

SYMBOLIC NARRATIVES/AFRICAN CINEMA

Audiences, Theory and the Moving Image

Edited by

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with an Introduction by

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- 31 See Wynter (Chap. 2).
- 32 See Pines and Willemen, *Questions*; Roy Armes, *Third World Film Making and the West* (University of California Press, 1987); Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism* (Routledge, 1994); Teshome Gabriel, *Third Cinema* and his various writings.
- 33 See Taylor (Chap. 6).
- 34 As part of a special issue on Jean Rouch an account of this conversation is reprinted as 'En 1965 entre Jean Rouch nous regardes comme des insectes', *CinemAction*, no. 81, 1996.
- 35 See Sylvia Wynter (Chap. 2).
- 36 Fred Johnson, 'Cyberpunks in the White House', in Jon Dovey (ed.), *Fractal Dreams – New Media in Social Context* (Lawrence & Wishart, 1996).
- 37 See Kevin Robins, 'Cyberspace and the World We Live In', in Jon Dovey (ed.), *Fractal Dreams*.
- 38 See Chap. 9.
- 39 George Lamming, 'Literature and Sovereignty', in Anne V. Adams and Janis A. Mayes (eds), *Mapping Intersections – African Literature and African Development* (African World Press, 1998), pp. 258–9.
- 40 *Ibid.*, pp. 257–8.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 257.
- 42 Mahoso (Chap. 9).
- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 See Manthia Diawara, *Black American Cinema* (Routledge, 1993), for these perspectives on 'spectatorship'. This volume includes 'Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance' which also appears in *Screen*, vol. 29, no. 4, 1988; and 'The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectatorship', also published in bell hooks, *Black Looks* (South End Press, 1992).
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 128.
- 46 George Lamming, 'Literature and Sovereignty'.

Chapter 2

Africa, the West and the Analogy of Culture

The Cinematic Text after Man

Sylvia Wynter

Introduction

My proposed title, 'Africa, the West and the Analogy of Culture: The Cinematic Text after Man' differs in two respects from the one listed in the conference programme ('Africa, the West and Cultural Analogy: Film after Mankind'). With respect to the first, not 'Cultural Analogy' but 'the Analogy of Culture'; to the second, not 'after Mankind' but 'after Man' – that is, 'The Cinematic Text after Man'. The two are linked, and I thought that I would make use of this fortunate error to explain my title.

Why 'Man'?, to take the second first. 'Man' is not the human, although it represents itself as if it were. It is a specific, local-cultural conception of the human, that of the Judaeo-Christian West, in its now purely secularised form.¹ Its 'Other' therefore is not *woman*, as I hope to show. Rather because *Man* conceives of itself, through its Origin narrative or 'official creation story' of Evolution,² as having been bio-evolutionarily selected, its 'Other' and 'Others' are necessarily those categories of humans who are projected, in the terms of the same Origin narrative, as having been bio-evolutionarily dysselected – i.e. all *native* peoples, and most extremely, to the ultimately zero degree, all peoples of African descent, wholly or partly (i.e. *negroes*), who are negatively marked as *defective humans* within the terms of Man's self-conception, and its related understanding of what it is to *be human*.³

Whatever our culture or religions of origin, all of us in this room, because educated in the Western episteme or order of knowledge which is based on the *a priori* of this conception of the human, *Man*, must normally know the world, even when most radically and oppositionally so, from this perspective. It is because of the shared nature of this perspective, one that, as Michel Foucault pointed out, is founding to all our contemporary disciplines,⁴ that we can all understand each other – that is, as long as we remain within the terms of this conception, and the field of meanings to which it gives rise. But what if we were to move outside this field? Outside its perspective or reference frame?

The idea behind the phrase and the title 'after Man' is to suggest that the function of the cinematic text for the twenty-first century will be to move outside this field, this conception, in order to redefine what it is to *be human*. In addition, because *Man* further defines itself as *homo oeconomicus*, in the reoccupied place of its pre-nineteenth-century conception of itself as *homo politicus* (political man), as well as in that of its originally matrix feudal-Christian conception of itself as *homo religious* (religious man), its 'Other', or signifier of alterity to this sub-definition (and therefore the analogue, at the level of the economic system, of *natives/negroes* at the overall level of our present cultural order, and its societal

'form of life'), is the category of the *Poor*, i.e. the jobless and semi-jobless; as well as, in terms of the global system as a whole, the so-called 'underdeveloped' countries of the world. While because economic *Man* is optimally defined as the *Breadwinner* (with the working classes thereby being defined as the secondary Breadwinners to the middle classes, specifically to their investor upper class),⁵ the 'Other' to this definition is, logically, the category of the *jobless, semi-jobless Poor*, together with that of the underdeveloped countries, both of which are made to actualise the negative alterity status of *defective Breadwinners*.

The central thrust of the 'after Man' of my title is therefore to propose, given the role of *defective Otherness* analogically imposed upon the peoples and countries of Africa and the black diaspora by the representational apparatus of our Western world system, central to which is that of its cinematic text, that the challenge to be met by the black African, and indeed black diasporic, cinema for the twenty-first century will be that of deconstructing the present conception of the human, *Man*, together with its corollary definition as *homo oeconomicus*; to deconstruct with both, the order of consciousness and mode of the aesthetic to which this conception leads and through which we normally think, feel and behave. This cinema will therefore be compelled, as it has already begun to do, if still tentatively so, to reinscribe, in Clyde Taylor's phrase,⁶ and thereby redefine, the human on the basis of a new iconography. One that will take its point of departure from the First Emergence of *fully* human forms of life, as an Emergence that was to be later attested to by, inter alia, the convergent explosion at multiple sites of the rock paintings of some 30,000 years ago, including that of the Grotto Apollo of Namibia;⁷ as an explosion whose dynamic moving images bear witness to the presence of the representational apparatus inscribing of their 'forms of life', of their culture-specific modes or poeses of being human⁸. This hypothesis, as one which places our origins in *Representation* rather than in *Evolution*, and thereby redefines the human outside the terms of its present hegemonic Western-bourgeois conception as a purely bio-economic being which pre-exists the event of culture, would, of course, call for a new poetics. This poetics, I propose, would be that of the human as *homo culturans/culturata*, that is, as the auto-instituting because self-inscribing mode of being, which is, in turn, reciprocally enculturated by the conception of itself which it has created; the poetics, in effect, of a hybrid *nature-culture, bioslogos* form of life bio-evolutionarily pre-programmed to institute, inscript itself, (by means of its invented origin narratives up to and including our contemporary half-scientific, half-mythic origin narrative of *Evolution*), as this or that *culture-centric* (and, as also, in our case, *class-centric*) genre of being human.

Why, 'The Analogy of Culture'? I have adapted the concept from Isaac Newton. As Amos Funkenstein points out, in the wake of the fifteenth-century voyages of the Portuguese around the hitherto believed to be unroundable bulge of West Africa and of their landing on the shores of Senegal in 1444, as well as of that of Columbus across the hitherto believed to be non-navigable Atlantic Ocean, and of his landing on a Caribbean island in 1492; as well, too, in the wake of the 1543 publication of Copernicus' 'Of the Revolution of the Spheres',⁹ Newton, like all scientists of the seventeenth-century, found himself empowered to make a new demand on the basis of the new image of the Earth and conception of the cosmos to which both the empirical voyages and Copernicus' astronomy had led.¹⁰ In place of the traditional acceptance of an Earth ostensibly divided into habitable and inhabitable regions (as it had been held to be in the orthodox geography of Europe before the voyages), or of a universe divided by an ostensibly ontological difference of substance between the incorruptible perfection of a celestial realm which moved in harmoniously ordered circles,

and its Other, the degraded, fallen realm of an Earth fixed and motionless at the centre of the universe as its dregs, (as it had been held to be in pre-Copernican astronomy),¹¹ the new demand was that all nature should now be seen as being homogenous, uniform and symmetrical. For the same laws of Nature, Newton had argued, could now be seen to apply to heaven and earth alike, and in Europe as in America. So that on this premise, a new order of knowledge based on the gradual acceptance that the same kind of matter built all parts of the universe as it built all parts of the earth, as well as that all matter was indeed governed by the same causes or forces, could now be elaborated; one that could now permit human observers to extrapolate, from the constant qualities of bodies that are found to be within the reach of our experiments, to all bodies whatsoever, seeing that the analogy of Nature is always consonant with itself¹²

The point of the phrase 'the analogy of culture' is, therefore, the following: that, in the same way as Newton had argued, on the basis of the premise of laws of Nature, that one could extrapolate from knowledge of the processes of functioning of the bodies nearest to us, in order to infer what had to be those of the bodies furthest from us, we too could now, on the basis of a projected new premise of laws of culture which function equally for the contemporary culture of the West as they have done for all human cultures hitherto, make use of the analogy of culture in order to gain insight into 'the basic principles of understanding' of the Western cultural body.¹³ That is, of the body of which we are all, as Western educated subjects, necessarily always already socialised, and therefore, in Fanonian terms, sociogenetic subjects.¹⁴ Further, that we should be able to gain such insight into these principles on the specific basis of the analogy of the processes of functioning of the cultures of traditional Africa, as the cultures which alone exist in a continuous line of descent with the Event of the First Emergence of the human out of the animal kingdom.¹⁵ And therefore, out of, as Ernesto Grassi proposes, the purely organic level of existence where behaviours are induced by genetic programmes, to a new and third level of existence, which is that of our uniquely human forms of life; as one whose behaviours are instead primarily motivated by the Word, whether that of the Sacred Word (as in the case of the Dogon's *Nommo*,¹⁶ that of Judaeo-Christianity, that of Islam) or that of the objective Word of *Man*. In effect, by what Grassi further defines as the linguistically inscribed governing codes, which when neurophysiologically implemented can alone enable us to *experience*, be conscious of ourselves as, *human* subject.¹⁷ Further, that these codes do so by the enacting of correlated clusters of meanings/representations able to mediate and govern – ('Meaning', David Bohm points out, 'affects matter'¹⁸) – if in always culturally relative terms, the biochemical reward and punishment system of the brain which functions in the case of purely organic forms of life, to directly motivate and demotivate the ensemble of behaviours¹⁹ that are of adaptive advantage to each species.²⁰ Yet how exactly, in the case of humans, does the mediation by the verbal governing codes and their clusters of meaning, their recoding of the behaviour-motivational biochemical reward and punishment system specific to purely organic forms of life, take place? What are the laws that govern their mediating and recoding function?

My proposal here will be that the traditional (i.e. pre-Islamic, pre-Christian) cultures of Africa are the 'cultural bodies' best able to provide us with insights into what the laws that govern this mediation, and, thereby, our behaviours, *must necessarily be*. Specifically, in the case of our contemporary Western world system, to decipher what must be the governing code and its related, representation system (including centrally that of the iconography of the Western cinematic text), which now functions to induce our present global collective

ensemble of behaviours – doing so on the basis of the analogy of culture premised to be, like the analogy of nature, always consonant with itself.

The Argument

The cinema and its new iconographic language made their first appearance on 28 December, 1895, some one hundred years ago. On that day, the brothers Lumière showed their first film in Paris. A decade or so before, in 1884, and in the wake of a meeting by the dominant Western powers in Berlin, the scramble for Africa by western European nation-states began in the context of an accelerated process of colonisation. This process was to fully incorporate the peoples of black Africa, and indeed of Africa as a whole, into the industrial era as an appendage to, and mere logistical extension of, the Western techno-industrial world system.

By 1897, as Ukadike points out in a recent book, the film titles of succeeding Lumière films had begun to define the role that the representation of an Africa, stigmatised with exoticism as the backdrop landscape for innumerable Tarzan figures confronting African 'natives' and African primates that were indistinguishable from each other, was to play in the modern Western cinematic text.²¹ For the new medium of cinema was itself to play a, if at that time still limited, role in the legitimisation of the incorporation of Africa into the Western imperial system in post-slave trade terms. New, because this was not the first encounter of Africa and an expanding West. Some four and a half centuries before the birth of the cinema, in the early decades of the fifteenth-century, what was to become the Western world system had been first put in place in the wake of two voyages. These voyages were to transform the history of the species. The first was that of the Portuguese ships and their eventual rounding of what had been for Europeans the hitherto believed to be unroundable Cape Bojador on the bulge of West Africa, followed by the Portuguese landing, in 1444, on the shores of Senegal. Their, at first, forcible initiation of a trade both in gold and in slaves was to be at the origin of today's black African diaspora. The second voyage was that of Columbus across a hitherto also believed to be non-navigable Atlantic Ocean and his landing on an island in the Caribbean in 1492. This voyage was followed by the West's expropriation of the lands of the Caribbean and the Americas. The accelerated slave trade out of Africa by several European countries provided the forced labour for the West's development of large-scale commercial agriculture in these newly expropriated lands.

The Western world system was therefore to be initiated on the basis of the bringing together of three hitherto separate worlds, their peoples and their cultural spheres: that of Europe, that of Africa, and that of the indigenous populations of the Western hemisphere. It was out of this bringing together that today's Caribbean and the Americas, like modernity itself, were to be born.²²

In his recent book *The Idea of Africa*, V. Y. Mudimbe makes a seminal point which allows us to correlate these three dates, that of 1444, that of 1884, and that of 1895 – that is to say, the landing on the shores of Senegal, the scramble for Africa, the birth of the cinema – and to do this within a reconceptualisation of the past from a world systemic perspective that is central to the argument I want to make here.²³

His new book *The Idea of Africa*, Mudimbe tells us, is both the product and continuation of his by now classic *The Invention of Africa*.²⁴ This is so in two ways. First, *The Idea of Africa* asserts that there are natural features, cultural characteristics and probable values specific to the reality of Africa as a continent, which serve to constitute it as a totally dif-

ferent civilisation from those of, say, Asia and Europe. Secondly, *The Idea of Africa* goes on to analyse the ways in which Africa, as well as Asia and Europe, have been represented in Western scholarship by fantasies and constructs made up by scholars and writers since Greek times. 'From Herodotus onwards', Mudimbe writes,

the West's self-representations have always included images of peoples situated outside of its cultural and imaginary frontiers. The paradox is that, if indeed these outsiders were understood as localised and far away geographically, they were none the less imagined and projected as the intimate and other side of the European thinking subject ... In any case, since the 15th century, the idea of Africa has mingled together new scientific and ideological interpretations with the semantic fields of concepts such as primitivism and savagery. The geographic expansion of Europe and its civilisation was then a holy saga of mythic proportions. The only problem – and it is a big one – is that, as this civilisation developed, it submitted the world to its memory.²⁵

This latter point is the central thesis that I want to put forward in this paper. There are, therefore, two central proposals here. The first is that if, as Mudimbe suggests, with the development of its post-medieval civilisation, the West seemed to be sanctioned by, and to produce, terrible evils that only a mad person could have imagined, including 'three remarkable monstrosities – the slave trade, colonialism and imperialism at the end of the eighteenth, and throughout the nineteenth, and fascism and Nazism in the twentieth',²⁶ this is so because the West was to be itself submitted to the same memory to which it would submit the rest of the world. It was to be that same memory that would lead, on the other side of the equation, to equally unimaginable achievements in many fields. These achievements included, centrally, the field of technology out of which the cinema was to emerge. It would include also Western Man's and, by proxy, the humans', first footfall on the Moon, together with the audiovisual communications revolution and, today, the computer-driven information systems that now circle the globe. The paradox here is that all of these technological revolutions have increasingly served to more totally submit mankind to the single Western and, in Clifford Geertz's term, 'local culture' memory that has made it all possible; that in effect has made our gathering here today, with all of us in this room, being able to understand each other, conceivable. Unimaginable evil, therefore, side by side, with the dazzling scientific, technological and other triumphs.

The second proposal is that if no other medium was to be more effective than that of the cinema in ensuring the continued submission to its single memory of the peoples whom the West has subordinated in the course of its rise to world hegemony, no other medium is so potentially equipped to effect our common human emancipation from this memory, from, therefore, in Nietzsche's terms, the prison walls of its world perception,²⁷ or, in Marx's, from its ideology;²⁸ or in mine, from the culture-specific order of consciousness or mode of mind of which this memory is a centrally instituting function.²⁹ This memory, I shall propose here, is the memory of the 'Man' of my title; that, therefore, of a specific conception of the human, the first secular or degodded (i.e. detached from its earlier millennial anchoring in the realm of the supernatural) conception of the human in history. The memory, therefore, of a mode of being human that had been unknown, as Foucault points out, before its invention by European culture in the sixteenth century, if in a then still partly religious form.³⁰ In the nineteenth century, however, as he also shows, this conception was to be inscribed in a purely secular, because biologised,

form by the then new, 'fundamental arrangements of knowledge' put in place by the matrix disciplines of economics, biology, philology. By, therefore, the arrangements that we have inherited, along with, in Mudimbe's terms, their ground or epistemological locus and conceptual modes of analysis or paradigms,³¹ as the model/paradigms through which, as Western or Western-educated filmmakers and scholars, we normally know, and represent, even where oppositionally so, the social reality of our contemporary world.³²

The central problem here is that if, as Foucault noted, *Man* was invented in the terms of a specific culture, that of sixteenth-century Europe, the anthropologist Jacob Pandian also reminds us that this new mode of identity was to be a direct transformation of the identity of *Christian*, that is, of the matrix identity of medieval Latin Christian Europe.³³ Now, the implication of the fact that the identity of *Man* is a transform of *Christian*, is not normally graspable within the terms of our disciplines, through whose reference frames we know and represent reality. This is so because, while the medieval public identity of *Christian* was easily identifiable as belonging to a specific religious creed and system of belief, and therefore to what Lyotard calls a 'Grand Narrative of Emancipation',³⁴ the parallel linkage is not normally seeable in the case of *Man* as the now purely secularised variant of *Christian*. Rather, instead of the reality of *Man*'s existence being recognised as a culture-specific mode of identity which functions within the terms of a secular belief system or Grand Narrative of Emancipation, that is itself the transformed analogue of the religious belief system and Origin Narrative of feudal-Christian Europe, *Man* is conceived of as an *acultural* mode of being. As one, therefore, whose ostensible pre-given and biologically determined 'human nature' is supposed to determine the behaviours that collectively lead to a social reality that is then represented as *the way things are in themselves, the way they will have to be*, with this representation then serving a teleological purpose. For how can one fly in the face of a reality, even where one is condemned by, and in, it?

The Dealt Cards, the Paradox of the Appeal of Mass Commercial Cinema and the Conference Organisers' Question

In the 1987 film *Saaraba* by Amadou Saalum Seck of Senegal, a group of disillusioned youngsters argue amongst themselves. 'The White man', says one, 'points out the direction and others must follow.' 'Don't you know', says another resignedly, 'that the cards have already been dealt?'³⁵ While although it might indeed be suspected that these dealt cards were from decks that were always already stacked, given that we are always already inserted in this reality, the problem we confront is that *Man* and the all-pervasive nature of what Heidegger defines as the understanding of the human's humanity that it embodies, so engulfs us, that we are unable to question this reality. Since it is precisely our present understanding of our humanity, the way we conceive ourselves to be human, that induces us to bring this reality into being by means of the collective behaviours that this understanding motivates; in effect, behaviours induced in the terms of the specific order of consciousness and mode of memory to which such an understanding and conception leads.

So how are we to contradict this reality? Call in question its always already dealt cards, its stacked deck? If we are to do so, we must first understand that it is because of this ontological dilemma that the commercial cinema of Hollywood and India has had such spectacular success with mass audiences in Africa and the diaspora. In that the global reach

and mass appeal of the cinematic dream factories of Hollywood's commercial cinema, in particular, directly derive from their ability both to provide an illusory escape from our present mode of reality, and at the same time to reinforce it. For they provide the escape in the very terms of the memory and understanding that gave rise to this reality in the first place; terms in which the celluloid heroes and heroines are shown, in the end, to succeed, against all odds, in mastering our contemporary reality. The paradox here is that it was, and continues to be, the systemically negative experiencing of this empirical reality by the vast majority of the individual spectators whose real lives are prescriptively lived according to ways in which the cards are dealt, that then makes the escapist fantasies of Hollywood into a necessity rather than a luxury. In that, it is because the experience of their real-life reality is such a persistently harsh and unfulfilled one for the cinema's mass audiences, that the fantasy of escaping from it becomes an urgent consumer need. This is so, given that in the wake of the West's secularisation of *Christian* as *Man*, and with the world system that it would bring into existence, being based on this transformation, an increasing loss of the guarantees that had been provided for, in all earlier 'forms of life', by the realm of the sacred, of the supernatural, would come to be experienced. Hence, as Heidegger noted, the emergence of the intensified form of insecurity that characterises and motivates the modern human and that now continually brings individuals and groups into conflict with their fellows³⁶ since all of us are driven, because of the unceasing competition to which this insecurity has led, to manipulate both nature and each other in order to ensure our own certainty and well-being. Such behaviours should *not*, however, as Heidegger further points out, be interpreted in the usual terms; that is, as being due to the political and personal ambition of individuals as Machiavelli would have had it, or to the universal desire for biological self-preservation, as Hobbes would have interpreted. Rather, these behaviours should be seen as being directly caused by our present understanding of mankind's humanity, and the subsequent attempt of all men, all women, of all of us, to realise it; the attempt of all of us, to realise being in the terms of contemporary modernity and of its techno-industrial mode of reality, to in effect, *be modern, be Man*.³⁷

The mass appeal of contemporary commercial cinema is therefore due to the formulaic way in which Hollywood's dream factories reinforce the desire for being in the terms of *Man*'s modernity, and therefore in the terms of our present understanding of mankind's humanity, with their middle class heroes – and, now increasingly, heroines – attaining to this quest in the face of great odds, thereby enabling the mass spectators to participate vicariously in their celluloid triumph, however illusory this triumph must necessarily remain for them. Hence the paradox that while at the level of empirical reality we all remain submitted to a memory, that of Western bourgeois *Man*, and to the logic of its stacked deck and dealt cards which dictates that any such concrete realisation on the part of the masses, and thereby, on the part also of the majority of the peoples of Africa, must continue to be thwarted, at the same time, these very masses are being drawn by means of cinematic fantasies and their plot-lines, into the consumer-producer network of contemporary techno-industrial civilisation. That is, into the civilisation that is increasingly bringing to an end the long agrarian era of mankind in which African civilisations, for example, had grown and flourished. In consequence, since it is through these Hollywood model cinematic texts that all the world's peoples are being induced to aspire to realise being, however vicariously, in Westernised terms, to be *Man*, and to be modern, the success of commercial cinema with its up-to-the-minute re-enacting of the ideal techno-industrial lifestyle

and optimum behaviours defining of the human within the terms of our present understanding of our humanity is ensured.

This widespread success of mass commercial cinema, and the paradox that it poses for an emergent African cinema, is one of the major issues that the organisers of this conference have posed. How, they ask, are the filmmakers of black Africa to confront and deal with the dichotomy which seems to definitely separate the possibilities of a commercialised mass appreciation of African cinema, and of African cinema as a valued cultural art form? What if, as they further suggest, the either/or choice of commercial mass success, on the one hand, or of seeking to produce a cinema of aesthetic force and cultural integrity on the other hand – what if this would call for the elaboration of a new conceptual ground?³⁸ Would such a new ground not have to be one which, in my own terms, moves outside the parameters of the memory of *Man*, as the memory to which we are at present submitted? Outside its understanding of our humanity?

The Birth of a Nation, Resisting Spectators, and the Issue of Consciousness/Memory as an Issue-in-Itself: The Cinema and World Outlooks

To address this issue, I shall bring in two other significant dates from the early history of the cinema, and of the Western cinematic text. The first date is that of 1915, the year in which D. W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* was first screened. This year also saw the emergence of black Americans as, in the terms of Manthia Diawara, a 'group of resisting spectators'.³⁹ The paradox here was that Griffith's innovations, as far as the art of cinema was concerned, were far-reaching, and would set the pattern for many techniques of cinema that were to follow. Indeed, the aesthetic force and power of Griffith's technical innovations would lead filmmakers of the stature of an Eisenstein not only to hail him as one of the genuine masters of the American cinema – i.e. 'a magician of tempo and montage'⁴⁰ – but to be also deeply influenced by the new techniques in the series of masterpieces that Eisenstein was himself to conceive and direct. In terms of content, however, while the film *Birth of a Nation* provided a symbolic charter that not only unified North and South after the Civil War, but laid the basis of the eventual integration of Anglo-Americans with the diverse immigrant European ethnic groups, it did so on the basis of a racial identity that could only be sustained by the symbolic, conceptual and empirical exclusion of black Americans, as a people of African descent, whether unmixed or mixed. The integration of North/South Immigrant/Anglo-America was therefore to be effected by means of the creation of a powerful new stereotype, that of the black American male. This stereotype was that of the violent, sensual, 'big black buck' bent on assaulting white men and raping white women,⁴¹ and thereby of 'miscegenating' the 'racial purity' of the hegemonic population group of European hereditary descent.

As a result, if, as Michelle Wallace points out, the film had set out to justify the emergence of the Ku Klux Klan by giving a tailored version of Reconstruction's impact on the South,⁴² its screening was also to be a watershed in what might be called the history of consciousness of black America.⁴³ For its screening set off the process by which black Americans, like black peoples everywhere, would gradually come to recognise that the issue of consciousness, although a secondary and epiphenomenal issue for all forms of Western thought (including the oppositional thought of Marxism and feminism), was to be the issue specific, as Aimé Césaire was to write in 1956, to the uniqueness of the problem of black

people; as an issue and a problem that could not therefore be made into a subordinate part of any other issue or problem.⁴⁴ Here Manthia Diawara's analysis of the narrational units of the film, including those in which the brutal black character Gus attempts to rape the white Little Sister, who jumps off the cliff to escape him, later dying in her brother's, the Little Colonel's, arms (with the Little Colonel thereby justly punishing Gus, by organising his vigilante execution by the Ku Klux Klan), reveals why this film was to evoke such deep outrage on the part of black American viewers, and to make them into one of the earliest groups of actively resisting spectators.⁴⁵

As Diawara further comments, the black spectator, confronted with such a scene, is placed in an impossible position. Drawn by the storyline to, on the one hand, identify with the white Little Sister as victim, feel grief for her, as well as desire vengeance against Gus, on the other, the black spectator was also compelled to resist the thematic representation of the black man as a dangerous, atavistic threat. The film's systemic negative marking of the black male (played in blackface by a white actor), would therefore, Diawara writes, lead black Americans not only to 'lobby for laws banning racial slandering, but also to begin the production of their long line of movies called "race movies"'. For in this context, the name 'race movies' signified not only that black Americans had recognised the need to fight their battle against racial subordination in the new language of the cinema itself. It also signified the widespread recognition that Griffith's film had confronted black Americans with an issue specific to them as a group, one that would have to be fought in the terms of a counter-iconography to that of Griffith's. Above all, that this would have to be done not as an 'ethnic' group,⁴⁶ but rather as a group that had been conceptually and aesthetically constituted, within the terms of the now globally hegemonic culture of the West, as the signifier of alterity or Otherness, both to post-abolition America as it now reinvented itself in the terms of its being a white nation, as well as, at a global scale, together with all peoples of African descent, as *Other to Man*;⁴⁷ a group whose members are thereby made to experience themselves as the deviant Other to being human within the terms of *Man*, within the terms of the memory, and order of consciousness therefore to which they/we were, and are still now, submitted.

This takes us to the cinema of black Africa. For although, as Ukadike points out, France had banned the showing of Griffith's film, *Birth of a Nation* in order not to offend its black colonial troops and the elite of its African colonies,⁴⁸ the same issue that had been raised by black America's response was to be raised by black African filmmakers in the wake of political independence, as an issue also experienced as being urgently specific to them. This issue, even where it remained as a subtext of their films, had to do with the reality of a hegemonic Western memory and its order of consciousness, as one to which, even after political independence had been won by social and military struggles, they still found themselves, as an educated elite, submitted; perhaps, even more so, after independence.⁴⁹ For in the same way as the black American, in order to identify himself/herself as a middle class American, post-abolition, had been compelled to negate not only his/her physiognomy, but the stigma of any African cultural characteristics that had been brought in on the slave ships across the Middle Passage, equally, post-independence filmmakers of black Africa found that in order to identify themselves as middle class men or women, they too had to deny, to be aversive to, the reality of their original cultural reality as a reality negatively marked and represented as *backward, primitive and savage*. They too found that, as in the case of *Birth of a Nation*, no other medium would so blatantly force them to a choice of options as would the new medium of cinema, as deployed by the formulaic stock fare of the Western cinematic text; nor so

forcibly remind them not only that after the struggles by which political independence had been won, the issue with which they were and are still confronted is that of the Sisyphean issue of the memory of *Man*, of the prison walls of its world perception or order of consciousness, but also that 'independence' went and goes beyond the 'political', beyond even the economic in order to touch upon the question of representation, the representational apparatus, and of the culture-specific memory and mode of consciousness which it institutes.⁵⁰

The second date is memorable in the above context. In 1925, after having absorbed the influence of Griffith's, the Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein screened a film that is still recognised as one of the dozen or so best films ever made. That film was *Battleship Potemkin*.⁵¹ Combining aesthetic force with a mass appeal to its Russian audience, the film, because it was made in the context of the still creative dynamism that had followed in the wake of the 1917 Russian Revolution, and therefore in the context of the projection of a new counter-identity to that of *Man*, that of the *proletarian*, could now count upon a new kind of spectator.⁵² Indeed the film was to be one of the central means of the ongoing transformation of memory, and therefore of consciousness, on whose basis post-revolutionary Russia was being put in place. Further, a central part of the film's aesthetic power and effectivity came from the fact that Eisenstein, as a Marxist, former engineer and now filmmaker, was fully aware of the potential power of the cinema and of cinematic techniques to either further enslave humankind or emancipate it from the dictatorship of memory, orders of consciousness or, in Marxist terms, of ideology, that have hitherto induced all subordinated groups to acquiesce in their, in our, own subordination; of the power of the cinema and of cinematic techniques, in effect, to engage spectators on one side or the other of the battle now being waged in the central intellectual cum aesthetic frontier and war zone of our times. That is, the battle, on the one hand, for our continued enslavement, as humans, in however seductive a guise, to our hitherto, heteronomously instituted orders of consciousness, and on the other, for the full emancipation, and therefore autonomy, of our always, culturally relative and symbolically coded modes of mind.⁵³ the autonomy, therefore, of the phenomenon of consciousness by means of which alone we can subjectively experience ourselves as human.⁵⁴

In 1946, in the wake of the eagerly awaited ending of World War II, Eisenstein wrote:

The cinema is 50 years old. It has vast possibilities that must be used, just as in the age of modern physics the atom must be used for peaceful purposes. But how immeasurably little the world aesthetics has achieved in mastering the means and potentialities of the cinema.⁵⁵

At the height of the war, he continued, 'his dream and hope had been that when peace came, a victorious humanity would use its liberated energies to create new aesthetic values, to attain new summits of culture'. With peace, however, not only had the splitting of the atom and the use of the nuclear bomb which followed it brought new problems for mankind, but the cinema itself had failed to realise its potential promise. Why had this been? 'It was not', he writes, 'only because of a lack of skill, of enthusiasm. It was because of striking conservatism, routine, aesthetic escapism, in the face of the new problems set by every new phase in the rapid development of cinematography.' And the central issue here was that, while we have no reason to doubt our capacity to solve these problems, 'we should always bear in mind that it is the profound ideological meaning of subject and content that is, and

will always be, the true basis of aesthetics and that will ensure our mastery of the new techniques'. So that, in 'this context, the means of expression would serve the medium for a more perfect embodiment of more lofty forms of world outlook ...'⁵⁶

For Eisenstein, writing just after the war and caught up in the enthusiasm which had followed on Soviet Russia's heroic part in the defeat of Hitler's Germany, and therefore of the fascist threat that his victory would have entailed, such a new and lofty world outlook could only have been that of Communism. Yet, Eisenstein himself had already, since the 1930s, as has been now revealed, begun to find himself *persona non grata* with Stalin; and even though partly rehabilitated after one of his films had been banned in 1935, he still found himself outside the innermost party circles. Other filmmakers who were in ideologically correct grace with the party leadership had therefore begun to preside over what was to be the decline of the Soviet cinema from the ideo-aesthetic standard set by Eisenstein.⁵⁷

From our 1990s' hindsight perspective, and in the wake of the total collapse of the Soviet Union and of its satellite spheres (including those African states whose variant one-party states had also been loosely based on the theoretical framework of a Stalinist Marxism), it is clear that Eisenstein's wished-for 'lofty world outlook' was not to be that of Communism.⁵⁸ Instead with the defeat of the Marxist theoretical challenge, and its postulate of a 'proletarian' counter-identity, the outlook of *Man* remains intact. While given the disappearance of the Soviet Union and, with it, that of its alternative memory, that of *Man* is now all-pervasive as it penetrates every nook and cranny of a world that has been recently defined by one writer as a 'Mac world' -- Macintosh and McDonalds.⁵⁹

What has remained constant is the position of Africa. Although no longer militarily and politically colonised, Africa, nevertheless, as the projected continent of origin as the extreme form of the 'native Other' to *Man*, retains its position as the bottom-most world, the one plagued most extremely by the contradictions that are inseparable from *Man*'s bourgeois conception of being human. Given that under the weight of the consciousness, memory and world outlook to which this conception gives rise, no other continent must as prescriptively find itself enslaved to the unending global production of poverty which is the necessary underside of the this-worldly goal of *Material Redemption* from *Natural Scarcity*, and therefore, of the no less unending production of wealth that is the correlate of *Man*'s optimal self-definition as *homo oeconomicus*, and Breadwinner. In that if we see our present this-worldly goal of *Material Redemption* as the secular form of the other-worldly goal of *Spiritual Redemption* that had been central to the Grand Narrative of Emancipation founding to the religion of Judaeo-Christianity, and therefore to the civilisation of Western Europe, in the same way that the matrix goal of *Spiritual Redemption* had been generated from that narrative's inscripting of the human as a being enslaved to Adamic Original Sin, with his/her redemption only therefore made possible by adherence to the behaviours prescribed by the Church, as the only behaviours able to realise the hope of Eternal Salvation in the Augustinian City of God, then our present biocentric and optimally economic conception of the human can also be recognised as having its historical origin in the intellectual revolution of lay humanism. That is, in the latter's invention of the identity of *Man* in the place of the identity of *Christian*, if at first only in a hybridly religious and political form that at the end of the eighteenth century was to be reinvented in a now purely secular, because biologised, form.⁶⁰ This, at the same time as this ongoing secularisation of identity, the matrix behaviour-motivational other-worldly goal of *Spiritual Redemption*, would also be transmuted into this-worldly ones, the first, political, the second, from the end of the eighteenth century on, economic.⁶¹

This may, at first, seem startling. Yet once we recognise that the 'cultural field' in which we all now find ourselves is that of Clifford Geertz's 'local cultural' of the West and, therefore, that of the Judaeo-Christian culture for which the behaviour-motivating schema and Narrative of Emancipation as originally formulated by St Augustine continues to function,⁶² if in a now purely secular and transmuted form, two consequences can be seen to follow. The first is that our present behaviour-motivating systemic goal of economic growth, development, i.e. or of *Material Redemption*, can now be identified as a logical transformation of the original matrix Judaeo-Christian goal of *Spiritual Redemption*. While the founding Augustinian postulate of the source of evil as being sited in mankind's enslavement to *Original Sin* can also be seen to have taken new form in the discourses of Malthus and of Ricardo (where it became translated into that of our enslavement to *Natural Scarcity*),⁶³ as well as in the new cosmogonic schema of Darwinism, in the reoccupied place of the Biblical Genesis and of its Adamic Fall. In these latter discourses and cosmogonic schema, the source of evil now came to be sited in humankind's postulated enslavement, not now to *Original Sin*, but rather to the random and arbitrary processes of bioevolutionary Natural 'selection' and 'dysselection'⁶⁴—with all peoples of African descent wholly or partly thereby being, in consequence, lawfully inscribed as the ultimate boundary marker of non-evolved, dysselected, and therefore barely human, being. This, in the same way as in the medieval order of Europe, the unroundable Cape Bojador had marked the limits of Christian being, and had thereby functioned as the boundary marker of the *habitable* regions of the earth enclosed in God's providential Grace, so that beyond its limits, the then believed to be non-habitable regions of the Torrid Zone (i.e. the zone which included today's sub-Saharan Africa) could be made to attest to the chaos that ostensibly threatened all those areas of the earth supposed to be outside that Grace;⁶⁵ and that analogically threatened any Christian whose behaviours moved outside the prescribed pathways laid down by the Church. In the same way, therefore, as within the terms of the Malthusian/Ricardo order of discourse, both the nation-state categories of the jobless or semi-jobless Poor, together with the global category of the 'underdeveloped' countries of the Western world system, (with their most extreme marker being the nations of Africa as well as other black nations such as Haiti), are logically postulated as being outside the 'grace' of Natural Selection because intended by Evolution to be expendable;⁶⁶ with their condemned fate threatening all those who move outside the behavioural pathways prescribed by the Western bourgeois order of words and of things.

The issue of consciousness or memory, the issue of Eisenstein's world outlook, can here be seen to take on a central significance, in the context of the related issue of the representational apparatus of the West, including centrally that of its cinematic text. Since what becomes clear is that although behaviour-motivational postulates such as *Original Sin*, *Natural Scarcity* and *Genetic dysselection*, or *dysgenesis*,⁶⁷ and the system of representations to which they give rise, are 'true' within the terms of this field, and are, as such, 'facts' for our present order of consciousness, outside the terms of our present secular cultural field they no more exist than the ritual practices of circumcision/clitoridectomy of traditional non-monotheistic Africa existed as desirable marks of honour *outside* the religio-cultural fields to which they belonged—and in residual cases, still belong.⁶⁸

The proposal here, therefore, is that outside of the terms of our contemporary culture, neither *Natural Scarcity* nor *Original Sin* (nor indeed *natural abundance*) exist, seeing that since these are conceptions that are 'true' only within the terms of what is the now purely secularised culture of the Judaeo-Christian West, as the field that prescribes, inter alia, the

role of Africa both within the scholarly and cinematic texts, as well as within the socio-economic structures of our present world system. So that, if within the logic of the matrix medieval Grand Narrative of Emancipation of Christianity and its system of representation, it had been the category of the *leper* with its leprosy which, proscribed outside the gates of the medieval town as the ostensibly actualised icon of his/her parents' sexual lust,⁶⁹ and thereby as proof of mankind's represented enslavement to *Original Sin*, that had legitimated the call for freedom to be conceived in terms of *Spiritual Redemption*, it is now the poor and jobless category — Marx's *lumpen proletariat*, Fanon's *Les damnés de la terre*⁷⁰ — who must remain proscribed in the ghetto and shanty town archipelagos of the First, Third and Fourth Worlds, and in the ultimate world of Africa. Since it is this category that now serves, within the terms of *Man's* secular Narrative of Emancipation, as the actualised icon, of humankind's threatened enslavement to *Natural Scarcity* in the reoccupied place of its post-Adamic enslavement to *Original Sin*. Given that it is the dually represented and concretely produced presence of the categories of the *jobless Poor* and of the 'underdeveloped' peoples, as signifiers of genetically dysselected humans, who as *defective Breadwinners* are unable to master *Natural Scarcity*, which imperatively prescribes that freedom be imagined in terms of *Material Redemption*. With the new telos or goal of 'economic growth' and 'development' and its metaphysics of productivity thereby coming to orient the behaviours of subjects socialised to experience freedom as freedom from enslavement to *material*, rather than as earlier to *spiritual*, want.⁷¹ In consequence, in the same way as in the matrix narrative of the Judaeo-Christian West, freedom, and the behaviours necessary to achieve it, had been represented within the terms of the theocentric identity of *Christian* as that of attaining to *Eternal Salvation* in the other-worldly City of God, or *civitas Dei*, so freedom for us, and the behaviours to secure it, have come to be imagined within the terms of the biocentric identity of *Man*, as that of attaining to the American Dream in the *civitas materialis* (the Material City) of the suburbs of the global bourgeoisie; within the terms, therefore, of our present world outlook, as enacted inter alia, in the Western cinematic text.

If all this seems too sweeping, let me refer you to the near-home example of the successful manipulation of our present cultural systemic goal of *Material Redemption* by the highly successful policies of Margaret Thatcher. To cite Stuart Hall's 1988 analysis of this phenomenon: 'Thatcherism', he wrote,

has put in place a range of different social and economic strategies. But it has never for a moment neglected the ideological dimension. Privatisation, for example, has many economic and social payoffs. But it is never advanced by Thatcherism without being constructed ideologically ('Sid', the 'share-owning democracy' etc.). There is no point in giving people tax cuts unless you also sell it to them as part of the 'freedom' package.⁷²

Thatcher's 'freedom package' would not have sold, however, if it had not been couched within the deep-structure terms of our present 'cultural field' and its Grand Narrative of Emancipation, as in Saussurian terms the *parole* of a *langue* in whose logic the ideal of mastering *Natural Scarcity* can only be made to function as a behaviour-motivating ideal, if its Lack, the failure to master *Natural Scarcity*, continues to be actualised in the systemically produced global categories of the *Jobless/Homeless Poor*, as well as of the 'underdeveloped worlds'. This in the same way as in the medieval order of western Europe, the ideal of *Spiritual Redemption* and of Divine Election to *Eternal Salvation* had depended for its per-

formative urgency on the actualised example of the leper on the part of the leper's parents to master their enslavement to the carnal lust of Adamic Original Sin; as the sign of this failure, of its 'disease of the soul' was embodied in the condemned figure of the leper proscribed outside the gates of the medieval towns.

Black African Cinema, the Untheorised Thematic of Poverty, the Issue of Consciousness, and the 'Freedom Package'

From the earliest films of post-independence Africa, beginning with Ousmane Sembène's *Borom Sarret* in 1963, the theme of poverty, as portrayed in the sharply coded contrast between urban poor and urban rich, divided, in Fanon's terms, between both the settlers' towns and the towns of the new African elites, on the one hand, and the natives' towns and the towns of the postcolonial poor,⁷³ on the other, has remained as a pervasive horizon text of black African cinema. While in spite of the fact that the thematic of poverty, unlike the thematics of labour proper as well as of gender, has not been theorised, its portrayal in black African cinema has consistently drawn attention to the reality that the global production of poverty is no less a constant of our contemporary world system than is the production of wealth, even where the implications of their dialectical relation have not been explored.⁷⁴ For as Zygmunt Bauman has noted, contemporary intellectuals, whether liberal-capitalist or Marxist, have remained incapable of theorising the issue of the category of *Jobless Poor*, as well as that of the category of the New Poor (i.e. people stuck in low-wage and temporary, casual jobs). This in spite of the fact that the latter category, (whose members are called 'temps' in the USA) is now a rapidly increasing one given the spread of technological automatisations, and the subsequent transformation of a large number of lifetime jobs complete with seniority status and benefit packages into part-time benefitless ones.⁷⁵

The persistence of the joblessness/poverty thematic not only in black African cinema, but as centrally in that of the black diaspora—in the by now classic films, *The Harder They Come* (1972, Perry Henzell) as well as Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* (1989)—has nevertheless begun to make it clear that the systemic reproduction both of the increasingly endemically jobless category, as well as that of the temporary labour category of the New Poor, is the lawlike consequence of the accelerated automatisations of the 'high-tech'/consumer stage of capitalism as the enforcer of the, now fully globalised, *Material Redemption* notion of human freedom; of the globalisation, therefore, of the this-worldly goal of Thatcher's 'freedom package'. A useful analogy here is provided by C. L. R. James's 1948 analysis of the widespread phenomenon of the Gulags or forced labour camps that had been put in place in the Soviet Union, as well as in its satellite spheres in eastern Europe. James's parallel point here was that the phenomenon of the forced labour archipelagos was the lawlike consequence of the Soviet New Class bureaucracy's notion of human freedom.⁷⁶ In that once the Party bureaucracy or *Nomenklatura* had come to install itself as a new ruling class, it had been able to legitimate this only by redefining socialism's notion of human emancipation and autonomy, in terms that made it isomorphic with the nationalisation of the means of production, under the total control of the Party: as a notion of freedom that had then functioned to legitimate the dictatorship of the New Class bureaucracy over the real-life proletariat or working classes in whose name they had seized power.

James's point that it was the notion of freedom⁷⁷ as redefined by the New Class or Party *Nomenklatura* that was a central determinant of the institution of the Gulag, and of the interment in these forced labour archipelagos, of any or all groups or individuals

suspected or deemed recalcitrant to, or of sabotaging of, the overriding goal of accelerated production based on collectivised agriculture, processes of industrialisation directly controlled by the Party and an overall centralised command economy, can be applied to our own notion of freedom or 'freedom package',⁷⁸ in terms of the telos or supra-ordinate goal of *Material Redemption*. Since it is the imperative of this overriding goal that has led, for example, to the situation in which, with the dismantling of the barriers of racial apartheid that had for so long existed in South Africa (as well as some 30 years before, with the dismantling of the US form of racial apartheid), a new form of now purely economic apartheid has come to reoccupy the earlier socially segregated form.⁷⁹ With this shift, because it was linked to widespread processes of automatisations, having led lawfully to the accelerating expansion in South Africa, in the USA, in Britain, Brazil and indeed all over the world, of the category of endemically jobless inner-city ghettos, favelas, jobless shantytown archipelagos, together with the prison-industrial complex that is their extension, as the criminalisation and incarceration of the poor and jobless, and, centrally, that of the young black male, now rapidly expands.⁸⁰ At the same time as their systemic 'damnation' was to become a central thematic of the black African and black diaspora cinematic text.

Here again, the issue of consciousness or memory and, with them, the imperative of redefining the notion of freedom emerges. In South Africa, for example, Stephen Biko, had he still been alive, would not have been surprised by the shift from a primarily socio-racial system of apartheid to a primarily socio-economic one. This is because the notion of freedom for him had not been either the issue of free market capitalist 'development', as the path to *Material Redemption*, or, as for the then neo-Marxist ANC, that of the path of socialism defined by an economy based on the nationalisation of the means of production. Rather, for Biko, the issue had been centrally one of consciousness, and therefore of the imperative need of any subordinated group to first of all secure its autonomy from the memory or normative consciousness in whose terms its members are both socialised and at the same time, prescriptively subordinated;⁸¹ of whose putting and keeping in place, the subordinated are thereby always in the long run accomplices, and with the ending of their subordination, therefore, necessarily calling for an end to be put to all such forms of complicity, for an uprising against their/our 'normal' order of consciousness.

Since Biko's death, and the parallel domesticating of the Black Consciousness Movement, both that of South Africa as well as that of the US in the 1960s, the issue of consciousness as a central issue — that is, the issue of *black*, indeed, of *native* consciousness, as a potentially alternative consciousness to that of *Man's* — has been marginalised.⁸² The difficulty here has to do with the conception of consciousness that underlies the dominant Western theories of our time, whether those of the status quo or those which are radically oppositional.⁸³ In the paradigm of liberal humanism, for example, which is based on what an African scholar, I. B. Sow, has identified as the 'theoretical fiction' of a purely biological and therefore non-changing human nature,⁸⁴ the mind is the brain.⁸⁵ Indeed, consciousness has also been defined within the logic of our present understanding of what it is to be human, by the DNA discoverer and Nobel Prize winner Crick, as being merely 'a pack of neurons.'⁸⁶ While for the counter-discourse of Marxism, consciousness, because labelled as *ideology*, and as such, as a merely superstructural or epiphenomenal effect of the *economic mode* of production, cannot be recognised as an issue in its own terms, any more than the correlated issues of *race* or of *poverty* and *Joblessness* can be seen as issues in their own.

Here Mudimbe's point, that all oppositional movements, including that of the most extreme Afrocentrism, and indeed that of Marxism and of feminism, must necessarily think

themselves within the 'ground' of the contemporary epistemological locus of the West and its conceptual models of analysis, even where they contest some of its surface structure premises,⁸⁷ enables us to see why our present understanding of *Man* and its biologised conception of being human must lawfully block recognition of the issue of memory, of consciousness, as being *the* primary issue of our times. Rather, so powerfully pervasive is the 'theoretical fiction' of our fixed biological human nature that, although, as Antonio de Nicolas points out, it is clear, given the diversity of human religions, as well as of human cultures, that men and women have 'never been any one particular thing or had any particular nature to tie them down metaphysically', and that, instead, we become human only by means of the conceptions (i.e. theories) of being human that are specific to each culture,⁸⁸ there is stubborn resistance to the recognition that it is these conceptions that encode, as the anthropologist John Davis points out, each culture's criterion of 'what it is to be a good man and woman of one's kind',⁸⁹ as the criteria of optimal being that motivate us to attain to the representation of symbolic life that they encode, and which is the only life that humans live.⁹⁰ It is here, therefore, that the centrality to human orders of representational apparatuses, including that of the cinematic text to our contemporary own, becomes apparent. For if, as Antonio de Nicolas points out, we are enabled to *live* and actualise these conceptions of being human, and therefore to be *conscious* of, to *experience* being in their culture-specific terms, only because of our capacity to turn theory into flesh, and into 'codings in the nervous system', this process of transmutation can be effected only by means of the system of representations in whose terms we are socialised as subjects, since it is these that function to 'tie us down metaphysically' to each culture's criterion of what it is to *be* human. Hence the paradox that our present purely biologised conception of being human, that is, its 'presentation' of the human on the model of the *natural organism* (as this model is elaborated, Foucault shows, by our present 'fundamental arrangements of knowledge' and their disciplinary paradigms),⁹¹ does indeed so serve to 'tie us down' metaphysically to its 'theoretical fiction' of 'human nature'. At the same time as its bio-centric strategy of identity, its representation of the human as a purely biological being who *pre-exists* culture, the Word, has come to both reoccupy and displace, at the global public level of a now *economically* rather than religiously organised reality, the formerly dominant theocentric strategies of monotheistic identity,⁹² whether that of Judaism, Judaeo-Christianity or of Islam. And, to effect, thereby, the ongoing displacement or the politicising of these religious identities as, in its time, Islam – as Sembène chronicles one instance of in his film *Ceddo* (1976),⁹³ – had displaced and reoccupied the traditional religions of Africa and their then local polytheistic and essentially agrarian strategies of identity, self-conception and therefore consciousness.⁹⁴

In the film *Ceddo*, Sembène visualises the clash that took place between the polytheistic strategies of the indigenous religions, and the monotheistic strategies of a then incoming Islam. In the battle of consciousness and thereby of being that had then ensued, Sembène portrays how the 'people of Ceddo', defined in terms of alterity as people from 'outside the spiritual circles of Mohammed', had fought and resisted the Muslims who attempted to convert them, doing so in order to remain faithful to their traditional mode of being, their millennial memory and mode of consciousness. As Sembène wrote in his synopsis of the film:

At the beginning of the Islamic expansion, the people who hesitated to accept the new religion were called 'Ced-do,' that is 'people from outside,' outside the spiritual circles of

Mohammed. They were the last holders of African spiritualism before it became tinged with Islam or Christianity. The Ceddo from Pakao resisted the Muslims who wanted to convert them, with a suicidal opposition. Their wives and children drowned themselves in springs in order to remain faithful to their African spirituality.⁹⁵

However, while Sembène canonises the struggle in *Ceddo* in epic terms, he also shows, in other films, that all such orders of consciousness, world outlooks and the memories of different traditions and cultures can also outlive their usefulness. At the end of another film, *Emitai* (1971), (the god of thunder), for example, he also suggests that the consciousness and memory of such traditional religions may also have outlived their usefulness; that they too must give way to a new consciousness. Consequently, in an episode of the film, he shows how, in the wake of the Diola villagers' defeat by the French, a defeat that leads them to begin to question the old religion, the Spirits threaten the chief that if he ceases to continue to believe in them, he will die. Yes, Sembène has the chief answer, he will die, but they too will die with him.⁹⁶ Sembène's point here is that the Spirits exist because of the chief's and the Diola villagers' collective belief in them, in the same way as, in my own terms, '*Man*' (and its purely biologised self-conception) exists because of ours.

My major proposal therefore parallels that of Sembène's *Emitai* – that is, that a new conceptual ground for African cinema will call for our putting an end to our present conception of being human. In that, in the same ways as in *Emitai*, the Spirits had existed only as a function of that traditional Agrarian conception of being, and therefore because of the collective *belief* held by the people and chief of the village in that conception, so our present Western bourgeois or ethno-class, techno-industrial conception of being *Man* exists only because of our collective belief in, and faithful adherence to, its now purely secular or desupernaturalised/degodded criterion of what it is to be good man or woman of our kind.⁹⁷ Only because, in other words, of our continued subordination to the memory and order of consciousness to which this conception/criterion gives rise; to, in effect, its notion of the 'freedom package' as *Material Redemption*, rather than as freedom *from* the mode of memory and world outlook which induces us to conceive of freedom in the terms of *Man*'s conception of being. How then shall we reimagine freedom as emancipation from our present ethno-class or Western-bourgeois conception of freedom? And therefore, in *human*, rather than as now, *Man*'s, terms?

The fundamental question then becomes: can a new conception of freedom, defined as that of attaining to the autonomy of consciousness and, thereby, of autonomy with respect to the always culture-specific self-conception in the terms of whose governing codes of symbolic life and death and their respective criteria we are alone enabled to realise ourselves as specific modes of the human, provide us with the new ground called for by the conference organisers? And, thereby, with a new post-liberal and post-Marxian 'lofty world outlook' able, as Eisenstein noted, to provide the 'profound ideological meaning of subject and content' as the true basis of an aesthetics able to transcend the opposition between the consumer escapism of the mass commercial cinema, on the one hand, and on the other African cinema's realisation as a culturally valid art form of force and power? As one, however, based on a new conception of freedom able to move us not only beyond that of *Man*'s 'freedom package', but also beyond those of *Man*'s oppositional sub-versions,—that of Marxism's *proletariat*, that of feminism's *woman* (gender rights), and that of our multiple multiculturalisms and/or centric cultural nationalisms (minority rights), to that of gay liberation (homosexual rights), but also as a conception of freedom able to draw them all

together in a new synthesis?⁹⁸ One in which the 'rights' of the Poor/jobless and increasingly criminalised category to escape the dealt cards of their systemic condemnation will no longer have to be excluded?

These questions take me to the crux of my proposal with respect to Africa, the West, and the analogy of culture; with what could be, therefore, the role of African cinema both in the deconstruction of our present memory of *Man*, its order of consciousness, and their reconstruction in the ecumenical terms of the planetary human. This is the new ground to which I've given the name of 'the Second Emergence'. My further proposal here is that it was with the challenge of this new ground with which black African cinema was, like black American cinema earlier, but even more comprehensively so, confronted from its inception.

The 'Colonial' or the 'Ontological' Rationale? The 'Gallery of Mirrors' of the Western Text and African Cinema towards the Second Emergence

'We've had enough', Pfaff cites Sembène as saying 'of feathers and tom-toms'.⁹⁹ The central impulse behind the beginning of filmmaking in post-independence Africa was indeed, as Ukadike points out in his recent book on black African cinema, the common concern of the filmmakers 'to provide a more realistic image of Africa as opposed to the distorted artistic and ideological expressions of the dominant film medium reflecting (to borrow from Erik Barnouw's terminology) the attitudes that made up the colonial rationale'.¹⁰⁰ For the exoticised and 'primitive' celluloid stereotypes of Africa which had been coterminous with the birth of the medium of film (specifically colonial films such as *Congorilla* (Martin Johnson) in 1932, an ostensible documentary, seen from an explorer-cum-anthropological perspective, as well as *Sanders of the River* (Zoltan Korda) in 1935 and in 1937) had consistently provided a distorted view of 'natives', portraying them as 'ingenuous, outlandish, somewhat mysterious beings who were nevertheless loyal and grateful to the Europeans for coming to guide and protect them'.¹⁰¹ This had, therefore, been a world outlook which, in spite of the presence of Paul Robeson who played the role of Bosambo, that of an 'enlightened' native chief subservient to Sanders the powerful representative of the British government, had 'served to portray all the peoples of Africa in terms which legitimated the colonising redemptive mission of the Europeans'; in secular redemptive terms, therefore, rather than, as in the earlier case of the missionaries, Christian redemptive terms, in which the polytheistic 'natives' had been primarily seen as *heathens, pagans, and practitioners of idolatry*, waiting to be brought into the only true because monotheistic path of spiritual salvation.¹⁰²

A key point emerges here... that of the constancy of the representation. For although the term *postcolonial* is now widely used to indicate an Africa in which the anti-colonial struggles waged during the 1950s and 1960s have resulted in political independence for Africa, with an end being put (except for South Africa, until very recently) to the political supremacy both of the colonial powers as well as of their settler-colonisers, in spite of the fact, also, that a wide range of films by post-independence African filmmakers have been produced, the representational role of Africa in the basic plot line, iconography and matrix narrational units of the Western cinematic text, although modernised and updated, and, in the case of the film *Congo* (1995, Frank Marshall), even gone high tech, remains the same.

In all such films these representations of Africa, whether as an exotic backdrop against whose landscape of indistinguishable wild game, primates and African natives, Europeans work out their destinies as the central characters of a love triangle (as in *Out of Africa* (1985, Sydney Pollack)), or as the backdrop for American adventurers and speculators who seek the industrial diamond mines of a vanished civilisation guarded by terrifying and specially-bred intelligent grey-skinned gorillas, at the same time as an American linguist having taught a young gorilla to speak and use sign language has nevertheless come all the way to return her to her native wilds and to her own kind (*Congo*),¹⁰³ rearticulate themselves. In these films, we therefore see revisualised, if now in partly feminist guise (for example, in *Out of Africa* the Scandinavian baroness heroine copes with her ne'er-do-well aristocratic husband as well as with a white hunter lover, manages her coffee-farm single-handedly, and builds a school to teach the native children to read having convinced the native chief (shades of Bosambo!) that reading is a good thing!) the same constants. In effect, from *Sanders of the River* to *Out of Africa*, and from *King Solomon's Mines* (1937, Robert Stevenson) to *Congo*, the reality of the African continent and of its varied peoples is made to conform to a lawlike prescribed pattern. What is more, it is made to do so both *before* political independence and *after* political independence; both before the emergence of an independent black African cinema, and *after* the emergence of such a cinema; both *during* the colonial era and *after* the colonial era. Can we therefore speak here, as does Barnouw, of merely a *colonial rationale* as the causal factor which determines the lawlike production of these representations?

What if we are here dealing, more profoundly, with a *kind of rationale* that can be no more seen to exist as an 'object of knowledge' within the terms of our present mainstream order of knowledge (which as Foucault points out was put in place at the end of the eighteenth and during the nineteenth century by Western thinkers), than, as he also points out, in the earlier pre-nineteenth-century classical order of knowledge, the concept of 'life as a biological phenomenon could have been seen to exist within the logic of the then discipline of natural history? What if this rationale, which I shall tentatively title the *ontological rationale* or the *rationale of the symbolic code*, is a rationale that opens us onto the issue of consciousness as an issue in its own terms? One therefore that opens up to a new 'ground' beyond the ground of 'Man', beyond its purely biologised conception of being human, of human being?

The proposal here is that the systemic nature of the negatively marked (mis)representations of Africa, Africans, as well as of all diasporic peoples of African descent (indeed of all the non-white, non-Western, and therefore 'native' Others), by the signifying practices not only of the cinematic texts of the West, from the exoticised Africa of the Lumière Brothers in 1896 to Black Gus in *Birth of a Nation*, from the explorer ethnographic documentary *Congorilla* to the 'Third World' ethnographic film *Reassemblage* (1983) by Trinh T. Minh-Ha,¹⁰⁴ from the backdrop of Africa in *Sanders of the River* to that in *Out of Africa*, the Africa of *King Solomon's Mines* and of Tarzan to that of the nauseous sentimentality of *Gorillas in the Mist* (1988, Michael Apted), to that of the recent *Congo*, should be seen as being due, not to a colonial rationale, but more far-reachingly to an ontological rationale, of which the colonial rationale is but one variant expression. That, further, this ontological rationale is that of the governing code of symbolic life and death, together with the related understanding of Man's humanity that is specific to the 'local culture' of the Judaeo-Christian West in its now purely secularised and bourgeois variant; in effect the code of *Man*, and therefore of the human in its Western bourgeois, or ethno-class expression.

In addition, the further proposal here is that if it is the rules generated by this code that govern the representations of Africa and peoples of African descent as well as of all other 'native' non-white peoples, doing so *outside* the conscious awareness of their Western and Westernised filmmakers, these are the same rules that have led Western as well as African and other non-Western scholars trained in the methodologies of the social sciences and the related disciplines of our present order of knowledge (or Foucauldian episteme) to systematically know and 'represent' Africa by means of parallel symbolically coded discourses that were first identified by Aimé Césaire in his *Discourse on Colonialism*,¹⁰⁵ and later by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism*.¹⁰⁶ To thereby know and 'represent' Africa through what is, as K. C. Anyanyu cites Roger Bastide, 'an immense gallery of mirrors which only reflect the image of our (Western and Westernised) selves, our desires or our passions ... [through] mirrors which deform'.¹⁰⁷ While, if as Mudimbe proposed in *The Invention of Africa*, both the world view of autocentric Africa and that of 'African traditional systems of thought' rather than being known and represented 'in the framework of their own rationality', have hitherto been known and represented, by both Western and Western-educated African analysts, 'by means of ... conceptual systems which depend on a Western epistemological locus', it would suggest that not even we ourselves, as African and black diaspora critics and filmmakers can, in the normal course of things, be entirely freed from the functioning of these rules; and, therefore, from knowing and representing the 'cultural universe of Africa' through the same Western 'gallery of mirrors' which deform – even where this deformation is effected in the most radically oppositional terms which seek to challenge rather than to reinforce the deformation.

How then can we free ourselves from our own subordination to the ontological rationale of *Man*, to its symbolically coded 'gallery of mirrors' and distorted yet rule-governed representations? In 1976, K. C. Anyanyu proposed that we can be enabled to break the academic (and by extrapolation, the cinematic) mirrors that systematically misrepresent the reality of the African cultural universe, only if we seek to cognitively grasp 'the basic principles of understanding of both African and Western cultures'.¹⁰⁸ Yet given that, as Mudimbe reminds us, it is precisely in the terms of the 'mirror' of this latter culture, and therefore of its 'epistemological locus',¹⁰⁹ that whatever our cultures of origin, we have been educated as academic, filmmaker and critic subjects, how can we cognitively grasp the 'basic principles of understanding' through which we now normally know and represent not only the African 'cultural universe', but also our own Westernised 'cultural universe', *outside* the terms of these basic principles of understanding themselves? How can we come to know what these 'basic principles of understanding' are outside the terms of their own self-representation? Would this not call for the effecting of a radical discontinuity not only with the deepest levels of Western thought (as Foucault argues Marxism has been unable to do),¹¹⁰ but with *all* human thought hitherto – including that of traditional African 'cultural universes' within the framework of their own rationality? Doing so in order to ensure the effecting of a transculturally applicable mode of discontinuity which I have defined as that of the Second Emergence?

This is the point of my attaching to my paper a photograph of a rock painting from Namibia in southern Africa discovered in a cave,¹¹² and which has been dated approximately some 28,000 years before the present. It is the same time-frame (i.e. some 30,000 years ago), therefore, that John Pfeiffer identifies as the time-frame of the 'creative explosion' of the human species when an extraordinary series of rock paintings convergently blossomed at multiple sites throughout the world.¹¹² In this context, and with respect to

the rock painting from Namibia, I want to emphasise a central suggestion that was put forward at a 1987 FESPAC Conference by the African scholar Théophile Obenga. In referring to the intellectual revolution of Renaissance humanism by which the lay intelligentsia of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe had laid the conceptual basis of the West's five centuries of global expansion, triumph and conquest, leading to the single history of secular modernity that we all now live, if severely unequally so, Obenga argues that they had been able to do so only on the basis of a central and fundamental strategy. This strategy had enabled them to move outside the limits of their then hegemonically religious medieval-Christian world, in effect, outside the limits of its 'epistemological locus', and order of consciousness, in order to reconceptualise their past in new terms. These terms had been afforded the Renaissance intellectuals by their strategic return to their pagan Greco-Roman intellectual heritage, as well as their revalorisation of a heritage whose system of thought had been either domesticated by the theology of medieval Christianity or stigmatised by it. It had therefore been on the basis of their new reinterpretation of their past that they had been enabled to effect the intellectual revolution of humanism, and to thereby give rise to the new image of the earth and conception of the cosmos that were to be indispensable to the emergence and gradual development of the natural sciences, as a new mode of human cognition.¹¹³ And as centrally, to also give rise to an epochally new, because secularising, conception of being, *Man*, as a post-religious and gradually desupernaturalised or degodded mode of the subject, at the public level of identity of the then emergent modern European state.¹¹⁴

On the basis of this analogy, Obenga had then proposed that if the intelligentsia of Africa are to bring an end to the ongoing agony of the continent, they also will find themselves compelled to reconceptualise the history of Africa, as outside the terms of our present 'epistemological locus' and its 'cultural universe'; and to do so by going back to the First Emergence of the human out of the animal kingdom, and then to the full flowering of the consequence of this First Emergence in the Egypt of the Pharaohs.¹¹⁵ However, while the tendency hitherto, given the 'great civilisation' syndrome of contemporary bourgeois scholarship, has been to focus on the latter aspect of this reconceptualisation of the history of Africa, I should like us to focus instead on its earlier and most dazzling, its most extraordinary, phase, that is, the phase of *auto-hominisation*, as a phase in which the history of Africa uniquely converges with the origin of the human; and thereby with the origin of its history as a uniquely hybrid (because *nature/culture*) form of life. Ernesto Grassi further identifies this phase as that of the moment in which a specific species effected the rupture that brought to an end the earlier subordination of its behaviours to the genetically-coded 'directive signs', and therefore to the subordination characteristic of purely organic life; and entered instead into the realm of the sacred Logos or Word, where its primary behaviours as a social being were now to be oriented, instead, by the 'directive signs' of a specifically human code, that – in my own – terms, of the governing code of symbolic life and death, specific to each culture.¹¹⁶

Grassi's thesis here is that the emergence of the human out of the animal kingdom, its rupture with the closed circles of purely biological life, had been impelled by the fact that the genetically coded 'directive signs' ordering of the behaviours of purely organic species were no longer sufficient to necessitate the new behaviours that were indispensable to the survival and reproduction of our uniquely human, because verbally *inscribed*, mode(s) of being. One can add here that because it was for these now verbally inscribed beings – ones therefore transformed from being purely biological *males/females* into hybridly biological and cultural *men/women, husbands/wives, fathers/mothers, sons/daughters, brothers/sisters,*

uncles/nephews, aunts/nieces and son on – that the genetically coded ‘directive signs’ of purely organic forms of life would have proved insufficient, it was for them that the rupture of the First Emergence, that is, from total subordination to the hegemony of the genetically coded directive signs that necessitate the behaviours of purely organic life, would have become imperative. ‘The insufficiency of the pre-verbal code’, Grassi wrote in this context,

is the immediate presupposition of the function of language, for here we are confronted with the distinctly human phenomenon of *the absence of an immediate code*. This absence of an ‘immediate code’ therefore not only points to the insufficiency of the biological code for this new language-capacitated form of life, but also reveals something else. This is the entry of a power that dissolves the unity of life, a power whose hidden and yet effective strength is that *upon which the origin of a new ‘code’ – the human code – and world depend*. While with this entry of ‘human spirituality’ life receives a completely different meaning compared to the biological world.¹¹⁷

Both the absence of an immediate code and the new behaviours for which genetic codes could no longer provide the appropriately motivating ‘directive signs’, are due to the paradoxical nature of the evolutionary route taken by our species. For humans, who normally should have lived like other primates in the very small closed *societies for which they are genetically programmed*, found that because of the prolonged period of helplessness of the human infant after birth, they needed larger societies based, like those of the social insects, on a division of tasks, which could enable them to co-operate as insects did, as an indispensable requirement for their species survival and reproduction.¹¹⁸ If, in the case of the social insects, however, the kind of kin-recognising altruism needed for this co-operation was ensured by the evolutionary route that the insects had taken, one in which the necessary degrees of co-operative eusociality had been determined by what biologists define as their high degree of *genetic kin relatedness*, this had not been so in the case of humans, and of the evolutionary route that they/we had taken.¹¹⁹ Since humans, as members of the primate family, are genetically programmed to be competitive rather than co-operative, and to normally display altruism only towards a small group of more or less immediate kin. In consequence, if they were to be able to display the behaviours needed to live in large complex societies, and to transcend the narrow limits of their genetically programmed kin-recognising behaviours (given that, as biologists argue, the intra-species’ socially cohering modes of eusocial altruism displayed by all forms of organic life is primarily dependent on the *sharing of genes*, i.e. I’m altruistic to you because you share the same genes with me, and if I help you, even at the expense of my own life, this is because the genes that you pass on will be the same as mine, thereby fulfilling my own reproductive imperative),¹²⁰ some other mechanism would have to be called into play. Human forms of life, therefore, if they were to be enabled to display a more generalised and inclusive level of kin-recognising altruism, would both have to effect a break with the purely genetic determining of altruistic behaviours, and to replace this with a new culturally motivated mode of altruism based on *symbolic*, rather than on purely genetic, degrees of conspecificity or of kinship. This would therefore have to be a new mode of cultural kinship, and of intra-group altruism, one now induced and necessitated by the Word, by the Sacred Logos, and by the overall religio-cultural field to which the ‘directive signs’ of the Word, and its governing code of symbolic life, give rise. In effect, therefore, the life that we call *human*, as one which ‘receives

a completely different meaning’ compared to the one that organic species receive from the biological world,¹²¹ cannot pre-exist what Grassi calls the ‘human code’ (one that I have defined as being, on the basis of a proposal by Peter Winch that symbolic forms of life are the only lives that humans live, the governing code of symbolic life and death).

I use the term ‘inscription’ here, in the context of Derrida’s proposed grammatology, but in the extended sense, going beyond Derrida’s itself, of our always self-instituting or self-inscribing, and therefore culture-specific, modes of being, of experiencing ourselves as, human. In this context both the rock paintings of Namibia and the ‘creative explosion’ identified by Pfeiffer as having taken place in multiple sites of the world, both African and extra-African, could themselves be seen as an even later phase of the *initial* forms of writing or of hominising self-inscription (Nietzsche’s ‘tremendous labor of man upon himself’)¹²² by means of which Grassi’s rupture was effected – ones of which that writing on the flesh, which is the rite of initiation and of circumcision, would have been an early and central form.

Anne Solomon notes in this context, in a 1996 *Scientific American* essay entitled ‘Rock Art in Southern Africa’, that ‘rock paintings’ which are found all over southern Africa and which were made by the ancestors of today’s San peoples ‘not only attest by their wide range to the vast areas once occupied by the ancient San’, but also ‘encode the history and culture of a society thousands of years old’. To accompany her essay, Solomon published a photograph of the contemporary San engaged in a dance, side by side with the rock painting of what is probably a portrayal of the initiation rite, as it attained to women. Indeed, as she further notes, the rock paintings on one of her research sites consisted ‘overwhelmingly of images of women’. While this ‘unusual prevalence’, she goes on, ‘not only suggests that some locations may have been ritual sites used only by women perhaps in connection with female initiation’, it also proves that it can no longer be assumed, as has commonly been done, that ‘art’ (and the self-instituting self-inscribing processes of that, the ‘tremendous labor’ of the human upon itself), that ‘art’, like ritual, enacts, was ‘solely a male preserve’.¹²³

I would like, in this context, to bring the ‘analogy of culture’ proposal of my title together with Obenga’s proposal that we return conceptually to the origins of human life in Africa, to its emergence out of the animal kingdom, doing so in order to reconceptualise the history of Africa, in terms outside those of our present order of knowledge. For if, as Grassi proposes, the question that confronts us with respect to the human code is the question of how exactly it is structured,¹²⁴ then Newton’s concept of the analogy of nature always consonant with itself suggests a way in which it can be done. In that it enables us to extrapolate to the idea of the analogy of culture always consonant with itself so that by inverting the terms of Newton’s argument that given that the laws of nature function in the same way for all parts of the universe in the same way, we can therefore be able to infer from our knowledge of the ‘bodies’ nearest to us what the processes of functioning of the bodies furthest from us must *necessarily be*,¹²⁵ we could postulate the following: that it is precisely those ‘cultural bodies’ whose institutions are far older than ours and therefore the furthest in time, as are the traditional cultures of Africa, that can provide us with two central insights, one general, one specific. The first insight is with respect to the question as to *how* the code is structured; the second is with respect to the rules which govern the functioning of the code in our contemporary case, as well as to the nature of the terms of this code – to the terms of its *ontological rationale*, and, therefore, of the ‘basic principles of understanding’ that such a rationale generates.

To develop both of these I make use of a further insight provided by a traditional African culture, that of the Sara of Chad, as discussed by the ethnologist Lucien Scubla in the context of his hypothesis with respect to the central role of the imagery of *spilt blood*, as the analogue of that of *menstrual blood* in the ritual ceremony of initiation or of symbolic birth, of traditional Africa. For the Sara, Scubla points out, the meaning of the ritual of initiation is based on a binary opposition between two kinds of 'birth', i.e. 'natural' birth of which the women are the bearers, and 'cultural' birth of which only the men can be the 'procreators'. Because, for them, it is only through the second birth that full humanhood can be attained, the function of the ritual is to transform beings who are 'animals with a human vocation' into humans. So that where, for the cultural belief system of the Judaeo-Christian West in its now purely secularised form, degrees of 'true' humanhood are equated with one's ostensible degrees of bio-evolutionary selectedness, with the scale of humanness therefore being based on the binary code of *eugenicity/dysgenicity*, for the Sara, true humanhood is attained to through the processes of cultural socialisation. One of the high points of this process, the ritual of initiation, is therefore represented as analogous to the transformative process of cooking. Where in the latter process, the men who are hunters give the 'raw meat' that they have killed to the women who then render it edible for human consumption, in the transformative process of initiation or of symbolic birth as it pertains to males, the women hand over the 'raw' male adolescents to the men so that they can be ritually killed and 'engorged' by the ancestors in order to be mimetically reborn, through a series of ritual ordeals, as *members of the clan*.¹²⁶ Central to this transformative process, therefore, is a value-principle which is drawn by the Sara between the positively marked blood spilt by the male either as hunter (the blood of the hunt) or as sacrificer (the blood of sacrifice), and its founding, yet binary analogue, the menstrual blood of the female. This is therefore a value-principle that is central, in my own terms, to the enacting of Grassi's governing code. Both of the former, i.e. the blood spilt by the hunter and the spilt blood of sacrifice in the religious rites presided over by the men, are therefore positively marked as signs of *symbolic life-giving activity*. They are thereby valorised as 'cooked' or 'true' life as contrasted with the 'raw' or 'uncooked' life given birth to by the women. And although Scubla does not discuss this aspect, the ceremony of female initiation presided over by older women should function according to the same principle of value-transformation.

My proposal here is that the institution of initiation or of *symbolic birth* should be seen in the terms of the Sara's conception, as one of the matrix social inventions founding to all human 'forms of life', to, therefore, their poesis of being, and correlated modes of symbolically coded, rather than genetically programmed, eusociality,¹²⁷ the invention, therefore of their conspecific identity as, in the case of the Sara, 'members of the clan' rather than as members of a biological species or sub-species. In this context, the institution of initiation based on the semantic charter¹²⁸ or morphogenetic fantasy¹²⁹ of the binary code of symbolic life/biological life, and the value-principle enacted by its positive/negative series of representations, can therefore be recognised as a central hominising mechanism by means of which what Antonio de Nicholas defines as the transmutation of *genetic* into *symbolic* identity, of theory (the conception of being human) into *flesh*, is effected.¹³⁰ By means of which, therefore, the now initiated young male adolescent is enabled to phenomenologically experience himself as the symbolic conspecific of those initiated and socialised with him in the terms of the same code; with this new experiencing of the self thereby inducing him to display altruistic co-identifying behaviours towards his age-group peers, within the terms of a mode of eusociality, that is, that of the *clan*, as a mode of eusociality which, like that

of our contemporary nation-state mode of conspecificity, is culture-systemically, rather than genetically, ordered.¹³¹

In other words, the order of the social, as Scubla further points out, is itself 'born' from the *spilt blood* of the religious sacrificial rites presided over by the men. Since it is this rite which marks the passage from the order of purely biological life, negatively marked as the sign of 'sterile' disorder in the Origin myths of traditional societies (as in the case of a Dinka Origin myth as well as of an Amerindian myth of the origin of tobacco that Scubla gives as examples), to the order of human societies that is founding to our uniquely symbolic 'forms of life'. While, as he further shows, an indispensable condition of this 'founding' is that the negative/positive binary opposition pointed to by the Sara of Chad between, on the one hand, the biological or 'natural' life given by the women (whose signifier is that of the image of *menstrual blood*) and, on the other, the 'cultural life' or symbolic birth given to by the men (whose analogical macro-signifiers are the blood spilt by the hunter and, even more centrally, by the spilt blood of the religious rite of sacrifice), must be lawfully kept in place and maintained at all levels of the specific social order and 'form of life'; as is also the case, therefore, with respect to the systemic nature of the *negatively marked representation of black Africa and of the peoples of black African descent, by the scholarly, cinematic, and social texts of the contemporary West*.

This symbolic coding imperative is clear in the two examples that are given by Scubla, that of the Dinka origin narrative and that of the tobacco origin myth of the Tereno Arawaks, but perhaps at its most transparent in the latter. In the latter's plotline, as Scubla shows, a woman who is a sorceress, attempts to poison her husband with her *menstrual blood* (the symbol of biological life/birth). Warned by his son, the husband goes in search of honey, mixes it with the embryos of a pregnant snake which he has killed, and gives it to the woman to eat. Eating it, she is transformed into a man-eating ogress. While chasing her husband to devour him, she falls into a pit and dies. Where she dies and spills her blood, a hitherto unknown plant, the tobacco plant, sprouts up from the ground. Her husband collects the leaves, cures them, then ritually smokes them in the company of his male peers (who are collectively, in the terms of the myth, the procreators of 'true' symbolic life as against the 'mere' biological life given birth to by the women). As they ritually smoke, the smoke ascends as incense to the gods. The constant here is that the plotline of the narrative can be seen to pivot on the same system of *negatively/positively* marked representations, whose binary evil/good oppositions will be performatively enacted as the passage of disorder to order in the ceremony of *symbolic birth* that is founding to traditional societies. 'The woman', Scubla writes,

is accused of poisoning her husband with her menstrual blood. The myth then leads from menstrual blood *which flows downwards*—a natural privilege of women but a privilege marked negatively, to the tobacco smoke *which rises upward* as the cultural privilege of the men which is marked positively; that is to say from the *signifier of procreation to the signifier of religion*.¹³²

The transformative passage in both narrative and ritual ceremony is therefore one from the signifier of the procreation of biological life (in whose terms behaviours of bonding altruism are restricted to their *genetic* limits), to the signifier of the cultural 'procreation' of symbolic life (in which degrees of bonding altruism will be induced and motivated by the new 'directive signs' of the narratively inscribed code). Here the representation system of the myth,

together with the *cooked/raw*, *tobacco smoke/menstrual blood* code of symbolic life and death that it enacts, functions, as the parallel drawn by the Sara reveals, according to the same negative/positive opposition on whose basis the ceremony of *symbolic birth* presided over by the male 'procreators' is effected. Since it is by means of both that the subjects of the order are induced to experience their biological being in symbolically coded terms, and to thereby transfer allegiance and kinship loyalty from their genetic to their culturally instituted conspecifics: from the siblings of the 'womb' to those of the clan. In our own case, to those of the class, of the nation-state, of the ethno-religious group, the 'race'.

From here the imperative nature of the way in which the *representation* of biological identity must be *negatively marked* at all levels, since it is this negative marking that induces the aversive behavioural response on the part of the subjects of each order, to the otherwise overriding imperative of their genetic identity.¹³³ This, at the same time as the positively marked representation of their 'artificial' identity serves to induce desire for, and allegiance to, the culture-specific criterion of being which it encodes. For the Sara of Chad, therefore, the category of the life to which the women give rise had to be as negatively marked (i.e. as 'brute' or 'raw' life) as was the sign of *menstrual blood* of which the woman is the bearer in the Tereno myth, given that both must now function as signifiers of *symbolic death*; of 'sterility' to the 'fecundity' of symbolic life.

Looked at transculturally, the image of *menstrual blood* can be identified as the image enacting of the Origin model of *Procreation* that is specific to societies of the agrarian era whose polytheistic religions had divinised Nature and the natural forces. Its macro-image of Origin was,¹³⁴ however, to be increasingly displaced by the rise of the monotheistic religions whose new Origin model of *Creation* would, by its degodding or de-divinising of nature, replace the *menstrual blood* Origin signifier with those of the macrotexual signifiers – as in the case of *Original Sin* – of their respective faiths. As Scubla's analysis of the Tereno myth therefore makes clear, the binary value opposition between order/full being, and the lack of full being (i.e. the positively marked *tobacco smoke* rising upwards) and disorder (i.e. the negatively marked *menstrual blood* flowing downwards), enacts the ontological rationale of a code in which the category of *women* are the bearer/signifiers of 'raw' biological life, and that of *men*, the procreators/creators of 'cooked' symbolic life, or culture. This, however, should not be seen as an effect of what we have come to define as 'patriarchy', and thereby interpreted in terms of the feminist paradigm as an empirical opposition between 'men' and 'women'. Rather, what is at issue here is an opposition that makes use of the *physiological* difference between the two sexes in order to inscript and enact Grassi's governing code in agrarian polytheistic terms.¹³⁵ This in the same way as, I shall propose here, in our contemporary industrial order, and thereby in the terms of the now purely secularised variant of the Judaeo-Christian culture of the West, the *physiognomically* different categories of two population groups, that of, on the one hand, the Indo-Europeans, and of, on the other, the Bantu-Africans, are deployed as the central means of the enacting of the governing code instituting of our present conception of the human, *Man*. With Africa thereby having to be represented in the terms of this code, by both the cinematic and scholarly texts of the West, as the abode and origin of the *Human Other*. This, at the same time as all peoples of African descent must be negatively represented, within the logic of our present conception of being, *Man*, as 'brute' or 'uncooked' life, as contrasted with the 'cooked' or symbolic life signified by the West, and embodied in all peoples of Indo-European descent, who must therefore be canonised as such by means of a positively marked system of representation.

Whether within the terms of the pre-Industrial Origin narratives of Africa, as well as in that of the Amerindian myth of the origin of tobacco, or in that of the Origin model of Evolution or 'Official Creation Story'¹³⁶ of the contemporary techno-industrial culture of the West, the negatively marked categories – that of the *Woman* of the first two, and that of the peoples of African descent of the third – are imperative to the process by means of which the governing code of symbolic life, and its verbally inscripted 'directive signs', can be made to override the directive signs of the biological aspect of human 'forms of life' and modes of being. That is, as an aspect which, although the indispensable condition of our experiencing ourselves in culture-specific terms of this or that mode of the human, must itself be systemically devalued, by being negatively marked. Given that if, as the linguist Lieberman points out, the human is defined by two levels of conspecific altruism – that of the organic level determined by our degrees of genetic kinship, and that of a 'more generalised level'¹³⁷ determined by our culturally instituted modes of symbolic identity, it is only by the latter's overriding of the 'directive signs' of the former that our experience of being human both as symbolic I and as a *we* based on symbolic, and therefore artificial, modes of kinship, can be enabled.

An example: soldiers who fight today's national wars and who must be prepared to die in defence of the flag might very well be tempted, as individuals, by the genetic imperative to save themselves. Yet given the enculturation process of school and home, and the social order in general, the genetic imperative is so automatically overridden that it can scarcely be heard. When, in addition, Bosnian Serbs fight and kill Bosnian Muslims or vice versa, or when Tutsis kill Hutus or vice versa,¹³⁸ therefore, they do so as subjects enculturated in the terms of their specific group identities. It does not matter that, as in the case of the Tutsis and Hutus, they all speak the *same language*; – the positivism of linguistic identity is not the issue here. Rather, the issue is that of narrative representations, of the symbolic identities to which they give rise, and of the systems of domination and counter-domination to which their respective group narcissism impels them.¹³⁹ Given that such identities and modes of *symbolic kinship/non-kinship* are experienced by their socialised subjects in no less cognitively and affectively closed, and therefore narcissistic, a manner, than are the purely *genetically determined* modes of conspecificity of organic species.

The fundamental hypothesis of our proposed new conceptual ground and world outlook, therefore, is that if the ritual ceremony of symbolic birth as conceptualised by the Sara of Chad enables us to grasp the mechanisms by which Grassi's governing code was and is structured and inscripted as the condition of the First Emergence (and thereby of the instituting of human 'forms of life' as a hybridly *bios/logos*, *nature/culture* level of existence), it also enables us to understand the nature of the price that had to be paid for the rupture effected by such 'forms of life' with the *genetically* determined 'directive signs' that motivate and necessitate the behaviours of purely organic life. This price, one that explains, inter alia, the lawlike nature of the 'gallery of mirrors'/representation of Africa and of all peoples of African descent in the scholarly and cinematic texts of the West, is that of our having to remain hitherto subordinated to the 'directive signs' generated from the narratively inscribed codes of symbolic life and death, signs which now function to motivate and necessitate our *human* behaviours in the terms of culture-specific fields defined by the self-referentiality of the code; and, thereby, by the cognitive and affective closure to which this self-referentiality leads.

How, nevertheless, is this motivation of behaviours by the negative/positive representations and/or 'directive signs' of Grassi's code concretely effected? The answer lies in the

recent discovery by biologists and neuroscientists of what they identify as the opiate biochemical reward-and-punishment system of the brain; and of the ways in which this system functions as the centrally directive mechanism which serves to both motivate and necessitate the behaviours of all organic species. As Avram Goldstein explains in a recent book, for all forms of organic life, a species-specific opioid system functions to *signal reward* on the one hand, and *punishment* on the other. In all cases, the *feel-good* reward signal is effected by the euphoria-inducing chemical event which, as Goldstein argues, is an event that is probably defined by the activating of *beta-endorphins*, while the *feel-bad* punishment signal is induced by the activating of *dynorphins*. 'We can therefore speculate', he continues,

that the reward systems function to drive adaptive behaviors the following way: They signal 'good' when food is found and eaten by a hungry animal, when water is found and drunk by a thirsty animal, when sexual activity is promised and consummated, when a threatening situation is averted. They signal 'bad' when harmful behavior is engaged in or when pain is experienced. These signals become associated with the situations in which they are generated, and they are remembered.¹⁴⁰

Here we approach the central role played by negatively/positively marked representations, as in the case of the *menstrual blood/tobacco smoke* representations of the Chadian narrative, or as in that of the Africa/Europe binarily opposed iconography of Western cinematic texts, in the artificial motivation systems that drive human behaviours. For if the reward system is central to the genetic motivation system (or GMS), by which the animal 'learns to seek what is beneficial and to avoid what is harmful', and, therefore, by means of which, the behaviours *appropriate* to each species are lawfully induced – 'This delicately regulated system', Goldstein continues, 'was perfected by evolution over millions of years to serve the survival of all species, and to let us humans experience pleasure and satisfaction from the biologically appropriate behaviors and situations of daily life'¹⁴¹ – nevertheless, as the biologist Danielli proposes, in contradiction to Goldstein in this respect, there is a fundamental difference in the case of the humans. For not only are the behaviours to be induced here intended to be *culturally* rather than *biologically appropriate* behaviours, but in the case of the humans, Danielli suggests, where the *altruistic* behaviours essential to social cohesion must be verbally semantically induced, it is discursive processes (i.e. Origin narratives, ideology or belief systems) and their respective systems of negatively/positively marked representations which serve to activate, in *culturally relative and recoded terms*, the functioning of the human biochemical reward and punishment mechanism, thereby motivating our always culture-specific ensemble of behaviours.¹⁴² With the consequence that the kind of 'generalised altruism' needed as the integrating mechanism of each social order must be as consistently 'rewarded' through the mediation of positively marked representations as must be the *criterion of symbolic life*, whose no less positive marking functions to induce in the order's subjects the desire to realise being in the terms which also makes possible the display of kin-recognising behaviours towards those socialised into subjectivity in the same terms as themselves; those with whom each *I* constitutes a symbolic *We*.

Each such criterion of the normal subject can itself be realised and experienced as a value-criterion, however, only through the mediating presence of the negatively marked category which is made to embody the signifier of *symbolic death*, in terms that are the antithesis of those of normal being; as the category, therefore of deviant *Otherness* or of Difference from which the bonding principle of *Sameness* or 'fake' similarity is generated.

If, therefore, every human mode of being and its 'form of life' is instituted about a governing code or representation of symbolic life (the TSRU) and death (the MBFD), which then functions to regulate in verbally recoded terms the functioning of the opiate reward and punishment systems of the brain, thereby enabling our human behaviours to be governed by the learned or *acquired motivation system (AMS)* specific to each 'local culture', then the behaviours so induced are everywhere behaviours *appropriate to the specific code* instituted by each cultural system and its founding Origin narrative. In consequence, where for all purely organic species, it is the *biochemical event* of reward and punishment which directly motivates and is causal of each species' ensemble behaviours, the fundamental distinction for human forms of life is that it is the *culture-representational event* which motivates and is causal of (by means of the functioning of the opiate reward/punishment system which it verbally recodes) *our uniquely human* behaviours.¹⁴³

The issue of the systemically negative representation of Africa in both the Western cinematic text as well as in the scholarly text can therefore be recognised as a function of the enacting of the governing code of symbolic life and death, which is instituting of our present criterion/conception of being *Man*, and thereby of the basic principles of understanding of our contemporary global culture – that of the West in its bourgeois and biocentric conception. While, since in the case of all human forms of life, it is the representational event (as in the case of those given rise to by the Western cinematic text) which gives rise to the biochemical event (whether to that of the beta-endorphin event activated by the *positively marked* representation of *Man* as iconised in the signifier of the Indo-European physiognomy, or that of the dynorphin event activated by the *negatively marked* representation of *Man's Human Other*,¹⁴⁴ as iconised by the Bantu-type physiognomy of peoples of African descent),¹⁴⁵ then the calling into question and countering, by the African cinematic text, from Sembène onwards, of these dynorphin-activating representations of Africa and of the peoples of African descent *is a calling into question of the governing symbolic code* enacting of *Man*, and therefore of our present ethno-class conception of the human, *Man*, itself. Yet, however, a calling into question that has necessarily remained tentative and provisional, since having to be carried out within the terms of our present 'epistemological locus'; and thereby, outside as yet a conceptual ground in whose reference frame or world outlook human 'forms of life', together with their respective governing codes of symbolic life and thereby of symbolic kinship and eusociality, will be able to exist as 'objects of knowledge', and to be thereby fully theorisable.¹⁴⁶ **This in very much the same way as biological life itself would only come to exist as an 'object of knowledge' and be thereby theorisable, as Foucault points out, only within the then new conceptual ground elaborated by the 'fundamental rearrangements of knowledge' that took place at the end of the eighteenth century and during the nineteenth; as a rearrangement which provided the new episteme or order of knowledge needed to inscribe our present 'figure of Man', together with the ethno-class conception of the human as an evolutionarily selected and purely biologised being which, ostensibly, pre-exists the culture and governing code that can alone inscript and enact it as such a mode of being human.**

We can therefore put forward the following hypotheses: that ruling groups in all human cultures, including our own, are ruling groups to the extent that they embody their respective cultures' optimal criterion of being, or code of symbolic life; that therefore the great transformations in history are always transformations of the code, of what it means to be human, and, therefore, of the poesis of being and mode of symbolic conspecificity, of which the code is the organising principle; a transformation, therefore, of the always symbolically

coded modes of consciousness integrating of our human orders and their forms of life. In this context if, as Jacob Pandian notes, with the West's *reinvention*, beginning in the sixteenth century, of its matrix religious identity, *Christian*, in two variant forms of *Man* (the first hybridly religio-secular, the other purely secular), it was to be the population group of African descent who were to be made into the physical referent of the *Human Other* to its second and purely secular because biocentric form, then the systemic negatively marked representations of this population group and of its continent of origin, Africa, can now be recognised as ones that are a lawlike function of the enacting of our present conception of being human, of its governing code and ontological rationale. That, therefore, the 'gallery of mirrors' representations of Africa and of African-descended peoples as signifiers of *Genetic Dysselection/Defectivity*, and thereby of symbolic death in the cinematic and scholarly texts of the West, are, as lawlike a function of our enacting of our present evolutionarily selected conception of being human, *Man*, as the negatively marked representation of the *Woman* (as the bearer of the macro-signifier of *menstrual blood* or of symbolic death), was a function of the enacting of one variant of the 'lineage' conception of being human of traditional polytheistic Africa.

Further, on the basis of the related hypothesis that there are laws of culture which function for our contemporary order as they have functioned for all human 'forms of life' hitherto, we can now postulate that the systematically negative misrepresentations of Africa made by the Western cinematic text is the lawlike effect of the fact that, within the terms of our present governing code of *Man*, Africa and all peoples of African descent, wholly or partly, have been made to take the signifying place of the *Woman*, and thereby made to *actualise* the code of symbolic death – of the 'menstrual blood always flowing downwards', the MBFD, if in the new and secular terms of *Genetic Dysselection/Defectivity*.¹⁴⁷ Here too, Scubla's point adapted from René Girard, that traditional orders see themselves as being born from ritual sacrifice¹⁴⁸ – with the blood of sacrifice being a re-enactment of the image of the *menstrual blood* – enables us not only to note that it is from the 'sacrifice' of the woman's death from which the tobacco plant grows, but also to recognise the imperative nature of the keeping in place, by all cultures and their modes of being human, of a value hierarchy between the representation of symbolic life (TSRU), on the one hand, and of death (MBFD), on the other; this as the condition of the subject being motivated to desire to realise him/herself in the terms of his/her *symbolic* rather than *biological* identity.¹⁴⁹

Here, Pandian's observation with respect to the way in which our present identity, that of *Man*, is a transmuted variant of *Christian*,¹⁵⁰ enables us to identify an analogical parallel. This is that the systemic misrepresentation of Africa and of peoples of African descent, by both the Western cinematic text and the 'gallery of mirrors' of contemporary scholarship, is as lawlike effected as, in the scholarship and religio-aesthetic system of Latin Christian Europe, the category of the *laity*, and therefore of the lay intelligentsia, had been negatively marked as the embodiment of symbolic death, i.e. of mankind's postulated enslavement to *Original Sin*, as contrasted with the positively represented category of the clergy as the embodiment of the *Redeemed Spirit*. In that, while in the terms of the Christian Origin Story, and its correlated Grand Narrative of Emancipation, the clergy had freed themselves by means of their voluntary celibacy from their negative legacy of Original Sin (as a legacy represented as having been transmitted in the wake of Adam's Fall, through the processes of genital procreation), the category of the *laity* had not. The intelligentsia of the latter were, therefore, because of the nature of their *fallen flesh*, represented as incapable of attaining to any certain knowledge of reality except through the mediation of the theological paradigms

of which the clergy were the guardians. In consequence, given that these paradigms were themselves tautologically based upon the founding premise which legitimated the ontological and therefore the knowledge-hegemony of the clergy – i.e. the premise of mankind's enslavement to Original Sin from whose negative consequences only the voluntarily celibate clergy had been freed – the cognitive closure to which they gave rise was a closure that was to be brought to an end only by the intellectual revolution of humanism. By, that is, the reciprocally ontological and epistemological revolution effected by the lay intelligentsia of Renaissance Europe against the then hegemonic medieval-Christian and theocentric conception of being, and thereby against their own negatively marked representation as bearers of the fallen flesh (MBFD) enslaved to Original Sin. As a conception of being that they were to deconstruct, only by means of their revalorised reconception of lay status, and their narrativisation and invention (beginning with Pico della Mirandola's *Oration on the Dignity of Man*) of 'Man' and its Origin.¹⁵¹

If we note that at the end of the eighteenth and during the nineteenth century the Origin of *Man* was again renarrativised, this time in the cosmogonic terms of evolution, as that of a bio-evolutionarily selected being on the model of a natural organism in the reoccupied place of Christianity's divinely created being in the image of God, a central recognition can be made with respect to the 'epistemological locus' which came into existence *pari passu* with this renarrativised Origin and its biocentric conception of being; as the locus that we have inherited. This recognition, one hinted at by Foucault at the end of his *The Order of Things*, is that our present disciplinary discourses and their respective systems of positively/negatively marked representations are the very practices by means of which our contemporary Western bourgeois criterion of being human, together with its nation-state mode of symbolic conspecificity, as well as the global order or world system which is the indispensable condition of their reciprocal existence, are produced and reproduced. Here the biologist Danielli's proposal that Marx's statement that religion (and therefore religious discourse) is 'the opium of the people' is a statement that needs to be taken *literally*, and indeed, is one that can be extended to the secular belief system or ideology,¹⁵² specific to our contemporary order, leads to the following conclusions. First, that the struggles waged with respect to the issue of representation (whether by Diawara's 'resisting spectators' of black America or by filmmakers of Africa who from Sembène onwards set out to counter and challenge the West's representations of Africa, in the immediate wake of political independence) can be recognised as struggles over the modes of consciousness to which our contemporary secular belief system or ideology gives rise. Second, that the role of all such orders or modes of consciousness generated from belief systems, religious or secular, is to *integrate human orders*, at the same time as they also serve to legitimate the social hierarchies, role allocations and the distributional ratios of the goods and the bads ('the way the cards are dealt'), the structuring of each such order, as well as the imperative of social cohesion. 'When Marx', Danielli wrote,

said that 'religion is the opiate of the people,' he spoke with greater accuracy than he realised. The ... decline of religion ... [has] ... tended to transform society so that we could now say that 'Ideology is the opium of the people.' What none of us has realised until the last few years is that ... unless society provides mechanisms for the release of endogenous opiates, i.e., for activating the IRS (the internal biochemical reward and punishment system internal to the brain) ... *social cohesion* is lost and collapse ... may be imminent.¹⁵³

Danielli's seminal point here is that because all human societies as well as their structuring hierarchies are primarily held together by the discursive practices of culture-specific theologies/ideologies able to induce cohesion in the terms needed by each order for its stable reproduction (in effect by the discursive practices which institute each order's field of consciousness), it is only by means of such practices, ones able to make the inequalities of each order seem just and legitimate, and as the way things are and *have to be* to their subjects, that the social cohesion of each such order can be maintained. Seeing that, without such discourses, together with their positively/negatively marked, and thereby symbolically coded system of representations (whether that of the Origin narrative of Chad or that of our own Origin narrative of evolution as enacted in the Europe/African binary representations of the Western cinematic and scholarly texts),¹⁵⁴ human forms of life as the culturally instituted, and sociosymbolic systems that they are, *cannot* be brought into existence and stably replicated. In effect, our modes of being human cannot pre-exist the Word, and thereby, the meanings/representations which the Word generates, given that it is by the latter's activation of the reward and punishment system of the brain in the terms of each culture's governing code of symbolic life and death, that we alone can experience ourselves *as* human. In effect, that we can come to exist in our respective phenomenological universes which function as parallel languaging universes to those of the purely biological, doing so in the terms of each such universe's culturally instituted mode of memory, of consciousness, of mind.

It is, therefore, only in relation to these phenomenological universes of our human 'forms of life' (as universes that cannot paradoxically exist as 'objects of knowledge' within the terms of our present episteme, its purely biologised conception of being, and the specific universe to which this biocentric conception gives rise) that we can be enabled to grasp the dimensions of the inventiveness of institutions such as that of initiation/symbolic birth, as well as of the foundational narratives and their complex religious belief systems; the inventiveness, therefore, of their respective Words, whether in the case of the millennially existent polytheistic religions such as that of the Dogon peoples, where the Word (*Norono*) is conceived of as 'the beginning of all things',¹⁵⁵ or in the far later monotheistic religions, from Judaism's Single Text, to Judaeo-Christianity's Catholic ritual of transubstantiation effected by the priest's utterance of words, to the sculpted word of the Islamic Koran. That in addition, we can be also enabled to grasp the no lesser degree of inventiveness that was at work in the West's forging of the secular belief systems or ideologies, beginning with that of the discourse of civic humanism elaborated by the lay revolution of the Renaissance civic humanism, and re-enacted as that of a new form of biological and/or economic humanism, in the nineteenth century; both as the ideologies by means of which the West, as a function of its epochal 'killing' of God, was to replace and/or marginalise all earlier Words, together with their religious conceptions of being human, with its single increasingly homogenising and secular or degodded conception, that of *Man*. As a conception, however, in the logic of whose Word, or governing code, its positive/negative system of representations, and thereby of the memory, and order of consciousness which they inscript and institute, the continued subordination and impoverishment of Africa and its peoples, as well as of the peoples of its diaspora, is always already prescribed -- the cards as dealt within the terms of its 'official creation story', of evolution, as they would have been dealt for the category who embodied the negatively marked category of biological or 'raw' life (the MBRFD),¹⁵⁶ within the terms of the traditional 'official creation story' (on the model of *Procreation* rather than of evolution) of Chad -- of its Word, its mode of memory, of consciousness, of being human.

Conclusion

Mudinbe's thesis as to the way in which the West, since the fifteenth century, has submitted the rest of the world to its memory, when linked to the hypothesis of the existence of laws of culture, and thereby of the analogy of culture always consonant with itself, reveals that the phenomenon that Marx and indeed Danielli identify as *ideology*,¹⁵⁷ is a phenomenon of the same order as the phenomenon described by Evans-Pritchard in the case of the Azande, a traditional people of Africa's Sudan, when he encountered them during the first decades of the twentieth century. What Evans-Pritchard says of the Azande, and of the cognitively closed nature of their culture-systemic memory and order of consciousness, can therefore be seen to apply, if in different terms, to the culture-specific memory and order of consciousness of *Man*, and to the nature of the symbolically coded systems of representations by which this memory/consciousness is inscribed. 'I have attempted', he wrote,

to show how all their beliefs hang together, and were the Azande to give up faith in witchdoctorhood, he would have to surrender equally his faith in witchcraft and the oracles. In this web of belief, every strand depends upon every other strand. An Azande cannot get out of the meshes because it is the only world he knows. This web is not an external structure in which he is enclosed: it is the very texture of his thought, and he cannot think that his thought is wrong.¹⁵⁸

This leads us therefore to the conclusion that there is, today, no misery being experienced by contemporary black Africa and its peoples, nor by the peoples of its diaspora, nor by the peoples who belong to the global and transnational category of the jobless and semi-jobless inner-city ghettos and shanty-town archipelagos, together with their prison-extensions, that is *not* due (as is also the ongoing pollution and degradation of the planetary environment)¹⁵⁹ to the following causal factor: that the way we collectively behave on our present reality, doing so in the terms of a world outlook based on our belief in the purely biological nature of the human, constitutes the very texture of our own thought, and that, like the Azande, we too cannot, normally, think our thought wrong. More precisely, think that our thought is true *only* within the terms of the local but now globalised and purely secular variant culture of the Western bourgeoisie, in the cognitive closure of whose symbolically coded system of representations and order of consciousness we are as enclosed, as the condition of the enacting of our present poesis of being, *Man*, as were the Azande, as the condition of the enacting of theirs; as would have been, and still residually are, the subjects of the traditional order of Chad, as the condition too, of the enacting of their own.

On the basis of the analogy of culture always consonant with itself, we can therefore put forward the following hypothesis: that if the governing code of symbolic life and death is a transcultural constant, then all our behaviours, including that of our contemporary order (and specifically those of the systemic and negatively marked representing of black Africa, its human hereditary variation, and indigenous cultural systems, by the Western cinematic and scholarly texts), must be as relative to it as, at the physical level of reality, time and distance are relative to the constant of the speed of light. Further, that because as observers of our social realities we are always already socialised as subjects in the terms of the governing code which prescribes the collective behaviours instituting of the reality that we observe, then the predicament in which we, like the Azande, find ourselves (i.e. that we cannot normally think that our thought is wrong, and must necessarily remain, normally, 'trapped in the circularity of a self-referential paradox')¹⁶⁰ is a culturally lawlike predicament.¹⁶¹

This Azande-type predicament was the unstated question that shadowed a 1992 symposium which dealt with the issue of the relation between mind and brain, consciousness and neurobiology. Against the view of mainstream neuroscientists that the *mind is the brain*, Jonathan Miller proposed that *mind* or consciousness, while implemented by the neurobiological processes of the *brain*, is *not* itself a property of these processes; that we cannot therefore use the same methods by which we have become acquainted with the brain (i.e. the neurosciences), to become acquainted with consciousness, with the mind. And therefore, with the 'vernacular languages of belief and desire' through which alone we can, as human, *know* what it's like to be us (an *I*, a *we*);¹⁶² in effect, through which alone we can phenomenologically *be* in the terms of each order's mode of symbolic birth. If, therefore, we define consciousness as a property of the correlation between the governing code of symbolic life and death (as inscribed by the Origin narratives founding to each human 'form of life') and, therefore, between its positive/negative marked system of representations and the opiate or biochemical reward-and-punishment system of the brain, with the former, the code, *always* determinant of the states of the latter, then finding a method by which to get acquainted with consciousness would call for the event of a Second Emergence. That is, for a rupture with the cognitive closure and circular self-referentiality of our symbolically coded orders of consciousness whose culture-specific 'directive signs' now function to induce our, thereby still heteronomously ordered, behaviours. Seeing that it is only by means of such a new rupture that we can, as a species, be empowered to govern the governing codes of symbolic life and death which have hitherto governed and still govern us, thereby necessitating our behaviours in pre-determined and code-specific ways. This, in the same way, therefore, as with the singularity of the First Emergence, we had, as a condition of our realisation as a new form of life, effected that initial rupture with the directive signs of the genetic codes that necessitate the behaviours of purely organic life; with this initial rupture then determining that as humans we were to experience ourselves in *symbolically coded* terms – even where, as in our own case, we verbally define ourselves on the model of a natural organism, and are thereby induced to experience ourselves as the purely biological beings that we inscript,¹⁶³ define ourselves to be.

The ethnologist Asmarom Legesse proposed in 1973 that it is only the liminal categories of human orders (i.e. categories made to embody the signifier of deviant alterity and, thereby, of *symbolic death* to the criterion of being, of each culture's 'normal' mode of being), who, in attempting to free themselves from their systemic role of ontological negation, can free us all from the prescriptive categories of the circularly self-referential modes of memory or orders of consciousness, whose function is to integrate human orders,¹⁶⁴ on the basis of the represented *symbolically*, rather than *genetically*, determined conspecificity of their subjects. If, in consequence, the West's intellectual revolution of humanism as spearheaded by the then liminal category of the laity was, with its revalorising conception of the human in the secular terms of *Man*, over against its theologically defined hopelessly fallen status, to make possible, on the basis of its new and correlated premise of autonomously functioning laws of nature, the rise of the natural sciences and, thereby, human knowledge of its physical and organic levels of reality *in their objective existence*, this new mode of cognition was, however, to remain an incomplete and half-fulfilled one. This given that, as Aimé Césaire pointed out, it remains unable to make our human worlds, as worlds instituted by the Word, by Origin narratives and representations, intelligible,¹⁶⁵ and therefore to provide knowledge of our phenomenological universes as a third level of reality, *outside* the symbolically coded terms of their order-enacting cognitive closure and circular self-referentiality.

This, I propose, is where our liminal status, as filmmakers and intellectuals, provides us with a cognitive advantage, which parallels, in new terms, that of the lay intelligentsia of Renaissance Europe. In that any sustained attempt to free ourselves from the negatively marked representations imposed upon us, as the embodied signifiers of Man's most extreme Human Others, by the 'gallery of mirrors' of the Western cinematic and scholarly texts, will necessarily impel us towards the realisation of Aimé Césaire's proposed new science of the Word, as one that, he argued in 1946, was imperatively needed to complete the natural sciences. If, that is, we are to gain knowledge of our human worlds, specifically of the contemporary global order of reality in which we all now find ourselves, *as it is*,¹⁶⁶ rather than in the behaviour-motivating terms in which it must be known by its subjects, as the indispensable condition of its own stable reproduction as such an order of reality. Knowledge, therefore, of the governing codes of symbolic life and death and their basic principles of understanding which lawfully prescribe the ensemble of behaviours, cognitive, imaginative and actional, by means of which all human orders, including our own, are brought into existence as living systems; codes which therefore determine, through the cards they deal, the overall effects, both good and ill, to which each such ensemble of behaviours will lead.

The concluding thesis here, therefore, is that it is only such a projected new science (one that Heinz Pagels was also to call for in 1988 in his book *The Dream of Reason: The Computer and the Sciences of Complexity*,¹⁶⁷ when he suggested that we should now set out to breach the barriers between the natural sciences and the humanities in order to put our 'narratively constructed world and their orders of feeling and beliefs under scientific description in a new way')¹⁶⁸ that can provide us with a method by which to get acquainted with the functioning of our symbolically coded orders of consciousness, of mind, as the neuroscientists have found a natural-scientific method by which to become acquainted with the processes of functioning of the brain. That can thereby make accessible to us the basic 'principles of understanding' of the contemporary culture in which we find ourselves, as principles that determine our own 'gallery of mirrors' representation in the circularly self-referentiality of the Western cinematic and scholarly texts: our representation, within the terms of our present culture's conception of the human, as the Human Other to *Man* and the actualisation of this negated role of alterity at the level of empirical reality, as well as at the level of our always already socialised consciousness.¹⁶⁹

Meaning, the physicist David Bohm pointed out, is *being*.¹⁷⁰ Because *meaning*, which is able to regulate *matter* (including, centrally, the biochemical opiate reward-and-punishment system of the brain), is that which defines us as *humans*, any fundamental change in our affairs calls for a profound change in meaning and thereby in the order of consciousness which it structures;¹⁷¹ cinematically speaking, a profound change in representations, iconographies. One that can move us towards the transformation of our present *purely* biologicalised understanding of what it means to be human, and towards the redefining of the human as the uniquely cultural and thereby *bios/logos* mode of being that it is. With such a redefining being made possible only by the proposed reconception of Africa's history as a history inseparable from the Event of the First Emergence, and thereby from the origin of being/behaving *human*, not in evolution, which gave rise only to the biological condition of our being able to *experience* ourselves as this or that mode of the human through the mediation of our self-instituting inscription;¹⁷² this latter as witnessed to both by the initiation iconography of the San rock paintings, as well as by the 'creative explosion' of some 30,000 years ago that took place convergently throughout the world.¹⁷³ While it is this

challenge to our present culture's biocentric Origin narrative of Evolution and the re-imagining of human origin in the terms of its autopoiesis or of its self-instituting as this is effected in the inscribed modes of being human to which each culture gives rise, that, I suggest, alone can provide a 'loftier' because transculturally applicable 'world outlook', able to serve as the basis for a fully realised black African cinema in the new millennium; and, thereby, as the new conceptual ground called for by the organisers of this conference.¹⁷⁴

If the novelistic text and its medium, print, was the quintessential genre/medium by which Western *Man* and its then epochally new, because secularising, Renaissance 'understanding of man's humanity' was to be inscribed and enacted,¹⁷⁵ the cinematic text, conceptualised in terms outside those of our present biocentric understanding, will be the quintessential genre of our now de-biologised conception of the human; the medium, I propose, of a new form of 'writing' which reconnects with the 'writing' of the rock paintings of Apollo Namibia, some 30,000 years ago, and beyond that, with the origin of the human in that first governing code of symbolic 'life' and 'death', about which, in the wake of the species' rupture with purely organic life, all other human forms of life were to enact their/our poeses of being, together with the self-organising social systems to which each such poesis gives rise. In the place of print, therefore, the cinematic text, and its audiovisual spin-off, the texts of TV/video, as the medium of the new iconography of *homo culturans* as a self-instituting mode of being, in the reoccupied ground of *homo oeconomicus*, and therefore, of the human represented and culturally instituted, in ethno-class or Western-bourgeois terms, on the model of a natural organism.

Black African cinema, by the unique nature of the imperative which it confronts of having to interface and grapple both with the fundamentally Neolithic nature of its traditional indigenous cultures and their founding mythical narratives as well as with that of the global techno-industrial culture of the contemporary West together with its founding Grand Narrative,¹⁷⁶ has already prefigured this mutation of the Second Emergence in many of the elements of its iconography, of its thematics. To take one example. In Amadou Saluum Seck's *Saaraba* (1988)¹⁷⁷, the narrational units show the hero of the film, newly returned to Senegal from his university education in the metropolitan centre, France, having to come to grips with a central dilemma. This dilemma is that none of the three cultural systems and their respective belief systems or creeds (two religious, one secular) that have come to coexist in a now postcolonial reality are capable of resolving the pressing problems of contemporary Senegal. These three are that of the indigenous, once autocentric, polytheistic religious system of neolithic agrarian Africa, that of the still theocentric monotheism of Islam, and that of the West as the biocentric secular creed in whose order of knowledge the hero has been formally educated. The inability of all three to resolve the ongoing crisis situation are shown in a series of episodes. In one episode, one of the characters, a herdsman, finding his livelihood threatened by the drought which kills off his cows one by one, turns to the local witchdoctor for help. The drought continues, in spite of the witchdoctor's efforts; the cows still die. The ultimate remedy then proposed by the witchdoctor, that he ritually sacrifice his daughter, is only averted by the character Demba, who stops the herdsman just in time by enabling him to recognise the futility and unthinkability of such a remedy.¹⁷⁸ In the central sequence of episodes, the hero who, as a Muslim has returned from his studies in Europe in order to find his 'roots' and to turn his back on the machine civilisation of the West, is shown as everywhere encountering the chaos that the secular Western 'remedy', i.e. its policies of economic development, has brought to Senegal. Beset on all sides by the crowd of beggars, and traumatised by the spectacle of the large numbers

of the jobless poor on the margins of the wealth and luxury of a now increasingly materialistic urban elite, the hero is shown as having to recognise that his 'roots' are not the answer, that the 'remedy' cannot be found there either. For the traditional answers of Islamic theology cannot tell him how to deal with an increasingly degodded world, nor how to escape the pervasive technological tentacles of the West, together with its remorseless displacement of all other 'forms of life', its ongoing homogenisation of belief, desire, consciousness.

Nor, however, can the secular creed of the West, with its reasons-of-the-economy ethic, any more solve the problems of Senegal's swarm of beggars as well as of its endemically jobless, educated young people who turn to drugs to alleviate their despair, than can the religious belief cum ethical systems of traditional Africa or of Islam. Instead the plotline of the film suggests that it is the very programme of industrial development (as spearheaded by the bribe-taking politician and by the hero's wealthy businessman uncle), intended as the 'cure' for Senegal's ills, that, by its very dynamic, leads to the rapid expansion of the archipelagos of the jobless, filled with peasants violently uprooted from the land, the village and from their millennial agrarian way of life. The very dynamics therefore of the secular Western creed's understanding of man's humanity and, therefore, of a remedy based on a specific notion of freedom, one imagined as *Material Redemption* from *Natural Scarcity* in the reoccupied place of the matrix Judaeo-Christian behaviour-motivating notion of human freedom as that of *Spiritual Redemption* from *Original Sin*.

The only way out of a no-win situation therefore seems to the hero to lie in the utopian challenge to the creeds of all three, a challenge which is carried in the film by the semi-mad mechanic Demba. In the same way as the disillusioned jobless young people of the hero's generation listen to the messianic utopianism of Bob Marley's reggae – its musical form returned, via technology and reversing the Middle Passage to Africa from the also jobless shanty-towns of the diaspora¹⁷⁹ – the hero goes off with Demba, riding on the back of his motorbike, in quest of the utopian place of traditional Wolof culture called Saaraba; as a place sung about in traditional songs and imagined as a place, free from misery, full of plenty, where people celebrate every day. Demba is shown, at first, imagining Saaraba in technological terms as a land where machines do all the work as he has heard happens in Europe: the bright glittering lights of the city at night seen from the top of a hill seem to him to be its very epitome. However, a car crash wrecks the bike and injures him severely. Unable to accept that this is the end of his quest, Demba at first angrily turns on the hero, knocking him over a cliff, where he barely hangs from the edge. In saving his friend's life at risk to his own, the now dying Demba reimagines Saaraba, in terms of a new ethic that moves beyond the limits of all three creeds (two religious, one secular), their particularistic inscriptions of being human, and respective 'truths'; beyond *Man*, and the dystopic world, made, (because represented) in its image.¹⁸⁰

'The human', he tells his friend, 'needs his fellow human. If you fight for that, you'll find *Saaraba/Utopia*.'¹⁸¹

Notes

- 1 See Clifford Geertz's book of essays *Local Knowledge* for the definition of contemporary Western culture as a 'local culture', 'one of the forms that life has locally taken' (p. 16). Luc de Heusch had earlier defined this culture as one which, whatever the changes in its mode of production and social systems, continues to be governed by the 'reference point' of the

- Judaean-Christian religion and symbology. See for this Luc de Heusch, *Sacrifice in Africa*, p. 206. For the definition of contemporary Western culture as the purely secularised form of the matrix Judaean-Christian religious culture of feudal-Christian Europe, see Sylvia Wynter, '1492: A New World View'. See also her essay, 'Columbus'.
- 2 See for this term Philip Johnson, *Darwin on Trial*.
 - 3 In his book *Hegel, Heidegger, and the Ground of History*, pp. 126-7. M. G. Gillespie cites Heidegger's point that our contemporary behaviours are driven by our present understanding of man's humanity and our attempt to realise ourselves in the terms of this understanding.
 - 4 Michel Foucault, in his *The Order of Things*.
 - 5 While J. G. A. Pocock shows the way in which the Renaissance discourse of civic humanism redefined the originally religious subject of medieval Europe as optimally *homo politicus* or political citizen (see his essay 'Civic Humanism and Its Role in Anglo-American Thought' in this collection of essays, *Politics, Language, and Time*, pp. 80-103, as well as his later book *The Machiavellian Moment*), he nevertheless oversees the way in which the new nineteenth-century discourse of liberal or economic humanism was to redefine the political citizen as *homo oeconomicus* and optimally *Breadwinner* (with woman's complementary role being that of *homemaker*).
 - 6 See Clyde Taylor's essays, 'We Don't Need Another Hero' and 'Black Cinema'.
 - 7 See, for a general analysis of the rock paintings of Namibia, Harold Pager, *Rock Paintings*. See specifically pp. 25-31 for a discussion on the relation of the rock paintings to 'intensive ritual activities'.
 - 8 The term is used to emphasise the 'made' or constructed nature of the criterion of being that is enacting of the code of *symbolic life* in a binary opposition with the negatively marked anti-criterion of *symbolic death*.
 - 9 The Latin title was *De orbis Revolutionibus*.
 - 10 See, for this, Amos Funkenstein, *Theology and the Scientific Imagination*, n. 22, p. 29. Contemporary interpretations of the significance of the Copernican thesis with respect to the position of the earth unfailingly interpret it in modern terms, laying the emphasis on the decentering of earth and therefore of the human. Taken in its own Renaissance humanist terms, however, Copernicus' feat lay in the fact that he broke down the binary opposition between the heavens as the realm of *Redeemed Perfection*, and the earth as the *sinful abode of fallen man*, thereby revalorising the latter, and asserting the homogeneity of substance between the two realms on whose basis the hypothesis of laws of nature was made possible. See, for this, Kurt Hubner, *The Critique of Scientific Reason*.
 - 11 Ferdinand Hallin, *The Poetic Structure of the World* and Sylvia Wynter, 'Columbus'.
 - 12 Funkenstein, *Theology*, p. 29, n. 22 and p. 91.
 - 13 See, for this, K. C. Anyanwu, *The Studies of African Religions*.
 - 14 In *Black Skins, White Masks*, Fanon made the proposal that the reflex behavioural aversive responses of his black patients could not be an *individual* problem, that besides the ontogenetic unfolding of the human individual there are also the processes of socialisation (or sociogeny) by which he or she is constituted as a subject. The response was therefore due to the terms in which the black is socialised as a subject of the cultural order of the West.
 - 15 See Théophile Obenga's essay, 'Sous-Thème', in which he defines the history of Africa as coterminous with the emergence of the human out of the animal kingdom.
 - 16 Marcel Griaule, *Conversations with Ogotemmeli*.
 - 17 The central thesis is that we realise ourselves as specific modes of the subject, and therefore of the human, *only* through the always culturally instituted field of meanings/representations, by means of which we are enabled to experience what *it is like to be* a specific subject; that is, through the mode of subjectivity into which we are socialised to be human. Hence the paradox that while our being human is implemented by the physiological processes of the body, the *experience of being human* is both a property of, and relative to, the criteria of being that are instituted and enacted by each cultural system or 'form of life'.
 - 18 See David Bohm's interview with *Omni* magazine, January 1987 p. 74.
 - 19 See, for this, Avram Goldstein, *Addiction: From Biology to Drug Policy*.
 - 20 In his book *Neural Darwinism*, Gerald Edelman proposes that organic species classify and know their environment in the terms of the behaviours that are of adaptive advantage to each species.
 - 21 See Nwachulwu Frank Ukadike, *Black African Cinema*, p. 32. This indistinguishability of Africans and primates in Africa in the representational apparatus of the Western cinematic text was, and is, generalised from the premise that the human exists in a pure continuity with organic species, and that Africans mark the dividing line, as the least evolved humans, between primates and the 'normal' because highly evolved human, as this normalcy is embodied in Indo-europeans.
 - 22 See, for this Sylvia Wynter, '1492'.
 - 23 See Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System* and Wynter, '1492'.
 - 24 See Mudimbe, *The Idea of Africa*, p. xiv. See also his *The Invention of Africa*.
 - 25 *The Idea of Africa*, p. xv.
 - 26 *Ibid.*, pp. xi-xii.
 - 27 See, for this, Nietzsche's 'On Truth and Falsity', p. 83.
 - 28 See, for a discussion of Marx's concept of ideology in this context, Paul Ricœur's essay 'Ideology and Utopia'. Ricœur's extension of the concept of *ideology* beyond that of *false consciousness* to that of a 'shared horizon of understanding' which functions as, so to speak, the template of social organisation, when linked to Nietzsche's concept of world perception as the rule-governed way by means of which humans know their reality, according to a specific standard of perception (as a bird, for example, knows its reality according to a species-specific standard), is crucial to the hypothesis that I put forward here. That is, that the phenomenon of consciousness, of Mudimbe's 'memory', which still remains undiscovered by neuroscientists, should be seen in the terms of Marx's concept of *ideology* redefined in Ricœur's terms.
 - 29 Since I shall be arguing that all human orders are born from a founding Origin narrative, memories, whether mythic, theological or historical, all take their point of departure from the conception of a *shared origin*. This origin then serves to structure the consciousness or mode of mind integrating of the specific order.
 - 30 See his *Order of Things*, p. 386. See also Wynter, '1492'.
 - 31 See *The Invention of Africa*, p. x.
 - 32 *Ibid.*, p. ix.
 - 33 See, for this, Jacob Pandian, *Anthropology and the Western Tradition*, pp. 2-11.
 - 34 See Jean François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*.
 - 35 The film *Saaranu* was made in Senegal by one of the younger generation of directors.
 - 36 Cited by Gillespie, *Hegel*, p. 127.
 - 37 *Ibid.*, pp. 126-7.

- 38 See the statement of purpose that was sent out to participants by conference organisers. 'In that sense' they wrote 'it will be an explanation of new ground rather than the proposal of hard and fast conclusions, and an opening up of debate rather than an exercise in making African cinema.' Letter of 6 July, p. 2.
- 39 See his essay 'Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance', in Diawara, *Black American Cinema*, pp. 211–20.
- 40 See Herbert Marshall's Introduction to Sergei Eisenstein's *Immoral Memories*, p. ix.
- 41 See Michelle Wallace in her essay 'Race, Gender and Psychoanalysis', p. 257.
- 42 *Ibid.*, p. 260.
- 43 For Marxism, the issue of consciousness is a superstructural effect of the mode of production; for feminism it is an effect of patriarchy.
- 44 See his open letter to Maurice Thorez – *Lettre à Maurice Thorez*.
- 45 Diawara, *Black American Cinema*, pp. 212–14.
- 46 *Ibid.*, p. 213. Where as Diawara makes clear the black-faced villain Gus is racially defined as Other to the white hero and heroine.
- 47 See, for this, Pandian, *Anthropology and the Western Tradition*, pp. 1–3.
- 48 Ukadike, *Black African Cinema*, p. 32.
- 49 The term 'neo-colonialism' was the attempt to come to terms with this fact – if in neo-Marxist, and thereby still culturally Western, terms – by radical politicians/thinkers such as Nkrumah.
- 50 This issue of consciousness and of its 'prison walls' has also been raised in the film *Sankofa* (1993) by Haile Gerima, but in cultural nationalist terms. *Cultural nationalist* because Gerima sees the issue as that of a *false consciousness*, which needs to be corrected, rather than of a *culture systemic consciousness*, which because it is the condition of all our present 'form of life' needs to be transformed, together with the overall system and mode of subjectivity (one in which we are all enculturated and socialised) that gives rise to this consciousness.
- 51 See, for this, David Mayer, *Eisenstein's Potemkin*.
- 52 As Eisenstein wrote in his autobiography, *Immoral Memories*. 'The boy from Riga became famous at twentyseven. Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford came to Moscow to shake by the hand the boy from Riga who had made *Battleship Potemkin*' (p. 8). Eisenstein tells in his autobiography also of how powerfully the film *Battleship Potemkin* resonated with members of the working classes (i.e. of the proletariat) all over the world (p. 65):
- And then to reap the fruits of your fame: To be invited to Buenos Aires for a series of lectures. To be suddenly recognised in the remote silver mines of the Sierra Madre, where the film was shown to the Mexican workers. To be embraced by unknown, wonderful people in the workers' district of Liège, where they screened the film in secret. To hear Alvarez del Vayo's account of how, back in the time of the monarchy, he himself had sneaked a print of *Potemkin* into Spain for a showing in Madrid. Suddenly to learn in some Parisian café, where you happen to share a little marble table with two dark-skinned Sorbonne students from the East, that 'your name is very well known to us in . . . Java!' Or, on leaving some little garish roadhouse, to receive a warm handshake from a Negro waiter in recognition of what you have done in films.
- 53 In a recent essay by David Chalmers, 'The Puzzle of Conscious Experience'.
- 54 The proposal here is that it is only through our symbolically coded, and thereby culturally instituted, orders of consciousness that we can experience ourselves as *human*, i.e. as

- hybridly bios and logos, gene and word, organic and meta organic. See, for the thematisation of this premise, Sylvia Wynter, 'The Pope Must Have Been Drunk'.
- 55 See his *Notes of a Film Director*, p. 7.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 57 The collapse of Communism, at the end of the 1980s, was inseparably linked to the formulaic degeneration of the aesthetics of social realism under the weight of the ideological imperatives of the New Class or *Nomenklatura*. In a longer version of 'The Pope Must Have Been Drunk' essay I draw the parallels between the belief system of *witchcraft* in traditional agrarian societies and that of *Natural Scarcity* in our contemporary techno-industrial world. The central parallel or *law* is that both *witchcraft* and *Natural Scarcity* (or for that matter the earlier Judaeo-Christian construct of *Original Sin*) function as 'socially significant causes' (see Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic*) which calls for a specific kind of intervention to be made (i.e. *witchcraft* to be cured by ritual practices, *Natural Scarcity* to be cured by economic policies or remedies): interventions that thereby *prescribe* the behavioural pathways that are to be followed by the order as the condition of its own stable replication as a 'form of life'.
- As Ukadike points out, a central problem with African films of the 1980s which deal with traditional African ritual practices and beliefs such as *witchcraft* (i.e. films such as Idrissa Ouedraogo's *Yaaba* (1989)) is that while it can be said that these films are now penetrating the world market, 'there seems to be a movement away from the political use of the film medium, which addresses and relates to authentic cultures and histories, toward a concern with film as an object of anthropological interest'; in effect, a tendency to 'employ the same Western ethnographic conventions that have historically worked to emit the understanding of Africa's sociocultural formations' (Ukadike, *Black African Cinema* p. 248). The proposal of a new *conceptual ground* which sees practices like *ethnomedicine*, *witchcraft* and *clitoridectomy* (a ritual practice centrally portrayed by Sissoko in *Finzan* (1990)) as behaviour-regulating practices that function according to the same laws as does, for example, the ethno-discipline of economics and its 'socially significant cause' of *Natural Scarcity* (in the reoccupied places of *Original Sin*), to motivate our contemporary ensemble of behaviours, would enable African filmmakers to deal with those issues without any risk of their being received by mass spectators as 'exotic' ethnographic material relevant only to the West's Others; would therefore avoid the dangerous trap of *magical realism* into which Latin American fiction fell.
- 58 In his autobiography, Eisenstein makes it clear that for him the 'world outlook' of Communism was the world outlook alone able to achieve what he called the 'single idea, single theme, and single subject' of his work – that of the 'achievement of (human) unity', *Immoral Memories*, p. 259. The collapse and disintegration of the Soviet Union was, however, to disprove this hope.
- 59 Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld* (New York: Random House/Times Books, 1995).
- 60 My central proposal in the address is that although our biological makeup is the 'condition' of our being human (and therefore the nature or bios aspect of our being) we experience ourselves as human only in the verbally inscribed part of our cultures, whether religious or secular. We are theoretic hybrids, both gene and word, nature and culture.
- 61 See Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 552.
- 62 See Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*.
- 63 See, for this, Hans Blumenberg's *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, pp. 127–36, 220–5.

- See also Gary Gutting's *Michel Foucault's Archaeology* and his analysis of Foucault's deconstruction of Ricardo's and Marx's belief-construct of *Natural Scarcity*.
- 64 The use of the concept 'dysgenic pressure' by Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray in their recent book *The Bell Curve* is a contemporary expression of the neo-Augustinian premise of mankind's enslavement, not now to *Original Sin*, but rather to hereditary dysselection for low IQ.
- 65 For Zygmunt Bauman's concept of *Conceptual Otherness*, see his *Modernity and the Holocaust*.
- 66 See, for a further development of this concept, my essay 'Is Development a Purely Empirical Concept?'
- 67 See Herrnstein and Murray, *The Bell Curve*, pp. 348–68
- 68 Within the ideological terms of feminist theory, which sees *gender* as an *acultural* concept, it cannot be recognised that clitoridectomy is one form of the *construction of gender*, just as the keeping of middle-class white women to the role of *homemaker* (until the revolt of feminism) is the contemporary bourgeois form of this construction of gender, of being. Hence the paradox of Sissoko's otherwise excellent film *Finzan* which remains, in this respect, entrapped in feminist ideology which defines clitoridectomy in terms of feminist culture as 'genital mutilation'. This is not a plea for the continuation of this practice now that we live in quite another world; rather both clitoridectomy and the contemporary feminist description of it as 'genital mutilation' should be seen as belonging to culture-specific fields and only 'true' and 'meaningful' within their respective fields. See also Ukadike, *Black African Cinema*, pp. 271–5 for a discussion of this issue.
- 69 See Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination*.
- 70 See the title and theme of his *The Wretched of the Earth*.
- 71 Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, p. 221, points out that while before the West's institution of the modern age, human beings had always known material want, this want had never before this been 'generalised to reality as a whole'. This generalisation was to be fully realised, of course, with Ricardo's construct of *Natural Scarcity* on whose rhetorical a priori the discipline of economics was to be based.
- 72 In his essay 'The Toad in the Garden', p. 274.
- 73 In *The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 274.
- 74 Marxism of course saw poverty only as an *effect* of the exploitation of the labour-power of the working classes, and therefore consistently defined the Poor as the liminal or Other category to the working classes, thereby accepting the bourgeois criterion of optimal being/behaving as that of breadwinner/breadwinning. Other recent -isms, feminisms, multiculturalisms, gay liberationism, ignore the issue both of the poor and of the social *subordination* of the working class. Only liberation theology theory with its preferential option for the poor thesis and Fanon's polemic on behalf of the *lumpen* i.e. the rural/shanty-town afro proletariat of the Third World, have attempted to deal with poverty as an issue in itself.
- 75 See Bauman's *Legislators and Interpreters*.
- 76 In his prescient and prophetic series of lectures published as *Notes on the Dialectics*, pp. 129–36, 211–23.
- 77 *Ibid.*, pp. 129–36.
- 78 The point here is that the conception of the 'freedom package' of *Material Redemption* then functions, in the terms of artificial intelligence theorists, as the supraordinate goal

- about which our contemporary behaviours are motivated. See Jaime Carbonelli, *Subjective Understanding*. See also Sylvia Wynter, '1492'.
- 79 The ongoing explosion of black 'crime' in South Africa (see the *New York Times*, 12 Dec. 1995) testifies to the new form of *economic apartheid* which has incorporated the black South African middle classes into the horizon of expectation of white middle-class privilege, with the large majority of the expendable jobless having to resort to crime as *their* avenue of 'advancement'. The prison system has therefore reoccupied the *outsider* place of the earlier segregated black world.
- 80 A global pattern has begun to emerge, whether in the case of the death squads in Brazil in the case of street children (see Gilberto Dimenstein's *War on Children*), or in the USA with the high rate of intra-black male violence and murder, as well as the high rate of police brutality resulting in the death of suspects taken into custody.
- 81 See his *I Write What I Like*.
- 82 That is the consciousness of *alterity* to Man as a conception of being, and 'form of life', as that of the working class is, in the Marxian paradigm, that of *alterity* to the employer and investor class within the terms of an economic mode of production as the determinant factor. Here the conception of being, in a sense the politics of being, replaces the mode of production as the *determinant* factor. Since ruling groups are legitimated as ruling groups to the extent that they embody their respective social order's criterion of being—and therefore of *behaving*. This then legitimates their control of the means of material production.
- 83 See Jonathan Miller's summary of this position in his brief essay 'Trouble in Mind'.
- 84 Cited by Mudimbe in his *The Invention of Africa*, p. 168. As Sow states,

We are not persuaded that when looked at carefully the specific object of social sciences is the study of one universal human nature given *a priori*, because we do not know if such a human nature exists concretely somewhere. It may be that human nature (of human being in general, natural human being, etc.) is a theoretical fiction of general philosophy, or then, the activist generalisation of a limited concrete experience.

Mudimbe gives the citation as *Psychiatrie dynamique Africaine* (Paris: Payot, 1977), pp. 250–5.

85 Miller, 'Trouble in Mind' and Chalmers, 'The Puzzle'.

86 In *The Astonishing Hypothesis*.

87 In his *The Invention of Africa*, p. x.

88 See Antonio T. de Nicholas, 'Notes on the Biology of Religion'.

89 See his book *Exchange: Concepts in Social Thought* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1992).

90 The concept that the only life that humans live is our represented symbolic life is Peter Winch's. See his essay 'Understanding a Primitive Society'.

91 Foucault, *The Order of Things*.

92 Hans Blumenberg analyses the implication of these theocentric strategies, i.e. strategies based on the premise of an Aristotelianised Unmoved Mover God, who had created the world and mankind purely for the sake of His own Glory, rather than with any special consideration for man. This God could therefore arbitrarily intervene to alter his creation, ensuring that humans could not depend upon the regularities of functioning of nature in order to know the rules according to which nature functions. The intellectual revolution of humanism was to challenge and change this conception of God and of his non-caring relation to an ostensibly contingent/mankind. See his *The Legitimacy*. See also Wynter, 'Columbus'.

- 93 *Ceddo* was made in 1976.
- 94 The premise here is that 'consciousness' is generated from each order's governing self-conception or governing code. See, for a conception of the specificity of the reflexive thought of the agrarian era of mankind as distinct from our techno-industrial order, Harold Morowitz, 'Balancing Species Preservation'.
- 95 Cited by Françoise Pfaff in *The Cinema of Ousmane Sembène*, p. 166. See also Ukadike's discussion of *Ceddo* in *Black African Cinema*, pp. 182–5.
- 96 See Pfaff, *The Cinema of Ousmane Sembène*, p. 147.
- 97 An identity, that of the West's 'Man', that unlike the earlier matrix identity, 'Christian', and indeed like all earlier cultural identities, hitherto, had not been guaranteed by being mapped onto the realm of the gods, or the supernatural, i.e. a secular identity.
- 98 The strategic manoeuvre by each group of their isolated -ism in their group-interest has confined the intellectual revolution of the 1960s to a reformist, and still hegemonically middle-class, role. I have adapted the pun, *sub/version*, from Lemuel Johnson's essay, 'Abeng: (Re)Calling the Body in(to) Question'.
- 99 Pfaff, *The Cinema*, p. 43.
- 100 Ukadike, *Black African Cinema*, p. 3.
- 101 *Ibid.*
- 102 See Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*.
- 103 Here again the indistinguishability of apes and African natives is subtly yet systematically insisted upon.
- 104 Made in 1982. See, for a discussion of this, Ukadike, *Black African Cinema*, pp. 54–7.
- 105 Published by Monthly Review Press, New York, 1972, trans. Joan Pinkham.
- 106 Published by Pantheon Books, 1978.
- 107 See Anyanya, *The Studies of African Religions*.
- 108 *Ibid.*
- 109 See Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*.
- 110 See his *The Order of Things*. See also, for this, Gary Gutting's *Michel Foucault's Archaeology*.
- 111 In Obenga, unpublished paper.
- 112 See his *The Creative Explosion*.
- 113 In Obenga, unpublished paper.
- 114 That is, of the optimal subject as *political citizen* whose first loyalty is to the state in its post-medieval conception. See, for this, Pocock, 'Civic Humanism in Anglo-American Thought' in his *Politics, Language, and Time*, pp. 85–95.
- 115 In Obenga, unpublished paper.
- 116 In his book *Rhetoric as Philosophy*, pp. 104–10.
- 117 *Ibid.*, p. 110.
- 118 See Donald T. Campbell, 'On the Genetics of Altruism' and 'The Two Distinct Routes beyond Kin Selection to Ultra-sociality: Implications for the Humanities and Social Sciences', in *The Nature of Pro-Social Development: Interdisciplinary Theories and Strategies*, ed. Diane L. Bridgman (New York: Academic Press, 1982).
- 119 See for this Campbell. See also Philip Wright, *Three Scientists*.
- 120 Campbell, pp. 133–7.
- 121 Grassi, *Rhetoric as Philosophy*, p. 110.
- 122 See Nietzsche, *The Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, p. 495.
- 123 See Anne Solomon, 'Rock Art'. See also Sylvia Wynter, 'Genital Mutilation'.
- 124 Grassi, *op. cit.*, p. 103.
- 125 See Funkenstein, *Theology*, n. 22, p. 29 and p. 91.
- 126 See his 'Contribution'.
- 127 The term is used by biologists and applied to species like the bees who are able to coexist and collaborate on the basis of their genetically programmed degrees of kinship.
- 128 See, for a definition of the term, Pierre Maranda, 'The Dialectic of Metaphor'.
- 129 Gregory Bateson uses this construct in his *Of Mind and Nature*.
- 130 De Nicholas, 'Notes'.
- 131 With culture rather than biology therefore being the 'ground' of human being/being human. See, for a further discussion of this, Sylvia Wynter, 'The Pope Must Have Been Drunk'.
- 132 Scubla, 'Contribution', p. 120.
- 133 The etiology of the reflex self-aversion displayed by Fanon's patients which led him to the hypothesis that human subjects are always socialised (sociogenetic) rather than purely ontogenetic or biological subjects, is to be found here. See his *Black Skins, White Masks*.
- 134 A recent book by Judy Grahn, *Blood, Bread, and Roses*, bears out this hypothesis with respect to the central role of the macro-representation of *menstrual blood* in human cultures.
- 135 Harold Morowitz, in his essay, 'Balancing Species Preservation'.
- 136 The term is from Phillip Johnson's *Darwin on Trial*.
- 137 Lieberman, *Uniquely Human*.
- 138 See, for a discussion of both the traditional and the contemporary identity systems of Rwanda and Burundi, by means of which the Tutsis have asserted their dominance over the Hutus, René Lemarchand, *Rwanda and Burundi*.
- 139 See *ibid.*, p. 155, for his discussion of the role of the *Karinga* drum in the assertion of the traditional dominance of the Tutsis over the Hutus.
- 140 Goldstein, *Addiction*.
- 141 *Ibid.*
- 142 In his essay, 'Altruism'.
- 143 See in this context the book by Wade Davis, *Passage of Darkness*. Davis's analysis of the functioning of zombification as a sanction system by the Bizeru secret society of Vodun, and his discovery of the chemical substances used by the hounsans to effect zombification, provides a scientific rather than ideo-ethnographic insight into the traditional cultures and religions of Africa from which Vodun is derived. Not only does it bear out Basil Davidson's thesis that African religions should be seen as the embodiment of the behavioural norms which had facilitated the expansion of black peoples across the African continent but he makes a critical point that enables us to identify the parallel function of the systemically negatively marked representations in the cinematic and scholarly texts of the West – this point is that it is not the chemical event which gives rise to the phenomenon of zombification but the cultural belief system (in effect the representation event) which activates the functioning of the biochemical event (pp. 244–62).
- 144 Note that the *Other* here is not simply black men or women, but the line of hereditary descent of which they are the expression. Since it is the latter's negative marking as a dysselected line of hereditary descent that enables the self-representations of the bourgeoisie as a ruling class, with their right to rule being based on their *eugenic* (rather

- than as in the case of the aristocracy of its noble line of descent. See in this context Daniel Kelves, *In the Name of Eugenics*.
- 145 See, for illustrations bearing out this point, George Mosse, *The Final Solution*.
- 146 See, for this concept, Foucault's 'The Order of Discourse'.
- 147 As the laity had been made to signify the *Fallen Flesh* to the *Redeemed Spirit* of the clergy. This belief system has been given contemporary expression in Herrnstein and Murray's *The Bell Curve*.
- 148 Scubla, 'Contribution', pp. 105, 134.
- 149 Grassi, *Rhetoric as Philosophy*, pp. 108.
- 150 Pandian, *Anthropology*, pp. 2-3.
- 151 See the edition translated by Charles Glenn Wallis and published by Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, New York, 1965.
- 152 James F. Danielli, 'Altruism'.
- 153 *Ibid.*, pp. 91-2.
- 154 These representations can therefore be recognised as symbolically coded ones as had been those of the pre-Copernican representations of the earth as fixed and motionless at the centre of the universe as its dregs, because it was the abode of fallen mankind.
- 155 See Marcel Griaule, *Conversations*.
- 156 The terms of course were first widely used in scholarship by Lévi-Strauss and refer to the distinction between the being of culture (the *cooked*) and the being of nature (the *raw*); the socialised vs. the unsocialised. The concept of the *ritual cooking* or socialisation of the child is common to many African cultures. See, in this respect, Eugenia W. Herbert, *Iron, Gender and Power*.
- 157 See also Paul Ricoeur's further development of the Marxian concept of ideology in his essay 'Ideology'.
- 158 In *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic*.
- 159 See, for this, A.J. Michael, *Planetary Overload*.
- 160 See, for a discussion of this, Fernández Amesto, *The Millennium: A History of the Last Thousand Years* (New York: Scribner, 1995).
- 161 See, for this hypothesis, Sylvia Wynter, 'The Pope'.
- 162 See his essay 'Trouble in Mind'.
- 163 See Foucault, *The Order of Things*.
- 164 See his book *Gãna*.
- 165 In his essay *Poetry and Knowledge*.
- 166 See Nicholas Humphrey, *A History of the Mind*.
- 167 Published by Simon & Schuster, 1988.
- 168 *Ibid.*, p. 319.
- 169 The central point here is that because the role of *alterity* must be expressed at the level of empirical reality, the distribution of the bads and goods of the order must function so as to replicate its signifying role at the level of the social system — i.e. it must be expressed in the dominance structure and status hierarchy of the order.
- 170 In his interview with *Omni*, January 1987, p. 74.
- 171 *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- 172 See John Pfeiffer, *The Creative Explosion*, pp. 11-15. The point here is that human being is defined by a specific *ensemble of behaviours* that are unique to the properly human species. As Brenda Fowler points out in a recent *New York Times* review of James Shreeve,

The Neanderthal Enigma, some 40,000 years ago the archaeological record shows a sudden marked change:

A wealth of new tools appear, as do, for the first time, examples of symbolic expression, in the form of the Venus figurines and cave-paintings. It is here, most paleoanthropologists now agree, that we first recognise human beings as they are today.

Fowler also cites a major point made by Shreeve in which he argues that it was the ability of the Cro-Magnon peoples to 'mate outside the immediate social group resulting in alliances that laid the ground for cultural innovations' and that defined the latter as properly human. My argument stands his on its head. It was the 'cultural innovations' that enabled the human transcendence of the limits of genetic kinship, defining of being human. See Fowler's review, p. 21.

- 173 See Pfeiffer, *The Creative Explosion*, pp. 11-13, 119-33.
- 174 In this new 'world outlook' what we humans 'produce' would be recognised as being *not* primarily our economic systems, but rather our 'forms of life', our respective modes of subjectivity and of sociality. What Marx defined as 'social relations of production' and saw as a function of economic production would therefore be turned on its head. Instead economic production would be seen as a function of the production of the social structure of relations by means of which we are instituted and integrated as *culture-specific* and always symbolically coded subjects.
- 175 See Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *Print Culture*.
- 176 If, as Mudimbe cites Claude Lévi-Strauss, 'the most important scientific discoveries on which we are still living — the invention of agriculture, the domestication of animals and the mastering of edible plants and their integration in human cultures — took place during periods dominated by mythical narratives' (see Mudimbe, *Parables of Fables: Exegesis Textuality, and Politics in Central Africa* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), p. 97), my proposal here is that the techno-industrial civilisation of the West and its discoveries were brought about within the context of the *secular Origin Narrative* of Evolution.
- 177 *Saaraba* was produced in Senegal in 1987-8. A video version of the film has been put out by the Library of African Cinema. The languages used are Wolof and French, with English subtitles.
- 178 Given that the cultural reality in which these agrarian behaviour-motivating beliefs had been viable had now deserted both the herdsman and the witchdoctor. One that, in another epoch, as Basil Davidson notes, had served to motivate the behaviours needed for the expansion across and settlement of African peoples. See his *Black Man's Burden*.
- Here again a new conceptual ground that would have enabled the herdsman's proposed sacrifice of his child (within the terms of the traditional African belief system in which nature is still divinized and the 'drought' can be cured by the sacrifice of what the herdsman most loves, his child), to be seen as paralleling the 'sacrifice' of the uprooted jobless masses in the West's secular belief system, one in which being is *biologised*, would have further de-exorcised traditional African ritual practices by identifying them as *one* form of the culture-systemic belief systems by means of whose 'programming languages' our human behaviours are lawfully induced/motivated. See, for this, Wynter, 'The Pope'.
- 179 The popular messianic religion of Rastafarianism had its origins from the 1930s onwards in the endemically jobless shanty-towns of Kingston, Jamaica. See Malika Lee Whitney and Dermot Hussey, *Bob Marley*.

180 The proposal here is (i) that the earlier political ethic which had had its origin in Machiavelli's *reasons of state* was replaced during the nineteenth century with a new economic ethic, i.e. *reasons of the economy*, which functioned in the same absolute terms as the earlier reasons of state ethic had done; (ii) that all human cultures are instituted about the reasons of a specific ethical imperative encoded by their founding narratives or belief systems.

181 In this context, Heidegger's concept of our present understanding of the human, as one in which each man must be brought into conflict with his fellows, causes the closing narrational unit of the film – in which Demba, after first attacking the hero in his disillusionment, in the wake of an accident, and pushing him over a cliff, holds on to him, and desperately grapples to save him, dying as he does so – to be in a direct challenge to this understanding and therefore to its bourgeois *notion of freedom* or 'freedom package', as being *Material Redemption from Natural Scarcity*. This is the notion of freedom from which we shall have to emancipate ourselves.

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Part Two

Arguments
