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The 'real' of racializing embodiment

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ABSTRACT

Chabani Manganyi's (1981) analysis of racializing embodiment represents an important, historically-neglected contribution to psychoanalytic social psychology. Influenced as much by Fanon's anti-colonial and psycho-existential concerns as by phenomenology and the imperatives of the Black Consciousness struggle against apartheid, Manganyi's work represents an unusually politically-committed form of social psychology. I introduce and elaborate upon Manganyi's single most important essay on racializing embodiment, drawing attention to his assertion that racism – in all its recalcitrance and tenacity - needs be linked to a psycho-existential problematic, namely that of the disjunctive pairing of body and ego. I critically elaborate upon Manganyi's argument in relation to similar conceptualizations of racism (the Manichean dynamics of colonialism, notions of differential embodiment, epidermalization, and the psychosomatics of racism) and in reference to Slavoj Žižek's Lacanian psychoanalytic theorization of similar issues (particularly the notions of the 'theft of enjoyment' and the bodily 'real').

Keywords: Racism, embodiment, racialization, psychoanalytic social psychology, the Lacanian real, theft of enjoyment, Manichaeism, epidermalization, the psychosomatics of racism.

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Troubling embodiments

It is in the style of psychoanalysis to emphasize a fundamental division – indeed, a barring - which means that human subjects are never complete or unified unto themselves. This division, sometimes formulated as the dislocation between the subject of the statement and the subject of the enunciation, needs be grasped in reference to the fact that language and being are never fully commensurate. For psychoanalysis, this radical incompatibility of ourselves to our selves creates an abiding tension, a type of irreparability that despite all attempts at reconstitution and wholeness remains a constituent factor of subjectivity. Let us take this incommensurability as our starting point, but let us steer our attentions to one particular facet of our incompatibility to selves: the dilemma of embodiment.

Despite its relative neglect by the mainstream of contemporary social psychology – a neglect to some extent been addressed within critical psychology (Cromby, 2004, 2005; Cromby & Blackman, 2007; Johnson, 2002, Peet, 2002; Walkerdine, 2002) - embodiment is neither a new nor a forgotten theme in psychoanalytic theory. Whether we refer to the Freudian (1984) depiction of an ego that emerges from the surface of experience of a body but that is never homogenous to it, or to the primal discordance of Lacan's (1977) *corps morcelé* that lacks primary motor-co-ordination and the imaginary unification of an 'I', we encounter the body as a problem. Science fiction is an ally in this regard; as in Freud's (1966) notion of the uncanny, science-fiction is filled with examples of disembodied presence (ghosts, poltergeists, spirits, hauntings) and embodied absence (robots, serial-killers, zombies, beings without souls) which dramatize this split. More anecdotally yet we might think of the constant war of control we fight against our bodies: the bodily technologies of weight loss, dieting, muscle gain, skin lightening and darkening, regimes of fitness, the very difficulty of getting the body to signify what we want it to. This is the problem I wish to focus on: the issue of the incommensurability of the body-ego relation which invariably requires the mediation of various psychical, symbolic and ideological mechanisms. These mechanisms – here the link between psychoanalytic and socio-political concerns with embodiment – play crucial roles in the reproduction of various forms of social asymmetry.

There are a number of perspectives one might take in elaborating the problems the body presents to culture, in tracing how such problems come to be channelled into various inequitable modes of sociality. From the position of a scholar interested both in psychoanalytic studies of racism, and in neglected trajectories of psychoanalytic critique, I would argue that there is a distinctive perspective on these issues that is particularly worth revisiting: the early work of South African psychologist Chabani Manganyi. The psychoanalytic social psychology of Manganyi's early essays (1973, 1977, 1981) – influenced as much by Fanon's (1952) anti-colonial and existential concerns as by the imperatives of Black Consciousness and the struggle against apartheid - stressed the factor of embodiment as an indispensable mode of analysis. The value of revisiting Manganyi's contribution can be underlined with reference to imperatives posed in recent sociological approaches to race and embodiment. Alexander and Knowles (2005) advance, for example, that "The corporeality of the racialized body has remained something of an enigma...comparatively little work has been done on either the embodied nature of racial discourse or on the embodied subjectivity of racialized individuals or groups" (p. 12). They echo thus the concerns of Shilling (1997) and Knowles (2003) - whose respective arguments call attention to my aims here – that inadequate attention has been paid to the body *as sensory and emotional entity* encapsulating individual experiences (Shilling, 1997), and that the body, as physical and material vehicle, is an important *focus of subjectivity*, a means through which racialized individuals make sense of their being in the world (Knowles, 2003).

The bodily 'real' and its symbolic mediation

Manganyi's (1981) lasting interest for us has much to do with how he takes up what he terms the 'psycho-existential' crisis of embodiment. In his estimation, the body is not just a problem of ego-denial (as in the disavowal of the crass physicality of its wastes and wants). Nor is it merely a problem of alienating depersonalization (the assimilation, in patriarchy, for example, of a woman's body, dress and deportment to a standardized framework of norms). In embodiment, we confront, in addition, *existential dilemma* of the disharmonious body-to-ego relationship as it is transformed into a pragmatic

socio-cultural problem. The existential dualism that arises in this situation involves “the contradictory realities of the finitude of the body and the limitless horizons of self-consciousness and man’s capacity for symbolization” (p. 106).

What quickly becomes clear in Manganyi’s account is that this dissonance between registers - this attempted conversion of the unpalatable real of the bodily into the symbolic terms of socio-cultural reformulation – gives rise to a virulent series of social and ideological formations. This conversion is undoubtedly ‘effective’ inasmuch as the problem of bodily disavowal becomes “in race supremacist cultures, a medium for the development of racist systems and fantasies” (p. 105). Yet it is dysfunctional inasmuch as it produces an excess, a set of symptomatic effects which return to haunt and destabilize the ideological system that had supposedly been secured in the process.

It is worth playing out the steps of Manganyi’s argument in a little more detail, both so as to replicate its structure, and so as to develop links to other conceptualizations of racism and differential embodiment. The point however is perhaps yet to be made strongly enough: why the disavowal of the bodily? Why allocate this crass corporeality to some other abjected social figure rather than simply assume and own it? Is our own corporeality that problematic for us; is it enough to ensure this fractious relation of incompatible reliance – the forever unsteady body-to-ego relation – that Manganyi describes in such dramatic terms? “At the core of human existence is a devastating contradiction” he proclaims, “the contradiction between the fate of creatureliness and the infinitude of the symbolic...” (1981, p. 123). He is not, of course, alone in making such a claim, or in asserting that this incompatibility presents an ideological problem. He makes reference to a key text in the history of psychoanalytic social psychology, Reich’s (1970) *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, resonating with its author:

‘Away from the animal; away from sexuality’ are the guiding principles of the formation of all human ideology...this adds up to an overemphasis of the intellect, of...logic and reason as opposed to instinct...the superior man as opposed to the inferior man (Reich, p. 339).

What must be emphasized is that Manganyi's approach – which in this respect differs from Reich and parallels rather Kristeva's (1982) account of abjection – does not rely on the assumption that it is primarily the *sexuality* of the body which makes corporeality so problematic. It is rather the body's inevitable fate of decay and death, the body as inescapable proof of finitude, mortality and demise that make it – along with the spiral of ideological values associated with it - so demanding of rejection, disavowal, and projection. The threat of deathliness, he insists, far outweighs the threat of sexuality: "...the reality which is feared most and defended against is death...the denial of death is first and foremost a denial of the body" (p. 121).

We confront thus a crisis of psychical and ideological management in which a variety of bodily values must be allocated a place in a discursive network of values. This crisis results in two broad psychological responses, repression and symbolization. Manganyi focuses principally on the latter of these two. The displacements and associations of ideological symbolization make it possible for individuals to maintain the polarization evident in the body-ego relation. The role of ideology may thus be understood as the "symbolic transformation mediating fundamental human needs for normative sanity" (p. 118). The symbolic realm provides some relief from this pressing existential anxiety of the body; corporeal dilemmas are played out within the symbolic. This is not all that is involved. The relation between the bodily real, the ideological symbolic, and the force of racist fantasy proves considerably more complex than this. The body itself becomes a means – a living vessel of experience – for the articulation and projection of ideological meanings. Symbolic dilemmas, that is to say, are also played out at the level of the corporeal:

[T]he human body is a perfect medium for the symbolic elaboration of social meanings, including the irrational substratum of superordinate/subordinate relationships. When this bodily symbolism is considered within the wider symbolic matrix which equates the body with creatureliness, finitude, excrement, sin...[then] the social and individual [psychic] dimensions of the body become manifest (p. 112).

For Manganyi thus the body is not merely a socially-constructed object, just as the anxieties of embodiment cannot be captured solely through the lens of socio-historical and discursive contextualization. His implication is clear: not every object is constructed in the same way; not every object proves to be such a recurring historical problem in a succession of societies, or such a potent a factor in the making and practicing of racializing ideology.

This lies at the heart of what is most important to retrieve in Manganyi's psycho-existential register of critique: a sense of a properly *universal* dilemma of the disturbing physicality of an embodied ego. This is a dilemma addressed in the form of grievous modes of sociality; it is from this 'irresolvability' of the body-ego relation that spring a field of symbolic articulations and fantasies. Bigoted social logics may be said to exploit this factor, to insist on a type of polarization in the individual's interpretation of their body-to-ego experience such that it comes to be expressive, in Manganyi's terms, "of an elaborate symbolic matrix" (p. 118).

To avoid confusion: the 'real' of the body - utilizing a Lacanian term to emphasize its existence as a vector of contingencies not simply carried away by representation - should not be taken as a license to an easy universalism. This 'real' is not completely independent of the flux of historical and discursive construction. The 'real' is that which represents a recurring deadlock of comprehension in different historical eras; it may as such be met with different symbolic and ideological strategies. My intention in drawing on this concept is to point to that which eludes the closure of the symbolic. Whether we are speaking of the body's resistance to symbolization – that irreducible aspect of corporeality never fully mediated by language – or, indeed, the impossibility of harmonizing the body and the ego - precisely this 'real' plays the part of continually spurring on a cascade of representations and fantasies. Slavoj Žižek provides a helpful point of clarification in this respect. Warning against thinking the 'real' as a kind of content, as a simply extra-symbolic domain, he cautions "the Lacanian Real is strictly internal to the Symbolic: it is nothing but its inherent limitation, the impossibility of the symbolic fully to "become itself" (2000, p. 120).

Orders of embodiment

Returning to the 'elaborate symbolic matrix' generated by the denial of the body: one of the most persistent and categorical of the available symbolic equations in Western culture, Manganyi insists, is that which equates *whiteness* with *mind*, and *blackness* with the *bodily*. These sociological schemata are essentially elaborations of a single dichotomy "between body and inner symbolic core (mind) which reflects and is supported by the symbolic variations of up and down (above and below), good and evil" (p. 112). We have thus two chains of signifiers: the upward trajectory of whiteness-mind-goodness-life and the downward trajectory of blackness-bodily-evil-death. Such trajectories are meant literally: Manganyi's phenomenological frame of analysis insists that the subject's bodily-experiential domain – the lived physicality of 'up' and 'down' - recodes and reaffirms this racist division of values. "Being above somebody and being below somebody" he comments, "are fundamental and deep-seated orienting constructions of the racist consciousness" (p. 110).

These polarized sets of value not only replay the rudimentary dynamics of racism (its logics, that is, of superiority and inferiority), they also represent routes of identification: the upper pole (whiteness) provides a means of narcissistic self-valorization, affording its subjects the position of symbolic idealization; the lower pole (blackness) represents that which is devalued, deserving of denial and repression. What thus needs to be built into these sociological schemata (or chains of signifiers) are two general subject-categories - the prospect, that is to say, of negative self-evaluation – if one is the subject of racist objectification – and of aggrandizing, positive self-over-evaluation – if one is its beneficiary.

These Manichean sets of value also, importantly, affirm racial difference at a variety of modalities of human experience. Whether we compare the physicality of the lower (genital) body with its higher cerebral qualities of mind, the spatial orientations of the upwards transcendence of spirit with the downward earthly destiny of flesh, or the plane of disciplined moral order versus that of base, unprincipled, instinctual action, each such comparison affirms two mutually-exclusive racial categories. Racial difference, we might venture, is given a radical reality, substantiated as a mode of being.

Race here is not simply a reality of meaning or signification, but a 'holistic' experiential reality of embodied, affective and spiritual depth. Racialization for Manganyi thus occurs in a profoundly personalized – which is not to say explicitly conscious - manner, within the *phenomenological* dimension of how we make sense of our social and bodily 'being-in-the-world'.

Racism thus profits from a bodily-ostracization:

The negative values associated with blackness (blackness as dirt, impurity, smell) become vehicles in race supremacist cultures for the racist's attempts to adapt to his estrangement from the reality of the human body. The projection of these undesirable attributes of the human body to the victim of racism as a convenient scapegoat, is part and parcel of the process of denial and self-deception which characterizes the cultural heroics of Western culture and civilization (p. 113).

Apparent in this extract are debts both to both Adorno *et al.*'s (1950) social psychological depiction of authoritarian fascism and Fanon's (1952) assault on colonial racism. However, while many of Manganyi's principal themes – projection, rejection of the bodily, the other as embodiment of denied desire – are evident in Adorno *et al.* (1950), I want to avoid viewing his work merely as a sub-variant of this tradition. The particularity of his concerns – anti-apartheid rather than anti-fascist critique, white racism as opposed to anti-Semitism, a focus on embodiment rather than on personality – marks his approach out as distinctive, as sharing far more in common with a variety of Black Consciousness and anti-colonial struggles. Manganyi clearly endorses Fanon's (1952) depiction of the Manichean dynamics of colonial racism whereby a 'metaphysics' of whiteness - embodied by the higher values of culture, intellect, civilization and spirituality - is opposed to the resolute bodyliness of blackness – which, by contrast, is made to gravitate around values of nature, sexuality, mortality and deathliness.

Contrary to attempts to bypass these Manichean divisions, to reject them as outdated analytical frameworks, authors such as Gordon (1997), Mbembe (2001) and Gilroy (2000) have called attention to their ongoing persistence. A variant identified by St Louis (2005) and Stuart (2005): the longstanding insistence within contemporary American and British culture on black

masculinities as hypersexual and hyperphysical. Gilroy (2000) is emphatic in this respect: the most iconic and/or heroic African American and Afro-Caribbean figures seem inevitably tied back to the familiar themes of bodily beauty, physique, athleticism. More vividly yet, Mbembe evokes many of Manganyi's string of Manichean oppositions (object/spirit, animal/human, death/transcendence) in his discussion of the lingering influence of Colonialism's philosophies of legitimization:

[T]he colonized individual...[was] the very prototype of the animal... [this] individual...was subordinate....[and] could not be like "myself". As an animal he is strictly alien to me... No power of transcending himself can be perceived in him...he belongs to the sphere of objects...[I]n the colony the body of the colonized individual is considered, in its profanity, one object among others...no more than a "body-thing," it is neither the substrate nor the affirmation of any mind or spirit...His cadaver remains lying on the earth in a sort of unshakable rigidity, a material mass and a simple, inert object, condemned in the position of that which plays no role at all (Mbembe, 2001, pp. 26-27).

This division between mute physicality and the enabling powers of the intellect, between the objectified body-thing which capitulates unto death, and those subjects which represent its transcendence, is by no means only a tactic of racism. This differential order of embodiment – a conditional relation to physicality as opposed to a *reductive* relation – is also operative in the making of sexual difference, in the fact that men and women are thought to be differently embodied within patriarchy. One is reminded here of Adorno's (1990) remark that a woman's voice cannot be properly recorded because it demands the presence of her body, in contrast to a man's voice which can exert its full power as disembodied. We seem to have here, as Žižek (2001) notes, an exemplary case of the ideological notion of difference in which man (or 'whiteness') is a disembodied Spirit-Subject, while woman (or 'blackness'), remains anchored in the body.

Envious racisms and 'regimes of enjoyment'

From Manganyi's perspective, the fact of facets of the bodily self residing in the 'racial other' – who is simultaneously denigrated and desired – is essential to the recalcitrance of racism. Racism occurs as a pathological means of mediating this point of incompatibility, as a means of comprehending, managing, this disjuncture of body and psyche; this is a crucial part of what lends racism its infamous tenacity. In Manganyi's eyes there can be no lasting harmonious combination of these two parts; inasmuch as this existential problematic is displaced on others, they will always exert a relation of bodily dread and sexual fascination that characterizes colonial forms of racism.

More interesting than the accepted wisdom that racism necessarily involves projection and 'scapegoating' – notions so routinely evoked that the ambivalence and nuance of the involved processes is almost completely lost - is the fact of the discomfiting intimacy of what is being denied, repressed, the very *desirability* of what is being projected away. Before moving on to this issue, it is worthwhile pausing over a related consideration, flagged up by Žižek (1997). The 'disequilibrium' that is seemingly pacified in racist objectification is not merely that of an individual's own internal affective economy. It is rather the more radical (and indeed, irresolvable) disjuncture that stems from the impossibility of ever fully knowing 'What society wants of me', of ever assuming a role that makes understandable my particular subject-to-society relation. So, for Žižek, the figure of the 'racial other' cannot be reduced to a projected externalization of the racist's 'inner conflict': "on the contrary, it bears witness to (and tried to cope with) the fact that I am originally decentred, part of an opaque network whose meaning and logic elude my control" (1997, p. 9).

Returning then to the fact of the disturbing intimacy in otherness, something emphasized in different ways by both Fanon and Žižek. Let us follow first Fanon's (1952) line of analysis: the bodyliness, the physicality and sexuality that the white colonial, cannot permit himself to possess, he project onto the screen of the body of the colonial other. This other, then returns to the white man the aspects of disavowed bodily existence – along with all its illicit pleasures and joys – that he envies and resents the black man for. There is thus a return effect of such processes of projection, and understandably so,

after all, to lose out on the creatureliness of the body and all its abjectionable aspects is to lose out also on its concomitant 'surplus enjoyments'. That is, doing away with the body's finitude and mortality is to lose out on that irreducibly traumatic kernel of sexuality with which – to follow Lacanian psychoanalysis - the surplus enjoyments of *jouissance* are inextricably attached. More simply put: there are times when the racist subject wants their bodyliness back, as in the case of sexual pleasure or those other libidinal 'enjoyments' which are by definition excessive, and which are always aggressively defended and covetously desired.

One might thus speak of the racist envy of a given 'regime of enjoyments', that is, an experience of lack in which the racist subject wishes to take back those surplus enjoyments that they perceive in various 'racial others'. The enjoyments in question are properties that the racist subject feels themselves singularly entitled to, but is lacking; these are properties that have as such been stolen away by others, whose possession thereof therefore qualifies these 'racial others' as radically blameworthy. In such moments the 'enjoying other' becomes curiously important to the racist, certainly so inasmuch as they might be said to represent a repository of enjoyments that need be taken back. We return thus to a familiar lesson in the psychoanalysis of racism: the 'racial other' is needed, envied, desired far more than the racist subject can ever admit.

As is no doubt apparent, my attempt above has been to overlap facets of two psychoanalytic accounts of racism that are not typically associated with one another. Fanon provides us with an emphasis on the role of projected bodily pleasures and excessive sexualities. He adds to this the idea that it is possible to match up each form of bigotry to an envied (and yet also denigrated and feared) property that has been projected upon a category of racial otherness. Žižek's (1992, 1994a, 1997) conceptualization of the 'theft of enjoyment' is more cautious when it comes to relying on notions of projection. His concern lies far less with the generation of denigrating stereotypes than with the impression of "lost" properties. These are properties – whether it be the case of "our" jobs, "our" traditional way of life, "our" wives and children – that have taken on the volatile currency of *jouissance* (that is, of *excessive libidinal enjoyment*), that the other has usurped. This is the point at which

racism both defeats itself (indeed, generates its own loss) and becomes endlessly self-perpetuating.

It is worth noting here that Žižek's recasting of the themes already present in Fanon (and various other psychoanalytic accounts of racism (Frosh, 1989, 2002)) is an enabling one, inasmuch as this elusive property of 'enjoyment' that he speaks of – realized either as an object of aggressive envy (the perverse, unjustified 'enjoyments' of others) or of zealous over-defensiveness (the precious, yet equally indefinable qualities of our own 'enjoyment' that is threatened by others) - is both more abstract and more variable than that permitted by the 'base-thematics' of the bodily. This is in many respects true; perhaps an analytics of *jouissance* derived from Žižek's (1991) notion of 'enjoyment as a political factor' represents a promising route of expansion for psychoanalytic social psychology's engagement with the politics of embodiment. Then again, it is perhaps precisely the reintroduction of earlier psychoanalytic theorizations such as that of Manganyi and Fanon which allow us a degree of fluency in how we apply and extend Žižek's ideas (particularly so given that Lacanian notions of *jouissance* seem never fully separable from the factors of sensuality, the bodily, and indeed, the deathly).

The 'getting under the skin' of race and racism

There is a dimension of embodiment that remains somewhat underemphasized in Manganyi's treatment – at least in his discussion of 'The Body-for-others' - namely, the *experiential* aspect of embodied subjectivity. It is not enough, I think, to insist on the bodily problematic as a crucial component of any ideological system, as that 'real' which feeds a variety of symbolic constructions and an order of fantasmatic captivation. Nor is it enough to argue that such ideological values get damagingly replicated – again in symbolic form - in the embodied individual's own ego-ideals and enculturated self-understandings. My concerns are perhaps best formulated as a question: does Manganyi attend enough to the feeling body, to the corporeal *as surface and medium of affect*, that is, to the body as a creaturely vessel that is able to turn back against the regulations of the ego, and to give symptomatic expression – despite such regulations - to the formulas of the wider symbolic social matrix? Manganyi's account emphasizes the necessary

roles of symbolization and repression in the body-to-ego relation; does he though capture anything of the symptomatic release of this repression, the 'coming undone' – in visceral eruptions and reactions – of this denied bodily aspect and its displacement into 'racial others'?

It is in Fanon (1952) that we find what is perhaps still the most powerful depiction of this aspect of racializing (and racist) embodiment. This rendering of the violated dialectic of the body and the world, is one in which – to repeat the oft-revisited refrain - the man of colour “encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema” (p. 112). Fanon’s body here is “sprawled out, distorted, recoloured, clad in mourning in that white winter day”; he is surrounded by the presence, *the metaphysics* of whiteness: “All around me...a white song.... [A] whiteness that burns me (p. 113). One cannot but notice the prevalence of the bodily in *Black Skin White Masks*, particularly the physicality of the black body, as it is contrasted against insignias of disembodied whiteness. The notion of ‘corporeal malediction’, the disjunction, in other words of a particular corporeal schema (of inhabiting a ‘black’ body) in a given historico-racial schema (of the racist ‘white’ world) is offered as a means of conceptualizing the brutal psychological effects of racism. Indeed, a recurring motif of *traumatized corporeality* grounds the text’s phenomenological concerns with racism: the ‘metaphysics’ of racism are read into the natural features of a hostile, white world; the hatred of this racist world, correspondingly, is read back into the experience of a mutilated, radically objectified body.

There is something difficult to fathom in this disconcerting mismatch of physical and psychological properties: a violent disjunction that obeys no strict demarcation between ideology and bodily experience, between the stereotypes of racist discourse and its effects on an embodied psychology. Fanon, I think, is going beyond a phenomenology of the black body, beyond a ‘corporealization’ of the psychological violence of racism (in this respect, who can forget his experience of racist objectification: an “amputation, an excision, a haemorrhage that splatter[s] my body with black blood” (1952, p. 112)). This is not simply a metaphoric conversion of psychic assault into the terms of bodily brutality. Rather these two domains, the realm of ego-subjectivity (or, ‘the psychological’) and the physical can never be neatly or comfortably

separated; attempts at ego-body mediation inevitably fail. We have instead a heightened disharmony, a continual disruption of each by the other. This is a way of conceptualizing the assault of racism: not only the determination of the soul by the body (the sense, as in Fanon's (1952) 'epidermalization', of 'race' and racism getting 'under the skin'), not only the metaphysical permeation of the material domain by racist subjectivity, but the 'splicing' of objectified souls with subjectified objects.

This then is what occurs as a result of modes of racist colonial embodiment: the balance of the body's relation to the world, to other bodies, to its own positive identity, to an array of cultural and historical values, is almost completely obliterated. This entails not only the breakdown of the dialectic between body and the world, between spheres of positive subjectivity and stable objectivity, but something more severe. We have an intersection here of two traumatic conditions, conditions I have referred to above as 'embodied absence' and 'disembodied presence', that is, a coupling of the object-status of souls that have been evacuated of psychological presence with the 'psycho-materiality' of objects animated by racist beliefs. What results is a nightmarish variation of Lacan's body-in-pieces in which Fanon experiences his physical being in a series of mutilated disjunctions. This is a state in which no real dialectical interchange can be maintained, be it with respect to Fanon's basic phenomenological stability in the world, or in view of his relation his own history, culture, or, indeed, his own basic 'lifeworld' of values. Hence the idea of the '*disfigurement*' of the colonized's culture and history that proved so important to Black Consciousness (as in Biko, 1978), a phrase that, subsequently, should not be read as merely metaphorical.

I would argue then that Manganyi's conceptualization of the denial of the bodily in racist culture - at least in the important 'The body-for-others' essay - needs be complemented with an array of ideas derived from Fanon's notion of epidermalization (see Riggs & Augostinous (2005) for a social psychological engagement with this concept). In tackling the problem of racializing (and, indeed, racist) embodiment we must not focus solely on the body as it presents a dilemma for racist ideology, with as it were, the 'imposed phenomenology' of the meaning of 'other' bodies, and of the transposition of discursive frames upon our own bodily existence. Nor should we should

concentrate only on the physicality of racism's bodily fascinations, that is, racism's preoccupation with 'evidential' markers of difference. We must engage also with the affective factor of bodily experience itself, with the 'expressive phenomenology' so to speak, of body as a surface of experience that undergoes anxieties, visceral responses, symptomatic episodes. It is helpful here perhaps to refer to the 'psychosomatics of race and racism', indeed, to use this as a departure point from which to investigate further the effects of racism's disruptions of (relatively stable) modes of embodiment, disruptions that one might suggest are felt in both the racist and the target of their racism alike. I am alluding to the lived experience of racism, and indeed, of 'race' at that embodied, affective and experiential level that 'comes before words', which is not easily contained, or assimilated into the symbolic domain of speech, language, signification (see Hall & Crisp, 2003; Miller & Smith, 2004; Nagda, Tropp & Paluck, 2006; Spencer-Rodgers & McGovern, 2002 for examples of social psychological work engaging with these issues). This is the 'sensuality' of racism that Fanon understood so well: phobias of racial proximity/contact; anxious physical reactions to the bodily presence of racial others; the heightened bodily sense of the 'getting under the skin' of racial markers which succeed in over-determining the subject from without.

This is a type of racism - not dissimilar to social psychological conceptualizations of aversive and implicit racism (Aberson & Ettlin, 2004; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; Durrheim & Dixon, 2005; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986, 2005; Son Hing & Zanna, 2002) – that appears to be as of yet unconditioned by discourse, and played out in behaviour and bodily reactions. There is thus another set of dynamics, a bodily order of nervousness, an array of racialized aversions and dreads that is linked to, yet not exhausted by racism in its symbolic forms (Hook, 2006). Clearly, these two manifestations of racism should not be seen as existing independently; 'prediscursive' forms of racism may underwrite and exert a driving influence upon racist patterns of signification, just as 'race' as ideology, as regime of truth, or order of signification, may come to encode the body, and hence over-determine its impulses and its affectivity.

The deadlock of ‘expressive’ versus ‘imposed’ phenomenology

In what has gone above embodiment has been understood as a subjectivizing force, a potent means of exercising influence upon subjectivity via the means of the body. I have tried to emphasize that the body – and indeed racializing embodiment - should be understood in at least two ways: as a vessel of physical experience and affectivity (along the lines of an ‘expressive phenomenology’) firstly; and more structurally, in terms of the ideological imposition of particular frames of value and meaning (an ‘imposed phenomenology’), secondly. This distinction serves to suggest that the body can both be over-determined by symbolic and ideological means (via various structural impositions) and yet also function, in its capacity as ‘surface of experience’ (affectivity, visceral reactions), as a point of discontinuity and resistance that is never wholly subsumed within the horizon of the discursive. Importantly, we have then neither a naïve appeal to the primacy of experience (in an ‘imposed phenomenology’ experience is necessarily subject to structure), nor a reference to the unmediated role of the symbolic (which needs always be factored through the bodily, through the ‘somatic field’).

An obvious suggestion arises in connection with my above discussion of two modes of racializing embodiment: do we not need to focus our energies on conducting parallel types of analysis, on performing a dual analytics of embodiment? This, it seems, is the answer implied above, that we need combine the analysis of experience (the expressive phenomenology of a ‘pre-discursive’ racism) and of structure (the imposition of discursive frame frames upon our bodily existence)? There is a moment of historical resonance in posing such a question; we echo here the terms that defined the deadlock of British cultural studies in the 1980’s. As Stuart Hall (1980) so memorably demonstrated, this tension between the primacy of the experiential and an awareness of the over-determining structures of language and materiality is not so easily overcome. Despite then the charm of such a dual analytics we must remain wary of overstating the reconcilability of the underlying paradigms involved.

Interestingly, in the jostling for ascendance between structure and experience discussed by Hall, in the very inability to harmoniously interrelate these factors, we appear to confront another ‘real’: the irreconcilability of a

given problematic – in this case the over-arching framework of cultural analysis – that is divided from within. We might call for a different approach here, one which eschews the gradual integration of paradigms in favour of the attempt to better understand what underlies their irreconcilability. Foregoing the hope of synthesis then, our analytical efforts should be aimed instead at grasping how both opposed viewpoints are marked by a shared impossibility.

Claude Lévi-Strauss's discussion 'Do Dual Organizations Exist?' in his (1963) *Structural Anthropology* is one of Žižek's (2005) favoured explanatory devices in exemplifying deadlocks of the 'real'. Lévi-Strauss presents the case of the Winnebago people, whose two sub-groups consistently represent the ground-plan of their shared village in opposed ways (a symmetrical design of concentric circles for one sub-group, a clearly divided arrangement for the other). Žižek's objective in using this example is to point to a traumatic constant that remains present in two opposed and properly irreconcilable ideological perspectives. The 'real' here points to the deadlock of comprehension which - despite all attempts at symbolic and fantasmatic mediation – cannot be resolved, assimilated by the worldviews in question. Two tendencies, insists Žižek, must here be avoided. Firstly: the attempt at a type of relativization, whereby the difference of perspective is explained away by the co-ordinates of the onlooker's own particular interests. Such an approach does not enable us to bring into view that traumatic regularity, that 'real' which cuts across the positions of both sets of subjects. Secondly: as opposed to the impulse to resolve the apparent incompatibility in question through types of combination or complementarity - precisely *against* the impetus to a higher-order synthesis - we need ask: what would be elided, obscured, in such attempts? The same holds for attempts to ascertain the 'objectivity' of a wider, more truthful, less subjective view of the phenomena in question. These are simply attempts to avoid the traumatic rift, the deadlock or incommensurability that defies resolution for the simple reason that, as Žižek (2005) insists, it is the *constitutive antagonism* around which the social realities in question *are themselves structured*.

The reasons for this digression are by now, I hope, evident. The two versions of embodiment that I have discussed above do not offer the prospect of a viable reconciliation. We are ultimately unable to close the gap between

the fine-grain richness of the experiential being of the subject and the fact of the unavoidable socio-symbolic structuring of their identity. The ‘truth’ here, to paraphrase Žižek, is not to be found in some combination of perspectives, in an idealistic complementarity, but rather in the constant of the antagonism itself. That is to say, the contrast of these two approaches leads us to the ‘real’ of the embodied subject, to a subject that only becomes a viable experiential and discursive entity through the fact of a *constitutive ‘irresolvability’*. Accordingly, we should concentrate on what is produced in the impossible attempt to mediate this ‘real’, on the various mechanisms - fantasmatic identifications and symbolic construction chief amongst them – that are called upon to reconcile this constitutive irresolvability. This is our focus: the ‘real’ of an unattainable resolution, to which race is again and again the most readily available “solution”.

In other words, our very inability to harmonize the paradigms (of structure and experience, of imposed versus expressive phenomenology) points to an underlying deadlock, a traumatic ‘irresolvability’ within embodiment itself. Unless we grapple with this ‘real’ of embodiment, the force, the persistence, indeed, the charms of race as a fantasmatic and symbolic “solution” to this impossibility will elude us. As in Lacan’s (1992) ethics of psychoanalysis, and in Žižek’s (1994b) critique of ideology, it should perhaps then be the antagonism of the ‘real’ that provides the starting point of analysis in our engagements with racializing embodiment.

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