the King that he could make wine out of water, scare away devils, raise the dead, and a hundred other equally miraculous things; that to cure a sick man was as easy as lifting his hand. The sick old King and his counselors had been overjoyed and had allowed the Dutch captain and several of his men to come ashore. This had been exactly what the captain had wished. He had ordered the sailors to carry ashore a great quantity of Holland gin which they had proceeded to pour down the throats of the unsuspecting natives until every able-bodied man in the kraal had become dead drunk. Then when they had placed all the warriors, and the King, in a stupor, they had robbed these natives of all their valuable possessions, kidnapped sixteen little girls and four little boys all under the age of puberty and had made their departure. These defenseless children after a terrible voyage in the hold of the vessel had later been sold into slavery at Jamestown, Virginia. "That's how it started," my uncle concluded. "From then on they were buying and selling men and women like so many dumb animals the length and breadth of the Colonies."

⁸¹ Ibid, pg. 11.

⁸² Ibid, pg. 7.

⁸³ James Sidbury, *Becoming African in America: Race and Nation in the Early Black Atlantic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pg. 146.

I was incensed at the Dutch captain's wickedness. 'Why didn't they chase the Dutchmen and shoot them and bring back their little children?' I asked.

'Not a ship among them,' my uncle explained.

'That has been the downfall of our race.'

'They shall have ships, they shall have ships, they shall. . . .' I said this over and over again as I sat on the beach in the moonlight.⁸⁴

This passage marks the conversion of a seafaring life from the passions of a boy and his curiosity for adventure to a narrative of the tragic initiation of blackness into modernity. The aspiration to redeem this unhappy history is simultaneously conjured up in this bleak crevice of memory. It all began, one could say, with a ship in Cape Town. But, once more, there are some curious inversions of actual historical events. Indeed, for historians the purchase of about twenty Africans from a Dutch ship in 1619 - they were sold off in Jamestown, Virginia - does mark a seminal moment in American history.⁸⁵ The origins of these Africans is not, however, specified. Of course, Dutch and Portuguese ships had made their way to the Cape of Good Hope by the end of the fifteenth century but no connection has been made between South Africa and the United States through this early moment in the slave trade. In his writing of the geography of history Dean fills in (or makes?) this latent structure of coequality as foundational to the black modern. Dean is also working with a very different sense of sovereignty than one that takes the nation-state to be the key territorial structure of its making and guarantee. "Not a ship among them" "That has been the downfall of our race" restructures the notion of sovereignty around the sea and its ships rather than territory. Dean's narrative, then, pushes against the grand narrative of slavery as the cause of the kind of black seafaring politic such as that of his own. Returning to Cape Town, from this perspective, makes sense. It gestures toward a the closure of complete return and a compensation for the loss of the middle passage through the romance of black empire.

I would like turn, at last, to the story of Dean and the Pedro Gorino in Cape Town. But before doing so, I would like to draw out another omission in Dean's narrative that may be significant. Dean indeed docked the Pedro Gorino in Cape Town, like Peregrino and other people of the black diaspora, at the time of the South African War. Dean omits from his narrative that he was among those who had attended the Pan-African Conference of 1900.⁸⁶ Apparently he had suggested to the chairman of the Conference, W.E.B. Du Bois, that "he (Dean) lead a black army across the Strait of Gibraltar to liber-

⁸⁴ Harry Dean, *The Pedro Gorino*, pp. 53-54.

⁸⁵ See Peter H. Wood, "Strange New Land: 1619-1776," in Robin D.G. Kelley and Earl Lewis (Editors) *To Make Our World Anew: A History of African Americans to 1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pg. 53.

⁸⁶ According to Marika Sherwood, in his unpublished Masters Thesis, John S. Burger does makes mention of attending the conference. See Sherwood, *Origins of Pan-Africanism*, pg. 153 & pg. 313. Burger certainly confirms this in his article "Harry Dean: Pan-Negro Nationalist in South Africa" but the conference is not hinted at in *The Pedro Gorino*.

ate the continent.”⁸⁷ Du Bois and other Conference attendees paid Dean little heed and thought his design for a forcibly liberated African homeland to be rather impracticable.⁸⁸ Of course the Conference itself privileged imperial belonging under the “Great Powers of the civilized world.” The absence of the Pan-African Conference from *The Pedro Gorino* may owe to the difficulties Dean experienced in channeling his dreams into the program of the Conference. John S. Burger has suggested that the purchase of the Pedro Gorino and Cape Town became a destination for Dean only after his disappointment in London. Was the Conference silenced in *The Pedro Gorino* because, like other instances, its discarded futures were not usable to Dean’s ultimate destination? Or was Dean more concerned to foreground the sociabilities of maritime existence that held his dream together? As delineated in *The Pedro Gorino*, Dean’s bridge to Cape Town, rather than the Conference, is laid by the brotherhood of the sea: “Fortunately for my project I met Captain Forbes early in life. He became my patron and sponsor just as Clarkson and Wilberforce had been Paul Cuffe’s. To him I attribute what I possess of the higher reaches of nautical science. He it was who taught me the theory and technique of international maritime practice.”⁸⁹ Dean and Forbes were joined in their endeavors by Sydney Wilson, “a West Indian sailor.” They purchased the Pedro Gorino in Stavanger, Norway and set sail for Cape Town.⁹⁰ Dean’s ‘play’ with history signals some shifts in how we may recalibrate the construction of early Pan-Africanism. George Shepperson has quite helpfully distinguished between “Pan-Africanism” and “pan-Africanism.” The first can be associated with the actual Pan-African Conferences of the first half of the twentieth century. The second, he suggests, is more of “a group of movements, many ephemeral” in which “the cultural element often predominates.”⁹¹ But what do we do with avenues of struggle that were mooted and in turn discarded by the Conference at *findesiecle*? It would be too easy to locate Dean in the genealogy of “pan-Africanism” as a precursor of Marcus Garvey. This does not, however, allow us to understand the imaginaries that were contemporaneous with but evacuated from the institution of Pan-Africanism at the cusp of its making. Perhaps the difficulty of Dean’s position within this matrix of Pan-Africanism is that it made the leap of thinking about a politic of diaspora that was an ‘international maritime practice.’

Dean’s mission in Cape Town and through southern Africa is of interest because of the multiple strands of blackness that are gathered in his narrative. His vision of a black empire rewrites African space as the conduit of an autonomous black cosmopolitanism. One could even think of Dean’s Cape Town as the site of a black cosmopoli-

⁸⁷ John S. Burger, “Harry Dean: Pan-Negro Nationalist in South Africa,” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1976), pg. 84.

⁸⁸ John S. Burger, “Harry Dean, Pan-Negro Nationalist in South Africa,” pg. 84.

⁸⁹ Harry Dean, *The Pedro Gorino*, pg. 68.

⁹⁰ John S. Burger, “Harry Dean, Pan-Negro Nationalist in South Africa,” pg. 84.

⁹¹ George Shepperson, “Pan-Africanism and “Pan-Africanism.” Some Historical Notes,” *Phylon*, Vol. 23 (1962), pg. 346.

tanism at work. Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo has defined black cosmopolitanism apart from the vulgar cosmopolitanism (of the West) by suggesting that if we take “the power dynamics that produce or prevent the production of the cosmopolite,” then part of what we need to take seriously is “the ways individuals and entities seek to define people of African descent and articulate the relationship among them and between them and the world at large.”⁹² If we also put “habitat” into the concept, then its reach toward a “planetary consciousness” will always be restrained by territoriality and its politics as shaping the kinds of mobilities and habitations of space that are possible. Though Nwankwo’s work turns to the hemispheric west to unpack the implications of this thinking, remembering the reach of these currents across the continents maps the spaces of significance in this thinking. Dean’s Cape Town is full of seafarers, merchants, race men working through print culture such as F.Z.S. Peregrino, religious actors such as Bishop L.J. Coppin and his wife Fanny J. Coppin of the AME Church, speculators made wealthy by the diamond rush in Kimberley such as Haji Hassan and the Texan Kid Gardener. *The Pedro Gorino* converts Cape Town from the kind of cosmopolitanism of a colonial city to that of a geography of black collaboration: “There was a coffee house on Hanover Street, a typical English coffee ouse, two steps up with little green tables and a silver urn for making cocoa. It was run by an Africano, a congenial old fellow. It was here that I picked up some of my best friends, men who were to play an important part in the next few years of my life. Here it was that I picked up a new crew to replace the Norwegians who sailed the ship to Cape Town. Among the first were peter Benjamin and Will Braithwaith from Barbados. They were both intelligent fellows and just the sort I was looking for.”⁹³ Being a port city on the tip of the British empire in Africa, “the great maritime crossroads of Cape Town” was an ideal setting for the ship of a black empire.⁹⁴ Dean drew a crew around him and established “a regular freight and passenger service.”⁹⁵ A vessel of transnational black mobility itself the *Pedro Gorino* was manned by “four native Africans” (whose origins are curiously not described by Dean) with the rest being “from South America and the West Indies.”⁹⁶

The *Pedro Gorino* anchors Dean to a life of inter-colonial mobility. From Cape Town, the ship sets sail for Port Elizabeth, East London, Port St Johns, Cape Agulhas, and Maputo, where Dean is offered purchase of the colony of Mozambique (then Lorenzo Marques) by Senghor De Costa. Dean’s search of a “national homeland” for the “wandering Ethiopians of the world” takes on an interesting quality once the *Pedro Gorino* brings him to encounter the colonial and diasporic fragments of the region. The arrival of Bishop L.J. and Fanny J. Coppin in Cape Town, heavily anticipated among the

⁹² Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo, *Black Cosmopolitanism*, pg. 10-12.

⁹³ Harry Dean, *The Pedro Gorino*, pg. 79.

⁹⁴ Alan Gregor Cobley, “Far from Home: the Origin and Significance of the Caribbean Community in South Africa to 1930,” *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1992), pg. 357.

⁹⁵ Harry Dean, *The Pedro Gorino*, pg. 90.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, pg. 90.

Pan-African assemblage of Cape Town, opens up a few frontier of collaboration. Though “inclined more toward Buddhism” than Christianity, the Dean and L.J. Coppin begin to work together as *race men*: “When the Bishop discovered my aims and ambitions in Africa he began to realize how much we have in common and out friendship grew daily.”⁹⁷ The need to “sacrifice much for your race” shifts the register from religion more explicitly to the grounds of race work. Dean agrees to leave his Cape Town business with the Pedro Gorino and work with King “Segow Faku” (Sigcau Faku) in Pondoland “building schools and making arrangements for a mission.”⁹⁸ Here, the desire for an Ethiopian Empire would appear to unfurl and become disaggregated into the institutions of religion and education as the primary grounds upon which “native Ethiopians” are to have access to modernity. But Dean quickly reorganizes these tropes and casts the framework of expectation to the mastery of the sea: “Almost every days there were more talks with the King I explained the strategic position of his country, its sources and possibilities. I discussed the future of Port St. John’s and, as an old seaman, offered my advice as to improvements in the little harbor. . . . Above all, I extolled nautical science and the discipline of the sea.”⁹⁹ The designs of empire creep, quite expectedly, into Dean’s tutelage among Sigcawu Faku’s people. His pedagogy reinscribes the geography of uplift and modernity through maritime specters of black empire. But Dean’s plan to re-frame the narrative of modernity around mastery of the sea is thwarted by Dean’s injury and illness. He returns to Cape Town to continue to labor for the financing of the purchase of Mozambique. His encounter with Sigcawu Faku and his people leaves his nautical dreams in limbo, trapped in the crevices of the narrative of modernization and the contingencies of colonial power and everyday life. What do we do with this disintegrating future of maritime supremacy?

I would like to close off this section by ruminating on loss a little more. It is not always easy to read *The Pedro Gorino* along the grain of the epic history that it seeks to construct. Ultimately, this form of monumental history making is absent in the book. It is, after all, the story of a single man’s singular quest. Dean appears to be the only figure in his narrative whose understanding of Pan-Africanism at *fin de siècle* conjoins discourse about the lay of empire and the sea. Perhaps the singularity of Dean’s vision owes to the exceptional genealogy his story is an extension of. *The Pedro Gorino* cannot escape the conditions of its own exceptionality. It is, after all, the story of an individual hero and his quest for monumental history. Whether Dean’s imagination was too robust and unbounded by the respectable character of black Victorian petitions and performances of imperial belonging to be reigned into its discourses and our protocols of memory is a point to consider. Dean’s fall from the sovereignty and redemption that the state of black empire was to create marked out the poignancy of his alienation from the community he sought to bring out of the grasp of Euro-American empire. The purchase of Mozambique calls upon the black community to develop its own pipeline of finance capital to collectively

⁹⁷ Ibid, pg. 142.

⁹⁸ Ibid, pg. 166.

⁹⁹ Ibid, pg. 179.

buy the land. Dean's request for assistance comes to nought. At the loss of the "the greatest chance the 'negro' has ever had to rehabilitate Africa," he left his harshest reproach to African Americans:

Every prominent Ethiopian in America had been approached. Without exception they tried to dissuade me. They did not realize that before their eyes, within the reach of their hands, was a possibility to return to their own motherland, to return to the only environment in the world that fits the needs of the colored man, body, mind and soul. They did not realize that for the first time in thousands of years Africa had a chance of arising to her old glory.

Why did you not respond, men of my race? You'd not respond because you were born in a land where the Caucasian is in power and the Ethiopian can only imitate. You did not respond because of the centuries during which you have labored under the hypnotic influence of false ideals, false logic, false education, and false come of morals, You did not respond because the spirit had been beaten and whipped from your black bodies until you could no longer hold up your heads.¹⁰⁰

Dean's election of African Americans as almost the only community in the diaspora to finance the purchase of Mozambique is rather curious, given that his whole project and the socialites around which it was built required the fashioning together of the diverse strands of the black diaspora to a massive exodus to a new homeland. Whether Dean was returning to a version of providential design which placed the burden of finance upon African Americans is something to think through a little more. The circumvention of Dean's ideal of diasporic return seems to call back to mind the genealogical and biographical difference that marked out the peculiarities of his Pan-African vision. The condition of enslavement returns; residually lodged in the mind, and comes to frame the limits of collectively making a black empire. This, coupled with a penchant for sea travel, of course, is what his genealogy sets him apart from. Reading *The Pedro Gorino* as a narrative woven around the anxieties and possibilities of community across the Atlantic makes for a powerful re-reading of diaspora. It centers the drama of becoming sovereign around African geographies and a circuit of movement tenuously held together by the sea. Perhaps Dean's straining for exceptionality and heroism pushes his narrative against history in some unexpected ways but the one boundary he so valiantly pushes against and enjoins us to reconsider is one where the grammar of belonging can re-drawn again the cartography of Euro-American empire. In casting diaspora to sea again, *The Pedro Gorino*, animates some of the lasting rubrics for rethinking a black project of liberation: the need for multiple unbounded mobilities and the possibility of a black cartography of sovereignty.

The end of Dean's days in South Africa were abrupt and treacherous. He was reduced to a homeless fugitive. His race work had made him "an enemy of the British Government" and his debts gave his foes reason to close in on him and expel him from Cape Town, leaving his ship and crew for life as "a fugitive from justice" in the South

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, pp. 123-124.

Atlantic.¹⁰¹ He made his way back to the United States at the beginning of the First World War. He died in Chicago in 1935 but not before writing and publishing *The Pedro Gorino*. A captain without his ship, his heroic dreams eluded him. After the first world war, a Pan-African nationalist born in Jamaica named Marcus Garvey (1887-1940) arrived in the United States. He founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (henceforth UNIA) in 1919 but alongside the association he also organized The Black Star Line Corporation. The corporation fused entrepreneurship with a radical nationalist politics that privileged the mobility of black people. The “Negro race scattered in Africa, the Americas and the West Indies” were going to have ships.¹⁰² Garvey’s peripatetic wanderings in the Americas, punctuated by his first hand experience of the common suffering of black people, lead him to dream of gathering the scattering of the black diaspora into one movement: “Having travelled extensively throughout the world and seriously studying the economical and industrial needs of our people, I found out that the quickest and easiest way to reach them was by steamship communication. So immediately after I succeeded in forming the Universal Negro Improvement Association in America, I launched the idea of floating ships under the direction of Negroes.”¹⁰³ In his quest to make the “black transnational dream of free movement in modernity” a reality, Garvey was at the brink of resuscitating the dreams that Captain Harry Dean had fought to the bitter end to breathe life into.¹⁰⁴ Dean and Garvey were alike in how closely they linked the redemption of the descendants of Africa to a culture of maritime mobility. It is highly unlikely that Dean and Garvey ever met. It is a small wonder, though, that the grand cartographies that inspired their desires for the African diaspora brought their shadows together in the city of Cape Town.

Clements Kadalie: “the great African Marcus Garvey”

On the 20th of May, 1920, a young African trade unionist by the name of Clements Kadalie wrote to S.M. Bennett Ncwana of Zonnebloem College, Cape Town. Kadalie was at pains to express to Bennett Ncwana his intention to partake in lessons from the “Efficiency Institute” and regretted the latter’s inability to do so himself. “My essential object is to be the great African Marcus Garvey and I don’t mind how much I shall pay for that education.”¹⁰⁵ Kadalie had wished that Bennett Ncwana would have been able to join him “at the Dock Gate.” He had organized a meeting at the docks that would involve some public teaching. “I have got all the information and I shall be looking for

¹⁰¹ Ibid, pg. 260-261.

¹⁰² Marcus Garvey quoted in Michelle Stephens, *Black Empire*, pg. 111.

¹⁰³ Marcus Garvey quoted in Michelle Stephens, *Black Empire*, pp. 111-112.

¹⁰⁴ Michelle Stephens, *Black Empire*, pg. 110.

¹⁰⁵ Kadalie to Bennett-Ncwana, 20th May, 1920, Marwick Papers, File 73, Killie Campbell Library, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

young men to go along with me and open up the Club at which the instructor will once a month come and teach in public.”¹⁰⁶ A few months before this - December of 1919 - Kadalie, the general secretary of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (henceforth the I.C.U.), had helped organize and lead a strike of the black dock workers of Cape Town. His interest in taking lessons from the “Efficiency Institute” was related to his work as a labor organizer. In his autobiography, Kadalie recalled that it was after the dock worker’s strike that “I had a big part to play in the trade union movement. I therefore decided to equip myself intellectually With this object in view I enrolled as a student with the Efficiency Institute, especially taking lessons in the art of public speaking, for which one guinea a month was paid as fees. This school had hitherto exclusively enrolled Europeans.”¹⁰⁷ Kadalie’s lament at Bennett Ncwana’s absence is understandable. The two men shared what seems to have been an intimate if at times complicated life in the early 1920s as collaborators in journalism and labor organizing. Apart from their involvement with the I.C.U. the two men worked together in publishing the first periodical connected to the I.C.U.: *The Black Man*.¹⁰⁸ It was perhaps a furtive homage to Garvey that *The Black Man* saw itself as “a Journal propagating the interests of Workers throughout the African Continent.”

Why was Garvey so important to Kadalie as he sought to locate himself in the political theatre of Cape Town? In his autobiography, *My Life and the ICU: the Autobiography of a Black Trade Unionist in South Africa* (1970), he had surprisingly little to say about Garvey that recalls the influence of the charismatic leader he styled himself after in his youth. “I did not believe in the slogan of ‘Africa for the Africans’ which was,” he said, “popular during the post-war period among the oppressed peoples of African descent throughout the world. I believed, as I believe now, that the salvation of the Africans in this country will be brought about through their own sweat and labour.”¹⁰⁹ *My Life and the ICU* was written in the 1940s, when Kadalie’s political career was already in decline and, as Stanley Trapido has observed, given the tenuous place of the I.C.U. in South African history, he “sought acknowledgement of his achievements in a country which denied him the recognition he deserved.”¹¹⁰ Perhaps in his “egoist vitality,” the older Kadalie obscured Garvey from the remnants of a legacy that marked his beginnings and the diasporic out-

¹⁰⁶ Kadalie to Bennett-Ncwana, 20th May, 1920, Marwick Papers, File 73, Killie Campbell Library, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

¹⁰⁷ Clements Kadalie, *My Life and the ICU: The Autobiography of a Black Trade Unionist in South Africa* (London: Frank Cass and Company, 1970), pp. 44-45.

¹⁰⁸ Kadalie’s letter to Bennett Ncwana, Killie Campbell, Image 8418. Les and Donna Switzer point out that *The Black Man* began circulating in July of 1920 and appears to have only been around until December of that year but in an article ran in *The Black Man* indicated that the periodical had been running for a year in August of 1920. See Les and Donna Switzer, *The Black Press in South Africa and Lesotho*, pg. 31 and “Brief News of the Month,” *The Black Man*, September 1920, pg. 3.

¹⁰⁹ Clements Kadalie, *My Life and the ICU*, pg. 221.

¹¹⁰ Stanley Trapido, “Introduction” to *My Life and the ICU*, pg. 11.

look of the I.C.U.¹¹¹ Indeed, in *My Life and the ICU* he distances himself from two of the most popular political ideologies to capture the black imagination after the First World War: Garveyism and Communism. Kadalie's portrait of the early days of the ICU in Cape Town sets the stage for an iteration of a cosmopolitan diasporic radicalism with its eyes cast against white racism. "In Cape Town there was a considerable number of West Indian Negroes at that time. Some of these men were highly cultured, and most of them were employed at the docks as stevedores in various occupations such as shipwrights, foremen etc. The second chairman of the ICU, James King, was a Negro, and a good tradesman, while J.G. Gumbs, another Negro, and a third chairman, who afterwards occupied the ICU presidency from until 1924 until his death in 1919, was a qualified chemist, as well as a rigger at the Cape Town docks."¹¹² In his later years, Kadalie preferred to locate himself in a singular tradition of radicalism - that of a "Black Trade Unionist in South Africa" - out of the multiple strands that ran through the I.C.U. in the 1920s: "When the Marcus Garvey movement was at its height, these [West Indian] Negroes in South Africa tried to use the ICU as an auxiliary of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, but, just as was the case with the Communist Party of South Africa, I became the stumbling block against their machinations, since I abhor serving two masters at the same time in my political make-up."¹¹³

Indeed, Kadalie labored quite some in the 1920s to siphon the influence of Garveyism and communism from the I.C.U. and maintain that it was a labor organization and not a political one. But there appears to have been a strikingly enduring quality about Kadalie that resembled Garvey. An article published in the *Natal Advertiser* in 1924 remarked that "The native stump orator promises to become a regular feature on our landscape, and a frequent figure in our courts."¹¹⁴ This article on "Native Orators" was sparked by a meeting that took place in 1924 in which "a large crowd of natives gathered around a group of four or five smartly dressed compatriots, who represented the so-called Industrial and Commercial Worker's Union."¹¹⁵ It is likely that Kadalie, who had since moved the I.C.U.'s headquarters from Cape Town to Johannesburg as it became a national labor organization, was among the speakers in this gathering for in a piece published in the *Sunday Times* about a month after this noted that "Clement[s] Kadalie the immaculately dressed Nyasaland Native whose organizing meetings for Natives on the Market Square, Johannesburg, were so rudely interrupted by the Police of September 17, has been contributing inflammatory articles on South African affairs to the negro Press in

¹¹¹ See Stanley Trapido, "Preface" to Clements Kadalie's *My Life and the ICU*, pg. 8.

¹¹² Clements Kadalie, *My Life and the ICU*, pg. 220.

¹¹³ Clements Kadalie, *My Life and the ICU*, pp. 220-221.

¹¹⁴ Article taken from "Natal Advertiser," 18th September, 1924, Marwick Papers, File 73, Killie Campbell Library, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

¹¹⁵ Article taken from "Natal Advertiser," 18th September, 1924, Marwick Papers, File 73, Killie Campbell Library, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

America.”¹¹⁶ Garvey’s oratory and penchant for appropriating the regal sartorialism of Western monarchies in order to publicly embody an imperial black sovereignty is well known. Michelle Stephens has argued that Garvey’s masculine black nationalism was keenly sensitive to “the forms of popular spectacles that mobilize mass audiences” who may not have been “involved in everyday print culture.”¹¹⁷ Garvey, she argues, went further in transferring his “popular nationalistic spectacles” to shape “a *global* rather than a *national* imaginary.”¹¹⁸ In his historical study on Caribbean radicalism in the United States during this time, Winston James has pointed out how important “oratory and good talking” was to Caribbean radicals such as Garvey, Hubert Harrison and others. Oratory and elocution “were taught at school,” he offers, but “elocution lessons were often offered and paid for privately. . . . Public speaking, good conversation, story telling, the dexterous and elegant manipulation of words, whether in Creole or standard English were all highly regarded, and emulated.”¹¹⁹ Garvey possessed and transferred to his public performances the kind of self-possession and elocution that Kadalie announced to be his means for doing political work at the Cape Town dock to Bennett Ncwana. The spectacles that purveyed political organizing in Cape Town and Johannesburg, particularly their sartorial dimensions and command of public space, obviously caught the eye of journalists and the state. Of equal concern was the projection of the political situation of black workers in South Africa to a transnational black public sphere which informed Kadalie’s vision for a continental black labor movement. The markers of self-possession, public spectacle and transnational communication that Kadalie displayed signal the conversion of Garveyist semantics of the body to the moment of the making of a black labor movement in South Africa and beyond.

In this section I begin to read for the various traces of migration and diaspora that were present at the beginnings of the I.C.U. and Kadalie’s career in it. I have begun with an exposition of the complicated and entangled histories of Garveyism and the nascence of the black labour movement in South Africa because of how explicitly they situate Cape Town and the black diaspora at the center of their confluence. Alan Gregor Copley and Robert Trent Vinson have been among the scholars who have written about the extent and influence of West Indians in Cape Town during this period.¹²⁰ West Indians, Copley points out after Tony Martin, are well known to be a “very migrating people” but

¹¹⁶ “Black Libels in Black Press,” 5th October 1924, Marwick Papers, File 73, Killie Campbell Library, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

¹¹⁷ Michelle Stephens, *Black Empire*, pg. 81.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Winston James, *Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia: Caribbean Radicalism in Early Twentieth-Century America* (London: Verso, 1998), pg. 80.

¹²⁰ See Alan Gregor Copley and Robert Trent Vinson. Victoria Collis-Buthelezi is another scholar of a younger generation whose work is teasing out these linkages and their implications for how we can imagine Cape Town. See Victoria Collis, *Anxious Records* and Victoria Collis-Buthelezi, “Caribbean Regionalism, South Africa, and Mapping New World Studies,” *Small Axe: a Caribbean platform of Criticism*, Vol. 46 (2015).

their itinerancies between the Caribbean and Cape Town “were a product of British imperial linkages.”¹²¹ With the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley (1860s) and gold in the Witwatersrand (1880s) the ports of South Africa were further integrated into the networks of commerce in the trans-Atlantic world and black seafarers from the Caribbean docked on the port cities of South Africa, most ostensibly in Cape Town, in search of work. In a show of commitment to the British empire, some Caribbean seafarers arrived in Cape Town around the turn of the twentieth century to aide the effort against the Afrikaner Republics in the South African War.¹²² The Cape Town census of 1904 listed close to 450 West Indian “Negroes” and close to 100 American “Negroes” in the city but one cannot underestimate the political influence of this community.¹²³ One of the striking features of Winston James’ study of Caribbean radicals in early twentieth century America is how considerable their influence was given the relative sparseness of the population.¹²⁴ The same held for the West Indians seafarers who made their lives in Cape Town. As Vinson explains, though they had a reputation for being “tough, hard back-boned Negroes . . . of the he-man type, aggressive and daring,” their notorious personality was interlaced with Pan-African outlook and a propensity for “Combination and Co-operation among the disparate ethnic groups.”¹²⁵ When the Garvey founded the UNIA and its weekly *The Negro World* black seafarers and their trans-Atlantic mobility played an crucial role in linking the print and political movements in South Africa and the United States and it is no surprise that the five divisions of the UNIA that were to be found in Cape Town during this period were among the earliest and largest in South Africa.¹²⁶ The British empire, however, was an empire of sea and land and the mines of the Witwatersrand and the social milieu of Cape Town attracted laborers and members of the black intelligentsia from both the the United States, the Caribbean and the African subcontinent. The latter dimension of migration cannot be ignored when thinking about the shape of diasporic anti-colonial politics in South Africa. In lieu of Kadalie’s origins I will briefly sketch out here aspects of migration and political imagination that related to colonial Malawi.

Clements Kadalie was one among a number who made their way from Malawi to other parts in southern, eastern and central Africa. The political economy of mining in South Africa contributed substantially to the making of a community of migrant laborers from Malawi from the turn of the twentieth century. The introduction of labor taxes in

¹²¹ Alan Gregor Cobley, “‘Far from Home,’” pg. 349-350.

¹²² Robert Trent Vinson, “Sea Kaffirs: ‘American Negroes’ and the Gospel of Garveyism in Early Twentieth-Century Cape Town,” *Journal of African History*, Vol. 47 (2006), pg. 284.

¹²³ See Robert Trent Vinson, “Sea Kaffirs,” 284.

¹²⁴ See Winston James, “Prologue” to *Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia*, pp. 1-8.

¹²⁵ Quoted in Robert Trent Vinson, *The Americans are Coming! Dreams of African American Literation in Segregationist South Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012), pg. 73.

¹²⁶ Robert Trent Vinson, *The Americans are Coming!* pg. 76.

the early 1890s along with the recruitment of Malawian laborers by the Foreign Office of the colonial government began with the exportation of about 1 000 laborers to the mines of South Africa under the employment of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association.¹²⁷ By the beginning of the First World War the Chamber of Mines in the Witwatersrand listed its contingent of Malawian laborers as numbering upwards of 9 500.¹²⁸ The Malawian proletariat was not alone in this movement. The mission-educated African intelligentsia was also prone to migration, a spirit of independence, as well as religious and political organization within and without Malawi. Before Kadalie, Elliott Kenan Kamwana (c. 1872–1956) and John Chilembwe (1871–1915) were among the more prominent modern leaders to emerge out of Malawi. Kamwana was a part of the African elite that was educated at Livingstonia Mission but his rebelliousness led to his early departure from the mission and a life working in Zimbabwe and Cape Town before returning to Malawi. In Cape Town he was connected to the Watchtower Church and began studying by correspondence through courses offered by the American headquarters of the church. He returned to Malawi as an ordained minister and proselytized throughout southern Malawi. But his religious outlook was deeply interlaced with a spirit of independence. The colonial administration of the colony would describe his religious outlook as one that called among other things “for the end of taxation,; the disappearance of British rule . . . and the formation of an African state.”¹²⁹ Kamwanaism was not bound to Malawi alone, though. Kamwana’s ideas were spread through Zimbabwe and other parts of southern Africa by Malawian laborers and members of its petty bourgeoisie.¹³⁰ Of the two leaders under discussion, John Chilembwe was the more thoroughly American-educated. Chilembwe had left Malawi for the United States with Joseph Booth, an English missionary who arrived in Africa in 1892 and first made contact with him when he came looking for work.¹³¹ In the United States, Chilembwe was taken up by the Dr. Lewis Garnett Jordan of the Negro National Baptist Convention and he began his education in 1898 at Virginia Theological Seminary. The African American influence during these years seemed to have been substantial enough for the colonial authorities to remark, upon his return to Malawi, that his time in America had given him “ideas above his station.”¹³² As with the Ethiopian movement in South Africa which had established important links with the Henry McNeal Turner and Charlotte Maxeke and the Coppins’ AME church in the 1890s, Chilembwe’s return to Malawi at the turn of the twentieth century made him

¹²⁷ See B. Pachai, *The Malawi Diaspora and Elements of Clements Kadalie* (1960), pp. 7-8.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, pg. 8.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, pg. 5.

¹³⁰ B. Pachai, *The Malawian Diaspora and Elements of Clements Kadalie*, pg. 6.

¹³¹ George Shepperson and Thomas Price, *Independent African: John Chilembwe and the Origins, Setting and Significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1958), pg. 36-37.

¹³² *Ibid*, pg. 115.

an attractive figure for a diasporic black Christian movement formed in the nadir of the Reconstruction project and in assertion of “the independent Negro spirit.”¹³³ I cannot dwell on the greater details of Chilembwe’s life story and his considerable influence on anti-colonial politics in Malawi here. George Shepperson and Thomas Price’s substantial biographical study *Independent African: John Chilembwe and the Nyasaland Rising of 1915* (1987) covers this ground in great detail. There are two things that are of interest to me about Chilembwe’s years back in Malawi. Chilembwe became the primary instigator, prophet and martyr of the uprising of 1915 in which only a few Africans (including) and Europeans were killed as a small group of disgruntled Malawian nationalists mutinied against the British. Though the rising and Chilembwe’s role in it was considered a failure the colonists could no longer be sanguine about their colonial order. Clements Kadalie, then a young teacher, joined the Malawian diaspora in southern Africa in 1915. As Shepperson and Price explain, when Kadalie left Malawi there was already in the air the spirit of “more secular forms of political struggle” and the uprising had demonstrated the potential of violent struggle in Malawi.¹³⁴

Interestingly, Kadalie omits these political struggles and their effect on him in his autobiography. *My Life and the ICU* paints a portrait of the radical as an auspicious student whose prospects for professional development were stymied by the social and economic milieu of Malawi in the 1910s. The turbulent political scene of nascent anti-colonial struggle is sidelined for a sketch of the quest for upward social mobility which in a striking way sets up the narrative of professional security in the colonial infrastructure of southern Africa as a horizon of expectation.

After I had taught in schools for one year in Nyasaland, I left home early in 1915 in quest of a higher civilized life. My cousin, Alexander Muwamba, now Acting Chief Chiweyu, went to join another young uncle, Isaac Clements Katongo, in the Northern Rhodesia’s civil administration. I travelled on foot with two men who were both older than myself to a cotton estate in Portuguese East Africa. Here we were all three employed, the two men as carpenters, making farm wagons, while I worked in the office. We stayed only one month at this farm, for I organized my second strike there. The cotton planter, who as an Englishman, was very cruel. He daily sjambokked laborers for petty offences. At times he shot at the native laborers. I informed my friends of the danger in remaining any longer on the estate, as our turn would come to be treated in similar manner to the local laborers. At the end of the month, after we have received our pay, we left the estate at dead of night and trekked to Southern Rhodesia.¹³⁵

In this passage Kadalie weaves depictions of white cruelty and his experiences as a laborer seamlessly with the narrative of his quest for self-realization in the bureaucracy of the colonial administration in Zimbabwe. But his efforts at racial redress - “for I organized by

¹³³ Ibid, pg. 122-123.

¹³⁴ Ibid, pg. 185.

¹³⁵ Clements Kadalie, *My Life and the ICU*, pg. 34-35.

first strike there” - are imbued with overtly political language that is left unexplained. One could, of course, read these actions as informed by an ethical critique of the violence that is written into the fabric of colonial life but the absence of Malawi in this critique, especially since the mobility of Malawians made them “important carriers of ideas” in southern Africa, is unlikely to have been fortuitous.¹³⁶ Indeed, Kadalie is eager to frame his migration to Cape Town as containing the markings of exceptional personality and he seems to have lent the generation of his political actions an air of singular inventiveness. These narrative imbalances in *My Life and the ICU* might be of critical importance. Were the details of life and politics in Malawi sacrificed for a narrative that ingrained Kadalie more intimately into the social and political landscape of South Africa? It would be interesting to know why he chose to leave as little to say about his earlier years as he does. At any rate, Kadalie left Bulawayo following an altercation with an overseer who was left in charge of the business of his employer’s who had left for Cape Town in 1917. Cape Town was more than an imagined destination for Kadalie. His older brother Robert Victor Kadalie had himself settled there and it was he who received him. “I reached Cape Town one afternoon [in 1918]. My elder brother Robert Victor Kadalie welcomed me at the station. When we reached his house at the top of Waterkant Street, my brother’s wife, a Coloured woman, said to him after she had shaken hands with me, ‘Look here, Robert, there is something in this boy and you will see.’ Quietly I pondered over her remarks.”¹³⁷ Kadalie’s arrival in Cape Town and his meeting with trade unionist A.F. Batty a year later which led to the formation of the ICU bore the truth to Mrs Kadalie’s comments. The passage gives Kadalie’s future activities and the ICU an air of inevitability tied to his individual personality but the multiple routes of migration within the British empire that lead to Kadalie’s arrival in Cape Town and the experiences of racial abuse that connected them all point to the intersection of diaspora as crucial to the making of his political outlook and aspirations.

It is not clear when Kadalie became aware of Garvey, the UNIA and *The Negro World* but the presence of the West Indian community in Cape Town would surely have made it certain that he had. Robert A. Hill and Gregory Pirio have suggested that the dissemination of Garvey’s speech from the UNIA’s First International Convention of Negro People of the World (August 1920) throughout South Africa was significant for the popularization of Garveyism in the country.¹³⁸ Kadalie’s letter to Bennett Ncwana suggests that it was quite early on in the history of the ICU that Garvey became a notable figure for the former. Notwithstanding Kadalie’s complicated relationship with the influence of Garvey, the relationship between the ICU and the UNIA as well as their auxiliary periodicals points toward the resonance of both across the Atlantic. In their research on Garvey-

¹³⁶ For a discussion of Malawians in this regard see Robert Benson Broeder, *Malawians Abroad: The History of Labor Emigration from Malawi*. PhD Dissertation. Michigan State University. 1974.

¹³⁷ Clements Kadalie, *My Life and the ICU*, pg. 35-36.

¹³⁸ Robert A. Hill and Gregory Pirio, “‘Africa for the Africans’: the Garvey Movement in South Africa” Shula Marks Stanley Trapido (Eds.) *The Politics of Class, Race and Nationalism in Twentieth-Century South Africa* (London: Longman Group, 1987), pg. 212.

ism in South Africa Hill and Pirio found that in the early 1920s Garvey thought of *The Black Man* as “the Negro World of South Africa.” He had been under the misconception that the *The Black Man* was edited in Cape Town out of the divisions of the UNIA. The misconception was no mere fantasy, though. *The Black Man* ran a news column in which mention of the UNIA and the *Negro World* made the relationship between the two periodicals a social fact. In the August 1920 issue of *The Black Man*, for instance, the “News of the Month” column informed its viewers that “Mr Johnson, agent of the “Negro World” and African life Insurance, paid us a flying visit in which he outlined the future prospects of the American Negro movement of the U.N.I.A. in this country.”¹³⁹ Garvey’s interest in *The Black Man* went beyond mention in the pages of the *Negro World*. In 1922 he had proposed to publish a newspaper in Jamaica. Interestingly it was to be called *The Blackman*. It was not until 1929 that *The Blackman* would go into print and after *The Negro World* went out of print in 1933 Garvey ran a magazine he called the *Black Man* which was in print until the year before his passing in 1940.

One of the key arguments that I have been attempting to develop throughout this chapter is that the framework of diaspora might help us to re-imagine the dimensions of black political space in Cape Town and South Africa. Because of the routes of empire etched in these migrations we have seen how both the imaginary and political aspects of the lives of black intellectuals in Cape Town always invoke a scope larger than the city and indeed the nation. Studies and engagements with the ICU in the 1920s have tended to focus on its existence in South Africa, an analytical move that has understandably framed its history around South Africa as its social and political confines. If we reconfigure our lenses around the framework of diaspora the ICU becomes an organization that we may know less of than it was previously thought. The earlier work on the ICU by P.L. Wickens, for instance, is sensitive to how that union was at pains in 1919 to “draw unskilled Black and Colored workers.”¹⁴⁰ But since neither the diasporic inflections of this demographic nor the affiliations with Garveyism which were coeval to the making of the ICU are given a history, the dock worker’s strike of 1919 has become tethered to its leadership and Kadalie’s exceptional skills. We know, though, that the black community in Cape was both diasporic and global in its political outlook. This raises questions about the early successes of the organization in Cape Town that push what we know from the archive beyond what it can yield. What is striking about this moment of genesis is how closely it links the general colonial experience of racism. Wickens rightly mentions that Kadalie’s “chance encounter” with Batty which led to him being invited to be a part of a union occurred after he had been pushed off a pavement by a white police man. Kadalie’s narration of the incident is quite significant.

One Saturday afternoon during the influenza epidemic of 1918 I was in the company of two Nyasaland friends in Cape Town. We were strolling in Darling Street when the *Cape Argus*, the afternoon daily newspaper, was out in the streets for sale. I bought a copy of the

¹³⁹ “News of the Month,” *The Black Man*, August 1920, pg. 2.

¹⁴⁰ P.L. Wickens, *The Industrial and Commercial Worker’s Union* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1978), pg. 26.

paper, and as soon as I perused it, I began to inform my friends that the end of the war was in sight, for Sir Douglas Haig had launched his offensive in Flanders. Suddenly appeared a European constable, who pushed me off the pavement, assaulting me at the same time. I informed my friends of my intention to report the matter at the police department. My two friends, who did not possess the meagre education and little courage I had at the time, refused to accompany me there. As I was struggling with my friends a European appeared on the scene. He must have been walking behind the policeman. After asking us a few questions, to which I replied without hesitation, he handed me a business card, informing me I could mention his name to the police, as he had witnessed the unprovoked assault on me. . . . After the election Batty called me to his shop where we discussed the advisability of forming a trade union. . . . I readily agreed to his suggestion, altho I anticipated difficulty in getting people together. We planned to invade the Cape Town docks, as the Harbour constituency fell in that area.¹⁴¹

Kadalie's pro-history of the formation of the ICU is richly suggestive of cross-racial collaboration as the union's generative movement. This passage strikes me as addressing events that occurred in the same time-period as that in which Kadalie happened upon the idea of making himself into the Africa's Marcus Garvey. Besides this absence of Garvey in this history, it's also striking that the experiences of racism and white impunity narrated by Kadalie are those that had followed him from Malawi through southern Africa. He also gleans over organizing activity in Zimbabwe, which all suggests that the moment of the ICU was, within his life history, the crystallization of a tendency for political organization that he already had an inkling for. In other words, the insight that Kadalie both opens up and somewhat siphons with scant detail is that of his life and his work in the ICU as a response to the colonial condition and its communicability across space. The kind of racial organizing that he partook in in Cape Town, then, uncovers the often obscured history of colonial migratory masculinity and diaspora in the shaping of black consciousness and anti-capitalism. One of the other traces of this history, however, lies in the relationship between *The Black Man* and the *Negro World*. The ICU's history is tied to its later newspaper, *The Worker's Herald*, which was went into print when the union had moved its headquarters to Johannesburg in 1923. Focusing on *The Black Man* one of the issues for further thinking becomes precisely that the emergent elements of black political culture after the First World War cannot be fully thought through without bringing diaspora into the picture. Unfortunately, the copies of *The Black Man* that are currently available in the archive number barely twenty pages. These run about four pages per issue between August and December of 1920. The little that exists is richly suggestive, however.

Of the periodicals that I have discussed thus far, *The Black Man* is the only one written almost exclusively in English. Its monolingualism did not, though, militate against its impetus toward forging a united worker's movement. Indeed, the workerist sensibilities of *The Black Man* were deeply inflected with a pan-Africanist outlook that inscribed the continent as a primary geography of struggle. In August, 1920, when the ICU commemorated its first year, *The Black Man* reported on its conference in Bloemfontein. The unifi-

¹⁴¹ Clements Kadalie, *My Life and the ICU*, pp. 39-40.

cation of the various black labor organizations that had sprung up after the war was a point of discussion and racial self-reliance was heavily stressed. The ICU urged attendants to work “with steady, purposeful action . . . so that when our turn comes to de, we shall lay down the task in the knowledge that the road to emancipation has been made easier for our children. If we do not begin building ourselves we cannot expect others to come forward and build for us.” This passage echoes and reframes for labor politics Garvey’s sentiment for “sympathetic co-operation” “in the Negro race.”¹⁴² The bent toward racial thinking at this stage in the history of the ICU had some significant impact on how it imagined it work. We are told that the delegates of the Bloemfontein conference had “Resolved unanimously” that “non-European workers” should form “one great union of skilled and unskilled workers of Africa, and that it be an instruction to all unions represented with a view thereto.”¹⁴³ Kadalie was reported to have argued the importance of a black unionism-for-itself at the Bloemfontein conference when he expressed the need “to demonstrate to the civilized world the race aspiration in the true sense of its meaning.”¹⁴⁴ He returned to the meaning of black laborism when he reflected on the ambitions of the ICU in his autobiography: “Our destination was the ‘ICU of Africa’. In pursuance of this designation we had two branches in Southern Rhodesia, at Bulawayo and Salisbury. At the end of 1927 the ICU had spread its wings throughout the sub-continent of Africa. Is it not a wonder that the exploiters of African labour saw the writing on the wall when they witnessed this new evolution of once downtrodden people on the march!”¹⁴⁵ The use of “African” in the ICU’s vocabulary designated more than a racial identity. It contained within it a scope for political imagination that clearly transgressed boundaries invented by the institutions of colonial administration and critiqued the trans-colonial provenance of racial capitalism itself. If we read the ICU through its imagined and real geographies of struggle and not solely through South Africa we that the organization was working with a much larger canvas than the category of the nation-state. But in the vestiges of this imaginary we can also read Garvey’s pan-Africanist thinking being translated into a language of labor unionism. Garvey’s politics of diaspora shifted the framework of sovereignty toward a transnationalism in which, as he put it in “Africa for the Africans,” “the Negro peoples of the world should concentrate upon the object of building up for themselves a great nation in Africa.”¹⁴⁶ In turn, Kadalie sought to fashion out of the various strands of disgruntled black labour an “ICU of Africa.” In her work on the ICU’s two periodicals, *The Black Man* and *The Worker’s Herald*, Victoria Collis has argued that Garveyism and the periodical form allowed the organization “to materialize a black community of the

¹⁴² See Marcus Garvey, “Lack of Co-Operation in the Negro Race,” *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey: Or, Africa for the Africans* (Dover: The Majority Press, 1986), pg. 49.

¹⁴³ “Bloemfontein Conference,” *The Black Man*, August 1920, pg. 1.

¹⁴⁴ “Bloemfontein Conference,” *The Black Man*, August 1920, pp. 1-2.

¹⁴⁵ Clements Kadalie, *My Life and the ICU*, pg. 221.

¹⁴⁶ Marcus Garvey, “Africa for the Africans,” *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, pg. 68.

present that included natives and coloureds and men and women.”¹⁴⁷ Certainly the need to forge a kind of blackness that conjured political solidarities that went beyond the pitfalls of the categories of “native” and “coloured” - which were being more deeply ossified in the body politic after the South Africa War - was an important part of the work of the periodical. I would like to underline another aspect of diaspora that was mooted in the first chapter. Following Michael Hanchard I suggested that one of the possibilities that arose out of transnational blackness in the late nineteenth century was an alternative means for inscribing modern subjectivity than the colonial polity made possible. The interest shown by the leadership of the ICU in Garveyism in the union’s early points to the revitalization of the narrative of “Afro-modernity,” as Hanchard calls it. But there is a wider narrative of black global alliances to be written and one in which the ICU sought a part in. One of the key arguments that Hanchard makes in “Afro-Modernity - Temporality, Politics and the African Diaspora” is that the rise of the New Negro movement that has often been closely associated with the Harlem Renaissance was had coeval histories in the Caribbean. In the aftermath of the abolition of slavery in Cuba saw the Afro-Cuban intelligentsia negotiation “civil rights” through the discourse of *El Nuevo Criollo* (New Creole in English) a periodical which presented, at the turn of the twentieth century, its own variation on the theme of the New Negro.¹⁴⁸ Interestingly, in an article on “Old Race Leadership” ICU member Thomas Mbeki was anxious to remind his readers that “the old moral ethics of the old type of Native leadership” were on the wane and “These are the days of democracy and self-determination, and therefore the New African wants to look at things from a broader point of view.”¹⁴⁹ These are the signs that black literary and political movements in Harlem, Paris and the Caribbean that Brent Hayes Edwards and Michael Hanchard have written about shared the same structures of feeling and were in dialogue with those on the continent.

I have been arguing that Marcus Garvey was important to Kadalie and the ICU in its early years because he possessed the vocabulary race-for-itself and public personality that allowed for a kind of racial self-fashioning. Though later a reluctant Garveyite at best, Kadalie too found himself compelled to genuflect to Garvey in the pages of *The Black Man*. He had attended a meeting of the UNIA and African Community’s League at Goodwood in July of 1920 and though he had not proposed to speak he was nevertheless called upon to do so. His remarks on Garvey were sharp if not loyalist: “Our dear brothers abroad expect every man and woman in Africa, every patriotic and loyal black man, to respond to the call for liberty. This is a movement which assures every man and woman of his or her salvation. We must, therefore, unite with racial pride that at last

¹⁴⁷ Victoria Collis, *Anxious Records*, pg. 164.

¹⁴⁸ Michael Hanchard, “Afro-modernism,” pg. 257-258.

¹⁴⁹ Thomas Mbeki, “Old Race Leadership,” *The Worker’s Herald*, March 27th 1926, pg. 3.

African will be redeemed and all her sons return where nature first put them.”¹⁵⁰ Indeed, in its own efforts to garner subscriptions, *The Black Man* mobilized the specter of Garvey:

We have been moved by that tender touch of brotherly feeling which inspired the Hon Marcus Garvey to appeal to the men and women of [the] Negro race to save the freedom and liberty of their future generation.

You are called upon to lay the foundation stone of that loftier element of human character which your fathers were unaware of. Are you, therefore, not bound by that most pressing and indispensable duty to identify you name with the cause, and the only cause which a brotherly feeling could not have been more deeply expressed.

Self-help, self-determination, self-reliance is the test of all lower orders of human kind. Your subscription to “The Black Man” will appease the hungry should of your children. “The Black Man is the mouthpiece of the working class of whom you are one.”¹⁵¹

The relationship between *The Black Man* and UNIA suggests then that the making of radicalized black publics in South Africa after the First World War was a process that drew on Garveyism as an authority. And in the interstices of diaspora the temporality of ‘civilization’ is transformed through the centralization of black work and the masculine black body as the subject of a history in the making (“Self-help, self-determination, self-reliance...”). In its assertion of a continental affiliation of black labor consciousness *The Black Man* also marshaled in news from other parts of the continent to purvey to its readership the fledgling of moments that were akin to the ICU. “Nyasaland Notes” may indeed have been published in *The Black Man* through Kadalie’s connections in Malawi. The note informed its readers that various African organizations in Malawi had been amalgamated into the Nyasaland Native Association. The association, we are told, “will act as the voice of the Nyasaland people, who are being exploited by the white race; it will endeavour to ameliorate the social, moral and economic condition of the people, with a view of stimulating the industrial and intellectual growth of the Bantu race.”¹⁵² *The Black Man* galvanized the multiple strands of migration and diaspora that had formed a part of the social milieu of Cape Town into a mean of organizing its publics. Indeed part of the work that it was doing revolved around making its readers aware that whatever struggles there were that they were being formed through were a vista to other “worlds of color” in which their kin were rising against the tide of white racialism and the machine of accumulation that it served.

Unlike Kimwana and Chilembe, Kadalie did not return to Malawi like a prodigal son returned in the aide of its people. But I would like to suggest that where black mobility was circumvented by the state the periodical continued to do the dangerous work of conjoining political movements. One of the few passages in *My Life and the ICU* in which

¹⁵⁰ “University Negro Improvement Association and African Community’s League,” *The Black Man*, August 1920, pg. 3.

¹⁵¹ “The Black Man,” *The Black Man*, August 1920, pg. 4.

¹⁵² “Nyasaland Notes,” *The Black Man*, August 1920, pg. 4.

Kadalie returns to the pathways that led him to South Africa gives fragments of his resonance in the region that border on a kind of strategic nationalism. During 1927 he had travelled to Europe to publicize the ICU and find support for its efforts in labor organizing. In England news came to him of fellow Malawians who were persecuted for their political work:

During my visit to England I found that far away in Nyasaland, where I was born, my fellow-countrymen were also suffering under the iron heel of imperialism. As a result of my representations the Labour Party . . . again raised in the House of Commons the question of the sentence of three's hard labor imposed upon Isa MacDonald Lawrence, a native of Nyasaland, for importing into Rhodesia six copies of the *Negro World*, published in Philadelphia, and two copies of *The Worker's Herald*, published in Johannesburg. . . . I was told on my return to South Africa that, as a result of my representations in this case, Isa MacDonald Lawrence was released from prison. The same applied to Robert Sambo, another ICU agent, who was deported from his Nyasaland home. His case also was presented by me to the British Labour Party with that of MacDonald Lawrence. When I was being tried with others in the Supreme Court at Grahamstown in 1930, following the East London general strike, I silenced the Solicitor-General by mentioning the above cases which he asked what I had done for Nyasaland natives instead of stirring up strife in South Africa, as he alleged.¹⁵³

Though in *My Life and the ICU* averts portraying himself through the vocabulary and sentiment of nationalism, he does ironically stir up, through the rhetoric of patriotism, how inseparable the struggles of black workers in various parts of the sub-continent were and ultimately how inextricable the fugitive circulations of the *Negro World* and *The Worker's Herald* had become. If the Supreme Court had sought to accuse Kadalie of forsaking his homeland, the transnational reach of *The Worker's Herald* and the *Negro World* did not differentiate the sites of struggles that they had traversed. On the contrary, Kadalie's claims to being committed to his people were quite subversive to the colonial project.

It is deeply ironic that, given the reach of the ICU and *The Worker's Herald* in southern Africa, Malawi holds such a minimal place in Kadalie's political consciousness. Perhaps to find a place in history with the demise of the ICU after the 1920s, Kadalie's self-writing had become deeply ingrained with the contingencies of South Africa and its politics of memory. The silences of *My Life and the ICU* are significant, though, because in them lie kernels of diaspora which in some ways catapulted him into a life on the public stage of struggle against racism and capitalism. If the recuperation of Garvey's appeal to Kadalie is significant to this story, I think it is precisely in the link that he provides in shifting the grammar of belonging from its situation in imperial citizenship to its location in a terrain in which, after the catastrophe of the the First World World War, blackness and its diasporic dimensions became the gathering ground for rethinking what were at some point the inviolable tenets of empire's civility. In other words, in the period between the first two Pan-African Conferences (1900 and 1921) the politics of diaspora itself had been

¹⁵³ Clements Kadalie, *My Life and the ICU*, pg. 126.

transformed to an institution for rethinking the grounds of black belonging in the post-War world. In order to recover the mutations which empire and imperial citizenship underwent during this period, I look, in the next chapter, toward the drama that surrounded state formation in South Africa. In its perverse inscription of an intractable racial order and re-configuring the institutions of empire the Union of South Africa blunted out the vestiges imperial belonging that were ingrained in the Cape Colony's liberalism. In turning to diaspora in its textual and migratory manifestations, however, we shall see how the black imagination sought alternatives to the anguishes of race citizenship.

Chapter IV:

“A Home-Made Empire:” The Afterlife of Empire in the Making of the Union of South Africa

South Africa has since its inception as a single state attached considerable importance to the rest of Africa for both economic and strategic reasons. The Union inherited from British imperialism an economic sphere of influence in Southern Africa characterised by the racial articulation of different colonial territories to the South African economy, and in large measure the mediation of their relations with international capital through and via South Africa which became “a centre in the periphery” with its own sub-imperial ambitions. *Sam C. Nolutshungu*¹

The Union was launched on a wave of optimism. There was a widespread belief, in England and in South Africa, that Boer and Briton would spontaneously fuse into one nation. It was to be a prosperous nation, efficiently exploiting the natural resources of the country. It was to be an expansive nation, peacefully absorbing the High Commission Territories, Southern Rhodesia, and, perhaps, the other British colonies and protectorates in central and even east Africa. Like Canada, , Australia, and New Zealand, it was to be an active partner in the British Empire. *L.M. Thompson*²

The discovery of personal whiteness among the world's peoples is a very modern thing, - a nineteenth century matter, indeed. The ancient world would have laughed at such a distinction. The Middle Age regarded skin color with mild curiosity; and even up into the eighteenth century we were hammering our national manikins into one, great, Universal Man, with fine frenzy with ignored color and race even more than birth. Today we have changed all that, and the world in a sudden, emotional conversion has discovered that it is white and, by that token, wonderful! *W.E.B. Du Bois*³

In January of 1946, A.B. Xuma (1893-1962) - then president of the African National Congress - sent a cable to the president of the United Nations Organization in London. The cable stated its protestation against the acquiescence of the Union High

¹ Sam C. Nolutshungu, “The South African State and Africa,” *African Journal of Political Economy*, No. 1 (1986), pg. 60.

² L.M. Thompson, *The Unification of South Africa 1902-1910* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), pg. 480.

³ W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Souls of White Folk,” *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007), pg. 17.

Commissioner of London to the proposed incorporation of South West Africa (now Namibia) to the Union of South Africa (hitherto the Union).⁴ Toward the end of the year, Xuma published a pamphlet addressed to Trygve Lie, the general-secretary of the United Nations. In order to petition the consummation of the Union's imperial advancement in Namibia, *South West Africa: Annexation or United Nations Trusteeship?*⁵ weaved an expansive cartography of racial disability that was held together by a critique of the Union's re-colonization of the color line. Xuma's urging of the United Nations against the Union's state of empire turned a map of mandates into a colony of the racially subordinated. "We oppose," he interjected, "the incorporation of South West Africa and the British Protectorates of Bechuanaland, Swaziland and Basutoland to the Union of South Africa because such incorporation would facilitate the extension of South Africa's color and race discrimination and domination. It would bring under this policy more hundreds of thousands of innocent victims."⁵

Written under restrictions that were swiftly clamoring around the black body to induce upon it a state of internal exile, *South West Africa* catalogued the travesties of statecraft under Union rule. In a gesture of acute trepidation Xuma would read the future of Namibia under the sign of its only possibility given the extension of Union sovereignty: the preponderance of "socialities of the skin" inherited from a society that was headed toward the "highest stage of colonialism in Africa."⁶ It is perhaps familiar to the point of being pedestrian knowledge that the narrow victory of the Nationalist Party in the elections of 1948 signaled the birth of Apartheid. Indeed, Hendrik Verwoerd's mischievous appellative of Apartheid as "a policy of good neighborliness" has become archetypical. This rhetoric encapsulated the politics of the governance of the prior and it now rests as a morbid reminder of the dawning of a dark chapter in the nation's history. There are, however, a couple of things that beg some consideration in our capitulation of the term Apartheid as a marker of the history of a certain kind of racism. In their article "No Names Apart: the Separation of Word from History in Derrida's 'Le Dernier Mot du Racisme,'" Anne McClintock and Rob Nixon have warned against our tendency to abstract the word "from its place in the discourse of South African racism."⁷ "No Names Apart" gives a detailed critique of the contingent and historically embedded articulation of the term with "with a developing ideology of race" in South Africa and how it can "also be seen to be intimately allied to different stages of the country's political and economic development."⁸ Interestingly, McClintock and Nixon point to the genesis of

⁴ See A.B. Xuma, *South West Africa: Annexation or United Nations Trusteeship?* pg. 5.

⁵ A.B. Xuma, *South West Africa*, pg. 26.

⁶ David Theo Goldberg's lecture of the same name and Simon Gikandi's article.

⁷ Anne McClintock and Rob Nixon, "No Names Apart: The Separation of Word and History in Derrida's 'Le Dernier Mot du Racisme'" *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (1986), pg. 141.

⁸ Anne McClintock and Rob Nixon, "No Names Apart," pg. 141.

Apartheid as a term in the imagining of a world order after the First World War and the formation of the League of Nations. “The word Apartheid was coined by General Jan Smuts at the Savoy Hotel, London on 27 May 1917 but had barely any currency until it rose to prominence as the rallying cry of the Nationalist party’s victorious electoral campaigns of 1948.”⁹ The location of the thinkability of *Apartheid* in the moment of post-First World War “imperial internationalism” complicates the genealogy of its use as a *national* racial ideology and places it in a *global* context of race thinking.

It is indeed a peculiar irony that Xuma’s objections to South Africa’s race for Namibia described not a territorially bound condition but one that seems to have been turned, geographically speaking, outward. In the interwar period it was not unusual that proposals were passed between the white statesmen of the Union and Namibia “for the incorporation of the territory [of the latter] into the Union as a fifth province, but no steps were taken to give effect to these proposals until the end of World War II.”¹⁰ This account of an expanding South African sovereignty, observes John Dugard, differently disguised what was, *ipso facto*, the extension of “the policy of white supremacy first introduced into South West Africa by the Germans” with “the interests of the White minority above those of the native peoples.”¹¹ In gathering Xuma’s acute sensitivity to the expansive politics of racial dominance, we can perhaps gesture toward reading the history of “South Africa’s color and race discrimination” as one that is a much the history of other nations, other geographies, and other peoples, as it is a national narrative. Indeed, as Dugard puts it, “the South African Government’s policy of separate development ceases to be a domestic issue when applied to South West Africa.”¹² But Xuma’s trepidations now seem to belong to an outlying history. This may not be surprising since, as we have often been reminded, nations marshal and conceal the ungainly patterns of history to the unitary forms of national identity. And yet, as Xuma’s work reminds us, ungenerous remembrances forestall us from seeing the logics of our own history unfolding elsewhere.

Toward a Partial Genealogy

We shall have to begin with a series of interpretive problems and not with the certitudes of historical orthodoxies. How does one read a petition such as *South West Africa* in the light of this history? Does it belong to a genealogy of the critique of Apartheid? Is it a petition against empire? An indictment of racism perhaps? Or, as Aime Cesaire would famously put it scarcely a decade later, is it simply a “Discourse on Colonialism”? Far from abating, the questions get compounded here. Is *South West Africa* a piece of South

⁹ Anne McClintock and Rob Nixon, “No Names Apart,” pg. 141.

¹⁰ John Dugard, *The South West Africa / Namibia Dispute: Documents and Scholarly Writings on the Controversy Between South Africa and the United Nations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), pg. 89.

¹¹ John Dugard, *The South West Africa / Namibia Dispute*, pg. 83.

¹² John Dugard, *The South West Africa / Namibia Dispute*, pg. xii.

African writing, that of Namibia and Southern Africa, or perhaps an internationalist tract? It appears that it is indeed located in the entanglements of these histories, textualities and their physical and discursive geographies. Take, for instance, that the pamphlet, written in South Africa, makes its journey to the offices of the United Nations through the improvised publishing of H.A. Naidoo and Sorabjee Rustomjee of the South African Passive Resistance Council, itself suspended between Durban and New York. Or if we take into account that the petition was supported by black South Africans and Namibians alike, we would have to admit that its critiques spoke not simply out of a place but, through crisis, to a general embodied predicament. *South West Africa* insists that we read South Africa's racist futures through the unjust geographies that it produces and not merely through its virtual temporalities. Here too readers of *South West Africa* will find themselves having to think in terms of audiences and publics for the drama of the Union's annexation of Namibia brought the application of one of the most significant documents at the end of the Second World War, that is the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945), into the theater of judicial council and mediation in a region where global politics assumed a "sacred trust" of responsibility to those "peoples [that] have not yet attained a full measure of self-government."¹³ Xuma projected *South West Africa* onto a transnational public sphere by presupposing and galvanizing what Michael Hardt and Antonio Negro refer to as an "international juridical order."¹⁴ The compounded problems that frustrate linear and territorializing interpretations of *South West Africa* suggest, then, that it was the creature of a vastly different and more complex a history that one which national(ist) imaginaries can account for.

In the midst of this crisis, Xuma ventured toward writing his own genealogy of the problem. It was one that complicated funneling national desire into a unitary structure of feeling. He interjected racial difference under settler colonialism as concocting its own logics of governmentality where the designs of an "ethnaclass" "overrepresented" the structure of sovereignty.¹⁵

Were the White or Europeans in South West Africa also the "sacred trust" of civilization? What difference does it make then if they ask to be incorporated into the Union of South Africa? Incorporation is to their advantage and not for Native Africans. The Natives have no political rights and therefore have no share in

¹³ The *Charter of the United Nations* is indeed the primary reason that Xuma sent his petition against the Union to the United Nations. See Xuma, *South West Africa*, pp. 25-28. For a perusal of what the United Nations had to say about this matter, see the *Charter of the United Nations: and Statute of the International Court of Justice* (San Francisco, 1945), pp. 14-17.

¹⁴ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negro, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), pg. 4.

¹⁵ I am working with ideas developed by Sylvia Wynter in her essay "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being / Power / Truth / Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation - An Argument." As she explains in this essay, there is an "ongoing imperative of securing the well-being of our ethnaclass (i.e. Western Bourgeoisie) conception of the human, Man, which overrepresents itself as if it were human itself, and of securing the well being, and therefore the full cognitive and behavioral autonomy and therefore of the human species itself / ourselves." Sylvia Wynter "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being / Power / Truth / Freedom," *CR: The New Centennial Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (2003), pg. 260.

the Government of the territory and the legislature is in no way representative of their opinion. They will have none in the Union of South Africa. The Union of South Africa and Europeans in South West Africa it seems to us are using this mandate territory as an office of profit or a position of private advantage for herself and for her nationals.

Yet General Smuts said in 1918 in his “League of Nations a Practical System,” that “The Mandate State should look upon its position as a great trust and honor, not as an office of profit or a position of private advantage for it or its nationals.” We understand that many of the Europeans are “Union Nationals.” Are not Field Marshall Smuts’ demands before the United Nations contrary to his declaration?¹⁶

Xuma virtually reads state-craft under settler colonial governance to mean race-craft. But what he really draws our attention to is the eventuation of what W.E.B. Du Bois (and other early Pan-Africanists) had seen at the turn of the twentieth century as the “global dimension of the color line” - “the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea” - in the southern geographies of Africa.¹⁷ There is another aspect in which the passage initiates a genealogical framing of the race problem. Jan Smuts (1870-1950), the statesman and imperial internationalist, appears in the aftermath of the two moments of global upheaval (the World Wars) as the prime agent located between white colonial nationalism and the international judicial order. This location, as Xuma shows, was itself ambiguously situated in the interstices of the grammars of global justice and colonial aggression, between an empire abroad and a home-made empire. It was the unruly regimes of race-craft which bound them together. In a sense, Xuma developed a minute genealogical sketch of a South African racial politic that “breaks down national boundaries,” much akin to the world order that Du Bois once described as “the anarchy of empire.”¹⁸

If one were to read these entanglements as a part of the social fermentation that lead to the moment of 1948, how would we then frame its history? Is it yet another painful moment in the (now almost teleological) narrative of the birth of the post-Ap-

¹⁶ Xuma, *South West Africa*, pg. 26.

¹⁷ W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, pg. 15. The first phrase I have taken from Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds from their book *Drawing the Global Color Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pg. 2.

¹⁸ “The Anarchy of Empire” forms part of the title of Amy Kaplan’s book. The title is taken from a passage in the poem “A Hymn to the People,” which appears toward the end of Du Bois’s *Darkwater*. Kaplan draws out a significance in the term which I find helpful for the concerns of this chapter: “The Anarchy of Empire,” describes, she explains, “the violent destruction and havoc wreaked on the peoples and lands subject to colonial exploitation all over the globe.” For Kaplan anarchy is a useful way of grasping the how America’s iteration of empire surreptitiously works. She is interested “in the way anarchy becomes an integral and constitutive part of empire, central to the representation of U.S. imperialism in dispersed locations and at different historical moments. Anarchy is conjured by imperial culture as a haunting specter that must be subdued and controlled, and at the same time, it is a figure of empire’s undoing. *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), pg. 12-13.

atheid nation? Or do we begin to see in this archival fragment smidgens of a nation's discarded history gathering as though the angel of history had taken flight in a slumber? In other words, what kinds of genealogies and hidden histories lie beneath the deterritorialization of Apartheid?

This chapter recuperates the itineraries of empire in South Africa. It is, in a sense, an effort at framing the conditions of possibility for what would become Xuma's *South West Africa*. By turning to what V.Y. Mudimbe calls the "colonial library" as well as the various 'counter-texts' that form what I would like to think of as a diasporic black critique of the color line, I begin to sketch out the geographies and discourses through which South Africa hovered between nation, racist state and empire in the early twentieth century. If the convulsions of South Africa's pasts have produced their own heroes of empire - this chapter shall consider, at varying lengths, the careers of two such men, namely Cecil John Rhodes and Jan Smuts - then perhaps we need to invoke a cartography of 'imperial' scope in order to reckon with the cultures of black textuality before the Second World War. With this in mind I think through the work of a number of black writers whose work in print culture and politics was deeply moved by the Union's racist politics of state-craft in the 1910s. Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje (1876-1932) is one such figure and his *Native Life in South Africa: Before and Since the European War and the Boer Rebellion* (1991 [1916]) remains perhaps the most detailed historical, political and ethical critique of the betrayal of the ideals of imperial citizenship in South Africa. As Bhekizizwe Peterson has observed, in *Native Life in South Africa* Plaatje worked "the ethics of suffering" into the form of the petition in order to impute metropolitan audiences to reckon with the realities of black South Africans after the Native Lands Act had been passed in 1913.¹⁹ In the wake of the passing of the South Africa Act in 1909 the African Political Organization (A.P.O.) began publishing a periodical called the *A.P.O.* If the South Africa Act established the terms upon which the privileges of white settler colonialism were to be converted to a new kind of state form, the *A.P.O.* sought to write a counter-history of the politics of citizenship in South Africa which re-inscribed the liberal foundations of belonging. In both instances, writing against the racial state and remembering the forlorn promises of imperial citizenship invoked a conflict of memories and commitments in the imperial imaginary. In their discontented mootings the vestiges of diaspora would assemble to elaborate a critique of a predicament that while deeply poignant was by no means exceptional. Diasporic (inter-)textuality enjoins us to think beyond bounded territorial categories and to invoke spatial logics that recover the multiple and intertwined geographies of racial alienation and solidarity.

Re-Staging Empire: Cecil Rhodes and the Quest for "a private empire"

It should not be entirely surprising that an exploration of empire should find in South Africa the vestiges of its grammars of subjection. In *Imperialism*, the second volume of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt wrote of the "overproduction of capital

¹⁹ Bhekizizwe Peterson, "Sol Plaatje's 'Native Life in South Africa': Melancholy Narratives, Petitioning Selves and the Ethics of Suffering," *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, Vol. 43 (2008), pp. 79-95.

and the emergence of “superfluous” money” as defining the expansion of Europe’s empires before the First World War.²⁰ Her thinking was fixed on mapping the geographies in which the techniques of imperialist rule emerged. Of course, one of the innovations of Arendt’s work was her recalibration of the milieu of totalitarianism, reading its prehistory almost contrapuntally as a colonial invention that would eventually haunt Europe. In order to uncover the history of the horrors Europe amidst the Second World War, one would have to begin with the colonial geographies that were to become laboratories of superfluity. As Arendt points out, “Of the two main political devices of imperialist rule, race was discovered in South Africa and bureaucracy in Algeria, Egypt, and India.”²¹ I have already suggested that while the elaboration of these techniques aligns closely with the era of industrial capitalism in South Africa, racialization as a technique of control and subjection stretches, in its different guises, to the days of early colonial settlement in the Cape.²² In the previous chapter I argued that Cape Town is an important space if one seeks to unravel the history of race thinking in South Africa because it pushes the historical reach of this history to the conjuncture of early colonial contact. In *Modern Inquisitions: Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World* (2004) Irene Silverblatt similarly argues while one must agree with Arendt’s arguments about placing the histories of imperialism and the racial instrumentalities of “a would-be master race” in relation to each other, this history has a much longer reach than that emerging in the nineteenth century. It goes back, she suggests, to “the dance of bureaucracy and race, born in colonialism” and “the creation of the modern world.”²³

Arendt remains for me helpful in her descriptions of imperialism because of how her focus on South Africa gives us a different reading of imperialism at work. In her characterization of the *imperialist mind* find inklings of the kind of genealogy that A.B. Xuma was invoking in the 1940s. Arendt paints a portrait of Cecil John Rhodes (1853-1902) standing at the vanguard of a South African appropriation of the imperialist ethos. In Arendt’s descriptions Rhodes reads like the figure who best articulates the ontology of imperialism: ““Expansion is everything,” said Cecil Rhodes, and fell into despair, for every night he saw overhead “these stars . . . these vast worlds which we can never reach. I would annex the planets if I could.” He had discovered the moving principle of the new, the imperialist era.”²⁴ Rhodes is significant not because of the absurd cosmological leanings of this ambitions but because of *where* he thinks empire from, that is, his re-reading

²⁰ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, pg. 135.

²¹ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, pg. 207.

²² This framing of race thinking and empire-making in the longue duree of modernity is given a far more elaborate treatment by Irene Silverblatt in *Modern Inquisitions: Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

²³ Irene Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions* pp. 4-5.

²⁴ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, pg. 124.

of the remaking of Britain's imperial cartography *from* the Cape Colony. In other words, as one of the Cape Colony's premier politicians *and* mining magnates he recalibrated racial capitalism, private finance and the institutions of liberal governmentality to shape a new logic of expansionism that was meant to have continental reach. John Flint might have had Arendt in mind when he observed that Rhodes' "ideas of government and administration in many ways anticipated fascism; and though he never deified the state and was not impressed by military men or uniforms, he would have beeb at home in a one-part corporate state."²⁵ Of course, Flint could have added to Rhodes' proto-fascism his inkling for a world ruled by an Anglo-Saxon master race.

In the first chapter we took a brief glimpse at Rhodes' budding political career in the Cape Colony. In those passages we gleaned Rhodes' masking of the *whitening* of citizenship with the rhetoric of 'civilizational' universality. In this chapter I more explicitly think through his racial politics of imperialism. Rhodes' imperial ethos worked at least two notions into its structure. Firstly, he sought to yoke whiteness and citizenship into a unitary form of colonial belonging. Secondly, his expansionist idealism provided an bourgeoning geographic terrain for the former to stretch itself from the Cape to the Zambesi River and even beyond. Although Rhodes' imperial dream would not be properly realized until he won the governorship of the Cape in 1890 and his British South Africa Company secured for him a path to "a private empire," its ideological foundations were firmly in place by the time he left Oxford for Kimberly in 1874. In his years at Oxford University, the young Rhodes' waning religious convictions were replaced with a melding of the tenets of scientific racism with a romantic faith in a renaissance of Anglo-Saxonism through a world-wide empire. As John Flint explains, Rhodes' philosophical preoccupations were, by the end of the 1870s, contained in this vision for a mastery of the globe by a race of the chosen whites: "In history God's purpose was likewise evident; as species struggled in the natural world so that the fittest might survive, so in human history the "races" of man struggled for supremacy, and it was surely evident that of all the races the "Anglo-Saxon" was the finest and noblest specimen, destined to triumph. . . . The triumph of the "Anglo-Saxon race" could only be achieved through the expansion of the British Empire. To this goal Rhodes most dedicate his life."²⁶ How was this to be done? Rhodes' biography from the mid-1870s to the end of his life was an affair lived in Southern Africa. It was this southern node of the British empire, with the Cape as its political authority, that he could hope to build his empire of white rule.

I have chosen to begin this chapter with Rhodes for a number of reasons. The rise of Rhodes is inseparable from the narrative and outlook of high imperialism toward the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. As Bernard Magubane put it, "British imperialism in South Africa from 1870 to 1910 is inseparable from the career of Rhodes, so much so that his activities, political and economical, may

²⁵ John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), pg. 160.

²⁶ John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes*, pg. 29.

be followed at the central thread of the tale.”²⁷ The specter of Rhodes exceeds the boundaries of South Africa, though. His notoriety for having having “given his name to a huge country” (Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe and Zambia) bespeaks a history of empire-craft and invokes a cartography that transgresses the nation-state form.²⁸ Rhodes did not live to see a unified South Africa. He died before the South African War ended in 1902. His life cast a long shadow over an incomplete cartographic project. It seems apposite to pause and ask here what geo-politics the Union of South Africa would settle into as its boundaries seemed to find a concrete territorial form while its ideological roots lingered somewhere between imperial designs and the desire for a white state. As I have suggested, Rhodes’ imperialism is tied to the fusion of of private capital with the politics of governmentality in the Cape. The discovery of diamonds in 1867 in Kimberley fueled the considerable growth of mining in the region. Since Kimberley was located in the Afrikaner Republic of the Orange Free State, the British found themselves faced not only with the problem of financing the modernization of the mining industry in the region but needed the political will “to push for a federation of the South African colonies and [Afrikaner] republics under British sovereignty.”²⁹ John Flint’s biographical study amply demonstrates why Rhodes became the considerable force that he became in this new geo-political project. As Flint explains, the British government in London was not willing to disburse the money of the British taxpayer to propel such an epic undertaking and less so was the Treasury. If there was to be an expansion of the frontiers of British rule in the region “it must be an imperialism on the cheap.”³⁰ Rhodes mattered because “the limitations and weakness of the “imperial factor” (that is, direct British imperial intervention)” had opened up the possibility to “local initiatives in extending British territory and empire in South Africa. . . . Such support could only come from the Cape Colony, the strongest of the white-settled areas and one that had enjoyed since 1872 a responsible cabinet, which places considerable power and initiative in the hands of its ministers.”³¹

Rhodes arrived in Durban in 1870 to make his fortune in the cotton industry with his brother Hebert. After a moderately successful stint as a cotton farmer he relocated to Kimberly a year later to gamble on the prospect of greater wealth in the diamond mines. Through the 1870s he built himself a considerable amount of wealth through his company De Beers and as he encroached near-monopoly over the diamond mining industry he entered into the political arena of the Cape. He won a parliamentary seat as the representative of Barkly West in 1880 and consolidated his political career by courting a union of

²⁷ Bernard Magubane, *The Making of a Racist State: British Imperialism and the Union of South Africa* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1996), pg. 99.

²⁸ John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes*, pg. xiv.

²⁹ Nigel Worden, *The Making of South Africa* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), pp. 24-25.

³⁰ John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes*, pg. 38.

³¹ *Ibid*, pg. 50.

white supremacy between the British and Afrikaners over Africans and moving the Cape Colony to “step in to save the road to the north for its own future expansion.”³² Rhodes’ racial politics were amply displayed in the 1880s in his bid to curb the expansion of the franchise for Africans. In 1887 the Premier of the Cape Colony, Gordon Sprigg tabled the Registration Bill (sometimes referred to as the Voters Registration Act) which was to disqualify “tribal tenure as a basis for property qualification” thus diminishing the electoral power of African voters under the franchise.³³ John Jabavu and his circle in *Imvo Zabantsundu* and the Native Vigilance Association dubbed the bill *Tung’umlomo* (The muzzling) and swiftly wrote against the degrading of African rights as “British citizens.”³⁴ Rhodes rose in parliament to support the bill. His speech reframed the language of citizenship as predicated on the acquisition of British subjectivity and in its stead projected the political sphere to be an explicitly race-based domain shared by British and Afrikaner prerogatives:

Does this House think it is right that men in a state of pure barbarism should have the franchise? The natives do not want it. . . . For myself I tell the “Bond” that if I cannot retain my position in the House on the European vote, I wish to be cleared out, for I am above going to the native vote for support Why should we not settle all these differences between Dutch and English, of which the native question is the greatest? What is the use of talking about a united South Africa if the native question remains undulate with? Does the House think the Republics would join with the Colony on its present native franchise?³⁵

Rhodes’ speech is significant for a number of reasons. Outside of the *public* domain he peeled off his garbs of non-racial politicking and revealed the terms upon which the future of South African citizenship was to be structured. The narrative of African ‘progress’ under the civilizational narrative which structured the colonial politics of citizenship to this point was discarded for a “racial contract” in which what Charles W. Mills has called

³² *Ibid*, pg. 61.

³³ See Andre Odendaal, *The Founders*, pp. 112-128.

³⁴ See John Jabavu, “The Natives and their Disfranchisement,” *Imvo Zabantsundu*, 20th July, 1887, pg. 3.

³⁵ Rhodes quoted in John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes*, pg. 83.

“*Herrenvolk* ethics” were mooted at the basis for structuring citizenship.³⁶ Rhodes wrestled the Premiership of the Cape Colony from Spriggs in 1890. He followed the Registration Bill with the Franchise and Ballot Act of 1892 which raised qualification for the franchise from £25 to £75. The bill was aimed at restricting the number of black voters who could effectively participate in the Colony’s political life. Rhodes’ crowning achievement in the governing of the black subject was perhaps the Glen Grey Act of 1894. Beginning with the Glen Grey district in the eastern Cape Colony but eventual incorporate through other districts in the eastern Cape, the act aimed to segregate Africans where they were entitled to own their own property and aspired to become “civilized by the discipline of work.”³⁷ In these segregated - for whites were not allowed to settle in them - areas the vestiges of the franchise that was already in the midst of being revoked for Africans was null. African politics was removed from involvement in the affairs of parliament. Those belonging to the district were given local councils where “elected representatives [were] empowered to raise taxes for local purposes.”³⁸ Since land tenure was to be individual, male and only “inheritable by primogeniture” African males not entitled to land ownership and compelled to work for wages to pay tax were forced to enter into the labor economy outside of the district, effectively becoming proletarianized. Govan Mbeki’s reflections on the devastating impact of the Glen Grey Act in his understudied pamphlet *Transkei in the Making* commands more careful study than I can give it here. I will focus on one passage here. In it Mbeki is able to perceptively frame and in some senses and even pre-empts a way of linking British rule to the elaboration of segregationist and perhaps also Apartheid. In his section on “Local Government” Mbeki paints a picture of indirect rule under Rhodes as the foundation of these institutions:

The Africans remained under the rule of the British and by the pressure of the absentee Administrators at Whitehall and in the offices of the Secretary for Colonies the African had to acquaint himself with the British ways if being Governed - hence the right to vote

³⁶ The ideas of the “racial contract” and “herrenvolk ethics” are developed in Charles W. Mills’ books *The Racial Contract* (1997) and *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race* (1998). Mills posits the racial contract as a more productive way of understanding the the reproduction of social inequality in spite of the existence of traditions of thought about equality. The racial contract as theory renders explicit how inequality is internal to the idea of the social contract itself: “By its crucial silences on race and the corresponding opacities of its conceptual array, the raceless social contract and the faceless world of contemporary moral and political theory render mysterious the actual political issues and concerns that have historically preoccupied a large section of the world’s population.” Mills, *The Racial Contract*, pg. 124. In *Blackness Visible*, Mills uses the notion of “herrenvolk ethics” to show how an iteration of this kind of contract mixed in with some bad faith structure the continuance of inequality: “The system of accumulated, entrenched privilege can reproduce itself through motivation that is simply self-and group-interested, that does not want to lose access to differential opportunities, that does not want to probe too deeply into the past (or the present, for that matter). Whites do not have to be racist to want to keep their privileges (though racism, as a rationalization, may make it morally easier); they just have to be human.” Mills, *Blackness Visible*, pg. 146. Mills’ ideas are useful to me because in Rhodes and Sprigg we find an actual historical example of this kind of racial contract of white over black being worked into the body politic of what will become the Union of South Africa in 1910.

³⁷ John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes*, pg. 168.

³⁸ John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes*, pg. 168.

in the Cape. This right to vote, however, remained open to the elite (according to Western Standards). For this reason the Glen Grey Act of 1894, introducing the council system, was the first legislative measure to indicate the coming of a new political theory for dealing with the huge masses of African people. . . . This administrative side-step has in the course of year received a new name which embodies theory and practice, viz., segregation.³⁹

Transkei in the Making was published about a decade before Apartheid was institutionalized. It would be interesting to see whether Mbeki later extended his views on indirect government under Rhodes to the making of the Apartheid state because he certainly ties it to its predecessors.⁴⁰ John Flint, writing about four decades after Mbeki, may have perhaps unknowingly linked Rhodes to the twentieth century ideology of fascism but he was more explicit in tying South Africa's "Man of Empire" to Apartheid. In an effort to segregate black and white, squeeze a pool of migrant labor and restrict African access to the franchise, he says, the Glen Grey Act became a "legislation which in several ways can now be seen as a blueprint for the modern South African system of *apartheid*."⁴¹ Rhodes was, then, a key innovator of the techniques of racial government in the Cape Colony. But since the Cape was only the anchor of his imperial scheme, we have to look more broadly to re-imagine the map of empire he sought to carve out of the continent.

By far Rhodes' most ostensible claim to Africa as the lay of a colonial-born British empire came to fruition when he acquired the Royal Charter from London in October of 1889. In the previous year, Rhodes sent an expedition to Lobengula's Ndebele chiefdom to gain a concession for "private British or Cape concession hunting."⁴² Colonists who had interests in the region had their eyes set on the lands of the Shona people where whites had discovered "ancient gold workings" and sought to convert the territory and its "potentially docile source of cheap labor" into "a new Rand."⁴³ Rhodes was no different and in acquiring access to the territory north of the Afrikaner Republics the parts of the subcontinent that lay north of South Africa was now open to him. Rhodes' plan to acquire the territory without military conflict or British annexation brought his considerable wealth and political influence into the shaping of the politics of expansion in the region. To this end he hatched a plan to form a chartered company. As Flint explains, Rhodes had revamped in the notion of a chartered company one of "the oldest expedients of British Imperial expansion" for these were "private companies" that "were organized and

³⁹ Govan Mbeki, *Transkei in the Making*, pg. 5.

⁴⁰ Govan Mbeki, *Transkei in the Making*, pg. 7.

⁴¹ John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes*, pp. 167-170.

⁴² Ibid, pg. 96.

⁴³ Ibid, pg. 93.

authorized by the Crown to rule colonial territories.”⁴⁴ Throughout the 1880s Rhodes had amassed the kind of wealth and power to use his finances for “the kind of administrative expenses a chartered company would incur.”⁴⁵ After convincing Lobengula to sign a treaty of ‘goodwill’ with Queen Victoria which allowed that no correspondence or treaty shall pass between the Ndebele “without prior British sanction,” Rhodes had acquired the leverage he could use in London to form a chartered company. Rhodes and his associates, along with a directorship that included men “of social and political standing” stood behind the British South African Company and in October of 1889 the Office of the Privy Council in London granted the company its formal existence. The terms of the Charter made clear the right that the British South Africa Company had to expand further into the subcontinent. It was written in Westminster on behalf of Queen Victoria that

That the Petitioners; and others are associated for the purpose of forming a Company or Association, to be incorporated, if to Us should seem fit, for the objects in the said Petition set forth, under the corporate name of The British South Africa Company.

That the existence of a powerful British Company, controlled by those of Our subjects in whom We have confidence, and having its principal field of operations in that region of South Africa lying to the north of Bechuanaland and to the west of Portuguese East Africa, would be advantageous to the commercial and other interests of Our subjects in the United Kingdom and in Our Colonies.⁴⁶

In the “Charter of the British South Africa Company” Rhodes had finally secured his means to “a private empire” in Africa. If it appeared that the Company would place the administration of the expansion of British power in the hands of a few men, the notion is easily proven to be mistaken. Rhodes himself ran the Company and in May of 1890 he acquired, through “the grant of a legal power of attorney,” “absolute discretion” to act on the company’s behalf.”⁴⁷ In the British South Africa Company, Rhodes had managed to marshal his wealth and political standing into an institution that, in its discursive outlook and robust finance capital, kept the lay of imperial expansion in Africa open. Perhaps the most lasting remnant of his imperial legacy is borne in the audacity he had in seeing it fit to give his last name to his new found colonial territories.

⁴⁴ Ibid, pg. 98.

⁴⁵ Ibid, pp. 99-100.

⁴⁶ “Charter of the British South Africa Company.” Web Address: <http://www.rhodesia.me.uk/Charter.htm>. Accessed on line Friday 13th February 2015, 18:50.

⁴⁷ John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes*, pg. 120.

Figure 2.⁴⁸

Rhodes did not live to see his dream of a private British empire stretching north from the Cape. In the mid-1890s his efforts toward the “economic absorption of the Transvaal into a South African system” failed miserably as he turned to military techniques and the botched Jameson Raid (December 1895 - January 1896) to bring the gold rich Afrikaner Republic to its knees and Britain’s sphere of influence. Importantly, Rhodes had broken the policy of gradualism that was to unite the British colonies of the Cape and Natal with the Afrikaner Republics and instead set the stage for the South African War. I do not wish to dwell on the details of this history. Rather, what interests me about Rhodes is that he established an imaginary and institutions of governmentally that were imperial in outlook. David Scott has suggested that an “archive is not merely a collection; rather it is a generative system . . . that governs the production and appearance of

⁴⁸ Cecil Rhodes’s imperial dream space. See *The Story of Rhodesia: Told in a Series of Historical Pictures*.

statements.”⁴⁹ Following this, Deborah Thomas has observed that seen in this way what archives open up are “new possibilities, possibilities for seeing connections previously unexamined and for reordering our ontological taken-for-granted.”⁵⁰ Thomas’s focuses on archive building in the post-colonial Caribbean, in particular Jamaica, and the problem of state violence as it relates to black experience and memory. I would like to transcribe Scott and Thomas’s comments on the archive to the colonial space that Rhodes sought to fashion into an empire. Figure 1. below shows a map in which Rhodes staked in red - “All that Red” “that’s my dream!” -the cartography that drew what was for him a *thinkable* empire. He was obviously working with a much larger scale of geography than the lands he acquired in his lifetime. But it seems more useful to think about Rhodes’ career, besides its monumental acquisitions of wealth, political power and its failures, as generative of a certain kind of archive; a system in which the possibilities of a revitalized empire were *encoded* in the governmental uses of private capital and the systematization of racial segregation and black labor.

It is not my intention to posit the notion of an archive of empire as the dominant means for apprehending geo-political processes in Southern Africa in the early twentieth century. I suggested in the first chapter that I would return to the work of Arthur Berriedale Keith. Keith’s work is significant to return to here because his own reading of the archive of empire allows us to trace the specter of Rhodes in the debates over statehood that swept South Africa after the South African War. I would like to maintain that an essential part of this conception of empire is the notion of a dominant white population peopling new frontiers of rule. Indeed, as scholars of empire have shown, what colonies of settlement throughout the British empire shared was the enshrinement of the idea that “the colored man [was] worth intrinsically less than the white” hence white belonging became implicit in these forms of territorialization.⁵¹ This narrative resembles, of course, that which Rhodes had lain the foundation for in his assault on the franchise for Africans in the Cape Colony in the 1880s and 1890s. The work of Keith gives some historical context as well as political focus to these developments. He suggests in his *Responsible Government and the Dominions* (1915) that settler colonialism lead, throughout the nineteenth century, to a kind of partial self-government in the form of representative institutions “involving the relative independence of the Executive and the Legislative.”⁵² Colonies that were settled “without conquest” were given the right to representative gov-

⁴⁹ David Scott quoted in Deborah Thomas, “Caribbean Studies, Archive Building, and the Problem of Violence,” *Small Axe: a Caribbean Journal of Criticism*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (2013), pg. 27.

⁵⁰ Deborah Thomas, “Caribbean Studies, Archive Building and the Problem of Violence,” p. 27-28.

⁵¹ See Robert A. Huttenback, *Racism and Empire: White Settlers and Colored Immigrants in the British Self-Governing Colonies, 1830-1910* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), pg. 317.

⁵² Arthur Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, pg. 11.

ernment by the Crown. But, Keith observes, representative government had within it tensions between colony and metropole: “where settlers were predominantly European, it was inevitable that they should resent the position in which they were placed by form of representative government in which they had no control over the Executive, which was appointed from England.”⁵³ Keith does not simply give a history of responsible government in the British dominions. He also anticipates and argues for the sovereignty of the dominions within empire. He argued, as imperialism was giving way to new forms of world governance such as the League of Nations, that “Dominions should be enabled to amend their constitutions without reference to the Imperial Parliament” and strongly advocated “the acceptance by the Empire of the doctrine of the right of the Dominions to preserve homogeneity of race.”⁵⁴ Keith conceived, then, a form of colonial government *within* empire that more and more took up the qualities of white statehood.

It is precisely because of his reading of empire as co-extensive with forms of statehood that Keith was able to read for the vestiges of empire in the making of the Union of South Africa. He observes that the “Union Act of 1909 contemplated the addition to the Union of the territory of South African Rhodesia, if and when that area desired to join the Union.”⁵⁵ Keith was most likely referring to paragraphs 149, 150 and 151 of the South Africa Act of 1909 when he mooted that besides the unification of the the Cape, Natal and the Afrikaner Republics, the boundaries of the Union of South Africa from 1910 would remain malleable enough to still expand its sovereignty:

IX. New Provinces and Territories

149. Parliament may alter the boundaries of any province, divide a province into two or more provinces, or form a new province out of provinces within the Union, on the petition of the provincial council of every province whose boundaries are affected thereby.

150. The king, with the advice of the privy council, may on addresses from the houses of parliament of the Union admit to the Union territories administered by the British South Africa Company on such terms and conditions as to the representation and otherwise in each case as are expressed in the addresses and approved by the king, and the provisions of any other council in that behalf shall have effect as if they had been enacted by the parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

151. The king, with the advice of the privy council, may, on addresses of the houses of parliament of the Union, transfer to the Union the government of any territories administered by the British South Africa Company, belonging to or under the protection of his majesty, and inhabited wholly or in part by natives, and upon such transfer the governor-

⁵³ Arthur Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, pg. 12.

⁵⁴ Arthur Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, pp. viii-ix.

⁵⁵ Arthur Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, pg. 35.

general may undertake the government of such territory upon the terms and conditions embodied in the schedule of this act.⁵⁶

As we can see, what Rhodes had enabled to be written into the making of South Africa are the spatial increments of empire that he had died leaving an unfinished project. Interestingly, the clauses on the “new Provinces and Territories” of the South Africa Act continued to apply to Zimbabwe until its white elite voted for responsible government in 1922 - responsible government became effective in Zimbabwe in 1923 - and paid the British South Africa Company £4 400 000 for its ‘loss’ and to enable it to recover the “value of property which might be taken over by the administration.”⁵⁷ This play between emergent white sovereignties and their exchanges in capital offers a striking instance of the negotiation of power, statehood and rule but it is for me an example of a negotiation of an enduring imaginary laid down by Rhodes. At the end of the First World War, Jan Smuts entered into the stage of global politics and the making of the new world order. It was, as Keith put it, the wish of “General Smuts and he Union of South Africa . . . to induce Southern Rhodesia to enter the Union.”⁵⁸ Smuts was also at the helm of the Union’s ploy to incorporate Namibia into its borders. In contrast to Zimbabwe, the Union’s struggle for the mastery of Namibia lived the transformation of global internationalist politics between the world wars and beyond. Smuts would remain a champion of the Union’s claim over Namibia and in his quest to expand the Union’s borders no one loomed closer as a legitimating figure than Rhodes and perhaps the red colored map of his imperial dreams.

Recalibrating Empire: Jan Smuts

It is hardly doubtful that Jan Smuts was among the most influential South Africans on the global stage after the First World War. He emerged after the war as a key figure in the making of the League of Nations. A precursor to the United Nations, the League of Nations that he helped form was to be an internationalist organization promoting lasting peace among the nations. The League of Nations was also formed between at the nadir of European imperialism and the rise of the United States as a global power. Smuts saw the importance of the former British colony to the future of world politics and pushed to “cement relations between the two greatest forces for civilization in the modern world.”⁵⁹ In Smuts, Arthur Keith’s arguments were translated into reality. After the First World War he was laboring to “transform constitutional relations between the Dominions and Lon-

⁵⁶ “The South Africa Act, 1909,” *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 4, No. 1 pp.34-35.

⁵⁷ Arthur Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, pg. 36.

⁵⁸ Arthur Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, pg. 37.

⁵⁹ Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Place: the End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), pg. 38.

don, boosting the power of the former within an essentially informal organizational framework.”⁶⁰

At the close of the Second World War, Smuts was among the oldest delegates in San Francisco to aid in the drawing up of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945). As Mark Mazower rightly observes, though the United Nations was to ensure the world peace that the League of Nations had failed to maintain, Smuts’s attendance bore the “possibility of embarrassment for his own country” for he still carried hopes that after the war the Union could still gain possession of the mandate of Namibia that the League of Nations had granted it more than two decades before. Indeed, as Mazower further observes, Smuts “was working through the war on a plan for a new “Pan-African” superstate that would stretch right up to the equator,” compelling “the young British states to our north which are our real industrial and political hinterland” into partnership with South Africa.”⁶¹ Like Xuma, Smuts was working through the new United Nations to advance his colonial ambitions but unlike the president of the African National Congress he was both an insider and confidant to the institution of the post-war era’s new internationalism. It is not fortuitous that Smuts’ imperial dreams resembled those of Cecil Rhodes’ of the late nineteenth century. Smuts himself was a British educated Afrikaner. He had studied law in Christ’s College, Cambridge University under an Eden Scholarship in the early 1890s.⁶² He returned to Cape Town in 1895 where he began his career at the bar. Cecil Rhodes, the man of empire who dreamed of “a united South Africa, nay, Pan Africa, under the British flag,” became aware of him and was soon a patron of the young Smuts, whom he sent to Kimberley to work on his behalf. Rhodes held considerable influence over the young lawyer for, as Smuts’s biographer Rene Kraus put it, he became an ardent Rhodesite: “Rhodes was all in all to Smuts. He became obsessed with Rhodes. He made Rhodes his hero and leader. A future under Rhodes was a great future.”⁶³ Smuts fell out with Rhodes after the botched Jameson Raid proved that the latter was willing to win the Afrikaner Republics by any means. However as the South African War came to an end and the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910, Rhodes continued to shape Smuts’ outlook on the Union’s place in the subcontinent.

In November of 1929 Smuts was invited to Rhodes’ alter mater, Oxford University to give the Rhodes Memorial Lectures. These were published by Oxford as a pamphlet titled *Africa and Some World Problems* (1930). In the Lectures Smuts was keen to impress upon his Oxford audience his inheritance of Rhodes’ old imperial project: “I was a young man fighting in the Boer War when Rhodes passed away twenty seven years ago. My whole working life has since been consciously occupied with the same sort of questions which governed his thoughts - the Union of South Africa, the progress of European civi-

⁶⁰ Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Place*, pg. 36-38.

⁶¹ Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Place*, pg. 54.

⁶² See Rene Kraus, *Old Master: the Life of Jan Christian Smuts* (New York: E.E. Dutton & Co, 1944), pg. 39.

⁶³ Rene Kraus, *Old Master: the Life of Jan Christian Smuts*, pg. 44.

lization on the African continent, the relation between white and black in that civilization, the promotion of world peace through better understanding between the leading nations of the world.”⁶⁴ With regard to the ‘the relation between white and black’ Smuts was clear that the African landscape was to be settled in order to rescue it from the vestiges of ‘barbarism’ that had apparently survived the previous century’s ‘civilizing’ efforts turning it into a future European homeland: “A large European community settled on the healthy lands in the heart of Africa, and forming not only a new center but a fresh support and stimulus for Western civilization through vast surrounding area, may well revolutionize the whole outlook for the future. It may give an opening for strengthening our civilization and reclaiming Africa from barbarism such as has never been dreamt of before.”⁶⁵ The arguments contained in *Africa and Some World Problems* were given a perceptive reading Mahmood Mamdani in his *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (1996). Smuts, for Mamdani, stood before his Oxford audience as the “standard bearer” of white racism and had developed his race-thinking to make segregation axiomatic to be the building of a twentieth century society: “The very image of an enlightened leader,” he observed, “Smuts opposed slavery and celebrated the “principles of the French Revolution which had emancipated European,” but he opposed their application to Africa, for the African, he argued, was of “a race so unique” that “nothing could be worse for Africa than the application of a policy” that would “de-Africanize the African and turn him either into a beast of the field or into a pseudo-European.””⁶⁶ The kind of racial essentialism at work in Smuts’ thinking turned the quest for imperial belonging that informed black discourses of citizenship in South Africa into a misguided form of mimicry that misrecognized the natural order of difference in the racial polity. Mamdani was well aware that Smuts was speaking to a form of government that was not unique to South Africa. Racial segregation had been concocted, he pointed out, by Lord Lugard and Lord Hailey as they pioneered institutions of indirect rule in west and central Africa in the nineteenth century. South Africa was not the source of its invention.⁶⁷ It had the unfortunate distinction of having developed practices and ideologies of racial exclusion to a “degree of force and brutality” - and *duration*, I might add - that seemed to place it on its own. But, as we have seen, the governments of Southern Africa were defined by settler colonialism and this distinguished how their white elite envisioned citizenship and the territorialization of the continent. In fact, Smuts’ ideas of racial rule made scant distinction between segregation, ‘civilization,’ black labor and white settlement. Indeed, Mamadani was correct to point out the striking affinities between Hegel’s characterization of Africa

⁶⁴ Jan Smuts, *Africa and Some World Problems*, pg. 39.

⁶⁵ Jan Smuts, *Africa and Some World Problems*, pg. 43.

⁶⁶ Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, pp. 4-5.

⁶⁷ Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, pp. 6-7.

as “the land of childhood” and Smuts’ infantilization of Africans for in them lie the kernel of his vision about the happy state of being between white and black:⁶⁸

[the] most easiest, most natural and obvious way to civilize the African native it so give him decent white employment. White employment is his best school; the gospel of labour is the most salutary gospel for him. The civilization of the African continent will be a vain dream apart from white employment, without the leading hand of the settler and the employer, away from the continuous living contact with the actual example and the actual practice of European industry and agriculture. The civilization of Africa therefore calls for definite policy, the policy of European settlement, the establishment of white community inside Africa whitewall form the steel framework of the whole ambitious structure of African civilization. Without a large European population as a continuous support and guarantee of that civilization and as an ever-present practice example and stimulus for the natives, I fear that civilization will not far and will not endure for long. From the native point of view, therefore, just as much as from the white or European point of view, nay, even more from the native point of view, the policy of African settlement is imperatively necessary.⁶⁹

In these passages, Smuts laid out a course of African colonization that mapped out the supposed commensurability the desires of whites and needs of black people. If Smut’s ideas of African colonization sounded like a romance they indeed were. *Africa and Some World Problems* was a continuation of ideas that were firmly in place by the end of the First World War where he felt the Union had already set itself on the path of “making a white man’s land of Southern Africa” by “creating a new white base in South Africa, and today we are in a position to move forward toward the North and the civilization of the African Continent.”⁷⁰ In his *War-Time Speeches: A Compilation of Public Utterances in Great Britain* (1917), one of his earlier public workings out before British metropolitan audiences and publics of the idea that “there will be free consent of nations about their own destiny and their own disposal,” a notion of national sovereignty that would explicitly exclude Africans and people of color, he ruminated on how greatly South African history lent itself to romantic idealism: “The history of South Africa is in many respects one of the true great romances in modern history. One of the most wonderful episodes in that romance you will probably have to opportunity to see in a cinematograph film which will be produced here in London called “Winning a Continent,” in which scenes from the great Boer trek into the interior are represented.”⁷¹ Smuts was referring to Gustav Preller’s (1875-1943) film of 1916 *De Voortrekkers* which depicted the Great Trek and defeat of the Zulu King Dingaane’s army at the Battle of Blood River (1838). The invitation to mark

⁶⁸ Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, pg. 6.

⁶⁹ Jan Smuts, *Africa and Some World Problems*, pg. 48-49.

⁷⁰ Jan Smuts, *War-Time Speeches*, pg. 76.

⁷¹ Jan Smuts, *War-Time Speeches*, pg. 72.

Preller's filmic memorialisation of the Afrikaner struggle to triumph over 'a Continent,' coming as it did at the heels of the formation of the Union seems made to set up an allegory to Smuts' own historical moment. It is curious that Smuts privileged the film's subtitle over its primary name but the gesture perhaps emphasized how close he felt the Union's history was to a kind of continental triumphalism. Nowhere did Smuts' expansion of a territory of white sovereignty seem more real than in the aftermath of the Union's invasion of Germany's colonial possession of Namibia in 1915. It was "a matter of grave imperial importance," he wrote in a letter he wrote earlier in that year.⁷²

As with all colonial encounters, South Africa's relationship to Namibia is long, complex and intertwined. Colonial migrations from South Africa into Namibia date back to the latter half of the nineteenth century with both English and Afrikaans speaking whites and Baster populations - these were people of mixed Nama and European ancestry - settling in the lands that lay to the north of the Cape Colony. When, in 1883, Frantz Luderitz, a Bremen's merchant, "proposed to establish a factory on the coast between the Orange and Little Fish Rivers, where he had recently purchased lands (November 1882)" Germany saw an opportunity to enter into the Scramble for Africa.⁷³ In April of 1884, Otto Van Bismarck notified the the government of the Cape that he sought to make the lands that Luderitz had settled upon and purchased into a German protectorate. The government of the Cape, in spite of Rhodes' urgings to the contrary, did not contest Bismarck's claim upon the territory and at the beginning of the 1890s the boundaries of German South-West Africa were agreed upon between the British and Germans: "by the Anglo-German Agreement of July 1890, the inland boundaries of German South-West Africa, embracing 322,450 square miles, were defined, and free access from the protectorate to the Zambezi was conceded by the Caprivi Zipfel, a corridor 20 miles wide."⁷⁴ As John Dugard explains, though Germany's claim to Namibia as a 'protectorate' invoked the rhetoric of a 'benign' European presence, being a "colonial protectorate" meant in the international law of the nineteenth century that Germany had exercise of full sovereignty over the lands and people of the colony.⁷⁵ Apart from the massive disciplining of land and African people to subservience, the implications for the acquisition of capital in the colony can't remain unspoken. It is indeed quite striking just how similar the histories of the colonization of Namibia and Zimbabwe are.

⁷² See Jan Smuts' letter to H.J. Wolstenholme in W.K. Hancock and Jean der Poel (Editors), *Selections from the Smuts Papers: Volume III June 1910 - November 1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), pp.238-239.

⁷³ John Dugard, *The South West Africa / Namibia Dispute*, pg 19.

⁷⁴ John Dugard, *The South West Africa / Namibia Dispute*, pg. 20.

⁷⁵ "It is true that, after the annexation, Germany extended her authority over the territory by the conclusion of treaties of friendship and protection with the various Herero, Baster, and Nama chiefs, but these treaties were not protectorate treaties between independent sovereign States, which preserved some of the sovereign rights of the protected territories. Instead the were "colonial protectorates," which are simply a disguise for annexation and resulted in the acquisition of full sovereignty by Germany. This was in accordance with international law of the late nineteenth century, which viewed territory occupied by indigenous peoples as "no man's land" (*territorium nulls*) and therefore subject to the acquisition of sovereignty by occupation by a European Power." John Dugard, *The South West Africa / Namibia Dispute*, pg. 21.

In a letter sent to Bismarck in September of 1885, the German chancellor was made aware that the purchase of territory in “South West Africa” by Luderitz “included certain older mining concessions, granted by Chieftains of the country to prove parties.”⁷⁶ The diamond rush around Luderitzberg in the early twentieth century would in itself set off a series of migrations that included South Africa laborers and speculators. This segment of South Africa’s migratory history I shall return to in the following chapter. What is significant for me to note here is how similar metropolitan and colonial-made imperial projects looked toward the end of the nineteenth century.

As *The Peace Treaty and Covenant of the League of Nations* (1920) underlined, the defeat of Germany in the First World War meant that the power was forced to renounce the territories it had hitherto claimed as its colonial possessions.⁷⁷ Smuts was among the drafters of the document and he threw his efforts toward ensuring that Germany’s former colony would be brought into the Union. While *The Peace Treaty and Covenant of the League of Nations* maintained that the “native inhabitants of the former German oversea possessions shall be entitled to the diplomatic protection of the Governments exercising authority over those territories,” the question of who held the right to the ‘diplomatic protection’ of what was then German South-West Africa would lead to a much more complicated struggle between the Union, the League and United Nations.⁷⁸ In *The League of Nations: A Practical Suggestion* (1918), he offered the system of trusteeship as a means of safe-guarding former colonized territories. In Smuts’ thinking, the system of “international trusteeship” was to apply to “the territories under Russian, Austrian and Turkish rule.”⁷⁹ According to John Dugard the former colonial possessions of Germany were left out of this system in *The League of Nations*, an omission which was to facilitate the Union’s possession of Namibia. I would suggest that what Smuts weaved into the folds of the new world system’s internationalism was a racially overdetermined theory of dependence and sovereignty. He was careful to point out in *The League of Nations* that “the German colonies in the Pacific and Africa are inhabited by barbarians, who not only cannot possibly govern themselves, but to whom it would be impracticable to apply any ideas of self-determination in the European sense.”⁸⁰ Throughout the interwar period, as we have seen, Smuts had resuscitated the Rhodesian project of a European settlement of Africa. In his advices on the re-making of the map of the world by the League of Nations he quietly inserted his old master’s dream of a white “Pan Africa.” Smuts’ failed to convince the other drawers of *The Peace*

⁷⁶ University of the Witwatersrand Archives, 2013, Image 4597.

⁷⁷ Article 118 of the treaty stated that “In territory outside her European frontiers as fixed by the present Treaty, Germany renounces all rights, titles and privileges whatever in or over territory which belonged to her or to her allies, and all rights, titles and privileges whatever their origin which she held as against the Allied and Associated Powers.” *The Peace Treaty and Covenant of the League of Nations*, pg. 103.

⁷⁸ *The Peace Treaty and Covenant of the League of Nations*, pg. 103.

⁷⁹ John Dugard, *The South West Africa / Namibia Dispute*, pg. 28.

⁸⁰ Jan Smuts, *The League of Nations*, pg. 15.

Treaty to leave Namibia out of the mandate system and it would take the dissolution of the League of Nations and its replacement by the United Nations before the Union government again took up the idea that had raised its head in the Union's parliamentary debates a few years before the election of 1948. In 1946 Smuts lead the House of Assembly on "the necessary steps for the incorporation of the Territory of South West Africa as a Province of the Union . . . subject solely to the sovereign power of the Union of South Africa in regard to both external and internal affairs."⁸¹ If the Union turned to the United Nations to legitimize the expansion of its borders, we must be reminded that this gesture was in itself not new. Not only has Smuts hoped that the League of Nations would be a means for appropriating Namibia but Rhodes had taken to London more than half a century before to stamp his blueprint for the Union's own home-made empire.

Smuts died in 1950, only two years after the emergence of the Apartheid state. His United Party had lost narrowly to D.F. Malan's Nationalist Party in the infamous national elections of 1948. It is perhaps a deep irony of history that the party that unseated him in the twilight of his life resuscitated for its sharpening of the country's segregationism *Apartheid*, a term that he had mooted in London in 1917 as he sought to work the form of the nation-state into an increasingly fading framework of empire. But, as we have seen, there was nothing fortuitous in this irony. The stubborn ideals of nineteenth century imperial dreams had been reworked over the course of two generations into a form of state rule that threatened to perfect the Glen Grey Act in South Africa and indeed beyond.

The Union's re-scripting of empire did not, however, go unaccompanied. In the years of the first gathering of nation various members of the black intelligentsia wrote back in kind, decrying their exclusion from the Union. They were astute and ethically incisive readers of the archive of empire and as the Union's borders were being drawn nothing seemed more urgent to them than to reclaim the dreams of imperial belonging from the melancholies of a nation-state that did nothing less than to make them forlorn to citizenship.

The A.P.O.: Gazing at White Folk

In May of 1910 the Union of South Africa became a political fact. The Treaty of Vereeniging had eight years previously ended the South African War as the Afrikaner forces finally laid down their arms and agreed on a path toward a nation-state forged in 'closer union' between the British colonies and Afrikaner Republics. The British imperial government appointed Lord Milner (1854-1925) to administer British policy after the war.⁸² Milner, who brandished his outlook as that of "an Imperialist out and out," set about outlining the objective of British governance in a unified South Africa: "The *ultimate* end is a self-governing white Community, supported by *well-treated* and justly *governed*

⁸¹ The Union of South Africa's *House of Assembly Debates* quoted in John Dugard, *The South West Africa / Namibia Dispute*, pg. 98.

⁸² See Thompson, *The Unification of South Africa*, pp. 4-5.

black labour from Cape Town to [the] Zambesi.”⁸³ The British government Milner’s image of a post-war South Africa concealed his lofty conceit regarding the future of African people. In a broad stroke of the pen he reduced the future of black people to a singular mass of ‘*well-treated*’ and ‘*justly governed*’ labor thus minimizing a generation long struggle for citizenship in the British colonies into something representable only by the colonist. The evacuation of the black subject from the economy of self-representation arrested, in the play of the colonial archive, just as the discourse on black labour had done, the notion that citizenship could be thought of in terms other than white. The tenor of reconciliation after the war, then, only opened itself up for a future of unified white rule structured by the tenets and cultural codes of Britishness.

Milner envisioned a form of white citizenship in which “the Afrikaners were to be exposed to the full force of modern Western cultural influences, transmitted in the English language.”⁸⁴ When the Treaty of Vereeniging was signed he had all but concluded on the exclusion of Africans from the franchise. Although the article on the treaty regarding the franchise deferred the question until representative governments were formed in the former Afrikaner Republics - “The question of granting the franchise to natives will not be decided until after the introduction of self-government.” - the subordination of Africans was settled upon before this point. When the terms of the treaty were mooted in March of 1901 the British were clear that the expansion of the franchise for Africans was subsidiary to white belonging: “As regards the extension of the franchise to Kaffirs in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, it is not the intentions of H.M. Government to give such franchise before representative government is granted to those Colonies, and if then given, it will be so limited as to secure the just predominance of the white race, The legal position of colored persons will, however, be similar to that which they hold in the Cape Colony.”⁸⁵ The other battle which was wielded during the war, the battle for black citizenship, had surreptitiously taken a turn for the treacherous for the private and public faces of British politicking during the war belied the sinister machinations of racial exclusion. To justify imperial advancement in the Afrikaner Republics in 1899 Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914) had told the Commons that “The treatment of the natives [in the Transvaal] has been disgraceful; it has been brutal; it has been unworthy of a civilised Power.”⁸⁶ Milner himself had put on a gainly public face for a colored audience in Cape Town to assure them that “it was not race or colour, but civilisation which was the test of a man’s capacity for political rights.”⁸⁷ This turned out to be nothing less than a Rhodes-

⁸³ Milner quoted in Thompson, *The Unification of South Africa*, pg. 6.

⁸⁴ Thompson, *The Unification of South Africa*, pg. 7.

⁸⁵ Quoted in Thompson, *The Unification of South Africa*, pg. 11.

⁸⁶ Chamberlain quoted in Peter Warwick, *Black People and the South African War, 1899-1902* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pg. 111.

⁸⁷ Milner quoted in Peter Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, pg. 111.

like flaunting of the rhetoric of non-racialism. As Peter Warwick has observed, the black intelligentsia in the Cape had presumed that “no basis for peace will be accepted . . . that does not secure Equal Rights for all civilised British subjects irrespective of colour.”⁸⁸ Warwick’s research has convincingly shown that the ‘Anglo-Boer War’ was no ‘white man’s war.’ Various segments of the black population in South Africa mobilized their resources and some even took up arms to join what most had expected to be a triumph of British liberalism over the Afrikaner effacement of black rights. During the course of this dissertation we have seen that if anything, the codification black exclusion was as much a part of the British as it was the Afrikaner project of constituting whiteness as belonging. As we shall later see, black writers often worked black citizenship through dichotomizing British and Afrikaner governmentally, a gesture which in complex ways appropriated and rendered performable British codes of citizenship. Warwick frames the extension of the franchise as forming a “horizon of expectation” for black people once the British had a secure victory in the war but it is important to keep in mind that the discourse of citizenship in itself was not generated in this moment. It belonged to an entire generation’s self-formation as British subjects. What the South African War had done was to reconfigure this project around the figure of the nation. In the interim years between the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging and the drafting of the South Africa Act the stage was being set for the dramatization of a form of racial governmentally in which the languages of imperial liberalism and *national* identity were to be intertwined, disentangled and made to speak to the meanings of and possibilities of citizenship.

In the same year that the South Africa Act was drafted, the African People’s Organization (henceforth the APO) launched a fortnightly periodical out of Cape Town. It was a bi-lingual periodical running sixteen pages that split its linguistic labor evenly between English and Afrikaans for its readers and the APO’s membership. English and Afrikaans reader were thus exposed to the same news and content. The eponymous *A.P.O.* seemed almost to exist as a direct response to the impending political exclusion that black voters were on the brink of. In a letter on “The Coloured People and the Franchise” written in 1906, the APO’s president Abdullah Abdurahman (1872-1940) remarked questioningly on the deferral of direct deliberation on the franchise for colored people: “Mr. Lytleton is reported to have said on the 15th of May, 1905: “That the Imperial Government understand[s] that the Boers interpret the terms of surrender as meaning that the question of enfranchising any Coloured people will be deferred until self-government is granted.””⁸⁹ Abdurahman was well aware that a suspension of judgement on the question left the “coloured races” in a precarious limbo as far as the franchise was concerned. The deferral in the eyes of black folk signaled what was undeniable about the color of citizenship in the coming Union: “while White South Africans are mainly concerned with the question of whether Boer or Briton shall get possession of the reins of Government, the minds of the coloured races are centered upon the preliminary, but to them infinitely more im-

⁸⁸ Quoted in Peter Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, pg. 112.

⁸⁹ Abdullah Abdurahman Papers, UNISA, Image 29.

portant point, whether it will be a purely “White” Constitution or not.”⁹⁰ As early as the mid-1900s the APO had begun to take steps toward setting up for itself an organ of public opinion to, in part, take up these issues. In the beginning of 1906 its “Newspaper Scheme” expressed frustration at the lack of contributions by branches toward the organization’s establishment of its own paper.⁹¹ About two years later at the APO conference “every delegate” had agreed that “We must have a newspaper of our own.” There remained a lack of support for the actual effort and Abdurahman and Matt Fredericks became “solely responsible for its production.”⁹² The *A.P.O.* would be closely aligned to Abdurahman and Fredericks’ politics. As Mohamed Adhikari explains, “Fredericks, general secretary of the APO, was editor of the newspaper, but Abdourahman exercised the greatest influence on editorial content.”⁹³ In June of 1909 the organization seems to have gathered enough capital to finance the *A.P.O.* As soon as it went into circulation it decried the “illiberal clauses of the draft constitution.”⁹⁴

The APO’s beginnings harken back to the formations of diaspora that were internal to the history of black Cape Town. Among its prominent members were Henry Sylvester Williams, the convener of the Pan-African Conference who briefly settled in Cape Town in 1903 and began working at the bar in the city. The presence of West Indians and Pan-Africanists in Cape Town and the organization might have influenced the organization’s self styling as representing “African People.” Henry Sylvester Williams left Cape Town before the end of 1904 and as the decade matured it became clear that the inscription of blackness around a unity of difference that one such as F.Z.S. Peregrino had advanced in his early days in Cape Town had to contend with the hierarchies insinuated into the structuring of blackness in South Africa. Abdullah Abdurahman, the APO’s long-time president and editor of the *A.P.O.*, was born and raised in Cape Town. He left the city for Glasgow, Scotland in 1888 to commence his studies in medicine. He returned to Cape Town in 1895 to begin an extensive medical practice. His life in medicine had to share his attentions with politics for soon after the APO was formed he was elected to the City Council of Cape Town, being the first person of color in it. He spent most of his political life as a member of the council and was in the Cape Provincial Council from 1914 to his death.⁹⁵ Like many black men of his generation, Abdurahman was deeply committed to the project of imperial citizenship. The franchise system in the Cape had,

⁹⁰ Abdullah Abdurahman, UNISA, Image 29.

⁹¹ See “Minutes of the

⁹² See “A.P.O. Newspaper,” *A.P.O.*, October 22nd, 1910, pg. 9.

⁹³ Mohamed Adhikari, “Voice of the Colored Elite: APO, 1909-1923,” in Les Switzer (editor) *South Africa’s Alternative Press: Voices of Protest and Resistance, 1880s-1960s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997), pg. 131.

⁹⁴ Abdullah Abdurahman, “Coloured Congress,” *APO*, June 5th, 1909, pg. 2.

⁹⁵ Abdullah Abdurahman biography in the introduction to the Abdullah Abdourahman Family Papers.

after all, ensured him a prominent professional, public and political life in Cape Town. But the ambiguities that British colonists exhibited on the extension of the franchise for the black subjects of the empire raised pointed questions about how belonging would be framed in the Union of South Africa.

In “The Colored People and the Franchise” Abdurahman was not simply concerned with re-inscribing into the body politic of the future Union the color-blind qualities of the liberal franchise; he sought to deconstruct the relationship between the promise of non-racial liberal citizenship which was foundational to the Cape with the antimonies of race that had crept into its scripting in the late nineteenth century. Of particular interest to him was the status of the “Coloured” subject in this matrix and how racial meanings determined the structure of belonging. Abdurahman was sensitive to how the claims of “Coloured” citizenship were to be defined not in relation to the belonging that whiteness made purchase of but more crucially to indigeneity as the marker of radical alterity in this schema. If, as Brent Hayes Edwards has suggested, working across linguistic, geographic and cultural spaces “diaspora articulates difference” then we must also be sensitive to the complex ways in which the qualities of ethnic and racial formation, especially in conjunctures of social change, not only affect translatability but the shape of relation across difference. In other words differences that need to be worked through do not only reside in the dispersals that go into the making of a diasporic consciousness but are often intimately at work within a given social formation. I am in part thinking about the work that some anthropologists have done around “ethnogenesis” in the Americas to attend to similar problems. As Jonathan D. Hill explains, ethnogenesis speaks more than to the processes that lead to “the historical emergence of people who define themselves in relation to a sociocultural and linguistic heritage.”⁹⁶ What is important to keep in mind about these processes, he suggests, is that they are “an ongoing process of conflict and struggle over a people’s existence and their positioning within and against a general history of domination. In this more analytical sense, ethnogenesis is not merely a label for the historical emergence of culturally distinct people but a concept encompassing people’s simultaneously cultural and political struggles to create enduring identities in general contexts of radical change and discontinuity.”⁹⁷ It is not my intention to suggest that the 1900s were a moment of either ethnogenesis (writ large as ethnic formation) or rupture in ethnic or racial consciousness in South Africa. I am more interested in thinking through how state formation in some sense sharpened the stakes of claiming the privileges of certain identities and in some senses inspired either the desire for its transcendence or a modality of relation that appraised the local through what Kiddoe calls “black cosmopolitanism.” What interests me about Abdurahman is the thinking that he was doing about the differences between universalist and racially articulated structures of belonging. Though this period exhibits some deep tensions between “Coloured” and “Native” as terms with specific resonances to liberal belonging in the Cape, I would also like to think through some

⁹⁶ Jonathan D. Hill, “Introduction: Ethnogenesis in the Americas, 1492-1991” in *History, Power and Identity: Ethnogenesis in the Americas, 1492-1992* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996), pg. 1.

⁹⁷ Jonathan D. Hill, “Introduction: Ethnogenesis in the Americas, 1492-1991” in *History, Power and Identity*, pg. 1.

of the productive uses of Colourdness in deconstructing the conceits of whiteness in the era of Union formation. If in *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil* (1920 [2007]) W.E.B. DuBois captured “the personal discovery of whiteness among the world’s people . . . a nineteenth and twentieth century matter” then this black quality of gazing at whiteness “from within the veil” proved transferable to the assemblage of white nationality in the Union.

Abdul Abdurahman took up some of these questions in “The Colored People and the Franchise” and they later on resurfaced in the struggles for the franchise that the *A.P.O.* publicized and documented. In “The Colored People and the Franchise” Abdurahman turned to a close reading of the aspects of legislation that addressed the question of color and the racial semantics that sought to distinguish which racial bodies were entitled to the franchise. “The question of *Enfranchising Coloured persons*,” he observed, “apparently depends upon the interpretation of the 8th clause of the Treaty of Vereeniging, which reads as follows: ‘The question of granting the Franchise to *Natives* will not be decided until after the introduction of Self-Government.’”⁹⁸ He turned to “*the meaning of the term ‘Native’*” in determining which persons’ entitlement to the franchise belonged to another moment in the future: “It has now been shown by a letter which appeared in the ‘Spectator’ of the 14th inst., that Lord Milner never intended that Cape Coloured people were to be included in the term ‘Native.’” He says: “I may say that personally I have always held that the word ‘Native’ in the terms of surrender meant ‘Natives’ and not Coloured people. I certainly consider that the universal use of language in South Africa makes a clear distinction between the two, and I have never myself heard Cape boys—much less Asiatics—spoken of as natives.”⁹⁹ Abdurahman’s strongest claim that “the term ‘Native’ does not include Cape coloured persons” came from his reading of the colonial archive itself.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, fixing racial meanings after the war was crucial to the development of a unitary approach to the management of difference in the Union. To this end the British government appointed Commission on Native Affairs. The Commission published its report in 1905 and when Abdurahman observed that “in classifying the population of South Africa” the Commission “puts colored people in a class by themselves” he was certainly thinking of the report and its curt decision that “the word ‘Native’ shall be taken to mean an aboriginal inhabitant of Africa, south of the equator, and to include half-castes and their descendants by Natives.”¹⁰¹ Abdurahman was clearly aware that defining the word “Native” had presented difficulties for the commission and its final intervention was a recourse to dubiously political social engineering than a recapitulation to restructuring race along its ‘natural’ lines. “The Colored People and the Franchise” in itself exhibited ambiguities that bordered on a rearticulated of the commission’s prescrip-

⁹⁸ Abdullah Abdurahman, UNISA, Image 29.

⁹⁹ Abdullah Abdurahman, UNISA, Image 29.

¹⁰⁰ Abdullah Abdurahman, UNISA, Image 30.

¹⁰¹ *South African Native Affairs Commission Report*, pg. 13.

tions on the one hand and, on the other, rejecting them in favor of a resuscitation of the discourse of universal citizenship first generated under the insignia of imperial belonging:

I beg to make the following suggestions:

1.—That the Imperial Government before granting Self-Government to the New Colonies, should wipe off the statute book all those restrictive and offensive laws which humiliate and degrade all non-white, simply and purely on account of the colour of their skin, and against which laws the Imperial Government always protested before the War. They are still there; others have been added to them, and the whole are now enforced with British rigour. They are *a disgrace to English men*. They loosen the affection of non-Europeans to the flag, and are an insult to humanity. In the Orange River Colony regulations are framed which even enter the sanctity of one's home, while in the Transvaal some laws place a premium on immorality.

11. —If it be impossible to grant the Franchise to all fully qualified men, irrespective of colour, race or creed, then the British Government should keep direct control over the unrepresented masses, and not hand them over to the Colonists, nor allow the Colonial Government to tax any section of the people until they are represented in the Councils of the State. This is only in accordance with the British principle of *no taxation without representation*.

111.— Have a reservation in the Constitution which will prevent any person being placed under any disability whatsoever simply on account of the colour of his skin.

IV.—Enfranchise all coloured persons, other than natives, who according to the mass of available evidence are not, and never were, included in the term “Native,” and I would suggest that a clause somewhat after the following be inserted in the Constitution: “Every male British subject, other than Natives, of the age of 21 years, etc., and who is not subject to any legal incapacities, shall be entitled to be registered as a voter. This would afford a way out of the difficulty, if difficulty there be, and cannot be considered, even by the Boer signatories, as a breach of the Treaty.

The 8th Clause of the Vereeniging Treaty says: “That the question of granting the Franchise to ‘Natives,’ etc., etc.”

If the above suggestion is adopted the Franchise will be granted to all British subjects *other than Natives*. As the Boers are unwilling to accept Lord Milner's interpretation of the term “native,” they surely cannot expect that their decision on this matter should be final, and accepted by Great Britain. The Chief Justice of the Transvaal, than whom there is no more impartial and just man, will then decide the question. The Under-Colonial Secretary is reported to have said, a few days ago, that the Supreme court will decide who is a white and who is a coloured person; but that is going further than the framers of the Treaty contemplated, or than is

necessary for the interpretation of the 8th Clause of the Treaty. The word “Native” is used. The term “White person” is not found in the Treaty.¹⁰²

I have reproduced these last passages of “The Coloured People and the Franchise” in large part because they encapsulate the vast and complex ways in which the imaginary of imperial belonging was, at the turn of the twentieth century, being disaggregated and reformulated to speak to the moment of nation-state formation. As I have already argued, Abdurahman kept the universal and racially particularistic aspects of citizenship in a tenuous relation and because the so-called “Native question” which, for the Commission, concerned the classification and governance of indigenous people, a vast terrain in the battle-field of racial meaning and the art of citizenship lay open in the relation between Coloured and white. As the meaning of “Native” was being fixed, then, Abdurhaman consciously labored to pry open and interrogate the meaning of what was being fetishized as the taken-for-granted guarantee of citizenship in the future Union: whiteness. Interestingly, the vestiges of empire remained in these discourses as the Commission did not simply define who belonged to the category of indigenous people by solely imagining the boundaries of national sovereignty as the limit. These discourses were pertinent to the shape of racial governmentality in the colonies and protectorates of what were then “Rhodesia,” “Basutoland,” Swaziland and the “Bechuanaland Protectorate.”¹⁰³ In 1909, these questions took poignant concrete forms as the South Africa Act moved closer to being ratified. Abdurahman and the APO took to petitioning the imperial government.

The position of Abdurahman and the APO toward Africans shifted more toward solidarity and collaboration in this moment. As Andre Odendaal explains, the APO criticized “the draft Act in terms similar to those of the African conferences, expressed a willingness to co-operate more closely with its African counterparts, and began to make preparations to send a delegation to Britain to appeal directly to the Imperial government.”¹⁰⁴ In July of 1909 Abdurahman joined John Jabavu, Walter Rubusana and Charles Dilke in a delegation to London lead by liberal statesman W.P. Schreiner. The delegation had hoped to appeal to the imperial authority to have “the blots removed from the Act, which makes it no Act of Union, but rather an Act of Separation between the minority and the majority of the people of South Africa” but the factions which discouraged the imperial government from accepting what was after to them a “technical rather than [a] practical” matter prevailed.¹⁰⁵ A month before this the APO’s fortnightly had

¹⁰² Abdullah Abdurahman, “The Colored People and the Franchise,” Abdullah Abdurahman Papers, UNISA, Image 31. In its entirety the 8th clause of the Treaty reads “The question of granting the Franchise to Natives will not be decided until after the introduction of Self-Government.” The full transcript of the Treaty of Vereeniging can be found on line (<http://africanhistory.about.com/od/southafrica/a/Text-Of-The-Treaty-Of-Vereeniging.htm>). Accessed Sunday 22nd February, 2015, 17:18.

¹⁰³ See articles 13 to 49 of the *South African Native Affairs Commission 1903-1905*, pp. 3-9.

¹⁰⁴ Andre Odendaal, *The Founding Fathers*, pg. 404.

¹⁰⁵ W.P. Schreiner and Merriman respectively quoted in L.M. Thompson, *The Unification of South Africa*, pp. 402-404.

into print. It was the *A.P.O.* which gave the grand significances of these unhappy struggles their most sustained interpretation and projection into the scene of quotidian colonial life.

It can be easily expected that the *A.P.O.* immediately focused itself on publicizing the aspects of the South African Act that spoke about the franchise in relation to black people. On June 5th of 1909 the *A.P.O.* published Abdurahman's presidential address. In it he offered his largest objection to the draft constitution of the Union: "it is un-British in that it lays down a color-line. This is directly opposed to, and is the very antithesis of the condition under which Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, on the advice of the Imperial Parliament, granted Representative Government to the Cape Colony."¹⁰⁶ The *A.P.O.*'s critique of the Union's color line invoked the imperial government's founding liberal principles. But it also critiqued the utility of the color line in demarcating difference. The invocation of a color-blind franchise might seem anathema to metropolitan and white colonial investments in racial purity. In *Colonial Desire: Hybridity, Culture and Race* (1994) Robert J.C. Young points out the deep resonance of metropolitan anxieties about race-mixing and hybridity from the mid-nineteenth century: "In the climate of obsession with the question of race in the 1860s, the increasing emphasis on the distinctness of races meant an ever greater fixation with the scientific question of hybridity and the imaginative phantasm of racial mixing which lay behind it."¹⁰⁷ But, as we have seen in the previous chapter, hybridity and racial mixing shadowed the construction of colonial identities in the long colonial history of the Cape and the *A.P.O.* began to interrogate the racist and amnesiac presuppositions of the uses of whiteness to structure citizenship. Reading for racial hybridity in the *A.P.O.* became an important project precisely because these differences were made through racialism's political and classificatory systems and were not indelibly written on the body by a code of 'nature.' In these discussions about race, its boundaries and significance, the *A.P.O.* strategically appropriated scientism and history to complicate the claims of white purity and superiority that presided over the definition of citizenship in the conjuncture.

In October of 1910 the *A.P.O.* published an article on "The Negro in the New World." The article in part reproduced and in part critiqued the work of Harry Johnston (1858-1927), the noted British explorer, botanist and colonialist, on the "black problem." In it inklings of the *A.P.O.*'s penchant for dispelling the purity of whiteness could already be gleaned. Johnston had, contrary to popular assumptions, concluded, having had "unrivaled opportunities of studying Africans in Africa," that "In tracing the origin of the negro . . . both Asiatic and European people have an ancient infusion of negro blood in their veins and that the negro has retained dormant the full attributes of humanity."¹⁰⁸ Citing Johnston on the African presence in European and Asian blood obviously lent weight to the critique of white purity. But this argument went hand in hand with the keeping of the color line by marking the black male's moral will to preserve the sanctity

¹⁰⁶ Abdullah Abdurhman, "Presidential Address," *A.P.O.*, June 5th, 1909, pg. 2.

¹⁰⁷ Robert J.C. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995), pg. 133.

¹⁰⁸ "The Negro in the New World," *A.P.O.*, 8th October 1910, pg. 6.

of white womanhood and, of course, by extension, the purity of the white race. Hence, besides reading race through the common (African) thread which ran across it, “The Negro in the New World” extrapolated from Johnston’s arguments a defense of black masculine sexuality. In the Americas, said Johnston, the “Negro” had shown some considerable restraint in largely leaving white women unharmed and preferring “to mate with women of its own race.”¹⁰⁹ In all of this what “the Negro” had shown is that he had “too great a racial sense of decency, or too little liking for the white women (I believe it is the former rather than the latter) to encourage the unhappy white women and girls temporarily in his power.”¹¹⁰ Johnston’s apparent defense of “Negro” masculine sexual restraint said much about how discourses and fears of miscegenation and black sexuality lived at the center of debates about race. But how did this explain the presence of African blood among European and Asiatic races in the first place? Could the discourse of sexual morality somehow have been made to speak to some kind of blackness that was non-threatening? “The Negro in the New World” does not go as far as to point out the inconsistencies in Johnston’s thinking. It is doubtful whether his authority would be seized upon only to be discounted. But indeed what the *A.P.O.* was wont to disarm were the white fear that without racial segregation “there would be a Kaffir Government in South Africa.”¹¹¹ What Johnston opens up are ways of thinking about blackness and the prospect of citizenship that are antimonious or threatening to the sexual politics of the racial order. The example that he points out shifts the referent to the West Indies where he gives a striking indication of the need for empire to adjust its reigns on the black subject with gradual looseness.

I don’t think any of the subject of Colored races in the Empire at present fit to govern themselves with complete fair play, Christianity, and stable civilisation. But that is no reason why we should never hold out hopes of their being able to do so. What would a school-boy think if the master said: “My lad you will always be at school. You will always have to play that silly cricket. You will never be allowed to go out of bounds or remain out after half-past eight. And you will always go on doing lessons!” Why, in time the whole school would mutiny! Therefore I thoroughly approve of these cautious measure of representative Government in India; I thoroughly endorse the limited suffrage accorded to the populace in the West Indies; and I approve the cautiousness: water must be let out slowly till at last its current is manageable.¹¹²

Johnston’s arguments seem to have opened up the use of representative institutions in the Caribbean not as an instrument of liberation but of social control in a situation that had the potential for civil and political unrest. His critique offered in the New World case the

¹⁰⁹ “The Negro in the New World,” *A.P.O.*, 8th October 1910, pg. 6.

¹¹⁰ “The Negro in the New World,” *A.P.O.*, 8th October 1910, pg. 6.

¹¹¹ See “A “Kaffir Government,”” *A.P.O.*, 24th September, 1910, pg. 3.

¹¹² “A “Kaffir Government,”” *A.P.O.*, 24th September 1910, pg. 3.

exhaustibility of the notion of the happily governed man-child in the colonies. Was the *A.P.O.* stealthily proffering a warning of what the neglect of access to representative institutions in the Union might breed? Again, the near authoritative and ventriloquist uses of Johnston's thinking deftly moots these possibilities without working them out. What is clearly suggested in "The Negro in the New World," however, is the emergence of alternative possibilities that lie outside of the record of racial governmentality in the British empire. Johnston gives the highest merit in the management of race relations to the United States. After a tour of "the Eastern and Southern States of North America," he concluded that "with all the imperfections of the social acceptance of the coloured people . . . nowhere in the world - *certainly not in Africa* - has the Negro been given such a chance of mental and physical development. . . ." ¹¹³ "The Negro in the New World" ended reversing Johnston's bolt assertion that "the British Empire [was] the most beneficent institution ever brought into existence:" "And yet some people talk of the British Empire being the freest in the world!" ¹¹⁴ Evidently, the terrain of reckoning the possibilities of freedom within the British empire in 1910 were dark and narrow. The *APO* seemed to be groping for a rhetorical ground upon which to critique empire while simultaneously imagining the possibility of black freedom. Perhaps "The Negro in the New World" negotiated this terrain in ways that produced its own contradictions, arguments muffled by the authority of the white colonial text, but what is clearly emergent here is need to think both along with and beyond the imperial imaginary, to recover other contexts as ground upon which to speak. In order to more properly fix its gaze on these gathering antimonies of race-craft and state-craft in the Union the *A.P.O.* made a remarkable gesture of curating a diasporic textuality through reproduction. It reprinted after "The Negro in the New World" W.E.B. Du Bois's essay "The Souls of White Folk" in its entirety!

"The Souls of White Folk" was published for the first time in the *Independent* (1910) a few years after Du Bois's seminal *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). The essay appeared again in Du Bois's collection *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil* (1920) which, after the First World War had gone some way in rethinking the possibility of achieving "the right to vote, civic equality, and the education of youth according to ability" in the American body politic. ¹¹⁵ In the First World War period, Du Bois had begun to turn his thinking toward how imperialism had not only shaped the politics of the globe but also its conflicts. In these years he would read Africa as a "prime cause of this terrible overturning of civilization which we have lived to see," and "In the awful cataclysm of World War, where from beating, slandering, and murdering us the white world turned temporarily aside to

¹¹³ "A "Kaffir Government,"" *A.P.O.*, 24th September 1910, pg. 3.

¹¹⁴ "A "Kaffir Government,"" *A.P.O.*, 24th September 1910, pg. 3.

¹¹⁵ DuBois quoted in Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "Introduction" to *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil* (2007), pg. xxv.

kill other, we of the Darker Peoples looked on in mild amaze.”¹¹⁶ “The Souls of White Folk” was among the earlier works in which Du Bois was developing this kind of thinking and in it he thought through the “discovery of personal whiteness” and its detriment to world politics: “what is the effect on a man or a nation when it comes passionately to such an extraordinary dictum as this? [“I am white and you are nothing.”] That nations are coming to believe it is manifest daily. Wave on wave, each with increasing virulence, is dashing this new religion on whiteness on the shores of our time. Its first effects are funny: the strut of the Southerner, the arrogance of the Englishman amuck, the whoop of the hoodlum who vicariously leads your mob. Next it appears dampening generous enthusiasm in what we once counted glorious: to free the slave is discovered to be tolerable only in so far as it freed his master. Do we sense somnolent writings in black Africa, or angry groans in India, or triumphant “Banzais” in Japan? “To your tears, O Israel!” these nations are not white. Build warships and heft the “Big Stick.””¹¹⁷ The *A.P.O.* spread “The Souls of White Folk” across two pages of its issue on the 8th of October, 1910. The reprint flaunted and dramatized across the Atlantic Ocean a black man turning the gaze on whiteness and reflecting on its conceits and daringly reproducing this gesture in the Union. This form of diasporic intertextuality evidently ventriloquized the process of speaking back to whiteness and was emerging in the *A.P.O.* The consequences that Du Bois drew on the effect of “personal whiteness” upon “a man or a nation” are uncanny for how closely they matched the moment of Union formation. Elleke Boehmer has argued that “The globalized formations of empire . . . paradoxically facilitated the rise of cross- or transnational resistances.”¹¹⁸ I would like to push Boehmer’s suggestion a little further by arguing that in the Union moment diasporically circulating black (inter-)textualities formed alternative epistemological frameworks for rethinking the suppositions of racial difference that went into the making of citizenship. The most incisive critique that came from the *A.P.O.*’s deconstruction of whiteness came in how the myth of its purity was turned on its head and back, so to speak, the intermixture that we have seen to be at the beginnings of the Cape’s history.

The *A.P.O.* held the trans-Atlantic history of racial formation in its grasp as it called into question the social construction of whiteness in South Africa. One article which demonstrated the denied history of racial hybridity in the colonial matrix is “Who is a White Person.” Apparently, after their wedding, the parents of a couple well known to the Coloured community in Cape Town went on to write an “indignant letter . . . protesting that the happy couple were not Colored, but white.”¹¹⁹ The claim received a fair

¹¹⁶ DuBois quoted in Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, “Introduction” to *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil* (2007), pg. xxx.

¹¹⁷ W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Souls of White Folks,” *A.P.O.*, 8th October, 1910, pg. 7.

¹¹⁸ Elleke Boehmer, *Empire, the National and the Post-Colonial 1890-1920: Resistance in Interaction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 4-5.

¹¹⁹ “Who is a White Person,” *A.P.O.*, 8th April, 1911, pg. 5.

amount of ridicule among those who knew the families. But the incident was more than failure at achieving whiteness. It symbolized how porous the distinction between whiteness and Coloureness was in Cape Town. Hence the paper's readers were invited to draw some deeper meanings from the attempt. "If white South Africa will persist in drawing a color life in every walk of life, it might wake up one to these fine mornings and find itself compelled to re-arrange its social circles."¹²⁰ When it was pointed out that "we do not intend - at any rate, for the present - to name those who have aboriginal blood in their veins or sit in the Union Parliament," the general knowledge of the fictions of the color line lay bare for public reflection. Pressed to make observances about the potentially tragic consequences that might arise out of the Union's parliament's intention to render unlawful the marriage of white and Coloured people, the effect of Jim Crow segregationism in the American south was used to sound off the deeper personal costs of the hardening of the color line. The arch of this history drew its sources of comparison from the affinities between the colonial histories of the Cape and the United States. "Louisiana, like the Cape, was settled partly by the French. There, as here, the whites who are dark complexioned, attribute their colour to their French extraction, and angrily deny that they have any Negro blood in their veins. But Louisiana, without having considered the possible consequences, had enacted a law forbidding intermarriage of a white person with anyone who has the least infusion of Negro blood. And what has been the result?"¹²¹ The *A.P.O.* cited a story in ran in *The Independent* in which a young woman who was killed after being run over on the street was spoken of as being "coloured" by a newspaper. The woman's family was proven to have one ancestor and this discovery "put the whole family in a horrible plight."¹²² This allegory of the tragedies that could befall the project of whiteness given the doubtfulness of its purity held up to the segregationists of the Union a mirror of what it would mean for them to pursue racial segregation in good faith. Indeed, while the South African Commission on Native Affairs did not deign to go beyond defining "Natives," the *A.P.O.* drew some ironic conclusions on what it would mean if the Union were to invert its logic and make the defining of whiteness the basis of belonging. It is not my point to suggest that Colouredness should be read as a hybrid identitarian space in which the dichotomies of black and white dissolve. As we have seen, state politics politicized ethnic and racial identities in ways which made it difficult to claim a neutral identity. On the other hand, one must keep in mind that invoking hybridity in relation to Coloureness in South Africa will often bring up the question of shame. Zoe Wicomb has argued that "Miscegenation, the origins of which lie within a discourse of 'race', concupiscence, and degeneracy, continues to be bound up with shame, a pervasive shame exploited in apartheid's strategy of the naming of a Colored race, and recurring in the attempts by

¹²⁰ "Who is a White Person," *A.P.O.*, 8th April, 1911, pg. 5.

¹²¹ "Who is a White Person?" *A.P.O.*, 8th April, 1911, pg. 5.

¹²² "Who is a White Person?" *A.P.O.*, 8th April, 1911, pg. 5.

colored to establish brownness as a pure category, which to say a denial of shame.”¹²³ This is not terrain that I shall traverse, save to point out the problems in assuming that hybridity offers a way out of the prison-house of race. What is strikingly evocative for me about the work of the *A.P.O.* in the 1910s is how it worked itself into a framework of diasporic critique in order to deconstruct and speak back to how whiteness was being reproduced in the political scene. These public displays of gazing at whiteness might not have produced the desired political effect of obliterating the color line in the Union but they were gradually opening up the space of diasporic inter-textuality that became crucial to black politics in South Africa after the First World War. The strategy of turning the mythic white subject into a *gaze-able* one also opened up a scene of memory that recalled the submerged history of the Cape wherein Krotoa-Eva, Sila and Sara Baartman stand for its deeply eroticized and ‘miscegenated’ foundations.

Cape Town was, though, but one node in the Union from which the Union’s alienation of the black subject was spoken back to. The 1910s wore on, those who had been classified as “Natives” worked with the APO and constructed their own national organization and set to work at petitioning the Union’s segregationist policies, chief among which was the Natives’ Land Act (1913), a further instantiation of the Glen Grey blueprint which would leave only about 7% of South Africa’s land area for African occupation. This was perhaps the deepest sign of the Union’s abandonment of the project of imperial belonging. And since the Union would not reinforce the empire’s founding principles, the black intelligentsia was left with nought but to petition the British government to enact its long standing promise to Her Majesty’s Subjects. These, briefly sketched, are the conditions in which Sol Plaatje began to write *Native Life in South Africa*, probably the most enduring record of the effects of the Union’s formation to black life.

“but through the biggest magnifying glass:” Sol Plaatje’s Imperial Cartography

The social and political milieu of the post-South African War period and the unification of South Africa in 1910 eventuated the nadir of liberal citizenship for the black intelligentsia and African population of South Africa. The Union’s politics of governmentality evidently inched toward ‘defining Natives’ as the radical antimony of modern citizenship. I have suggested, following Elizabeth Povinelli, that the structure of racial governmentality in South Africa unfolded around the governance of the prior. Povinelli usefully argues that “in acceding to the logic of the priority of the prior as the legitimate foundation of governance, the settler state projected those who already inhabited the land before the settler’s arrival as spatially, social, and temporally before it in the double sense of “before” - before it in a temporal sequence and before it as a fact to be faced.”¹²⁴ This passage is quite apposite with regards to the Union’s politics of governmentality for one

¹²³ Zoe Wicomb, “Shame and Identity: the Case of the Coloured in South Africa,” in Derek Attridge and Rosemary Jolly (Editors), *Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pg. 92.

¹²⁴ Elizabeth Povinelli, *Economics of Abandonment*, pg. 36.

of the arenas in which the problem of belonging was fulcrumed on was that of land. As the segregationist state evolved into the Apartheid state after the Second World War the “regime of differentiation” in South Africa had normalized what the Comaroffs called ethnic citizenship into the fabric of the body politic.¹²⁵ Nowhere was this more poignantly demonstrated than in the seminal Natives’ Land Act of 1913 and its spatial prescriptions of belonging, mobility and its conditions. The principle of racial segregation had already found its ideological elaboration in the nineteenth century but in the twentieth century the Union explicitly structured belonging in the spatial economy of what Fanon would call “a world cut in two” and “not in the service of a higher unity.”¹²⁶ In the ensuing struggle for the restoration of imperial citizenship as the guarantor of belonging in the racial polity land and space preoccupied the black imagination with grave immediacy.

The confounding mutations of colonial governmentality between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries placed the black intelligentsia of the Union of South Africa precariously in the interstices of nation and empire. Scholars of the period have rightly pointed out that if anything the reconnaissances of national politics among the black intelligentsia were a response to the new state of the Union.¹²⁷ In January of 1912 the barrister and American educated race man Pixley ka Isaka Seme (1881-1951) convened a conference in Bloemfontein in which the South African Native National Congress (henceforth SANNC) was founded.¹²⁸ As Andre Odendaal observes, the formation of the SANNC lead to “the first time traditional leaders co-operated enthusiastically with the educated elite on an inter-territorial basis.”¹²⁹ Sol Plaatje, then editor of the Setswana periodical *Tsala ea Becoana* was elected as the general secretary of the SANNC. When the Natives Land Act was passed in June of 1913, the SANNC put together a delegation that included its president John Dube, Thomas Mapikela, Saul Msane and Sol Plaatje to petition the Native’s Land Act to the Her Majesty’s Imperial government in London. The SANNC delegate boarded the *Norseman* at the cusp of the First World War and aboard the ship Plaatje noted that he had begun “compiling a little book on the Native Land Act and its operation which I hope to put thought the press immediately after landing in England.”¹³⁰ Plaatje’s ‘little book’ was not published until 1916 and by this time his critique of the Natives’ Land Act had swollen to an excess of four hundred pages! *Native Life*

¹²⁵ See Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, pg. 7.

¹²⁶ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), pg. 39.

¹²⁷ For a historical discussion of the consolidation of African national politics after 1910 see Andre Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!* pp. 256-292.

¹²⁸ See Andre Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!* pg. 270. The South African Native National Congress was the precursor to the African National Congress, which has been the party in government in South Africa since 1994.

¹²⁹ Andre Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!* pg. 270.

¹³⁰ Plaatje quoted in Brian Willan, *Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist 1876-1932* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pg. 174.

in *South Africa: Before and Since the European War and the Boer Rebellion* (1916) appeared then in the midst of the First World War but as its subtitle suggests Plaatje, a cosmopolitan spawned from the margins of empire, inflected his appeal to the imperial conscience with the specter of the South African War. Janet Remington has recently read *Native Life in South Africa* as a text formed through “the politics of travel.”¹³¹ Indeed, as Remington suggests, the pathways of imperial travel opened up for Plaatje a vista to imagining and invoking a political community that went beyond the “geo-political fixity” of the Union’s racial order.¹³² However if, as Michelle Stephens has pointed out, our remappings of a “new geography and world history” would have to begin “in the colonial world rather than in the once imperial metropolises” how do we map the pathways of *Native Life in South Africa* and its inscriptions of the spatial politics of the Union’s state of empire? Plaatje consciously placed the vicissitudes of black life in the Union between the war on Britain’s margins (the South African War) and the Great War. The gesture of reading South African and British history contiguously through the figure of war conjoined the disparate geographies of metropole and periphery. I would like to conjoin Plaatje’s *Native Life in South Africa* with one strain of thinking that I have been developing in this chapter. One of the arguments that I have been making is that the period around the First World War has been that of the reshaping of imperial space. I have been reluctant to read the nation-state as the singular referent for the formation of the Union of South Africa for its sovereignty came inscribed with an emergent species of empire. I have also suggested that the texts emerging out of the colonial library can be read as an archive of empire for how they discursively mapped the possibilities of a racial (white) territorialism on the continent. But since this archive virtually rewrote the narrative of imperial citizenship it existed in sharp contrast to black appraisals of empire. How, then, did black intellectuals such as Sol Plaatje and *Native Life in South Africa* come to terms with the conflict of memories that underwrote the state of the Union?

It might seem intuitive to read *Native Life in South Africa* as a petition that took its referential coordinates to be the borders of the Union. After all, the segregationist prescriptions of the Natives’ Land Act were concocted to ossify a new regime of settlement and (im)mobilities in the wake of the making of a nationalism of settler colonialists after the South African War. Plaatje was aware, however, of the greater geo-political significance of the newly found Union in southern Africa and he anticipated with foreboding its consequences for racial governmentality. As W.E.B. Du Bois had begun to do during this period, he exhibited some deep hesitancy toward separating “racism at home from colonialism abroad”¹³³ and as the Union troops marched into Namibia during the First World War he warned against the libertory pretensions of the occupation. For Plaatje, the recon-

¹³¹ Janet Remington, “Solomon Plaatje’s Decade of Creative Mobility, 1912–1922: The Politics of Travel and Writing in and beyond South Africa,” *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (2013), pp. 425–446.

¹³² Janet Remington, “Solomon Plaatje’s Decade of Creative Mobility, 1912–1922: The Politics of Travel and Writing in and beyond South Africa,” pg. 427.

¹³³ See Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, pg. 175.

figurations of the map of colonialism that had been set in motion by the First World War threatened to expand rather than banish the potential effects of the Natives' Land Act. He argued therefore that

the Act should be abolished because it has lowered the prestige of the Union Jack in the eyes of the coloured subjects of the King, who have suffered and are still suffering untold misery under it. Perhaps nothing illustrates more clearly this changed feeling of the natives than the present state of things in South Africa. Thus, if German South-West Africa had been annexed to the Cape before the Union, every native, south of the Zambesi, would have approved of the step, whereas today, as a result of the Native Land Act, there is a different feeling extant. For now the natives know that annexation to the Union will mean the elimination of the Imperial factor and that as Cape Town, like Pretoria, has ceased to represent British ideas of fair play and justice, such a change would in the annexed territory establish 'Free' State ideas under the aegis of the Union Jack. The natives of the Union shudder at the possibility of the Damaras, who are now under the harsh rule of the Germans, being placed under a self-governing Dominion in which the German rule will be accentuated by the truculent 'Free' State ideas of ruling natives.¹³⁴

Plaatje's anxieties about imperial abandonment recast the geo-political arrangements that were to emerge out of the ruins of the First World War. Passages such as these in *Native Life in South Africa* should make us sensitive to how Plaatje was writing at the moment of the emergence of "Empire," that formation which Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri posit as a "decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm with its open, expanding frontiers."¹³⁵ But, as I have been trying to show throughout this chapter, the "sovereignty of nation-states" did not disappear with this emergent global structure of rule. The case of the Union of South Africa matters to the geo-politics of this period because its innovation of techniques of "ruling natives" was slated for thinking about the governance of racial difference in Africa. Plaatje's linking of the Natives' Land Act as shadowing the Union troops' presence in Namibia Plaatje clearly initiates a mode of critique that A.B. Xuma picked up and extended after the Second World War.

Native Life in South Africa worked with a complex arrangement of colonial and imperial concatenations. South Africa, and within it its former Afrikaner republics and British colonies, England, Germany, Namibia and other geographies were held together in an unstable interplay of power, memory and foreboding. If *Native Life in South Africa* represented a predicament that was both marginal and distant to the immediacies of metropolitan life to be sufficiently moving, Plaatje insisted that his English audiences read the plight of Africans in the Union with sympathy because of the universality of suffering. In a moving passage in the "Prologue" he poignantly deployed sentimental writing to to de-

¹³⁴ Sol Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, pg. 245.

¹³⁵ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, pg. xii.

pose his readers of their comforts: "Some readers may perhaps think that I have taken the Colonial Parliament rather severely to task. But to any reader who holds with Bacon, that 'the pencil hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon,' I would say: 'Do, if we dare made the request, and place yourself in our shoes.' If, after a proper declaration of war, you found your kinsmen driven from pillar to post in the manner that the South African natives have been harried and scurried by Act No. 27 of 1913, you would, though aware that it is part of the fortunes of war, find it difficult to suppress your hatred of the enemy."¹³⁶ Of course, Plaatje's choice of inter-textual referents brought the ethical issues bearing on imperial responsibility to the distant Union much closer to home. Readers of *Native Life in South Africa* would not have failed to know that they too were living through life after 'a proper declaration of war.' Indeed, toward the end of *Native Life in South Africa*, Plaatje observed that during his time in England he witnessed at close quarters that "every moment was ticking to drive us towards the greatest war that the world ever saw."¹³⁷ He went further in drawing parallels between the First World War and the South African War so that his audience might be able to read their crisis through the prism of colonial history: "it did not then occur to the writer, a stranger then of only six weeks in London, that after seeing the capital of the Empire under conditions of peace, he was soon to see it under a war cloud filled with all the horrors of the approaching war storm and all the signs of patriotic enthusiasm. We were about to see Mafeking over again, but through the biggest magnifying glass."¹³⁸ Read through the Siege of Mafeking as its analogy and antecedent the exceptionality of the First World War was reduced to a degree of scale and the trepidations and sufferings of those who underwent both wars were likened through the framework of comparison that Plaatje's experiences as a traveling imperial subject permitted him to construct. If, then, imperial audiences were to think about the "hopes and impediments" of the First World War Plaatje directed them to his originary colonial space to apprehend its significance. The cross-referentiality of colony and metropole magnified the crisis of Africans in the Union and brought metropolitan anxieties to bear on imperial questions. The publication of *Native Life in South Africa* interestingly turned Plaatje into a meticulous chronicler of socialites mediated by the specter of war. At the turn of the twentieth century he was caught in the Siege of Mafeking and it was from here that writing imperial subjectivity under duress acquired the kind of urgency and perceptiveness seen in *Native Life in South Africa*.

It would be useful to mark the horizons of expectation that Plaatje constructs for the metropolitan audiences of *Native Life in South Africa* by revisiting the temporal frameworks he offers for reading *Native Life in South Africa*; starting with "the Boer Rebellion." Plaatje had left Kimberley to take up a post as a court interpreter in Mafeking in 1898. When the South African War broke out in 1899 and the Afrikaner forces held Mafeking under siege he took to documenting the minutiae of life under the extremities of war.

¹³⁶ Sol Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, pg. 17.

¹³⁷ Sol Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, pg. 296.

¹³⁸ Sol Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, pp. 296-297.

Plaatje's diary of the war was posthumously edited and published for the first time in 1976 by the anthropologist John L. Comaroff. *The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Plaatje: An African at Mafeking* (1976) was not destined for a public life. According to John Comaroff Plaatje was toward the end of his life and an "established writer and polemicist" when he "gave the scrapbook to [his daughter] Violet apparently with little explanation of its content."¹³⁹ The diary gathered dust languishing among a "literary rubbish-dump" of "books and other memorabilia" which Violet had passed on to her son Victor.¹⁴⁰ *The Boer War Diary* is an under-examined document of the South African War and certainly one of the lesser known works in Plaatje's oeuvre. Plaatje had published his only novel *Mhudi: An Epic of South African Native Life a Century Ago* (1930) - written about a decade earlier - around the time he passed his diary on to Violet and perhaps his youthful preoccupations had waned in significance. The novel's overshadowing of his non-fictional writings may account for the disparities in critiques of *The Boer War Diary*. The study of writing and printing culture in Africa, though, has seen a rising interest in what Karin Barber called "tin-trunk" literary activity.¹⁴¹ Though this involves for Barber "the profusion of individual writing and enterprising efforts in local, small-scale print publication by non-elites in the colonial world" and "the propensity to collect and "archive" such texts" in often private and unconventional ways, a text such as *The Boer War Diary* also performs the work of excavating the an archive of black memory and loyalty to the Crown during the war, experiences which would prove crucial to staking claim to a place in the Union in the following decade. In other words, part of the work of reading Plaatje's diary should invariably involve recovering a black archive of the South African War. I do not have enough time and space to do this in any detail here but I would like to show how closely this archive fits into representations of imperial belonging which Plaatje and others of the black intelligentsia sought to inscribe into the structure of citizenship in the Union. The minutiae of daily life aside *The Boer War Diary* sorted the grand narrative of the South African War into a melodrama preempting Britain's moral upper-hand in the war. Brian Willan has quite insightfully pointed out that in his diary "Plaatje delighted in constructing elaborate musical metaphors" that turned the timbre of clashing artillery into a moral allegory. In an early entry Plaatje comes to this conclusion about the war, having been privy to some exchanges between the British and Afrikaner forces:

To give a short account of what I found war to be, I can say: no music is as thrilling and as immensely captivating as to listen to the firing of the guns on your own side. It is like enjoying supernatural melodies in a paradise to hear one or two shots fired off the armored train; but no words can suitably depict the fascination of the music produced by

¹³⁹ John Comaroff, "Preface" to *The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Plaatje*, pg 9.

¹⁴⁰ John Comaroff, "Preface" to *The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Plaatje*, pg. 9.

¹⁴¹ See Karin Barber, "Hidden Innovators in Africa," in *Africa's Hidden Histories: Everyday Literary and Making the Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

the Maxim, which to Boer ears, I am sure, is an exasperation which not only disturbs the ear but also disorganises the free circulation of the listener's blood.¹⁴²

Plaatje's partial auditory sensibilities translated the Siege of Mafeking into a moral battlefield in which combat wielded under the flag of the Union Jack could be raised to the aesthetic plane. The aestheticisation of war-far did not simply service the improvisation of a chamber for 'hearing' the war. Plaatje's active listening was a means of choosing sides and willing an outcome as the siege endured. He writes later on in his diary that the Afrikaner forces "were quickly silenced and we enjoyed that sweet and enchanting music from our muskets. It gave us an entertainment of the sweetest music imaginable when slow volley after volley was directed at the angry Boers: now and then a 7-pounder would harmonize the proceedings with an occasional 'boom' in sweet bombardment, and the whole of the proceedings is as safe as an Altar."¹⁴³ Implicit in Plaatje's acoustic writing is a form of solidarity with the British imperial project and his diary is important because it is the only such record of it written by a black witness. When Robert Baden-Powell and his men made their way to Mafeking late in 1899 to alleviate the siege Plaatje gladly enumerated the changing tide of things. He was careful to write the a collective Britishness into the unfolding events in Mafeking: "From across the border *we* learn that it is quite true that *we* silenced 2 of the enemy's guns on the 23rd and that the following is the result of the season's fixtures between Baden-Powell's 400 and Cronje's 10 times that number."¹⁴⁴ Baden-Powell's advancement on the Afrikaner encampment in Mafeking proved to be a turning point in the siege. The Afrikaner contingent was effectively repelled and Mafeking relieved. *The Boer War Diary* is not only a mode of self-writing which restores the black presence in the war, it also underwrites an appraisal of the war as ideally imagined by a black British subject. Plaatje was convinced that the "Native Question" which, "since the abolition of slavery, always been the gravest question of its day" was all the more important during "the present Siege . . . for Natives have always figured pre-eminently in its chief correspondence."¹⁴⁵

The Boer War Diary does more than show Plaatje's commitment to the British Crown during the war and his considerable skills as a writer. His life and experiences in Kimberley and Mafeking are significant for how they affected his thinking about what constituted British spatiality in Unionist South Africa. He writes in *Native Life in South Africa* that while the SANNC was searching for an appropriate place to have a national conference he unsuccessfully offered Kimberley to host such an occasion. But why Kimberley? For Plaatje, any political gathering staged by the members of the SANNC would have to proceed from British ground and Kimberley, "my home," he argued, "is not yet a

¹⁴² Sol Plaatje, *The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Plaatje*, pg. 34.

¹⁴³ Ibid, pg. 49-50.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, pg. 58-59. Italics mine.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, pg. 65.

republic in its sentiments. There we have not reached the stage where someone's permission must be asked before a meeting can be held. So we invite the Congress to hospitable and British Kimberley, where public meetings close with signing the British National Anthem and not with singing the 'Volkslied' or the 'Red Flag', as is the case in meetings at some other South African Centers."¹⁴⁶ In this vein *Native Life in South Africa* constructs an imperial cartography of the Union by ferreting out of its body politic its British and unBritish geographies. If Plaatje lived through the South African War and could only imagine it through the opposition of Afrikaner and British, he accordingly read the Natives' Land Act as the reorganization of the Union through the politics of Afrikaner and therefore unBritish governance: "no matter what principles one might read into the Act, it would be found that the principles underlying it were those extending the 'Free' State land laws throughout the Union - an extension by which natives would be prohibited from investing their earnings in land where on they would end their lives in peace."¹⁴⁷ Unlike the British colonies of the Cape and Natal, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State did not institutionalize a non-racial franchise and black people there had not political rights. Throughout *Native Life in South Africa* Plaatje marks this absence by suspending the adjective "Free" in parentheses to point out the irony of the discourse of freedom in the Afrikaner republics. Against what he saw as the rise of Afrikaner nationalism in defining the national body politic of the Union Plaatje posited the politics of empire as anathema. As he saw it, from the crisis of the South African War "the only dividing fence between the Transvaal natives and complete slavery" was British imperial benevolence.¹⁴⁸ In the absence of imperial protection there arose "evil forebodings regarding the average Republican's treatment of the natives."¹⁴⁹ In making the journey to the heart of empire and writing *Native Life in South Africa* from its metropole Plaatje had taken the politics of imperial belonging to its furthest point. *Native Life in South Africa* turned the genealogy of imperial liberalism in South Africa for his metropolitan audiences to read the benefits of empire over racial nationalism.

Bhekizizwe Peterson has made a compelling argument for why we should read *Native Life in South Africa* as forming part of the genre of the petition. Indeed, for Peterson, Plaatje wrestled *Native Life in South Africa* into a form which outlined an ethics of obligation through its "symptomatic insistence on establishing social relations" and imputing its imperial audiences toward "the desired movement from rupture to plea to intervention to redress."¹⁵⁰ Peterson urges us to look beyond the rhetoric of empire in our reading of *Native Life in South Africa* and instead think through the ethics of obligation between those

¹⁴⁶ Sol Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, pg. 212.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, pg. 60.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, pg. 70.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, pg. 70.

¹⁵⁰ Bhekizizwe Peterson, "Sol Plaatje's *Native Life in South Africa*," pg. 84.

who have power and those who do not in order to better grasp Plaatje's invocation of an imperial ethics. That Plaatje chose a metropolitan audience for his staging of the case of Africans who were being segregated into second class citizenship is itself an indication of the perilous failure of the Union government to reform its exclusionary racial politics. It was in the exhaustion of national protest that Plaatje and the SANNC turned to petition the imperial metropole. I would like to extend Peterson's insights by discussing how, at the level of form and representation, Plaatje sought to present to his metropolitan audiences the "melancholy situation" of "the South African natives."¹⁵¹ Plaatje's plea was accordingly addressed to "the sympathetic reader" who, for "the glory of our Empire, and the purity of your religion" would "grapple with this dark blot on the Imperial emblem."¹⁵² He had initially planned to enlist the help of Sir Harry Johnston to write an introduction to his book. Johnston proved to be more of an impediment to Plaatje's undertaking than a patron. He suggested that Plaatje change the title of his book from *The European War and the Boer Rebellion* and insisted that he should use the word "Negro" instead of "native."¹⁵³ Johnston's objections to the title of the book and its author's arguments are not specified in Brian Willan's biography of Plaatje but it is striking that what he desired to be altered was the contrapuntal reading which gestured toward a juxtapositioning of colony and metropole. Plaatje's duly proceeded to pursue publishing without Johnston's literary patronage. One detail of Johnston's objection to *Native Life in South Africa* that we know of seems important to outline. Johnston was of the opinion that ought to "remove a lot of the quotations and generally 'pull the whole work together.'"¹⁵⁴ Indeed, *Native Life in South Africa* is wrought with extensive transcriptions of newspaper articles and parliamentary speeches. This might at first appear to be a confounding if distracting mode of authorship.

I would like to point out, following Simon Gikandi that since colonized writers, "always limited by their conditions of production as citizens and subjects" and had no choice "but to deploy inherited forms toward their own goals," we need to read for the ends to which they adopted and reconfigured what they adopted from their colonial milieu.¹⁵⁵ But, as he has further pointed out, the colonial condition itself elicited a crisis of representation for the colonized subject's experience of reality was already under question.¹⁵⁶ I would like to extend Gikandi's argument that African narrative practice in the

¹⁵¹ Sol Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, pg. 15.

¹⁵² Ibid, pp. 15 & 404.

¹⁵³ See Brian Willan *Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist*, pp. 188-189.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, pp. 189.

¹⁵⁵ Simon Gikandi, "Realism, Romance, and the Problem of African Literary History" in *Modern Language Quarterly* Vol. 73, No. 3: 2012, pg. 311.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, pg. 311.

eras of colonialism and high African nationalism conflated narrative and generic forms by suggesting that Plaatje's penchant for citation was in itself a mode of generating historical veracity. He reproduced, for instance, the parliamentary debates on the Native's Land Act over about twenty two pages of the second chapter of the book. The seeming abnegation of an authorial voice in these passages precisely alters the referential turn of the book toward a kind of documentary effect. In his dissatisfaction with the ubiquity of citation in *Native Life in South Africa*, Johnston had missed that Plaatje was involved in a form of curatorial writing that archived for metropolitan audiences texts and debates that were particular to their colonial space. The oscillation between the author function as authority and curatorship in *Native Life in South Africa* raises an important question about the work of the book form that are yet to be discussed. *Native Life in South Africa* can be considered, for instance, as rendering portable various kinds of texts and generic forms mostly generated by discussions of the Natives' Land Act. These were meticulously collected by Plaatje and dispersed into a (book) material form which arranged them into a vortex of history. Thus, where Plaatje's authorial voice seems to have diminished a kind of immanent veracity emerges. It is important to keep in mind that *Native Life in South Africa* was Plaatje's first book. Prior to this he had worked extensively as a court interpreter and journalist, having been the editor of two Setswana periodicals *Koranta ea Becoana* (1900s) and *Tsala ea Batho* (1910s). What impact did Plaatje's work with the periodical have on the writing of *Native Life in South Africa*? And what, besides the unforeseeably long stay that he had in England, accounts for the mutation of Plaatje's "little book" into the sizable volume that it became? These are significant questions that would require reading Plaatje's oeuvre between its periodical and book forms, a task for the future but which can not be done here. But it may be important to begin to consider the question, if speculatively. If one considers Isabel Hofmeyr's argument that one of the important things that emerge out of the study of periodicals by "colonial born" intellectuals writing within the culture of empire is the experimental diminution of institutions authorship and copyright as centralizing the production of textuality then we can begin to read the proliferation of texts within *Native Life in South Africa* as interesting precisely because of how the authorial voice shifts between the margins and point of focus of the account.¹⁵⁷ In a sense, Plaatje left his metropolitan readership with not one text but both an edited volume, a travel narrative, interviews, history, statistics and a religious manifesto, aspects of *Native Life in South Africa* which have not been closely examined yet. But perhaps one of the lasting legacies of *Native Life in South Africa* is Plaatje's valiant attempt to imagine an imperial brotherhood out of the rubble of the First World War. In this regard he shared one important quality with race-men of the black diaspora active during these years. Like W.E.B. Du Bois, he pushed the drawers of the color line and cartographers of empire to think about the possibility of a geo-political scene after the War in which those of a darker hue would not remain "drawers of wood and hewers of water" simply because "God did not make them white."¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ See Isabel Hofmeyr, *Ghandi's Printing Press*, pp. 153-163.

¹⁵⁸ Sol Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, pg. 90.

Sol Plaatje returned to South Africa early in 1917 while the First World War was still unfolding. He was the only member of the SANNC who had remained in England in the cause of rescinding the Natives' Land Act for as long as he did. His efforts had failed to bring an end to the perilous effects of the bill and indeed. In the end Plaatje's efforts proved crucible to the war that engulfed the British in spite of his insistence that the grievances of Her Majesty's Subjects not be overlooked. He arrived back in South Africa to find the situation had become even more grave than when he had left for England. In January of 1917 parliament was discussing in Cape Town the passing of the Native Administration Bill which would lay out "a uniform system of administration . . . headed by the Minister of Native Affairs."¹⁵⁹ The grim situation in the Union prompted the SANNC to wait the war through before considering putting together another delegation to England to appeal the Union government once again. But, as Brian Willan has shown, Plaatje had during this period grown weary of the politics of imperial citizenship and had begun to consider the political alternatives to empire. The end of the War had brought much talk about the rights of "small nations" and the question of "self-determination."¹⁶⁰ The grammar of national sovereignty, as we have seen, was one which emerged out of the War to cement the prospects of world peace after empire. Plaatje had, during this period, increasingly turned his interests to what the politics of diaspora. He had cited "Professor Du Bois's" *The Souls of Black Folk* in the preface to *Native Life in South Africa* and as he prepared to leave for England again in 1919 he wrote him a letter expressing his frustration at missing the Pan-African Congress in France: "It is a great pity I have not been able to get to Paris in February. It is all owing to the backwardness of our race - a backwardness that is intensified by our tribal and clannish differences. However, I take this opportunity to thank you in the name of our people for the wide ground covered and the success up to date. I feel certain that much more would have been effected had you any information about the semi-slavery extend in South Africa."¹⁶¹ There is, of course, nothing unique about Plaatje's interest in the politics of Pan-Africanism *writ large* or in his desire to attend the Pan-African Congress of 1919. Indeed, John Jabavu, the Peregrinos and Captain Harry Dean before him had been important links between the Pan-African Conference and South Africa at the turn of the twentieth century. Perhaps one of the most intriguing diasporic links between South Africa and the United States is Charlotte Manye Maxeke, who had once been a student of Du Bois at Wilberforce University in the 1890s. When A.B. Xuma wrote a brief biography of Maxeke in the 1930s Du Bois obliged him with a foreword in which he testified to "Mrs Maxeke as a pioneer in one of the greatest human causes, working under extraordinarily difficult circumstances to lead a people, in the face of prejudice, not only against her race, but also against her sex."¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Quoted in Brian Willan, *Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist 1876-1932*, pg. 206.

¹⁶⁰ Brian Willan, *Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist 1876-1932*, pg. 229.

¹⁶¹ Plaatje's letter to Du Bois in Brian Willan, *Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist, 1876-1932*, pg. 231.

¹⁶² W.E.B. Du Bois, "Foreword" in A.B. Xuma, *Charlotte Manye (Maxeke): What an Educated African Girl Can Do* (1930).

Maxeke had been a part of the African Jubilee Singers which toured England having been inspired by Orpheus McAdoo's Virginia Jubilee Singers on their South African tour of the 1890s and ended up in the United States once the tour folded.¹⁶³ During her time in Wilberforce Maxeke connected the AME Church in the United States to the Ethiopian movement in South Africa which led to the establishment of branches of the church in South Africa.¹⁶⁴ That Xuma assessed Maxeke's contributions as a race woman as most admirable in her femininity and domesticity somewhat curtailed his appreciation of the work that she did for the making of diasporic institutions at the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁶⁵ Maxeke and Plaatje were both founding members of the SANNC in 1912. In 1917 Plaatje turned down an offer to serve as the president of the organization to concentrate on resuscitating *Tsala ea Batho* but the Union government's entrenchment of racial segregation prompted him on another tour of England and America between 1919 and 1922. This time Plaatje's politics were more inflected with an outlook toward diaspora and Pan-Africanism, evidently shifting his prior commitment to imperial citizenship. I would like to end with Plaatje's foray into diaspora, a turn which, as we will see, offers a lot to think through about how black intellectuals after the First World War were rethinking the politics of empire.

As with the younger Clements Kadalie's early preoccupation with Marcus Garvey, Plaatje's post-War turn to the politics of pan-Africanism came from a need to rethink the failures of imperial citizenship by positing diasporic blackness as the source of an alternative community making process. In 1921 Du Bois convened the third Pan-African Congress with sessions running in Europe. He met with Plaatje while he was on a tour of the United States in 1921 and encouraged him to represent the Union of South Africa at the Pan-African Congress. Du Bois was also keen to publish a new edition of *Native Life in South Africa*, a gesture which enlivened the prospects of the book's circulation outside of the sphere of imperial publics that it was initially designed to impress against the Natives' Lands Act.¹⁶⁶ Plaatje had written a speech for the Congress but his finances limited his prospects for travel outside of the United States. Du Bois agreed to read Plaatje's address in Paris. Plaatje's address to the Pan-African Congress is a significant document coming out of the milieu of the Union. It read almost like a counter-manifesto to Jan Smut's thinking about racial government in Africa and the League of Nations's place in world politics. Indeed, Plaatje posited the Pan-African Conference as possibly ushering an alternative political grammar that did not rely on white or European institutions:

¹⁶³ See Veit Erlman's *African Stars* and Tsitsi Jaji, *Africa in Stereo*.

¹⁶⁴ See James T. Campbell. *Songs of Zion*, pg. 277.

¹⁶⁵ Xuma's pamphlet used Maxeke's biography to discipline the political energies of African women into the domestic space: "Leadership, public service, and even the exercise of the new freedom by women receive our applause, but it is the woman as **wife** and **mother** that we admire most. Such a woman is Charlotte." A.B. Xuma, *Charlotte Maxeke*, pg. 26.

¹⁶⁶ See Brian Willan, *Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist 1876-1932*, pg. 271.

I know some of our friends question the utility of a Pan-African Congress; but if the European nations, with all their economic and political power, if the white races, with their aeroplanes, their anti-aircraft, their battleships and submarines, find it necessary to form a League of Nations to protect their interests surely the circumstances governing the African races who lie so helplessly at the mercy of their exploiters should impel them towards a closer union if only to counsel one another how to best face the appalling difficulties by which they are surrounded.¹⁶⁷

Pan-Africanism offered Plaatje an opportunity to meditate on the possibilities of a racial politics in charting resistance to white supremacy after the War. Since the Pan-African Congress was a discursive and political space in which the geographies of the black world converged around their grievances, unlike his previous tour of England, Plaatje could map out in front of a sympathetic community the nadir of imperial citizenship and critique the reshaping of southern Africa by the imperatives of racial rule. The address offered its own portable history of the decline of imperial citizenship but it was in the Union's reconfiguration of the region through the League of Nations' mandate system through which Plaatje drew out the grave consequences of its state of empire. He likened the Union's expansionism to the scramble for Africa re-incarnate with the difference being that the benevolence of imperial belonging had become a thing of the past:

In the scramble the South African Natives, having then regard to the spirit then manifested by Queen Victoria's advisers, bore more than their fair share. They shot their brothers down in the hope of extending partnership in a world empire in which all men would be equals. But to their consternation they now find themselves in a different empire, under the harsh rule of new Englishmen, and their gallantry on the South African battlefields is rewarded by acts of parliament making them permanent hewers of wood and drawers of water for another race; and they are asking whether the problem of the mandates over the German colonies was not a providential intervention opening the door afresh for a reconsideration of that scramble.¹⁶⁸

After the end of the First World War and the establishment of the League of Nations, the cautions that Plaatje had made in *Native Life in South Africa* about "South Africa's unfitness for a mandate over subject races" to came to pass.¹⁶⁹ Though the address to the Pan-African Congress held the possibility that a transnational black appeal to the League of Nations might sway "whoever is in charge" to curb the power the Union government against the "African races" at home and in Namibia nothing was more distant to Plaatje's thinking about a world community than 'a world empire in which all men would be equals.' The waning of the notion of imperial citizenship became quite deeply evident

¹⁶⁷ Sol Plaatje, "Address to Pan-African Congress, Paris, 1921," Brian Willan (Editor) *Sol Plaatje: Selected Writings*, pg. 264.

¹⁶⁸ Sol Plaatje, "Address to Pan-African Congress, Paris, 1921," Brian Willan (Editor) *Sol Plaatje: Selected Writings*, pg. 273.

¹⁶⁹ Sol Plaatje, "Address to Pan-African Congress, Paris, 1921," pg. 274.

after the end of the First World War. The refashioning of empire into new institutions of global governance, of course, mooted the ideal of lasting world peace but for colonial intellectuals such as Sol Plaatje who had experienced at first hand the tragic effects of national sovereignty without racial equality the transnational sphere itself had been converted into a space for the making of racial solidarities without which any kind of citizenship remained vulnerable to the contradictions of nation formation.

A.B. Xuma's *South West Africa* and its impassioned invectives against Jan Smuts and his surreptitious inflection of the League and later United Nations with his white supremacist ideals is a deeply perceptive record of the remnants of empire in the governing of difference during the interwar period and beyond. Xuma was, whether consciously or not, working out of a tradition black letters which simultaneously worked through nation, empire and diaspora to create a complex cartography of the "worlds of color" in which, as Sol Plaatje reminded the Paris contingent of the 1921 Pan-African Conference, "the negro races throughout the world occupy an inferior position."¹⁷⁰ If, returning to the insights to David Scott and Deborah Thomas, we were to read the discursive ground covered in this chapter as an archive read retrospectively, what kind of "generative system" could we begin to think of it as and which "ontological-taken-for-granted" do they open for us to begin to see differently? The historical space which lay in-between *Native Life in South Africa* and *South West Africa* is one in which the institutions of liberal imperialism took on a form of racial rule with distinctive spatial and social configurations. Since Cecil Rhodes and Jan Smuts were imperial minded men the very idea of the Union of South Africa presented its own entanglement with the geographically hungry ontology of empire. Black writers such as Sol Plaatje, Abdullah Abdurahman and A.B. Xuma fashioned their own cartographies of resistance and solidarity which lent themselves to diasporic and internationalist politics. One of the enduring insights to draw from them is their deep generosity and sympathy for reading the anguishes of citizenship by looking both within and beyond the territorial boundaries presupposed by the relatively young form of the nation-state.

¹⁷⁰ Sol Plaatje, "Address to Pan-African Congress, Paris, 1921," pg. 265.

Conclusion:

1936 - Fascism and The End of Liberal Citizenship

The era of liberal citizenship came to a close for black people in South Africa when the Hertzog Bills of 1936 struck off the vestiges of the franchise that were long being worn out. Barry Hertzog (1866-1952) had come into power in 1924 when the National Party trumped the pact Government of the South African and Labor Parties. In the mid-1920s Hertzog had proposed to strike off the franchise for black voters in the Cape completely. The Union had not extended these rights throughout its four provinces as evinced in the early years after the South African wars but the passing of Hertzog's Native Bills in 1936 established Rhodes' Glen Grey policy as national administration. (briefly discuss the two bills) The management of black life under the Union was to be mastered by the Department of Native Affairs. It had taken almost half a century but the specter of Rhodes prevailed over the management of racial difference.

The mooted of the Hertzog Bills piqued the discomfort of the black intelligentsia with being drawn back to a fabricated state of 'traditional' law under a colonial government. In the tradition of convocation and critique that Henry Sylvester Williams, Anne Kinloch, W.E.B. Du DuBois, Harry Dean, the Peregrinos and others had initiated with the Pan-African Conference at the turn of the twentieth century, the All-African Convention was formed toward the end of 1935. It was to be a "unity campaign" against the Hertzog Bills composed of "accredited organisations and organized bodies."¹ The All-African Convention brought together prominent political figures in black political and intellectual life of various persuasions. The liberal D.D.T. Jabavu, son of John Jabavu, chaired the convention, while the president of the African National Congress, A.B. Xuma, served as its vice-president. Clements Kadalie, who had since 1928 broken from the I.C.U. and formed the Independent I.C.U. which largely operated in the eastern Cape Colony, supported the convention, and so did black communists who were expelled from the I.C.U. (in its purge against communists in 1927) such as James La Guma and John Gomas.

The All-African Convention called an "emergency meeting" in Bloemfontein between the 29th of June and the 2nd of July of 1936 to address the Hertzog Bills. In the meeting Rev. S.J. Mvambo of Cape Town summarized the grievances of the convention:

This All-African Convention expresses its entire disapproval of the movement afoot in the Free State and other centers to celebrate the passing by Parliament of the Native Bills by public functions and jubulations. This, in its opinion, is gloating over a down-trodden people and is not in keeping with the traditions of civilised or Christian races, and, moreover,

¹ D.D.T. Jabavu (Editor), *Minutes of the All African Convention* (Lovedale Press: 1936), pp. 19-20. See Edward Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, pg. 288.

is calculated to embitter the relations between the Black and White races of this land, thereby provoking feelings of hostility between Black and White.²

Rev. S.J. Mambo took the snuffing out of the vestiges of the franchise as forestalling the promises of civilization that had come with Christian enlightenment in the previous century. Mvambo's trepidations over the passing of the Hertzog Bills contained a modicum of truth that went beyond cautioning against the provocation of racial hostilities. The narrative of liberal citizenship had been brought under closure and no longer could empire form the source of appeal for belonging. In lieu of these failures of empire and state to create a language for black citizenship, the All African Convention, like its other Pan-African predecessors, gathered the Sons of Ethiopia and gestured toward a formulation its own institutions of amelioration. As we have seen throughout this dissertation, empire had turned its back on universal citizenship and abandoned its most oppressed subjects. The All-African Conventions was not lost on this imperial abandonment. Because of the global reach of empire was wont to make a diasporic turn in condemning the failure of the European powers to stall the catastrophes that had, after the First World War, enjoined a rethinking of global politics.

In the previous year fascist Italy's troops had invaded Ethiopia. Under the watch of the League of Nations fascism had taken its sights toward colonizing the black diaspora's mythic home and one of the few territories on the continent that were not subject to colonial rule. As Cedric Robinson has shown, the black diaspora's response to Italy's invasion of Ethiopia was impassioned, global and spontaneous.³ In South Africa, the All-African Convention joined the black diaspora in its condemnation of Italy's invasion of Ethiopia. Article 27 of the the All African Convention's minutes from the Bloemfontein conference detailed Italy's continuation of the imperial project and the need for the black diaspora to organize internationally against such aggressions:

(27) *On Abyssinia*

- (a) The All African Convention hereby expresses its utmost condemnation of the savage, unprovoked and unwarranted attack made by Italy upon Abyssinia and declares as its considered opinion that the ruthless action of Italy can only be regarded as large scale violence against fundamental human rights.
- (b) Further this Convention sees in its action a continuation of the game of grab which the imperialist nations of Europe have played on this continent whereby millions of inhabitants have been deprived of their land, exploited and robbed of their labor.
- (c) This Convention thereby declares its conviction that imperialism which has thus resulted in the ruthless destruction of life, in violent acts of robbery, in increasing exploita-

² S.J. Mvambo quoted D.D.T. Jabavu (Editor), *Minutes of the All African Convention* (Lovedale Press: 1936), pg. 12.

³ See Cedric J. Robinson, "The African Diaspora and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis," *Race & Class*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (1985): pp. 51-65 and Robin D.G. Kelley, "Introduction," C.L.R. James, *A History of Pan-African Revolt*, (Oakland: PM Press, 2012).

tion and in the destruction of African culture is an evil force to be exposed, condemned and resisted.

(d) The All African Convention recognizes the value and desirability of establishing contacts with Africans and African organizations in other parts of the world. To this end the All African Convention believes that a call to [an] international conference of Africans and overseas peoples of African descent should receive the serious consideration of the Executive Committee.⁴

In its critique of imperial aggression and racial subjection, the All African Convention brought into sharp relief the simultaneous effects of the Hertzog Bills and the Italo-Ethiopian War in bringing about the colonial subjection of African people. The All African Convention's close juxtapositioning of these moments around 1936 surely made the predicament of a global form of black citizenship all the more poignant. In the same year, *Umvikeli-Thebe: the African Defender*, the monthly periodical of South African Labor Defense edited by communist Moses Kotane (1905-1978) went into print. In its first issue it drew some pointed connections between the exportation of Italian fascism to Ethiopia and the Hertzog Bills. In the article "South Africa and Ethiopia," it urged its readers to make scarce distinction between Hertzog and Mussolini:

The Ethiopians are fighting to save their country from the Italian robber imperialists. They do not want to be ruled by white bosses, to have to carry passes, to have be treated like dogs in their own country. We black people of South Africa know what it is to be under the heel of imperialism. Therefore we are prepared to defend Abyssinia. African workers at Durban, Ludertiz and Cape Town have already refused to load mean on ships - meat which is destined for the Italian soldiers who are fighting against Abyssinia. The fight against the robber laws of Hertzog, Smuts, and Prow is at the same time the fight in defense of Abyssinia. We want freedom for black people in Africa.⁵

The front page of this issue of *Umvikeli-Thebe* contained a large cartoon of hog-like effigies of Benito Mussolini and Barry Hertzog clad in black and brandishing chains to an African worker who promptly refuses to wear them.⁶ The end of liberal belonging in South Africa thus did not signal the end of empire but the deepening of its logics of racial subjection. George Padmore (1903-1959) well understood the significance of the connections to be drawn between fascism and the Union of South Africa. In 1938 he wrote to in *Controversy* that "Public attention is so firmly engaged with Fascist depredations in Abyssinia, Spain, China and South-Eastern Europe that the quieter Fascist tendencies within the British Empire are ignored."⁷ These fascist tendencies were shown, for Pad-

⁴ D.D.T. Jabavu (Editor), *Minutes of the All African Convention* (Lovedale Press: 1936), pp. 19-20.

⁵ D.D.T. Jabavu (Editor), *Minutes of the All African Convention*, pp. 19-20.

⁶ *Umvikeli-Thebe*, January, 1936, pg. 1.

⁷ George Padmore, "The Government's Betrayal of the Protectorates," *Controversy*, Vol. 2, No. 21, (1938).

more, in the Union government's ploy to absorb the British protectorates of Bechuana-land, Swaziland and Basotholand into its borders and Hertzog had, in 1936, made Africans "aliens in their own land!" Padmore had hoped that "international solidarity" would be shown to "the struggles of the colonial toiling masses in resisting Fascism within the Empire."⁸ However, the failure of the Comintern and white working classes to join in the struggles of the "colonial toiling masses" remapped Padmore's revolutionary path from Communism to Pan-Africanism after the Second World War. In the few years after the Second World War, Aime Cesaire wrote in *Discourse on Colonialism* (1950) about the "terrific boomerang effect" of fascism in Europe.⁹ The dual critiques of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia and the end of the franchise in South Africa brought the discourse on fascism to bear on events in colonial geographies. It is perhaps because of its remote location in relation to the metropolises that the Union of South Africa has seemed beyond the grasp of being read in the genealogy of fascism that Cesaire elaborated. Colonial intellectuals working on the margins of empire were, however, never too far from drawing the necessary linkages between state racism and fascism unfurling in places that were long-standing laboratories of bio-political designs. They had, almost with uncanny prescience, proven W.E.B. Du Bois in essence in the correct to meditate on the roots of the First World War by submitting the colonial problem: "in the Dark Continent are hidden the roots, not simply of war today but of the menace of wars tomorrow."¹⁰ They were, after all, on the cusp of witnessing the vestiges of that first conflagration about to bring the civilized world to its knees and shake the imperial foundation of colonial power to its core.

There is much that remains to be said about the odyssey of radical black South Africans in the institutions of labor, communism and pan-Africanism before the Second World War and the effluence of literary and journalistic writing contained in the periodicals and other textual forms that they chose to affiliate themselves with. In this dissertation I have tried to show how very notion of imperial citizenship was transformed as black intellectuals and toilers sought to find a language of belonging in South Africa. The 1936 moment might have snuffed out what remained of that ideal but the black political imagination had already replaced the global scope of empire with alternative imaginaries that embraced continental and world-wide communities of struggle. There is much in what our predecessors said and did that remains to be thought through and placed back into the public sphere of a post-Apartheid South Africa. It remains to be seen whether their voices and struggles can indeed be fashioned into a new pan-Africanist ethic that embraces the new diasporas that are already with us.

⁸ George Padmore, "The Government's Betrayal of the Protectorates."

⁹ Aime Cesaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press (2001 [1950]), pg. 36.

¹⁰ W.E.B. Du Bois. "The African Roots of War," *Monthly Review Press* (1973) pg. 28.

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Figure 3.¹¹

¹¹ *Umvikeli-Thebe*, January, 1936, pg. 1.

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