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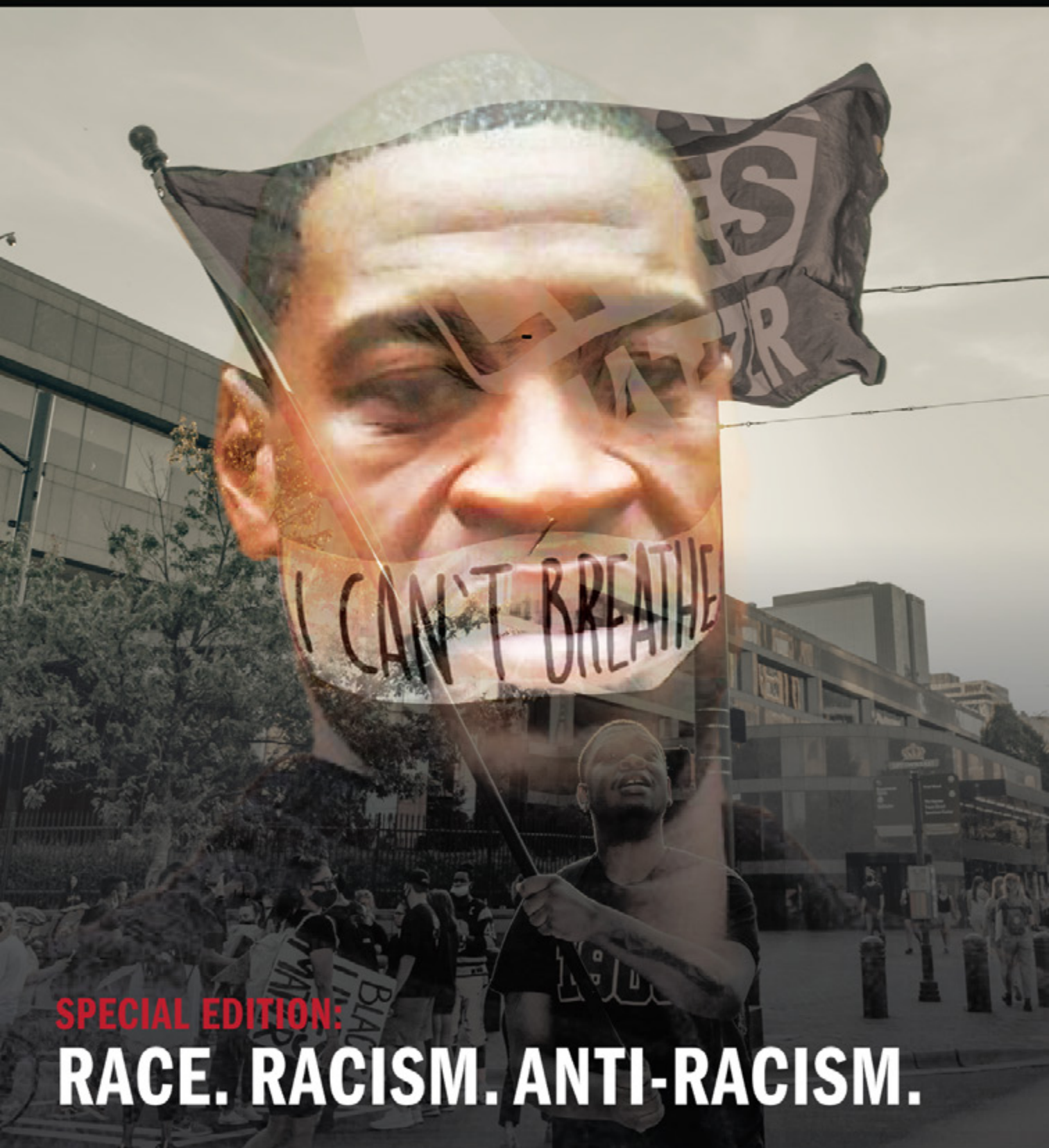

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In This Issue

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Prof Ronit Frenkel

The University of Johannesburg acquired The Thinker in April 2019 from Dr Essop Pahad. Over the last decade, The Thinker has gained a reputation as a journal that explores Pan-African issues across fields and times. Ronit Frenkel, as the incoming editor, plans on maintaining the pan-African scope of the journal while increasing its coverage into fields such as books, art, literature and popular cultures. The Thinker is a 'hybrid' journal, publishing both journalistic pieces with more academic articles and contributors can now opt to have their submissions peer reviewed. We welcome Africa-centred articles from diverse perspectives, in order to enrich both knowledge of the continent and of issues impacting the continent.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS EDITION - All contributing analysts write in their personal capacity

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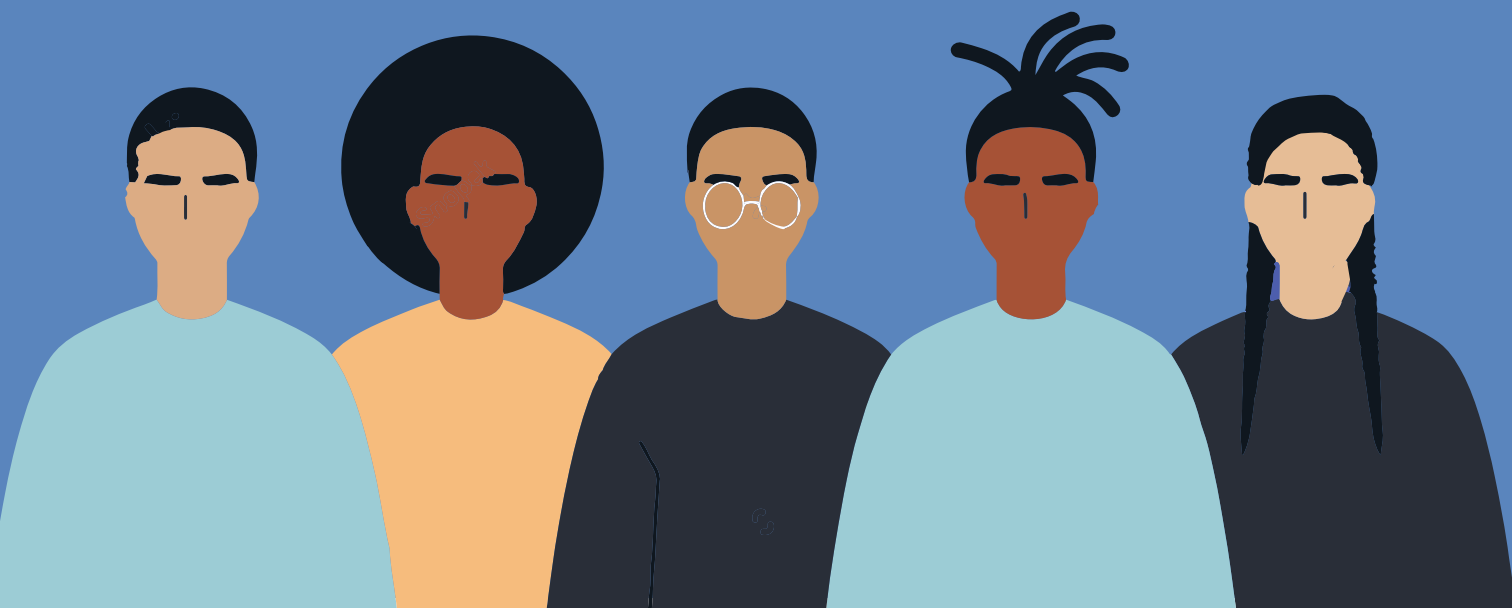
How Do We Live and Lose Together?

Considering a Politics of Grief for Anti-Racist Praxis That Tackles Oppressor Identity in Post-Colonial Spaces

By Kyla Hazell | Peer Review



Abstract

Exclusion from the category of full humanity constructs certain populations as 'ungrievable' or 'unworthy of grief' after death in a way that creates and reinforces radical vulnerability in the conditions they experience. This argument from Judith Butler resonates clearly with what decolonial thinkers have described as a fundamental feature of how racism emerges and operates in the modern world system. Building on these understandings, this article considers the potential and limitations of working with grief as a conceptual framework for tackling the apathy of whiteness as part of anti-racist work.

Introduction

In her book Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence (2004), Judith Butler argues that certain populations are culturally rendered 'ungrievable' or 'unworthy of grief' in a way that creates and reinforces radical vulnerability in the conditions they experience. Working from the belief that grief ordinarily attaches to the trauma of losing human life, ungrievability represents an exclusionary zone outside normative ideas of the human, a boundary beyond which certain lives are not granted full recognition or seen as worthy of grief after death. As part of theoretical research conducted between 2015 and 2017, I placed this understanding of differential vulnerability in conversation with decolonial thought. As a young, white, female, eight-generational settler in post-1994 South Africa, I wrote at a time when the legitimacy of our 'democratic' society was being critiqued in specifically decolonial terms that caused a disruption to the 'rainbow nation' myth.

My theoretical engagement was influenced by reflections formed while being embedded in both student and social movements driving these critiques during the period [1]. Observing responses to these shifting politics, I became interested in how a system and those who sustain it loosen their hold on survival of a particular kind so that space might be opened for the emergence of new futures. Exploring ungrievability as a dimension of coloniality, I considered the potential and limitations of working with grief as a conceptual framework, particularly for moving dominant or oppressor identities toward the work of structural transformation [2]. With race remaining a significant determinant of life possibility and experience in South Africa, this meant tackling whiteness.

In the years since undertaking that theoretical research, I have worked variously as a popular educator in the spatial injustice and land inequality sector and as a facilitator and board member for a small NPO that engages beneficiaries of colonialism/apartheid about the need for restitution in South Africa. Reflecting on the theory from my research in relation to these experiences, I would like to offer a few introductory thoughts about grief as a potentially transformative praxis for whiteness attempting to engage with anti-racist work in post-colonial contexts such as South Africa. As a thinker and practitioner who embodies multiple oppressor identities myself, my reflections are tentative and emergent, connected to both personal and collective experiences of loss, but cognisant that these could never be representative. As a process of profound change that is not chosen and cannot be controlled, grief may offer tools for moving beyond notions of 'transformation' that seek to contain change.

“Exploring ungrievability as a dimension of coloniality, I considered the potential and limitations of working with grief as a conceptual framework, particularly for moving dominant or oppressor identities toward the work of structural transformation. With race remaining a significant determinant of life possibility and experience in South Africa, this meant tackling whiteness.”

Ungrievability and Differential Vulnerability

From all our different perspectives and positions, experiencing life means encountering loss. The grief we may feel reveals that we are vulnerable: at risk of suffering because we are reliant on each other and on the material conditions that sustain us. This is a common vulnerability, simply part of being human and interdependent. We need others and we also need certain economic and social conditions to sustain ourselves (Butler, 2009: 14). However, while all people are inherently vulnerable, social and political organisations have developed historically in order to 'maximise precariousness for some and minimise precariousness for others' (Butler, 2009: 2). The result is that certain populations find themselves more vulnerable than others because they are generally exposed to greater violence with fewer protections. This is what the theory of ungrievability interrogates. Vulnerability to loss – what fundamentally exposes us to grief and what ought to be shared as a reminder of our humanity – is unequally distributed due to

differential power within present structures, leading to a failure of economic and social support for some (Butler, 2004: xii; Butler, 2009: 25). As noted at the outset, Butler argues that the unequal distribution is possible because certain people are excluded from the dominant understanding of full humanity.

As a parallel, Argentinian decolonial theorist Walter Mignolo (1995: 8) understands racism as a hegemonic discourse that questions the humanity of people who are constructed as different from and lesser than those who assume the right to classify. From a decolonial perspective, this questioning – what Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007: 245) describes as 'misanthropic scepticism' – is central to how 'race' as we know it today [3] became the most significant determinant of a person's social and class position in the single-world order emerging under European expansion after 1492. [4]

Sylvia Wynter (1999) argues that a particular understanding of what it meant to be human – one that had emerged within a specific time/place as the result of particular cultural transformations and historical events – was imposed onto different civilizations and weaponised to set the foundations of a racialised global hierarchy. Colonisers attempted to justify the exploitation and elimination of those they encountered during expansion by proclaiming the absence of an equal human soul among indigenous people. This allowed for a form of social stratification that was entirely hierarchical and immutable because the oppressed were not seen as equally human, supposedly justifying radical violence against them (Morgensen, 2001: 61–63; Maldonado-Torres, 2007: 244). Although Butler's theory was developed as an analysis of war in the aftermath of 9/11, it quite clearly intersects with the way that racism as a structure of differential vulnerability is understood in the lineage of decolonial thought.

Augustine Park (2015) makes this connection when she puts the concept of ungrievability into conversation with settler colonial theory. Patrick Wolfe (2006) argues that the colonial project operates according to a 'logic of elimination' driven by the need to access and retain land. Simply put, in order to impose and sustain an external civilisation, one must destroy what already exists in a place. This might be through direct violence, through structural violence, or through multiple forms of assimilation that undermine the elements of identity that those marked for elimination might organise around to challenge the external power. I include here the elimination of cultural assets such as language, social formation, and spiritual practices that protect and reinforce collective identities, supporting life over time. For Park, the logic of elimination is what renders indigenous life ungrievable in settler colonial contexts. If a life is not seen as holding full human worth, but rather regarded as an obstacle to be removed from space, its loss or the loss of that which renders it irreplaceable will not be met with mourning (Park, 2015: 279). It must be noted that this is not to suggest that indigenous peoples are not intimately connected to the grief that flows from experiencing colonial violence. Nor is it to say that indigenous peoples are left 'hostage to grief', debilitated by pain and passively waiting for the day that settler society recognises their loss and the value of their lives (Park, 2015: 290). Either of these views would deny an entire history of radical decolonial struggle that has worked through pain to continuously challenge oppression. As Kēhaulani Kauanui (2016) puts it, the operative logic of settler colonialism may be to 'eliminate the native,' but indigenous peoples 'exist, resist, and persist' all the same. She argues that the logic of elimination must always be balanced by the truth of 'enduring indigeneity' (Kēhaulani Kauanui, 2016).

With that said, drawing a connection between ungrievability and the logic of elimination helps us to trace the continuities that bring differential vulnerability into the present. For Maldonado-Torres (2007: 247), as for Butler, casting doubt upon humanity justifies the injustices committed against certain peoples by normalising and radicalising their heightened vulnerability. He argues that existing as a racialised other means existing in a perpetual condition of war, permanently faced with the likelihood of either direct or indirect structural violence. Elimination, though always resisted and never complete, becomes a persistent challenge in varying forms. In A Dying Colonialism, Frantz Fanon (1959: 128) offers a description of the oppressed experience:

> There is, first of all, the fact that the colonised person…perceives life not as a flowering or a development of an essential productiveness, but as a permanent struggle against an omnipresent death. This ever-menacing death is experienced

> as endemic famine, unemployment, a high death rate, an inferiority complex and the absence of any hope for the future. All this gnawing at the existence of the colonised tends to make of life something resembling an incomplete death.

At certain points in history, elimination manifested in battles on the frontiers of settler and colonial states or in forced removal from land that supported life; today, it can be recognised in the disproportionate threat of police brutality faced by racialised communities or their lack of access to social goods such as decent education, healthcare, legal aid, and social support. Ungrievability as part of racist structures is powerfully articulated by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement's contemporary call to 'end the war on Black people' as 'an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise' (Black Lives Matter, 2021). For me, though, it is perhaps most perfectly captured by Malawian-born poet Upile Chisala (2005) when she says:

> so when black blood bleeds it is minor
> it is commonplace
> it is expected.
> so when black blood bleeds,
> a system doesn't cry.

Putting ungrievability into conversation with decolonial thought is useful for grappling with racism as a specifically embedded form of structural injustice in ostensibly post-colonial settings. In particular, it offers insight into the way that whiteness – a dominant dimension of the 'system' that does not cry – situates vulnerability away from itself through a process of elimination and erasure. Considering this here, in the world's most unequal society, we can trace that whiteness means holding privilege that flows from an historic ability to situate vulnerability away from ourselves. Dispossession meant looting, killing, and burning (Reddy, 2015) – as well as legislating to secure the land that would mean life (SAHO, 2019). Later on, the mechanisms of constructing vulnerability took subtler but no less deadly forms. Our grandfathers worked in jobs reserved for white people (Hepple, 1963) and bought homes in designated, well-located areas (SAHO, 2020), while communities were torn apart by forced displacement. Our fathers continued to rely on cheap domestic labour and educational opportunities that were closed to others (O'Malley/NMF), while a generation sacrificed their learning to fight for liberation (Naidoo, 2019; SAHO, 2020). As contemporary health and education systems struggle, our own debit orders reflect the turn to private school fees and medical aid. In choosing as we do, we continually distance ourselves from the vulnerability that inheres in the society we are part of, implicitly turning attention away from the fact that this so often concentrates it onto others. We disinvest from the need to fix what's been broken. We close our eyes to the loss others carry and too often forget the subtle threads that historically bind us to that suffering.

Anti-Racist Work and Grief as a Potentially Transformative Praxis

Can this be overcome? As part of her initial theorisation of 'ungrievability', Butler argues that grief may lead us to consider ethical responsibility in new ways because it makes us acknowledge that relations and social conditions are deeply part of our personhood. This metaphysic isn't foreign in traditional African cultures where 'I am because you are' is what makes most sense (Mangena/IEP). But for those embedded in the more individualist worldviews that dominate Western capitalist modernity, Butler urges that personal and social grief can help us to identify with the vulnerability others face. Park (2015) goes a step further by proposing a 'politics of grief' for settler colonial contexts. She argues that working to overcome ungrievability has the potential to both decolonise the mind of the settler and ground a push towards transformative structural justice (Park, 2015: 277). This is very interesting when thinking about anti-racist work that focuses on the oppressor or dominant identity. According to Park, a politics of grief reconstitutes the individual and collective, literal and figurative death of indigenous persons as grievable, allowing settlers and indigenous peoples to honour one another's existence in a manner that fundamentally alters the relationship because it rejects the foundational logic of elimination (Park, 2015: 286).

The politics of grief is proposed as a resource through which a grievable person – in Park's formulation, the settler, but this could more broadly be understood as applying to dominant identities or whiteness

generally in a racist world order – is potentially able to join the work of internal and external change to create a more human world. 'The work' is not about feeling bad; instead it must mean fighting against the construction of disproportionate vulnerability that results when some monopolise the material resources for liveable life at others' expense. This requires looking at issues like shelter, work, medical care, food, and legal protection. Butler (2009: 28) says:

> For populations to become grievable does not require that we come to know the singularity of every person who is at risk or who has indeed, already been risked. Rather, it means that policy needs to understand precariousness as a shared condition, and precarity as the politically induced condition that would deny equal exposure through the radically unequal distribution of wealth and the differential ways of exposing certain populations, racially and nationally conceptualized, to greater violence.

I am drawn to Park's vision of a grief-centred politics that turns dominant identities toward the work of structural transformation, but it is unclear how that politics could emerge practically. Given the discussion above of elimination and erasure, it seems any politics of grief would need to involve critical education: challenging and introducing knowledge that disrupts erasure. Anti-racist popular educators in this area would need to focus on conscientising those embedded in whiteness about the history of elimination in different spaces so as to surface what has been lost and reveal the mechanisms through which vulnerability is historically differently allocated. Particularly when working with dominant or privileged identities that might deny confrontations with structural injustice, experiences of loss and tangible measures of differential vulnerability can be powerful pedagogical tools. However, knowledge alone might not be enough. When elimination operates continuously over time, a significant problem is that the absence is not felt even if it becomes recognised. Cocks (2012: 224) says:

> The lack of a sense of loss of what has been erased, on the part of persons whose sensibilities have been molded within a new order of things, means that the critic must find a way not merely to conjure up a world that is no longer there but also to elicit a felt concern for its absence. This is especially difficult when the absent world belonged to some other people's ancestors. [My emphasis]

The pathology of ungrievability is essentially a systemic failure by those who enjoy greater protection from vulnerability to be moved by the more radical vulnerability and elimination others experience. It is an absence of feeling – what might be described as apathy or indifference – and an associated failure to act. As an example – in her book What Does It Mean to Be White? – anti-racist scholar Robin DiAngelo argues that white people seldom register or lament the lack of meaningful diversity in dominant culture. Whiteness is accepted as the norm in their neighbourhoods, schools, media products, mentors, and relationships, so there is little felt need to take action toward change. My core work targets how this operates in space, focusing on the legacy of spatial apartheid and the continued exclusion of poor and working class, Black and coloured people from well-located areas that were reserved for those classified as white under apartheid. 'Good' neighbourhoods remain predominantly white and their lack of transformation – or increasing exclusivity – is rarely seen as problematic. As fellow popular educator Nicola Soekoe (2019: 48) interprets: homogeneity is often felt to be a privilege, not a lack. The absence or erasure of an oppressed group from dominant culture results in their potential influence being rendered 'ungrievable' because that which was different was seen as lesser from the start. The destruction or absence of languages, cultures, knowledge systems, spiritualities, and various forms of social organisation outside of white supremacy is not mourned as loss because it is not in the first

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instance seen as part of the same human collective. This is a serious obstacle for practitioners working for anti-racist structural transformation.

Al-Saji (2014: 147) specifically emphasises the importance of targeting racism at the level of affect. Some protest that this plays into the emotionally over-determined and irrational nature of racism, and argue that anti-racist work should rather be undertaken at a cognitive or rational level targeting people's beliefs. While cognitive work that challenges racism is essential, we must also be willing to recognise that affect is what moves people to take political action (Nussbaum, 2013) or at least believe that action is necessary. One can shift a rational understanding without actually undoing the affective structure that underlies the point of view or developing the desire to act differently. There is an immediacy to the (non)-response of indifference. It affects what we do and do not notice and what we turn attention toward or choose to dedicate energy to. Al-Saji argues that 'anti-racist transformations need to occur at the affective, perceptual, and bodily level, the pre-reflective level of habit, and not merely at the reflective level of cognition or belief' (2014: 162).

A politics of grief that pursues affective transformation must be able to disrupt the indifference of ungrievability for whiteness to experience a meaningful felt response that will actually move people to action. The social and structural security of whiteness reinforces ungrievability, so introducing a 'politics of grief' would take an initial act of rupture to allow for moments of opening in which the dominant way of being can be critically engaged and possibly shifted. As popular educators in the social justice sector, one might be able to achieve this through sharing knowledge or activating protest action that confronts and challenges complacency.

This raises a further issue, however, in that disrupting indifference risks resulting in highly reactive and resistant responses. In the book The Cultural Politics of Emotion, critical race and postcolonial theorist Sara Ahmed argues that emotions may invest people so strongly in social structures that they experience a challenge to the system as a sort of existential threat. Emotional responses shape our action in ways that either allow for opening, or violently reject it. Confronted with disruption, privilege likely attempts to restore prior comfort as quickly as possible. Butler's (2004, 2009) thinking on violence, mourning, and vulnerability emerged in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, from seeking to understand the American public's response to sudden and unforeseen trauma. 9/11 was a moment characterised not only by physical loss of life within the nation's borders, but also by the symbolic loss of a particular sense of what life in that society meant. Entangled and multidimensional, grief flowed openly from a wound that tore into the nation's understanding of self. The 'break in first world complacency' ruptured the relative security of life in a Northern superpower (Butler, 2004: 8), connecting to varying forms of loss for the individual and the society and disrupting a status quo that sought to be seen as secure. Considered as an example of privilege confronted, it is revealing that its consequence was the so-called War on Terror. Butler (2004: 29–30) points out that in cases of disruption, privilege likely 'shores itself up, seeks to reconstitute its imagined wholeness, but only at the price of denying its own vulnerability, its dependency, its exposure, where it exploits those very features in others thereby making those features 'other' to itself'.

The uncertainty and vulnerability of disruption can be rejected in repressive or violent ways if we experience it as something to be escaped or overcome, rather than embraced as a resource for opening ourselves and our structures to change. As practitioners, we must be able to not only break through complacency, but sustain the opening created by disrupting indifference in order to build different politics. A politics of grief may need to introduce vulnerability, but then also hold and support people so that they can accept it. Vulnerability should, at all times, be introduced and navigated in ways that reconnect us to it as a connector, a shared part of our human experience. Exploiting vulnerability is dehumanising; embracing and redistributing it may hold the potential to be humanising. Here I align strongly with Soekoe's (2019) move to develop a facilitation style or approach to anti-racist education that creates spaces of uncertainty and vulnerability. When it comes to doing this practically, we might take seriously the emotional tools and perspectives that help people navigate confrontations with grief and vulnerability generally, drawing on contextually appropriate traditions for these where necessary.

This for me is perhaps most honestly the place of any politics that considers grief in relation to the pathology of ungrievability: thinking about how to nurture moments of opening in structures that are ordinarily closed and supporting people to accept uncertainty as a space of possibility. A politics of grief could open us to conversations about the material effects of trauma, the actional work of healing, the love and the anger that urge individuals towards justice, and the deeply unequal apportioning of vulnerability in the modern world. It also compels us to recognise how very present both the past and future are in how we inherit and enact structures, allowing us to look to our history and to see the continuities that inhibit meaningful change moving forward. But for any of this to be possible, whiteness must be willing to embrace the necessity, inevitability, and unknowable potential of change. Grief is always indeterminable and has a certain transformative potential that cannot be controlled, as captured when Butler (2004: 21) says:

> Perhaps, rather, one mourns when one accepts that by the loss one undergoes one will be changed, possibly forever. Perhaps mourning has to do with agreeing to undergo a transformation (perhaps one should say submitting to a transformation) the full result of which one cannot know in advance.

If ungrievability is a question of power revealing the individuals or institutions that have the ability to situate vulnerability away from themselves, then asking for this submission is not about wanting people to be less protected. It's about reflecting on the question: if we could not other this human vulnerability, how would we want our systems set up?

Notes

[1] These movements were the Rhodes Must Fall and Fees Must Fall student movements, to which I was an active ally participant, as well as the Reclaim the City social movement, which I remain closely part of today.

[2] Any attempt to bifurcate a population into 'oppressor' and 'oppressed' necessarily collapses the complexity of the multiple intersecting identities all people embody. Aware of this, I still use the bifurcation in this analysis to recognise race as a primary construct used to divide between the coloniser and the colonised, or oppressor and oppressed (Quijano, 2007; Gordon, 2005; De Sousa Santos, 2007). This does not discount the role of complex class formations, divisions between core and periphery areas, and hierarchies based on gender, sexuality, religion, belief, language, and looks.

[3] Racism is inherently a question of power and of structure which may have varying articulations across space and time, but retains an essential logic of hierarchy with different markers (for example, race as phenotype in certain spaces and as religion in others).

[4] To read more on this, see generally Wynter, 1995; 1999; 2003; Morgensen, 2011; Dussel, 2002; Grosfoguel, 2007; Quijano, 2007; and Mignolo, 2011.

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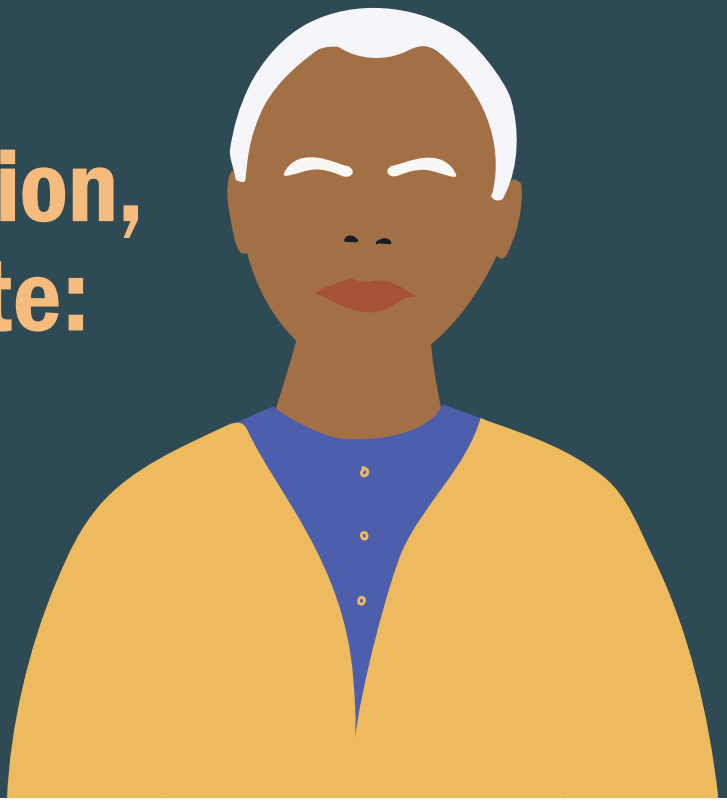
Race, Racialisation, and Colour-Caste:

Neville Alexander's Contribution to the Philosophy of Race

By George Hull | Peer Review



Abstract

Since race categories do not pick out biologically significant divisions of humanity, their use can be misleading and offensive. Yet racialisation – society's viewing and treating South Africans as though they comprised different races – has generated real societal groups which are significant from the perspectives of justice and identity. In the philosophy of race, these facts make for a conceptual conundrum. Is common-sense race thinking right that races, if they exist, are human groups differing in significant, inherent and heritable ways, in which case there are no races? Or has common-sense race thinking failed to grasp races' socially constructed nature, and should we say races are the really existing groups generated by racialisation? The same facts confronted the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) – a mid-20th-century South African liberation movement – with an organisational and theoretical challenge. Given its uncompromising non-racialism, how could it justify a federal structure which effectively divided its membership into African, Coloured, and Indian sections? If this was not race-based division, what was it? A former NEUM member, Neville Alexander, provided the Unity Movement with the conceptual resources to answer this challenge. I argue that his major work, One Azania, One Nation, is also a contribution to the philosophy of race. Alexander first contends that social constructionists cannot, without equivocation, claim that common-sense thinking about race in one sense has created races in a quite different sense. He then shows that introducing a second concept, 'colour-caste', can preserve the insights of the constructionist approach. While races are unreal, colour-castes are real social identities which need to be overcome.

Introduction

In South Africa, as in other countries where race thinking has in the past played a determinative role, race presents itself to us today clothed in paradox. Race categories and the concept of race can strike us as unsound, race itself as unreal – relics of an age of illusion and oppression which should be discarded. Public discussion of a research publication from 2019 – which claimed that 'Colored women in South Africa have an increased risk for low cognitive functioning, as they present with low education levels and unhealthy lifestyle behaviors' (Nieuwoudt et al., 2019: 1) – correctly stressed that there are strong scientific objections to the use of, and especially generalisations in terms of, race categories such as 'coloured' (see, for instance, Jansen et al., 2020) [1].

At the same time, race can strike us as real and important – a phenomenon which should factor into policymaking by societal institutions and government. This applies particularly in relation to efforts by South African institutions to redress historical injustices inspired or rationalised by race thinking. For example, a newspaper opinion piece recently questioned a South African university's commitment to redress in staff appointments, on the basis that its 'top management team [...] is dominated by coloured and Indian or white South Africans', with individuals 'of African descent' (sic) in the minority (Naidu, 2020) [2].

Examples like these raise conceptual questions. Is it possible both to criticise a scientific study for employing race categories and to criticise an institution's redress policy by invoking race categories? Does the one criticism simply contradict the other? Or would a correct theory of race allow that both lines of criticism could be legitimate? At the root of all these questions is the question which is my focus here: What is race?

Due to its conceptual character this is, in part, a philosophical question – though only philosophy informed by relevant biological and social-scientific research findings could hope to answer it adequately. But professional philosophers are not the only people who engage in philosophical thinking. I argue here that an important contribution to philosophical thinking about race is to be found in the work of an activist and intellectual from South Africa's Unity Movement tradition: Neville Alexander.

> "...after explaining why there is a philosophical question about the nature of race, I detail how the same factors which make this philosophical question so hard to answer created a theoretical and practical conundrum for the leaders of the Unity Movement in mid-20th century South Africa. I then outline Neville Alexander's distinctive position on race in his major work, One Azania, One Nation"

In recent years, several studies have highlighted the relevance of Unity Movement ideas for South Africa's renewed engagement with questions of race and identity (see especially Maré, 2014; Zinn, 2016; Brown et al., 2017; Motala et al., 2017; Erasmus, 2017; Soudien, 2019). These studies have, however, tended to focus on the Unity Movement's general anti-realist position about race, without paying attention to the particular more nuanced account of race which Neville Alexander developed. Where they have given attention to Alexander's position (see Zinn, 2016; Motala et al., 2017), they have not pinpointed the advance it makes on the theoretical work of the previous generation of Unity Movement intellectuals, or the fact that Alexander's thinking also makes a contribution to the contemporary philosophical debate about race.

In what follows, after explaining why there is a philosophical question about the nature of race, I detail how the same factors which make this philosophical question so hard to answer created a theoretical and practical conundrum for the leaders of the Unity Movement in mid-20th century South Africa. I then outline Neville Alexander's distinctive position on race in his major work, One Azania, One Nation, showing how his thinking advances not only the debate about race in Unity Movement circles, but also the philosophical debate about race today. As we will see, Alexander argues that, though race is unreal, the societal process of racialisation has given rise to real groups, colour-castes. While real now, colour-caste identities need not

exist forever. In Alexander's view, they are something which can, and must, be overcome.

Why is there a philosophical question about race? [3]

Not many people would think to ask a philosopher what race is. The expertise of human biologists and empirical social scientists seem more relevant. And in the first instance, it is. But sometimes a few uncontested empirical observations, taken together, create a paradox or dilemma which only careful conceptual thought will resolve. Many philosophical problems arise this way. For instance, the observation that it is open to us humans to decide whether or not to carry out some physical actions, combined with the scientific observation that universal laws govern physical events, creates the philosophical problem of free will. In the case of race, three observations – on which there is wide agreement among empirical researchers – create a philosophical conundrum.

(i) Races, on the common-sense understanding, are not real

There is a common-sense understanding of 'race' of which almost all English speakers are aware, even if they distance themselves from it. On this understanding, races are human groups which differ significantly, significantly enough to justify our giving them their own labels: 'Black', 'white', 'Asian', 'Pacific Islander', in South Africa 'Coloured', and others besides. The differences – says this common-sense understanding – are certainly physical, perhaps also cognitive and emotional. What is more, they are relatively fixed and immutable. Unlike cultural and religious differences, they are not a matter of choice or training; rather, they are inherent to the individual, possessed by nature, and passed on down the generations like a family's distinguishing traits.

To say this is the common-sense understanding of 'race' is not necessarily to say that common sense takes races on this understanding to exist. There is, after all, a common-sense understanding of 'unicorn', though it is not common sense that unicorns exist. There have always been sceptics about race. And it is likely that some, despite being sceptical, have nonetheless spoken and acted as though they believed in races – for example, because they found themselves, or desired to be, on the privileged end of a racialised hierarchy (Blum, 2010: 317n4). But 'race' is not quite like 'unicorn'. An unexamined assumption that races in the above sense exist is widespread in many parts of the world. As Charles W. Mills puts it, 'lay consciousness' about race 'is typically realist' (1998: 60). What is more, belief in races in the above sense has informed influential scientific theories and political doctrines – both the harmful doctrines underlying colonial, fascist, and apartheid politics (see Fredrickson, 2002), and some of the political theories of Africanists and pan-Africanists in the 19th and 20th centuries (see Appiah, 1992: Ch. 1).

For significant and inherent differences to be transmitted within discrete populations, they would need to be genetically encoded. Yet that is not what scientists find. Humans have more than 99 per cent of their DNA in common. When geneticists compare the chromosomes of members of what we count as different races, they consistently find that the overwhelming majority (85% or more) of what little human genetic variation there is can be found within groups we call races. Only a small proportion (a maximum of 15%) can be classed as variation between groups we call races (Nei et al., 1972; Lewontin, 1972).

At the phenotypic level, traits also do not cluster as common-sense race thinking would lead one to believe. Human skin pigmentation varies along a spectrum by latitude (Jablonski, 2015). Nose shape varies among humans, but not along the fault lines of 'race': for example, many East African 'black' people have the same nose shape as North European 'white' people (Atkin, 2012: 35). Tightly curled hair can be found among people classed as 'white' as well as among those classed as 'black'. All in all, if one's purpose was to come up with a rational categorisation of human beings by physical traits, one would not arrive at the divisions common-sense race thinking presses upon us.

If one focuses on the 15% of human genetic variation which exists between the groups we call races, among the different clusters detectable are some which correlate in a rough and ready way with common-sense race thinking's divisions. For example, Noah Rosenberg and his colleagues' cluster analysis identified five populations corresponding very approximately to groups we would class as races – except, notably, it counts South Asians (for e.g. Bangladeshis) as

members of the same population as North Europeans (Rosenberg et al., 2002; Rosenberg et al., 2005). Though the differences such a cluster analysis detects are real biological differences, they are not significant biological differences. Indeed, the clusters Rosenberg and his team located are largely made up of non-functional DNA in the human genome (Spencer, 2019: 104). Neither at the phenotypic nor at the genotypic level does common-sense race thinking carve human nature at its joints.

(ii) Racialisation is real

Though there are not significant, inherent, heritable differences between the groups we call races, this has rarely stopped us, over the past 500 years, from behaving as though there were (see, for e.g., Fredrickson, 2002). Perceiving and treating groups as though they were races is what social scientists call racialisation. Lawrence Blum defines it as 'the treating of groups as if there were inherent and immutable differences between them; as if certain somatic characteristics marked the presence of significant characteristics of mind, emotion, and character; and as if some were of greater worth than others' (2002: 147).

What Blum describes here is racialisation on a racist basis – i.e., based on the notion that the putative different human races form a natural hierarchy. This form of racialisation has been especially pervasive (and destructive) in human history. But it is also possible to treat people as though they were members of different races, while taking those races to be of equal, or incomparable, worth; as it is to treat people as though they were members of races which differed only physically. Here I will understand racialisation broadly, as the pervasive viewing and/or treating of groups as though they were discrete, relatively homogeneous divisions of humanity which differ from one another in significant, inherent, heritable ways.

(iii) Racialisation can give rise to real societal groups

Centuries of racialisation has in some cases given rise to real societal groups. Members of these groups have had in common the similar types of treatment, whether favourable or unfavourable, they receive in certain contexts. '[T]he black man,' W.E.B. Du Bois famously remarked, 'is a person who must ride Jim Crow in Georgia.' ([1940] 2002: 153) That is not necessarily to say that they are aware of having types of treatment in common. '[W]hite privilege,' Chike Jeffers has claimed, 'is [...] a condition of which it is characteristic that having it makes it more likely that one will be unaware of its existence.' (2019: 53)

The groups to which racialisation gives rise are not only distinguished by ways in which they are perceived and ways in which they are treated. Members of a group may respond to racialisation with an alternative vision of their group identity, subverting the identity imposed from outside. We should be cautious about generalisations in this area, since any cultural identity ascribed to a group is likely to be contested by many individual members of the group (Shelby, 2005: 224–25; Soudien, 2019: 84). But it is not implausible to think that a group which is racialised could actively respond to racialisation in this way.

Chike Jeffers has claimed that 'black identity [...] is an identity partly shaped by the agency, creativity, and traditional cultures of those who came to inhabit it and, as such, it has distinctive cultural meaning and value' (2013: 419–20). In the South African context, Denis-Constant Martin has made a similar claim about the group racialised as 'Coloured'. He writes:

> The people who were to be classified coloureds were stripped of their names, as individuals and as people, when they were organized as a group from the outside. They nevertheless took possession of this group and invented an original culture; they created rules to live by and ideals to dream from. (Martin, 2000: 117)

Rather than resolving the issue of what race is, let alone answering the question of whether races exist, the three empirical observations above generate a dilemma. One could take the view that the common-sense understanding is right about what 'race' means, and conclude that races do not exist in the real world. This is the option favoured by Kwame Anthony Appiah in In My Father's House. 'The truth,' writes Appiah, 'is that there are no races: there is nothing in the world that can do all we ask race to do for us.' (1992: 45) On this anti-realist view, the identities to which racialisation gives rise are illusory; racialisation is nothing but the propagation of illusion. However, there is another option. Rather than deferring to the common-sense understanding of 'race', one could take the view that

races do exist, and are the groups to which racialisation gives rise. Going down this route entails agreeing with the idea that races exist, but holding that the common-sense understanding of 'race' needs to be revised.

Precedents for this second, semantically revisionist, type of response to the facts are easy to find. In the first dictionary of English, Samuel Johnson recorded the common-sense understanding of his time, when he defined 'whale' as 'the largest of fish'. Yet whales are not fish; they are mammals like us. Are we to conclude that whales do not, or did not then, exist, or that when people in Johnson's time said 'whale', they were referring to the rhincodon typus, which is the largest fish? Surely not. We know what organism they were referring to, and we know that it exists (albeit in ever-decreasing numbers). What needed to be revised in this case was the common-sense understanding of a whale's nature. Perhaps the same is true in the case of race.

Philosophers such as Charles W. Mills and Sally Haslanger have argued that races are not biologically but socially real: they are constituted by the societal processes of classification which seize on a cluster of physical markers, and by the societal processes of privileging and disadvantaging which order the groups with these markers into a generally recognised hierarchy. For Haslanger and Mills, race is a social construction not in the sense that it is an illusion, but in the sense that its reality depends on societally inculcated habits of perception and behaviour (Mills, 1998; Haslanger, 2019).

A variant on this social constructionist position holds that, though races were originally constituted solely by processes of privileging and disadvantaging, they are now also partially constituted by the cultural ways of life which unite their members (see Jeffers, 2013). The philosophical debate over which of these views of race is correct remains unresolved (see, for e.g., Glasgow et al., 2019).

The Unity Movement's response to the question of race [4]

'The Unity Movement' refers to a cluster of South African political organisations, encompassing the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM), founded in 1943; the New Unity Movement (NUM), still in existence today; and several others in between – including the African People's Democratic Union of Southern Africa (APDUSA) and the Cape Action League (CAL).

The NEUM came into being through the federation of two organisations dedicated to opposing segregatory legislation in the Union of South Africa. The first of these was the All African Convention (AAC), founded in 1935 to oppose proposals from J.B.M. Hertzog's government for further political and territorial segregation of Africans, and comprising mainly Africans from rural areas of the eastern Cape. The second was the Anti-CAD, founded in 1943 to oppose plans from Jan Smuts' government for a Coloured Affairs Council (CAC) and ultimately a Coloured Affairs Department (CAD). Later, in 1948, the Anti-Segregation Council, a splinter from the Natal Indian Congress, also affiliated to the NEUM (Jaffe, 1992; Adhikari, 2005).

The overlapping leadership of the AAC, the NEUM, and the Anti-CAD was drawn from a small group of Cape Town intellectuals. Most prominent were Ben Kies, Goolam Gool, Hawa Ahmed, Janub Gool, I.B. Tabata, and Hosea Jaffe. In their leadership roles, these intellectuals – dubbed 'the Cape Radicals' by Crain Soudien – applied ideas which they had developed over a number of years in discussion groups, especially the New Era Fellowship. Their interactions with a compulsively secretive Trotskyist organization, the Workers' Party of South Africa (WPSA), whose members included the Scottish novelist and political theorist Dora Taylor, were also decisive in shaping their thinking (Soudien, 2019).

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in their attempts at this analysis, they were confronted by the same three empirical observations, and by the same dilemma in how to respond to them, as are philosophers of race today.

(i) Races, on the common-sense understanding, are not real

Their uncompromising non-racialism set the NEUM and its affiliates apart from other mid-20th century South African liberation movements. For the NEUM, non-racialism signified not merely the equality of races, or even the irrelevance of race in all practical contexts, but the non-existence of race. Nowhere is this more evident than in Ben Kies' speeches from the 1940s and 1950s.

In his address to the Anti-CAD conference of May 1943, Kies repudiates the 'vicious racial myths' prevalent in South Africa at the time. These include, on Kies' analysis, not only ideas of racial hierarchy – 'the idea of white trustees and non-white child races' – but also the very idea of 'racial differences' (1943: 1, 14). Kies' A.J. Abrahamse Memorial Lecture from 1953 likewise critiques 'the myth of race' (1953: 7). Once again, Kies rejects not only ideas of 'inherent "racial" superiority', but also the very idea that there are different human races:

> [O]ne thing is quite certain, and that is that mutations in skin-colour, hair texture, shape of nose or skull, and stature, owing to geographical dispersal, isolation and diet, have made not the slightest difference to the biological unity of man as a single species, and provide no scientific basis for a division into what are popularly mis-called "races". (1953: 12)

There was no genetic evidence for Kies to draw on in the early 1950s, but he cites then-recent work in physical anthropology to substantiate his critique. Kies' position can also be seen as an organic development of the scepticism about racial categories prevalent among political activists in the Cape, going back to Abdullah Abdurahman's African Political Organisation (APO). The APO had mocked the 1905 School Board Act's attempt to provide a definition of 'European' and in 1925 Abdurahman had denounced government policies for being based on unscientific race theories (Lewis, 1987: 68, 134).

In the 1940s and 1950s, the National Party government was beginning the process of legally codifying the common-sense race categories which had been in use for a century or more. Over the ensuing decades it was to apportion different rights and entitlements to South Africans, depending on their assigned race, creating a notorious system of legally sanctioned racism (Maré, 2014). But it was not only in government circles that race thinking intensified during this period. Within the Congress Movement, which campaigned against segregation and apartheid, the leading intellectual of the Youth League, Anton Lembede, articulated a hard-line Africanism based on biological racial realism:

> The Leader of the Africans will come out of their own loins. No foreigner can ever be a true and genuine leader of the African people because no foreigner can ever truly and genuinely interpret the African spirit which is unique and peculiar to Africans only. Some foreigners Asiatic or European who pose as African leaders must be categorically denounced and rejected.
> (Lembede, [1946] 1996: 92)

Consistent with their uncompromising non-racialism, Unity Movement organisations took a stand both against D.F. Malan's National Party government, and against the African National Congress (ANC). The AAC founded the Society of Young Africa (SOYA) – in Phyllis Ntantala's words – 'to counter the rabid racism of the Youth League with its slogan "Africa for the Africans"' (2009: 153) [5]. Meanwhile, the Anti-CAD instituted a social boycott of everyone who participated in the CAC, instructing its members: 'Don't meet them, even if it is necessary to cross over to the other side of the street. Don't see them, even if you do come face to face with them.' (Lewis, 1987: 214)

(ii) Racialisation is real

The leaders of the Unity Movement paid a lot of attention to the societal process of racialisation. It was something they wanted to bring to a halt. They had a Marxist explanation for why racialisation had occurred in South Africa as it had. 'The real cleavage is one of class, not one of colour,' wrote Tabata in The Awakening of a People; '[b]ut [...] the herrenvolk found it possible, and in fact extremely convenient to utilize Colour differences to cover over and obscure the fundamental dividing-line, that of class.' ([1950] 1974: 4)

Echoing V.I. Lenin's economic analysis of imperialism (see Lenin, [1917] 2010), Kies contends that the property-owning class in South Africa and in the imperial metropole overseas used the idea of race to effect a 'basic segregation of the working class into a white labour aristocracy and a black serf majority' (1943: 3). The higher-paid and privileged white working class would be willing to support the ruling class in the super-exploitation of the majority of the working class. Meanwhile, the owner class used its psychological weapon of race a second time, playing 'divide and rule' against the non-white working class:

> The African is told that he is superior because he is "pure blooded"—and he has believed this. The Coloured man is told that he is superior because the "blood of the white man" flows in his veins—and he has believed this. The Indian has been told that he is superior because he belongs to a great nation with a mighty culture—and he has believed this. The Herrenvolk of South Africa have nothing to learn from Dr. Goebbels, for their vicious racial myths have bitten deep into the life and ways of the non-Europeans.
> (Kies, 1943: 5)

(iii) Racialisation can give rise to real societal groups

The Unity Movement also showed clear awareness that racialisation in South African society had given rise to real societal groups. This awareness is manifest not only in statements by its leaders, but also in the form Unity Movement organisations took. The NEUM, though committed to non-racialism, was deliberately structured as a federation of 'three federal bodies representing the three racial groups,' as Tabata put it (1945: 14) – the AAC membership being virtually all Africans, the Anti-CAD membership Coloured people, and (from 1948) the Anti-Segregation Council Indians.

Yet the first generation of Unity Movement intellectuals proved unable to conceptualise adequately the nature of the groups to which racialisation in South Africa gave rise, making it difficult for them to articulate the justification for the NEUM's federal structure. This is evident in Kies' address to the 1943 Anti-CAD conference. After deprecating the myth of race and the unsavoury motives behind racialisation in South Africa, Kies enters the following qualification to his call for non-European unity:

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> [W]hen we speak of a united front of ALL non-Europeans we do not mean lumping ALL non-Europeans holus-bolus together and fusing them all together in the belief that since ALL are non-European oppressed, the African is a Coloured man, an Indian is an African, and a Coloured man is either Indian or African whichever you please. Only those who are ignorant of both politics and history can believe in this nonsensical type of unity.
> (Kies, 1943: 13)

Given that he has already told us they are not races, this passage invites us to expect an explanation, based on politics and history, of what the groups Kies mentions are. But no explanation is forthcoming. Instead Kies defers the very question at issue, continuing:

> When [the non-Europeans] have thrown off their chains, then they can settle whatever national or racial differences they have, or think they have.
> (Kies, 1943: 13)

Mohamed Adhikari and Crain Soudien claim statements like these from Kies show that the Unity Movement's abandonment of race categories was at this time incomplete (Adhikari, 2005: 408; Soudien, 2019: 133). I believe the correct diagnosis is somewhat different. While the first generation of Unity Movement intellectuals were confirmed anti-realists about race, they were still groping for an adequate characterisation of the groups to which racialisation in South Africa had given rise, and which, they were convinced, made the NEUM's federal structure necessary. The crucial next analytical step was to be taken by Neville Alexander – albeit from outside the Unity Movement's organisational structures.

Neville Alexander's contribution to the philosophy of race

Neville Alexander was expelled from APDUSA in 1961 for contending, unlike his mentor Tabata, that the time was right for armed struggle in South Africa. From 1964 to 1974, he served a term of imprisonment on Robben Island for his activities with the Yu Chi Chan Club and the National Liberation Front. Though writing from outside the Unity Movement's formal structures, Neville Alexander's published works following his release remained firmly in the tradition of Unity Movement non-racialism. His magnum opus, One Azania, One Nation, written in the second half of the 1970s and published under the nom de plume 'No Sizwe', is the most successful attempt by a theorist in the Unity Movement tradition to conceptualise the nature of South Africa's population groups. Since the factors which led the Unity Movement into a quandary about the population groups are the very factors which make for a dilemma in philosophical theorising about race today, the conceptual portions of One Azania, One Nation are also a contribution to the philosophy of race.

The 'central thesis' of One Azania, One Nation, according to its author, is 'that the officially classified population registration groups in South Africa are colour-castes and that it is of pivotal political importance to characterise them as such' (No Sizwe, 1979: 141). Like the previous generation of Unity Movement intellectuals, Alexander is adamant that affirmations of racial equality are insufficient. 'There is something fundamentally wrong,' he writes, 'in accepting that the "population groups" in South Africa are "races" at all' (No Sizwe, 1979: 133). Alexander agrees with his forerunners in the Unity Movement that this is both because race is a scientifically discredited concept and because the belief that there are different races in South Africa does the ruling class's work of division for it: it dissipates in inter-sectional rivalry the activist energies which alone could overturn the inegalitarian status quo.

A social constructionist about race would say Alexander could have resolved the Unity Movement's quandary by affirming that the population groups are races – so long as races are to be understood not along common-sense biological lines, but as groups constituted by societal processes of classifying, privileging, and disadvantaging. Alexander is aware of this theoretical option, and he rejects it. Social constructionism, in his terminology, is the position that there exist 'sociological races'. To understand Alexander's thinking on race, it is crucial to unpack his reasons for rejecting this view. He writes:

> Put very simply, this approach implies that, because a very large number of human beings (but how many? by what statistical formula is an adequate number to be arrived at?) believes that there are "ghosts", science must accept the reality of "ghosts" because the belief in their existence occasions individual and group behaviour that could be expected if such things did in fact exist. Because "many" people still believe that the sun revolves around the earth, therefore the sun does revolve around the earth! Or because racial prejudice is a very real phenomenon, therefore "race" is a reality. (No Sizwe, 1979: 136)

It would be easy to dismiss this passage as putting the matter not just simply, but simplistically. However, I believe there is an insight buried in this passage written by a Unity Movement political theorist more than 40 years ago which can advance the contemporary philosophical debate about race.

A constructionist would likely object that Alexander clearly has not grasped the social constructionist position. Key to this position is that the descriptive meaning of 'race' employed by the constructionist who affirms that there are races ('sociological races', in Alexander's terminology) is entirely different from the common-sense meaning of 'race' employed when people affirm that there are races in everyday life. The constructionist would also point to a significant disanalogy between ghosts and planetary motions, on the one hand, and races, on the other. While individuals' beliefs and behaviours have no impact on the movements of heavenly bodies or the ability of humans to appear in spectral form following their death, individuals' beliefs and behaviours do have an impact on what societal groups come into being and persist. It is precisely because racialisation is a real process which gives rise to real societal groups that societal groups are available as candidates to count as the referents of – as that which is designated by – race terms.

But this objection misses the point. If I have understood it correctly, the thrust of Alexander's

critique of 'sociological races' is as follows. The social constructionist cannot both hold (a) that people's everyday beliefs framed in terms of 'race' as they understand this term generate real races, and (b) that the real nature of races is very different from what people's common-sense thoughts or beliefs framed in terms of 'race' would predict. Constructionism about race is an attempt to have one's cake and eat it. A theory which says the groups produced by racialisation are constituted by ordinary race thinking, and behaviours based on race thinking, has already invoked the concept race and established its content. Common-sense race thinking assumes that races are groups which differ significantly and inherently from one another, in ways which are passed on down the generations. A theorist who accepts that the groups produced by racialisation are brought into existence by beliefs about race in this sense cannot, without equivocation, go on to claim that the groups produced by racialisation are races in a quite different sense.

This is the light in which Alexander's comparison of race thinking with beliefs about ghosts and planetary motions must be viewed. If it were true that people's believing in ghosts produced ghosts, the ghosts produced would have to be ghosts in the very sense in which people believed in them. The same applies to planetary motions. But equally, if it were true that people's thinking and acting as though there were races produced races, the races produced would have to be races in the very sense in which people thought of races. If one holds that common-sense race thinking gives rise to real groups, but is not willing to affirm that these groups are races in the way common-sense race thinking understands races, then one must hold that the groups to which race thinking gives rise are not races, but groups of another kind.

Having rejected the social constructionist position, Alexander is not constrained to deny that racialisation gives rise to real groups. On the contrary, in One Azania he reserves some of his harshest words of criticism for members of the Fourth International Organisation of South Africa, who insisted on a purely class-based analysis of South African society and castigated the Unity Movement for its federal structure. '[T]he ultra-left vestiges of the Fourth International,' according to Alexander, faced 'the national question [...] with total incomprehension' (No Sizwe, 1979: 112–13). Alexander's position is that the South African population groups – African, Coloured, Indian, and white – are not races, not that they are not real.

"A theorist who accepts that the groups produced by racialisation are brought into existence by beliefs about race in this sense cannot, without equivocation, go on to claim that the groups produced by racialisation are races in a quite different sense."

Alexander holds that the process of racialisation in South Africa has given rise to colour-castes. The concept caste is appropriate, he argues, because racialisation has constituted the four groups hierarchically, with white people the most advantaged and privileged, Africans the most disadvantaged, and Indian and Coloured people in between. As in other caste systems, South Africa's colour-castes have exhibited tendencies towards endogamy, cultural distinctness, and job specialisation. As Alexander writes, they 'exhibit two fundamental tendencies, economic integration and non-economic separation within a single politically defined territory' (No Sizwe, 1979: 146). Whereas the ideology which held the Hindu caste system in place was religious, South Africa's has been held in place by a pseudo-scientific racial ideology: hence South Africa's caste system is a colour-caste system in Alexander's view (No Sizwe, 1979: 148).

Neville Alexander's contribution to the philosophical debate about the nature of race is twofold. In the first place, he supplies – albeit in abbreviated form – an argument against the social constructionist form of realism. The constructionist cannot, without equivocation, hold that the belief in races in one sense creates races in a quite different sense. A theorist who denies the existence of race on the common-sense understanding of it, but believes that racialisation gives rise to real societal groups, must conceive of these groups not as races but as groups of another kind. In the second place, Alexander shows that adopting an anti-realist position about race does not entail jettisoning the insights about racialisation and its impact which

the constructionist position takes on board. Introducing a second concept, alongside the concept race, which captures the nature of the groups which racialisation creates, enables us to acknowledge their social reality. It is quite possible to follow Alexander in adopting this second concept, even if one has doubts that 'colour-caste' is the best label for it. Though 'caste' is frequently used in a general sense to mean a group with a place in a hierarchy (see, for e.g., Wilkerson, 2020), it might be thought that the associations with the Hindu caste system will inevitably create confusion, so a label like 'racialised group' may be preferable (see, for e.g., Blum, 2002: 149) [6].

By denying the reality of races but affirming the reality of colour-castes, Alexander provides the conceptual resources which the Unity Movement needed in order to justify its federal structure. Organising its members by population group was not a regression into race thinking, but an acknowledgement of the reality of colour-castes. But since a caste identity is one which denies humans' fundamental equality, it will be natural for members of subordinate colour-castes, once they understand the nature of such an identity, to wish to co-operate in dismantling the system which makes it possible. As Jaffe had put it, without the benefit of Alexander's colour-caste theory, the 'federal form' was 'necessary because it proceeds from conditions as they actually are, [...] transient because it overcomes the conditions which made it necessary' (1953: 20).

Finally, Alexander's theory provides a cogent way of resolving the paradox with which we started. If 'Black', 'white', 'Coloured' or 'Indian' are used as terms for races – biological groups exhibiting significant, inherent, heritable differences – then they are relics of the past in need of being discarded. If, on the other hand, they are used as terms for colour-castes – the hierarchical products of South Africa's history of racialisation – then they refer to group identities which, while real, are in need of being overcome. Pursuing redress policies and monitoring their progress are plausibly one step on the way towards doing this.

Notes

[1] The article by Sharné Nieuwoudt and her colleagues was soon retracted by the journal which had published it. In a statement on 2 May 2019, the editors said this was because 'a number of assertions about "colored" South African women [...] cannot be supported by the study or the subsequent interpretation of its outcome'. This seems to me a valid criticism of the article. Whether these general assertions were based on 'racial essentialism' is a different matter. I am not as confident that they were as several of the contributors to Jansen et al. (2020) appear to be.

[2] I am not associating myself with the analysis in this opinion piece. My purpose is simply to illustrate the racial language often used in discussions of redress policies.

[3] I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for this journal whose comments enabled me to improve this section.

[4] Parts of this section draw on Hull, 2019.

[5] To be fair to Lembede, his published writings suggest his thinking was racialist but not racist – i.e., he affirmed the existence of races, but did not view them as forming a natural hierarchy (see Appiah, 1992: 13–20, for discussion of this distinction).

[6] I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for this journal for pressing me on this point..

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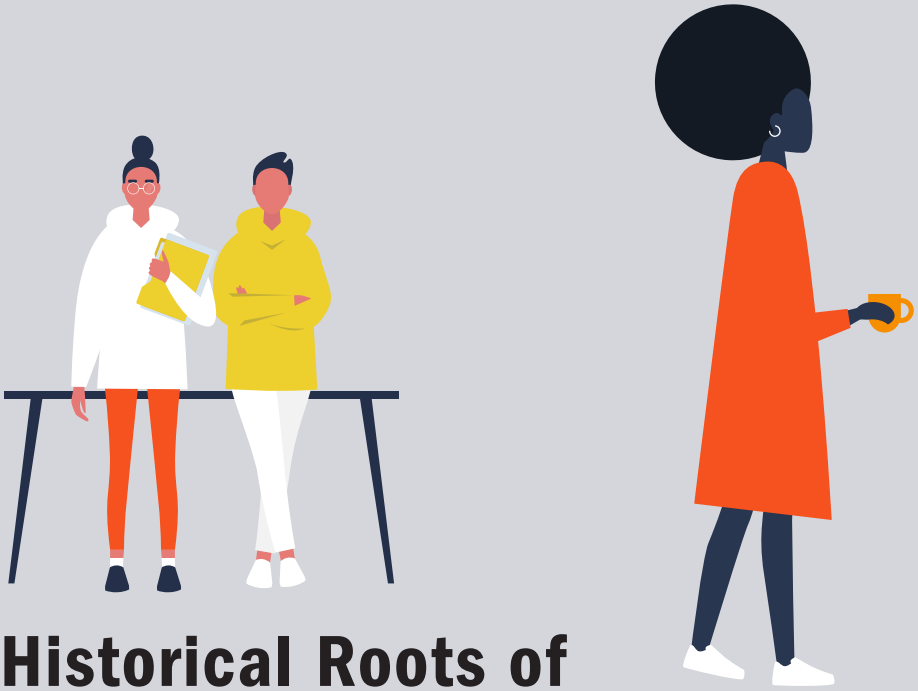

The Historical Roots of Post-Apartheid Intra-Working-Class Racism

By Tlhabane Mokhine 'Dan' Motaung | Peer Review

Abstract

Both European colonialism and apartheid shaped the economic history of South Africa, at the heart of which was the super exploitation of Black labour for the benefits of capital, the state, and white labour. While the early mercantile and agricultural economic stages influenced South Africa's racial capitalism, it was the era of the mineral revolution in the late 19th century – as well as the attendant imperative for cheap, Black labour – which formed the bedrock of the Union of South Africa in 1910 and later necessitated the rise of the apartheid state. With vested interests in the racist and later racialist order, which constituted them as the racialised labour aristocracy, white labour conceived of its identity – in racial and cultural terms – as part of European society. Consequently, an increasing social gulf emerged between Black/African labour and white labour, whose world outlooks were deeply immersed in racist metaphysics. Post-apartheid South Africa has inherited this dual, contradictory, and mutually antagonistic historical consciousness. This has been exacerbated by poor economic performance based on a neo-liberal framework, the social visibility of the often-self-assertive emerging Black middle class resulting from government affirmative policies, and the relative impoverishment of the white working class as they begin to face the cut and thrust of labour market with no preferential state cover. In view of this history of racialised capitalism, racism in post-apartheid South Africa is largely located within the Black and white working-class socio-economic space, as the latter forfeited its racially vested interests while the former derive the benefits of corrective state action.

Introduction

'Who controls the past controls the future. And who controls the present controls the past.' – George Orwell

South Africa's history was shaped within the context of European colonialism, beginning in 1492, a period which 'gave the world a centre and a periphery' (Blaunt, 1992: 2). In this racialised global geography, the former was white and European and the latter was African, Asian, and Latin American. As the global climate of racism and racialism began to hold sway as the order of things, the South African localised version of this racialisation phenomenon evolved within an economic context: first of mercantile capitalism, followed by agricultural capitalism, and – with the discovery of minerals in the mid-19th century – industrial capitalism (Terreblanche, 2000, 1994; Magubane, 1979; Elphick and Giliomee, 1979).

Both British colonialism (which took on the hue of racism during the segregation era) and the era of apartheid racialism (starting in 1948) racialised society within the capitalist logic. Black people were turned into a labouring class at the service of the white master population: their super exploitation, land dispossession, and structured low-paid employment guaranteed better remuneration for both capital and the white working class (McDonald, 2006; Terreblanche, 2002). The result of this structured subordination of Black labour was the creation of racialised capitalism, at the heart of which lodged the practice of labour aristocracy. The white workforce, culturally and racially differentiated from the Black workforce, was given tangible stakes in the defence and continuance of the system of racial oppression (Magubane, 1979, 1996; Terreblanche, 1994; De Kiewiet, 1959). Anchored on the ideology of racism at the level of the superstructure, this system of racial privilege fed off prevailing global notions of racial superiority (De Kiewiet, 1957; Magubane, 1979; Fredrickson, 1981).

In view of this history of racialised capitalism (where a racist philosophy legitimated officially sanctioned material inequities), racism in post-apartheid South Africa is largely located within the Black and white working classes. The latter forfeited its racially vested interests, while the Black working class derive benefits from corrective state action. Compounding matters is

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the socially and economically visible upward mobility of some sections of the Black population (i.e. the Black middle class) by dint of affirmative legislation and the attendant process of post-colonial elite formation. At the interface of this epochal social change, marked by the reassertion of scarred African/Black identities and an economy wilting in the doldrums, an undercurrent of hostile intra-working-class relations have emerged.

This essay confines itself to the historical period starting with the formation of the Union Government in 1910. This moment was largely a synthesis of historical currents (mercantile and agricultural capitalism) that moulded the evolution of race and class materially and ideologically, sculpting the enduring character of the emerging society as a racialised capitalist order based on the mineral revolution of the late 18th century.

This essay argues that through both the historical phases of British segregation (racism, 1910–1948) and apartheid (racialism, 1948—1980s), the white working class consciousness was infused with what Fukuyama calls megalothymia (2018: 22), 'something that by its very nature cannot be shared because it is based on one's position relative to someone else'. Megalothymia, as Fukuyama further elaborates, 'is the desire to be recognised as superior' (2018: 22). In the case of South Africa, it can be understood as a sanctified racial category in which British colonialism and apartheid placed white people.

Still drawing on Fukuyama, I contend that the rising assertion of African nationalism following the dissolution of apartheid reflected isothymia, the 'demand to be respected on an equal basis with other people' (2018: xiii). Framed in egalitarian terms

and expressed through constitutional dispensation, African nationalism was inclusive in its central tenets despite its new-found, post-apartheid euphoric exuberance. However, the need for historical redress meant consciously adopting racially affirming policies. This seemed to rouse the resentment of the white working class, who were just beginning to confront biting post-apartheid capitalist conditions without the familiar protection of the state. Economic stagnation, which failed to either keep up with or bankroll transformation aspirations, meant that the white working class' thymos, 'the part of the soul that craves recognition of dignity' (Fukuyama, 2016: xiii), and isothymia were negatively impacted.

Some scholars ascribe the apparent failure of the post-apartheid state to grow the economy, and thus ensure a fairly commensurate distribution and consumption of public goods to all South Africans, to the neoliberal economic choices the governing party adopted shortly after assuming power (Turok, 2008; Mohammed, in Mbeki, 2011). Stagnant economic conditions in a society with hyper-sensitive racial and ethnic self-consciousness meant not just the exacerbation of inherited mutual resentment between Black and white people, especially of working-class provenance, but also sharpened contradictions within the ethnically differentiated Black labour itself (an equally apposite sub-theme which is beyond the scope of this essay).

British Segregation and Racial Capitalism, 1910–1948

A closer look at the history of South Africa reveals intense intra-class animosities preceding but congealing into clearly discernible form in the period after the South African War of 1899–1902 (also widely known as the Anglo-Boer War). Terreblanche (1994, 2001), Magubane (1979, 1996), MacDonald (2006), and Wolpe (1981) attribute the evolution of South Africa's racial capitalism to this period. According to Terreblanche (1994):

> Shortly after the Union, the political alliance between the English- and the Afrikaans-speaking whites was threatened by both groups' need for cheap African labour. To avert an open clash on this issue, the Botha/Smuts government and the English Establishment agreed on an economic 'alliance of gold and maize'. The formula on which this alliance was built – a formula that was inherently exploitative – remained the economic foundation of the system of racial capitalism until the early 1970s.

From Terreblanche's analysis, it follows that racial capitalism is a definite social order characterised by a plethora of racist laws meant to first entrench the vested interests of capital (gold and maize), and second the interests of white workers above those of Black workers. Fukuyama's theory indicates that these asymmetrical racial relations enrooted megalothymia within the people of European descent, while impairing the thymos ('the demand of the soul craving recognition and dignity') as well as the isothymia ('the demand to be respected on an equal basis with other people') of Black people. White supremacy was implanted within white working-class consciousness and tendentiously anchored on material incentives to sustain it within the overall logic of the racist order.

Within the context of developing modernisation in South Africa, the white working class was always protected against competition from the Black working class on the grounds of race (De Kiewiet, 1957; Magubane, 1996). Magubane argues that 'an abstract class analysis not only liquidates the national question, but ignores critical differences in the exploitation of Black and white workers which are due specifically to racism' (1996: 4). Throughout the period of racial domination, from segregation to apartheid, the white and Black proletariats never joined forces; instead, the two working class forces dichotomised racially, what with the collaboration between the state and the pernicious hand of capital (MacDonald, 2006).

After the signing of the Peace of Vereeniging in 1902, four main actors steered the history of the country: the racist state, capital, white workers, and Black workers. On the one hand, it had always been the responsibility of the white government to uphold the racist/racialist order through policies that ensured that no white people were on the same socio-economic level as Black people. On the other hand, capital went along with government's racist policies to the extent that they were congruent with its interests. Where such policies were neither congenial nor compatible, capital simply went it alone. As capital looked after its self-interests, this sometimes meant compromising

the interests of white labour if that meant cutting production costs, most likely resulting in a fallout between capital and white labour. The result was often embittered industrial action by white labour. Industrial action was particularly pronounced in 1907, 1913, 1914, and 1922 (Roux, 1948). Because capital could play off white labour against its Black counterpart when conditions suited it, a template was set which ensured the persistent deterioration of relations between Black and white workers.

Racial capitalism, with the collaboration of state legislation, corralled the white worker into the same camp, but it also calcified structural divisions and inter-racial antagonisms between the white and Black worker through differential material existence grounded in racist metaphysics (Magubane, 1996). With the projection of partisan white settler capitalism's interests as the collective interests of the master society as a whole, the most visible fault lines in South Africa became Black people as the oppressed and white people as the oppressors. This, of course, did not mean that white society was economically monolithic, as the preceding section demonstrates (De Kiewiet, 1957; Hazlett, 1993). Therefore, in terms of South Africa's violent colonial modernisation history, it remains true that 'race is... the modality in which class is "lived," the medium through which class relations are experienced...' (Hall, 1980, in Morley, 2019: 216).

From the beginning of the European conquest of South Africa, racism and coerced labour were the most dominant attributes of social relations. Conquest was dressed in racist garb and, as Jacklyn Cock and Julia Wells (2020) argue, 'deeply embedded in British colonialism, these settler elites soon articulated and perpetrated a virulent racism.' According to Magubane, 'throughout the period of colonialism, segregation and apartheid, attempts were made to reduce the African into a permanent sub-proletariat on whom the prosperity of the political economy of the settler economy rested' (2007: 178).

Terreblanche (1994) argues that the period between 1910 and 1924, when the Pact government gained political ascendancy, was the time of the construction of racial capitalism. As Terreblanche outlines:

> The Mines and Workers Act consolidated the job-reservation system in mining and industry in 1911; the Native Land Act was passed in 1913; the Native Affairs Act for the administration of the African reserves in 1920 and the Native (Urban Areas) Act for the administration of African locations in 1923 (1994: 6).

Like Siamese twins, racism and capitalism therefore constituted the forces that incubated South Africa's historical consciousness. In periodizing South Africa's history, Terreblanche summarises it thus:

> The 120 years of economic modernisation since 1870 can be divided into three periods [...]: the period of British imperial conquest (1870–1910); the period of racial capitalism and segregation (1910–1948) (under the firm control of the local English Establishment with the Chamber of Mines at its core); and the period of Afrikaner Volkkapitalisme and apartheid (1948–1990) (1994: 2).

Like Cock and Wells, Terreblanche traces racial domination in South Africa to the beginning of British conquest in 1870, but it is worth remembering that racism actually arrived with the Dutch East India Company/Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC) in 1652. Richard Elphick and Hermann Giliomee (1979) argue that race and class had close correlation in the early Cape because of the policies of the VOC, and suggest that: '(A)n implication of our view is that the origin of Cape racial order is one of the antecedents of the modern South African racial order' (1979: 523).

Reflecting on the nature of Europe's racialisation of the world in the 16th and 17th centuries, Elphick and Giliomee state that 'like all colonising peoples of the period, the Dutch were convinced of the superiority of their culture and religion. Cultural chauvinism was an important component of racism...' (ibid). The Dutch, according to Elphick and Giliomee, '... arrived at the Cape with a "somatic norm image" or a collectively held picture of ideal human appearance' (ibid). Therefore, even in its nascent stages, what would evolve into the South African state was deeply rooted in notions of racial difference as a predicate to racial privilege. As argued earlier, throughout the formation of South Africa's history, megalothymia ('the desire to be recognised as superior') bore racial imprint. This deeply-etched point of view would prove contradictory to the corrective measures of the post-apartheid context.

Racial privilege was elevated to official state policy with the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 when mining and agricultural capital ('gold' and 'maize') could not take off without a constant and reliable supply of cheap labour. To make matters worse, the Union government had to confront the spectre of the 'poor white problem', resulting from multiple factors, including the British 'scorched earth' policy and the mechanisation of agriculture. Both government and white capital also came to the realisation that as long as Black people had access to land ownership, white access to cheap and available labour would remain a pipedream; hence the Native Land Act of 1913.

Throughout the segregation and apartheid governments, the 'poor white problem' would shape the contours of South Africa's historical trajectory. In a society defined by racial identity, the notion of the white subject sinking into conditions of poverty akin to those of the Black subject imperilled the key claims of the racial order itself (MacDonald, 2006; De Kiewiet, 1959). In occupying the same existential space as Africans, against whom they had been socialised to see themselves as superior, the white working class found itself in an untenable social situation. As De Kiewiet explains:

> It was at the turn of the century that it became evident that white society had developed within itself disturbing inequalities. At the base of white society had gathered, like sediment, a race of men so abject in their poverty, so wanting in resourcefulness, that they stood dangerously close to the native themselves (1959: 181).

Sharing a station in life with Black people went against the grain of notions of white supremacy and therefore posed an existential danger to the racist ontology of the state. The megalothymia propelled by this racist ontology was undermined by these racially indistinguishable social conditions. Both the segregation and apartheid states therefore aimed to privilege white capital and white workers at the cost of African labour. This was purportedly to maintain the separation of the two cultures, but in truth it maintained white economic privilege. MacDonald expresses this point lucidly in explaining that:

> the state, then, siphoned wealth from blacks and split it between white society, in the form of inflated profit. But the state also responded to the political power of whites by enhancing the living standards of whites (or citizens) with resources that were generated through the hyper-exploitation of blacks (or non-citizens) (2006: 58).

Throughout the history of South Africa, and especially starting with the era of British segregation, race implicated class as successive governments' efforts were directed at addressing the 'poor white problem', as white supremacy would not hear of white people wallowing in the same dehumanising social conditions which were the lot of African people.

Both skilled and unskilled white labour were distressed in their own respective ways. Skilled white labour feared the disconcerting tendency of capital to employ cheap but skilled Black labour at sub-market rates, which invariably undercut their bargaining position. Unskilled white labour – consisting of migrants to urban and industrial centres from doomed rural, agricultural conditions – feared competition from the multitudes of cheap, unskilled, African labour who could perform sweated labour for slave-like pay.

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"The pens of historians have spilled much ink on the intersection of race and class in South African history, where white became synonymous with the ruling political and economic class and Black with the oppressed working class. Of equal importance, however, is how South Africa's racialised capitalist history has shaped intra-class relations between Black and white working-class segments of the population."

the oppressed working class. Of equal importance, however, is how South Africa's racialised capitalist history has shaped intra-class relations between Black and white working-class segments of the population.

Louis Botha, the first prime minister of the Union of South Africa, agonised over the reliable provision of African labour, the warp and woof of the new polity (Myers, 2008). Botha argued that indirect rule would be unsuited to the country's needs because it physically located African labour outside the white areas which sorely needed it (ibid). As Myers puts it, 'for Botha, a black working class was an inseparable – albeit unequal – component of the South African settler society, whose hierarchy would be reproduced using nothing more than the state's basic repressive machine' (2008: 13).

For their part, white workers – under the sway of the skilled segment of the white work force – agitated for the protection of their privileges as a racial group under the guise of not being reduced to the 'uncivilised' status of natives. As a result, 'whites formed labour unions in the early 1900s to guard against this persistent tendency, and the South African Labour Party (SALP) was formed in 1908 to explicitly advance the interests of European workers' (Hazlett, in Henderson, 1993). Dressing the issue of white privilege in the garb of political respectability, Frederic Creswell – who was later to become the leader of the Labour Party – rebutted the mining capital's argument for native labour on the grounds that reliance on African labour represented a threat to the future of white society (De Kiewiet, 1957).

In analysing the history of racial capital in South Africa, Harold Wolpe (1980) has employed the theory of the 'articulation of modes of production' to argue that traditional African economies existed side-by-side with the market economy, with the former situated in an auxiliary position. While Wolpe's thesis is larger than the scope of this argument, his most salient, apposite contention is that the segregation government used the two modes of production to sustain the exploitation of Black migrant workers, whose sub-market payment was compensated for by the agricultural produce in the reserves, where they retained reciprocal relations with their kin (Wolpe, 1980). This absolved the state and capital of the responsibility to maintain social production and reproduction by taking care of the Black workers once they were worn out. By implication, and as MacDonald argues, the under-payment of Black migrant workers was not only to the advantage of capital, but to white workers too.

The 1922 Rand Strike and the Pact Government of 1924

Both the 1922 Rand Strike and the Pact government of 1924 were incremental steps in the process building up to apartheid, which would come into being in 1948. At the centre of these developments were white labour interests. Afrikaner nationalism gained ground as the poor, working classes could not take the heat from the unfriendly policies of capital. In further illuminating this history, Janis Grobbelaar states that:

> Afrikaner nationalism, the strategies and organisational infrastructures forged to give it momentum, the rewards and patronage with which it has endowed its adherents and the mobilising and modernising tendencies it has engendered lead to the embourgeoisement of the majority of white South Africans – especially those of Afrikaner descent – via majority of white South Africans – especially those of the civil services and in a series of white Afrikaner dominated parastatals that were established. (White Afrikaner males were the special recipients of those very rewarding affirmative action strategies) (in Zegeye, 2001: 305).

Exclusionary and implemented at the cost of African workers, the laws which the Pact government brought about not only entrenched the further misery of the Black proletariat but also, at the cost of Black labour, promoted the racial and class progress/mobility of white people as a group.

The 1922 Rand Revolt represented a clear tipping point in the relations between Black and white labour, as well as affirming primary contradictions between labour and capital, irrespective of colour. It indicated the fluid and contingent relations between labour – be it Black or white – and capital, as well as further lending credence to the absolute importance of profit as the raison d'être for capital. As historiography has shown, the 1922 Rand Revolt was instigated by the unusual step of mining capital to lower the labour costs of white workers in the face of depressed profits,

as that of Africans had already reached miserably low levels (De Kiewiet, 1959; Magubane, 2007, 1979, 1996; Terreblanche, 1994).

The 1922 Rand Revolt's key thrust was avowedly white supremacist, as evidenced by its slogan: 'workers of the world unite for a white South Africa'. The Revolt also represented a fightback against the 'betrayal' (on racial grounds) by the Smuts government and capital (Magubane, 1996; De Kiewiet, 1959). In unabashedly appropriating and repurposing the revolutionary Marxist slogan, white workers demonstrated a dyed-in-the-wool racist animus within the framework of the political economy. In Fukuyamian lexicon, the white workers of 1922 did not just seek for fairness and justice in their relationship with the mine owners: they sought to maintain conditions that recognised them as superior to Black people at all costs. In other words, they sought to possess megalothymia in its racial variant. Terreblanche states that:

> After the Rand Revolt of 1922, the Smuts government became convinced that conditions conducive to accumulation (i.e. of profit) and legitimation (i.e. of the state in the eyes of the white community) could only be guaranteed if the economic position of the white proletariat and the African petit bourgeoisie could be secured (2002: 249).

Securing the interests of the white working class could only mean further compromising those of the Black workers, further deracinating their isothymia. Race had trumped class solidarity in the face of common capitalist exploitation of the proletariat, as amply demonstrated by the outcome of the strike and its political ramifications. For one thing, the Pact government unseated the Botha-Smuts government in the 1924 national election, on the ticket of upholding policies which entrenched and perpetuated the vested interests of white over Black workers. This essentialisation of race as a central axis of South African society saw an array of racist laws come into being. Many Africans lost their jobs as a direct result of the Pact government's policies. The 1925 Mines and Works (Colour Bar) Act 'finally established in the law of the land the principle that the right of a man to do skilled work depends on the colour of his skin' (Roux, 1948: 152).

Quite clearly, the Pact government was occasioned by historical exigency to mollify relations between capital and white workers, on the one hand, and canonise the perpetual economic servility of Black workers, on the other. As Peter Walshe argues:

> When the new Pact Government began to apply its 'civilised labour' policy, passing further discriminatory legislation, and Hertzog began to explain his approach to the Native problem, congressmen were quick to discern the repressive nature of the supposed new deal. The 'civilised labour' policy initiated in 1924 and the 'Colour Bar' Act of 1926 (Mines and Works Amendment Act) were seen for what they were – an integral part of Hertzog's comprehensive 'solution' to the Native problem and a means towards his expressed goal of permanent white supremacy outside the reserves (1971: 109).

"The Black population was not to be a source of concern as far as their degraded living standards were concerned because '...poverty, in such state of reasoning, was thus a normal condition of native life, like the infertility of barren land'"

The Black population was not to be a source of concern as far as their degraded living standards were concerned because '...poverty, in such state of reasoning, was thus a normal condition of native life, like the infertility of barren land' (De Kiewiet, 1959: 220).

This historical evolution of oppressive labour laws culminated in the 1948 apartheid state which saw the National Party assume political power with the explicit aim of making Black South Africans 'hewers of wood and drawers of water'. With exclusive political citizenship, white people would benefit from a government with which they had shared cultural affinities under the umbrella of Afrikaner nationalism.

What is also historically worth noting about the leitmotif of the Pact government is its 'welfare state

policy which was geared towards compensating poorer whites (of which over 70 percent were Afrikaans) for the impoverishment and disruption they were suffering as a consequence of modernisation and urbanisation' (Terreblanche, 1994: 10). This measure found historical parallel in the post-1994 political scenario when the ruling African National Congress (ANC) introduced affirmative action policies to which most white and especially Afrikaner organisations objected vociferously, citing reverse racism. Afrikaner nationalism was exclusionary and insensitive to the existence of the 'other' and, in its quest to empower its own, 'it had a clear economic interventionist thrust' (Terreblanche, 1994: 12).

The coming into existence of the apartheid state was occasioned by the Afrikaner nationalist economic self-interest. In explaining this development, Hazlett submits that:

> The problem apartheid attacked was circular. Economic cooperation among the races led to social integration. Social integration led to further economic cooperation because industrialists found low-wage blacks irresistible. Racists saw social separation enforced by law – apartheid – as the essential way to shore up the economic protection of white labour (in Henderson, ed., 1993: 17).

Apartheid further entrenched racially privileged white Afrikaner nationalism and excluded Africans, Indians, and Coloureds from the polity through what it termed 'separate development' (Terreblanche, 1994; MacDonald, 2006). Apartheid continued to provide state welfare to working class Afrikaners throughout its lifespan until the 1980s (Terreblanche, 1994). Separate development, according to Terreblanche (1994), was one of the 'almost desperate attempts made by successive National Party heads of state to crystallise a new ideology which could legitimise (or mystify) the continuation of white supremacy and the structures of racial exploitation' (1994: 15). Separate development represented a move away from the segregationist era's avowed racist policy to a policy of 'racialism'. MacDonald (2006) states that 'racialism insinuates race as a defining human attribute, a central axis of human society and political organisation, a fulcrum of political representation and participation'. Despite the sleight of hand to delineate apartheid as separate but equal political arrangements, the fundamental inequalities resulting from structured relationships of dominance remained and continued well until the 1994 democratic breakthrough.

Racism in the Post-Apartheid Era

Though it ushered in a political seismic change in South Africa's racially charged history, the 1994 democratic breakthrough only represented political change and not structural transformation (Habib, 2013; Mbeki, 2009; Terreblanche, 2002). The structural imbalances and inequities emanating from the history of racialised capitalism are still in place. However, over the course of this historical trajectory, some socio-economic fluidity has also emerged. Terreblanche (1994) argues that during the course of the anti-apartheid struggle much damage was done to the South African economy, which also affected the fortunes of the white working class. He notes that the most affected incomes were those of Afrikaner households 'in the ranks of the lower 40 percent' (1994: 22). As the political economy was the pivot of 'white politics', such drastic changes swelled the ranks of Afrikaner rightwing nationalism, which, considering its history of comfort at the expense of the Black workforce, was to be expected. Yet this resurgence in racial consciousness was not to end on the dawn of the new democratic dispensation.

Given the deteriorating economic conditions of the Afrikaner working class and the corresponding rise in rightwing discourse, as well as the massive racial imbalances and great expectations of the formerly oppressed, when the democratic era dawned in 1994 it was already potentially afflicted with congenital impediments. At the same time, one could draw the conclusion that the reconciliatory policies and tone of Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first democratically elected president, on the back of heavy compromises by the ANC, narrowed the space for strident right wing assertions in the face of the certainty of loss of state power.

What resuscitated racial rancour, however, were the democratic government's policies of redress, which included, among others, affirmative action, Black

Economic Empowerment, affirmative procurement, and countless other means of enabling Black people to stake a claim in the economy of South Africa. As stated above, some observers have blamed the neoliberal policy choices of the ANC for the country's failed economic performance, which, in turn, has resuscitated primordial identities. Because South Africa's concept of identity is racially circumscribed, addressing social imbalances goes against the grain of racial sensibility as those who benefited from the unjust past interpret current redress as racial role swapping. Transformation is perceived in sweeping, racialised generalisations to the extent that it is seen to represent a threat to livelihoods. De Kiewiet has made the acute observation that:

> In spite of the labours of many students of native life, there continued to prevail amongst most classes of white society a remarkable lack of precise and unequivocal knowledge of native life. It was no shape for the legislator to be ignorant of the condition of the greater part of the population (1959: 226).

Could it be that these sweeping generalisations ignore the fact that the majority of Black working class communities are still trapped in historically-induced conditions of powerlessness? In a country were racial and spatial historical patterns are still deeply entrenched, ignorance could still be bliss.

To be sure, post-apartheid South Africa has seen a tiny section of political elites, most of them the results of government affirmative procurement policies, rise up the social ladder to become both visible and vocal (Habib, 2013). Joining the ranks of the white middle class and the rich, the growth of this Black, and especially African, elite contrasts with increasing social inequality as the majority of unskilled, uneducated Black South Africans sink deeper into conditions of impoverishment. Similarly, it would not be drawing the long bow to say, as Terreblanche has argued about the period leading up to democracy, that a significant number of white people, especially Afrikaners, are also facing impoverishment.

Fukuyama (2018) has argued that identity and the politics of resentment characterise modern societies, where communities of European descent who have benefited from racial privilege push back against

“Yet, in comparative terms, white people in South Africa are still far better off and still own strategic assets that the majority of Black people can only wistfully imagine. Be that as it may, some Afrikaner civil and political organisations have re-narrativized the post-apartheid experience as one of reverse racism and the marginalisation of white people”

assertive formulations for equality by historically marginalised groups, with the former invariably appropriating the latter's mode of discourse to cast itself as the victim of reverse marginalisation and racism. Post-apartheid South Africa is not too far from this portrait.

Yet, in comparative terms, white people in South Africa are still far better off and still own strategic assets that the majority of Black people can only wistfully imagine. Be that as it may, some Afrikaner civil and political organisations have re-narrativized the post-apartheid experience as one of reverse racism and the marginalisation of white people, Afrikaners in particular (MISTRA, 2018).

Sharing his musings on this theme, Dirk Hermann, the CEO of Solidarity, an Afrikaner lobby group, states the following in an imaginary letter to 'Mother Africa':

> Why is my quest for a place in Africa racism, but that of my brothers a justified quest? Why are you silent about certain parts of history while you emphasise others? (2018: 59)

Ruminating along similar lines, Ernst Roets, deputy CEO of AfriForum, 'a civil rights organisation', opines that:

> Technically there is no legal basis according to which my race is defined. 'White' is not defined in the Employment Equity Act, nor in the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, nor in the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act. 'Black', however, is defined as

> 'generic terms referring to Africans, coloureds and Indians' (2018: 67).

Both of these speakers are influential members of Afrikaner communities and historical products of Afrikaner nationalism. Their opinions are representative of a fairly large section of the Afrikaner community. One can infer that their thinking does not seem to appreciate the presence of history in post-apartheid South Africa.

Afrikaner sentiment respecting the loss of power and the process of transformation, imperfect and deformed as it is, echoes the history that has incubated it. The ethnic nationalism that bound the Afrikaner system of thought over generations will not merge easily into the wider South African nationalism ushered in by the democratic era. Zegeye maintains that:

> The Afrikaner image was forged by ideologues. To be an Afrikaner entailed having a sense of belonging to that group, and birth into the Volk (in terms of Afrikaner ideologues an imagined community of racially similar people [...]) superseded identification with the state (2001: 7).

One could be excused for detecting a historical continuity here with the history of racialised capitalism. As De Kiewiet notes:

> Without special protection, he (i.e. the white, Afrikaner worker) could meet native competition only by a fatal reduction in his own standard of living, and that would simply permit the lower civilisation to drive out the higher civilisation (1959: 225).

Disentangling oneself from this framework of thinking in the face of a declining economic situation may not be all that easy. However, the majority of the Afrikaner community is not wallowing in a debilitated economic state. Responding to this train of thought within the white community, Terreblanche emphasises that:

> It is rather hypocritical of whites to claim these benefits with greedy self-righteousness but decline any responsibility (directly or indirectly) for the evil of colonisation and its ugly consequences. In as much as these problems have resulted not only from whites' obsession with power and entrenched privileges but also from their short-sightedness, greed, and reductionist individualism, white South Africans ought to realise that they cannot be effectively addressed without a willingness to make substantial sacrifices – materially and symbolically – as part of an open commitment to the restoration of social justice (2002: 5).

For his part, Peter Hudson sees the structural continuities not only of material inequalities, but also of racism, disguised by the system of democracy. Hudson argues that:

> colonialism does not disappear but is repressed and unconscious. This does not, however, prevent it from continuing to structure social practice. It does this without seeming to disrupt the democratic non-racial order by inserting itself in an ambivalence at the heart of capitalism (in Satgar, 2018: 159).

Conclusion

In a society where superordinate national identity had never been constructed, the rising tide of African nationalism, the transformation of the state in demographic terms, and the redistribution of the economic dividend enhanced pre-existing ethnic macro-identities between the Black and the white working classes, exacerbating a climate of resentment (Fukuyama, 2006).

The eradication of legislative racial privilege in post-apartheid South Africa has dispossessed the white working class of this shelter, which in turn has led to the perception of group marginalisation or reverse racism as legislative redress of past racial imbalances takes place within an ever-shrinking economic base that cannot commensurately sustain adequate living standards for all. The post-colonial resurgence of African identity is being perceived by poor working-class white (Afrikaner) communities as evidence of the shoe being on the other foot: i.e. the perception that they are in turn the victims of state oppression.

Fukuyama has contended that '...demand for recognition of one's identity is a master concept that unifies much of what is going on in the world today' (2018: XV). Therefore, the rising tide of unemployment and the corresponding deracialised impoverishment affecting both the Black and white working classes – and possibly the former

more acutely – is perceivable by the latter, which had historically been socialised into the thought-system of comparatively better material wellbeing, as systematic marginalisation (Magubane, 1996, 1979; Fredrickson, 1934; De Kiewiet, 1957). In decomposing the working class along racial lines, both ideologically and materially, settler colonialism implanted a dichotomous albeit mutually hostile trans-historical consciousness between the two working class segments. This consciousness is still extant in the post-apartheid era, albeit in a more subtle and attenuated form.

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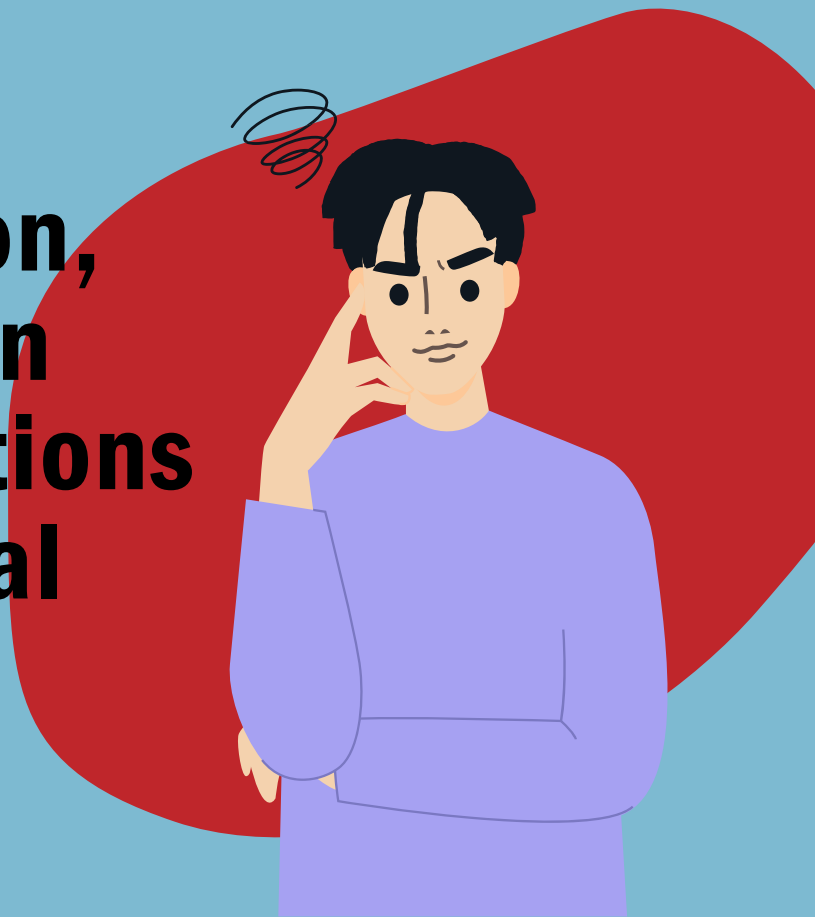
Race, Transformation, and Education as Contradictions in a Neoliberal South Africa



By Isha Dilraj | Peer Review

Abstract

In navigating the complexities of race and inequality in South African society, shadowed by colonialism and apartheid, the term transformation has gained traction as the mantra for growth, retribution, education reform, and economic and societal prosperity. However, the capitalistic and neoliberal environment within which the country operates has resulted in transformation initiatives becoming an obsolete contradiction. The education arena, in particular, exemplifies this contradiction and the plethora of inequalities still prevalent in society today. Race has been, and still is, at the forefront of understanding societal inequalities and socio-economic challenges, even though it doesn't operate in isolation, and relies on the chaotic politics of intersectionality to reveal how power operates in ways which occlude and disguise different kinds of inequalities. In this article, I focus on race as a construct and its deep-rooted significance in South African society, by dissecting conceptualisations of race as a signifier and symbolic, as a structure of division and marker of exclusion, and as a construct of power. Presenting these conceptualisations of race sets the foundation for understanding why transformation initiatives became focal and imperative in charting a new, democratic course in the country. However, these initiatives have become blatant contradictions, as exemplified in the Covid-19 moment in relation to the education sector and the return of students to schools, highlighting deep-rooted inequalities. In acknowledging the severe plight of South African society, handicapped by a superfluity of disparities and discrimination, an offer of hope to reimagine society is deliberated as a way forward, by analysing concepts of antiracism, decoloniality, and a turn to re-defining transformation initiatives to free society from the captivity of neoliberal mentality.

Introduction

The dynamic environment within which our world exists is rife with complexities which perpetuate inequality, injustice, corruption, power, poverty, and racism. Societies, therefore, place value on principles of freedom and human dignity, and a political agenda which propagates such becomes adopted as a believed benefit and remedy to the growing ills of the world. At this juncture, theories of neoliberalism emanate as the 'perceived' holy grail to combat the aforementioned tribulations, in allowing for economic progress in a globalised world. The reality, however, is far more complex and convoluted. Neoliberalism, adopted in an attempt to redefine the world from the mid-1970s onwards, is a right-wing propaganda founded on ideas of freedom and the individual, the promotion of privatisation, free markets, and trade. However, in practice, neoliberalism seeks to commodify our world and its people, and consequently serves the interest of the elite class of capitalists in further promoting the economic prosperity of a miniscule group in society, thereby threatening the transformation initiatives required to eradicate poverty, inequality, and racism in the majority of the world – South Africa being no exception. Freedom is never free – it always comes with a hidden price and, sometimes, that burden becomes too heavy as it is carried by the poor and disadvantaged in society, who are already crippled by a legacy of marginalisation and deprivation.

In the wake of Covid-19, a worldwide pandemic which has changed the functioning of the world as we know it, which has halted economies and threatened job security, which has redefined borders and re-emphasised technology, which has torn apart families and loved ones, and endangered livelihoods and survival, we have been rendered defenceless and our vulnerabilities have been exposed. We are forced to reconsider what our idea of 'normalcy' entails, and question whether the world order, as we know it, is truly based on equity, equality, and justice. One thing is evident: a spotlight has been shone on the blatant contradictions of society and the illusion of transformation. Our world and, in particular, our country, displays the paradox of society in encompassing, on the one hand, privilege in all its whitewashed layers and, on the other, the extremities of poverty, social inequality, and racial injustices which have been entrenched into society for years, thereby rendering a host of transformation initiatives unsuccessful. These inequalities have existed prior to this moment, but the neoliberal world in which South Africa operates has provided Covid-19 with an opportunity to further exacerbate and deepen them.

"One such arena which aptly illustrates this contradiction, and displays the nuances of race and inequality, is that of education. For years, one of the focal points for democratic change in post-apartheid South Africa has been to provide greater access to education for the large majority of the population who previously could not readily access either education or skilled work"

One such arena which aptly illustrates this contradiction, and displays the nuances of race and inequality, is that of education. For years, one of the focal points for democratic change in post-apartheid South Africa has been to provide greater access to education for the large majority of the population who previously could not readily access either education or skilled work (Mandela, 2003). The scars of apartheid and colonial rule are so deeply entrenched in our society that even today, 26 years post-democracy, the effects still linger in terms of racial inequalities which are prevalent in the schooling and post-schooling systems. Over the years, South Africa has witnessed the deepening of the socio-economic divide and the aim for greater access to education not being actualised. The reason for this could be (arguably) attributed to the neoliberal context in which the country has found itself to exist: borrowing from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, the subsequent Structural Adjustment Policies, increased privatisation, and the commodification of education and humans as capital are but a few of the instances which hamper transformation (Connell and Dados, 2014: 119). Furthermore, Covid-19 (operating within the neoliberal context) has served as a marker to further highlight how damning the social inequalities are and how race is still very much at the forefront of understanding societal inequalities and

socio-economic challenges. It must be noted that, in this article, race is selected as the primary focus, but it is imperative to acknowledge that race does not operate in isolation – the intersectional nature of race, class, gender, etc. is crucial in trying to make sense of the complexity of neoliberalism. The chaotic politics of intersectionality brings to the fore how power operates in ways which occlude and disguise different kinds of inequalities.

Imperative to unpacking the issues prevalent in the education terrain in South Africa, is a robust understanding of neoliberalism, its imprint on the world and its effects in the South African context, and how this has allowed race to be enacted in particular ways by delving into the intricacies of how race is woven into the lived realities of all, via a haunted past of colonial rule and apartheid. Navigating these conceptualisations of race as a foundation to exploring and coxswaining the various necessities and attempts at transformation, the article uses the current landscape of the South African schooling and education terrain, particularly in the light of Covid-19, as an exemplification of how inequalities are still heavily embedded in institutional arrangements and the blatant contradictions of transformation.

In acknowledging that South Africa (and the majority of the world) operates in a market-economy-driven neoliberal world, writers like Arundhati Roy offer insightful provocations: 'Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next' (2020). Consideration should, therefore, be given to alternate thoughts to charter a new course in the direction of 'reimagining' our future – a turn towards anti-racism, decoloniality, and re-defining transformation in an honest, practical, and unpretentious reconcilement, whereby the complexities of the neoliberal grip are understood and teased out, but at the same time, allowing new possibilities to emerge as we forge forward.

Briefly navigating neoliberalism

Neoliberalism in its ubiquitous complexities may be succinctly summarised in the words of David Harvey as: 'a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade' (2005: 2). Following the trajectory of neoliberalism, its roots can be traced back to the fall of fascist regimes in the mid-1970s and a response to the supposed failed Keynesian programme. From thinkers like P.T. Bauer, Friedrich von Hayek, and Milton (to name a few), to the introduction of neoliberal ideas in Chile and Iraq in the 1970s, from the Mont Pelerin Society, to the Thatcher and Reagan administrations, and the successive worldwide spread of neoliberal principles and agendas, either via independent country adoption or via Structural Adjustment Programme requirements (instituted in countries who borrow from the IMF and the World Bank), the neoliberal agenda forged through and became the dominant world order of the 21st century (Harvey, 2005; Connell and Dados, 2014).

Essentially, neoliberalism has become a hegemonic power which attempts to redefine the world order from public to private, from fair/free to commoditised, and is arguably the latest phase of capitalism (Connell and Davos, 2014). In prioritising economic value above all else and assigning human beings as capital to produce wealth in the economy (Livingstone, 1997), this system has perpetuated the inequalities from the remnants of apartheid and colonial rule in South Africa. From the mid-1990s, the South African newly elected democratic government swiftly aligned its policy agenda to neoliberal agendas in focusing on 'free market, privatisation, globalisation, reduction of government spending, repayment of apartheid debt, cutting corporate taxes, and cutting social programs' (Kgatle, 2020: 3). These prioritisations, unfortunately, sacrificed the reform that was needed socially in the country in order to address racism, inequalities, and poverty. Clarno described neoliberalism in the South African context as a system that 'denies the continued significance of racism and enables assaults on corrective policies such as welfare, affirmative action and land redistribution' (2017: 12). Instead of focusing on policies which benefited the majority in the restructuring of a just society, neoliberalism instituted a sense of individualism that resulted in the prosperity of a small group, thereby producing an elite Black class, leaving behind the majority of previously disadvantaged groups in states of poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment.

These issues have existed in South African society since the inception of democracy (and prior to it); however, against the backdrop of neoliberalism, Covid-19 has reiterated and exacerbated the multifarious concerns pertaining to how racism is enacted in particular spaces and how transformation initiatives are depicted as blatant contradictions, particularly in the education terrain.

Traversing race

For centuries, the term race has been used to grapple with, and understand, the functioning of human interrelations, inter alia political, socio-economical, and sociological. We have pondered, theorised, analysed, inscribed, and transcribed. Race exists as much in the physical world as it exists in each person, and is torturously interwoven into the way the world operates, how people interact, and what shapes dialogues, policies, and practices. In the South African landscape, race plays out a particular narrative that is entrenched in the aftermath of oppression and the symbolic (and physical) weaponisation of its use from apartheid and colonial rule. This has been further influenced by the neoliberal society in which we operate, which has not allowed the emotional (historical) dimensions of race to be dealt with. Race as a construct is a multi-dimensional term heavily loaded with the burden of history, with the pain of it being weaponised, and with an attribution of various symbolic representations. It has become a variable of analysis, and holds in its construction a hope for rectification, retribution, and transformation. Understanding the multifarious epistemic nature, history, and connotations of the term 'race' is both complex and comprehensive, and intertwined into the histories of the world (in this instance, South Africa). Various understandings and conceptualisations of race have emerged over the years, and as with other social constructs (i.e. gender, sexuality, and class), race opens a narrative regarding discourses of power, inclusion, exclusion, discrimination, oppression, privilege, and transformation – all imperative in unpacking the complexities surrounding the conceptualisation of race. The following three sections – (i) race as both a signifier and symbolic, (ii) race as a structure of division and marker of exclusion, and (iii) race as a construct of power – offer a framework for delving into the conceptualisation of race as a construct.

Race as both a signifier and symbolic

Over the years, in South African society, the social reality of race has become irremovable from our identities. It has become, in the words of Crain Soudien, 'a master signifier', as a means of explaining everyday life, as well as providing an understanding of deep philosophical and enigmatic occurrences (2012: 6). Race, as a signifier (the physical form a word, term, or concept takes on), allows for us to gain a deeper perspective of the complexities in navigating our identities. Apartheid, shadowed by colonial rule, instilled in both society and the self the belief that race is a defining human characteristic that holds the utmost importance in the organisation of society.

Another intriguing idea is one of race as the preservation of privilege. Since the inception of race as a signifier, a means to define difference, it has exhibited symbolic properties: the arbitrary distinction of individuals based on the colour of their skin, then precipitously designated ideas of superiority and inferiority as a means to maintain privilege, to separate, and to dominate. Whiteness became associated with superiority, privilege, and status, while blackness – or anything non-white – became associated with inferiority, mediocrity, and unworthiness. These ideas, instilled into the fabric of human make-up and entrenched via institutionalised practices, ensured that race became an inextricable part of the mosaic of every South African's identity, and is the reason we have become so accustomed to reading our world and understanding our reality through the lens of race. We have normalised associating race with our definable identity – as a descriptor in social interactions, on various application forms and, most importantly and curiously, as an intrinsic identity for ourselves. Why have we become so complacent in accepting the realities played out by the designation of race? Why is it that we still view race as an imperative signifier in social relations and settings, in understanding our individual and national identities, and in political and organisational deliberations and functioning? An attempt at demystifying this lies in the idea of race as symbolic.

The challenge in defining race as symbolic is that the symbolism it holds for various groups of people is different across the board, based on each individual's history, experience with race, thought-process, and

lived reality. Written from my positionality as an 'Indian, South African woman' (the irony of this identification does not surpass me, but rather aptly exemplifies the importance of race as a signifier), race as symbolic holds particular significance in how my identity has been shaped and presented. For me, and for many people of colour in South Africa, conceptualising race as symbolic is significant in terms of a vast array of circumstances. Race is symbolic as it represents one's historic diaspora – where one comes from, what one has been through – and holds substance for where one still needs to go. It clutches importance as a mark of what one has endured, what one has grown through and overcome, and represents what one has now achieved (even if much more remains to be charted). It is a reminder that one's history (and that of one's family) is so rooted in racial identity and a fight for democracy. It is even more so a symbol of injustice, oppression, and pain; of difficulties and unwarranted endurance; and of all that was superficial and indecorous. At the same time, it is a symbol of a new dawn, one's untiring spirit in the fight for change and transformation, and a pride for having walked decades indefatigably. Race as a signifier/symbolic helps one understand why race is ever-present in oneself, one's identity, and one's interactions. It is a reminder of why one needs to continue to use race as a signifier to quantify progress, to rectify, and to transform.

Race as a structure of division and marker of exclusion

In understanding the symbolic nature of race and its role as a signifier, a deviation down a historical lane is necessary to understand how race was weaponised and why race held, and holds, the significance it does in South Africans' identities. Colonial rule and the apartheid regime left South Africa a canvas of tainted paintwork, drenched in morose colours of division and exclusion. The institutionalising of laws and behaviours, which divided the nation by excluding people of colour (designated as Black, Indian, and Coloured), meant that race was used as a structure of division and a marker of exclusion. In dividing people on the basis of race in separating where they lived, which facilities they could use, which schools they attended, what level of education they could be accepted into, what jobs and income they could be restricted to, and many other oppressive and dehumanising practices, the apartheid government sought to devalue and

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undermine people of colour by breaking their spirits and controlling their lives. These deep-rooted wounds left unimaginable scars on the South African people and the make-up of society, so much so that post-1994 the stain filtered through, marring the rainbow nation that the newly-elected democratic government tried so desperately to create, but were unable to, in the wake of the neoliberal world in which it operated.

The entire underpinning of apartheid rested on the ideas of inclusion and exclusion: white equalled good and valued, which meant inclusion, and non-white equalled subpar and inferior, which demarcated exclusion. Therefore, in order to confront the years of social exclusion based on race, it necessitated that the newly-elected democratic government sought to acknowledge, rectify, and instil representation and justice by instituting policies of 'inclusion' for all previously disadvantaged groups. (Note, the article does not aim to delve into the various government strategies that attempted rectification and transformation, which naturally encompassed policies rooted in inclusion. It merely notes these attempts as an exemplification to the construct of race as a structure of division and marker of exclusion.)

The stark reality, however, is that inclusion begets exclusion and vice-versa. In including a particular group of people, another group is automatically excluded. This is not to demerit the necessity of 'inclusion' and the substantive reasoning behind its requirement; however, theorising ideas of inclusion can become controversial in the ways it positions extremities embedded in the historical contexts of South Africa, and in how it approaches these in efforts to bring about change. Racial segregation, exclusionary laws, physical separation, deliberate denigration, and violent oppression are particularly difficult historical constructs to 'redress' in a neoliberal,

global environment where external pressures and internal hegemonic forces constantly 'push back' at transformational efforts. This is most evident in the ways 'race as a construct' has been addressed 'in relation to questions of domination and subjugation, inclusion and exclusion, and the creating of new social hierarchies' (Soudien and Sayed, 2004: 102). Therefore, the debate cannot simply be about who to include, how many to include, where to include, or what mechanisms are required to achieve this (Soudien and Sayed, 2004: 106). Rather, the debate needs to be considered within larger social justice concerns in terms of why particular groups need to be included and how to facilitate their inclusion, and what the moral imperatives and implications are for the exclusion or deliberate disadvantaging of others. It can be argued that, as long as these considerations are built on social justice goals and do not perpetuate inequalities and lead to new forms of racialisation, inclusion approaches and policies can justifiably choose or privilege certain groups (if in the best interests of society) (Soudien and Sayed, 2004). On the other hand, inclusion – written in political ways to privilege certain groups – may generate new logics for exclusion that could have dire consequences for future processes, thus reinstating that race as a construct will almost always encompass ideas of it being a structure of division and a marker of exclusion.

Race as a construct of power

This notion sparks another final thought pertaining to the construct of race in identifying the ideological aspect of how race plays out a significant role in matters of power – attaining, maintaining, and exercising. Power is a curious creature, particularly in terms of how it rears its head in individual interactions and in the realm of politics. (Note: seeking to understand the mechanisms of operation is beyond the scope of the paper, which for now, aims to simply acknowledge a broader and complex relationship between power and race.)

Power, at one level, imperceptibly drives policy, practice, and decision-making, particularly in a neoliberal context. Governments yield power from the symbolism embedded in race conceptualisations and by the inclusion/exclusion of certain groups of people, which is driven by political agendas. French intellectual Michel Foucault offered interesting insights into how power operates and the governmentality behind certain decision-making – his terms 'biopower' and 'biopolitics' are significant in understanding how the state denotes a particular 'form of governmental power which addresses the administration, control and regulation of human beings as members of populations: their health, sanitation, birth-rate, longevity, race' (Christie, 2006: 375). For Foucault, power is to be explored in every micro manifestation, in the most imperceptible places – 'his concern is to explore 'strategies of power': networks, mechanism and techniques as well as the accompanying rationalities which normalise acts of power so that there is a sense that a particular decision 'could not but be taken in the way it was'' (Christie, 2006: 375). Following this understanding of power and decision-making, it can be understood how race distinction and division was instituted via policy and practice. It is imperative, however, to note that the 'regimes of truth' that governments relied on were not rational laws or foundational truths, but were rather results of particular strategies in exercising power that were either by chance or illusionary in driving a particular political agenda which the government rationalised as necessary. In this manner, race was a construct of the power wielded by the apartheid government. Similarly, in an effort to collapse this bias and injustice, the democratic government relied on transformation policies which also privileged race, but, as a strategy to empower rather than disempower, and to institute social justice as a means to rectify past injustices. Race, therefore, embodied complex strategies to exercise power from a political/governmental perspective.

On another level, power is existent in the intricate relations between individuals – their actions, their subjectivities, their prejudices, and their treatment of others. In this sense, race holds a power identity because it is 'fundamentally a power construct of blended difference that lives socially. Race creates new forms of power: the power to categorise and judge, elevate and downgrade, include and exclude' (Kendi, 2019). It is evident in the relationships that each individual shares with others in terms of how they relate and interact, but is more subtly displayed in the self via personal beliefs and understandings of the world, society, and people. It is evident in our everyday lives and decisions: where to live, what transportation to take, which route to drive, what area or neighbourhood to walk in, which schools to

send one's children to, and where to shop, eat, or travel. It is in the subconscious ideas that we hold, that guide our decision making, and that denote particular subjectivities. Power, therefore, lives both in the internal and external self, and is manifested in outward action by people, society, and organisations, based on each individual's context, history, upbringing, and conditioning.

South Africa's complicated history has pre-determined that its people, therefore, will always have race as a part of their construct. What is unfailingly disconcerting, however, is that the power that was wielded years ago by the apartheid government still has lasting effects on South African individuals, society, and organisations. This can be particularly attributed to the fact that neoliberal institutional arrangements have positioned the marginalised in a particular way and have entrenched divisions so deeply that they have yet to be unravelled.

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Coxswaining transformation – South African education in crisis

Transformation initiatives were imperative to chartering a new path of democracy in an effort to address the years of suppression, racial division, and exclusion. The continuous struggle, however, is how to transform, what to transform, and how to ensure that transformation is successful in changing the realities of the previously disadvantaged. The term transformation has gained traction over the years as a widely-used expression to institute change, but what exactly is meant by transformation? For the purposes of this article, in the South African post-1994 context, transformation is closely aligned to concepts like equity, redress, and social justice, where the transforming of the education system is seen to be closely tied to societal improvement and fundamental social change. More often than not, change is understood as political, social, and economic, and is about reversing the effects of the past. Akoojee and Nkomo note that 'the challenge for the success of education strategies, however, lies in the need to balance issues of institutional autonomy and change with the national imperatives of efficiency, equity and redress' (2007: 366). However, transformation is complex and faces the struggle of the embeddedness of race in South African societal makeup. Furthermore, transformation initiatives have been flawed by the guidance of neoliberal policies and the fields of power, politics, and economics, which is why these initiatives have not been truly achievable. Damning socio-economic conditions and poor standards of living for a large population of previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa have been ongoing concerns of the post-apartheid era.

The years 2020 and 2021 have been blatant examples of these struggles, as Covid-19 has unearthed the realities that have always existed in the education terrain: an unequal education system which has privileged the privileged (and still does). This is due to education operating in a neoliberal environment in which humans are viewed as 'capital' for a means to an end in economic growth and development, i.e. those who gain education and pass through the system effortlessly will benefit the economy by getting higher-paying jobs, which leads to the system prioritising those who have a higher probability of success. Livingstone explains this as human capital theory which 'equates workers' knowledge levels with their level of formal schooling, to rely on quantitative indices of amount of schooling in estimating individual economic returns to learning and to infer that more schooling would lead to higher productivity and macroeconomic growth' (1997: 9). Following this thought process, explicit and blatant contradictions are evident in the schooling sector, which has been spotlighted in terms of the governmentality behind

the opening of schools and completing the academic year during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Covid-19 moment in a neoliberal world

In an interview with Times Live, the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) stated that 'corpses can neither be taught, nor teach' (Govender, 2020). This simple yet heavily loaded statement struck a chord and erupted an explosion of emotion in many citizens – an anger at the ill-thought-through plans to let our students and teachers be our 'soldiers', as Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, called it. However, what guides the decision-making behind the opening of schools to save the academic year at all costs? Is it truly a fight for aiding our disadvantaged students and providing them with an education? Is it truly social justice concerns? I argue, not! The reality is that the 'hidden' neoliberal hand is always at play. When lockdown was announced in March 2020, all 'privileged' schools shifted to teaching online almost immediately. Their students sat in the comfort of their technologically-friendly homes and quickly adapted to Zoom classes, Google Drive, and virtual learning in a stable home life that supported their new schooling environment. Academically, they were on par with the curriculum, if not ahead, and were able to keep up with learning, bar a few adjustments here and there.

Contrast that with the rural child, or the child who lives in an informal settlement whose reality could not be further from the above described. These children live in households that survive on a minimum wage or less, their parent/s are essential workers who risk their lives just to provide food for the day, or their parents are now unemployed and overcome with the struggle of not knowing how to provide a meal at all. These children become the unsuspecting victims of a further unjust, unequal divide. Those who live in a small space inhabited by many, and have no room to sit and learn, or further still, those who have no laptop, data, or phone are, ironically, left further behind in so-called 'tech-schooling' – a gap the Department of Basic Education vehemently, yet hypocritically, asserts they are bridging. If anything, the gap has widened, and still is widening, at an alarming rate.

Forget technology though, for the only thing that matters right now is survival. These children and their families face a plethora of struggles of great magnitude: physically, emotionally, materially, and financially. Many have lost their jobs, have lost their loved ones, and are hungry and scared. Many do not have the privilege of social distancing, sanitising, and wearing a mask. These children have lost far more than just the academic year, and this is precisely what the government fails to acknowledge. In the quest for health, safety, and survival, the government has, not for the first time, prioritised differently – placing the completion of the academic year above lives. People have been reduced to mere statistics and insignificant extras in the theatre of life – like fists in a container of water. Remove the fist, and one cannot tell the difference.

In proudly announcing the resumption of schools and the completion of the academic year in the midst of a pandemic, the government relied on the logic of providing meals to hungry children, providing a safe haven to shelter students from abusive homes, and the provision of an equal opportunity for these children to receive an education so that they would not fall behind and drop out of school. At face value, this sounds noble, democratic, and fair, but if we truly unpack this, it reeks with the aroma of a neoliberal political agenda packed with misinformed solutions.

Firstly, what is the true purpose of schooling? The pandemic has shown that schools have become the panacea for all ills. Schools have become day-cares with pastoral functions that operate as points of nutrition acquirement – a weak response to solving other non-learning issues. This hides the government's inability to truly address the real issues of the socio-economic conditions faced by many disadvantaged communities. Instead of ensuring that no citizen goes hungry with focused efforts in job creation and broader community feeding projects, they rely on schools to provide a meal a day to only attending students.

Secondly, a critical mistake made by a neoliberal and capitalist-driven government is attributing education to the field of power, politics, and economics in using the school as a day-care for children, so that parents can resume work to reopen the economy. Whilst reopening the economy is essential to maintaining the livelihoods of, particularly, the disadvantaged, it is misinformed to not outrightly acknowledge that schools were being called on to play a different role

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other than to provide education. This is essential in determining whether the academic year can and should be saved. Once again, this reiterates the socio-economic divide, as the privileged still continue safely – either online or physically in properly resourced schools with small class numbers – whilst children from disadvantaged communities, who have not been learning online, are now faced with a storm of anxieties. These children are pressured into cram-learning a curriculum on staggered days in order to write exams and pass the year, and are forced to return to schools which lack proper infrastructure, have poor sanitation facilities, and possibly no running water – all whilst facing untold struggles at home.

Thirdly, try as much as we may, the playing field is not level. Teaching and learning in this crisis (and in general) mean different things to different communities based on their privilege. The reality is that saving the academic year is not a social justice decision, but rather a decision driven by neoliberal mindsets and capitalistic gain which benefits the economy and the privileged. The decision has been wrapped in the guise of transformative thinking and concern for equal opportunity and education, but at the heart of it lies a contradiction which essentially heavily disadvantages the poor child of colour.

Covid-19 has explicitly shown that the schooling system is a site of power where race and class continuously play out as variables of inclusion/exclusion. The ghastly truth that we fearfully hide away from is that the poor, disadvantaged child of colour – who hails from a range of societal, economic, and financial issues – has been ‘given up on’. We no longer consider these children to be worth fighting for. They have been left so far behind in the race that we can barely see them on the horizon. We focus on achievements and standards, goals and accomplishments. We see humans as capital and commodities to enter the workforce to add to our GDP. We have lost sight of our humanity.

Each year, as we progress to the next level, we nonchalantly acknowledge the need for further transformation initiatives to rescue the marginalised without a deliberate attempt to truly impact the reality, and this unfortunately is the unadorned contradiction of democracy in our country. Our education system privileges the privileged, and perpetuates socio-economic divides in our society, wherein our poor sink further into the cesspool of poverty and disadvantage. We are not addressing the true problems faced by poor socio-economic conditions and are, instead, bandaging the wounds with neoliberal policies and false hope by providing broken crutches to a very dysfunctional and ailing society. Government has not yet achieved the disentanglement of past inequalities and so we limp through institutional arrangements which have positioned the marginalised in a particular manner – their plight unaided by the failure to unravel these injustices that continue to hamper healing.

Re-imagining: a turn to anti-racism, decoloniality, and re-defining transformation

So, where then does this leave us? Do we sink silently in the cesspool of mourning and complexities within which we find ourselves entangled, or do we grab onto ideas of hope, reimagining, and deliberate action to pull us out of the drowning? Do we succumb to a directionless defeat or do we use the compass of opportunity to guide us to a new reality, a new world order?

Balfour, explaining James Baldwin’s ideas of racial innocence, defined it as: ‘a willful ignorance, a resistance to facing the horrors of the American past and present and the implications for the future’ (2001: 27). Although written for American society, this quote is significant for South African society, as well, in reiterating how complacent we have become as a society in truly understanding

the effects that institutionalised racism has had on our country, the society we live in, and on each individual. Transformation is a long road and navigating change is complex and challenging. In acknowledging that, to date, the government has not been able to truly institute the required change, we need not succumb to pessimism, but rather use the current situation as an opportunity to pave forth a new direction – a turn to anti-racism, decoloniality, and re-defining transformation.

If we are to truly heal and forge a new path, we need to grapple with the enormity of race disparity and inequality prevalent in our society. We need to acknowledge the pain and hurt experienced by the recipients of the system and its grave effects, which are still embedded today. We need to engage, not only from a symbolic position, but to create change physically in changing the lived realities of the marginalised. We need to all actively be anti-racist. What does it mean to be truly anti-racist though? Anti-racism is a term which has gained traction in recent months, particularly in the wake of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. However, the term has been used and defined widely prior to this. Underpinning the comprehensibility of anti-racism, is the acknowledgement of the premise that to be anti-racist, one must be against racism and fully conscious of privilege – one must see race, acknowledge, and identify how racism is prevalent in structures, institutionalisation, beliefs, and behaviours, and then actively resist all forms of racism in attempting to create a change in these practices, in turn creating a transformation of being in the world (Kendi, 2019). Anti-racism is about examining every aspect of: (a) interpersonal interactions that result in power imbalances between people of different races, and which disadvantage the Black (refers to all non-white people) person; (b) the acknowledgement of white privilege which perpetuates difference and racism, and which is often unrecognisable, but impacts how 'whiteness' has promoted and advantaged one's progress, standing, and access in all facets of life. It encompasses an awareness of how racism has affected people of colour and how it still does; how racism has been systematically engrained in society via previous institutionalised policies, via behaviours and attitudes, via unspoken and subtle inherent beliefs and actions; how it has hampered progress and access to education, a better standard of living, employment, and a respectable socio-economic standing for the Black person, not excluding the personal, mental, and emotional turmoil experienced. Therefore, particularly in our South African context, being anti-racist is a necessary, non-negotiable prerequisite in charting a new path and reimagining our society – it is the first step to becoming authentically aware of the true transformation required to create a society based on true principles of equity, equality, and justice.

A second aspect necessary to reimagining our society is that of decoloniality. According to Maldonado-Torres:

> Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such nation an empire. Coloniality, instead, refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day (2007: 243).

South Africa's history of apartheid, shadowed by colonialism and its current operation in a neoliberal world, has complexified racism and the inequalities prevalent in our society, and so, if we are to truly unravel the deep-rooted scars embedded, we must use this narrative and moment as an opportunity to address coloniality. We need to assess how, as a society in all its functions, we still embody ideas of coloniality. We need to have deliberate conversations to shift power and define an 'African' identity without a 'north' influence – via education structure, curriculum, knowledge, practices, the order of society, economic policies and shifts in thought, awareness, and understanding. The process is, and will be, arduous and multifaceted, and will be a perpetual undertaking; however, it is one that South Africa desperately needs to incessantly pursue in order to institute meaningful change. The moment is now – timing, circumstances, practicalities, acknowledgement of our country's socio-economic context and rational thought are what is needed to guide us on the plan moving forward.

Therefore, this combination of decoloniality and anti-racist practices are the suggested tools required to aid us in re-defining tangible transformation in our country. In acknowledging the many blatant contradictions evident in the governance of the country, particularly in the education terrain, we need to take responsibility and make a commitment to rectifying failed transformation initiatives, even if this means abandoning the neoliberal principles that have been surreptitiously crafted into the order of society. In addressing the above highlighted education crisis, we need to acknowledge that the opening of schools will not be just. We need to acknowledge that the education terrain is rife with injustice and contradictions and that there are countless issues of inequality in the staggered opening of schools and saving the academic year amidst Covid-19. However, we must then take this as the opportunity to open not just a conversation, but an action plan towards the re-imagining of a new world based on a platform of social justice and genuine transformation. We must make a commitment to fight for the marginalised child of colour who is left far behind on the horizon, and pledge that we will rescue their future so that they, and future generations, can all walk side by side. We need to question and re-define the role of education, of schools, and of tertiary institutions. We need to re-define our structures and curriculum by analysing what was, what exists, what the pitfalls are, and what needs to transform for true equity, equality, and justice to prevail. We need to veer away from viewing individuals as capital and instead commit to acknowledging each human as a being who is essential and important to society and our country as a whole. We need to value every life irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, class, religion, and creed. We need to reimagine our rainbow nation to achieve the dream that Tata Madiba so fervently believed we could realise. We need to create a movement that will ignite and accelerate this paradigm shift, and we need to understand that movement is a verb.

Finally, returning to Arundhati Roy's quote in her article 'The pandemic is a portal': 'Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next' (2020). This quote so aptly captures the mantra for reimagining the future and hints at the necessity for change, an opportunity for betterment. Will we, however, take it, or will we perish further into a drain of murky contradictions carved with the scars of the past and racial indifference? Will we forge a new future and make our mark as the generation who realised and actualised anti-racism, decoloniality, and transformation in creating a new world order, or will we simply remain pawns on a chessboard moved aimlessly (yet covertly calculatedly) around by a neoliberal political agenda, and according to a variety of contradictions?

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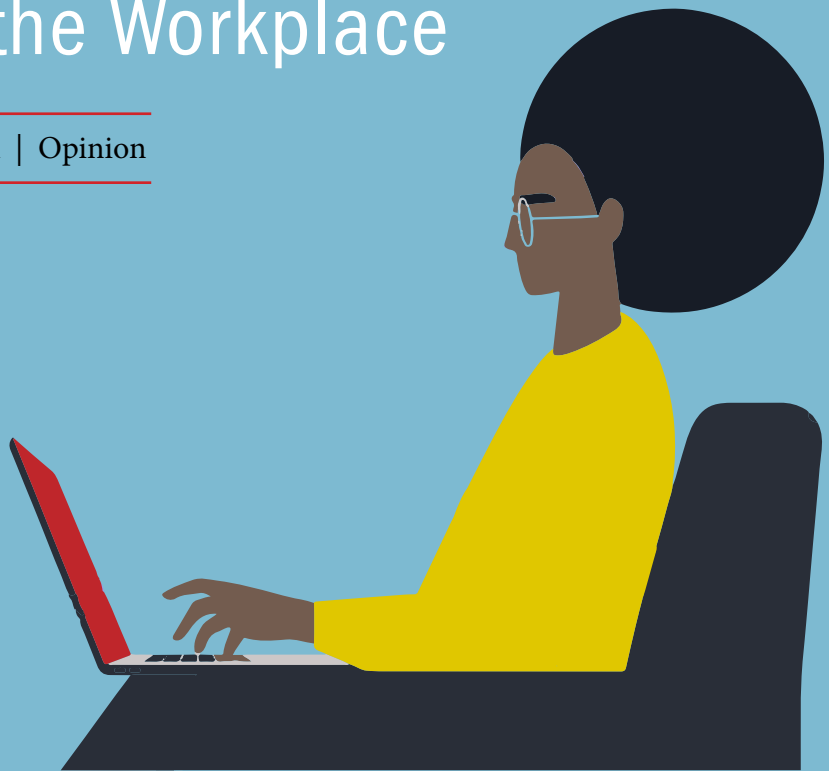
Racists Beware

Some Labour Law Perspectives on Racism in the Workplace

By Letlhokwa George Mpedi | Opinion



Abstract

This contribution reflects on racism within the workplace from a labour law perspective. It deliberates on the approach adopted by the South African courts of law in dealing with the vexed issue of racism at work. In particular, this contribution focuses on the following themes: the relevant legislative framework, determining racism in the workplace, the nature and impact of racism at work, dealing with false accusations of racism, the use of racial slurs on social media, racism-related off-duty misconduct, and the dismissal of an employee at the behest of third parties. It concludes by arguing that racism in the workplace cannot and should not be tolerated. Furthermore, it is a broader societal problem that must be addressed by all stakeholders. Such stakeholders include employees, employers, trade unions, workplace fora, labour inspectors, the Director-General of the Department of Employment and Labour, and the Commission for Employment Equity. In dealing with racism, sight should not be lost of the fact that courts of law cannot unilaterally eradicate this scourge. South Africans from all walks of life have a role to play. After all, in as much as racism is taught, it can and must be unlearned.

Introduction

Racism has demonstrated over time to be one of the perennial challenges experienced in the world of work the world over. In South Africa, racism was one of the central features of the apartheid system. As Dugard (2018: 89) puts it, '[i]nstitutionalised race discrimination was the hallmark of apartheid'. Racism featured in all aspects of life, including sport (see Lapchick, 1979; Martin, 1984), religion (see Tiryakian, 1957), and employment (see Mariotti, 2009). The demise of the apartheid system did not spell the end of racism in South Africa. Instances of racism are reported from time to time in many sectors of society, ranging from sport to business. In the work environment, the Constitutional Court in Rustenburg Platinum Mine v SAEWA obo Bester and others (2018) 39 ILJ 1503 (CC) (at paragraph 52) delineated the situation as follows: 'Racism and racial prejudices have not disappeared overnight, and they stem, as demonstrated in our history, from a misconceived view that some are superior to others. These prejudices do not only manifest themselves with regards to race but it can also be seen with reference to gender discrimination. In both instances, such prejudices are evident in the workplace where power relations have the ability 'to create a work environment where the right to dignity of employees is impaired''.

In an effort to eradicate racism, post-apartheid South Africa established a legislative framework to promote equality and to prohibit unfair discrimination. These laws include the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (hereinafter the Constitution); the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000; labour laws such as the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 (hereinafter the EEA); and the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 (hereinafter the LRA).

The use of law to proscribe and punish racism makes sense as racial discrimination was legally sanctioned during the apartheid era. The following apartheid laws spring to mind: Population Registration Act 30 of 1950 (created a national race register and the Race Classification Board); Group Areas Act 41 of 1950 (created different residential areas for different races); Native Building Workers Act 27 of 1951 (made it a criminal offence for Bantu to perform skilled work in urban areas except in sections designed for Black occupation); Bantu Authorities Act 68 of 1951 (made provision for the homelands); Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act 48 of 1953 (prohibited strike action by Black people); Bantu Education Act 47 of 1953 (made provision for racially segregated education facilities); Native (Prohibition of Interdicts) Act 64 of 1956 (denied Black people the opportunity to appeal to the courts against forced removals); and Extension of University Education Act 45 of 1959 (stopped Black students from attending white universities).

"This contribution shares some labour perspectives on racism at work. It reflects on how courts have dealt with this thorny issue by addressing a variety of questions which include the relevance of the context in determining racism in the workplace, how to deal with a false accusation of racism, the use of racial slurs on social media, off-duty misconduct"

Needless to say and as shown in this contribution, having relevant laws enacted does not automatically lead to compliance. Old habits, as the saying goes, die hard. As appositely stated by Chief Justice Mogoeng in South African Revenue Service v Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and Others [2017] 1 BLLR 8 (CC) (at paragraph 1): 'there are many bridges yet to be crossed in our journey from crude and legalised racism to a new order where social cohesion, equality and the effortless observance of the right to dignity is a practical reality'.

This contribution shares some labour perspectives on racism at work. It reflects on how courts have dealt with this thorny issue by addressing a variety of questions which include the relevance of the context in determining racism in the workplace, how to deal with a false accusation of racism, the use of racial slurs on social media, off-duty misconduct (related to racism), and dismissal of an employee at the behest of third parties. It concludes by providing a succinct way forward on eliminating racism at work.

Relevant legislative framework

The legislative framework dealing with racism at work is anchored in the Constitution. The Constitution, which is the supreme law of the country (Preamble, sections 1(c) and 2 of the Constitution), lists the achievement of equality and non-racialism as some of the values of South Africa (section 1(a)-(b) of the Constitution). It recognises the right to equality as a fundamental right (section 9 of the Constitution). Furthermore, it prohibits unfair discrimination based on, among other grounds, race, ethnic, or social origin and colour. The right to equality and the right not to be unfairly discriminated against are not absolute and so is every right contained in the Bill of Rights (see section 36 of the Constitution). It is therefore not surprising that laws and affirmative action measures can be introduced to 'protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination' (section 9(2) of the Constitution). In the area of labour law, the most notable piece of legislation is the EEA. The EEA has been enacted to 'promote the constitutional right of equality and the exercise of true democracy; eliminate unfair discrimination in employment; ensure the implementation of employment equity to redress the effects of discrimination; achieve a diverse workforce broadly representative of our people; promote economic development and efficiency in the workforce; and give effect to the obligations of the Republic as a member of the International Labour Organisation' (Preamble of the EEA; see also section 2 of the EEA).

Section 6(1) prohibits unfair discrimination, direct or indirect, based on inter alia race, ethnic, or social origin and colour. It should be recalled that according to section 6(2) of the EEA: 'It is not unfair discrimination to – (a) take affirmative action measures consistent with the purpose of this Act; or (b) distinguish, exclude or prefer any person on the basis of an inherent requirement of a job.' The LRA also addresses the issue of racism in the workplace. It classifies a dismissal as automatically unfair if the reason for such dismissal is that 'the employer unfairly discriminated against an employee, directly or indirectly, on any arbitrary ground, including, but not limited to race, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language, marital status or family responsibility' (section 187(1)(f) of the LRA).

Racism in the workplace:
A cursory overview of its form and impact

Racism in the workplace, which is a ground for dismissal (misconduct), can take a variety of forms. This includes racial slurs which are defined as 'derogatory or disrespectful nickname[s] for a racial group' (Croom, 2011: 343–344). Furthermore, racism at work can be overt or covert. Racism is legally, morally, and otherwise repugnant because it dehumanises the victim(s). As aptly articulated by the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (adopted on 8 September 2001): 'racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, where they amount to racism and racial discrimination, constitute serious violations of and obstacles to the full enjoyment of all human rights and deny the self-evident truth that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, are an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations among peoples and nations, and are among the root causes of many internal and international conflicts'.

Viewed from a workplace perspective, one can argue that racism has the potential to undermine good working relations in that it impedes racial harmony among employees. Furthermore, as argued in Edcon Limited v Cantamessa and Others [2019] JOL 46015 (LC), it can negatively impact on the business of the employer, particularly when left unpunished. The aforementioned views were echoed by the Constitutional Court in Rustenburg Platinum Mine v SAEWA obo Bester and Others (at paragraph 56) as follows: 'Our courts have made it clear, and rightly so, that racism in the workplace cannot be tolerated. Employees may not act in a manner designed to destroy harmonious working relations with their employer or colleagues. They owe a duty of good faith to their employers which duty includes the obligation to further the employer's business interest. In making racist comments in the public domain, the actions of the employee may foreseeably negatively affect the business of his employer or the working relationship between him and his employer or colleagues.'

Some commentators went as far as pointing out that there are no winners in the racism debacle, as it affects both the perpetrator and the victim

(see Reeves, 2000). For instance, in his address to the United Nations General Assembly on 3 October 1994, Mandela pointed out that: '[t]he very fact that racism degrades both the perpetrator and the victim commands that, if we are true to our commitment to protect human dignity, we fight on until victory is achieved.'

The relevance of context in establishing racism

Many racial epithets, defined as 'derogatory expressions, understood to convey hatred and contempt toward their targets' (Hom, 2008), are well known in South Africa and they include baboon (bobbejaan), kaffir (kaffer), and monkey (aap). There have been instances where a couple of racial epithets have been used together. For instance, in Lebowa Platinum Mines Ltd v Hill [1998] 7 BLLR 666 (LAC), an employee was disciplined for using insulting or abusive language in the sense that it was alleged that he addressed a Black colleague as 'bobbejaankoppie' (baboon head). While some racist utterances are identifiable at first sight, this does not apply to all racial slurs. For example, calling a colleague a Black man may be innocent or malicious. The issue is how one establishes whether words are racist or not. In Rustenburg Platinum Mine v SAEWA obo Bester and Others, in a matter involving a situation where a white employee addressed his Black colleague as 'swart man' (Black man), the Constitutional Court found that 'the test was whether, objectively, the words were reasonably capable of conveying to the reasonable hearer that the phrase had a racist meaning' (at paragraph [50]). Therefore, the test is an objective one. The Constitutional Court found that the test regarding whether words are derogatory and racist is objective. In their quest to establish whether there is implicit, covert, and indirect racism, the South African Courts have invariably found context to be important (see Rustenburg Platinum Mine v SAEWA obo Bester and Others and Modikwa Mining Personnel Services v Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and Others [2018] JOL 40266 (LC)).

Are racist tendencies restricted to one race group?

Racism is not race-specific, in the sense that it can be perpetrated by any race group. Black persons (used broadly to include Africans, Coloureds, and Indians) are not immune from committing racist acts. This is sadly the case even though one would expect such a group to fully appreciate the pain of being on the receiving end of racism. As shown in Modikwa Mining Personnel Services v Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and Others, a Black employee was dismissed for uttering a racist remark at a work meeting, i.e. 'we need to get rid of the whites'. The other contentious issue that needs to be adequately settled is the question of whether persons of the same race group can be racist towards one another. For instance, can a Black man be racist to a fellow Black man? There is a view that the answer to such a question is no (Wadula, 2019). Notwithstanding what the views may be on the subject, one fact remains: the uttering of racial epithets cannot and should not be tolerated, especially in the workplace. The use of racist language at work should invariably attract a sanction.

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Dealing with a false accusation of racism

It is abundantly clear that racism should not be tolerated, particularly in the workplace (see Crown Chickens (Pty) Ltd t/a Rocklands Poultry v Kapp & Others [2002]6 BLLR 493 (LAC) and City of Cape Town v Freddie and Others [2016] 6 BLLR 568 (LAC)). However, a question that begs attention is what about false allegations of racism? Can (an) employee(s) deceitfully accuse fellow worker(s) of racism? Experiencing racism surely hurts. Conversely, it should be painful to be branded, without just cause and excuse, as a racist. As harshly as racism should be dealt with, it is only sensible that the same favour should be extended to false accusations of racism. Such blame should, in the workplace context, be treated as misconduct.

Our courts have indeed accepted that groundless allegations of racism could amount to serious misconduct. For instance, in SACWU & Another v NCP Chlorchem (Pty) Ltd & Others [2007] 7 BLLR 663 (LC) (at paragraphs 26–28), the Labour Court found that: 'Clearly, if an employee has conducted himself in a manner which may justify the allegation by another employee or employees that he is a racist or is displaying a racist attitude, then such allegation needs to be properly made to the employer and these allegations need to be investigated, if necessary through the institution of disciplinary action...Patently clearly, one needs to be able to accuse a person of being a racist or displaying a racist attitude without fear that making such allegations lead to one's dismissal. Equally clearly, if you make such allegations that a fellow employee is a racist or is displaying racist attitudes and you make them without justification or reasonable cause, therefore, you must accept that this will most likely lead to disciplinary action being instituted against you. Equally, it should be clear to any employee who makes unfounded allegations against a fellow employee that he or she is racist or that he or she is displaying a racist attitude, that this will in most instances, in my view, amount to serious misconduct which may lead to that employee's dismissal. Racial harmony in the workplace must be of paramount importance to each and every employer and employee alike. Just as racist behaviour needs to be rooted out, allowing employees to willy-nilly accuse fellow employees of being racist or displaying racist attitudes, must be addressed with equal fervour by employers if such allegations are baseless and made without reasonable cause therefore. Clearly, to allow such allegations to be made without there being a proper and reasonable basis therefore will be equally destructive to racial harmony in the workplace.'

In Chemical, Energy, Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers Union obo Dietlof v Frans Loots Building Material Trust t/a Penny Pinchers [2016] 10 BALR 1060 (CCMA), the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration found the dismissal of an employee who made a false accusation of racism on social media to be fair. In this matter, the employee falsely accused a manager of kissing only white women when congratulating them at an award ceremony and ignoring Black women. It argued that the actions of the employee 'could have serious consequences for the business of [the] company as it was being branded on Facebook by the applicant, as being racist' (at paragraph 8).

Use of racial slurs on social media

The Constitution recognises every person's right to freedom of expression (section 16(1) of the Constitution). However, such a right is not absolute. It can be limited. For example, section 16(2)(c) of the Constitution states clearly that the right to freedom of expression does not extend to 'advocacy of hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion, and that constitutes incitement to cause harm.' This important provision was emphasised in Edcon Limited v Cantamessa and Others. In this case, the Labour Court confirmed the dismissal of an employee who posted a racial slur on Facebook while on leave. It ruled that the employer can in principle discipline an employee as long as it can establish the requisite connection between the misconduct and its business (at page 14). While in the case in question the comments made had no connection with the employer's business, it was sufficient connection that the employee indicated in the post that she worked for the employer. This was found to compromise the good name of the employer in the eyes of the general public. Employees must avoid posting racial slurs on social media. Failure to do so could lead them straight to the unemployment line. It does not matter whether one uses his or her own device or data. Racial slurs posted on social media that connect an employer to the employer's business will most likely attract a disciplinary action that can result in the dismissal of the offending employee.

Off-duty misconduct

What an employee does after work is none of the employer's business (see Edcon Limited v Cantamessa

"The Constitution recognises every person's right to freedom of expression (section 16(1) of the Constitution). However, such a right is not absolute. It can be limited."

and Others). That is the general rule. However, does that imply that employees are at liberty to engage in racist behaviour or utter racist slurs after work and/or outside of the employer's premises? The answer is not necessarily. The point is that there are exceptions to the general rule. There are indeed instances where an employer's disciplinary arm can be long enough to reach and discipline an employee who misconducts himself or herself after work. In National Union of Mineworkers & Other v East Rand Gold & Uranium Co Ltd (1986) 7 ILJ 739 (IC), the then Industrial Court rejected a plea to reinstate an employee who was disciplined and dismissed for assaulting a fellow worker on a bus while being transported from work to home. The principle is that an employer has the jurisdiction to discipline and dismiss an employee if the racist conduct is committed by an employee while he or she is still within the course and scope of his or her employment. There must be a connection between the misconduct and the employer. The protection that the employer has to extend to employees against racism is not restricted to the work premises. It extends to employer-provided accommodation. In Biggar v City of Johannesburg (Emergency Management Services) (2017) 38 ILJ 1806 (LC), a Black employee and his family who lived at housing apartments provided by the employer were subjected to severe racism perpetrated by his co-workers, who also resided at the housing apartments. The Labour Court found that the employer failed to take the necessary steps to protect the employee and his family against racism and adequately deal with racial harassment. It ordered the employer to pay the employee 12 months' compensation.

It is important to note that when it comes to off-duty misconduct, the fact that one was on leave may not always come handy as a defence. Two cases come to mind. The first one is that of Khutshwa v SSAB Hardox (2006) 27 ILJ 1067 (BCA), in which an employee on leave from work was indicted for shooting his wife and her boyfriend. It was found that the employer was justified in dismissing an employee in light of the serious nature of the charges and that 'the employer has a duty to ensure that the workplace environment is safe and secure' (at page 1071). The essence of the matter was that the employee's involvement in a criminal act placed the relationship of trust between himself and the employer under strain. In the area of racism, the pertinent case which is covered above under the use of racial slur on social media is that of Edcon Limited v Cantamessa and Others, where an employee was dismissed for using a racial slur on social media while on annual leave.

Dismissal at the request of a third party

The employment relationship is, generally speaking, a matter between an employer and an employee. Parties to an employment contract are invariably an employer and employee. Thus, the termination of such a contract is mainly a matter between the two parties. However, there are instances where an employer can terminate the contract of employment at the instance of a third party. A leading case on the subject of racism in the workplace is Lebowa Platinum Mines Ltd v Hill. In this case, a trade union threatened to embark on a strike action should the employer fail to dismiss an employee for using racist language. Such a dismissal is recognised in South African labour law as dismissal due to incapacity. The employee concerned is incapable of continuing with his or her employment due to a threat by a third party. Such a dismissal will be fair if it complies with, inter alia, the following principles which were expounded in Lebowa Platinum Mines Ltd v Hill (at paragraph 22) and summarised as follows: '(i) the mere fact that such a demand had been made was not enough to justify the dismissal; (ii) the demand had to have sufficient foundation; (iii) the threat of action by the third party if its demand was not met had to be real and serious; (iv) the employer had to have no other option but to dismiss; (v) the employer must have made a reasonable effort to dissuade the third party from carrying out its threat; (vi) the employer should investigate and consider alternatives to dismissal and consult with the [employee]; (vii) the extent of injustice to the employee must be considered; (viii) the blameworthiness of the employee's conduct should be taken into account.'

Racism in the workplace – the way forward

It will take more than (labour) legislation to eradicate racism in the workplace. The issue is that racism is a broader societal problem. So, all stakeholders will need to play their part. In as much as racism is learned, it can and must be unlearned. As Boncheck (2016) puts it: 'Unlearning is not about forgetting. It's about the ability to choose an alternative mental

model or paradigm. When we learn, we add new skills or knowledge to what we already know. When we unlearn, we step outside the mental model in order to choose a different one.' As society at large grapples with the challenge of unlearning and eventually eliminating racism, some key stakeholders have an important role to play in endeavours to eradicate racism in the workplace. These stakeholders include employees, employers, trade unions, workplace fora, labour inspectors, the Director-General of the Department of Employment and Labour, and the Commission for Employment Equity (see Chapter 5 of the EEA on monitoring, enforcement, and legal proceedings). All said and done, racism in the workplace should not be tolerated. Both real and false cases of racism should be handled with the harshness they deserve. South African courts, including the Constitutional Court, have – as shown in this contribution – led the way in this regard. However, this is not a war that can be won through the courts alone. We all have a role, no matter how modest, to play. This call was also sounded by the Constitutional Court in South African Revenue Service v Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and Others (at paragraph 8) as follows: 'South Africans of all races have the shared responsibility to find ways to end racial hatred and its outstandingly bad outward manifestations. After all, racism was the very foundation and essence of the apartheid system. But this would have to be approached with maturity and great wisdom, obviously without playing down the horrendous nature of the slur. For, the most counter productive approach to its highly sensitive, emotive and hurtful effects would be an equally emotional and retaliatory reaction.' As the fight against racism rages on, all that can be said, at least for now, is that racists beware!

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The Publishing Race:

a debate

By A.W. Misbach | Opinion

A note from the editor:

In October 2020, The Thinker received an open letter from Waghied Misbach as part of a call for papers on a special edition on "Race. Racism. Anti-Racism." As this letter was about what he termed, "the erasure of black lives" in publishing, I decided to publish the letter and invited Terry Morris from Pan Macmillan to respond in the interests of fairness and open debate.

Terry Morris, in turn, sent the letter to Fiona Snyckers. While Fiona Snyckers send me a response, it was not addressed as an open letter. As such, it has not been published here. What follows is the original open letter from Waghied Misbach, Terry Morris' response and finally Waghied Misbach's response in return. Due to publication deadlines for this issue, we have not been able to follow up on this debate any further at this time. The Thinker supports open debate and academic freedom. However, a portion of the first letter has been redacted with the author's permission, due to the potential for litigation. The Thinker encourages a scholarly engagement of ideas and does not serve as a vehicle for potentially litigious comment.

Pan Macmillan South Africa's Erasure of Black Lives: An Open Letter

Re: Pan Macmillan South Africa wanted my full manuscript, but signed a white author instead

Attention: Pan Macmillan South Africa MD Terry Morris

Dear Ms Morris

It has been two years since my last interaction with some representatives of your company and I think it is now time to write this open letter. I want to raise my concerns about your representatives' marginalisation of my work as a Black writer foregrounding characters and issues that have been ignored over many decades in academia and the publishing industry, and then signing up a white author to do a similar but highly flawed work, which raises issues of integrity and ethical responsibility. I will, over the course of this letter, sketch the background to my work and my submission to your company. I will then conclude with a specific critique on content, highlighting what I believe are the racist and Orientalist tropes in the work published by Pan Macmillan South Africa.

My novel The Girl with the Red Flower is a response to Nobel Prize laureate J.M. Coetzee's controversial Booker prize-winning 1999 novel Disgrace, from the perspective of the marginalised character Soraya, the Muslim woman who is portrayed by Professor Coetzee as a sex worker, who I consider a rape victim. My view goes against the almost overwhelming consensus of the literary establishment over two decades that she is not a victim of rape, in comparison with other female characters, which has resulted in scant critical attention and further marginalisation, a situation I consider to be the trahison des clercs. My novel is the creative component of an academic study at the University of the Western Cape, completed in 2017. F. Fiona Moolla, Professor in the English Department, supervised my work, and Professors Imraan Coovadia and Ashraf Kagee (from the University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch respectively) assessed it cum laude.

After an initial submission to your company on 6 June 2018, your representatives responded positively on 25 June 2018 asking for the full manuscript of The Girl with the Red Flower and promising a review in six to eight weeks. Surprisingly, your company announced on 11 September 2018 that a white author, Fiona Snyckers, would write on the same topic, covering

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the same issues with a novel entitled Lacuna, which would highlight the plight of the character Lucy Lurie, who is also a rape victim in Disgrace. I will discuss later what I consider to be your company representatives' unsalutary conduct.

Worse still, Ms Snyckers, believing that Lucy Lurie was the only rape victim, lacuna, or missing voice in Disgrace, proceeded to exclude all the Black, raped women I had attempted to foreground in my work. Ms Snyckers and her supporters do not even recognise as a rape victim the student Melanie Isaacs, who is violated by Professor Coetzee's protagonist David Lurie. In addition, Ms Snyckers' novel is marked by several Orientalist (racist) tropes, as I indicated earlier. Only two critics, whom I will discuss later, unaware of my work and its connection to Lacuna and your company, have identified Lacuna as a work of 'privileged white feminism'.

Ms Morris, I now want to, as briefly as I can, talk about my 2017 academic study, in which I raise concerns about the portrayal of Soraya in Disgrace and in the critique that followed, including the use of the words 'sex worker' for people who are often forced to sell their bodies to live and feed their children, risking life and limb. I consider these people to be enslaved and rape victims. As you know, people of colour, particularly women and girls of colour, have long been

victims of rape during South Africa's slave, colonial, and apartheid eras – a violence that continues today.

Disgrace has divided opinion because of its perceived negative representation of Black people, with critical responses from several people, including the late Nobel Prize laureate Nadine Gordimer and Booker Prize winner Salman Rushdie. Professor Gordimer would write quite negatively about Disgrace, as quoted in J.C. Kannemeyer's insightful 2012 biography of Professor Coetzee, A Life in Writing. This criticism could well be equally applied to Ms Snyckers' Lacuna:

> In the novel Disgrace there is not one black person who is a real human being. I find it difficult to believe, indeed more than difficult, having lived here all my life and being part of everything that has happened here, that the black family protects the rapist because he's one of them. If that's the only truth he could find in the post-apartheid South Africa, I regretted this very much for him. (563)

The Girl with the Red Flower merges the character of Soraya with that of Mrs Noerdien, a Muslim assistant bookkeeper, who is another minor female Muslim character in Professor Coetzee's fictionalised autobiography, Scenes from Provincial Life (2011: 479–480). Mrs Noerdien is objectified, Orientalised, and presented as a docile, submissive stereotype by Professor Coetzee in the novel, through the eyes of the fictional John Coetzee. The surname Noerdien is actually Nur Al-Deen, Arabic for Light of the Faith, and is indicative of how Muslim people in the Cape have attempted to counter discrimination and sought to assimilate with Afrikaans- or English-sounding surnames, or have had their names spelt or mangled in this manner by white government bureaucrats.

Professor Coetzee juxtaposes the oppressed, industrious, and sexually-arousing Mrs Noerdien (she wears a headscarf and likely needs a male guardian, who is absent from the text as most oppressive, Black Oriental/African men usually are in the existential tales of white males), with benevolent Jewish male figures who own an auto-parts firm (480). This is similar to the way the exoticized, sexually industrious Soraya is placed opposite the disgraced and somewhat redeemed David Lurie, who may also be Jewish. (Ms Morris, for a possible etymology of the name David Lurie, consider Chaim Potok's 1975 novel In the Beginning, with the main character being an orthodox Jewish boy, David Lurie, growing up in the Bronx in the 1920s.)

Professor Coetzee's portrayals of Muslim women opposite Jewish men perhaps hints at what I view as his 'flexible positional superiority' over the Orient, which is all about power and dominance 'which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand', as Edward Said argued so convincingly in Orientalism, which I will discuss later with regard to Ms Snyckers' novel.

This is Professor Coetzee writing through the fictional John Coetzee: 'How does it happen that Mrs Noerdien, who wears a headscarf and is presumably Muslim, comes to be working for a Jewish firm, one where there is no male relative to keep a protective eye on her?' Professor Coetzee then uses the fictional John Coetzee to ask that if he were married to 'such a woman, what would it take for a man to traverse each day the space from the exalted heights of the feminine to the earthly body of the female?' (480).

Ms Morris, I am writing at a time of much debate on the value of Black lives. Your company has identified this as an important moment in history in a blog post on 26 June 2020, stating: 'In this seminal moment, remaining silent and neutral on these matters of representation and commitment to change is not an option.' Your blog talks further about developing Black talent and identifying new voices through your annual open window for submissions, as long as it also makes business sense. I remain a sceptic. I have waited two years in vain to see whether your company would do something significant with regard to my work, which is eminently publishable, no matter its harsh and 'anti-intellectual' tone. I wrote The Girl with the Red Flower in the manner I did as a challenge to the seemingly intelligent and ironic novels by white (and self-loathing Black) authors that obscure a real love for Black people.

I submitted The Girl with the Red Flower to your company during your annual 'open window' that you have identified as a positive mechanism to identify Black voices. Several questions arise: What are the obligations and ethical responsibilities of Pan Macmillan South Africa towards authors whose

work is solicited directly in this manner? I raise these questions because you had three chapters of my work and a full summary. Your representatives then asked for my full manuscript, which I contend means they read my summary and were very much interested in seeing more. What follows then is that they seemingly decided to ask a white author to write a similar work. When I sent two emails to your representatives with the essay I wrote as part of my 2017 academic work, as a means to seek some clarification on your promised review, your company fell silent. So, what exactly did your representatives need to see in my full manuscript?

There are similarities in our books: these include Soraya's unreliable narration in parts of the novel, and the foregrounding of a relatively minor character, although I do not consider Lucy Lurie to be as marginalised as Soraya in Disgrace: she speaks her mind, has agency, and makes her own decisions. She also has a full name and a complete family history. The other similarities between Lacuna and The Girl with the Red Flower are the focus on the life of a raped woman, her existential crisis, her involvement in legal wrangles, and having David Lurie as a crooked and immoral father (in my novel David Lurie is Soraya's husband) who is eventually convicted of sexual assault. The plot twist at the end of my novel, in which David Lurie is found guilty of sexual assault, is repeated exactly in Ms Snyckers' novel in slightly different circumstances. Why was her manuscript chosen for publication over mine?

In addition, the similarities extend to the critique of the largely white-controlled, publishing industry and academia; the debunking of the myth of white genocide; and in particular the critique of Professor Coetzee himself, who is one of many male authors who uses rape as a metaphor/allegory for political debates, apart from his quite Orientalist and racist depictions of Black people. In my view, Professor Coetzee is one of those super-literate writers whose Orientalism is often hard to identify, but not so with Disgrace. Ms Snyckers is less literate, but her Orientalism in Lacuna is equally easy to identify, although one would not think so if one reads or listens to the critics' positive reviews of her novel.

I would appreciate your company's representatives indicating whether this is a case of some kind of excusable lack of oversight involving some of Pan Macmillan South Africa's employees. There is the question of how to classify this type of conduct. Ms Morris, I look forward to your response to this.

Further, do your company's representatives believe that a Black man cannot write about a Black woman's life? Or that a Black man has no understanding of rape? Or that a boy or man cannot be raped by a man or a woman and therefore cannot conceive of a raped person's emotions? Or does your company simply think that the lives of a Muslim woman and her children and family are not worth the attention and investment?

What made you choose the white author when you clearly had a choice? I believe your representatives knew well that a novel challenging a world-renowned author like Professor Coetzee using the 'minor-character elaboration' genre has become increasingly popular and wanted the white author to gain all the benefits that would likely accrue from it. I wonder then how your current contracted Black authors fare in terms of your company's advertising and marketing spend, and support for literary agency representation and publication on international markets.

Of course, to emphasise a point I made earlier, I argue that your representatives' core belief was that Lucy Lurie was the only rape victim in Disgrace and that my story of Soraya was therefore not as worthy. This is what Soraya thinks about how she is presented to the world by her dead former husband, David Lurie, in The Girl with the Red Flower:

> She is convinced this is how a rejected lover would have wanted to present her: as half a person, with no real name and her two boys, her living, breathing children, also unnamed. In this he was much like his settler forefathers who, unable to possess the land they so desired, made the people invisible – a land without people. So, like those who came before her, she became an ephemeral woman, with no history, no past, no future, and not even an existential crisis. A figure from the margins of history, as David ironically described his own condition. But she was beyond a further border – a figure from the margins of the margins of history. It is a crime he committed. Not only did he shackle her with his words, he murdered her.

> Here she is waiting, hawking silence in the wings of a stage, for condolences or just an apology that no one is going to give. (1)

Ms Morris, as you may know, Soraya, her unnamed children, and invisible partner/husband, have been routinely ignored by academics studying Professor Coetzee in South Africa and around the world. A quick observation on her invisible partner/husband: as I indicated earlier, in many works by white authors, Black men are either rapists, villains, general layabouts, or lifeless two-dimensional ironic representations à la Professor Coetzee, who need to be shunted aside so that their abused women can be saved by the Rational and Sensitive White/Occidental/Western Man, as our own colonial masters had often told us. I deliberately muted the voice of the father of Soraya's children in my novel to make this point about what white authors do. On Soraya's presence in literary criticism, the academic and poet Gabeba Baderoon has written several insightful paragraphs in her excellent 2001 work Regarding Muslims (91–93). However, I do not agree with Professor Baderoon's defence of Professor Coetzee's portrayal of Soraya.

Ms Snyckers foregrounded characters in her novel Lacuna that have received widespread attention in academia and the literary media. I am sure you know just how much has been written about the existential crisis of David Lurie and the plight of Lucy Lurie – literally hundreds of mentions in journal and newspaper articles and books, apart from academics giving lectures and speaking at conferences around the world, while supervising tens of theses on Professor Coetzee's oeuvre that barely mention a word about Soraya. I am simply saying Black lives matter too.

Ms Morris, if you think that I am exaggerating about all this, I have a quite illustrative example that would indicate just how far this rabbit hole goes. I will summarise: Sue Kossew and Melinda Harvey of Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, edited a collection of essays Reading Coetzee's Women, published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2019, based on the papers presented at a conference held in Italy in September 2016. The papers were written by academics from all over the world, all admirers of Professor Coetzee, who himself attended and delivered a speech. The papers consider all of Professor 'Coetzee's women' – his narrators, his characters, his relationship to women writers in South Africa and globally. The papers mention the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in the literary world. There is much talk, and rightly so, of Lucy Lurie, at 124 mentions, but a lamentable lesser mention of Melanie Isaacs at 19, over whom there is a debate about whether she is raped or not. In contrast, there is not a single mention of Soraya or Mrs Noerdien.

In my novel The Girl with the Red Flower, I included Lucy Lurie as a rape victim and as a lesbian, as Professor Coetzee portrayed her, with a daughter from her rape, Anna Magdalena. Ms Snyckers 'unqueered' Lucy Lurie and erased her former partner, Helen, described in Disgrace as 'a large, sad-looking woman with a deep voice and a bad skin, older than Lucy' (58) for the purposes of exploring how a raped woman can get her libido back in an intimate relationship with a man. Perhaps it would have been more insightful to ask how abused people who identify as gay or lesbian, whose narratives are often marginalised in literature, would attempt intimacy with their own partners.

See Ms Snyckers talk about this at a panel discussion at the 2019 Franschhoek Literary Festival: 'The Women Left Behind: Who are feminists really fighting for? Fiona Snyckers and Ena Jansen (Like Family) discuss how good intentions can sometimes get in the way of impactful results in the pursuit of equality.' Strangely, none of the Black women left behind by Ms Snyckers in Lacuna, including Soraya and Melanie, are mentioned during the discussion.

The purpose of my work was not to marginalise Lucy: the issue of rape is far too important in this country to do that (although there is another view of Lucy's

“Black men are either rapists, villains, general layabouts, or lifeless two-dimensional ironic representations à la Professor Coetzee, who need to be shunted aside so that their abused women can be saved by the Rational and Sensitive White/Occidental/Western Man”

rape that I will discuss at another time). But I wanted to highlight that it was time to also write about the women of colour from Disgrace, because no one else seemed to have done it, bar Michelle Cahill with her short story 'Letter to John Coetzee' in 2016 that foregrounds Melanie Isaacs, although Professor Cahill does not identify her as a raped woman. Ms Snyckers and her supporters do not consider Melanie a rape victim, much like Professor Coetzee's former student David Attwell, the academic. Professor Attwell, who was also a participant at the Italian gathering, believes David Lurie is a 'near-rapist' despite forcing Melanie to have sex with him, and her repeatedly saying 'no', as quoted in Professor Kannemeyer's biography (559).

Before moving onto the specific critique of Ms Snyckers' work as containing quite marked Orientalist tropes, I want to quote here both Professor Coetzee and Professor Gordimer. Professor Coetzee, despite recognising how his own writing has been 'deformed and stunted' by apartheid, still continued to ironically silence and marginalise Black people in Disgrace. This quote is from his speech when accepting the Jerusalem Prize in 1987, twelve years before the publication of Disgrace, from his 1992 collection of essays, Doubling the Point:

> At the heart of the unfreedom of the hereditary masters of South Africa is a failure of love. To be blunt: their love is not enough today and has not been enough since they arrived on the continent; furthermore, their talk, their excessive talk, about how they love South Africa has consistently been directed toward the land, that is, toward what is least likely to respond to love: mountains and deserts, birds and animals and flowers. (97)

And this is what Professor Gordimer had to say about love and Professor Coetzee's Disgrace as quoted in Professor Kannemeyer's biography:

> Now in this elegantly and powerfully written novel there is no deep feeling (except, maybe...self-disgust), no love, until there is a need to put down a stray dog, the feeling for which is the sole life-affirmative emotion for anyone or anything in the professor. (562)

Ms Morris, I will now move onto the part of my letter that deals with what I consider to be the quiet violence of Orientalist nostalgia and 'privileged white feminism' because what writers do on the page, and publishers do in the boardroom, to vilify or marginalise or erase, can certainly be considered violence of a social, cultural, and economic sort. This entire argument is contained to some degree in my 2017 essay and novel, and is supported by Danyela Demir and Lucy Valerie Graham in their articles published in September 2019 and March 2020 respectively.

I need not repeat all their arguments. I choose here part of Dr Demir's argument in her review of Ms Snyckers' work: 'Who is the Real Gap?: Reviewing Fiona Snyckers Lacuna', which appeared in The Thinker Volume 81, published in the third quarter of 2019. Dr Demir states clearly that in Disgrace: 'the lacuna is not the white woman as Snyckers would have us believe. Coetzee's lacuna is the voice of the Black woman and the woman of colour: Soraya, Melanie, and a nameless Black sex worker, who David picks up from the side of the road towards the end of the novel, are the voiceless, the women without agency (73).'

Further, Dr Demir points out how 'Lucy's ordeal is 247 pages long while Melanie's rape is referred to as a 'misunderstanding'' (73). I make this same point in Chapter Two of The Girl with the Red Flower with Soraya thinking (the italics are indicative of Soraya's thoughts) about her dead husband David Lurie and identifying Melanie Isaacs as a rape victim:

> Does anyone want to know how many times that doos David mentioned me in his overrated story but never even gave my full name? Thirty times. Even Byron's dead Teresa is mentioned more than me at forty-six, and gets a surname and whole family history. Melanie, that student girl he raped, is at seventy-three. Bev Shaw, his married girlfriend, is at ninety-three. And how many times did he mention animals? Also more than me at thirty-seven. And dogs? Wanna take a wild guess? One-hundred-and-forty-one-fucking-times. I've counted, gone through every godforsaken page, that's how I know. (18)

I have added to the critiques by Dr Demir and Dr Graham by identifying Soraya as equally, if not more, marginalised than Melanie, and as a victim of rape because of the structural inequalities and violence in South Africa that force young women to sell their

bodies to make a living, risking not only their physical and mental health but also that of their families, particularly if they are mothers like Soraya, and possibly married, as Professor Coetzee has suggested with his portrayal of Soraya in Disgrace.

In addition, I want to argue that Ms Snyckers, having knowingly marginalised Soraya, the one Muslim woman in Disgrace, then makes a revealingly Orientalist statement through the character Lucy Lurie about Muslim women, indicating that she as a white feminist knows exactly what is on the minds of these nameless and faceless Muslim women, from some imaginary, homogenous group that she has concocted in her mind. This is much like the manner in which the superior Western Occidental considers and represents the homogenous Orient despite the dizzying diversity of ancient cultures and languages in Africa, the Middle East, and the Far East.

Reasonable questions to ask are these: What Muslim women is Ms Snyckers referring to, whom Lucy Lurie can so easily identify and label, and whose thoughts she can read? Are they feminists from Muslim/Asian/Oriental/Arab/Mideast/North African/Brown/Black backgrounds like several of her fellow writers at Pan Macmillan South Africa and journalists currently working in the media? Or does Ms Snyckers want to go further back to the older generation of activists, like the late Fatima Meer, many of whom have ancestry traced to Asia and Arabia? What, also, does Ms Snyckers think of men of this above category, or are they of a brutish type, of no intellectual consequence and easily brushed aside? This is what Ms Snyckers has Lucy Lurie say in Lacuna:

> I retreat into the world of my phone, scrolling through social media posts and news sites. It is a soothing world. Everything that appears in my feed is designed to reinforce my world view. I permit no cognitive dissonance to intrude. It is a world I can lose myself in for hours. I am in the middle of reading about '10 things that Muslim women wish white feminists would stop doing' when I become aware of a weight descending onto the bench next to me. It is a policewoman. She is fanning herself with a manila folder. (2019: 161)

What Ms Snyckers tries to say here about Muslim women highlights the 'two great themes' of Orientalism, which are 'knowledge and power'. This is how the late Professor Said rightly describes it in his seminal 1979 work Orientalism, which he uses as an example of how this was used by colonial administrators, including Arthur James Balfour and Lord 'Over-Baring' Cromer, as justification for the imperialist enterprise or mission civilisatrice in Egypt and elsewhere (32). This followed the work of those eminent scholars Silvestre De Sacy and Ernst Renan, two of their era's leading anti-Semites, erudite thinkers to a degree but lacking in their love for Arabs, Muslims, and Jews. They are, I argue, some of Professor Coetzee's literary forefathers, in setting up an Orientalist genre that allowed the rational and civilized Occident to study and then represent in journals, novels, poetry, and travel writing the barbaric, violent, and irrational Orient and Africa.

The whole idea that Ms Snyckers reinforces here is that to have knowledge of a thing is to 'dominate it, to have authority over it', as Professor Said describes it (32). This means Ms Snyckers' intelligent, academically trained Lucy Lurie knows the minds of these people from degraded civilizations and belief systems. In addition, they are not African like the other real Africans whom she refers to later, and to whom she looks for an education on rape and abuse. These Orientals, Ms Snyckers argues, can easily be countered with the understanding and rationality of the white feminist, who reads this post about the protests of Muslim women quite calmly, or as a 'soothing' read, as she puts it.

Further, it is not enough for Ms Snyckers to simply dismiss Muslim women, those half-literate and invisible Orientals who are not feminists like white feminists. She then goes on to set part of her novel in a run-down Bo-Kaap (a historically largely Muslim neighbourhood, as I have indicated previously), which is not populated by any real people, only poor, uneducated souls, with one clearly uneducated guard character speaking in the vernacular, or her version of it, of Kaaps, which Ms Snyckers mocks through Lucy Lurie, and then says that she knows exactly what she is doing and that she cannot participate in 'blackface' (269).

Apart from Ms Snyckers 'knowing' exactly how to speak like this person, one can reasonably ask here: would Ms Snyckers have dared to mimic/mock

the accent of a 'real' African, say a Xhosa-speaking person, in the same manner? This is similar to Professor Coetzee's Orientalist depiction of Soraya, in the opening pages of Disgrace, as uneducated and having no moral compass, similar to the ways in which Professor Coetzee portrays all the other Black characters throughout the novel (and in many of his other novels), including the sly and villainous Petrus and the mentally deficient Pollux. In Disgrace, this is how Professor Coetzee has David Lurie describe Soraya:

> In bed Soraya is not effusive. Her temperament is in fact rather quiet, quiet and docile. In her general opinions she is surprisingly moralistic. She is offended by tourists who bare their breasts ('udders', she calls them) on public beaches; she thinks vagabonds should be rounded up and put to work sweeping the streets. How she reconciles her opinions with her line of business he does not ask. (1)

Further, Ms Snyckers and Professor Coetzee adopt a position of superiority or 'architecture moralisée', as the late Linda Nochlin described it in her seminal essay 'The Imaginary Orient' which analyses French Orientalist painters including Jean-Léon Gérôme through the lens of Professor Said's Orientalist arguments. Professor Coetzee places the naked and desirable Soraya in the sparsely furnished, lifeless, and seedy flat at Windsor Mansions in Green Point, Cape Town; Ms Snyckers goes much further by describing Bo-Kaap as quite empty of Muslim people, rundown and neglected, in their colourful houses, an imaginary Bo-Kaap that hardly fits the reality of the diversity of the community. As Professor Nochlin states in the May 1993 edition of the magazine Art in America:

> The lesson is subtle, perhaps, but still eminently available, given a context of similar topoi; these people – lazy, slothful and childlike, if colourful – have let their own cultural treasures sink into decay. There is a clear allusion here, clothed in the language of the objective reportage, not merely to the mystery of the East, but to the barbaric insouciance of Moslem peoples, who quite literally charm snakes while Constantinople falls into ruins. (123)

Dear Ms Morris, I will have to end here, for the time being. I have so much more to say about the publishing industry, the continued depictions of imaginary backward African and Oriental peoples, and of course about Soraya. I hope we can initiate a conversation that would delve into these issues and find solutions that would benefit the industry and society.

Sincerely,
Waghied
A.W. Misbach

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Dear Mr Misbach

In acknowledgement of your open letter to be published in the The Thinker, Pan Macmillan South Africa appreciates this opportunity to respond where appropriate to some of the issues you raise.

We apologise unreservedly for the lack of follow-up in 2018 to the email you received requesting the full manuscript of The Girl with the Red Flower. We have a small local publishing team made up of three full-time employees and we make use of the services of a few freelancers, who understand our publishing ethos and commercial imperatives. The open submission period you refer to in 2018 is not one that we are proud of in terms of how it was managed. The in-house employee who was overseeing the submission process resigned and left the company at the end of August 2018. This departure unfortunately led to several tasks not being effectively followed up or completed, including the open submission period. There were several would-be authors, yourself included, who heard nothing more from us on their full manuscript submissions, which were not read or reviewed any further. This is extremely unprofessional, and it is a failure we acknowledge, which is why we offer our sincere apologies in this regard.

It is important for us to comment further on two related points. The first is that as publishers we absolutely guarantee and protect the intellectual property of the works and the authors who submit material to us. Each manuscript is unique to an author and there is no sharing of concepts or ideas between projects. We wouldn't have a business model if we didn't prioritise this.

The second point, which is related, is that however flawed our open submission process was in 2018, Pan Macmillan received the full manuscript of Lacuna by Fiona Snyckers a few days after The Girl with the Red Flower via the same open submission process. We do therefore feel that the accusation levelled against us that 'What follows then is that they seemingly decided to ask a white author to write a similar work' is untrue, unsubstantiated and unfair to Pan Macmillan and, more importantly, to Fiona Snyckers as an author, who had spent several years crafting Lacuna before submitting the manuscript to Pan Macmillan.

Our small team is unable to read all of the submissions received in an open submission period. As a result, we recruit a wider team of readers, both in-house and freelance, to aid us in the reading and review process. These readers are provided with guidelines but we do rely on their input and initiative. It was one of our trusted freelance readers who brought the initial submission of Lacuna to our attention and then recommended the manuscript to us for a closer look after she had reviewed the material received.

We have been aware of the shortcomings in the administration of our open submission process. As a result, we have taken steps to ensure that the opportunity for would-be authors is managed more effectively and closely to deal with the high number of submissions we receive.

Pan Macmillan is only able to publish four or five novels a year owing to our capacity and the relatively small consumer market for local novels. We don't therefore claim to have a flawless system and a model whereby we are able to publish as widely as we would like, but we do endeavour to provide a platform for diverse voices. A look at the fiction titles we have published over the past few years showcases a broad range of South African authors, and several of the novels published have gone on to win awards.

Finally, we note your critique of Lacuna and Disgrace; each of these novels has provoked diverse reactions from readers and critics. And that is, at heart, what we hope our fiction publishing contributes to: a local literary landscape that allows for a range of responses, questions, reflections and critique, which enrich the reading experience for all.

Yours sincerely
Terry Morris
on behalf of the Publishing Team

FEB 2021 RESPONSE TO TERRY MORRIS' RESPONSE

Racism and Islamophobia probe of Pan Macmillan SA urged
Full transparency and revelation of all facts in the public interest

Dear Ms Morris,

In response to your letter I acknowledge with reservations your unreserved apology for the manner in which The Girl with the Red Flower disappeared without trace during your company's Open Window period in 2018, while Fiona Snyckers' deeply flawed work on the same subject and in the same genre was published. Your explanation leaves several unanswered questions on transparency, which I believe is a disservice to me and the public.

I have rightly asked you several probing questions, sketching out possible scenarios of what may have happened, concerning the circumstances around the disappearance of The Girl with the Red Flower. And I have asked you about Lacuna's possible conversation with and similarities to The Girl with the Red Flower because Ms Snyckers was aware of my work in 2018, months before Lacuna's April 2019 publication (I have the screenshots from Facebook that attest to this, if you need to see them). You have now responded rejecting some of these possible scenarios that I posed. I believe I am the aggrieved party who had my manuscript lost, so I can also adopt my journalist hat to ask any further follow-up questions, in a bid to get access to all the facts for an interested public.

As a follow-up, I believe it is in the public interest for Pan Macmillan South Africa to launch a thorough independent probe on issues of process, representation and inclusion, including whether racism and Islamophobia exists within Pan Macmillan South Africa and then to publish the full findings. This would allow your readers/consumers to know the full details of what transpired, so that we can retain our trust in the intellectual products you produce with your suppliers/collaborators. I propose that this probe should include all your freelancers and editors, especially those involved intimately with Lacuna.

These are some of the questions I believe you should answer in the public interest: Who read my initial submission and made the assessment of the manuscript for further review? Who was this assessment sent to for approval and communication with me? Was this a senior person? If not, do you have junior employees making such decisions? You point out that one of your 'trusted freelance readers' flagged Ms Snyckers' work, can you indicate who read my work?

You say that the in-house employee who left at the end of August 2018 coordinated the submission process, but my email correspondence included one of your most senior executives, namely Sandile Nkosi, who is still with your organisation and is responsible for editorial coordination, which I assume happens at regular editorial meetings. I would like to know why Ms Nkosi did not flag my work to Publisher Andrea Nattrass, as would be expected from a senior employee.

Ms Morris, in your probe of racism and Islamophobia and institutionalised forgetting, I would urge you to ask why Ms Snyckers mentioned my work for the first time only on 1 February 2021, referring to 'an unpublished novel' without naming me or the title, in her interview and webinar with Sarah Mosoetsa, chief executive officer of the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences. What is further worrying to me is that Ms Snyckers did not acknowledge that Soraya and Melanie are rape victims. She simply said to Professor Mosoetsa that they are the 'marginalised' women from Disgrace.

Ms Morris, this photoshopping of the Black women from Disgrace by Ms Snyckers and Pan Macmillan South Africa is mirrored by the almost unanimous agreement by the critics. It is perhaps important to place this all on record, to show how pervasive it was. This is what Black people have to contend with on a daily basis, which has become so entrenched that some of us Black people even partake in it. Of course, many of us do so for the obvious reason of survival, to literally put bread on the table.

Ms Snyckers mentioned to Professor Mosoetsa about other writers who had responded to Disgrace in the past, without naming them. This includes Elleke Boehmer's short-story collection Sharmilla, and Other Portraits published in 2010. There is clearly an allusion here to a sex worker from Cape Town in Professor Boehmer's work. But what is most remarkable is that Professor Boehmer does not mention Sharmilla or Soraya in her essay published as part of the Reading Coetzee's Women collection of essays that I mentioned to you in my original letter. In addition, Sharmilla is not mentioned in Professor Boehmer's biography published at the front of the book, although her 2019 second short story collection is mentioned.

There is a further purge of Soraya (Melanie gets two mentions) in academic Richard Alan Northover's 'Lucy's Precarious Privilege in Fiona Snyckers' Lacuna'. Professor Northover defends Ms Snyckers as being a critic of White privilege, which is similar to the arguments supporting Professor Coetzee's Disgrace over the past twenty years.

In Litnet on 10 July 2019, publisher and author Karina Magdalena Szczurek (wife of the late Andre Brink, who himself responded to Disgrace), erases her Black sisters from Disgrace. There is a similar glowing tribute from author Nthikeng Mohlele in 'A Novel Response to Disgrace', in the Mail & Guardian on 12 April 2019, who also renders invisible his Black sisters.

Another positive short review is from well-known author Lauren Beukes, who declared on the Pan Macmillan South Africa Facebook page on 30 August 2019: 'Fiona Snyckers' novel Lacuna is furious and incandescent, told from the perspective of the rape survivor in [J.M.] Coetzee's Disgrace. It deserves to win all the awards.' Ms Beukes clearly thinks that there is only one rape survivor in Disgrace. Another positive review is by Jonathan Amid 'Disgrace op sy kop gedraai' on 8 July 2019 in Beeld who also makes no mention of the Black raped women from Disgrace.

In the same vein is the Rapport review on 16 June 2019 of Fanie Olivier, the translator of Disgrace into Afrikaans (titled 'n Oneer) with 'Verkragte vrou praat hier terug'. Reviewer Lloyd Gedye, in New Frame on 15 May 2019 with 'Lacuna disputes the rape narrative of Disgrace', states that Professor Coetzee's Lucy has 'an absence of real agency', but does not recognize the other agency-less Black women. Eusebius McKaiser, the former radio host, also had unqualified praise for Lacuna, in interviews with Ms Snyckers in 2018 and 2019 while offering no incisive commentary on or even naming the missing Black women. Also following this narrative was radio host Jenny Crwys-Williams.

Ms Morris, I will now return to the probe I have proposed. I believe it is perfectly reasonable for Pan Macmillan South Africa's investigation to determine the views of both Ms Snyckers and Helen Moffett, her editor, in producing a work about the female character Lucy Lurie (whose religious beliefs are not identified clearly), of a Muslim like me writing about a clearly Muslim female character. This question goes to the heart of the issue of representation and inclusion that Pan Macmillan South Africa and others are grappling with as Blacks and Muslims across the world are being marginalised and slaughtered.

Pan Macmillan South Africa should ask Ms Snyckers and Dr Moffett why they think it is acceptable to single out (or ghettoise) and then render invisible and nameless Muslim women in relation to White women and the feminist Lucy Lurie. Why not single out, and name, Melanie Isaacs (clearly identified in Professor Coetzee's Disgrace as Christian but not so in Lacuna) in the same way?

Ms Morris, unconsciously or likely quite consciously, I argue that Ms Snyckers and Dr Moffett are here clearly drawing on the ideological work of the late Bernard Lewis and his much-touted essay 'The Roots of Muslim Rage' that appeared in The Atlantic in September 1990. Dr Lewis' work then inspired the late Samuel Huntington's 1993 questioning essay 'The Clash of Civilisations?' and later 1996 book with the emphatic title The Clash of Civilisations.

These works have been used as intellectual backing for various imperialist adventures in the Middle East; and further bolster the notion of Dr Lewis that the Judeo-Christian civilisation was under threat from Islam, meaning Muslims and Arabs. It now

appears that this is how Ms Snyckers views Lucy on one side, versus Soraya and her Muslim/Arab 'rage' on the other.

Ms Morris, what I am essentially arguing here is that Ms Snyckers and Pan Macmillan South Africa are appearing to indulge in a discredited ideology under the guise of progressive liberalism. Words and representations do matter. This raises the obvious question of Ms Snyckers' political affinities, as well as those of Pan Macmillan's South Africa's 'trusted' freelance reader who had flagged her book as important in the first place. Ms Snyckers raises the issue of the attitude of Muslim women toward White women. Why not now ask what she feels about Muslims, Arabs and Palestinians and the continued violation of their human rights?

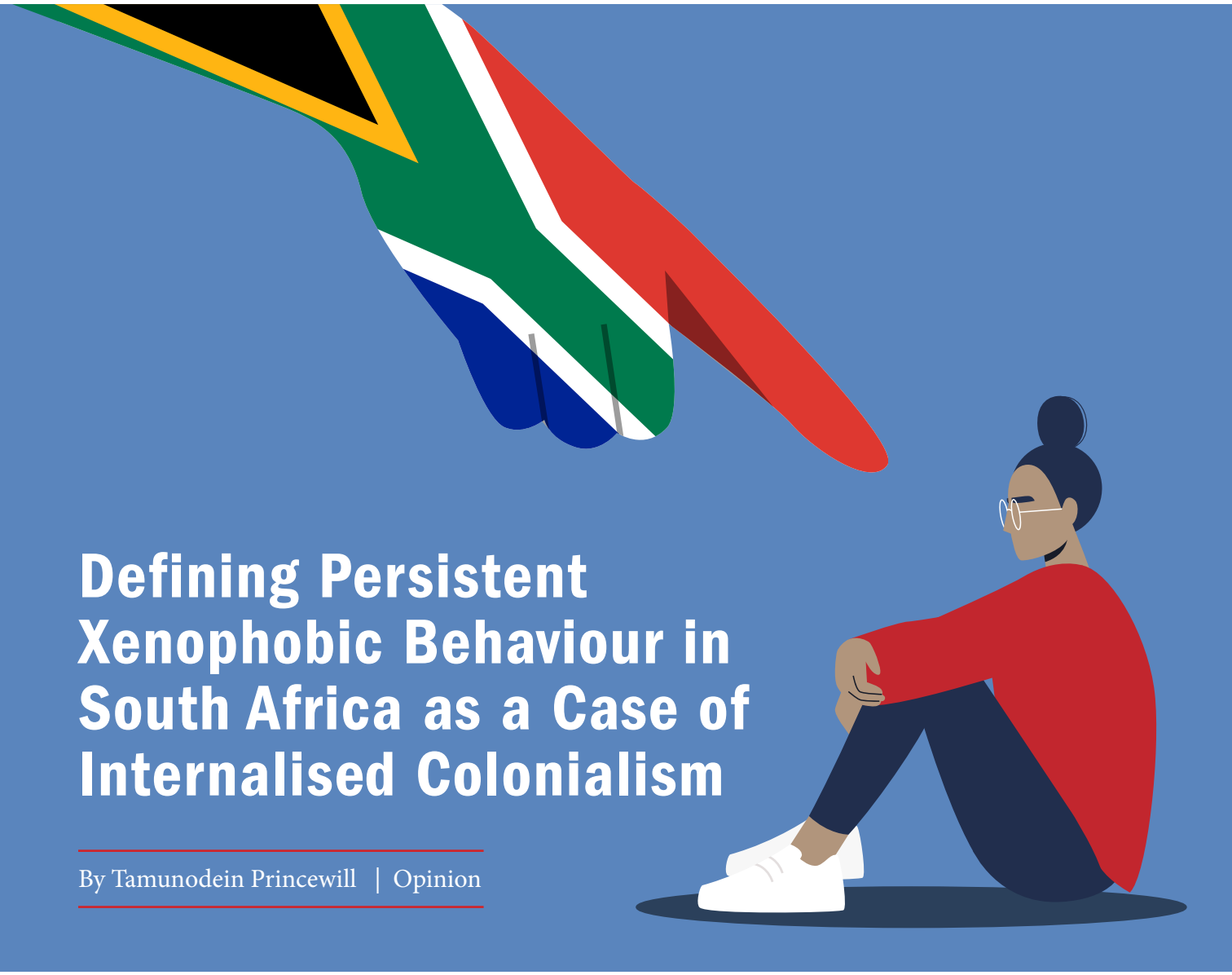
I must say, Ms Morris, that I am not surprised by the insouciant tone of moral equivalence and flexible positional superiority that pervade your letter. I suppose this is to be expected considering how you described Lacuna on Twitter on 7 October 2020 when Ms Snyckers won the novel prize at the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences awards: 'What a book – congratulations @FionaSnyckers! Adding to [the] evening's excitement level.' It seems fairly obvious that you have decided that the White voice is the superior one to bolster what appears to be your small, book-buying White public, and that Black voices, bar the outstanding individual performers (in your assessment of course), is to simply make up the numbers in your publication list.

I want to emphasise the commitment to diversity and inclusion and the pledge adopted by your parent company in September 2020. For the benefit of the uninformed, I will quote a short extract from the 'The Pan Macmillan Diversity and Inclusion Pledge and Associated Action Plan – September 2020'.

> We believe that racism and prejudice of many kinds are still insidious in our societies and that these issues must be effectively addressed. There is an urgent need for individuals, and companies such as ours, to be better allies and equitable employers to POC [People of Colour] staff, authors and illustrators, to educate ourselves on issues of racism and prejudice, and to commit to sustained and effective action to oppose racism and ensure that it has no place at Pan Macmillan.

Ms Morris, I look forward to further interaction but considering your response, I am not confident at all that you will make more than just cosmetic changes. I hope I am wrong.

Best,
Waghied.
A.W. Misbach



Defining Persistent Xenophobic Behaviour in South Africa as a Case of Internalised Colonialism

By Tamunodein Princewill | Opinion

Abstract

South Africa has a history of systemic racial segregation. The ramifications of this history within contemporary South Africa, that extend beyond the Black South African demographic, are yet to be fully discussed. The idea emerging is that the xenophobic culture prevalent in South Africa is a result of internalised colonialism. In discussing internalised colonialism, the notion of citizenship needs to be analysed in order to legitimise who belongs to a state and who has access to a state? The de jure factors that fortified South Africa's apartheid regime indicate that dismantling internalised colonialism and its projection unto other Black demographics in South Africa requires legal fortification. The idea is that de facto and de jure factors can exist within a cycle that enables the deconstruction of xenophobic behaviour in South Africa. In discussing this behaviour, the larger global landscape must be considered as being part of a web that perpetuates new forms of exclusion. Emerging is an exposure of the vicious cycle that exists between previously subjugated groupings extending maltreatment towards other groupings within their spheres of influence. The idea is that a socio-totem pole exists in which there will always be an 'other' for the historically 'othered'.

Introduction

The term citizenship has different meanings in different contexts. It could either describe who belongs in a space or who has access to a particular nation state. These notions of 'belonging' and 'access' are at the core of citizenship discussions and, as such, the genealogy of citizenship in South Africa needs to be assessed as a means of interpreting the roots of xenophobic behaviour in the nation. This paper identifies the detrimental legacy caused by prioritising de jure citizenship during the apartheid regime in modern-day South Africa, and how this manifests in the behaviour of Black South Africans towards Black immigrant groupings and other non-Black South Africans. As such, this paper aims to state that xenophobic behaviour in South Africa is simply a case of internalised colonialism on the part of Black South Africans. In meeting the aforementioned aim, this paper will provide an analysis of citizenship in South Africa by linking the embodiments of citizenship during the apartheid regime to a post-apartheid definition of citizenship in South Africa.

The origins of citizenship

Citizenship entails two notions: who belongs in a space and who has access to the state (Ceuppens and Geshierre, 2005). The notion of who belongs in a space is the original and historically correct embodiment of citizenship, as this pre-dated the formation of the modern state, which brought with it the latter notion of citizenship referring to who has access to the state (Strozzi and Bertocchi, 2006). Following from this original formation of citizenship was the notion of prioritising males belonging in spaces and, as such, women were barred form attaining citizenship and citizenship became gendered (Strozzi and Bertocchi, 2006). This was followed by a class-based citizenship: the idea that working males belonged to a space more than non-working males, as the former contributed more to society.

With the emergence of the Westphalian state in 1648, came the idea that citizens had obligations to the state and did not just claim from state. In return, the state would provide rights and privileges to its citizens (Strozzi and Bertocchi, 2006). The creation of the Westphalian state also meant that citizenship shifted from being gendered and class-based to being defined on the basis of race and language. This type of citizenship encompassed both notions of citizenship and rested on the idea that the white man both belonged in a space and had access to the nation state. As such, it was this type of citizenship that brought with it the current socio-hierarchical structures of the world: a hierarchy that starts with the white man, followed by the white woman, then the Black man and, at the very bottom of the hierarchy, the Black woman. In essence, not only did the nation state bring forth an exclusive form of citizenship, but it used this citizenship to produce an idea of who could be 'rightfully' subjugated. The 1949 formation of the apartheid regime in South Africa embodied the aforementioned idea of citizenship and enforced this idea of citizenship by legalising it and making the law a tool of coloniality (Modiri, 2019).

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The exclusive and restrictive form of citizenship defined and legalized under the apartheid state created 'borders within borders' with the formation of homelands, which enabled the apartheid state to ensure that Black people did not have access to the South African state and instilled within Black people the idea that they did not belong outside of the homelands. It is clear that the origins of citizenship in South Africa had roots in white supremacy and the subjugation of the Black South African masses, which restricted their belonging and access to the state. This leads to a discussion on the subjugation of Black immigrant groupings by Black South African masses as a means of defining citizenship within their own

Black South African context. In the same way that the broader socio-hierarchical structure of the world starts with white people and ends with Black people, the South African socio-hierarchical structure starts with the white South African male, followed by the white South African female, then the Black South African male, followed by the Black South African female and finally, at the end, Black immigrant groupings. The idea emerges that the notion of citizenship is an entity reliant on the continuous subjugation of human beings. South Africa's current-day exclusionary and restrictive citizenship is a legacy of white supremacy, as the subjugation of Black immigrant groupings by Black South Africans merely extends the treatment given to them. As such, adequately exploring persistent xenophobic behaviour implies assessing xenophobia's origins in white supremacy.

Defining post-apartheid citizenship

As previously mentioned, apartheid South Africa's citizenship was based on exclusion. Post-apartheid citizenship is one that has merely changed the manner in which this exclusionary citizenship is manifested. The South African state was previously only accessible to white South Africans, but now is accessible to all South Africans, meaning that citizenship is now nationalistic as opposed to its previous ethnic stipulations. One form of exclusion was replaced by another form of exclusion with the aims of forming an inclusive basis of citizenship. Such neo-exclusion is seen in the recent trending hashtag on Twitter by South Africans calling for #Nigeriansmustfall, which saw discussions surrounding having Pass documents for Black immigrant groupings in order to identify legal immigrants from illegal immigrants. This has links to an apartheid legacy, in which the Pass System was introduced by the apartheid government to restrict and regulate the movement of Black South Africans. This idea of Black South Africans dealing with an 'other' in the way white South Africans dealt with them as the 'other' is a reflection of the deep-rooted internalised colonialism present amongst Black South Africans (Hall, 1992), as subjecting Black immigrant groupings to an internal Pass System is a reflection of the internal policing Black South Africans endured under the apartheid state.

In mentioning the idea of the 'other' becoming the 'otherer' and vice versa, one must mention how Nigerians (who are being othered by #Nigeriansmustfall within South Africa) were themselves once the perpetrators of the othering of another group within their own country. The aforementioned was seen with the 'Ghana Must Go' rhetoric used by Nigerians in 1983, which ultimately led to the forced removal of Ghanaians and other undocumented West African immigrants from Nigeria's borders by former Nigerian leader Shehu Shagari (Lawal, 2020). This legacy of intra-state conflict in deciding who has access to the state and who the state belongs to manifests as inter-state conflicts on the African continent, as tensions persisted between Ghana and Nigeria for many years following the exile of Ghanaians from Nigeria (Lawal, 2020). A further probing of the unhumanitarian narratives attached to denied citizenship, particularly in apartheid South Africa and how it manifested into the denied citizenship of refugees and asylum seekers in post-apartheid South Africa, will show the large extent to which persistent xenophobic behaviour is rooted in white supremacy.

As previously stated, xenophobic behaviour in South Africa is simply a case of internalised colonialism on the part of Black South Africans. This is because the apartheid state denied simple human necessities to Black South Africans, such as access to food and adequate healthcare. The inadequate education offered to Black South Africans and the job restrictions placed on them entrenched many Black South Africans in poverty, which greatly impacted their access to food, and as such many Black South Africans had to go to great lengths to perform the basic task of feeding their families (Britannica, 2020). Another way in which basic human necessities were denied to Black South Africans by the apartheid state was with the inadequate and segregated healthcare facilities Black South Africans were given (Britannica, 2020), which created overcrowding in Black hospitals. The underfunding of Black hospitals ultimately limited the healthcare treatment that Black South Africans could have access to. As such, living in poor physical health, whether unknowingly or knowingly, was normalised for Black South Africans, as was living with poor mental health, due to the long working hours and long distances created by the migrant labour system.

It is by understanding the above that one can

further probe the xenophobic behaviour shown towards refugees and asylum seekers, who are not inhabiting South Africa for economic reasons but for humanitarian reasons. It can be stated that the reason for xenophobic behaviour towards refugees and asylum seekers is rooted in the manner in which Black South Africans experienced unhumanitarian narratives attached to their denied citizenship during apartheid South Africa. The severity of one's needs does not equate to one being able to access the state, in the same way that the dire circumstances of Black South Africans did not hasten the apartheid state to grant them access to the state. It is the legacy of this unhumanitarian narrative attached to citizenship, resulting from white supremacy, that sees the current exclusionary form of citizenship in South Africa. In contrast, a humanitarian narrative attached to citizenship would see the welcoming of an African brotherhood within South African borders, limiting the inter-state and intra-state conflict manifested by xenophobic rhetoric.

The aforementioned dealt with citizenship in terms of who has access to the state, in doing so assuming that Black immigrant groupings are seeking access to the South African state as opposed to seeking belonging within a South African space. The demarcation between the notions of accessing and belonging is based on the idea that accessing the South African state is an economic and educational pursuit, whereas belonging is a personal and psychological pursuit, in which Black immigrant groupings aim to fit into Black South African culture.

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, safety needs such as that of economic security supersede that of belonging. As such, the continued assumption that Black immigrant groupings are first and foremost seeking access to the South African state can be substantiated. Black immigrant groupings aim to assimilate and form their sense of belonging to the state within Black South African culture, as opposed to within white South African culture, because Black South Africans have access to the sector of the state in which Black immigrant groupings can operate. This means that the attempts of Black immigrant groupings to assimilate into Black South African culture is also sector-specific, as the majority of Black immigrant groupings operate in the informal sector. Furthermore, the low-income status of Black immigrant groupings means that the majority of this group live in informal areas, townships, and non-suburbia dwellings – the same areas in which the majority of Black South Africans live (De Greef, 2019). As such, belonging becomes intertwined and intensified with speaking a Black South African language.

Considering the notions of accessing and belonging within the definition of citizenship, the question is which of these notions do Black South Africans prohibit Black immigrant groups from having? Answering this question will allow for an exploration of the ways in which xenophobia is linked to the successful or unsuccessful assimilation of non-citizens. The aforementioned can be achieved surrounding a discussion on the discourse of xenophobia. In the same way that there is a language of racism, there is also a discourse of xenophobia.

The xenophobic discourse developed increasingly since the 1990s by the South African Department of Home Affairs and the South African media has links to a post-apartheid constitution regarding notions of citizenship and has been internalised by Black South African citizens to conceptualise their relationship to the nation (Modiri, 2019). As a result, the discourse of xenophobia creates positions for Black immigrant groupings to occupy as objects and it gives way for the master signifiers in this discourse, Black South African citizens, to organise the identity of Black immigrant groupings. It is in the latter that the power of this discourse lies, as Black South Africans shape the idea of citizenship for non-citizens, in essence dictating their livelihood within the borders of South Africa. As such, decreasing xenophobic rhetoric is linked to the successful assimilation of non-citizens, because the more they strip themselves of the identity of the 'other', the less power Black South Africans have to shape them as the 'other' (Hall, 1992). However, this same notion of assimilation by non-citizens causes increasing xenophobic rhetoric as the naturalisation of non-citizens threatens the existence of Black South Africans as autochthones, thereby resulting in a persistent division between citizens and non-citizens and increasing xenophobic rhetoric.

Furthermore, one must discuss the manner in which vacuums and voids strengthen the discourse of xenophobia. Vacuums in this case relates to the lack of a unified national consciousness in South Africa,

which sees national citizenship as the only unified entity which joins all South Africans together (Modiri, 2019). The idea that the state belongs to a citizen, and that a citizen has access to the state, is the basis upon which South African society manages to co-exist, meaning that this society is dependent on de jure factors for its functionality (Modiri, 2019). It is this fixation on de jure factors that sees the entrance of non-legalised entities posing a threat to the very basis of South African society's harmony. A unified national consciousness would replace the dependence on de jure factors for a functioning society, and this would trickle down to alleviating persistent xenophobic behaviour. As such, the othering of Black immigrant groupings would decrease once the vacuum caused by a lack of unified national consciousness is filled (Fanon, 1963). The starting point for filling this lack of national consciousness would be for the white bourgeoise within the state to invest back into South Africa, as their wealth is dependent on a legacy of subjugation of Black people as an underpaid labour source (Fanon, 1963). Furthermore, the 'petty black' bourgeoise within the state should disassociate from colonialist thought with regards to Black immigrant groupings being used as a working source (Fanon, 1963). As a collective, both the white and Black national bourgeoise of South Africa should disassociate from wanting to fill the gap of Western bourgeoise, an 'othered' bourgeoise (Fanon, 1963), as such forming an intermediary role that reflects the idea to working-class South Africans that foreign citizens should be barred from accessing the state. Moreover, the aforementioned de jure reliance of South African citizens adds to a disregard of individual experiences which essentially shape national existence (Fanon, 1963). One group's individual experience cannot be prioritised over another in order for national consciousness to exist.

The de jure and de facto notions surrounding citizenship form the basis of the DHA's non-naturalisation stance of foreigners. For instance, the child of an immigrant who has lived in South Africa from the age of 5 and has made use of the country's educational institutions while contributing to the country's economy, by means of working part-time jobs or working within the informal sector, is still not eligible for South African citizenship. Such a person probably speaks at least one indigenous South African language fluently, is likely familiar with South African culture, and can be said to be a citizen by de facto measures. As opposed to countries like the United States of America, which naturalises non-citizens after ten years of contributing to American society regardless of their place of birth, South Africa only recognises a non-citizen's naturalisation if that non-citizen is linked to a South African in terms of having a South African parent.

This micro-division between citizens and non-citizens forms the premise of dictating macro ideas of who belongs within a space and sets the precedent for xenophobic behaviour. An immigrant's claim to citizenship and naturalisation is linked to their association with an autochthony. As such, a powerful discourse emerges surrounding autochthony and the manner in which a 'regional minority reinvents itself as a national majority' (Ceuppens and Geshierre, 2005: 395). Although Black South Africans were never regional minorities population-wise, they were regional minorities in the manner in which they were treated like second-class citizens, which sees their recognized autochthony in democratic South Africa as a way in which they reinvent themselves as a national majority that dictates the entities that can access their nation and to whom their nation can belong to. The proceedings surrounding 1994 legally prohibited any drastic action to bar white South Africans from being stripped of their self-proclaimed autochthony to the South African state (Modiri, 2019), hence further substantiating the previous claims that South African society is held together by legalised citizenship and legalised ideas of belonging, as opposed to a national consciousness.

"This micro-division between citizens and non-citizens forms the premise of dictating macro ideas of who belongs within a space and sets the precedent for xenophobic behaviour. An immigrant's claim to citizenship and naturalisation is linked to their association with an autochthony."

From this idea of the powerful discourse surrounding autochthony comes a discussion surrounding the fluidity of the autochthon in South Africa and the smaller zones in which autochthon discourses emerge. This, in essence, implies that the ideas of citizenship are not just inter-related between national citizens and Black immigrant groupings, but are intra-related within national citizens by means of culture and tribe, which leads to the idea that 'being South African' is a fluid spectrum. On the lower end of this spectrum, considered to be less indigenous, are those of Pedi and Venda descent, because of their closer resemblance to the ethnic groupings of inhabitants from Lesotho and eSwatini. This also highlights that the 'othering' of non-citizens is one that bears no consideration for neighbouring countries or border proximities, as eSwatini and Lesotho are nations that share borders with South Africa.

Furthermore, the smaller zones in which the power of autochthony discourses are felt is within provinces. For instance, those considering themselves autochthones of the Western Cape are hostile towards the increasing influx of people from the Eastern Cape. Such a hostility is present within the townships in which these opposing groups of people live, thereby fuelling the already present gang violence within and between townships (De Greef, 2019). The idea emerging is that being a national citizen is no longer enough to belong in every space within national borders and to be able to access every province (Ceuppens and Geshierre, 2005). This idea can be extended to the global sphere in which African Americans are considered allogenes of America despite their generational presence in the country. Proponents of autochthony reflect the idea that the only place they will truly belong is where their ancestors lived (Ceuppens and Geshierre, 2005). Once the discourse of power surrounding autochthony has been broken down, then a paradigm shift will occur, allowing for a decrease in South Africa's fixation on legalised, racialised and ethnicised citizenship. This will allow for the self to be a reflection of the actor's socialisation, meaning the self will be more inclusive, as such producing a smaller 'othered' pool (Hopf, 1998).

Following from a discussion surrounding autochthony, one needs to then discuss the former racialised citizenship present in apartheid South Africa and the extent to which present-day South Africa shifted from that type of citizenship to a legalised citizenship. During apartheid, white Afrikaans speaking South Africans claimed to be the autochthony, as their ancestors the Dutch had settled in South Africa for generations. Their citizenship was based on the entitlement that they could fully access the state. Similarly, white English-speaking South Africans laid claim to the nation because their countrymen had colonised the nation; essentially, their citizenship was based on the idea that the state belonged to them. Combining the notions of belonging and accessing within citizenship, white Afrikaans- and English-speaking South Africans created a racialised citizenship that validated the identity of the white man as a naturalised entity of South Africa. The irony in this racialised citizenship was that neither of these groups of people were autochthones of the South African state, and the real indigenes were the ones being subjugated and treated as second-class citizens.

In modern-day South Africa, the questioning of who is natural to South Africa has risen within xenophobic discourses, and one could link this questioning to the frustration caused by legalised citizenship, in that Black South Africans cannot formally prohibit white South Africans from accessing a nation state that was not theirs to begin with. As a result, this inability and frustration is projected onto Black immigrant groupings who do not have the same legal protection regarding citizenship as white South Africans do. The embodiment of naturalisation that Black South Africans have within the discourse of xenophobia can be said to be a means of redefining their identity to belong to what was once taken away from them. However, one can also state that this narrative has been reflected towards the wrong groups of people.

Factually, white South Africans resisted a non-racial democracy until it was no longer a viable economic decision, whereas other African nations fought alongside Black South Africans in the fight towards liberation. The inhabitants of those African nations form the current Black immigrant groupings within South Africa. As such, one could question whether citizenship should be formed on the basis of who fought for modern-day democratic South Africa. Such an idea would render the claim of white South Africans to the state as useless. However, given the legacy of apartheid, coupled with the internalised colonialism present in Black South Africans, the

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historically ‘othered’ unconsciously finds more closure in othering and subjugating another entity. The idea of white South Africans being excluded from the narrative of citizenship forms part of a type of constitutional irresolution of citizenship, in which the politico-historical tensions between Black South Africans and white South Africans have been ignored and have been blanketed under the pretext of a constitutional citizenship (Modiri, 2019), once again building a façade of national unity on de jure pretexts.

Occurring from this constitutional irresolution is a constitutionalisation of injustice which sees the forced transmission of the injustice of the past into a ‘justice’ of the present (Modiri, 2019). As such, xenophobic behaviour in this case stems from the irresolution within South Africans caused by the country’s reliance on legalised national unity. The inability of Black South Africans to deal with this irresolution results in their projection of the South African citizenship crisis onto Black immigrant groupings, which in itself echoes tendencies of internalised colonialism, as the historically ‘othered’ becomes the perpetuator of ‘othering’. The idea is that Black South Africans are now the entitled group within South Africa with regards to dictating who has access to South Africa, meaning that to a large extent they can justify their othering of certain groups because of their place in the citizenship hierarchical structure of South Africa. This idea of entitlement brings to light the equal entitlement that Black immigrant groupings should have with regards to accessing the South African state on the grounds that their home countries helped South Africa in the fight for democracy, echoing ideas of the African brotherhood based on Nkrumah’s school of thought.

In recognising the legal roots that produce an irresolution of citizenship discourses in South Africa, one must also recognise the economic roots and incentives behind the production of certain citizenship discourses which result in persistant xenophobic behaviour. Many ‘moderate’ Third World governments, such as South Africa’s, aim to link objectives of social growth and social justice, which attempt to use current socio-economic platforms to incorporate marginalised groups (Ballard, 2012: 813). In South Africa, such a marginalised group would be Black South Africans. Emerging is the idea that post-neo-liberalist governments focus on the poor and discourses of citizenship, as opposed to neo-liberalist governments that focus on economic management (Ballard, 2012: 813). South Africa is a country that aims to find a middle ground within the motives of post-neo-liberalist and neo-liberalist governments, meaning that the government is often skewed towards narratives surrounding marginalised groups, which allows for this type of narrative to be present during election time, leading to vote-seeking behaviour on the basis of incorporating the marginalised into the country.

The issue that arises from this vote-seeking behaviour occurs when lines are blurred between advocating for the marginalised citizens of South Africa and basing the lack of access of these marginalised citizens on that of Black immigrant groupings, as such fuelling existing xenophobic rhetoric as Black immigrant groupings are used as the scapegoats of the economic woes facing Black South Africans. This is similar to the historical situation faced by Jews, who were treated as second-class citizens within Germany and were scapegoated for the economic woes of ‘autochthony Germans’, despite having been citizens of Germany for generations (Ranan, 2020). Both situations echo the idea that no level of assimilation by one group into another group is ever truly enough to escape being ‘othered’. The magnitude of vote-seeking behaviour in fuelling xenophobic behaviour is demonstrated in the cycle of a period of harmony, followed by sporadic or episodic violent outbursts within hot zones, such as townships and other impoverished locations (De Greef, 2019).

Unpacking the fallacy surrounding Black immigrant groupings' economic success in South Africa is key to dismantling xenophobic behaviour in the country. The first assertion that needs to be made in relation to the aforementioned is that Black immigrant groupings are not stealing the jobs of Black South Africans. The intent behind the use of the word 'stealing' in this context implies that certain jobs are reserved for Black South Africans, which echoes the colour bar system of the apartheid era, in which job reservation for white South Africans was legislated. This once again roots internalised colonialism within the discourse of citizenship. The idea of Black immigrant groups 'stealing' jobs is one that is false on the basis that the majority of Black immigrant groups work within the informal sector as small-scale entrepreneurs, bringing to light the idea that Black immigrant groups are merely filling the economic voids left by Black South Africans and the South African socio-economy as a whole. One could further substantiate this claim by highlighting the inability of Black South Africans to set up shops and businesses prior to the arrival of Somali or Nigerian immigrants.

In discussing the economic roots of persistent xenophobic behaviour in South Africa, one must also discuss the financial incentives of institutions fuelling citizenship discourses that lead to the formation of illegal immigrants, which fuels existing xenophobic rhetoric. The South African DHA decreases the channels of direct access that Black immigrants have to them. Instead, they transfer the legalities of citizenship to external companies like VFS Global and other visa application centres. These centres offer the buying of services to their customers, whom are mainly Black immigrant groupings, offering them the ability to 'enjoy a faster, more convenient and more luxurious application' (VFS Global, 2020), in essence treating legal status as if it were a business. The golden rule of thumb in the consumer-business world is that if a consumer cannot afford a product (in this case, obtaining a legal status in South Africa), then that product simply won't be bought. The capitalisation of acquiring valid visas in South Africa has direct links to the rising numbers of illegal immigrants within the country, as many of these immigrants cannot afford the services offered by these visa application centres. This leads to these immigrants turning to cheap forms of labour in order to sustain their livelihood in the country with their illegal status, thereby lowering the minimum wage as their cheap labour creates competition with Black South Africans, which in turn leads to the idea that Black immigrant groups are overflooding the informal job market. Black immigrant groups are then associated as those threatening the access of Black South Africans to the state, as the limited job markets available within the state are flooded with these immigrant groups.

The economic roots of the citizenship discourse that enables xenophobic behaviour could be used to dismantle these xenophobic behaviours. For instance, the contribution of Black immigrant groupings to South African society by means of their critical skills and entrepreneurial skills should be remunerated with easier access to gaining South African citizenship. This idea of a foreigner's contribution to their host society being grounds for remuneration in the form of citizenship or permanent residency is seen in many parts of the world. In the USA, for instance, the acquisition of a Green Card, a Permanent Resident Card which is equated to naturalisation, is achieved after a period of ten consecutive years in the country; this ten-year period is quantified as an immigrant's contribution to American society. Furthermore, countries like the USA make it easier for non-Americans to gain citizenship with a form of medical tourism that incentivises pregnant non-citizens to give birth in America, thereby making use of their healthcare system, and in return the American government grants American citizenship to the child born to that individual.

South Africa has no such form of medical tourism. If you are born in South Africa and your parents are not South African citizens, you are only able to contest for citizenship when you are 18 years of age (Andani, 2020). The aforementioned medical tourism also forms part of discussions surrounding the assimilation of non-Westerners into a Westernised citizenship which forms the basis of identity and assimilation discourses. This also propagates the idea of a de jure citizenship in which the only claim these individuals will have to America is based on their passport, and not on de facto reasonings of their lived experience in the country. As such, this inclusive and less restrictive form of acquiring citizenship still rests on the law. This means that the idea of the autochthony being the only entity that can lay claim to a state cannot be upheld, as inherent to the notion of autochthony is the idea that it is natural.

Once legalities are intertwined with this, the law dictates who belongs to the state and not the natural origins of the individual. As such, who has access to the state is constantly being redefined against a new 'other', as seen with the shift in the 'othering' of Black South Africans to Black immigrant groups.

Dismantling xenophobia

In discussing citizenship in its different stages, the idea of digital citizenship needs to be briefly explored. Digital citizenship shifts from de jure and de facto ideas of citizenship. Its basis is the use of technology as a tool for a harmonious society, in which digital content can be created and consumed (Digital Technologies Hub, 2020). The possibilities of such a citizenship in South Africa is unlikely, as the present society would exclude certain demographics, mainly Black South Africans, from accessing these digital technologies (Modiri, 2019). As such, South Africa needs to redress its de jure citizenship before it can explore the prospects of a harmonious society based on de facto or digital citizenship. The first step to dismantling xenophobic behaviour is reliant on de jure factors. In the same way that citizenship discourses that lead to xenophobic behaviour are shaped by the law, dismantling xenophobic behaviour is also based on the law, and as such a greater role should be placed on international human rights law within the parameters of advocating for the human dignity of the most vulnerable immigrant communities, refugees, and asylum seekers. In addition, xenophobic attitudes should be persecuted as hate crimes in the same way that racist attitudes and speeches are. The fact that xenophobia is not prosecutable as a hate crime shows the irony within South Africa's citizenship hierarchy, where the victims of hate speech are also the perpetuators of hate speech, a classic case of the 'othered' becoming the 'otherer'.

Another solution to dismantling xenophobic behaviour would be to dissect internalised colonialism. With this comes the breaking down of afro-pessimistic behaviour, which is at the very root of the South African xenophobic discourse, as Black South Africans do not associate these discriminatory practices and attitudes towards white immigrant groupings. This would allow for a return back to an African brotherhood, would confront the language of xenophobia present within discourses of citizenship, and would introduce a Pan African pedagogy. Confronting this language of xenophobia is important in addressing other xenophobic attitudes within the wider context of the African continent, as foreigners across the continent are associated with many stereotypical labels. In Cameroon, foreigners are named 'came-no-goes', which is pidgin for 'immigrants' and translates to 'people that came but refuse to go', therefore associating foreigners to entities that cause an inconvenience to local citizens (Ceuppens and Geshierre, 2005: 395). In South Africa, the term 'kwerekwere' is used to refer to the sounds made by Black immigrant groupings when speaking in their home languages.

Although there are possibilities in the dismantling of xenophobic behaviour, it is important to discuss the realities involved in doing so. A brief look at citizenship in the wider context of Africa is important. African Americans and autochthonous Africans are involved in a discourse of 'othering', for instance, in which African Americans attempting to defend their return to Africa is seen by autochthonous Africans to be more about accessing the global (Ceuppens and Geshierre, 2005: 387). The harmful notion that then arises from autochthonous Africans being 'the self' and African Americans being the 'other' is one along the lines of 'not all skin folk are kin folk'. The irony is that autochthonous Africans are 'othering' African Americans in the same way that these autochthonous Africans were othered by the West. This Western 'othering' is the very cause of these large groups of Africans being in the diaspora in the first place, and once again the historically 'othered' becomes the perpetuator of 'othering'.

This intercontinental afro-pessimism has been acknowledged by Ghana, which is looking to combat it with legal aspects and de facto aspects. Ghana's 'Right of Abode' law of 2000 aims to provide documentation for African Americans and anyone of African descent to freely move between Ghana and America at their own leisure (McCormick, 2019). Similarly, Ghana's 'Year of Return, 2019' aimed to incentivise African Americans and Africans in the diaspora to visit Ghana and possibly to resettle in the country (McCormick, 2019). Ghana is the pioneer of shifting the harmful 'othering' narratives that exist between African Americans and autochthonous Africans, and other African countries are yet to follow

suit. In the same way that internalised colonialism caused by the apartheid state's subjugation of certain groups became manifested in South Africa's citizenship discourse, the internalised colonialism caused by the West's colonialism of Africa causes Africans in the diaspora to be victims of a misplaced citizenship discourse by autochthonous Africans.

Conclusion

Essentially, this paper has highlighted xenophobic behaviour in South Africa as a case of internalised colonialism on the part of Black South Africans. In doing so, the dual conceptualisations of citizenship were discussed as a means of interpreting the roots of xenophobic behaviour in South Africa. Furthermore, the different stages of citizenship discussed within the South African context exposed the detrimental legacy caused by prioritising de jure citizenship during the apartheid regime, and its subsequent manifestations in the attitudes and behaviours of Black South Africans towards Black immigrant groupings.

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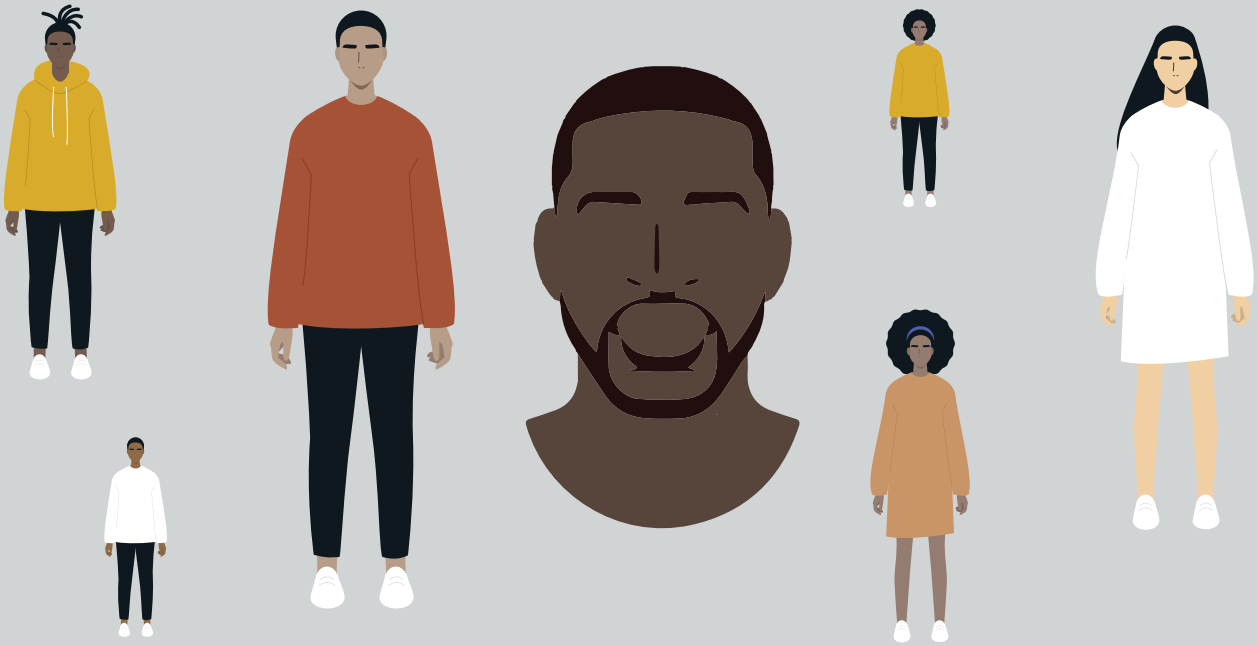

Casting the George Floyd Story in a Broader Context

By Gerson Uaripi Tjihenuna | Opinion

Abstract

On 9 June 2020, viewers around the globe were glued to international TV networks to watch the live coverage of the funeral of George Floyd, an African-American man who was killed by the police during an arrest in Minneapolis on May 25 2020. Police brutality against African-Americans is not something new and this is what led to the slogan 'Black Lives Matter' that has been the lodestar of the recent waves of protest. The American Police Force is embedded with systemic racism which seems to have been reinforced by Donald Trump's presidency. However, the brutal killing of Floyd should be understood in a broader context. The Black race has gone through many dehumanising experiences, including the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonialism, and all manner of discrimination. This, in turn, has led to an inferiority complex because, for the most part, we have been defined by others – and not in the most positive of terms to say the least. There is a need for a conscious paradigm shift to transcend from a negative self-image to a positive one on the part of Black people all over the world. It is high time we stood up to define ourselves.

Introduction

On 9 June 2020, viewers around the globe were glued to international TV networks to watch the live coverage of the funeral of George Floyd, an African-American man who was killed by the police during an arrest in Minneapolis on May 25 2020.

On that fateful day, four police officers pinned Floyd to the ground and literally choked him to death while he helplessly pleaded for his life. One speaker at the memorial service could not have stated it better when he said: '...the only crime that George Floyd has committed was that he was born Black.' Protests in response to his death, and more broadly to police violence against Black people, quickly spread across the US and internationally.

The question is: what does George Floyd's murder have to do with most of us here on the Afrikan continent and in other parts of the world? To answer that question, we need a brief reflection on Pan Afrikanism.

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Pan Afrikanism and Self-Definition

A few years back, before I started to pay serious attention to the Pan Afrikan cause, I used to think that Pan Afrikanism was just a pastime, a form of intellectual romanticism. However, when I started to seriously reflect on it, I came to the sobering realisation that Pan Afrikanism is about who we are as a people, based on our lived experiences. Pan Afrikanism is about defining ourselves based on our common struggles and experiences, so that we can stand tall and relate to others on an equal footing!

The Black race has gone through many dehumanising experiences: the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonialism, neo-colonialism, and all manner of discrimination and degradation. This, in turn, has led to an inferiority complex and a negative self-image because, for the most part, we have been defined by others – and not in the most positive of terms, to say the least. That definition has mainly been in the shadows of others, where we are defined as 'other' or as 'outsiders' who are 'not good enough' according to Eurocentric standards.

Given the current historical and socio-economic international order, Western knowledge and cultural structures dominate the world. In other words, the 'international imagery representation' is mainly Eurocentric and extra-African. As a result, Eurocentric values and opinions have come to be accepted as 'universal' standards. As Edward Said would say, we are out-numbered and out-organised by the prevailing Western consensus that regards the Black race as a culturally inferior people. For too long, our story has been told by others. Pan Afrikanism deals with the reconstruction of distorted images about Afrika and the Black race in general. Pan Afrikanism is a call for the democratisation of the asymmetric global knowledge system with the view of creating epistemological equity. It is a discourse about self-definition and self-affirmation. As the saying goes, 'as long as the antelope does not tell its own story, hunting will continue to be told from the hunter's perspective.'

When I visited Johannesburg for the first time after apartheid was dismantled, I made it a point to visit Soweto and when I went to New York City in 2005, I also made it a point to visit Harlem. Someone who does not share in the common collective experience of Black people may ask, what is the big deal about that? My answer is that both Soweto and Harlem represent a collective cultural frame of reference for Black history, Black resistance, and Black identity in more ways than one.

As Black people, our imagery representation has, for the most part, been negative. We have not only been subjected to all manner of oppression and dehumanisation, but who we are has been defined by others. Sadly, most of our people have come to accept this 'definition'. The problem with mental slavery or

a race-based inferiority complex is that, for the most part, the victim does not seem to be aware that he/she is a victim. It is like being in a prison, without being aware that you are a prisoner. In his seminal book, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Paulo Freire states that: '...under these circumstances the oppressed cannot consider the oppressor outside themselves sufficiently clearly to objectivize him – to discover him outside themselves because their perception of themselves as oppressed is impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression' (1993: 27).

In other words, there is a need for a conscious paradigm shift to transcend from a negative self-image to a positive one. Again, to paraphrase Freire, the oppressed person needs to transcend from being an object to becoming a Subject. According to Freire, the term Subjects denotes 'those who know and act, in contrast to objects, which are known and acted upon' (1993: 18). To put it differently, as Georg Hegel said (cited in Freire), the oppressed needs to '...attain the status of an independent self-consciousness...' (1993: 18). That is why we have chosen to speak up on the brutal killing of George Floyd.

Black Lives Matter and the Trump Presidency

Police brutality against African-Americans is not something new and this is what led to the slogan 'Black Lives Matter' that has been the lodestar of the recent waves of protest. The American Police Force is embedded with systemic racism which seems to have been reinforced by Donald Trump's presidency. As one TV commentator put it, Trump failed to 'speak to the moment' regarding the brutal killing of George Floyd and the subsequent street protests. The few moments when Trump spoke publicly on the issue, he was very combative and belligerent. Instead of telling the protestors that 'I hear you and I will address your grievances,' Trump instead chose to come across as the Law and Order President who was out to 'put the protestors in their place'. He even threatened to send in the army to quell the protests. In any democratic country, the military is deployed to deal with external aggression and I do not think the American military is an exception to this rule. However, we were faced with a situation where the President of the most powerful country in the world, the epitome of democratic governance, was threatening to use the army against peaceful demonstrators.

Since his election in 2016, Trump basically reversed America's political life ninety degrees back to the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) days, both domestically and at the international level, where he pursued a hawkish foreign policy. The phrase WASP refers to an informal, but closed social group of high-status and influential white Americans of English Protestant ancestry (Wikipedia, 2021). This is the group that has dominated the political and social life of the US for many years. It is interesting to note that out of the 46 Presidents who have ruled America over the years, only John F. Kennedy and Barack Obama were not from this group. Kennedy was a Roman Catholic and Obama is an African-American. It is also worth noting that the WASP's unwritten ideology is exclusive to the point that even the Irish and Italian Americans (two groups that happen to be predominantly Catholic) were for many years not considered as 'members' of mainstream 'white America'. That theme is, for example, captured in Patrick McKenna's book When the Irish Became White.

The WASP ideology – although it was never formally written – was, to a certain extent, informed by the 20th Century German Sociologist Max Weber's book Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. The central thread of the book is that although economic production for gain had existed in other civilizations like India or China, it was only in the West where capitalism, for the first time, gained momentum and took off. This, according to Weber, is due to the notion of the 'calling.' This notion of the 'calling' did not exist either in Antiquity or in Catholic theology; it was introduced by the Reformation, Weber argues. In other words, the highest form of moral obligation of the individual is to fulfil his/her duty in worldly affairs. This is particularly so for those who are called out or chosen, who then need to demonstrate a solid work ethic and iron discipline. The surety of being chosen is to be demonstrated through the performance of 'good works' in worldly activities (Wikipedia, 2021). Weber further argues that it was this Protestant ethic that paved the way for the introduction of the formal factory system and thus the creation of a 'free' mass of wage-labourers whose livelihood depends upon the sale of labour power in the market. According to this theory, for the first time in history, there were 'free' labourers who were neither slaves nor mere household unit producers.

Max Weber's theory is based on the doctrine of predestination, as advocated by John Calvin. According to this doctrine, only some human beings are chosen to be saved from damnation and that choice is predetermined by God. This was the doctrine that was used to undergird and justify apartheid.

Trump represents a new social phenomenon: right-wing white nationalism, a movement that has a strong international dimension. In the era of perceived or real danger of international terrorism, refugee crises, and international migration, this right-wing movement has been on the rise in a number of Western countries. Britain's decision to exit the European Union should, for example, be understood within that context. The leader of the far-right National Front in France, Marine Le Pen, also came out singing praise songs to Donald Trump after the latter was elected to office in 2016. In an article published in The New York Times on 1 November 2016, Amanda Taub argued that: '... whiteness is more than just skin colour. You could define it as a membership in the ethno-national majority. What it really means is the privilege of not being defined as other.'

Trump's political tone and vocabulary find resonance with supra-racist groups like the Ku-Klux-Klan and other right-wing white elements. To paraphrase Taub in the article referred to above, the supra-racist elements in the US feel that they were in a long line leading uphill where they were hoping to get hold of the American dream, but alas the line had slowed down or even stopped because immigrants, African-Americans, and other 'outsiders' seemed to be cutting the line. That is the heart of Trump's tone and it does not matter how much his spin-doctors may want to sugar-coat it: it is heavily loaded with racism! Taub further argues that: '...for decades the language of white identity has only existed in the context of white supremacy. When that became taboo, it left white identity politics without a vocabulary' (2016). It is that white identity vocabulary vacuum that Trump is trying to fill. For Trump and his supporters, the grand American narrative is white. In other words, for them, what constitutes 'political community' in the US is the 'silent' assumption that it is 'the white ethnic majority'. The others are 'outsiders' and thus just a footnote, if not a nuisance to that grand narrative. It is this narrative that racist elements in the US (including some police officers) feed into.

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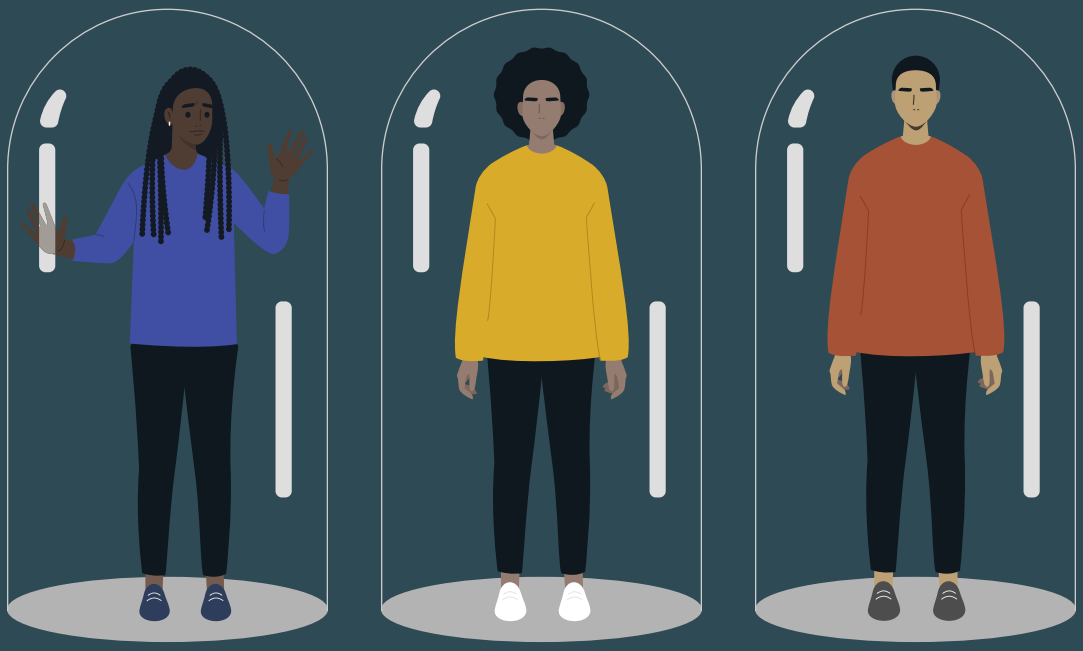

George Floyd, Bad Governance, and the Silent Violations of African Human Rights

By Tata Emmanuel Sunjo | Opinion

Abstract

In 2020, George Floyd – a Black man in the United States – was brutally killed by a white police officer. The world was unequivocal in denouncing such an outrageous act, but Black people living in Sub-Saharan Africa continue to face multiple right violations. This can be attributed to fundamental governance crevices associated with poor leadership that characterise many of these African states. This article outlines a number of examples of the incessant suppression of the socio-economic, civil, political, and overall human rights of Africans in the face of dictatorship, anarchy, and bad governance. The clamour for good governance on the continent is critical for upholding the dignity of Black African lives.

Overview

While the world is still struggling to fully grasp the agonising socio-economic and political ramifications brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, the recent killing of George Floyd, a Black man, in the United States of America on 25 May 2020 portrays one of the most despicable human rights violations in modern times, especially in a country that parades itself as the bastion and champion of democracy and good governance. What irony! According to The New York Times, the killing came after 'Minneapolis police officers arrested George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, after a convenience store employee called 911 and told the police that Mr. Floyd had bought cigarettes with a counterfeit $20 bill' (Hill et al., 2020). The criminal investigation showed that the police officer, Mr. Derek Chauvin, kept his knee on Mr. Floyd's neck for eight minutes and 46 seconds despite the fact that he had lost consciousness and showed no sign of life one minute after paramedics arrived at the scene. The police officers were fired a day after Floyd's arrest and death.

Undoubtedly, this heinous act in the 21st century clearly serves as a conspicuous vista of complex and deeply engrained racial and structural inequalities and discriminations. It is also a direct and outrageous peril to the existence of the Black race in particular and the human race as a whole if humanity does not, as one, stand up to massively promote and protect universal human rights and freedoms, as enshrined in the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights which are domesticated in various continental, regional, and national platforms.

Reflections on Floyd's Death and African Human Rights Records

The killing of Floyd has been received with outrage and protests across the world. However, citizens and leaders from Africa – the cradle of humanity and a continent predominantly inhabited by Black people – have expressed relatively few concerns on the continuation of Black discrimination and inhumane treatment.

The reluctant public response, especially from the continent's political leadership, does not come as a surprise due to the incessant suppression of the

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socio-economic, civil, political, and overall human rights of Africans in the face of dictatorship, anarchy, and bad governance. In other words, if leaders dare talk about Black Lives Matter in this context, they will be deluged with questions about the lives of their own populace, which are being lost on a daily basis due to poverty and underdevelopment, unemployment, chaotic healthcare systems, lack of quality education, limited rule of law, conflicts of all dimensions, gender and other inequalities, and many other vices. Certainly, George Floyd's repeated cry of 'I can't breathe' when Derek Chauvin, aided by three other police officers, kneeled on his neck for almost nine minutes, is just a glimpse of the pains, torments, tortures, and premature deaths that Africans have gone through and continue to go through as a result of bad political leadership.

Yet, these do not capture global empathy due to restrictions on press freedoms, as well as on freedoms of assembly and peaceful protests, even though these are clearly provided for in many African countries' constitutions. Indeed, Amnesty International reported in 2019 that Africa was 'marked by widespread repression of dissent – including crackdowns on peaceful protests, and attacks on media, human rights defenders and political opponents. In over 20 countries, people were denied their rights to peaceful protest, including through unlawful bans, use of excessive force, harassment and arbitrary arrests' (2019: 5).

In 2020, in the wake of enforcing sweeping restrictions on movement to fight the Covid-19 pandemic, more than half of the 54 African countries – including Burundi, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe ¬– had not pretended to register their names in records of rights violations of their populations, ranging from torture, to arbitrary arrests, to extra-judicial killings. In the case of Nigeria, for example, before 20 April 2020, at least 18 people had been killed by security forces while implementing the country's draconian Covid-19 lockdown measures, at times preventing the population from accessing even basic necessities. Ironically, at the time, the number of contagions from the virus had not reached the number killed in the process of implementing lockdown.

Despite being overwhelmingly blessed with stupendous natural resources, Africans have continued to live degrading lives. Before the majority of African countries gained independence in the second half of the 20th century, most of the blame for the continent's underdevelopment was attributed to the cruel slave trades and to European colonialism. However, even though a multiplicity of factors account for the continent's backwardness more than 50 years since independence, leadership inadequacies in many African countries are to be held responsible for the failure to generate an economic miracle on the continent similar to that of the East Asian tiger economies in the second half of the last century.

It is indeed horrendous that the majority of Africans who dominate the Black populations both on the continent and in the diaspora continue to live at the margins of a civilisation which commenced on African soil. This situation is largely attributed to systemic structural problems which are a function of poor-quality leadership. In much the same way that Floyd cried out 'I can't breathe' to the police officers and finally died, bad governance in Africa has for a long time created similar scenarios for Africans. Thus, bad governance and its adverse human rights effects in Africa, with the complementarity of external factors, is very reminiscent of Derek Chauvin's kneeling on George Floyd's neck, aided by three other then-police officers. Drawing from this analogy, therefore, a number of pains, tortures, and deaths on the continent can be inferred as follows:

1. It is bad governance that makes Africans continue to cry out: 'I can't survive unless I engage in a suicidal journey to Europe' through the dangerous and deadly Mediterranean waters. Even though the number of migrant deaths has significantly declined due to relentless efforts headed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 1,283 deaths were still recorded in 2019 through the three main Mediterranean Sea routes, adding to the 19,164 migrant lives lost since 2014 (IOM, 2019).

2. It is bad governance, typically represented by weak and biased judicial systems, as well as limited respect for the rule of law, that has resulted in extrajudicial killings, targeted killings, summary execution, and the non-guarantee of a fair trial to all Africans –especially those who are political opponents. This is well-captured in the 2019 Amnesty International Report, which accuses a number of African governments, characterised by rising insecurity, of using state security forces to commit human rights violations such as extra-judicial killings, enforced disappearances, and torture (Amnesty International, 2019).

3. It is bad governance that has promoted massive squandermania and jaw-dropping bribery and corrupt practices, leading to the deepening of poverty and inequalities and the loss of many African lives. The 2019 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report reiterates that 20–30% of investments in publicly funded construction projects may be lost because of mismanagement and bribery (OECD, 2019: 17). In 2016, The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) observed that corruption is certainly one of the major obstacles to structural transformation in Africa. In this report, corruption on the continent is attributed to three main factors: the level of institutional weaknesses which provide the basis for political leaders and public servants to misuse national resources and abuse power without being checked; the continued decline in the standards of public servants associated with poor incentives; and the blind eye often turned to corruption by Western countries (UNECA, 2016).

4. It is bad governance that has failed to tackle infectious and non-communicable diseases that continue to claim thousands of African

1. lives due to limited medical research and poor healthcare systems. While other regions of the world have made significant strides in improving their healthcare systems, nutrition, drinking water, and sanitation – which all contribute enormously to reducing mortality rates and raising life expectancy -– the Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa (2008) observes that Sub-Saharan Africa remains the last world region where mortality rates (particularly child mortality) continue to be high, and life expectancy low (ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2008). According to the World Bank's 2019 Report, rates of communicable disease morbidity and mortality remain stubbornly high due to a combination of factors, key of which is weak healthcare systems. The poor development of healthcare systems is attributed to the general lack of political will of the continent's leadership, complemented with the illicit financial flows of money from bribery and corruption. This explains why most of the continent's political elite quickly rush to hospitals in developed countries with well-developed systems for medical attention, while the majority of their citizens are victims of the disease burden.

2. It is bad governance, represented by Derek Chauvin's kneeling on Floyd's neck, that is responsible for the lack of basic, yet critical, infrastructures of water and sanitation, energy, housing, and education that increases the vulnerability of African populations to premature deaths. While some gains have been made largely through the efforts of UN and international development partners, the gap on accessing these critical amenities still remains wide. For instance, in one of its briefing documents, the German development agency GIZ states that: 'Only 56% of city-dwellers have access to piped water, down from 67% in 2003, and just 11% to a sewer connection' (2019: 10). This situation could become more precarious due to other factors, such as growing population, pollution, and climate change. Inadequacies in providing amenities such as water expose the population to dire hygiene and sanitation situations, water-related diseases, and gender-based violence against women and girls who have to search for potable water.

3. It is bad governance that has created deep divisions among and between African sons and daughters over political, social, cultural, and natural resources issues – giving rise to complex conflicts and growing insecurity which continue to result in more deaths, forced movements, and rising poverty and disillusionment. A 2017 Oxfam Report noted that data on conflict fatalities in Africa are scarce and inconsistent. However, most of the recorded deaths in conflict and security-challenged environments are caused by uncontrolled arms. The report notes that millions of lives were lost as a direct result of wars in Africa (Adeniyi, 2017). While state-based conflicts have significantly reduced over the years due to advances in clearly defining states' geographical boundaries and growing multilateral cooperation, non-state and one-sided conflicts still remain a serious concern on the continent due to a combination of factors linked to poor governance, election rigging, discrimination against minorities, and growing fundamentalism among others. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) has indicated that: 'Conflict in Africa is becoming more complex as the numbers of conflict actors have increased. Rebel (and extremist) groups are more numerous and often fracture into additional groupings' (Cilliers, 2018: 3).

Conclusion

We could go on and on to demonstrate the systemic human rights issues fundamentally caused by bad governance on the continent, which all demand the democratisation of advocacy through peaceful civil protests, as guaranteed in most African countries' constitutions. While the massive and largely peaceful protests in the US and around the globe in response to Floyd's death advocated for serious structural reforms, African countries in particular require fundamental institutional reforms that will address governance crevices in a bid to propel and sustain socio-economic developments that will improve human dignity in general and Black African lives in particular. Achieving this will not only halt the brain drain on the continent, but will create a conducive and receptive ground for diasporic Africans and other global citizens to feel that they can come back to Africa and lead rewarding lives, as they would elsewhere in the world.

Without these reforms, the 2030 Sustainable

Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063 will all remain nebulous ventures. As a continent with independent states strongly wedded to the doctrine of state sovereignty and territorial integrity, addressing governance issues domestically seems to be yielding insignificant results at a very slow pace. Thus, the task of pressuring for the effective and swift implementation of these reforms lies with the global political leadership spearheaded by the UN and her partners, as well as with continental and regional organisations.

The guarantee of civil and political rights for African citizens is equally critical in advocating for these structural reforms to be made to pave the way for good governance and sustainable development. Just as there are growing debates and efforts to mitigate systemic and institutionalised racism in some Western countries, African countries must work to eradicate systemic bad governance practices which are responsible for defacing the value of Black lives on the continent. In other words, unless the continent's political leadership gives dignity to the lives of their citizenry, it will be difficult for that dignity to be accorded freely to Black people in other parts of the world. This is possible and will go further to lay bare the barren argument of the superiority of some races over others. Throughout the history of human civilisation, cases abound where significant strides have been made by people of all races in areas of peace and security, science and technology, arts and culture, and all facets of human society. To complement good governance efforts, the collective action of people from all races to give dignity to human life is equally critical to end the pervasive and, in many cases, gruesome human rights violations occurring in many countries today. This can only be guaranteed by enhancing good governance practices across the continent.

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