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'KOZE KUBE NINI?' THE VIOLENCE OF REPRESENTATION AND
THE POLITICS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

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NEW NATION: NEW HISTORY
THE HISTORY WORKSHOP IN SOUTH AFRICA 1979 - 1994

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This article seeks to appraise the influence of the History Workshop (based at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa) both on the study of history in South Africa and on popular understandings of the past. This is a hazardous and perhaps foolhardy venture. Most historians of the sub-continent would agree that a revolution occurred in the writing of the history of South Africa in the later 1970s and 1980s, but to isolate the role of the History Workshop from a variety of other local and international influences is both difficult and, in its outcome, almost certainly controversial. To assess the impact of the History Workshop on popular perceptions of history is even more problematical, through want of virtually any kind of data or even of appropriate measures. All that will be attempted here is to indicate what parts of the wider public the History Workshop has succeeded in reaching. The chief reason for even attempting such an exercise is that the popularisation of South African history is so centrally a part of the History Workshop project that even the strictly academic side of its activities cannot be understood in isolation from it.

The History Workshop was founded in 1977 by a group of academics drawn from a number of disciplines in the social sciences and the humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand. The date was not without significance, for at that time both the discipline and the wider society in South Africa were in turmoil. Since the late 1960s and more particularly the early 1970s a radical critique of liberal and conservative South African historiography had been underway, spearheaded by South African scholars based at a number of university centres in England, and this had been making a growing impact on younger academics and undergraduates in South Africa (1). Outside of the universities, South Africa in general, and the Witwatersrand in particular had been

"Koze Kube Nini?"¹: The Violence of Representation and the Politics of Social Research in South Africa.

INTRODUCTION:

"The are times in life when the question of knowing if one can think differently than one thinks and perceive differently than one sees is absolutely necessary if one is to go on looking and reflecting at all.... But then what is philosophy today - philosophical activity, ... - if it is not the critical work that thought brings to bear on itself? In what does it consist, if not in the endeavor to know how and to what extent it might be possible to think differently, instead of legitimating what is already known?"².

¹ On Monday March 16 1992, The African daily newspaper, Sowetan, following the eruption of violence in the township of Alexandra, during the weekend of March 14-15, expressed its concern by asking this question in Zulu (which explicitly singles out its Zulu-speaking readership, thus assuming that Zulu identity is somehow connected to the violence that has affected african townships in the past three years): "How long will this going on?". In this paper, I use this phrase, which underlies the central concerns of this discussion, in a double sense: (1) to pose a set of questions around the active activity of textual and media representation of African people in South Africa, an activity that is absolved, from a close reading of it, from the accusation that it reproduces stereotypical images of African people. Theoretically, therefore, I cast serious skepticism around the concept of representation which basically informs much of social discourses and researches in the social sciences of South Africa. (2) "Koze Kube Nini?" is a question that I ask to call for a situation, however problematic, where African people will be active and visible in their own representation, a practice that will be intimate to their own struggles. (This would forcefully reflect Spivak's observation regarding her role in the dualism of subject/object: "... I have repeatedly emphasized the complicity between subject and object of investigation. My role ... as subject of investigation, has been entirely parasitical, since my only object has been the Subaltern Studies Yet I am part of their object as well", in G.C. Spivak, In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics, New York: Methuen, p. 221). Currently, they do not represent themselves, especially in those texts that I examine in this paper.

² Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Vol. II: The Use of Pleasure, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1985), p. 9.

The purpose of this paper is my attempt to "think differently" about the social object of social research in the context of South Africa. Although this paper is a critique of this object in a certain period of the history of the social sciences in South Africa, however it is, simultaneously, an attempt to initiate the critical process of reflexivity at the level of the philosophical constitution of this object. This process, I argue and to repeat Foucault, is necessary if social research in South Africa is to be sophisticated and less problematic.

Initially the paper's focus was on the examination of the discourse on violence and ethnicity in contemporary South Africa, which is a discourse that, in the current context of political transition, has emerged as an outcome of certain socio-political developments. However, as my thinking on the question of the construction of this discourse deepened, I noted the degree to which social research plays a fundamental role in this process, and thus decided to refocus the paper to concentrate on the social activity of social research in knowledge-construction. The paper proceeds through a discussion of certain theses on the history of social research in South Africa, and wherever possible, I have tried to support my claims with appropriate examples, although the most elaborate and clear examples that I do provide are on the literature on violence and ethnicity and on feminist literature in South Africa.

Through the notion of "violence of representation", I refer to the idea that the act of representation is in itself an act of violence³. Representation is a form of violence. Like the act of translation⁴, representation is an act of distancing. It becomes possible through the concept of "space", through something other than itself. Within this vacuum of separation, representation results, and sustains itself through a variety of social process-

³ "To perceive something as an object is to tear it out from ... (its) shapelessness, (and) ... shape it according to us". (Andrzej Zybertowicz, "Violence as a Category of an Epistemology", in Engeldor Gastelaars, Ph.V. & S.I. Magala, & O. Preub, Critics and Critical Theory in Eastern Europe (The Hague: University Press Rotterdam, 1990), p. 179. Zybertowicz further notes that it was through violence that certain inter-social and inter-cultural contacts in history were "mediated", and this violent "mediation", subsequently, led to the disappearance of some epistemologies and to the "domination of others" (p. 175). Derrida also examines the question of the relationship violence, metaphysics, and representation in his "Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas", in Writing and Difference, Trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978).

⁴ Andrew Benjamin, Translation and the Nature of Philosophy: A New Theory of Words (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 1.

es that are never visible and stable. However, because of this existential condition, we have to constantly repeat certain questions, regarding the concept of representation: What makes representation possible? Who insists on the reproduction of representation? What and who sustains its existence? However, much more dramatic, I want to assert that representation, in certain politico-historical conditions, becomes violent in that it is always already predetermined and informed by certain cultural and epistemological categories. In these conditions, representation becomes the message⁵. As a consequent of this cultural/epistemological orientation, representation partakes in the active process of knowledge-construction, a condition that becomes starkly visible when the distance, as the space that is necessary for appropriation to occur, between the subject/object dualism is externally remote, and travel becomes the only means by which this relationship can be forged and sustained⁶. However, it is through the activity of representation that this goal is attainable.

By "politics of research" I refer less to the political ideologies that shape social research and more to the epistemological and ontological determinants that regulate and shape the relationship between practitioners of social research and those upon whom social research is practiced. Social research is social practice. But it is also a cultural practice. Within the context of South Africa, social research, with its philosophical undertones firmly placed, provides its adherents with self-justification to probe into the lives of the "other", and to "write" about them, to be their "voice", and to appropriate them for certain

⁵ Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

⁶ On the critical function of travel in this process, see Johannes Fabian, Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Other (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Rana Kabbani, Europe's Myth of Orient (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); & Bernard McGrane, Beyond Anthropology: Society and the Other (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), among others. However, I argue, as part of this paper's theses, that within South Africa travel is still the means through which social scientific knowledge is constructed. The space (distance) created by apartheid is intimate to this process. Therefore, this is another level of the reproduction of racial domination in South Africa, and it is a level that needs to be examined. Thus another project from this paper is to embark on a detailed study of "travel research" and its role in the construction of the "other" within South Africa, especially in African Townships and African Rural life. It is at this level, further, that apartheid becomes sustainable through other means.

interests, which are usually unknown to the "other". Therefore, "politics of research" is about the philosophical conditions of social engagement and the subtle social use of research texts.

A. THESES ON SOCIAL RESEARCH IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICA:
APPROPRIATIVE DISCOURSES⁷.

"They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented"⁸.

⁷ The following theses result from a rethinking of central issues in post-colonialism, defined loosely as a set of projects that seek to understand and reconceptualize the issues of race, ethnicity, gender, literature, etc., in Third World countries. In one sense, this paper positions itself very closely to Said's Orientalism, in that it seeks to reflect on the relationship between the construction of knowledge (through social research of "apartheid research" and "radical research") and racial domination (through social institutions in South Africa) that pervades, structurally, in that society. This reflection leads me to view social research in the same light as the institutions of orientalism. Thus my argument that social research is a set of self-interested social and institutional practices. Second, these theses have been provoked by Toni Morrison's Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), which is a reflective text concerning the historical development of American literature through a systematic engagement with what she calls an "African presence". From this inevitable engagement, argues Morrison, emerges the identity of American literature as nothing else but American Africanism. From Said, Christopher L. Miller, Blank Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985); V.Y. Mudimbe, The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge (London: James Curry, 1990), and Morrison, I have wondered the extent to which social research in South Africa, with its predominant preoccupation with the African object does not of itself constitute an aspect of Africanism, with an internal ordering process.

⁸ Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (New York: International Publishers, 1963). Representation is appropriation, and the latter refers to the process of taking for "oneself in exclusion of others; to claim or use as by an exclusive or pre-eminent right" (Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language, Second Edition (Springfield, Mass.: G & C Merriam Company, 1939), p. 133.

Thesis 1.

Social Research⁹ is an unreflexive and uncritical enterprise, especially in terms of its philosophical conditions¹⁰.

EVIDENCE:

A reading of social scientific research in South Africa, especially from the 1930s to the present, shows an extreme preoccupation with what social research can achieve. Simultaneously, there is an absence of engagement with issues of knowledge and ontology. In fact, the epistemology of social research in South Africa is divided roughly into two positions: afrikaans-speaking universities tend to be oriented towards logical positivism, where quantitative research methods are closely adhered to; english-speaking universities tend to embrace phenomenological-hermeneutic epistemology and some degree of positivism. Through this orientation, social scientists from English-speaking campus have been able to conduct research on the African people that has allowed the latter to be "heard". While the Afrikaans-speaking universities never seriously sought to give Africans a "voice", partly due to the radical objectification resulting from the use of logical positivism,

⁹ This paper is limited to academic social research, especially in the disciplines of sociology, education, anthropology, history, and psychology. However, my preliminary observations of social research conducted by the non-academic non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is that these organizations are largely preoccupied with social policy research, in their attempts to seek solutions to pressing social problems. Nonetheless, it is this practical involvement that renders them to be unable to reflect at all on the philosophical conditions of social research.

¹⁰ That, historically, particularly in Europe, the emergence of social research resulted from the various epistemological and ontological arguments proposed by Descartes, Hume, Locke, Berkeley, Kant, Hegel, and Marx is noted by diverse contemporary thinkers such as Bourdieu, Habermas, Foucault, and Luhmann. However, it is Foucault who has done much to demonstrate the epistemic contexts of different types of knowledge (connaissance). Thus, the phrase "philosophical conditions" refers to the question of what, philosophically (epistemologically and ontologically), made social research possible. It refers to the question of how was the epistemological limits of the Cartesian "I" (subjectivity) was resolved through an invention of the object, an exterior other. This move is always already sustained by both epistemology and ontology. As Foucault argues, however, the "empirical syntheses" for this dualism had to be conducted elsewhere, The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences, (New York: Vintage Books), p. 340.

Africans came to be "heard" and "seen" in the texts of radical scholars. However, neither questioned the possibility of this relationship, except that "apartheid" was blamed for the neglect that was expressed by conservative scholars towards Africans.

Thesis 2.

Social Research fails to see itself as a set of social practices that are historically linked and identifiable with the social practices and institutions of apartheid and its predecessors.

EVIDENCE:

Although most social sciences acknowledges¹¹, with varying degrees, the social context of their research, however all ideological social scientists (liberal, conservative, and radicals), perceive a distinction between the uses of social research and its level of "neutrality" (something like "pure social research"), in that the ingredient elements of social research (methodology, truth, and rationality) are seen not to be linked to apartheid relations, or even a post-apartheid society. What is ignored here is the nature and status of social research as an European Invention. What is not questioned here is the extent to which the idea of social research reflects a particular set of practices that are linked to social domination. For example, the inherent danger of instrumental rationality that Horkheimer and Adorno warned us about, and what has been Habermas's theoretic-political and ethical concern for the past four decades is not even reflected upon by those who fail to see the link between much of late twentieth century social repression and the rationality of modernity. Therefore, it cannot be denied that social research is a critical element of the "project of modernity".

¹¹ See Eddie Webster, "Servants of Apartheid?: A Survey of Social Research into Industry into in South Africa", in John Rex (ed.), Apartheid and Social Research (New York: Unesco Press); Adam Kuper, South Africa and the Anthropologist (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), Chapter 1; Harold Wolpe, "The Liberation Struggle and Research", in Review of African Political Economy, No. 32, 1985; Stanley J. Morse & Orpen, C. (eds.), Contemporary South Africa: Social Psychological Perspectives (Cape Town: Juta & Company Ltd, 1975); Anonymous, "Social Research and the Black Academic in South Africa", in John Rex (ed.), Apartheid and Social Research (New York: Unesco Press); Jonathan D. Jansen (ed), Knowledge & Power in South Africa (Braamfontein: Skotaville, 1991); Johan Muller & Nico Cloete, "The White Hands: Academic Social Scientists, Engagement and Struggle in South Africa", Paper presented at XIth World Congress of Sociology, New Delhi, Indian, 1986. A recent discussion of the relationship between social research and apartheid was the 1992 Transformation Conference.

Thesis 3.

As a consequent of this failure, social research has largely concerned itself with the substantive issue of apartheid, and thereby proceeding instrumentally and ignoring its own participation in the perpetuation of apartheid conditions. Within this movement, it has found support from the postulation of the false dichotomy between research methods, as instruments for gathering knowledge, and theory, as either a precondition for launching a research project, or a result of empirical engagement.

EVIDENCE:

The research output of the 1970s and 1980s in history, education, and sociology provides support to this proposition¹². Evidently, the political context of this output was the intensification of anti-apartheid popular protests, and the demand upon intellectuals to be relevant was strong. However, in being "intellectuals"¹³ social researchers became absorbed in the question of the morality of knowledge, without pausing to reflect on the philosophical implications of this engagement, which emerged when those researched for the sake of political relevancy questioned the racial domination of white social researchers¹⁴.

¹² In education, see, for example, Peter Kallaway (ed.), Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africa (Johanneburg: Ravan Press, 1984).

¹³ Foucault and Lyotard, for example, have respectively raised critical questions around the identity of "intellectual". In Lyotard's view, an "intellectual" is "someone who identifies ... with a collective subject given a universal or potentially universal value (humanity, the nation, the proletariat, etc.), who analyses a situation in terms of that subject and prescribes what should be done for it to flourish, accomplish its destiny" (in George Bennington, Lyotard: Writing the Event, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), p. 5. Foucault sees "the intellectual" as "quite personified", as someone who is "guilty about pretty well everything: about speaking out about keeping silent, about doing nothing and about getting involved in everything", Michel Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture, Interviews and Other Writings, 1977-1984, L.D. Kritzman (ed.) (New York: Routledge, 1988), p. 324.

¹⁴ A classical case is the 1991 Gender Conference at the University of Natal, when a handful of African feminists who were present confronted and challenged the logic behind the idea and practice of a gender conference on "ordinary African women", which did not consider their "presence" and participation.

Thesis 4.

Much of social research has never engaged itself with the questions of its own philosophical conditions. It has never asked itself the Foucauldian question of what makes it possible.

EVIDENCE:

It has always been taken for granted by social scientists that social research will bring "truth into view", that the discovery and proliferation of truth will enlighten supporters of apartheid. Therefore, social research was conscientisation by other means¹⁵. However, it was never asked, reflexively, as to what makes this truth-provider possible.

Thesis 5.

Like most European Inventions, social research has not adapted to the lives and realities of African South Africans¹⁶. Instead, it has always acted as an exteriority that inserts itself through unknown procedures of self-justification. As an outsider, social research has prevailed as a legitimate universality. This is irrespective of the claims that have been made by South African social scientists that social research has been adequately modified and adapted to suite the realities of African South Africans. Subsequently, regarding apartheid, it has been argued that the proper use of social research (through a politically correct research agenda) can serve the interest of this population. But what about the interests of the researcher, those who formulate the research questions, those who "write" the research text? I argue that the problems that beset social

¹⁵ As Pierre Bourdieu notes, sociologists use social research to achieve political goals by other means. Sociology is politics by other means See his In Other Words: Essays Towards Reflexive Sociology (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), and "1992)

¹⁶ Noting the speed at which South Africa is becoming a complex society, in terms of racial and cultural identities, analytically it becomes appropriate to unpack the blanket term of "black", which is used by most opponents of apartheid to capture and unify the three groups (Indians, Coloureds, and Africans) that have largely been on the receiving end of much of the government racial policies. Simultaneously, through this notion of African South African, I seek to problematize the issue of Identity for anti-apartheid political organizations. Thus, I concur with this statement by Morrison that "To identify someone as a South African is say to very little" (1990: p. 47). A very fascinating analysis of Identity in South Africa around the 1940s is by G.H. Calpin, There Are No South Africans (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1941).

research in South Africa are philosophical, and that these problems severely undermine the good intentions of the "political correct" social researcher.

Thesis 6.

Consequently, social research operates with the rigid dualism of subject (writer) and object (speaker). In South Africa, the former is historically linked to the issue of domination, while the object is linked to different modes of oppression and appropriation. I argue that even those attempts towards some level of intersubjectivity fail, given their failure to engage with the issue of dualism, at its level of philosophical discourse. The history of feminist literature in South Africa is an example of the rigidity of subject/object dualism.

EVIDENCE:

The dualism that is so widely disputed nationally and internationally in social theory and social history is not, in the practice of research questioned at all¹⁷. Instead, African people serve as informants, as assistants, as objects of research. Further, it is not clear, even for both Giddens and Bourdieu, two internationally renown social theorists who have done much to combat this dualism, how can a "research text" resolve this problem. They do not tell us about the issue of "writing", "signature" and "copyright"¹⁸. In South African social science, what is the authorship status of those many Africans who have been extremely resourceful in the research of certain key "research texts"? And on what grounds is the issue of

¹⁷ For example, in social theory see Anthony Giddens, The Constitution of Society: An Outline of the Theory of Structuration (Oxford: Polity Press, 1984); Pierre Bourdieu, The Logic of Practice (London: Polity Press, 1990); and Jurgen Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, Volumes I & II (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984 & 1987), and social history has been largely criticized for being atheoretical. On the latter, see, for example, Ira Katznelson, "Working-Class Formation: Constructing Cases and Comparisons", in Ira Katznelson & Z. Aristide (eds.), Working-Class Formation: Nineteenth-Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

¹⁸ These issues have largely been raised by Jacques Derrida in his Of Grammatology (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976) and in his critical response to John Searle, the analytic philosopher, in Limited Inc. (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 1988)

copyright decided¹⁹? This is a problem that can be resolved textually.

Thesis 7.

In social research texts what is appropriated through representation is the "object" of this dualism. (Regardless of how hard conceptually he tries Bourdieu, for example, has never succeeded in dissociating himself from the role of the "subject"). This is explicitly manifest, when the "object" is said to be a "second language speaker", to be a foreigner (and thus outside and excluded) to the language of representation. Evidently, the text is not written for the "object" (the issue of literacy becomes another component for the argument of exclusion) and those of his/her village or township. This is irrespective of the differently structured research relationship between the "subject" and "object". However, although posed as an alternative, intersubjectivity does not resolve the dualism of subject/object. It merely seeks to shorten the distance, as, ultimately, questions of "writing" are never confronted by the supposedly synthesized subject/object. If the latter was the case, everything would radically change.

Thesis 8.

Social Research, from liberal, afrikaans-speaking, and bush universities, is conceptualized in terms of political instrumentalism. The right ideologues uses research methods to support their racial policies. The left, located on the opposite, advances its political agendas through the same, or similar, even complementary, research methods. Both groups converge on the instrumentalism of social research as a means of acquiring legitimacy. Both groups believe in the inherent rationality of the research methods. Both groups do not question both methods and their underlying epistemologies, as European Inventions.

Thesis 9.

Social research has played its role in the construction and perpetuation of racial domination of African South Africans, who make up the largest group of those who are researched. By appropriating, speaking, and writing about/for African people, social research has reproduced racial domination in South Africa.

¹⁹ A recent example is Belinda Bozzoli's, Women of Phokeng: Consciousness, Life Strategy, and Migrancy in South Africa, 1900-1983 (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1991). However, such developments have historical predecessors, Ellen Hellmann's, Sellgoods: A Sociological Survey of an African Commercial Labour Force (Johannesburg: Oxford University Press, 1953).

Thesis 10.

Social Research is epistemological and ontological. It can never be otherwise. Thus the need for it to be problematized in South African social sciences.

Some of these theses are reflected through the two main illustrations of two major interventions in the history of social research in South Africa. The first is the 1991 Gender Conference held at the University of Natal, and the second is the current proliferation of the literature on violence and ethnicity. The first is chosen primarily for two interlined reasons: it was a conference on gender identity, and from which an explicit confrontation emerged on the issue of representation of the "Other" between white feminists and african feminists. The second is chosen as a result of my interest in the question of the construction of identity in the context of political violence in South Africa. My concern here is to examine the possibility of extending Said's project to the realm of the social scientific epistemic in contemporary South Africa²⁰.

B. APARTHEID RESEARCH AND RADICAL RESEARCH.

I argue that the aforementioned theses apply to the domain of the history of social research in South Africa. Thus, my focus in this section is on the examination of the two main traditions in South African social scientific research, namely: what I refer to as "apartheid research"²¹ and "radical research"²². These

²⁰ Edward W. Said, Orientalism (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

²¹ Broadly defined, I use this term to refer to the constitution and conduct of social research by the apartheid state, Afrikaans-speaking universities, and parastatal institutions such as the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). Within this group, social research has been instrumental in the construction and implementations of apartheid policies. An example of this are the many state-initiated commissions throughout much of this century, and the most prominent one in the present decade is the Goldstone Commission whose terms of reference was to investigate "political violence" in African townships. (See Eddie Webster, "A Survey of Social Research Into Industry in South Africa", 1980, p. 78; and Adam Ashforth, The Politics of Official Discourse in Twentieth-Century South Africa (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

²² This term is used broadly to refer to a heterogenous group of social scientists (historians, sociologists, political scientists, trade unionists, etc.) who were largely trained in British universities in the late 1960s to the mid-1970s. This group brought with it certain questions, analyses, and perspectives that were not

politically and theoretically distinct approaches to social science have dominated social scientific discourse in South Africa over the past five decades or more. However, they differ along ideological lines, in terms of the correct or incorrect uses of social research. The first group (apartheid research) is conservative, in its support of the apartheid state, and the second group (radical research) tends to embrace left political ideologies. Specifically, "radical research" emerged as a challenge to both "apartheid research" and the state. Through detailed studies on the state²³, capital accumulation²⁴, and the history of African oppositional politics²⁵, "radical research" sought to show the domain of society as a "contested terrain"²⁶. However, this ideological divide, I argue, is the only issue on which the history of social research in South Africa has been divided. Otherwise, both groups are in agreement on the issues of

dealt with by the then mainstream social science. Consequently, the history of the social sciences in South Africa since then has been predominantly shaped by this group, through a wide-range of research projects in social history, labour studies, education, and gender issues. Currently, their various research agendas define mainstream social science in South Africa, especially so in the English-speaking universities.

²³ See, for example, Robert Davies, Capital, State and White Labour in South Africa, 1900-1960 (London: Harvester Press, 1979), Belinda Bozzoli, The Political Nature of the Ruling Class (London: RKP, 1981), and Harold Wolpe, Race, Class, and the Apartheid State (London: John Curry, 1988).

²⁴ See Martin Legassick, "South Africa: Capital Accumulation and Violence", Economy and Society 3, 1974; F.A. Johnstone, Class, Race and Gold: A Study of Class Relations and Discrimination in South Africa (London: RKP, 1976); and David Yudelman, The Emergence of Modern South Africa: State, Capital, and the Incorporation of Organized Labor on the South African Gold Fields, 1902-1939 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983).

²⁵ See, for example, Hilary Bradford, A Taste of Freedom: The ICU in Rural South Africa, 1924-1930 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Tom Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945 (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983); and Anthony W. Marx, Lessons of Struggle: South African Internal Opposition, 1960-1990 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

²⁶ This is a notion that is used mainly by labour process theorists to capture the nature of capital/labor relationship in the workplace. See, for example, R. Edwards, Contested Terrain: The Transformation of the Workplace in the Twentieth Century (London: Heinemann, 1979), and Michael Burawoy, Politics of Production (London: Verso, 1985).

the rationality and philosophies that govern social research. This is evident, for example, by the absence of critical studies on the nature of social research. Moreover, recently there have been political moves towards the ideological integration of this divide, as South Africa moves in the direction of a democratic settlement²⁷. Nonetheless, much of social research remains at the level of substantive issues, without consideration of the philosophical conditions that informs it.

What is at play here is the importance of philosophical determinism which has shaped much of social research in South Africa, rather than the ideological positions of social researchers. I argue, following Foucault²⁸ and Derrida²⁹, that the nature and the form that social research took in South Africa was largely shaped by its philosophical conditions (empirical and phenomenological epistemologies and objectivist ontology) rather than the political position of the social researcher. This is not to deny that both "apartheid research" and "radical research", in different ways, were supported by apartheid institutions, although, surprisingly, the latter group has been unable to autocritique its relationship to certain apartheid structures. However, the choice and formulation of the research agenda has always already been determined by the philosophical constitution of social research³⁰. The substantive issue of apartheid was a

²⁷ One of these developments, and one in which I have been involved, is the mergence of two previously "ideologically-opposed" sociological associations, Association of Sociology in South Africa (ASSA) and Suid Afrikaanse Sociologie (SASOV). The merger took place at the University of the Witwatersrand, January 20-22, 1993, amidst dissenting voices within the two organizations. Further, there have those (within ASSA) who were (and still are) opposed, on the grounds of moral integrity, to work in the planning of the Merger Conference with certain SASOV members who had conducted research for the South African Defense Force (SADF), and the Military Intelligence (MI).

²⁸ Michel Foucault, The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), Preface.

²⁹ According to Jacques Derrida, "... every particular borrowing drags along with it the whole of metaphysics", in Writing and Difference (London: Routledge, 1978), p. 282.

³⁰ Although, epistemologically, there are implicit positions for the sustenance of a complementary relationship between positivism and phenomenology, however social research has not yet questioned its relationship to objectivist ontology, which is a very crucial moment in the possibility of the representation and construction of the "Other". The latter is already demanded by the dualism of subject/object. Still, I do not separate epistemology

mere extension of this determinism. Thus my concern is with social research as an object, as a philosophical moment in the "order of things".

Before proceeding to a discussion of "apartheid research" and "radical research", it is crucial that I note and comment on the question of the use of social research in the history of the social sciences in South Africa. This question is important for its centrality to the immediate past of South Africa and the anticipated "post-apartheid" South Africa. However, it's a question, regardless of how it is posed and who poses it, that will continue to dictate the relationship between social research and its philosophical conditions in South Africa.

B.1. THE INSTRUMENTALISM OF SOCIAL RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICA:

My characterization of the use of social research is that the latter has largely been appropriated for certain political interests of capital³¹, the apartheid state and its institution³², and "radical research"³³. In this history, however, what is absent is an organized African interest. It appears as though this population has no interest in social research. However, this picture is more complicated, as we look deeply into the status of the "African researcher". In fact, what has apparently been systematically happening is that potential "African researchers" have been recruited by both capital and "radical research" to conduct research for them and/or with them. On the other hand, "apartheid research" has a historical tendency

from ontology, contrary to Roy Bhaskar, A Realist Theory of Science (Leeds: Leeds Books, 1975); The Possibility of Naturalism: A Philosophical Critique of the Contemporary Human Sciences (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979), and Scientific Realism and Human Emancipation (London: Verso, 1986).

³¹ See Eddie Webster, "Servants of Apartheid?", p. 88. However, a recent intervention by capital is the setting-up of the Urban Foundation in 1981, which was commissioned to create an urban African middle-class that was going to act as a buffer-zone between the poverty-stricken African masses and the white suburbs. See also John Saul & Stephen Gelb, The Crisis in South Africa: Class Defense, Class Revolution (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1986).

³² See Ken Smith, The Changing Past: Trends in South African Historical Writing (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1988), Chapter 3; See also Eddie Webster (1980).

³³ Self-consciously, proponents of this group define themselves to be on the left of the ideological spectrum. Consequently, most of them have been (and some are) activists in various social and political organizations.

of excluding African researchers from any level of participation in social research. Moreover, others have complained that before the emergence of "radical research" in the early 1970s, the lives of Africans were not researched, as, in terms of the discipline of history, "history was conducted from above". Thus, "radical research", through its social history variant, sought to redress the state of affairs by conducting "history from below", thereby, presumably, "including" Africans into social research.

In the 1980s, however, there were attempts by certain African intellectuals to create "African research institutions", these have never gain prominence and distinction, nationally and internationally. The sole reason being that any initiative by Africans and for Africans is seen as either pro-PAC or pro-AZAPO. Africans are seen to be unable of non-partisanship. To the majority of white left intellectuals in South Africa attempts for self-determination by Africans borders on their exclusion and reverse discrimination.

B.2. APARTHEID AND APARTHEID RESEARCH:

There is no denying that the history and nature of "apartheid research" is closely linked to the political issues surrounding the survival and development of the Afrikaans-speaking ethnic group. Thus all of the major institutions of social research in the "Afrikaaner community" have been largely developed and funded by the state. Examples are the history of Afrikaans-speaking universities and the HSRC. Therefore, in contrast to "radical research", "apartheid research" has always been historically institutionalized. That is, it emerged out of apartheid structures and institutions, and it was part of those institutions. On the other hand, "radical research" has moved from "outside" into some of these institutions, and to transform them for its own political goals. Also, "apartheid research" has always got access through "apartheid channels". However, much of the research was for the development of the state and its structures. To elaborate on some of these points, let me provide two examples, namely: (1) Afrikaans historiography, and (2) Afrikaans-speaking universities and their relationship to language.

B.2.1. AFRIKAANS HISTORIOGRAPHY:

Throughout its history, Afrikaans historiography has been connected to the political question of seeking political independence from British colonialism. It was written and developed to a make sense of the afflictions that the Afrikaans-speaking people have suffered in their contact with the British. Thus, in its earlier phase, 1868 - 1881, Afrikaans historiography emerged to articulate the history of the sufferings of the Boers since the Great Trek. In this phase, a "history of grievances" was compiled, and such efforts were rewarded in 1876, when an

Afrikaans history text was published with the financial support of the Free State government. Subsequently, this historiography developed through appropriating the sense of the Boers's past, and in achieving this, politics, language, and history became intertwined. All were "part of the same striving for Afrikaaner identity"³⁴. The discipline of history, therefore, was overtly political, and its philosophical problematics were not considered to be important.

B.2.2. AFRIKAANS-SPEAKING UNIVERSITIES:

One of the central issues during the Soweto School Boycotts was the question of language, specifically, the Afrikaans language. It is generally argued that the Boycotts were sparked-off by the rejection of this language, which is identified with apartheid. Thus, throughout much of the Boycotts of the mid-1976, Afrikaans was totally rejected by the students, and it has been seriously undermined by subsequent generations, especially in the Pretoria, Witwatersrand, and Vaal (PWV) areas. However, it has been through this language that "apartheid research" has developed, and it has been through it, furthermore, that it has entrenched its exclusivity and isolation in the internationalization of South African social science. Moreover, in the teaching of social science in South Africa, "apartheid research" benefits those universities that conduct classes in the Afrikaans language. "Apartheid research" is also known for embracing positivist social science. It is largely influenced by the classical theories of Durkheim and Spencer, and the post-classical theories of Merton, Parsons, and Homans. In the dualism of subject/object, it has inscribed itself within an intellectual position that has been criticized throughout much of post-war social science in Western societies. Subsequently, this radical objectification of society has made infamous with the proponents of "radical research". Clearly, the history and practice of "apartheid research" is overtly political, and it will continue to be so. Also, it has been inscription of politics within it that has dictated certain theoretical choices and research methods. However, does it mean that its political opposite and different group will be above politics? Does it mean that "radical research", with political ideals that are universally acceptable, will be unproblematic? Does it mean that the usage of different research methods that are not objectivist will undermine the problem of apartheid social relations? These are my questions for "radical research".

³⁴ Ken Smith, The Changing Past: Trends in South African Historical Writing (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1988), p. 60.

B.3. RADICAL RESEARCH: FROM THE 1970s.

"... there is a danger of producing apartheid in the very research act itself - the White sociologist conceives, the Black research assistant executes"³⁵.

The emergence of "radical research" by intellectuals who were largely inspired by left politics has contributed significantly to the history of social research in South Africa. This has been in the disciplines of labor history³⁶, social history³⁷, and labor studies³⁸. These disciplines and their developments were strengthened by their subsequent institutionalization, in both the academic and non-academic worlds. Labor history is anchored in the African Studies Institute, at the University of the Witwatersrand, social history is systematically developed by History Workshop, and labor studies is developed through the South African Labour Bulletin (SALB), and the Sociology of Work Programme (SWOP). The latter is based at the University of the Witwatersrand. What is distinctive about these approaches, in the history of the social sciences in South Africa, is their predominant preoccupation with the local, African oppressed people, the marginalized, and the "history from below". All these were mobilized, in part, as a rejection of mainstream social

³⁵ Webster (1980: p. 87).

³⁶ See Eddie Webster, "Taking Labour Seriously: Sociology and Labour in South Africa", Inaugural Lecture, University of the Witwatersrand, 1991; Belinda Bozzoli & Peter Delius, "Radical History and South African Society", Radical History Review 46/7, Winter 13, 1990; and Bill Freund, The African Worker, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

³⁷ See Charles van Onselen, Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1933 (Nottingham: Pluto, 1976); and the History Workshop Collection, especially those edited by Belinda Bozzoli, Labour, Townships and Protest (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1979); Town and Countryside in the Transvaal: Capitalist Penetration and Popular Response (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983); Class, Community and Conflict (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987).

³⁸ See Jeremy Baskin, Striking Back: History of COSATU (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1991); Ari Sitas, "African Workers Responses to Changes in the Metal Industry, 1960-1983", Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1983; Robert Lambert, "Political Unionism in South Africa: The South African Congress of Trade Union, 1955-1965", Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1988.

scientific research, which was dominated by both liberal and conservative social researchers, and from the observation of the absence of a systematic engagement with African people. The apparently silent African presence was about to find expression, or a voice. Consequently, "radical research" did much to demarginalize the "silent African presence". In this political quest, "radical research" employed a triangulation of research methods to include quantitative and qualitative methods. However, it was this posturing through conventional research methods and their underlying philosophical orientations (the stress on the search for "truth", logic, and integrity) that contributed to the activity of the representation of the "newly discovered" territory, the African object. Therefore, it is this relationship that "radical research" developed with its subject-matter, especially through the philosophically-laden social research that really interest me. How could the politically legitimate concerns of "radical research" be achieved through "social research", which is founded on the problematic of subject/object dualism? How could the same ideals be attained, when the political question of orality and writing (in its apartheid context) has not been resolved? In the context of a society in which the education of African people has been systematically destroyed, since 1954, how could the critical issues of "writing", "signature", and "authorship" be resolved? Through these concerns, I seek to examine the relationship which "radical research" has had with social research, and from this to ask the essential question of the construction of research texts by "radical research". Regarding these two concerns, my preliminary observation of "radical research" is that Webster's statement is very much true in the current history of social science in South Africa. In fact, "radical research" has developed within this fixation, in which the object-speaker of social research has been, and continue to be, African people, and the researcher-writer are white intellectuals. However, I seek to investigate this relationship as an effect of the underlying philosophical conditions of social research in South Africa.

I now want to illustrate some of the theses that are stated above, through an analysis of what I consider to be very important events in the history of social research in South Africa, namely the 1991 Gender Conference, and the current construction of the discourse (literature) on violence and ethnicity. The latter had one of its manifestation at a recent conference³⁹. The emergence and construction of this discourse

³⁹ The gender conference, which was titled "Women & Gender in Southern Africa", was organized by the Gender Research Forum, and held at the Durban campus of the University of Natal, January 30 - February 2nd, 1991. The conference on violence and ethnicity was titled "Conference on Ethnicity, Society and Conflict in Natal", also it was held at the University of Natal, the Pietermaritzburg,

in South Africa's history highlights the seriousness that is attached to the issue of violence and ethnicity. However, what is of concern to me in both events are the processes that are play in the construction and constitution of knowledge, especially at the philosophical level of the social sciences. By situating my concerns at this level, I simply ask: to what extent are such researches a challenge to apartheid social relations? To what extent is there an attempt to subvert apartheid relations in the "research acts"? Who speaks in such texts? Who writes? Basically, what is happening to the "African object" in these texts?

September 14 - 16, 1992. Another conference, titled "Ethnicity, Identity and Nationalism in South Africa: Comparative Perspectives", will be held on 20 - 24 April, 1993, at the Rhodes University.

C. FEMINISM AND AFRICAN WOMEN: GENDER CONFERENCE, 1991.

"It is only natural that they insist on (representing) us with the yardstick that they use for themselves, forgetting that the ravages of (apartheid) are not the same for all, and that the quest of our own identity is just as arduous and bloody for us as it was for them. The interpretation of our reality through patterns not our own serves only to make us ever more unknown, ever less free, ever more (oppressed)"⁴⁰.

C.1. FEMINISM IN SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY.

The obvious problem that confronts feminist theory and mobilization in South Africa is that their manifestations and modes of reproduction reflect the dominant racial and class compositions of that society. Theoretically, feminist theory in South Africa also reflects the developments and concerns of feminist theory in western societies. Thus in its African context, this theory tends to undermine the "feminine identity of African women", which is an identity that is rooted in a different cultural epistemology. Subsequently, it these social and class identities of feminist theory in South Africa that has led it to be criticized in some quarters⁴¹. However, to make this observation is not to deny the reality of the various forges that South African women, from the mid-1950s, have made to organize along political principles that undermined their respective social, class, and political positions. My observation is that these developments have ignored the critical issue of "difference among women". Thus some feminist theorists attribute the lack of political zeal for activism in the "feminist movement" among urban African women to the social condition of "motherism"⁴². Is it not possible that the nature of social (status), political (race), and economic (class) "difference" among women contributed to the decline in activism by African women? Is it not possible, also, that the geographical distance

⁴⁰ Adapted from Gabriel Garcia Marquez's, "The Solitude of Latin America", Noble Prize for Literature Lecture, 1982, Translated by Marina Castaneda, in Julio Ortega (ed), Gabriel Garcia Marquez and the Powers of Fiction (Austin: University of Texas, 1988), p. 89.

⁴¹ See C. Qunta, Women in Southern Africa (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1987), p. 11.

⁴² Julia C. Wells, "The Rise and Fall of Motherism as a force in Black Women's Resistance Movements", Paper Presented at the Conference on Women & Gender in Southern Africa, January 30th-February 2nd 1991, University of Natal, Durban.

among "different" women did contribute to this decline? What interest me, for this paper, is precisely the question of "difference among women", and much less so, their own separate identity in the struggle against patriarchal domination. I want to explore the issue of "difference among women" at the level of subject/object dualism, the moment of its construction, and not so much on the material differences of issues that I have just listed. By focusing on the question of subject/object dualism, my interest is to examine the role played by social research in defining the "difference among women". That is, social research, which is founded on the this dualism, is a secondary moment in the creation of "difference among women". Thus, I argue that in its relationship to social research, feminist theory in South Africa has developed through the objectification of the African "woman". This has been a relationship in which the subject/object dualism is very sharply defined, and the 1991 Gender Conference, I argue, clearly reflects the current status of feminist theory in South Africa, in that it largely failed to rethink its theoretical and philosophical positions.

C.2. THE 1991 GENDER CONFERENCE:

As I noted earlier, it was at this conference that certain African professional women explicitly challenged the issue of racial participation at a conference whose focus was largely on "ordinary African women". Their challenge questioned the logic of a conference that had white academic feminists representing the "absent" "ordinary African women". This was connected with the observation that the racial composition of paper-givers and participants was skewed: there were only five African women, of which three were from Zimbabwe and Lesotho. Implicitly, these African professional feminists brought into the surface the issue of "difference among women". The "differences" that inscribe South African women are political, educational, economic, and cultural. In the context of South Africa, however, feminist theory has never theorized these "differences", as the relationship between, for example, African and White women has been that between "maids and madams". However, this is located far deeper than the superficial level of "apartheid": it is inscribed by the philosophical orientation of social research, the dualism of subject/object, the whole enterprise of the "will to knowledge". Thus, concerning this conference, my interest is not so much on the issues that were raised by African feminists, but on the issues surrounding social research, especially questions of the "other" among South African women.

The conference covered diverse issues; and the papers were from different disciplines and areas of life. It was not mainly an academic conference. My focus is on those papers in which the relationship between the "subject and object" is made clear by the subject, and social research was utilized to write the paper. Thus, I deal with the issues of "representation" and "methodolo-

gy". On the former issue, I ask: who speaks in the texts?, who is allowed to speak in the texts? for what purpose is the representation conducted? What is the status of the "African object"? On the issue of methodology, I seek to determine how the data of the paper was obtained, who did the research, how was it conducted?

A. METHODOLOGY.

While the general character of the papers at the conference illustrate the current status of the question of "difference among", in terms of the dualism of subject/object, some papers were explicitly constructed on the relationship⁴³. What is strikingly common to all these papers is their unreflexive use of social research⁴⁴. In fact, social research is used to prove a theory, or even to discount another. Thus, they reach out to the "surplus people" and research them. In a research paper that aims at discounting the view held by some African women and African feminist regarding the non-oppressive nature of African household, Carboline White conducted a limited study of "urban Africa households" to investigate this issue. The research paper is a study of the "urban African household" as "site of oppression" (p. 4). However, this social space, she argues, is linked to the class and race of urban african women. White interviewed 22 African women at work and their homes. However, she did not interview the spouses of these women. What emerges from her limited study is an objective description of how these women function within the households. The women's activities from cooking, dishwashing, etc., are described. Most of the data was derived from "interviews", and White wrote these. From the

⁴³ Carboline White, "Close to Home' in Johannesburg: Sexism in Township Households"; Robert Morrell, "Gender and South African Education: Is There Space on the Agenda"; Carol Murphy, "Gender Constraints to Increased Agricultural Production - A Case Study of Women in Rural Kwazulu"; Georgina Jaffee, "Industrial Decentralisation and Women's Employment in South Africa: A Case Study"; Sue Middleton et al., "The Hidden Burden: The Impact of Detention on the Women Left Behind"; Shirley Walters, "Her Words on His Lips: Gender and Popular Education in South Africa"; Astrid Von Kotze, "English is the umbrella of all languages in South Africa: Domestic Workers' English"; D. Cooper, et al., "Urbanisation and Women's Health in Khavelitsba - Demographic and Socio-economic Profile".

⁴⁴ All of the above-mentioned papers make use of conventional research methods, and they rely largely on interviews to accumulate data. The ultimate effect of this approach is that it treats African women as oral subjects. The same is true, even when African women are "educated" (in White's paper). The division of labour is such that they "speak" and the researcher "writes".

research paper, it is clear that the dualism is present and sustained.

B. REPRESENTATION.

In these papers, although the role of African women is that of them as oral people, however, when they do speak, they do this not in their own languages; they speak through translation.

"... we then selected an interpreter/translator. We decided to use a woman interpreter"⁴⁵.

"Eight hundred households ... were visited by 11 trained female interviews selected from the community"⁴⁶.

It is assumed by the researchers that African women do not write, and cannot write. Writing is already self-allocated. Thus, the African women interviewed are represented through speech, an activity that led to their not being invited to the conference. In all these papers, these is how African women are represented. My argument is that the one of the fundamental "difference" among women in South Africa is that which is inscribed by the subject/object dualism. It is this "difference" that leads white feminist researchers to act as subjects that research and write about African women. However, it is a "difference" that has been perpetuated by racial domination in South Africa. Still, in my view, it is too philosophical to be dismissed through a powerful anti-apartheid discourse. Most of the papers at the 1991 Gender Conference reflect the fundamental degree to which white feminist social researchers are not aware of this problem.

⁴⁵ Middleton, et al., p. 9.

⁴⁶ Cooper, et al., p. 4.

**D. DISCOURSE ON VIOLENCE & ETHNICITY: THE CONTEXT OF
POLITICAL TRANSITION IN SOUTH AFRICA.**

The discourse on violence and ethnicity in contemporary South Africa is, like all discourses, constructed along conventional modes of representation that are philosophical, social, and linguistic. On these bases, the discourse on violence and ethnicity is constructed for a variety of reasons, some political, and some unclear⁴⁷. What interests me in this discourse, however, are the issues that Foucault has raised concerning the process of discourse-formation. But also very important is the question of the status of the "Other", or "Subaltern" in the discourse on violence and ethnicity, in that the latter is explicitly founded on an engagement with the "Other". Thus one can read the "debate" between Shula Marks and Chief Buthelezi as essentially one over the question of "who should speak for the Other"? However, Buthelezi is not disputing the right of non-Zulu's to speak about the Zulus:

"It does not always take a Zulu to understand Zulu history"⁴⁸.

Nonetheless, he perceives the danger of this:

"... but if there are any reinventions of history, reinterpretations will come from those who try to

⁴⁷ Of significance here is the political antagonism that has emerged between Shula Marks and Mangosuthu Buthelezi. According to Marks, Chief Buthelezi, as a cultural broker, has manipulated Zulu ethnicity for his political ends: "In his attempts to mobilize his constituency, Buthelezi laid great stress on Zulu history" [The Origins of Ethnic Violence in South Africa, forthcoming, 1993], p. 139. Buthelezi, in turn, has replied to Marks: "I was thus totally astounded to read what Professor Shula Marks had to say about our Zulu commitment to unity and to our culture we experience today. She says that these commitments come from the fact that we felt threatened and we actually reinvented history so that we could paint a picture of Zulu unity. ... I really am astounded. Every year we come together to find unity in our numbers and to find strength in that unity because we remember who we are and where we came from. Professor Shula Marks now has the audacity to stand there and tell us that we are reinventing history because we have a need for a certain image now". (Passages, vol. 3, No. 1, 1992: p. 2.)

⁴⁸ Passages, p. 9.

reinvent history and reinterpret history to cause our political defeat and humiliation"⁴⁹.

As I argue, the construction of this discourse is made possible by this engagement with the "Other". It is this reality that leads me to seek an exploration of the question of the relationship between "discourse-formation" and the "Other". Thus, I argue that discourse-formation is made possible by what it excludes, in as much as by what it includes. That is, while the history of the discourse on violence and ethnicity is initiated by those who are concrete social agents, those who "make history", however, this is the group that does not write history. The history that they "make" is written for them by those who appropriate it. This is a group whose main preoccupation is to "write history". It is a group that construct history. This is the group that actively constructs the discourse on violence and ethnicity, and it is this group that interest me greatly⁵⁰.

"... Vail's model provides important pointers for the construction of a history of Zulu identity"⁵¹.

"... all these points seem to me to presuppose organized and responsible academic research and publication, undertaken with an awareness of the political implications"⁵².

The discourse⁵³ on violence and ethnicity is very impressive, in

⁴⁹ Passages, p. 9.

⁵⁰ My interest in the study of the "construction of knowledge" is also influenced by Pierre Bourdieu's Homo Academicus (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988).

⁵¹ John Wright, "Notes on the Politics of Being 'Zulu', 1820-1920", Paper Presented at the Conference on Ethnicity, Society and Conflict in Natal, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 14-16 September 1992., p.4.

⁵² Jeff Guy, "Debating Ethnicity in South Africa", Paper Presented at the Conference on Ethnicity, Society and Conflict in Natal, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 14-16 September 1992, p. 10.

⁵³ By discourse, I refer to the operationality of a particular mode of thought and analysis that is socially organized and reproduced, and as such this "mode of thought and analysis" is sustainable through processes of appropriation and reappropriation. A discourse is in operation when the issue of dualism is inevitable. Following Foucault, The Discourse on Language, (1972),

the ways in which it has been organized⁵⁴. The literature has emerged from researchers linked with the HSRC to independent university-based researchers. It also received considerable attention from NGOs, such as Planact. Thus the broad picture of social research on violence and ethnicity in South Africa shows a wide spectrum of research organizations and involvement. These national picture, in my view, loosely comprise what I refer to as the discourse on violence and ethnicity in contemporary South Africa. However, I argue that this discourse is clearly defined by the theses that I have stated above, especially in terms of the status of social research.

The discourse on violence and ethnicity consists of different levels: of explanation, representation, methodology, political ideology (in the current context of negotiations), policy implications for the resolution of the violence, and the level of their own construction. Taking this discourse as an example, I want to show how it plays a role in some of the issues that I have raised above.

A. METHODOLOGY.

Largely, the discourse on violence and ethnicity is dominated by historians⁵⁵. Although political scientists⁵⁶, sociologists⁵⁷,

discourse, of necessity, becomes institutionalized.

* A deeply theoretical and sophisticated analysis, as an offshoot of this research project, of this discourse looks at the "conventions of representation" that Mary Louise Pratt argues for. The aim is on the examination of the linguistic devices that operate in this discourse, in terms of how they construct our knowledge of violence and ethnicity in South Africa. [See Mary Louise Pratt, "Conventions of Representation: Where Discourse and Ideology Meet", in W. Van Peer (ed.) The Taming of the Text: Explorations in Language, Literature and Culture (London: Routledge, 1989)] and P. Atkinson, The Ethnographic Imagination: The Textual Constructions of Reality (London: Routledge, 1990):

⁵⁴ Much of the research has been conducted in Natal, where since 1984 violence has tended to become the "way of life" for most African people living there. However, since 1990, violence has "moved" to the Reef, and this in itself has generated an impressive research output. See, for example, Babylon Xeketwane, "The War on the Reef: The Political Violence on the Reef's Black Townships since July 1990", BA Honours Thesis, The University of the Witwatersrand, 1991.

⁵⁵ See, for example, John Wright, "Notes on the Politics of Being Zulu, 1820-1920"; Jeff Guy, "Debating Ethnicity in South Africa"; Shula Marks, "The Origins of Ethnic Violence in South

and geographers⁵⁶ have also made significant contributions. However, what is common to these approaches is their use of conventional research methods, from quantitative to qualitative methods. The approaches are driven by the desire to fathom the truth behind the link between violence and ethnicity in South Africa. However, it is this "will to truth" that, in my observation, overrides other critical considerations such as those for reflexivity and the modes of construction that are involved in studying the link between violence and ethnicity. For example, in the conclusion of his paper, "Debating Ethnicity in South Africa", Jeff Guy makes suggestions regarding the future of social research on ethnicity. First, social research on ethnicity should be interdisciplinary. Second, it should be "carried out by people with personal access to different ethnic traditions"⁵⁹. This should be the case, he argues, as the "very nature of the subject demands this"⁶⁰. However, in Guy's view (and here he contradicts himself), those who are inscribed by ethnic identity cannot provide legitimate analyses of ethnicity (but what about the legitimate point about "personal access?"), while those outside of this inscription are able to see that "ethnic perceptions give rise to an unacceptably restricted perspective of society as whole". Guy implies that "outsiders" have legitimate views about ethnic identities which they are not part of. But it is clear who the "outsiders" are, that is, they are those who will organize "responsible academic research and publication". It is also very clear what should be the status of "insiders" (those who blindly produce ethnic identity) be. Guy is

Africa" (forthcoming).

⁵⁶ See Rupert Taylor, "The Myth of Ethnic Division: Township Conflict on the Reef", Race & Class, vol. 33, No. 2., 1991.

⁵⁷ See, G. Mare & G. Hamilton, An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and the Politics of Loyal Resistance (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987); G. Mare, Brothers Born of Warrior Blood: Politics and Ethnicity in South Africa (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1992).

⁵⁸ See, for example, Brij Maharaj, "Ethnicity, Class and Conflict: The Indian Question in Natal"; Mark Byerley, "Ethnicity, Violence and Social Differentiation: A Case Study of Conflict in Number 5 - A Squatter Settlement South of Durban"; Dhuru V. Soni, "Socio-Spatial Segregation and Urban Conflict in Natal"; Papers Presented at the Conference on Ethnicity, Society and Conflict in Natal, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 14-16 September 1992.

⁵⁹ Guy, p. 10.

⁶⁰ Guy, p. 10. However, Guy does not suggest who these people are, or should be.

nowhere near addressing the issue of dualism (subject/object), and its link to the reproduction of apartheid in social research.

What is clear to me is that the construction and constitution of this discourse follows conventional and conservative procedures. The underlying principles that govern the discourse-formation of the discourse on violence and ethnicity in South Africa do not accommodate the modes of representation of the "Other". Thus, the voices of the Other are inevitably absent, they do not speak, nor do they write. A clear of this example is Shula Marks paper, "The Origin of Ethnic Violence in South Africa". The text is constructed in such a way that not one Zulu-speaking person is allowed to speak. Instead the "authority voices" that she allows to speak are largely non-African. Nonetheless, she goes on to say about the Zulus:

" ... it seems clear that Inkatha supported, mobilized around a specific Zulu ethnic identity, have been the source of most of the aggression"⁶¹.

One would have expected the Other to presents his/her views on the whole question of the relationship between violence and ethnicity. They are many articulate Zulu-speaking people who could account for the question of violence and ethnicity in South Africa.

B. REPRESENTATION.

Because of dualism that informs the formation of the discourse on violence and ethnicity, certain explanations for the question of the relationship between violence and ethnicity emerges. That is, these explanations reflect the philosophical status of social research in South Africa. Also, they reflect the structure of the discourse itself. To a large extent, the explanations of the relationship between violence and ethnicity in South Africa that invokes the essentialism of tribalism, cultural absolutism, and genetic determinism⁶² are currently discredited. However, what has appeared in their place, are academic sociological and historical accounts⁶³. From this institutions, therefore, there

⁶¹ Marks, p. 122.

⁶² In South Africa, common-sensical explanations takes three forms: "black-on-black violence" (culturalism); tribal conflict between the Zulus and Xhosas (tribalism), and the history of Zulu aggressiveness (genetic determinism). However, it is interesting to note how some of the academic theses largely perceive the violence in terms of "Zulu aggression".

⁶³ Social historians, political scientists, and sociologists in South Africa are on the forefront of much of these explanations.

are three explanations: manipulative thesis⁶⁴, socio-spatial thesis⁶⁵, and urban-conditions thesis⁶⁶.

What interests me is the first thesis, partly because it is closely tied to the questions of social research and the "Other". The "Other" is manipulated by both Buthelezi and the nationalist Party. According to Marks, "there are real ethnic identities to be mobilized ... by politicians and cultural brokers". Ethnic identity is constantly constructed and reconstructed by those "individuals determined to sow dissension in the community". What is implied here is the notion that ethnic identities cannot, of themselves, initiate social change. It is implied that they are silent and passive; they await to be "mobilized". That is, they can be shaped into any action. This is what I find interesting. Why is it that identity within Inkhata Freedom Party, or the Zulu-speaking people not allowed the "difference" which other identities have? Zulu identity is seen to be essentialist, and it is thus manipulated by Buthelezi. Why is not Zulu identity elusive to Buthelezi? What evidence is there that Buthelezi manipulates Zulu identity? How is it possible for him to manipulate seven million Zulu-speaking people? What does this imply regarding the Zulu "other"? Is this group so primitive that they have no sense of who they are, what political settlement do they want, etc.? Are they so unthinking that they wait for Buthelezi and the Nationalist Party to "mobilize" them? The political ideology of this thesis is very clear, but what is dangerous in it is its construction of the "Other". Thus it is not surprising that it is constructed through a distancing from the "Other"; the latter does not represent himself/herself. Still, whatever the "Other" says is linked to "culture" and "Zuluness".

⁶⁴ Roughly, this thesis is propounded by Marks, Mzala, Mare and others. Simply stated, this thesis argues that Buthelezi, for political motives, has used Zulu culture, history, monarchy, and identity to further his political goals. The thesis, therefore, puts Buthelezi at the center of the mobilization of the Zulu people. Another component of this thesis is that the South Africa state also manipulates the seven million Zulu people, thus the arguments for the Third Force involvement in the violence in the Reef and Natal.

⁶⁵ This thesis argues that the socio-spatial arrangements in Natal, for example are conducive to violence among the African population. See Soli, "Socio-Spatial Segregation and Urban Conflict in Natal".

⁶⁶ This is argued for by Taylor, 1991. According to Taylor, violence among urban African people is related to the conditions of the townships (and informal settlements) and migrant labour system (hostels).

CONCLUSIONS:

" ... the study of 'the others' is in fact a progressive alienation of the identity and culture of these 'other' "⁶⁷.

Knowledge, especially social knowledge, is constructed. However, within academic institutions this process takes the form of systematic engagement, thoroughness, rigor, and a considerable period of time. These are some of the requirements for the validation of a piece of research that wants to be certified as knowledge. Thus knowledge is always addressed to someone, in this case the academia. In this relationship the social construction of knowledge becomes conducted through techniques, which social scientists refer to as "research methods". However, this approach of deriving knowledge, as a utilitarian object, follows largely philosophical empiricism. Still, we need to ask, how is this process of knowledge construction mediated, negotiated, or even forged? My argument has been that it is possible that this "will to knowledge", the "will to truth", is intimate to certain social practices of control, repression, and domination⁶⁸. Such an implication, in the context of South Africa, is possible. Second, the construction of knowledge takes the form of a certain distance, absence, leave, solitude, reflection, and separation. The social nature of knowledge-construction in South Africa is primarily informed not by the social conditions that prevails between Africans and whites, but by the philosophical orientation (of the dualism of subject/object) that tends to find expression through the social practice of social research. Therefore, what this paper has attempted to do is bring to the surface the deeply-ingrained philosophical problems surrounding the practice of social research. It has been Foucault who has enabled me to "think and perceive differently" the practice of social research, with its centrality in much of knowledge-construction in South Africa. To paraphrase Foucault, "what then is thought, in what does it consist, if not in the endeavor to know how and to what extent it might possible to think differently, instead of legitimating what is already known?"

⁶⁷ J. Copans, "The Marxist Conception of Class: Political and Theoretical Elaboration in the African and Africanist Context", Review of African Political Economy, No. 32, 1985.

⁶⁸ See Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language", in The Archaeology of Knowledge (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972).